

## Introduction:

Last Week: Another Gospel Gal 1.6-9...

*Mt 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. 15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*

There is a way marked "to heaven" by men that leads to hell.

Once again for newcomers: we are letting the Catholic Church speak for itself.  
Sources of Catholic Doctrine

- Mainly - Catechism of the Catholic Church- Edited by Joseph Ratzinger [Also known as Pope Benedict XVI (1994)]

Two books helpful in this study are:

- Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma – Ludwig Ott<sup>1</sup>
- The Gospel According to Rome - <sup>2</sup>

We began last week with infant and adult justification. What were the problem and the object of justification? It was to remove the obstacle of **original sin**.

Okay then what was the only way for anyone to be justified? To be **baptized**. Was the process the same for babies and adults? For infants it was an event of one day and all commitments were made by **other people**. For an adult converting to Catholicism it is a very different story. It can take years and the person in essence has to make themselves **worthy** for justification.

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So let's move on and look at **INCREASING JUSTIFICATION** and **RE-JUSTIFICATION**.

Here is how a person adds to their justification.

The **sanctifying grace** granted at baptism is the inner ability and grace that enables a person to please God.

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<sup>1</sup> Ott, Ludwig. *Fundamentals of catholic dogma*. S.I: Tan Books & Pub, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> McCarthy, James G. *The Gospel according to Rome*. Eugene, Or: Harvest House, 1995.

**Actual** grace is the temporary strengthening that inspires a person to do the good works necessary for salvation.

## **Sacraments**

- The way a person maintains sanctifying and actual grace is by way of **sacraments**. The word literally means some secret or hidden. In application the church uses these 'sacraments' as holy secret channels of grace [Ott 325-326].
- Each sacrament contains grace or is the instrumental vehicle or **channel** for granting grace to the one receiving it. In addition to "sacraments there is something called a "**sacramental**". Though not equaling a sacrament they do have their place in the daily life of a Catholic person. These rites, relics and rosaries are very prominent in the Catholic faith. They are things like:

Rosaries	Stations of the Cross	pictures of saints
Crucifixes	scapulars	exorcisms
Miraculous medals	genuflecting	Holy water
Lighting candles	statues	Ashes on forehead
Anointing with holy oil	sign of the cross	ringing of bells
Observing holy days	blessed palms	blessings of possessions
The blessing of throats	wearing a cross	many more...

- The proper sacramental may: give you material blessing; make you sorry for sin; atone for temporary punishment of sin; grant forgiveness for minor sins and protect you from Satan. So let's make sure you are getting this. Jesus gave the sacraments to the church. The church can dispense – in fact is the only dispenser of these sacraments which can grant you more grace. Sacraments are necessary for **salvation**. [Catechism: sanctifying grace (1266, 1996 2005, 2023—2024); actual grace (2000, 2024); the sacraments (1076-1666 notice this is 590 pages)

## **Merit [catechism 2006-2011, 2025-2027]**

- The church teaches that a person receiving the grace must **cooperate** with them. They must result in and in fact also are derived from doing **good works**, acts of charity and self-denial. According to the Roman Catholicism the performance of good works earns a reward from God called a **merit** or merits. As one is moved by the Holy Spirit he can earn for himself **and others** merits on his account in heaven.

### **Sanctification [catechism 824-825, 1995-2004, 2012-2016]**

- Catholicism teaches that these graces inspire the mind and strengthen the will. They encourage a person to keep seeking the sacraments and to do good works. The sacraments and good works increase the flow of grace and build up merits creating a cycle that continually repeats itself. This is called **sanctification**.

Two goals:

- **Preserve** the grace of justification received at baptism.
- **Increase** or perfect the state of our justification.
- Vatican II listed 9 important means by which to be justified. 1) Loving God 2) Loving your neighbor 3) Obeying God's commandments 4) Receiving the sacraments especially the Eucharist 5) Participating in liturgy – listening to the mass 6) Prayers 7) Self-denial 8) Service 9) Practicing virtue. Simple enough huh.

### **Bible response:**

- Grace by definition is **unmerited** not a reward.
- Justification in **complete** in Christ.

The idea of earning more grace is completely the opposite of what the Bible teaches. *Eph 2:7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

The church has **obscured** the meaning of grace indeed it altered its very essence. Grace has become the medium of exchange in the church's merit system. If grace could be earned, then it is not grace but payment. *Ro 11:6 And*

*if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.*

The church **distorted** grace by setting up or **inventing** the sacraments. The church controls them, distributes them and withholds them. The church has placed itself **between** the believer and his savior. God has made a way for us to live in a relationship with him; he has not set up a set of sacraments that further separate a man from God. God offers a **relationship** not a **ritual**. The idea that sacraments only available in the Roman Catholic Church are necessary for salvation does not have a single verse of scripture to support it.

- The Bible teaches that God's grace is offered **freely and directly** to all who trust in Christ. *Ro 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
- The Bible teaches that our justification is **complete** in Christ and we cannot enhance or increase it. [All of these statements are specifically declared anathema by the Councils.]-- *Ro 8:33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. --Rom 4.5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:*
- For the Roman Catholic – salvation is the **work** of a lifetime – sacraments, good works and continual rites, relics and rosaries. But the Christian **rests** in Jesus he doesn't strive to gain or maintain what God gives him by grace. *1 Jn 5:11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*

The RE-JUSTIFICATION of a sinner.

That is a new term for us here. The word 'justified' for Catholicism is the **infusion** of sanctifying grace that is poured into a person at baptism. Original sin is remedied and the person is now in a state of grace. What if he sins again grievously? He loses his justification. Okay what is a person to do? He is to get re-justified of course.

There are two classes of sin according to Catholicism. [catechism 1849-1876]

- **Mortal** sin: We commit *mortal sin* when we transgress a commandment of God in a serious matter, with full knowledge, and free consent of the will. Serious sin is, for example, unbelief, hatred of a neighbor, adultery, serious theft, murder etc. (Dogmatic theology for the laity pg. 78) Just like Adam's sin killed the life of God in him mortal sin kills the life of God in Catholics. Without repentance it brings eternal punishment.
- **Venial** sin: We commit *venial sin* (from Latin *venia* meaning 'pardoned' and may be pardoned outside confession) (Dogmatic Theology for the laity pg 79).

Venial sins can be forgiven in prayer but they weaken a person's spiritual vitality. They are likened to illness that affects the body. Mortal sin is a deathblow and you are no longer justified. You can't deal with mortal sin alone it is time to call in or go to the priest.

### **The sacrament of Penance [976-987, 1422-1498]**

According to Catholicism the sacrament of penance restores the wayward Catholic to a right relationship with God. Penance is also called **reconciliation and confession**. There are several requirements:

Confession [1455-1458, 1493]

1. The Catholic must **disclose** his sin to the priest.
2. There must be the presence of "**contrition**". The sinner must demonstrate his sorrow for his sin and his determination to avoid the sin in the future. He does so by acts of contrition.
3. **Judgement** by the priest. Only God can forgive sin but he has chosen to do so through the church (1441-1445). The priest will inquire into the sin with questions until he is satisfied that the whole truth is out. He

determines whether the sinner is sorry or not and then will decide whether or not to forgive his sin. [85].

4. **Absolution** by the priest. [1411-1445,1449,1461-1467, 1495] The priest has the knowledge to know whether a person is sincere and the authority to forgive or absolve their sin or to bind them to its punishment. To absolve means to *set free or to release from the consequences of guilt*. The actual conveyance of this forgiveness lies in the actual **words** that the priests uses when true contrition is observed. "I absolve you from your sins." This is not a simple declaration of God's forgiveness; it is a **judicial** act of the priests – he has by decree taken away their sin.
5. **Acts** of Penance [1434-1439, 1459-1460, 1494] Not done yet! The sinner has to do penance for his actions or there must be *satisfaction*.

### **Bible response**

This re-justification by confession and acts of penance simply does not appear in the Bible. It is a **fabrication** of the church. Ludwig Ott in his book Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma spent great effort to defend and quote all the anathemas of the Council of Trent concerning anyone who dare question the confession, the mass, and the efficacy of the priest's absolution (pages 416-441). Yet even he stated that the scriptures nowhere granted this authority.

The scriptures contain **no teaching** on penance or the authority of a man to forgive sins. To the contrary the Bible teaches:

- Confession is to God not a **priest**
- Satisfaction for sin is in Christ's **sacrifice** not our acts of penance.
- All sin is **mortal**; no venial sin exists.

*Ps 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

We go **directly** to God and we already have a mediator.

*1 Jn 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

Satisfaction for sin has been placed on the sinner at the direction of the priest and not on **Jesus**. According to Rome sin can be paid for in this life by acts of penance or in the next life by purgatory where his sins are purged [1030-1032,1472].

*Is 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."*

The idea that a sinner must pay for his own sin is saying that the blood of Christ is **insufficient** to remove our sin guiltiness. It is to make a person his own **savior**. It is teaching the antithesis of what the Bible teaches. *1 Jn 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

**All sin** is mortal. Jesus equates hate with **murder**. He equates lust with fornication and adultery. Catholicism minimizes sin, trivializes it and by way of their confession barter with the sinner to the point that sin is a fortunate occurrence for the church. *Ro 7:13*

The lie that sin is not so bad and a man can remedy his own sin is as old as time. Satan told Eve, you won't really die. Adam tried to fix the problem himself by sewing fig leaves together. It won't do. "...and without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin (He 9.22).

# The Seven Roman Catholic Sacraments

## The Three Sacraments of Initiation

### **Baptism** [1213-1284]

According to the Roman Catholic Church, the purpose of the sacrament of baptism is to reverse the effects of Adam's sin. Baptism is said to accomplish this by removing original sin from the soul and infusing sanctifying grace back into it [1262-1266]. This justifies the recipient, making the person holy before God, a participant in the life of grace, and a member of the Roman Catholic Church [1265-1270].

### **Eucharist** [1322-1419]

The Eucharist is the central act of Roman Catholicism. It is the "Sacrament of sacraments," [1211] and "all the other sacraments are ordered to it as to their end" [1211] [1113]. Catholics receive the sacrament of Holy Eucharist during the Mass. It is believed to provide the body and blood of Christ as spiritual food [1392. Commonly called Holy Communion, this sacrament is said to unite the Catholic more closely with God [1391]. The Church considers the Eucharist the greatest of the seven sacraments, the *Blessed Sacrament*, and encourages Catholics to receive it frequently [1389]. Many devout Catholics go to Mass and receive the Eucharist daily.

### **Confirmation** [1285-1321]

Confirmation is a special strengthening by the Holy Spirit to enable the Catholic to resist temptation, and to both defend and promote the Roman Catholic Church [1285, 1302-1305]. Catholics usually receive confirmation at about age 12 after completing a preparatory course on doctrine [1306-1311]. A bishop or his delegate administers the sacrament. The minister of the sacrament dips his right thumb in holy oil and anoints the person on the forehead with the sign of the cross, saying, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" [1300] [1300, 1312-1314]. Confirmation is sometimes referred to as a personal Pentecost [1288, 1302].

## The Two Sacraments of Healing

### **Penance** [1422-1498]

Commonly referred to as confession, this sacrament is for the forgiveness of serious sins committed after baptism [1446]. It is normally first received at about age eight just before First Holy Communion [1457]. Penance restores sanctifying grace to the baptized Catholic who has fallen because of serious sin. For this reason it is also called the Sacrament of Reconciliation [1424].

Today there are three different rites for the sacrament of penance [1482-1484, 1497]. The first and probably still most common is the traditional form in which an individual receives the sacrament privately as *Re-justification*. In the second form of the rite, several persons receive the first part of the sacrament together. Then they individually and privately confess their sins to a priest and receive absolution. The third

form is also designed for several penitents. In this variation, the participants receive the entire sacrament as a group. Rather than individually confessing their sins to a priest, they recite a prayer in which they acknowledge their general guilt in thought, word, and deed. The priest proposes a common penance and declares absolution over the entire group. However, if a person who is guilty of a serious sin receives absolution by this third rite, he is still required to privately confess the sin to a priest within one year. <sup>550</sup>

### **Anointing of the Sick** [1499-1532]

Older Catholics know this sacrament as *extreme unction* [1512]. The purpose of this sacrament is to provide spiritual and physical strength to individuals who are seriously ill or in danger of death [1499, 1511, 1514-1515, 1520-1523, 1532]. In the case of a person threatened by death, it prepares the soul for heaven. Under some circumstances, this sacrament also promises physical healing [1512]. The anointing of the sick is usually received with two other sacraments: penance and Eucharist [1524-1525]. These three together are called the *last rites*.

## The Two Sacraments of Service

### **Holy Orders** [1536-1600]

Holy Orders is the sacrament by which men are incorporated into the episcopate as bishops, the presbyterate as priests, or the diaconate as deacons. These are the three degrees of Roman Catholic ordination [1536-1537].

### **Matrimony** [1601-1666]

The sacrament of matrimony is the Roman Catholic marriage ceremony [1601]. Through this sacrament the union is made holy and the couple receives special grace to help in married life [1638-1642].