

BOOK OF GALATIANS

“Hearing with Faith?”

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 3:1-5

-) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDES 7-8**. Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 9**. We continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #19. I have titled today’s message *“Hearing with Faith?”*
-) The question is simple. How do you believe one gets saved? By the works of the Law? Or by hearing with faith? Make a choice. One brings eternal life (hearing with faith) and the other brings eternal death (works of the Law).
-) If you believe you must contribute works to either obtain or maintain your salvation, then you believe that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was not sufficient for your justification, for your sanctification, or for your glorification. In other words, you believe in a deficient Savior who needs your help. Is this what the Bible teaches?
-) Today I will again be speaking about RC in the 21st century. Why am I picking on RC? Because RC is one of many works-based religious systems. (1.6b – 16%) And RCC teaching is making the same theological errors the Galatians were making.
-) I’ll repeat. It is not my intention in this message to condemn or to insult anyone who is part of RC or to bash the Catholic religion. My intention is to provide you with RC doctrine and compare that with what the Bible teaches.
-) I am convinced there is nothing more loving than the truth. So, what I say in today’s message, I say in love and in truth. The truth really does matter.

-) **SLIDE 10.** What I teach about Catholic doctrine comes from 1) the Catholic website www.ewtn.com, 2) the Catholic website www.catholic.com, 3) James Akin and his article “*Justification in Catholic Teaching*,” and 4) the Council of Trent.
-) **SLIDE 11.** Last week we concluded from these Catholic sources: 1) only the RCC can properly interpret the Scriptures, and because of that 2) only the RCC can determine how a person comes to salvation, and 3) the RCC teaches that works must accompany faith for one to be saved.
-) **SLIDE 12.** Today I want to add one more to this list. Canon 4. “*If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation but are superfluous, and that without them or without the desire of them men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification, though all are not necessary for each one, let him be anathema.*”
-) **SLIDE 13.** Review. The RCC will say that one must have faith in Jesus Christ to be saved. They will never deny that. But salvation is not obtained or maintained by that faith alone.
-) What does RCC teach about salvation? In RC, justification (to be saved) is a 4-step process. Last week we covered step #1. Let’s look at that again.
-) **SLIDE 14.** RC Salvation Timeline. Explain.
-) Today let’s look at steps 2 through 4.
-) **SLIDE 15.** Step 2. Progressive Justification. Progressive justification is how you grow in righteousness.
-) **SLIDE 16.** “*If we progress in righteousness as we obey the commandments, then a corollary to this is that it is possible, in a very real sense, to obey the commandments. This does not mean we never sin, but it does mean that it is possible to keep the commandments in a substantive sense, through the grace which God gives us and the love he pours out in our hearts,*

and we may in this sense increase in righteousness (justification).”

-) **SLIDE 17.** RC timeline.
-) Catholics teach that a person grows in righteousness (in their justification) as they remain obedient to God’s commandments and that obedience on their part is made possible by His grace and love. But what is their theology behind this? Their faith must be maintained and perfected by their actions.
-) **SLIDE 18.** This is exactly why Paul was rebuking the Galatians (GAL 3:3). The Galatians believed that ongoing works of obedience contributed to and perfected their faith.
-) How does a Protestant respond to this step? We believe we should be obedient to God’s commands, but we do not consider obedience to God’s commands as part of the justification process. Obedience to God’s commands is a result of our justification, not a means to obtain it or maintain it.
-) **SLIDE 19.** Biblical Salvation timeline. A Protestant will call this step sanctification.
-) **SLIDE 20.** We are growing and maturing into Christlikeness. 2COR 5:17. The old creature is gone, and the new creation is here. Remember we believe that our justification is complete at our moment of salvation. We have put on Christ and we are now right with God. We now have a Biblical worldview.
-) Obedience to God’s commandments must be the response of every true believer—it will not be perfection, but it is not the means by which we are made right with God and Christ.
-) **SLIDE 21.** Step #3. Re-Justification. Return to righteousness after committing a mortal sin. The RCC breaks down sins into two categories—venial sins and mortal sins. A venial sin is a minor sin (gossip, lying, disobedience to parents), and a mortal sin is a serious (deadly) sin. Let’s see what they say.

-) **SLIDE 22.** The EWTN.COM website states: “*Chapter 15 establishes the conditions that must obtain if one is to lose one’s justification (that is, one must commit mortal sin). A good catalogue of mortal sins, explicitly identified as those which result in damnation, is found in 1st Corinthians, where Paul says, ‘Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.’ And the real possibility of a Christian committing mortal sin is indicated in numerous places, such as John 15:2, 6, 10, Rom. 11:17-24.*”
-) What they are saying is this: if one commits a mortal sin, they lose their salvation—their justification. And to return to justification, they must go to confession and tell their sins to a priest, receive absolution, and do their penance.
-) **SLIDE 23.** RC timeline. Explain.
-) So, let’s sum this up so far before moving on to step #4. Catholics teach a person is justified (saved) through Catholic water baptism. They progress in this justification by being obedient to God’s commandments. But if they fail and commit a mortal (very serious) sin then justification has been nullified. So, they must go to confession and begin step #2 again.
-) **SLIDE 24.** What does the Bible teach about losing salvation? EPHESIANS 1:13-14.
-) **SLIDE 25.** Step #4. Final Justification. To a Catholic this means to perform good actions that God has promised to reward in the end.
-) This differs from step #2 in the fact that step #2 is being obedient to God’s commandments. Step #4 is doing good works such as are outlined in MATT 25:35,36.

-) **SLIDE 26.** MATTHEW 25:35-36. Catholics call such acts "*Corporal Works of Mercy.*"
-) **SLIDE 27.** The website states: "*There is therefore a sense in which we seek after immortality by persistence in doing good, and it is a sense which will be rewarded, because in response for persistence in doing good God gives eternal life on the Last Day. As a result, God has promised to give eternal life in response to good works, or persistence in doing good.*"
-) **SLIDE 28.** Now, I want to take what is said here, and highlight a few things. "*God gives eternal life on the Last Day.*" This is not what Jesus tells us.
-) **SLIDE 29.** JOHN 5:24.
-) **SLIDE 30.** Here's this same statement again. God will or will not give us eternal life based on our works. This is not what Jesus tells us.
-) **SLIDE 31.** EPHESIANS 2:8-9.
-) **SLIDE 32.** ROMANS 3:28.
-) If my works contribute to my justification (salvation) then I have something to boast about. There is no boasting before God.
-) **SLIDE 33.** Review. 1) Catholics teach we are justified (saved) through Catholic water baptism. 2) We progress in this justification by being obedient to God's commandments. 3) But if we fail and commit a mortal (very serious) sin then our justification has been nullified and lost. 4) If we persist in doing good works, God has promised us eternal life.
-) Now that we have covered all four steps in the RC justification process, I must ask. Is this what GALATIANS is teaching us? No. Martin Luther saw it and true believers for centuries have seen it. And we see it too. The RC teaching on salvation and justification is heresy.

-) Are we saved by the works of the Law? Never. Are we saved by hearing with faith? Always.
-) I want to conclude by saying this. You are what you believe. And what you believe is the only thing you will take to the grave with you. With that said, I am convinced that not all Catholics are lost. I am convinced that not all people affiliated with the Catholic Church believe Catholic doctrine. However, if they do believe the simplicity of the true gospel, I must question why they continue to be affiliated with the Catholic Church.
-) Likewise, not all protestants are saved. Protestant churches are full of people who 1) have never been taught the true gospel, and/or 2) they hear but never believe the true saving gospel.
-) **SLIDE 34.** Sermon series on Catholicism.
-) Next week, we will move on to verses 6-9 in chapter three.

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