Roman Catholicism

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[0:00] As I mentioned earlier, it's good to be here with you and see you here tonight as we continue! on in our series through denominations, doctrines, and the deceived. And tonight we come to Roman! Catholicism. And as I said last week, the groups we cover week in, week out will progressively go from bad to worse. And we're officially, as of last week, in the deceived category.

We covered several denominations leading up to this, and last week with Church of Christ, we're now transitioned to the deceived category. And so we'll continue to stay in that category as we go throughout the last few weeks of this series. As of last week, we're halfway through, so we've just got three more groups, including Roman Catholicism, and we'll do one final overview on why we're Baptist.

Many of you probably know some Roman Catholics, maybe in your family, maybe from your school, or maybe in your friend group. I don't have many Roman Catholic friends. Well, I don't have many friends, just in general, so pray for me. But I don't, thank you, thank you, appreciate it. I don't have many Roman Catholic friends. I do have a friend, as of about a year ago, that did convert to Roman Catholicism.

So he, at one point, many years ago, was a member of this church here, and wrote us a letter. He had hopped through several denominations on his way to Catholicism, but had written me and a few of our friends a letter explaining what he believed now, and what he believed that the Roman Catholic Church got right, and what he now believed compared to us. And so me and my friends met with him, and had a confrontation with him about what he said he was believing, and we did that in love, wanting him to see the truth and understand what God's Word says. But we made an opening statement to him at that meeting, and we just said, if you believe everything you say you believe in that letter, and if you believe everything you say you believe that the Roman Catholic Church teaches, you will go to hell.

Why did we start so severely with him? We then went on to have a three-hour-plus conversation, talking about whatever he wanted doctrinally, and going back and forth theologically with him. [2:25] But why did we start on that note? Why did we start there with him? Because Roman Catholicism preaches a false gospel. It is works-based salvation, and there is no salvation in a false gospel.

If you consider the Apostle Paul's letters that he wrote, there is one that is incredibly severe compared to the others, and that's the book of Galatians. And what he's addressing, what he's confronting in that letter, is a church that has embraced works-based theology, a church that has departed from the true gospel and incorporated works into what it means to become a Christian. And the way he opens that letter, one of his opening statements is, if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one that we preach to you, let him be accursed. What the Apostle Paul is saying is, if someone comes among you, I don't care who he is or who he claims to be, if his message tampers with the gospel, that person is not saved. That person will be judged by God because a wrong gospel is no gospel at all. And so I want to go through our structure that we've been going through each week. We'll look at some background of Roman Catholicism. We'll look at some positives of Roman Catholicism, and we'll look at specific beliefs that Roman Catholics and Roman Catholicism props up and holds to. So first, background of Roman Catholicism. And first, I want to think about just the name, Roman Catholicism. What does that mean? Well, it's Roman Catholicism because it is centered in Rome. The Bishop of Rome is really the Supreme Bishop in Roman Catholicism. He's called the Pope. His office is called the Papacy. And so that's really the central hub of Roman Catholicism. So that's why it's called Roman. And it's called Catholicism because the word

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Catholic just means universal. And so we read the Nicene Creed at Falls Creek several times this summer, and it says we believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic church. That word Catholic just means universal. There's one church of God in God's eyes. There are many local churches, but one universal church. So Roman Catholic, that's where the name comes from. Now, I want to give you a breathtakingly fast survey of church history. Okay? You guys ready? Strapped in? Okay. So the church was built on the preaching and teaching of the apostles. Christ sent his apostles. They preached the word. They preached what Christ taught them and continued to teach them. And the church was built and grew upon what they taught.
[5:18] They wrote that instruction down, what we have preserved for us in the New Testament. After the apostles died, the church continued on. The apostles had died, but they left pastors behind them to lead churches and to continue to preach the doctrine that they received from Christ. And so each local church that was started and planted was overseen by multiple pastors. And back in that day, a town wouldn't have had a Baptist church and a Presbyterian church and a Methodist church and a Nazarene church. There just would have been the church. Okay? So there's one church per town, roughly, that was overseen by multiple pastors.

And as these pastors became skilled and would shepherd their flocks, certain of them through their skill or their prominence became more prominent leaders in other churches. And over time, these kind of pastors of pastors began to be called bishops. Now, according to the New Testament, the word bishop or overseer and elder and pastor are all one office. But over time, the term bishop referred to this pastor who oversaw other pastors. And so they were responsible for pastoring multiple churches in their region. In the mid-300s, early to mid-300s, Christianity becomes legal. Up to that point, Christianity had been highly persecuted by the Roman Empire. And when Christianity became a legal religion, it brought a lot of difficulty with it, actually. Because up to that point, being a Christian was incredibly costly. Being a pastor was incredibly dangerous because they would go after the leaders of these churches. But now that Christianity was legal, being a pastor seemed like an okay job. There was some prominence associated with it in the church. There was even some prominence in your community that came with it as well. Over time, this developed into some influence in government affairs as well, just by being a pastor. And it got to the point where there were two bishops that were kind of exalted over everyone. So there was a bishop in the west, in Rome. There was a bishop in the east, in modern-day Turkey. And so these two guys really were the most prominent men in the church. One in the east, one in the west. And the western church, with the guy in Rome, the western church thought that there should only be one guy over the whole church on earth. Well, the church in the east disagreed with that. And so these two bishops did what any gentleman who disagreed would do. They excommunicated each other and never spoke again. So they kicked each other out of the church, went their separate ways, and then the bishop of Rome became prominent over the western church. That happened in 1054 AD. It's referred to as the Great Schism. The church split east and west. There were other issues that contributed to that as well, but the two popes excommunicated each other. It's pretty funny. So the pope in Rome, the bishop of Rome, began to be the authority over the church. That came with some political power. That came with some power over the civilians as well in that city. And from this point, Roman Catholicism became almost hopelessly corrupt over the next 500 years. So from about 1054 up to the 1500s, Roman Catholicism began to continually become more and more corrupt. And Bruce Shelley, a church historian, wrote a church history textbook. And in it, he says, during this time, the church gained the whole world, but lost its soul. The church gained the whole world, but lost its soul.
And over the next 500 years, the Roman Catholic Church would become, would come to embrace and write into doctrine some of its most sinister beliefs. And the word of God would be set aside as the traditions of men would prevail in the church. And during this time and along the way, God always had faithful preachers who were preaching the true gospel, who were standing up against some of the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. Guys like Bernard of Clairvaux. You've heard of St. Bernard's.
They're named after him, actually. And so he was a faithful gospel preacher. A guy named John Huss was a faithful preacher of the true gospel during this time. He was excommunicated and burned at the stake by the Catholic Church. Martin Luther was another faithful one during this time. He was also excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. And these men were not seeking to split away from the church. They were seeking to reform it and correct it. But in very many cases,

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they were kicked out of the church. They were hunted and killed in the streets. They were burned at the stake. And so at that point, it became very clear that if the true gospel was going to continue to be preached, it would need to be outside the confines of the Roman Catholic Church, which led to the Protestant Reformation in the early 1500s. So that's our breathtakingly fast survey of church history. There's only one Catholic Church in Mustang in its Holy Spirit Catholic Church on Sarah Road, kind of over by Michael and Marcy Staten. So it's in between 59th and 152, if you've ever driven that way. All right, secondly, I want to talk about a couple of positives of Roman Catholicism. A few positives of Roman Catholicism. I've got five.

[11:01] Number one, the doctrine of the Trinity. Doctrine of the Trinity. The Roman Catholic Church has a faithful understanding of the nature of God and of who he is. They believe what we believe about the Trinity. There is one God who exists eternally in three persons. These three persons are distinct from each other, but they're not separate or different in their glory or in their attributes. God exists in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Number two, they take obedience seriously. They take obedience seriously.

And we'll look at some of why that is, but they should be commended for taking obedience to God's word seriously. Number three, it's historic. It's historic. I read this week in preparing that the Roman Catholic Church is the oldest international institution in the world. And so it's very historic.

Now, that's not necessarily a good thing because it could be a bad history, but I think it is a positive thing because in our world, we're becoming increasingly detached from history. And so I think being historic is in general a good thing. And I think we need to acknowledge that in very many ways, Roman Catholicism and Christianity just more broadly has shaped our Western world in very many ways.

Our system of government, our system of justice in the past has been shaped by Christianity and Roman Catholicism. Number four, there are pro-family and pro-babies. Pro-family and pro-babies. And we won't get into all of the reasons why that is, but they basically believe that you should have as many babies as you possibly can. And I don't think that's necessarily right, but I think it's maybe closer to right than what our world would have you do today. So they're pro-babies and pro-family, and they should be commended for that. Number five, this one's a little bit wordy, so just make your own words, I guess. But it is the largest non-governmental provider of education and healthcare in the world. The largest non-governmental provider of education and healthcare in the world. So if you've ever been to St. Anthony's, actually Joy Plain works there, is that right? Okay, I just saw her picture there one time, long story.

[13:45] But anyway, St. Anthony's, St. Jude's, anything with saints in it are Catholic-funded and founded institutions. Also, they have plenty of colleges, universities, high schools, private schools throughout the United States. And so those are good things for humanity. All right, so those are five positives of Roman Catholicism. Now, thirdly, we'll spend the bulk of our time on specific beliefs, specific beliefs. As you study Roman Catholicism and compare it to Protestantism, what you have are two fundamentally different systems of thought and systems of doctrine. They're built on different foundations, and so you need to keep that in mind as you think through this, and as you talk to people with different beliefs than you. There is a different foundation, and so keeping that in mind will help you, as you keep that big picture in mind, will help you in conversations about specific details. So number one, Scripture and tradition. Scripture and tradition.

So the Roman Catholic Church teaches that God's revelation for the church flows through two streams, scripture and tradition. And if you notice my hands, they're on the same level because they think these things are equally authoritative for the life of the church. And now in theory, they would say that scripture and tradition are on the same level. I would argue that when it comes to practice, tradition trumps scripture in Roman Catholicism. Tradition trumps scripture in Roman Catholicism. And so what do we mean when we say tradition? According to Roman Catholicism, tradition is what was passed down orally from Christ to the apostles to the church. From Christ to the apostles to the church. This isn't written tradition necessarily. It's just a body of teaching and doctrine that was passed down verbally through the generations, and it's preserved by what they call the magisterium. The magisterium. And based on this tradition, based on this body of teaching, the magisterium led by the pope will, they would say develop, but I would say create doctrines based on this tradition. We'll look at a couple of those momentarily. And then scripture is the other stream of revelation. Scripture is God's word. Catholics believe that, but it must be interpreted by the church's leadership. And so the pope and bishops around him called the magisterium gives the

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church its authoritative interpretation of scripture and tradition. And so any interpretation of scripture must align with the leadership of the Roman Catholic church with what they say is faithful understanding and interpretation. And now here's where I would argue that tradition triumphs over scripture in the Roman Catholic church. In practice, it's not scripture that's authoritative for their churches.
It's the Roman Catholic interpretation of scripture that's authoritative in their churches. According to one of the Catholic councils, which they hold to be infallible and as authoritative as scripture, they say that the bishops or the pastors of the Roman Catholic church have the same authority as the apostles did. So the apostle Paul spoke authoritatively to the church. So do Roman Catholic bishops. They have the same degree of authority as the apostles did. And they'll even flesh this out so that whoever listens to the bishops is listening to Christ. And whenever these bishops get together, agree on anything in terms of doctrine and agree on anything in terms of doctrine and teaching, their conclusion is considered to be infallible. That's without error and as authoritative as scripture.
But where is scripture in all of this? They would say the bishops are as authoritative as the apostles, but they don't say anything about the bishops submitting to the apostles' teaching. The bishops submitting to what God's word says. And as long as they agree as a group, it's considered infallible and without error.
But it should be that scripture is their rule and they need to line themselves up with scripture in order to teach true and faithful doctrine. And we would say that God's revelation for the church is scripture alone. Scripture alone. What God wanted us to know, what God commands of us, is found in his word. That is the only infallible source of revelation. That is the only authoritative document or teaching or doctrine in the life of the church is scripture alone. God's word reigns supreme in and over the church and we must submit to its teaching.
[19:57] And this is really the overarching issue with Catholicism. Whatever issue you address with them, whatever thing you talk about, you'll find yourself talking in circles a lot because it will always come back to this issue of what or who has authority in the church.

If you say the Bible says this, they will likely come back and say, but this is what our church teaches. And so it's fundamentally a question of who has authority in and over the church.
So that's scripture and tradition. Number two, I want to talk about the authority of the Pope. The authority of the Pope. Roman Catholics believe that the apostle Peter was their first Pope.
They believe that he was the first one to reign over the church in Rome. It's worth noting that everyone rejects this claim except for Roman Catholics. Secular historians, Protestant historians reject this claim.
In fact, we don't even know if Peter spent a substantial amount of time in Rome. We know he died there. He was crucified there upside down, according to tradition. But we have no solid evidence that he spent an extensive amount of time in Rome.
[21:20] But they believe that he was reigning supreme over the other apostles, over all the churches from Rome. And the question we should ask is, is that what Peter thought of himself?

Is that what Peter claimed for himself? We see Peter writing in 1 Peter 5, calling himself a fellow shepherd, not with the other apostles, but with just elders in the churches he's writing to.
We see him get rebuked by Paul. It does not seem like he had authority over Paul. The apostles understood themselves as working together. They viewed themselves as part of the church, not ruling over the church.
They viewed themselves as a team of equals working to serve the risen Christ by teaching the church. But the Roman Catholics think Peter was the first pope ruling from Rome.
And they think that whenever the pope speaks officially, that what he says is infallible. That what he says is incapable of erring.
[22:21] And they call the pope the vicar of Christ. V-I-C-A-R. The vicar of Christ, meaning the replacement of Christ on earth.

And so Christ ascended to heaven and left his pope over the church. That's not how Peter understood himself. That's not how the other apostles would have understood Peter.
And there should be no man speaking infallibly over the church. The only inspired instruction given to the church is the word of God.
Number three, Mary. They love Mary. They talk about Mary all the time.

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They have some really interesting beliefs about her. They believe that Mary herself was sinless. And so they say that they call this the immaculate conception.
[23:22] She was miraculously conceived in her mother's womb. And so she was born without a sin nature. And she herself never sinned. So they think that she was sinlessly perfect.

At least they started believing that in 1854 when it was written into their tradition. They say this to explain how Jesus was born without sin. So they look at Jesus and say he was born sinless.
The only way he could be born sinless is if his mother was also that way. If his mother was also sinless. But according to scripture, Jesus is the only person who was born without sin.
He was the only person who never committed sin. And when we look at Mary, is this how she understood herself?
We don't get a ton of speech from Mary in the Bible. When the angel appears to her and tells her what's going to happen, she describes it as an act of mercy.
[24:30] She says the Lord's mercy reigns from generation to generation. She understood herself to be receiving mercy from the Lord.

They teach something that's called the perpetual virginity of Mary. So they claim that not only did she conceive Jesus as a virgin, not only did she give birth to Jesus as a virgin, but she remained a virgin throughout her time on earth.
And so when they refer to her, they refer to her as the virgin Mary. Now, there are several places in scripture that talk about Jesus having brothers and siblings.
And so you take a Roman Catholic to those verses where these Pharisees from Nazareth are saying, no, isn't this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose mother and brothers we know? And they say, well, those weren't really his brothers.
They're probably like cousins or something. Real conversations I've had, yeah. And so they'll just discount, you know, other than those verses about Jesus' brothers, there's no mention of Jesus' brothers in the New Testament. So they dismiss the evidence on that one.
[25:35] They have given several titles to Mary. They call her advocate, helper, which are actually two titles given to the Holy Spirit by Jesus.

That's dangerous ground. They call her benefactress, meaning she's the benefactor of the church. She's ruling over the church benevolently. They call her mediatrix.
We pray to Jesus, but sometimes he doesn't listen to us. And so if we pray to Mary, she'll pray to Jesus for us who will pray to the Father. And so they will pray to Mary because she's more soft-hearted than her son is.
They also call her the Queen of Heaven. The Queen of Heaven. And I was just looking on someone's Twitter last night. I didn't know this guy before last night, but I was looking at some of his tweets, and he seems pretty solid.
And so there was this Catholic guy that had tweeted out and said, if Jesus is the King, why wouldn't Mary be the Queen? And this guy responded and said, because he's not married to his mother.
[26:44] That's good logic, baby. Protestantism right there. So they call her the Queen of Heaven. Catholics pray to her to intercede before Jesus on our behalf.

But the Bible says Jesus is interceding for us. The Bible says that Jesus is our mediator. They came to believe that Mary didn't actually die, and they call this the bodily assumption of Mary.
So she was taken up to heaven before she died. This became Roman Catholic doctrine in 1950, and it actually contradicts earlier history, where the apostles are said to have been around her as she died.
And so they venerate Mary. They venerate other saints as well. They kind of idolize them and put them on a pedestal. They pray to them. They pray to other saints. Catholics, and Catholics would say they don't worship Mary, but that she's in an exalted position over the angels, but under God. So they say they don't worship her, but they pray to her. They call her the Queen of Heaven. They call her our mediator. And so they may not worship her as much as they worship God, but they do worship her.
[27:55] And that's what we call just classic polytheism. They do worship her. And they may say, well, no, no, we don't pray to her. We pray through her, but please show me the difference.

You're praying to someone who is not divine. And they venerate other saints as well. And in the Roman Catholic Church, in order to become a saint, the church has to recognize you as living a particularly heroic life, or dying a martyr's death, or doing something heroic and extraordinary for

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them to consider you a saint.
But what the Bible teaches is that all God's people are saints. If you read Paul's letters to the churches, most of them in the first five or six verses, he's going to say to the saints in Philippi, to the saints at Ephesus.
The word saint just means sanctified, and all God's people are sanctified by Christ, so all God's people are saints. And we only should worship and pray to God, not to any human being.
Now you can open with me to the book of Romans, and I want to talk fourthly about justification.
Justification. The Roman Catholic view of justification is warped compared to what Paul teaches.
[29:25] We'll look at the book of Romans, but he teaches this in several other places in the New Testament. And so what they teach about justification is they describe it as infused righteousness, an infused righteousness.

They believe that this is actual righteousness, and so that when you believe in God, it's not just God declaring you righteous, but it actually makes you righteous.
Now we would say that God does make us righteous, but that's through sanctification, through growing in our faith in Christ. They would say that justification isn't just God pardoning your sins and declaring you righteous, but it's God actually making you righteous.
And I think the Apostle Paul in Romans is very clear on what justification is. So you're in Romans chapter four. Look with me at verse two.
He's talking about Abraham. And he says in Romans chapter four, verse two, for if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.
[30:41] Verse three, for what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift, but as his due.

Verse five, and to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness. Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works.
And he quotes Psalm 32, blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not, what? Count his sins.
The way Paul views justification is that the Lord considers faith as righteousness. It's not by works. It's not actual righteousness.
It is a legal declaration of God saying, I consider you righteous. I do not count your sin against you.
[31:56] I am considering you as spotless as Christ. This is what justification is according to the apostle Paul. And look with me again at verse nine.

Part way through. For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. Now go to chapter five, verse one. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through him, we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And then chapter eight.
We've looked at this when considering a few different groups, but it's so powerful and so clear. Romans eight, verse 28. Paul says, According to Roman Catholic teaching, you begin the process of justification through belief and works, and they call that initial justification.
And just because you're justified in the present moment or begin the process of justification in the moment does not mean you will get to heaven. They think you can lose your salvation, that you can lose your justification.
[33:54] But look at what Paul says here in verse 30 once again. Those whom he called, he also justified. Those whom he justified, he also glorified.

According to the New Testament, everyone that God justifies will go to heaven. Everyone that receives this forgiveness from God, this righteousness from God, will be in heaven.
And then look down at verse 33. I've been describing justification as a legal declaration by God. Verse 33, Who shall bring any charge?
That's a legal word. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies who is to condemn. And so what the Apostle Paul does here is he contrasts justification with condemnation.
What is condemnation? You are guilty and you will be punished. Paul sets justification here as the opposite of that.

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[35:05] You are forgiven. You are righteous. You will not be punished. Justification is God counting someone as righteous, just considering them righteous.

And this is critically important to the gospel. How is someone made right with God? How is someone saved? How is someone forgiven? The Bible says, and we sang it tonight, in Christ alone. By faith in Christ alone. The Roman Catholic Church would say by faith and good works. They don't believe in salvation by faith alone.
The Catechism of the Catholic Church says baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the gospel has been proclaimed. And the Council of Trent, in about the 1540s, 1550s, they curse anyone who believes in justification by faith alone.
The Apostle Paul says, we hold that justification is by faith alone in Galatians 2. And the Council of Trent, allegedly authoritative, allegedly infallible, would place a curse on what the apostles taught.
[36:20] They would curse the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter for teaching that justification is apart from works of the law and is by faith alone. As I mentioned, they believe you can lose your salvation, but really you can't ever be sure that you will be saved.

We would call that the doctrine of assurance that God wants us to be confident of our salvation, not because of us, but because of His promise. Roman Catholics would call that the sin of presumption. You cannot know that you're saved. That's prideful. You can't be confident that you're saved. You're presuming on God's kindness. What does the Bible say? 1 John 5, 13, I am writing these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life.
God wants us to have assurance if we're His. Number five, quickly, purgatory. Purgatory. Roman Catholics believe this is a place of purification after death for God's people who aren't yet purified from their sin.
And so you're a Christian, but not a great one, and so you're going to go to purgatory for X amount of time to pay for your sins, to be purged of your impurities.
[37:39] And like, it's not painful, it's not a punishment, it's just fire burning your impurities away for an undisclosed amount of time. But the good news is the saints who are alive on earth can speed that process up for you by praying for you and giving to the church conveniently.

But there's zero basis for the doctrine of purgatory in Scripture. This is one of those things they would chalk up the church tradition, slap a couple of proof texts on there maybe, but this is completely contrary to what the Bible teaches and has no scriptural basis whatsoever.
The Apostle Paul says to be absent from the body is to be present from the Lord. That's 2 Corinthians 5. In Philippians 1, the Apostle Paul says it is better to depart and be with Christ.
Number six, the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper. They call it the Eucharist, which is just a, comes from a Greek word meaning thanksgiving.
But they believe in something called transubstantiation. I don't expect you to spell that, just sound it out, get close, you can do it, I trust you. And so with this, they believe that during the Lord's Supper, the elements of the Lord's Supper change into the body and blood of Christ.
[39:06] In form, it remains bread and wine, but in substance, it changes to the actual body and blood of Christ.

And the priest will do this and he'll say a little thing in Latin, it's hoc es corpus meum, which is Jesus' statement, this is my body.
And that's actually where the phrase hocus pocus comes from because he would say it repeatedly under his breath and it sounds like hocus pocus, but just a fun fact. And they get this from places like Jesus at the Last Supper where he says, this is the blood of my covenant, poured out for the sins of many.
And they get it from places like John 6 where he says, I am the bread of life. And later in that passage he says that if someone would abide in me, they must eat and drink from me.
They must eat my flesh and drink my blood. And so they develop from this that the Lord's Supper becomes in substance the body and blood of Christ.
[40:13] And I would just simply argue this is a complete failure to be able to read metaphor. Jesus says, I am the bread of life. We understand he was not literally a loaf of bread walking around.

He says, I am the door of the sheep. We understand this is a metaphor. He says, I am the way and the truth and the life. We understand this also to be a metaphor.

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And when he says this is my body, this is my blood, we understand this is not actually the blood of Christ. These are symbols pointing to his sacrifice.
Symbols pointing to his shed blood that brought the forgiveness of sins. And I think this is also heretical.
They think that the bodily presence of Christ is there. But Jesus' body is not omnipresent.
[41:17] He is omnipresent as the Son of God, but his flesh is not omnipresent. And so they would say that in that moment, he is seated at the right hand of the Father and present in the elements.

They view the Eucharist as a legitimate sacrifice. They say it's a true and proper sacrifice in which God is appeased. And so they view it as atoning, as appeasing God's wrath.
But Hebrews, for example, repeatedly says Christ's sacrifice was once for all. And Catholics will say the sacrifice was once for all, but they view the Eucharist as actually atoning for sin.
But all of God's wrath is atoned for, for believers. Christ has paid all of it. Number seven, quickly, baptism. Baptism. They believe that baptism cleanses from original sin and regenerates them.
They would hold to baptismal regeneration. It washes away all sins, both original sin inherited from Adam and sins that have been actually committed.
[42:30] And the Roman Catholic Church accepts different forms of baptism, sprinkling, pouring, and immersion. They will baptize babies, and they hold that these sacraments, they hold to five others in addition to Lord's Supper and baptism, that they operate just by the work being performed.

And so faith isn't essential to be benefited by these things, just by being baptized. A baby is given grace, for example. Faith would help, but even if faith is not present, these things actually give grace to those who participate.
Now, I mentioned earlier that the word of God would be set aside and the traditions of men would prevail on the church, and much of the darkness that came through the hands of the Roman Catholic Church came because they did not want scripture being in the hands of the people.
And so they kept it in Latin for years and years, even when people could not read Latin. They said the people would corrupt God's word, but there were faithful men who translated the Bible into English.
William Tyndale, John Rogers, Martin Luther, not into English, but translated into German for his people to be able to read scripture. And one of the things the Reformation did is it put God's word back into the hands of God's people, and it moved the pulpit from the side of the building to front and center as a throne for God's word to rule over his church.
[44:00] God's word is how he speaks to his church. God's word rules over the church, not the pope. And the Roman Catholic church is very ancient.

It goes way back, but an ancient lie is just a lie. An ancient error is still an error. And I would argue that the Roman church goes back even further than the apostles.
They claim to have a line of succession to the apostles. I would argue it goes further back to a group known as the Pharisees. The Pharisees loved their works.
The Pharisees loved their elaborate clothes. The Pharisees loved their tradition. The Pharisees loved to discuss how Jesus' teaching departed from their ancient tradition they had received from Moses.
The Pharisees loved to think they were more righteous because they followed rules and doctrine that they made up. And do you know how Jesus described them? You can read it in Matthew 23, but one of the descriptions he says, you are whitewashed tombs.
[45:05] You're decorated tombs. You look good on the outside, but there's death on the inside. You have all the right stuff. You've got the word of God. You've got the love of God on the outside.

You put on this appearance, but on the inside it's hollow and dead and empty. The Pharisees looked attractive, but they defiled and infected anyone who came in contact with them.
They weren't content to go to hell. They wanted to bring others with them. This is the lineage. Now, I believe that the Roman Catholic Church wasn't always as corrupt as it currently is or as it was during the Reformation era.
I believe that there are true believers in the Roman Catholic Church, but it would be in spite of what their church teaches and not because of it. Many Roman Catholics don't know what they believe or what their church actually teaches.
But anyone who fully believes and fully embraces the official doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church is not saved. It's a false gospel.

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[46:13] And that's why we were so severe with my friend about a year ago because he fully embraces this works-based legalism. And there's no salvation in that.

In embracing that, he turned his back on the true gospel of Christ. So let me pray for us. Our Father, we thank you for this evening. We thank you for your word.
I pray that your word would continue to rule over our church, would continue to shape our church, and that we would submit to its authority alone. In Christ's name I pray.
Amen.

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