

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
Matthew 16:16-19

Introduction:

1. The Roman Catholic Church is the first and oldest of all denominations.
2. Many equate Christianity with the Roman Catholic Church.
 - a. This gives them a very distorted picture of Christianity.
 - b. There are approximately one billion Roman Catholics.
3. We shall briefly note the history of the Roman Catholic Church.
 - a. We will note the truths it teaches.
 - b. We will note its major errors in the light of the New Testament.

Discussion:

- I. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES IT IS THE ORIGINAL CHURCH.
 - A. New Testament writers foretold the coming of a great apostasy.
 1. Paul spoke of the falling away and the coming of the man of sin (2 Thess. 2:1-12).
 2. The Holy Spirit testified that in the later times men would fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - B. The Roman Catholic Church is a corruption of the true church.
 1. The church in Rome took on the nature of the empire.
 2. The first pope, Boniface III, was crowned in 606.
 - C. The Catholic Church divided in 1054.
 1. The Eastern Church opposed the use of images in worship.
 2. They also rejected the pope.
 3. They became the Eastern (Greek) Orthodox Church.
 - D. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century broke the stranglehold the Roman Catholic Church had on Western Europe.
- II. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES SOME TRUTHS.
 - A. They teach there is one God but three Persons in the Godhead (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).
 - B. They believe in the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the body, the Judgment and Heaven and Hell.
 - C. They oppose divorce and uphold the sanctity of the home.
 - D. They oppose abortion and euthanasia.

III. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES THE CHURCH WAS BUILT ON PETER.

- A. They claim Peter was the first pope (Matt. 16:16-19).**
 - 1. Peter is from “petros,” a small stone.**
 - 2. The church is built on “petra,” a great ledge of rock.**
 - 3. The ledge of rock is the truth that Peter confessed that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

- B. They teach that Peter and subsequent popes have the power to retain sins or to remit sins (Matt. 16:19).**
 - 1. Peter used the keys to open the door of the kingdom (church) to the Jews on Pentecost and to the Gentiles of the house of Cornelius (Acts 2, 10).**
 - 2. The other apostles were also give the power to bind and loose (Matt. 18:18).**

- C. There are seven reasons Peter could not have been a pope.**
 - 1. He was an elder, not “the elder” (1 Pet. 5:1).**
 - 2. He was a sinful, fallible man (Matt. 26:31-35; 69-75; Gal. 2:11-14).**
 - 3. He refused homage and worship (Acts 10:25,26).**
 - 4. He was a married man (Matt. 8:14,15; 1 Cor. 9:5).**
 - 5. Jesus Christ is the only Head of the church (Col. 1:18).**
 - 6. There is no historical proof that Peter was ever in Rome.**
 - a. Paul does not mention him in the Roman letter.**
 - b. Even if Peter had been in Rome, that does not make him a pope.**
 - 7. Christ is the rock upon which the church is built (1 Cor. 3:11).**

IV. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH WORSHIPS MARY.

- A. They claim Mary is the “Mother of God and the spouse of the Holy Spirit.”**
 - 1. The Scriptures never refer to Mary in this way.**
 - 2. If Mary’s husband was the Holy Spirit, then she was a bigamist for she was also married to Joseph (Matt. 1:19,24).**

- B. They claim Mary is a “mediatrix” between God and man.**
 - 1. Paul wrote: “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5).**
 - 2. They pray to Mary believing she will influence her son.**

- C. They teach Mary remained a virgin perpetually.**

1. Joseph, her husband, “did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn son” (Matt. 1:25).
2. Mary and Joseph had several children (Matt. 13:55,56; John 7:3-5; Gal. 1:19; Jude 1).

D. Jesus never elevated Mary above others (Luke 11:27,28).

V. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH WORSHIPS DEAD “SAINTS.”

A. They believe the “saints” have extra merit in Heaven.

1. They can even hear and answer prayers of the faithful.
2. Christ alone is man’s Mediator, High Priest, and Advocate with the Father (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:14-16; I John 2:1,2).

B. Selling indulgences grew out of the worship of the saints.

VI. THERE ARE MANY OTHER FALSE DOCTRINES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

A. They teach the doctrine of Purgatory.

1. Catholics who are not good enough to go to Heaven must have their sins purged in Purgatory.
2. Purgatory is not found in the Bible.
3. There is no second chance after death (Heb. 9:27; Lu. 16).

B. They teach the bread and wine in the communion become the literal body and blood of Jesus.

1. This is the doctrine of Transubstantiation.
2. The Lord’s supper is a memorial, not a sacrifice (1 Cor. 11:23-25).

C. They teach celibacy is a holier estate than marriage.

1. Celibacy of the priesthood is the major cause of homosexuality and child molestation among priests.
2. Marriage is good for it was created by God (Gen. 2:18-25).
3. Paul taught: “Because of sexual immorality, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2).

Conclusion:

1. The Roman Catholic Church does not teach the Bible plan of salvation.
 - a. They teach salvation by works of human merit (Eph. 2:8,9).
 - b. They teach all are born in sin (Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 5:12).
 - c. They practice infant baptism (Acts 8:12).
 - d. They practice sprinkling in place of immersion (Rom. 6:4).
2. Obeying the Gospel puts one in the church of Christ (Acts 2:36-47).