

Chapter Ten

The Roman Catholic church

Any attempt to do a full and thorough examination of Roman Catholic doctrine and faith traditions would be a daunting task for the most diligent researcher. The sheer volume of material would humble anyone. That does not, however, deter this author from doing a fair examination and comparison of a few of the most common and recognizable doctrines with the Word of God. After all, we are commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 to “test all things and hold firmly that which is good.”

Of the many errors in the teachings of the Roman Catholic church, perhaps the most egregious is the denial of the sufficiency of the sacrifice of the Messiah. They have salvation to sell but it's not free. A heavy dose of human works-righteousness and performance-based acceptance is introduced. The overlay of their teachings ensures that the sinner is always behind in his or her payments. Even after death, a great debt is still owed that must be paid by relatives in the form of payments for masses and

prayers for the dead. I will address the heresies of Purgatory and the sacrifice of the Mass a little later.

Perhaps, to the surprise of my readers, there are some points of agreement I find with the Roman Catholic church, such as the doctrine of the triune nature of God and the deity of Messiah. There are, however, many more points of disagreement. As we examine this system of man-made traditions of “pay, pray, and obey”, we will focus on the corrective to error found in the eternal Word of God.

As a point of full disclosure, I should also note my personal background with respect to the Roman Catholic church. Although I have a Jewish heritage in my family genealogy, I was baptized, raised and mostly educated as a Roman Catholic. I left the Catholic faith in my early 20s and began a search for absolute truth. After a winding and circuitous route, I became a believer in Yeshua in 1976. This began another quest to pursue truth throughout the many flavors of Protestantism. I finally landed in the Messianic movement in 1999 where I found the firm foundation I was seeking. I was fully ordained as a Messianic Jewish Rabbi in 2013 by Messianic Jewish Rabbi Amnon Shor at Bet Shalom v'Emet¹ in Fresno, California.

1. Bet Shalom v'Emet is Hebrew for The House of Peace and Truth.