

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Exposing the Heresies of the Catholic Church: Grace vs. Works

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-5

Code: B130225

The New Testament is clear about the nature of saving faith. “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law” (Romans 3:28). “A man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus . . . since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified” (Galatians 2:16). “But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:4-5).

According to Scripture, salvation is by faith in Christ *alone* through God’s grace *alone*. When you put your trust in Jesus Christ He declares you righteous—not because you are, but because He imputes His righteousness to you, and because He paid the penalty for your sin. Christ bears our sin and we receive His righteousness. That is the indescribable glory of the doctrine of justification (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The teaching of the Roman Catholic Church stands in stark opposition to that biblical understanding. Rather than salvation by grace through faith, they preach a false gospel of works.

The words of the Council of Trent—convened to affirm and codify the teaching of the Catholic Church in response to the Reformation—clearly spell out the Catholic version of justification that still stands today. “Hence, to those who work well unto the end and trust in God, eternal life is to be offered, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward promised by God himself, to be faithfully given to their good works and merits.” Salvation in the Catholic system is something you earn “by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life and to have truly merited eternal life.”

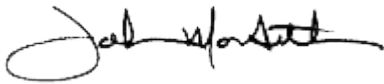
That is an absolute and total contradiction of the Word of God. It’s a completely foreign gospel, manufactured by the Catholic Church and able only to condemn, not save. No amount of repetitious prayers, veneration of the saints and other church relics, or masses attended can redeem a sinner’s soul. No priest has the power to forgive sins, and no indulgence bought and paid for can hold back the due punishment of those sins.

At the heart of the merit-based Catholic system is the unbiblical concept of purgatory. In fact, it’s the invention of purgatory that makes Catholic dogma attractive at all—without it, Catholicism would be a very hard sell. Catholics are never really on solid spiritual ground. They can’t know for certain if they’re saved or whether they will ever make it into heaven. And even confident, pious Catholics live in perpetual fear of committing a mortal sin that will throw them out of favor with God and the church.

It’s the false doctrine of purgatory that provides Catholics their spiritual safety net, bringing false hope to people trapped in a hopeless system. It’s the one relief in their entire guilt-ridden, fear-ridden system of works righteousness. And it is complete fiction—a tragic farce that’s led countless souls to hell.

The apostle Paul could not have been clearer about the true nature of justification: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). That gracious, glorious gospel has been rejected by the Catholic Church, and they have replaced it with a corrupt, unbiblical system of works righteousness and merit-based salvation.

Presiding over that twisted system of satanic lies is the pope. And that is where we’ll pick it up tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel W. Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

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