

Discerning
Truth in the midst of *Error*

Part Two: **A Biblical Examination** of **Catholicism**

Question #5 – What is the Spiritual Solution?

(C. = Catholicism, RCC = Roman Catholic Church, CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church)

- C. affirms that the ultimate spiritual solution to mankind's sin problem is to attain salvation from sin.
- Eternal salvation is one of the main themes in the Scriptures and also in Catholicism.

"The necessary means of salvation" - newadvent.org/cathen/03744a.htm

"In the preceding examination of the Scriptural doctrine regarding the Church, it has been seen how clearly it is laid down that only by entering the Church can we participate in the redemption wrought for us by Christ. Incorporation with the Church can alone unite us to the family of the second Adam, and alone can engraft us into the true Vine. Moreover, it is to the Church that Christ has committed those means of grace through which the gifts He earned for men are communicated to them. The Church alone dispenses the sacraments. It alone makes known the light of revealed truth. Outside the Church these gifts cannot be obtained. From all this there is but one conclusion: Union with the Church is not merely one out of various means by which salvation may be obtained: it is the only means.

- Salvation in the RCC equals salvation in Christ. Embracing their sacraments equals embracing Christ.
- But Christ is distinct from the universal church. Christ is our mediator, not the church. Christ saves, not the church. Christ is Lord of all, not the church. Christ is **"the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one gets to the Father but through" Him**, not thru the church. (John 14:6)
- C. makes itself out to be the embodiment of Christ and His graces. The two are indistinguishable.
- So you can see why they claim that salvation is in them and comes through them. No church, no Christ.

Cont *"The doctrine is summed up in the phrase, Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus. [Outside the Church there is no salvation.] This saying has been the occasion of so many objections that some consideration of its meaning seems desirable. It certainly does not mean that none can be saved except those who are in visible communion with the Church. The Catholic Church has ever taught that nothing else is needed to obtain justification than an act of perfect charity and of contrition. Whoever, under the impulse of actual grace, elicits these acts receives immediately the gift of sanctifying grace, and is numbered among the children of God. Should he die in these dispositions, he will assuredly attain heaven. **It is true such acts could not possibly be elicited by one who was aware that God has commanded all to join the Church, and who nevertheless should willfully remain outside her fold.** For love of God carries with it the practical desire to fulfill His commandments. But of those who die without visible communion with the Church, not all are guilty of willful disobedience to God's commands. Many are kept from the Church by ignorance. Such may*

be the case of numbers among those who have been brought up in heresy. To others the external means of grace may be unattainable. Thus an excommunicated person may have no opportunity of seeking reconciliation at the last, and yet may repair his faults by inward acts of contrition and charity.”

- The foundational dogma is *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*. But C. has allowed some concessions to evolve.
- We all know some people who are good people, doing good things, but have a perverted view of salvation.
- C. would allow room for these folks to be in the state of grace and spiritually incorporated in Roman C.
- However, once we know that C. demands a visible union with it, and we refuse, there is no hope.
- But, where there is ignorance or heresy and no access to the external Roman Catholic sacraments, there is still hope that a person will be saved by doing sacrificial works inspired by actual grace.
- By the Scriptures alone we can know God’s truth about sin and about God’s salvation solution.
- And the foundation to understanding this solution is biblical teaching on the total depravity of man.
- Based upon that scriptural foundation we asked, “What can dead mankind do to make themselves alive?”
- Nothing. We can’t even aid God in the process. Unless God does the saving NO ONE will be saved.
- But C. rejects total depravity of man. They embrace the idea of a wounding or partial death of man.
- Spiritually man is wounded but still able to function enough to follow the church’s teachings.
- To receive what C. claims to be the “graces of Christ” by obeying the sacraments.
- Thereby sinners cooperate with the salvation process that Christ began on the cross. **“It is started.”**
- Or, if you have no access to the sacraments, one may be saved by true acts of contrition and charity.
- But those folks are limited in the justification process by not being able to obey the sacraments.

Introduction to the Sacraments of Catholicism

- What are sacraments? What part do they play in C.’s teaching on the spiritual solution for mankind?
- The word sacrament means: A rite or ritual in which God is uniquely active.
- An external sign which contains and transfers sanctifying grace to the sinner.
- The sacraments of C. are: Baptism, Penance/Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction/Anointing of the Sick.
- C. embraces these sacraments, external signs, as the solution to man’s sin problem.
- Through the sacraments the process of justification begins and progresses throughout life.

Catholic.com *The history of human salvation is the history of the way God came to men. The first step on this way was the bridging of the gulf separating God and man in the person of the one Mediator Jesus Christ and by his work of redemption. By means of his Church Christ makes his grace available to all. Only in this application of redemption to mankind is the redemptive action of Christ completed. The doctrine of the sacraments is the doctrine of the second part of God's way of salvation to us. It deals with the holy signs which Christ instituted as the vehicles of his grace.*

- C. affirms that Christ is the Mediator between Holy God and sinful man b/c of His work of redemption.
- Ask any Catholic if Christ died on the cross to pay for sin and they will answer, “Yes.”
- But there’s more. Christ’s grace is only available thru the Church as the Church applies the sacraments.
- **Rom. 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...”** In the Biblical good news of Christ alone is salvation for all who believe.
- Catholic dogma changes that to give lip service to Christ and puts the bulk of emphasis on the sacraments.
- The sacraments are the vehicles of God’s grace...NOT Christ directly, and certainly not Christ alone.
- Christ, His merits, His grace for the salvation process are considered to be IN the sacraments.

Cont. *The great mystery of the union in Christ of a human nature with the second Person of the Godhead is that the human actions and sufferings of Christ are divine actions and sufferings. The sacraments are a living continuation of this mystery. There are earthly, external signs here which, of themselves, could never acquire any supernatural significance, but the signs of the sacraments have been made by Christ into vehicles of his grace. They effect in men the grace for which Christ made them the sign.*

- This can only be true if you reject Sola Scriptura and embrace Catholic Tradition as your authority.
- C. claims that Christ setup the system they promote. Even though it clearly contradicts Scripture.

Cont. *[The sacraments] are the signs of Christ's work; the effectiveness of Christ's continuing work in his Church cannot be dependent on man's inadequacy. A sacrament, administered properly in the way established by Christ and with the proper intention, gives the grace it signifies. It is effective not by reason of the power of intercession of priestly prayer nor on account of the worthiness of the recipient, but solely by the power of Christ. **The power of Christ lives in the sacraments.** The effect of the sacrament is independent of the sinfulness or unworthiness of the minister. The Church has never tolerated any subjective qualification of the objective effectiveness of the sacraments *ex opere operato*. This would ultimately be to conceive the way of salvation as being man's way to God and not God's way to man.*

- C. teaches that the sacraments are the living and breathing power of Christ and can produce grace for the communicant just by being performed.
- Grace is dispensed by the Church just by the act of performing the sacrament. *Ex opere operato*.

Cont. *The Church Thus Teaches: There are seven sacraments. They were instituted by Christ and given to the Church to administer. **They are necessary for salvation.** The sacraments are the vehicles of grace which they convey. They are validly administered by the carrying out of the sign with the proper intention. Not all are equally qualified to administer all the sacraments. The validity of the sacrament is independent of the worthiness of the minister...Sacramentals are instituted by the Church and are effective by virtue of the Church's intercession. Institution and alteration of them is reserved to the Holy See.*

- According to C., you cannot have Christ or receive the special graces of Christ without Ecclesia Romanus.
- The sacraments must be dispensed and received with proper intention.
- If a priest performs a sacrament with improper intention, it affects how much grace is dispensed.
- But *Ex opere operato* guarantees that the grace proper to the sacrament itself is not diminished.
- That would be a real bummer to think you were paying high \$ for a high mass to get your loved one out of purgatory, only to have its affect nullified by the improper intentions of the priest.
- So, it certainly behooved Roman C. to put this caveat in the mix. There will always be some limited benefit.

Indelible Character

- Only three of the sacraments dispense an indelible sacramental character, a permanent spiritual mark.
- Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders are special sacraments that can never be repeated.
- And even though they leave a permanent mark, they never give any assurance of eternal security.

CCC 1121 - *The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental character or seal by which the Christian shares in Christ's priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, is indelible; it remains forever in the Christian as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of divine protection, and as a vocation to divine worship and to the service of the Church. Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated.*

If it is doubtful whether a person has received one of the three sacraments in question, the sacrament may be administered conditionally, but not, properly speaking, repeated. The doctrine of the

sacramental character was dogmatically defined at the 16th century Council of Trent, but was held for more than 1000 years before, and was written about by Augustine of Hippo.

- If a person went through a similar ordinance but not in the traditional Catholic method, it could be redone.

A Brief Examination of the Sacraments

Sacrament of Baptism

- C. promotes baptism as the beginning of the salvation process...putting people on the road to heaven.
Catholic.com – *Baptism is the sacrament that frees man from original sin and from personal guilt, that makes him a member of Christ and His Church. It is thus the door to a new and supernatural life.*
- Baptism is the door into a whole new spiritual dimension...with the new possibility of attaining heaven.
- Once again, we see the blurring of the difference between Christ and the Roman Catholic Church.
- To enter into Roman C. by way of their baptismal sacrament equates entering into Christ.
Cont. *This sacrament has been undisputed in the Church since the beginning of Christian tradition. It has never been rejected by any heresy intending to remain on a Christian basis. Doubts could arise only about the ways and means of administering it and on its effects and way of operation. These things are therefore in essence what Church documents about baptism deal with.*
- Biblical baptism has never been disputed but Catholic baptismal regeneration is disputed by the Scriptures.
Cont. *THE CHURCH TEACHES: Baptism is a true sacrament instituted by Christ. It is administered by washing with natural water and at the same time invoking the Most Holy Trinity. Anybody, even an unbeliever or a heretic can validly administer baptism.*
- I don't know of any Biblical example of believer's baptism being carried out by unbelievers.
- The Great Commission is carried out by believers...both the preaching and the baptizing.
- But in C.'s traditions the baptismal sacrament holds Christ's graces. So it doesn't matter who performs it.
- Christ is in the sacrament. Grace is in the sacrament. The sacrament has power to save.
Cont. *Since it confers grace by the signs' being properly carried out children can and should be baptized even while still infants. Baptism is necessary for salvation. Baptism effects the remission of original sin and actual sins and of all punishment due to sin; it confers sanctifying grace, membership in Christ and in the Church and the obligation to obey the Church's laws, and give an indelible character. Note: from Pope Innocent III AD1201. The baptism of young children is not profitless. As circumcision made men members of the People of Israel, so baptism gives them entry to the kingdom of heaven.*
- There must be union with the RCC or there is no union with Christ.
The necessary means of salvation - newadvent.org/cathen/03744a.htm
"This doctrine of the absolute necessity of union with the Church was taught in explicit terms by Christ. Baptism, the act of incorporation among her members, He affirmed to be essential to salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Any disciple who shall throw off obedience to the Church is to be reckoned as one of the heathen; he has no part in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 18:17)."
- C. makes the claim that Christ taught baptismal regeneration. Is that what the scriptures really teach?
- **Mark 16:14-16** Mark 16:9-20 is not in the earliest, most reliable manuscripts, added in later manuscripts.
- Even if this is part of the original inspired text, it does not teach baptismal regeneration.
- It is believers who get baptized. Unbelievers are condemned for unbelief, not for not being baptized.
- We must always compare scripture with scripture and never create dogma on isolated passages.
- **Matt.18:12-17**

- In the context of the parable of the lost sheep (18:12-14), vs.15-17 follows that up with God's way of dealing with sin within the body of believers so as to rescue the "sheep" that has gone astray.
- The main concern is restoration of a believer to fellowship with God and consequently to the local body.
- **1Jn.1:3** "...what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."
- As individual believers increase their fellowship with the Father, fellowship with each other increases also.
- The Scripture's primary concern for individual believers is not that they obey the church...but God.
- **Matt.18:17** is not a threat of loss of salvation to those who disobey the rules of the church.
- It is a God-given process to keep fellow believers on track through loving clarity.
- If the RCC can save on behalf of Christ, then RCC can also un-save on behalf of Christ.
- Through many passages we have established that IF GOD DID NOT SAVE, NO ONE WOULD BE SAVED.
- Refer to Discerning Truth in the midst of Error, Part One, Essential Truth, Question #5.

Defending Infant Baptism - Catholic.com "...[It] is the same concept we are talking about with original sin and being in Adam and with salvation and being in Christ. We are born with a fallen nature, a nature that is separated from God as a result of Adam's sin. We have to be born again to become joined to God, to be in Christ, to become a member of the body of Christ, to be saved. We are born of Adam's body into condemnation. We are born of Christ's body unto salvation. Finally, we reach the part where this ties into infant baptism. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). In verse 5 he repeats himself: "Unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." In other words, being born again is the same thing as being born of water and the Spirit, and it is a necessary condition for entering the kingdom of God. Jesus is saying that a man must be born of water and the Spirit—in other words, he must be baptized. The Bible tells us that you cannot enter the kingdom of God if you are not baptized. When you explain infant baptism in the context of original sin and sacramental baptism—of being born into a state of original sin and being born again into a state of grace—you make a very powerful argument on behalf of the Church's teachings in this area. And you do it straight from the Bible."

- Water baptism removes the state of original sin and gives the state of grace...the road to attaining heaven.
- Is this straight from the Bible? Does the Bible really teach baptismal regeneration?
- **Jn.3:1-7** Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a protector and teacher of the O.T. Law, with added Torah, oral traditions.
- Jesus expected Nicodemus to understand the analogy Jesus was making. **Jn.3:10**
- The context is that of O.T. teaching and nothing to do with N.T. baptism which did not yet exist.
- John the Baptist's baptism was a preparation for Israel to receive their Messiah, baptism unto repentance.
- The phrase **born again** in 3:3 literally means **born from above**. It is a complete work of God.
- **Jn.3:6** gives the contrast, **That which is born of the flesh is flesh...born of the Spirit is spirit.**
- The phrase in **Jn.3:5**, **born of water and the Spirit** parallels **born again** and has O.T. meaning.
- To be born again, born of the Spirit, and born of water and the Spirit all refer O.T. regeneration.
- **Ezek.36:24-27** Regeneration, a spiritual cleansing, is an O.T. truth that Nicodemus should have understood.
- Without the spiritual washing of the soul, done only by the Holy Spirit thru the Word of God, no one can be saved and enter God's Kingdom.
- Being **Born of water and the Spirit** is not a work of man, or the church, and is not water baptism.
- It speaks of a spiritual cleansing by God and is not water baptism.
- **Eph.5:22-28a** – notice who did the spiritual cleansing...Christ.

- All believers who make up the church, WILL have no spot or wrinkle and WILL be holy and blameless.
- Why? Because Christ gave Himself up for us. He does the purifying. Not the church or believers.
- **Titus 3:3-7** – the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit...**not on the basis of deeds...**
- **Jn. 4:1-2** Surely if baptism was necessary for salvation, Jesus would have been doing some baptizing.
- And if N.T. baptism was necessary, none of the original Apostles of Christ were saved in that manner.
- They may have received baptism unto repentance by John the Baptist or Jesus' disciples before salvation.
- But they did not receive N.T. baptism as far as we know from the scriptures.
- The Apostle Paul in **Acts 9:18** would be the only N.T. baptized Apostle.
- So that would mean that they Original Apostles were saved by some other way. Faith alone in Christ alone.

Baptism of Desire

- In direct contradiction to **Titus 3**, C. teaches that some can be saved by a good life.
- And in contradiction to much of their own (De Fide) infallible dogma, C. has created salvation loopholes.

catholic.com

Venerable Pope Pius IX - Singulari quadam - It must, of course, be held as a matter of faith that outside the apostolic Roman Church no one can be saved, that the Church is the only ark of salvation, and that whoever does not enter it will perish in the flood. On the other hand, it must likewise be held as certain that those who are affected by ignorance of the true religion, if it is invincible ignorance, are not subject to any guilt in this matter before the eyes of the Lord.

Venerable Pope Pius IX - Quanto conficiamur moerore - We all know that those who are afflicted with invincible ignorance with regard to our holy religion, if they carefully keep the precepts of the natural law that have been written by God in the hearts of all men, if they are prepared to obey God, and if they lead a virtuous and dutiful life, can attain eternal life by the power of divine light and grace. For God, Who reads comprehensively in every detail the minds and souls, the thoughts and habits of all men, will not permit, in accordance with His infinite goodness and mercy, anyone who is not guilty of a voluntary fault to suffer eternal torments.

Pope St. Pius X - Catechism of Christian Doctrine, para. 132 - A person outside the Church by his own fault, and who dies without perfect contrition, will not be saved. But he who finds himself outside without fault of his own, and who lives a good life, can be saved by the love called charity, which unites unto God, and in a spiritual way also to the Church, that is, to the soul of the Church.

Pope Pius XII - Encyclical Letter Mystici Corporis - For even though by an unconscious desire and longing they have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer, they still remain deprived of those many heavenly gifts and helps which can be enjoyed only in the Catholic Church. Of those who are members of the Church, the elect will greatly outnumber the damned; and if we include as members of the Church all those who are hers in spirit by baptism of desire, this immense number of elect will be very great indeed.

- Who is to say if a life is virtuous and dutiful?
- A Muslim who murders anyone who refuses to convert to Islam...performing the duty of their religion?
- A Tribal mother and father who sacrifice their child to appease the spirits? Is that virtuous?
- The Biblical Gospel is universal Truth and is not relative to culture. All must come to Christ alone.

Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation

- What purpose does Penance serve? What must be done to have sins absolved?

Catholic.com – *As to Penance. If the Church is to fulfill in its entirety her task of saving mankind she needs the power to forgive sins. It is a power essentially different from her mission to preach the Gospel and baptize. In baptism, indeed all sins and the punishment due to them are remitted. Baptism is the first justification. But the first justification is also the first entry into the realm of the supernatural which works entirely by God's grace and which asks of the person baptized no more than that he turn away from sin and turn in faith to Christ.*

Penance is something different. A baptized person who sins again, sins against God to whom, since his baptism in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, he belongs. He also betrays the Church of which he is now a member. Thus, the new atonement assumes the character of a legal trial, with accusation, sentence and satisfaction.

- Where is the grace? Where is the sufficiency of Christ's final sacrifice for sin? Nowhere to be found.
- Why? Because in reality C. teaches that we must cooperate with Christ in being made fit for heaven.

Cont. *The practice of penance has varied considerably down the centuries. In very early days satisfaction, usually in the form of public penance, was very much to the fore. Re-acceptance into the Church community normally took place only after completion of the penance imposed. More and more, however, penance has withdrawn from the public domain and today only the private administration of the sacrament is still in use.*

THE CHURCH THUS TEACHES: *The Church has the power to forgive all sins. This forgiveness of sins is a true sacrament instituted by Christ, different from baptism, particularly on account of its judicial form. Sins are forgiven only by the sacrament of penance. Sins are forgiven by absolution which can only be given by an authorized priest. It is a real judicial pardon. The Church has the power to reserve certain cases.*

- To reserve certain cases means that certain mortal sins may not be forgiven and absolved.
- It is the right of the priest over the confessor and the bishop over his diocese.
- To retain mortal sin and refuse forgiveness is to have an eternal death grip on that soul. Control by fear.
- **Jn.20:23, Matt.16:19** Confession is to God alone, Forgiveness is by God alone, and absolution is from God alone.
- The Biblical body of Christ and its designated leaders do not have the power to forgive and absolve sin.
- Only to declare with certainty what God's word says about confession and forgiveness. **1Jn.1:9**

Cont. *On the part of the sinner contrition, confession and satisfaction are required. Contrition is aversion to the sins committed. Perfect contrition remits sin even before confession if it is joined with the intention to confess. Imperfect contrition (attrition) is sufficient if there is confession, and is a good and salutary thing.*

Confession must cover all mortal sins committed since baptism and not previously confessed. Venial sins, and sins already confessed can validly be confessed.

And satisfaction. The effect of the sacrament is reconciliation with God, that is, the remission of sins and the eternal punishment but not all the temporal punishment.

- This discussion on <http://forums.catholic.com> will help us understand Perfect and Imperfect contrition.
Q. I have heard that if one were to make an Act of Perfect Contrition outside of Confession that this would be sufficient to forgive one of their sins is this true and how would one know if they have made an Act of Perfect Contrition?
A. CCC 1492 Repentance (also called contrition) must be inspired by motives that arise from faith. If repentance arises from love of charity for God, it is called "perfect" contrition; if it is founded on other motives, it is called "imperfect." CCC 1452 When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called "perfect" (contrition of charity). Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible.
A. (Forum Elder) If you are really asking, "Why do I have to go to confession if I can make a perfect act of contrition?" the answer is that it is almost impossible to make a perfect act of contrition but in the Sacrament of Confession, simple attrition is sufficient. Jesus himself has provided this beautiful Sacrament as the ordinary means of reconciliation with God and with the Church. It is a privilege to come to his mercy on his terms.
A. (Forum Elder) If one was truly in a state of perfect contrition, regretting their sins not only for their perceptible evil effects and fear of punishment, but in a state of complete love for God and

submission to His will, nothing would prevent this person from confessing and asking for absolution from one of God's priests at the earliest opportunity.

- So, even though there is a chance to receive forgiveness directly from God, it is almost impossible to do.
- And it is impossible to be sure about it. The only sure way is to go to confession and be forgiven by priest.
- C. teaches that if you are truly repentant of your sin, you will get to the confessional booth ASAP.
- Once again, this sacrament subjects God's word to tradition. Forgiveness is by Sola Ecclesia Romanus.
- How does one make satisfaction for sin, after contrition and confession? <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11618c.htm>

The absolution given by the priest to a penitent who confesses his sins with the proper dispositions remits both the guilt and the eternal punishment (of mortal sin). There remains, however, some indebtedness to Divine justice which must be cancelled here or hereafter (see PURGATORY). In order to have it cancelled here, the penitent receives from his confessor what is usually called his "penance", usually in the form of certain prayers which he is to say, or of certain actions which he is to perform, such as visits to a church, the Stations of the Cross, etc. Alms deeds, fasting, and prayer are the chief means of satisfaction, but other penitential works may also be enjoined. The quality and extent of the penance is determined by the confessor according to the nature of the sins revealed, the special circumstances of the penitent, his liability to relapse, and the need of eradicating evil habits. Sometimes the penance is such that it may be performed at once; in other cases it may require a more or less considerable period, as, e.g., where it is prescribed for each day during a week or a month. But even then the penitent may receive another sacrament (e.g., Holy Communion) immediately after confession, since absolution restores him to the state of grace. He is nevertheless under obligation to continue the performance of his penance until it is completed.

- Christ's sacrifice on the cross for sin is not enough to satisfy God's Divine justice.
- Individuals are taught that they must make satisfaction for their own sin through acts of penance.
- **1Jn.2:1-2, 4:7-10** Propitiation – removal of wrath by the offering of a satisfactory gift.
- By Sola Scriptura, we know that Christ's one-time sacrifice for sin completely and for all time satisfied God.

Indulgences

<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/indulg.php> - *As to Indulgences. The power to forgive sins necessarily included the power to remit the eternal punishment due to them. But there remains temporal punishment. But besides the power to forgive sins and their eternal punishment Christ also gave his Church the power to remit temporal punishment for sins.*

*In the remission of temporal punishment, that is, in indulgences, it is not a matter of regaining the state of grace, or of the essential goods of the supernatural order which we receive in the sacraments and through the objective effects of the sacraments *ex opere operato* (i.e. independently of one's own or the Church's merits but solely by the power of Christ working in the sacramental signs), but of a lessening of the punishments still due for sin. This remission comes about on the basis of the value as satisfaction of the works and sufferings of Christ and of all who can accomplish such works in the grace of Christ, i.e. of all persons in a state of grace. The application of this satisfying value, however, is not attached to any sacramental sign in itself but to certain actions which can be prescribed by the Church. Thus, the twofold basis of the doctrine of indulgences is: first, the satisfying and supernaturally meritorious value of all works done in a state of grace, and second, the community of saints, of all, that is, who have been redeemed by Christ and live and work in his grace, in communion with Christ and with one another.*

- Merits are gained while in the state of grace by performing the repeatable sacraments and doing good. *Since the gaining of indulgences is related to certain actions, great abuses and scandals have been possible. The in part very abusive practice in matter of indulgences at the end of the Middle Ages served the Reformers as a symbol of a mechanistic organization of supernatural life, of the worldly character and avarice of the Church who touted holy things in the marketplace...the Church declared her power to grant indulgences, and their value for the faithful, but at the same time she pull[ed] all her force into the campaign against abuses.*

THE CHURCH THUS TEACHES: The Church, then, teaches she has received from Christ, on the basis of the treasury of his merits, the power to grant to the faithful on certain conditions indulgences i.e. the remission of temporal punishment due to sin. Indulgences may be applied to the dead. Abuses are to be avoided. The use of indulgences is salutary for the people of Christ.

- Temporal punishment for sin in this life and in purgatory to speed up being made fit for heaven.
- For more info see “How to gain an Indulgence” <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1994/9411fea1sb4.asp>

Sacrament of the Eucharist – we will discuss this under Question #6 – Who is Jesus?

Sacrament of Confirmation

- CCD - Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was started in the 1500's and is the religious teaching program of the Catholic Church.
- CCD classes are taught to school age children so they learn the basic doctrines of C.
- It is the preparation for confirmation which usually takes place at age 12.
- As we will see, confirmation is not optional for faithful Catholics, it is one of three “permanent” seals.

The sacrament of confirmation completes the sacrament of baptism. If baptism is the sacrament of rebirth to a new and supernatural life, confirmation is the sacrament of maturity and coming of age. The real confession of Christ consist in this 'that the whole man submits himself to Truth, in the judgment of his understanding, in the submission of his will and in the consecration of his whole power of love. To do this, poor-spirited man is only able when he has been confirmed by God's grace' This confirmation in the power of the Holy Spirit leading to a firm profession of faith has always been the particular effect which Catholic tradition has ascribed to the sacrament. It is effect which complements and completes that of baptism.

THE CHURCH TEACHES: Confirmation is a true sacrament instituted by Christ and different from baptism. It is administered by laying-on of hands and anointing with chrism accompanied by prayer. The chrism is blessed by the bishop and the bishop administers the sacrament. All baptized persons can and should be confirmed. The effect of the sacrament of confirmation is to give strength in faith and for the confession of faith and to impress an indelible character.

- What is Chrism? (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03696b.htm>)

A mixture of oil of olives and balsam, blessed by a bishop in a special manner and used in the administration of certain sacraments and in the performance of certain ecclesiastical functions. That chrism may serve as valid matter for the Sacrament of Confirmation it must consist of pure oil of olives, and it must be blessed by a bishop, or at least by a priest delegated by the Holy See.

- Confirmation completes baptism. There is always something more in C. ...Justification is never complete.
- At least not in this life. Only after all of the temporal judgments for sin are paid for in purgatory.
- Confirmation is the second of three sacraments that can never be repeated. One and done.
- It has a permanent seal associated with it, indelible character, but not eternal security.

Sacrament of Matrimony

Catholic.com - Matrimony is the marriage contract between Christians raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament... The mutual sacrifice and devotion of husband and wife is a true picture of Christ's sanctifying sacrifice and devotion to His Church. Matrimony has its significance in the first place from Christ who took the Church as his bride at the price of his own blood. And also because when he offered his life as the price of her ransom, he stretched out his arms in an embrace of supreme love. And thirdly: as Eve was formed from the side of Adam while he slept, so the Church was formed from the side of the dying and dead Christ, as the two chief sacraments poured from his side - the blood of redemption and the water of absolution' (Albertus Magnus).

- Albert Magnus is stretching the Scriptures to come up with this last part. But it fits Catholic tradition nicely.

- A sacrament is said to contain and transfer sanctifying grace which helps make people fit for heaven.
- So in C., marriage is considered a sacrament and helps married people toward heaven.
- C. promotes monogamy as the only valid marriage contract. Remarriage is allowed after death of spouse.
- Marriage cannot be dissolved, even in cases of adultery. Separation is the only option.

Cont. *The Church Thus Teaches: Marriage is willed by God and was raised to a sacrament by Christ. It is therefore good but may not be put before the state of virginity. The sacrament of matrimony consist of the marriage contract, so that for Christians the contract and the sacrament are inseparable. Therefore marriage comes into the legal competence of the Church... The purpose of marriage is the increase of the people of God and mutual help for the partners in loyalty and love. The sacrament gives married people a claim on the graces necessary to their state.*

- C. misses the Biblically correct stance and ignores the two biblical reasons for divorce.
- **For the Biblical view see “Divorce and Remarriage Flow Chart” booklet.**

Sacrament of Holy Orders

- This is the last of the three sacraments that can never be repeated...only elevated to higher levels.
- If you become a deacon or priest but then walk away from C., you can never again receive that holy order.

Catholic.com – *As to Orders. The supreme task which Christ had to fulfill was his priestly work of atonement which he completed as mediator between God and man. By the union in himself of humanity and divinity Christ is by nature the mediator. As a man from among men, Christ is our mediator with the Father; yet he is also capable of offering a worthy sacrifice to God because, by virtue of the union of his human nature with the Second Person of the Godhead, his human actions have in infinite value. In this fullest sense, the priesthood belongs to Christ alone.*

- It belongs to Christ alone ONLY in the fullest sense. In another lesser sense the church has priestly power.

Cont. *But if Christ wished to live on and continue his work in the Church, the first thing he had to do was to provide for the continuance of his sacerdotal and mediatory function. Above all, if Christ wished to renew the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages and all over the world as the sacrifice of the New Law in the Holy Mass, he had to allow other men to share in his priesthood. For if there is to be a true sacrifice, there must be a priesthood ordained and authorized by God from whose hands God will accept the sacrifice.*

- **IF** there was to be ongoing real atoning sacrifices for sin, there would have to be an authorized priesthood.
- **Heb.10:1-18**, There is NO MORE NEED FOR SACRIFICE FOR SIN. Christ died once for all. **“It is finished.”**

Cont. *All attacks on the priesthood of the Catholic Church thus go back to denial that the Holy Mass is a true sacrifice, entrusted by Christ to his Church, and ultimately to denial of any visible Church to which Christ entrusted his work as mediator and redeemer.*

- Amen. That is exactly why **THE SCRIPTURES** reject and condemn the Catholic mass.
- Every mass is a false sacrifice upon a false altar by a false priesthood.
- C. is so confused on this issue that it keeps folks from trusting Christ alone and his finished work alone.
- More on this later when we talk about the eucharist.

Cont. *THE CHURCH THUS TEACHES: Order is a true sacrament instituted by Christ who ordained the Apostles at the Last Supper. It is administered by the laying on of hands and the key phrases of the ordination preface. Only a Bishop can validly ordain. Order is a purely ecclesiastical concern. The effect of the sacrament of order is to impart the Holy Spirit and to impress an indelible character, which permanently distinguishes those in orders from the laity. The laity also has a part in Christ's priesthood, but in another manner. The office of Bishop is above the priesthood (which in turn is above the diaconate) and gives special powers of consecration. To the priesthood belong the celebration of Holy Mass and the power of forgiving sins. The subdiaconate belongs to the priesthood*

and diaconate to the 'major orders.' In addition, the four 'minor orders' were instituted by the Church. Conditions for the valid reception of order are baptism and being of the male sex. The Council of Trent defined that, besides the priesthood, there are in the Church other orders, both major and minor. Though nothing has been defined with regard to the number of orders it is usually given as seven: priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, readers, and doorkeepers. The priesthood is thus counted as including bishops.

Sacrament of Extreme Unction/Anointing the Sick

Catholic.com – *As to Anointing by conferring the Holy Spirit completes the sacrament of baptism, so extreme unction is the complement and completion of penance. Penance restores the justification lost by sin, extreme unction takes away the infirmity left by sin; it removes that state which might be an obstacle to the clothing with glory of the resurrection'; and, as every sacrament makes us men in some respect like Christ, 'so we become by extreme unction like the risen Christ because it will be given to the dying as a sign of the glory to come in which everything mortal will be stripped from the elect' (Albertus Magnus). According to the teaching of great theologians, the holy anointing makes the man who stands at the threshold of eternity and loyally cooperates with the grace of the sacrament ready to enter directly upon the Beatific Vision.*

THE CHURCH TEACHES: *Extreme Unction is a true sacrament instituted by Christ and proclaimed by St. James. It is administered by anointing with blessed oil accompanied by prayer. Only a priest can validly administer it. It can be received by any baptized person who has reached the age of reason and is on account of sickness or age in danger of death. Its effect is the strengthening of the soul, often of the body as well, and in the necessary conditions remission of sins.*

- **James 5:14-15** I don't see here any indication of a preparation for death.
- Like every other sacrament, this one also is a part of the salvation process within C.
- The final preparation one can make in this life before entering purgatory to be made fit for heaven.

Summary

- Sacraments are the cornerstone of the Catholic way toward salvation, toward justification, toward heaven.
- Catholicism claims Christ gave them ability to dispense salvation & grace through the sacraments.
- Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders can never be repeated due to the permanent seal they provide.
- Although that "permanent seal" does not give eternal security.
- If the state of grace is lost through mortal sin, it can be regained by contrition, confession, and the sinner making satisfaction for sin.
- In effect, then, C. teaches that Christ's atonement on the cross was not actually complete or sufficient.
- Sola Ecclesia Romanus by dispensing the sacraments to cooperating sinners actually completes salvation.
- The spiritual solution for the problem of sin comes from the teachings of C. alone.
- The Scriptures and even Christ Himself is made subject to C.'s dogma and practice.
- Jesus, C. claims, has given all authority for salvation to Sola Ecclesia Romanus.
- Sola Scriptura elevates Christ alone as the solution for our sin. Man-made religious rites and rituals can NEVER save anyone.
- Christ alone made the absolute satisfactory sacrifice for all sin for all time when he died on the cross.
- Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus, and Soli Deo Gloria. Amen.