

The Scriptures vs. Catholicism

By David Lasseter

This is a series of issues I've discussed with a good friend of mine who is a member of the Catholic Church. I'm publishing it to my website for two reasons: If you're studying with someone who is Catholic, I pray you'll find some answers to common issues you'll encounter. If you're Catholic yourself, I pray you'll consider the scriptures I've included with each question and will determine to examine your religious beliefs. As always, I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

1) Scripture

a) Authority. I feel that authority lies at the root of most of the differences between scripture and the practices of the Catholic Church. In Matthew 28:18 Jesus says that all authority (power in the KJV) is given Him, both in heaven and on earth. Therefore, if any man has any religious authority, it must have been given to him by Jesus. I'd like for you to consider a few issues I have with authority as recognized by the Catholic Church:

i) The Bible: I've written an extensive survey of the authority of the Bible and how we know it is complete. I've pasted it here to serve as a foundation for the issues we'll consider in this study:

- (1) Paul said that knowledge, tongues, and prophecy would cease. 1 Corinthians 13:8
- (2) Knowledge and prophecy are "in part" (i.e. they are not "perfect"). 1 Corinthians 13:9
- (3) Knowledge and prophecy are part of a larger body of miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11
- (4) That which is in part would be done away when that which is perfect has come. (1 Corinthians 13:10) The Greek word translated "perfect" is *teleios*, and means "brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, perfect". Paul is telling us when the incomplete things would go away: When something that is complete ("perfect") has come.
- (5) Since knowledge and tongues are "in part", (along with the larger body of spiritual gifts listed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12), they are destined to cease when that which is complete has come.
- (6) What is the "perfect" thing? Many (if not most) denominations teach that it is Jesus. Is it? Let's answer that question next.
- (7) Paul said that 3 things would abide (remain) after the perfect thing has come: faith, hope and love. 1 Corinthians 13:13
- (8) If the perfect thing is Jesus, then faith, hope and love will remain **after** He comes again.
- (9) Everyone (all eyes) will **see** Jesus when He comes again. Revelation 1:7
- (10) What is faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things **not seen**. Hebrews 11:1
- (11) If the perfect thing is Jesus, and everyone will see Jesus when He comes again, then faith as we know it will end when He comes again. Why? The Hebrews writer defines faith as the evidence of things **not seen**. Faith as we know it will no longer be able to meet this definition after He comes again, since **all eyes will see** Him.
- (12) Since faith as we know it will end when Jesus comes again, but Paul says that faith remains **after** that which is perfect has come, the perfect thing in 1 Corinthians 13:10 cannot be Jesus.
- (13) Paul said that hope will remain **after** that which is perfect has come. 1 Corinthians 13:13
- (14) Paul said that we don't hope for something we've seen, but for something we **haven't seen**. Romans 8:24-25
- (15) If the perfect thing is Jesus, and everyone will see Jesus when He comes again, then hope as we know it will end when He comes again. The reason is identical as to why faith as we know it will end when Jesus comes again.
- (16) Since hope as we know it will end when Jesus comes again, but Paul says that hope remains **after** that which is perfect has come, the perfect thing in 1 Corinthians 13:10 cannot be Jesus.

- (17) Why do most denominations teach that the perfect thing in 1 Corinthians 13 is Jesus? In my opinion, it's because the word "perfect" is misunderstood to mean "moral perfection". As we've seen in the definition of *teleios*, "perfect" in the NT doesn't necessarily mean "moral perfection". Let's look to other uses of *teleios* to confirm this.
- (18) Jesus was "made perfect", which means that He was, at one time, "imperfect". (Hebrews 5:9) The Greek word translated "made perfect" is *teleioo*, which is derived from *teleios*. It means, "add what is wanting in order to render a thing full".
- (19) Jesus was sinless, which means His "imperfection" wasn't a moral imperfection. Hebrews 4:15
- (20) All men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23
- (21) Since all men have sinned, all men are morally imperfect.
- (22) Although all men are morally imperfect, all are capable of being perfect (complete). 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- (23) That which is capable of making men perfect (complete) is scripture (the Word of God). (2 Timothy 3:16-17) The word translated "perfect" in 2 Timothy 3:17 is *artios*, and means "complete, perfect, having reference apparently to 'special aptitude for given uses'".
- (24) How can something that is incomplete make a man complete? Since the Word of God is capable of making men complete, it must be complete itself.
- (25) To whom did/does the Holy Spirit reveal the Word of God? If we knew the answer to this question we could look to see if this group/groups of people still exist today. If they do, then the Holy Spirit may well still be revealing the Word of God to men. However, if they don't, then we'd know that God's revelation of His Word to men has ended.
- (26) The Holy Spirit revealed the Word of God to Apostles and Prophets. (Ephesians 3:5) Therefore, if God is still revealing His Word, it must be to Apostles and Prophets.
- (27) For one to be an Apostle of Christ they must be a man who was with Jesus from the time of His baptism by John to the day He returned to Heaven. Acts 1:21-22
- (28) Since no man today can meet these qualifications, there are no true Apostles of Christ today. Therefore, if God is still revealing His Word to men, it must be through prophets.
- (29) How did a prophet become a prophet?
- (30) The Samaritan believers received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of Peter and John, two Apostles of Christ. Acts 8:14-17
- (31) Prophecy was one of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:10), and therefore was given to the Samaritan believers by the laying on of the hands of an Apostle of Christ. (In Acts 19:6 prophecy was one of the gifts specifically recorded by Luke that these 12 received by the laying on of Paul's hands.)
- (32) Prophecy **must** have ceased, since there are no living Apostles of Christ to convey this gift to another.
- (33) The purpose of prophecy was to reveal the Word of God. Deuteronomy 18:20-22
- (34) Since the purpose of prophecy was to reveal the Word of God, and prophecy must have ceased, the Word of God **must** be complete.
- (35) The "perfect" or "complete" thing mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 is the Word of God. It would be completed sometime between Paul's writing of 1 Corinthians and Jesus' second coming. We are able to "pin down" more precisely when His Word would be completed by considering to whom He revealed His Word. Since the Holy Spirit revealed His Word to Apostles and Prophets, and neither group can exist today, the Word of God has been complete, or "perfect", for nearly 2000 years.
- (36) Since the Word of God is complete, He is no longer revealing His Word to men. What does this mean to us today?
- Anyone who claims to be an Apostle of Jesus today is known to be a false prophet. Again, the Apostles in Acts 1 were looking for specific qualifications in the one who would replace Judas. Nobody today can meet these qualifications.
 - Since the laying on of an Apostle's hands was the method by which the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were passed to another, and true Apostles of Christ cannot exist today, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 have ceased. One

of these miraculous gifts was the gift of prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:10).

- (c) Anything new that any man claims to have received from God **after** the death of the last true Apostle and Prophet is known to be false. Paul tells us of Satan's tactics: He is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers masquerade as ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:12-15). Therefore we can't identify a true minister of righteousness from a minister of Satan masquerading as a minister of righteousness by how they look. We must listen to what they say and compare their words to those recorded in the now complete Word of God (Acts 17:10-12).
- ii) Tradition: The Catholic Church recognizes tradition as being a valid source of authority, in addition to the Bible. The Catholic Encyclopedia says the following about the belief of "Protestants" and Catholics on the issue of tradition: "Catholics, on the other hand, hold that there may be, that there is in fact, and that there must of necessity be certain revealed truths apart from those contained in the Bible." Jesus said that the Word of God is truth, and it's by this Word that we are sanctified (John 17:17). As we learned in the study "How we know the Bible is complete", the scriptures (the Word of God) are able to make men complete (2 Timothy 3:16-17). If the Word of God was incomplete, it would be unable to make men complete. Therefore, when Jesus said that the Word of God is truth, it must contain only truth and it must contain all truth. In an article I've written (and published to this website) entitled "Why must we use the Bible only?", I look at each verse where the word *paradosis* (translated "tradition") is used. Only 3 of the 13 times the word is used is a positive idea conveyed. 2 Thessalonians 3:6 says, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." Anyone who did not follow the tradition they received of Paul was to be withdrawn from! The only tradition that's authorized in this verse is the tradition the Thessalonian Christians received from Paul.
- iii) The "deposit of faith": As we learned in our study of the Bible and its perfection, there is no new revelation from God being given to man today. As the Catholic Encyclopedia says, which I quoted in the above paragraph, Catholics believe that there must of necessity be revealed truths apart from those contained in the Bible. Mario Derksen, a Catholic web author, has this to say about the deposit of faith: "As I just showed, no doctrine is based on the Bible alone, but on the deposit of faith (of which the Bible is merely a part)." (<http://www.cathinsight.com/apologetics/infant.htm>) The Catholic Church considers the Bible to be only a part of the deposit of faith. Catholicism has changed many times over the centuries as different ecumenical councils gathered together to reconsider the teachings of the Catholic Church. This contradicts scripture and takes authority away from the Word of God and gives it to men.
- b) Rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15): I was watching EWTN one evening, and the commentator gave the reason why the Catholic Church forbids contraception: It violates the 5th commandment ("Thou shalt not kill"). I'd like to take a few moments and review why it's not possible to violate the 5th commandment today:
 - i) The Ten Commandments were given to Moses and the nation of Israel (Exodus 34:27-28). In Romans 3:19 Paul says, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law..." Since the commandments were given **only** to the nation of Israel, anyone who was not an Israelite was not subject to the Ten Commandments, since they were not under that law and therefore were not subject to it.
 - ii) Were the Ten Commandments designed to be a lasting covenant between God and the nation of Israel?
 - (1) First, consider a couple of God's characteristics
 - (a) He doesn't change (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8)
 - (b) He is no respecter of persons (Romans 2:11; Acts 10:34; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; 1 Peter 1:17). Since God is no respecter of persons and He doesn't change, He never has been and never will be a respecter of persons.
 - (2) Doesn't the fact that God gave the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel but not to the Gentiles show that He is a respecter of persons? On the surface, it may. However, if our understanding of an issue contradicts scripture, it shows us that we don't understand the issue under consideration. Let's consider the Gentiles during the time the nation of Israel was un-

der the Ten Commandments:

- (a) Genesis 22:18: God tells Abraham that in his seed **all nations** of the earth would be blessed.
- (b) Exodus 34:27-28: The Ten Commandments were given to **one nation**, the nation of Israel.
- (c) Galatians 3:16: The seed through whom all nations would be blessed is Christ.
- (d) Christ was of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14), who was the son of Israel, who was the son of Isaac.
- (e) So all nations (Jews and Gentiles) would be blessed through the seed of Abraham (Christ, whose forefather was Isaac).
- (f) The promise made to Abraham in Genesis 22:18 was given 430 years **prior** to the law given to Moses (Galatians 3:17). This verse also tells us that the law was not able to make the promise of none effect (worthless). Therefore, the law given to **one nation** (Moses and the children of Israel) was **unable** to nullify the promise made to Abraham that through his seed **all nations** of the earth would be blessed. So, the Ten Commandments had to end before the promise made to Abraham could come to fruition. I'll have more to say on this point shortly.
- (g) Were the Gentiles without hope during the time the Ten Commandments were in effect? This is the essence of the question I asked under (2) above. The answer must be no, since God is no respecter of persons and He doesn't change. He could be neither if the Gentiles had hope prior to the Ten Commandments but had no hope during the time the Ten Commandments were in effect. Since the Gentiles were not subject to the Ten Commandments, how did they have hope during the time of the Ten Commandments?
 - (i) Romans 2:13: It's not the hearers of the law that are just before God, but the doers of the law.
 - (ii) The Gentiles could do by nature the things contained in the law, therefore be doers of the law and considered just by God (Romans 2:14-15).
- (h) However, we see in Ephesians 2:11-12 that something changed for the Gentiles: They now have no hope! No longer could they do by nature the things contained in the law and be considered just by God. What changed?
 - (i) Paul says they were "without Christ" (Ephesians 2:12)
 - (ii) Paul uses the phrase "at that time" to indicate when it was the Gentiles were without hope (verse 12).
 - (iii) "At that time" **cannot** refer to the time of the Law of Moses, because the Jews were also "without Christ" when the Law of Moses was in effect. "At that time" **must** refer to a time when the Jews had Christ but the Gentiles didn't.
 - (iv) Acts 2:5: The ones who heard Peter's first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost were Jews. The ones who were pricked in their hearts (2:37), who were told what to do (2:38), who obeyed (2:41) and who were added to the church by Jesus (2:47) were all Jews.
 - (v) On the day of Pentecost the period of time Paul calls "at that time" started.
 - (vi) Acts 10: Peter preaches to Cornelius, who was a Gentile (Acts 11:1). Cornelius and his household were obedient (Acts 10:48), just as some 3,000 Jews were on the day of Pentecost. "At that time" has now ended. The Gentiles have the same hope as the Jews, and that hope is found only in Christ.
- (i) Now we understand that hope is found only in Jesus Christ, not the Law of Moses. What did Jesus do to the Law of Moses when He died on the cross?
 - (i) Matthew 5:18: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Jesus says that one jot or one tittle would not pass from the law **until** all be fulfilled. The word "until" is key: It is a time-limiting word. When you say you'll be on Okinawa **until** July 2005, I understand you to mean that you'll no longer be on Okinawa in August 2005. "Until" tells me how long you'll be on this island. (My friend and I live on Okinawa. I used this example to show him what is meant by the word "until".)

“Until” in Matthew 5:18 tells us that the Law of Moses was destined to end, and that its ending would happen when all had been fulfilled.

- (ii) John 19:28: “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.” Jesus knew that all things had been accomplished that the scripture might be fulfilled. At that moment the Law of Moses was abolished and ceased being a valid covenant between God and man. No longer could the Jews do the things written in the law or the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law and be considered just by God. Justification is no longer by doing the deeds of the law but it is now by Christ! (Please review other resources I’ve published to this site to consider justification in more detail.)
- iii) What are the consequences of attempting to keep any part of the Law of Moses today?
 - (1) Galatians 5:4: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Christ has become of no effect for the Catholic Church due to its doctrine being based on elements of the old law. This is true for the Catholic Church and any other individual or religious organization that bases its doctrine upon any part of the old law.
 - (2) James 2:9-10: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.” The Catholic Church is guilty of the entire old law, because it attempts to keep some parts of the law of Moses but not others. The Catholic Church doesn’t teach that one should keep the Sabbath day holy, but that commandment was also one of the Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.
- iv) What purpose does the Old Testament serve today?
 - (1) Romans 15:4: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 10:11: “Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”
 - (3) In these two passages we see that we are to learn from the things recorded in the Old Testament, but the OT has ceased being a valid covenant between God and man and no longer serves as a source of religious authority today.
- 2) *Petra* and *Petros*: We spent some time looking up these two words in a Greek New Testament, a concordance and a Bible dictionary. I’d like to review what we learned.
 - a) Definitions (from Vine’s expository dictionary): *Petra* denotes “a mass of rock,” as distinct from *Petros*, “a detached stone or boulder,” or a stone that might be thrown or easily moved.
 - b) Matthew 16:18: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The Catholic Church uses this verse as justification for its teaching that the pope holds the office Peter once held, with Peter being the rock upon which Jesus would build His church. The Greek word translated “rock” in Matthew 16:18 is *Petra*, which refers to a massive boulder and a firm foundation.
 - c) John 1:42: “And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.” The word translated Cephas is *Kephas*, or “stone”.
 - d) The Catholic Church makes a connection between Jesus’ giving Peter the name “Cephas” and the rock He mentions in Matthew 16:18. In his website Mario Derksen explains the Catholic Church’s belief regarding the meaning of *Petra* and *Petros*: “With that in mind, namely, that Simon is the Greek *Petros* and the Aramaic *Cephas*, we can now proceed to further clarify who is the rock of Matthew 16:18 upon whom or which the Church is built. Now, the Aramaic *cephas* means “rock,” and “rock” ONLY; it does NOT mean “stone.” Therefore, we conclude that when Jesus said that Simon was now Peter, He meant to apply the title “rock,” *Petra* in Greek, to him, since the other translation of “Peter” is Cephas, which *means* “rock.” So Christ built His Church “upon this rock”--Peter. The reason Jesus did not call Simon *Petra* is very simple: the word *Petra* has a feminine ending because it is a feminine noun. It is not appropriate to give a male person a female name. So Jesus makes this female noun “male” by switching the female *-a* ending into the male *-os* ending, so that the Greek word “rock” can

be applied to Simon. Again, we know that Jesus means to call Peter ROCK and not STONE because in Aramaic He calls him *Cephas*, which can only mean "rock" and not *Evna*, which is the Aramaic name for "stone," and because he could have called him *Lithos* instead, the Greek word for "stone," which even possesses a male ending already." (<http://www.cathinsight.com/apologetics/adventism/peter.htm>) So according to the Catholic Church, the reason Jesus called Peter the Aramaic Cephas (Greek *Petros*, a stone that is easily moved) and not *Petra* (a massive boulder) is because it would have been inappropriate for Him to assign a name with a feminine ending to Peter, who was a man. There are a few problems with this reasoning:

- i) Natural gender (Grammar points taken from William Mounce's Basics of Biblical Greek, page 24): The Catholic Church has misinterpreted these verses because of their insistence that the gender of the noun used to describe Peter match his gender. This is called **natural gender**. Natural gender means that a word takes on the gender of the object it represents. In Greek, **pronouns** follow natural gender but **nouns** for the most part do not. Both *Petros* and *Petra* are nouns! In Greek, these words generally do not follow natural gender. For example, the Greek noun for sin is *hamartia*. This is a feminine noun. However, we all understand that this word may be used to describe the state of either a man or a woman. *Hamartia* does not follow natural gender when it describes the sinful state of a man (rather than a woman). In a similar fashion, the nouns *Petros* and *Petra* are used to describe **characteristics** of a person regardless of their gender. *Petros* was used to describe Peter because he manifested the characteristics of a small pebble.
- ii) Other uses of *Petra*:
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 10:4: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." "Rock" is the Greek *Petra*, and Paul states plainly that this Rock was Jesus Christ. However, Jesus was a man (i.e. of the masculine gender)! The fact that Paul uses *Petra* (a feminine noun) to describe Jesus (a man) shows that it is unnecessary for nouns to follow natural gender in the Greek language. The noun describes a characteristic of the person.
 - (2) 1 Peter 2:7-8: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." *Petra* is translated "rock" in these verses. Acts 4:10-11 tells us specifically who is this "head of the corner": "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." So again, we have the feminine *Petra* being used to describe Jesus Christ, emphasizing the fact that the gender of a Greek noun does not need to match the gender of the one it describes.
- e) So in these verses and the way the Catholic Church interprets them we see that the entire superstructure of the Catholic Church is based on error. Jesus did not build His church upon Peter, He built it upon the confession Peter made in Matthew 16:16. I've gone over this passage in Matthew in detail in my article published on my website. The URL is http://www.noeo.net/church/church_matthew_16.html.
- 3) Worship: Jesus tells us that God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). Worship in spirit and in truth characterizes true worshipers of God. Since Jesus tells us there are *true* worshipers of God, there must also be *false* worshipers of God. There are three possible "varieties" of false worshipers: One who worships in spirit but not in truth, one who worships in truth but not in spirit, or one who doesn't worship in either spirit or truth. We've discussed the coordinating conjunction "and" several times in our studies. As you remember, "and" joins two words or phrases of equal grammatical value (Merriam-Webster's dictionary). To be a true worshiper one must worship in both spirit and in truth. The Old Testament records examples of men who chose to worship God they way they wished and not according to His commandments. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1,2) chose to use an unauthorized kind of fire and paid dearly for it. Cain **must** have known what God expect of him in worship, but chose to disobey. Genesis 4:5-7 records the fact that God did not respect Cain's offering, and telling Cain that he would be accepted if he did well. Since we cannot look to the OT for religious author-

ity, we must seek to understand how God commands us to worship Him today by studying the New Testament. However, we can look to the examples of those in the OT who were disobedient to the commandments God gave them to learn God's attitude toward those who disobey His commandments today. We can do this because God doesn't change! He is just as displeased with those who disobey His commandments today as He was with those who were disobedient during the time of the Old Testament.

- a) Use of religious titles and garments: The Catholic Church is known for its use of religious titles and garments among the leaders of that organization.
 - i) Luke 20:47: "Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation." Jesus warned them of the scribes, and one thing that characterized them was their desire to look religious in their long robes.
 - ii) Matthew 23:5-7: "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." Again, Jesus condemns the scribes and Pharisees for the works they did to be seen of men.
 - iii) Matthew 23:8,9: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." This is the continuation of Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees. He tells His disciples to call no man "Father" upon the earth, for they have one Father, which is in heaven. As I understand it, even the lowest-ranking member of the Catholic clergy is called "Father".
 - iv) Psalm 111:9: "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name." The name "reverend" belongs only to the Lord. Again, it's not at all uncommon to hear members of the Catholic clergy and many protestant denominations referred to as "reverend" by their peers and congregants.
- b) Music: We spent a great deal of time considering the use of music in NT worship. I'd like to review how we determined that the use of instrumental music in worship renders worship vain:
 - i) Moses: Again, we can use OT examples to determine how God expects us to respond to His commandments today. Let's consider a couple of points from Moses' life:
 - (1) Exodus 17:1-7: God commanded Moses to take his rod and strike the rock, after which water would flow from it. Moses obeyed God's commandment.
 - (2) Numbers 20:1-13: God commanded Moses to take his rod and speak to the rock, after which water would flow from it. However, Moses took his rod and struck it just as he did in Exodus 17. Was God pleased? Absolutely not! In verse 12 we learn that Moses would not be permitted to take the children of Israel into the promised land because of his disobedience. Numbers 27:12-14 says, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin."
 - (3) In these two passages we learn much about God and our response to His commandments. When God gives us an explicit commandment (e.g. speak to the rock), it is accompanied by an implicit commandment (e.g. nothing else will do).
 - ii) Since God doesn't change, if He's given us an explicit commandment in the New Testament with regards to music in our worship to Him, it's accompanied by the implicit commandment that He will not be pleased with anything else. What commandment has He given us?
 - (1) Ephesians 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"
 - (2) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

- iii) Both verses where music in NT worship is addressed commands the use of vocal music (specifically singing). The Greek word *laleo* (translated “speaking” in Ephesians 5:19) requires the use of the voice to utter articulate sounds. Again, notice where the “ands” are used in these verses. The use of instrumental music in the worship of the Catholic Church renders its worship vain, since the authority for such use could come from only two places: the Old Testament or the commandments of men. As we’ve seen, we cannot look to the Old Testament for religious authority today, and Jesus stated plainly that the commandments of men taught as doctrine renders worship vain (Matthew 15:9).
 - c) The Lord’s Supper: We spent a good deal of time studying the New Testament passages that deal with the Lord’s Supper. I’ll briefly review what we learned.
 - i) Frequency: Acts 20:7 reads, “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” In this verse Luke reveals a frequency and a purpose for the disciples meeting together. They came together on the first day of the week to break bread. Paul preached to them during this gathering. As I understand the practice of the Catholic Church, the “eucharist” is made available to the members nearly every day of the week, if not every day of the week. It may seem like an insignificant thing to us, how often we partake of the Lord’s Supper. The Catholic Church is not the only religious organization that observes the Lord’s Supper on a day or days other than that authorized by scripture. Many “Protestant” organizations observe it once a month or less often. We have an example in the Old Testament of how the Lord feels about changing the commandments He has given us regarding what day to do some things. Exodus 16 reveals the commandments God gave the children of Israel regarding the collection of manna. They were to gather only enough for one day, except on Friday, when they gathered enough for two days. If they gathered more than one-day’s worth of manna on any day other than Friday, the excess spoiled. So God gave them a specific day to gather more than one-day’s worth of manna. They couldn’t collect more than one-day’s worth on any day other than Friday.
 - ii) Who is to partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine? Matthew 26:26-28 says, “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Jesus states specifically that the disciples were to all drink of the fruit of the vine. Likewise, each disciple was to partake of the unleavened bread. This is contrary to the common practice in the Catholic Church for the members to partake of the bread, but only the clergy to partake of the fruit of the vine.
 - iii) Transubstantiation: This was an interesting topic of discussion during our studies. Again, I’d like to review the reasons why transubstantiation is not a scriptural doctrine:
 - (1) John chapter 6: This is the passage that is commonly used to support the doctrine of transubstantiation. In verses 51-53 Jesus says, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” Many of His disciples who were in His presence when He said these words misunderstood them. Verse 60 says, “Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?”, and verse 66, “From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” The key to understanding this passage is found in verses 61-63: “When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” Jesus Himself states that the flesh profits nothing. We must consume the words Jesus spoke in order to have life. He asks them a question, “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” If they were required to eat His flesh and drink His blood, when His body returned to heaven they would have no hope! His body would no longer be available for them to consume. He

then tells them that it's not the flesh that profits, but the spirit. We will always be able to consume His words, even after His body returned to heaven.

- (2) Matthew 26:26-28: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." You've most likely heard that Jesus' use of the word "is" indicates that the bread and fruit of the vine were actually His body. I used the example of a handwritten map to my home to illustrate why this isn't the case. If I were to draw a map to my house I'd likely draw some intersecting lines and rectangular shapes to represent the streets and buildings one would encounter along the way to my house. However, after I drew the actual rectangle that represented my house, when I was giving directions to you I'd probably point to that rectangle and say, "This is my house". We all understand that the rectangle isn't my house, but it represents my house and gives you directions to find it. Paul speaks of the purpose of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." When we partake of the Lord's Supper we remember the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. We don't actually consume his flesh and blood, but unleavened bread and grape juice that represent His flesh and blood.
 - (3) Acts 15:28,29: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." The first century church was dealing with Judaizing teachers (i.e. men who said they had to follow certain tenets of the Old Testament in order to be saved). The apostles and elders in Jerusalem sent a letter to them by Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas, instructing them on things to avoid. These four things are found in verses 28 and 29 of Acts 15. Note one of the things they were to abstain from: blood! It would have been impossible for the first century church (and for us today) to abide by these instructions if the fruit of the vine was changed into blood each first day of the week. God isn't going to give His children a commandment in one part of the scriptures that makes impossible keeping a different commandment in another part of the scriptures. This is another proof that transubstantiation is a doctrine of men.
 - (4) Romans 6:9,10: "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Paul said that Jesus died unto sin **once**. His body was broken at His death. If His body is broken on a weekly basis then He died to sin more than once. Again, the doctrine of transubstantiation contradicts scripture and reveals itself to be a doctrine of men.
- d) Use of images: I've gone "round and round" with several Catholics about the reason for the images one sees so commonly in Catholic churches. I've decided that in most cases it's not fruitful to address the *reason* for their presence, but it's more effective to address why they're there at all. Romans 1:20-23 says, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Paul says that these people professed themselves to be wise, but became fools and changed the glory of God into an image made like to corruptible man. Paul never addresses the *reason* for the existence of the image, he simply condemns its existence at all! He says that those who make such images have become fools. Nobody knows what Jesus looked like. The only physical description we have of Him is found in Isaiah's

messianic prophecy in chapter 53. Isaiah 53:2 says, “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Every picture or image I’ve seen of Jesus is that of an incredibly handsome man. This is contrary to the sole physical description we have of Him in the scriptures, which gives us no details of His appearance other than it was one we wouldn’t consider beautiful.

- 4) Qualifications for religious leaders. One reason we started our series of lessons was my friend’s disgust with the pedophilia among the Catholic clergy that came to light a couple of years ago. One of the first things we did was to review the qualifications of bishops (also known as elders or overseers in the NT). These qualifications are found in the following verses (I’ve highlighted in red the qualifications that the Catholic clergy fails to meet):
 - a) 1 Timothy 3:1-7: “This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that **ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity**; (**For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?**) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”
 - b) Titus 1:5-9: “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the **husband of one wife, having faithful children** not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”
 - c) If the Catholic clergy were permitted to marry and have children, it’s likely (in my opinion) that many of the problems they’ve experienced recently would never have materialized. However, even if there was never a case of child abuse among the Catholic clergy, they still would not meet the qualifications for a bishop as Paul outlined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- 5) Mary: We spent some time discussing Mary and the children she had other than Jesus. Here are the verses that support the fact she had other children:
 - a) Matthew 1:24-25: “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” The Bible didn’t say that Joseph never had sexual relations with Mary (i.e. “knew” her in the KJV). Matthew states that he didn’t have sexual relations with her **until** she had brought forth her firstborn son. Again we have that time-limiting word “until”. Just as in Matthew 5 where Jesus said that the old law would not pass away **until** all had been fulfilled (which happened when Jesus died on the cross), the use of the word “until” in Matthew 1 tells us that Joseph and Mary did not have sexual relations until Jesus was born, but afterwards they engaged in the usual sexual relationship between husband and wife.
 - b) Mark 6:2-3: “And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.” In these verses we learn that Jesus had half-brothers and sisters through the relationship between Mary and Joseph.
 - c) John 7:3-5: “His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him.” Here we learn that, at the time of John 7, His brothers did not believe in Him. The point is that Jesus had brothers.
 - d) Galatians 1:18-19: “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.” Again, James is

noted to be the brother of the Lord.

- 6) Baptism: This is one of the major topics we've studied over the past few months. I'd like to close this summary of scriptural issues and the Catholic Church with a review of baptism. Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost that baptism was for the remission of sins. Acts 2:38 says, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Since baptism is for the remission of sins, the one being baptized must be in sin in order for baptism to be of any use to them. However, we also have the coordinating conjunction "and" used in Acts 2:38. Here, "and" connects repentance and baptism, making them of equal value. So the one being baptized must be in sin, and they must also repent of their sin in order for baptism to be of any use to them. I'd like to consider the scriptures as they reveal to us who is to be baptized, how one is to be baptized, and then compare these requirements with the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- a) Who is to be baptized? As you know, the Catholic Church practices infant baptism. So, in order for this baptism to be valid, two questions must be answered "yes". I'd like to address each of these questions next.
- i) Question 1: Is an infant in sin? In order for infant baptism to be valid, the infant must be in sin, since the purpose of baptism is for the remission of sins.
- (1) Romans 7:8,9: "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Paul wrote the book of Romans, and he lived under the OT when the Law of Moses was in effect, and he lived during the time when the OT was abolished and Christ's law came into effect. The point is that Paul never lived a day in his life when some religious law was not in effect, either the law of Moses or the law of Christ. But Paul says that **he** was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and **he** died. When was Paul alive without the law? Consider what he says in Romans 5:13: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." What was the purpose of the law? Romans 7:7 says, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Galatians 3:19 says, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." In these two verses we see the purpose of the old law. Sin was being committed by mankind prior to the law, but God didn't hold men accountable for something they couldn't understand or know about Him. However, when the law came (the example Paul uses is coveting in Romans 7:7), mankind was now held accountable for something they could understand. It is not possible for an infant to understand the law of Christ (under which we live today). Do infants and children lie? Of course they do. Is it ever not wrong to lie? No, it's not. John tells us the fate of all liars in Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Are infants and children held accountable for the things they do that are contrary to God's law? No, they're not, because as Paul said in Romans 5, sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Paul was alive without the law once. This was the period of time in his life when he could not understand the commandment that had been given. But, as he matured, "the commandment came", sin revived and he died a spiritual death. However, before this time he was spiritually alive because God didn't hold him accountable for the things he could not understand. So we see that if an infant is in sin, it's not his/her own sin. It must be the sin of another. God doesn't hold one accountable for something they cannot understand.
- (2) So if an infant is in sin and in need of baptism for the remission of sins, it must be the sin of another. Is an infant bearing the guilt of another's sin? Ezekiel 18:20 answers this question: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." This verse lies to rest the concept of original sin. Ezekiel plainly states that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The soul that sins is the one that shall die.

We aren't held accountable for the sins of our parents. Original sin is a doctrine that is of human origin, not divine.

- (3) We've seen in the two points above that the answer to the first question must be "no". Infants are not held accountable for things they do wrong but cannot understand, and they do not inherit the sins of their parents. So, infant baptism **must** be a doctrine of men since infants are not in sin and therefore have no need of baptism for the remission of sins.
- ii) Question 2: Can an infant fulfill the requirements for baptism as outlined in the New Testament? To answer this question we looked for the word "and" in the verses that address baptism, to see what else is of equal importance.
- (1) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In this verse Jesus tells us two things are necessary for salvation: belief and baptism. One who believes but isn't baptized cannot be saved, just as the one who is baptized but doesn't believe. Paul tells us how one develops faith: by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). An infant is incapable of belief, since understanding language is required for belief and infants cannot understand language.
 - (2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Peter makes repentance just as important as baptism for the forgiveness of sins. In order to repent one must be in sin, and one must have godly sorrow. 2 Corinthians 7:10 says, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Anyone who has observed an infant after the infant has committed some wrong knows that they don't experience sorrow. An understanding of sin and the moral consequence of sin (one's spiritual death and the requirement for Jesus' physical death for one to have any hope of salvation) is required for one to have godly sorrow. Infants are incapable of understanding the moral consequence of sin. Therefore, they are incapable of godly sorrow and repentance (since godly sorrow works repentance). Since they are incapable of repentance they cannot fulfill the requirements Peter establishes in Acts 2:38 for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (3) Just as with question 1, the answer to question 2 must be "no". An infant is incapable of fulfilling the requirements for baptism as outlined in the New Testament.
- iii) As we saw in our studies regarding baptism, the Catholic Church's practice regarding infant baptism is contrary to scripture. Infants are not in sin and they cannot fulfill the requirements for baptism as outlined in the New Testament.
- b) The manner of baptism. The Catholic Church practices sprinkling or pouring in their "baptism" of infants. Next, let's consider the NT scriptures regarding manner of baptism.
- i) Acts 8:35-38: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." In this passage we learn the manner of baptism: both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. A body of water large enough for the one being baptized to be completely immersed is required for NT baptism to take place. One who believes, has repented of their sins and has confessed their belief in Jesus as the Son of God is a candidate for baptism. Any body of water large enough for them to be completely immersed is sufficient for them to satisfy this command. This could be a bathtub where the one baptizing stands to the side and immerses the one being baptized or a body of water large enough for both the baptizer and the one being baptized to enter.
 - ii) Romans 6:3-6: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Paul tells us that baptism is a burial

(Greek *sunthapto*, to bury together with), that this burial takes place with Jesus by baptism into death, that we are to walk in newness of life after be raised from the grave of baptism, and that this planting together with Jesus is required in order for us to be raised with Him in the likeness of His resurrection.

- iii) Colossians 2:10-12: “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” I once read a Catholic commentator use this verse to de-emphasize the importance of baptism, saying that baptism is a symbolic circumcision like the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham. However, this fails to justify the act of sprinkling or pouring in place of immersion. Paul says that we are “buried with Him in baptism”. In Romans 6 he uses the phrase “buried with Him by baptism”. So, we see in these two passages how we are buried together with Jesus into death: by baptism.
- iv) I’d like to ask a few questions about Jesus’ experience as we close this section on the manner of baptism:
 - (1) Death
 - (a) Did Jesus die? Yes.
 - (b) Are we to die? Yes. Galatians 2:20 says, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Just as Jesus was crucified, we are to be crucified with Him (self must die daily). Luke 9:23,24 says, “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”
 - (2) Burial
 - (a) Was Jesus buried? Yes. In what was He buried? A tomb. Was any part of His body exposed to the world outside of the tomb after His burial? No. A large stone was placed over the opening and His body was completely encased in earth.
 - (b) After our spiritual death, are we to be buried? Yes. With whom are we to be buried? Jesus. (See Romans 6 and Colossians 2 above.) If we are buried **with** Jesus, will any part of our bodies remain exposed to the outside world during our burial? No. His entire body was entombed, and if we are buried **with** Him, our entire body will be entombed as well.
 - (3) Resurrection
 - (a) Was Jesus’ body resurrected after His burial? Yes.
 - (b) Will our bodies be resurrected after our burial? Yes. We will emerge from the watery grave of baptism just as Jesus emerged from the earthly grave of His tomb.
 - (4) Change
 - (a) Was Jesus different after His resurrection? Yes. His body was now alive, when it had been dead prior to His resurrection.
 - (b) Will we be different after our “resurrection” from the grave of baptism? Yes. Our sins are forgiven and we are to walk in newness of life, as Paul stated in Romans 6.
 - (5) As we see in these verses, only the act of baptism by immersion fulfills the requirements one must meet in order to be raised in the likeness of Jesus’ resurrection when He comes again. The manner of “baptism” practiced by the Catholic Church is contrary to the NT scriptures.
- c) As one can see from this brief study, the teachings of the Catholic Church with regards to original sin, infant baptism and sprinkling rather than immersion are contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. Since Peter said that baptism is for the remission of sins and Jesus said that one must be baptized in order to be saved, failure to follow the commandments the Lord has given us regarding baptism will result in our eternal damnation.

If you’re studying with a Catholic, I hope this summary has given you some tools to use in your study. If you’re a Catholic and have questions about your religion, I pray this summary has answered the questions you

have. If you didn't have any questions before you read this article I pray some questions have entered your mind. We must be like the Bereans and search the scriptures daily to see if the things we're hearing are true (Acts 17:11). The Lord has been so gracious to us in giving us the instructions we need in order to obey His will and be pleasing to Him. He didn't leave us "groping in the dark", hoping to stumble onto His will and forced to spend our entire lives wondering if we've done what He's commanded. As I mentioned in my opening, I stand ready to help you in any way I can and to answer any question you may have. If I'm unable to answer it, I'll research the scriptures and find the answer or refer you to someone who can answer it. I pray you have a fruitful study of God's word