

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

The Bible Vs. Roman Catholicism

One night nearly 2000 years ago, Paul and Silas were thrown into prison for preaching the good news of Jesus in Philippi. While they were praying and singing, God sent a powerful earthquake which shook the foundations, broke their chains, and opened all the doors! The jailer, fearing the prisoners had escaped, was about to take his own life until Paul assured him everyone was still there. Trembling, the jailer asked the most important question, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” and the apostles answered simply:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (Acts 16:30-31)

The apostles then “spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.” (Acts 16:32) Immediately, the jailer “and all his family were baptized”. (Acts 16:33) The jailer “rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.” (Acts 16:34)

God teaches us in the Bible that salvation is simple and free for undeserving sinners. False religion twists the Scriptures and throws unbearable burdens upon people. (2 Pet. 3:16; Matt. 23:4) We must approach God on His gracious terms, not our own.

Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mk. 1:15)

These following three terms will help you understand what you must do to be saved.

REPENT: To repent means to have a change of heart, which causes us to turn to God and serve Him. It is a complete forsaking of sin.

BELIEVE: “To believe on, is to trust, to place full confidence in, to rest upon with faith... a yielding of the will and affections, accompanied with a humble reliance on Christ for salvation.”¹ Christ calls us to genuine, humble trust in Him and His gospel that relies upon His perfect character and not our good works.

GOSPEL: Gospel means “good news”. The Apostle Paul summed up the good news about Jesus Christ this way: “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen...” (1 Cor. 15:3-5)

Dear reader, see the beautiful simplicity of the “glorious gospel of the blessed God”! (1 Tim. 1:11) When we hear the good news of the perfect, once and for all sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and respond with repentant faith, we are promised eternal life, a right standing before God, and are given the Holy Spirit. Today, you can absolutely “know that you have eternal life.” (1 Jn 5:13) When the people asked Jesus: “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (Jn 6:28-29)

The following is taken from The Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry (CARM.org). Paragraphs from The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)² is referenced throughout. Please compare the Catechism and traditions of men with the word of God. (Matt. 15:6)

Salvation in Roman Catholicism is a process. To begin, God grants actual grace to a person which enables him to believe in Christ (CCC 2000) and also believe in the truth of the Catholic Church (CCC 1814). After belief, the person must be baptized, which is necessary for salvation (CCC 1257). This baptism erases original sin (CCC 405), unites the person with Christ (CCC 977), infuses grace into the person (CCC 1999), and grants justification (CCC 1992, 2020). After baptism, he is saved. But, to maintain his salvation, it is necessary for him to perform good works (CCC 2010, 2068, 2080) and participate in the sacraments (CCC 1129) which provide the grace that is “proper to each sacrament” (CCC 1129, 2003). This is necessary in order to maintain infused grace (CCC 987, 1468). However, grace can be lessened by venial sins or completely lost by mortal sins. Venial sins (CCC 1862) remove part of the infused grace but not the saving grace known as sanctifying grace (CCC 1863). To remedy the problem of venial sins, the Catholic is to take the Eucharist which the Church teaches forgives venial sins (CCC 1416). He must also perform various penance which must be done in concert with perfect contrition (CCC 1452).

But there is a problem. Sins require punishment. Even though sins are absolved by a priest (CCC 1463, 1495) the punishment due to a person because of his sin can remain. To deal with that remaining punishment, indulgences are administered to deal with the punishment due to the guilt of the sins already forgiven (CCC 1471, 1498). These indulgences draw upon the “good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary” (CCC 1477) and “of Christ and the saints” so as to obtain “the remission of the temporal punishment due for their sins” (CCC 1478). Furthermore, indulgences can be applied to themselves or the dead (CCC 1471) who are in purgatory (CCC 1498). Now, in case the Catholic has committed a mortal sin, then all his infused grace is lost. To regain this grace, he must partake of special penance (CCC 980) since it helps restore grace that was lost (CCC 1468, 1496).

To conclude, the Roman Catholic must have faith, participate in the sacraments, take the Eucharist, keep the commandments, perform penance, and do indulgences in order to attain, maintain, and regain his salvation as well as reduce the punishment due to him for the sins of which he has already been forgiven.³

Contact:

² https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

³ <https://carm.org/roman-catholicism/summary-of-process-of-salvation-in-roman-catholicism/>

(All Scriptures in the NKJV)

¹ <https://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/believe>