

Overview of Church History

▶ DR. SHAWN NELSON

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| ▶ PREVIOUS | EARLY CHURCH FATHERS TO CONSTANTINE |
| PREVIOUS | EVENTS OF THE REFORMATION |
| ▶ TODAY | SHARED BELIEFS BETWEEN ROMAN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS |
| TODAY | OVERVIEW OF KEY DIFFERENCES |
| UPCOMING | ORIGIN OF DENOMINATIONS SINCE THE REFORMATION |

CHURCH HISTORY

This class will briefly touch on the major events in church history that explain how we went from the first-century church to today, with all of the different denominations.

Topics covered today:

- Shared beliefs between Roman Catholics and Protestants
- Overview of Key Differences

Meeting Mondays

6:30 pm

Light Church Chapel

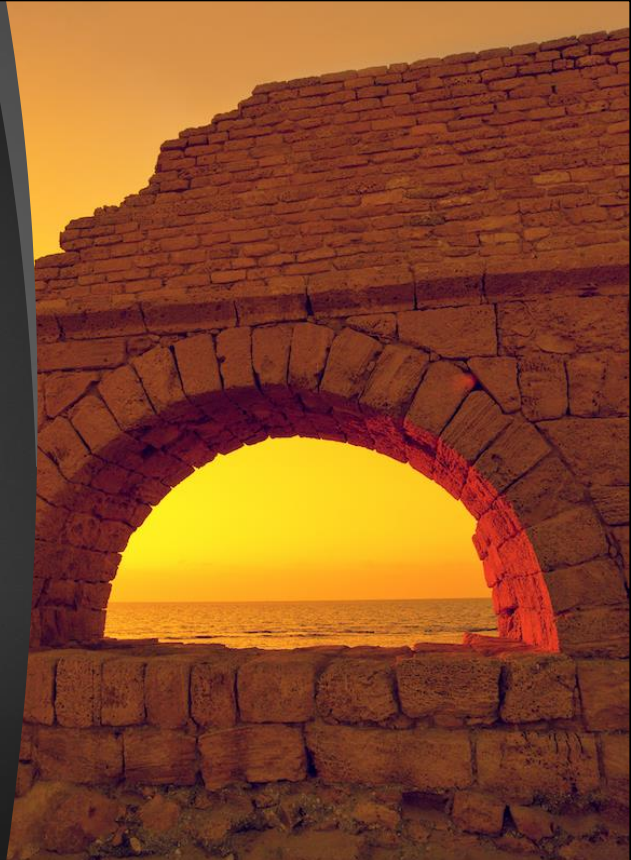
831 3rd St, Encinitas

Roman Catholics and Protestants

▶ Summary of agreements & differences

▶ Key differences:

- ▶ It there one true church?
- ▶ Was Peter the first Pope?
- ▶ Saved by faith + works?
- ▶ 7 sacraments?
- ▶ Transubstantiation
- ▶ Is confession required?



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What Evangelicals Have In Common

- ▶ **“What evangelicals have in common with Roman Catholics...** this includes the great fundamentals of the Christian faith, including a belief in the **Trinity**, the **virgin birth**, the **deity of Christ**, the **creation** and subsequent **fall** of humanity, **Christ’s unique atonement** for our sins, the physical **resurrection** of Christ, the necessity of **God’s grace** for salvation, the existence of **heaven** and **hell**, the **second coming** of Christ, and the verbal inspiration and infallibility of **Scripture.**”

Geisler, MacKenzie, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences*, 155.

What Evangelicals Have In Common

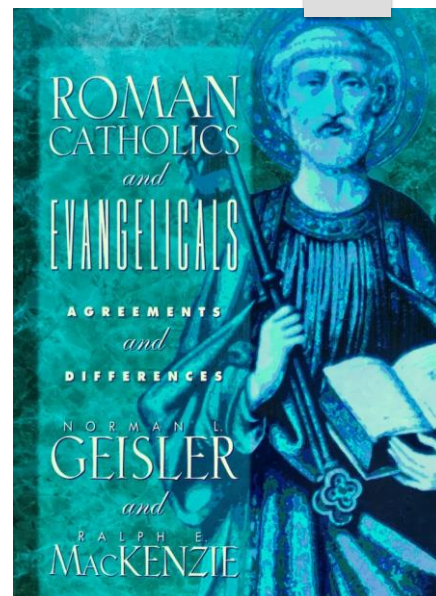
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Geisler, MacKenzie, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences*, 155.

Pics: Pope Francis (top), Billy Graham (bottom).

Significant Differences

- ▶ "...there are some significant differences between Catholics and evangelicals on some important doctrines. Catholics affirm and evangelicals reject the **immaculate conception** of Mary, her **bodily assumption**, her role as co-redemptrix, the **veneration of Mary** and other saints, **prayers to Mary** and the saints, the **infallibility of the pope**, the existence of **purgatory**, the inspiration and canonicity of the **Apocrypha**, the doctrine of **transubstantiation**, the worship of the transformed Host, the special sacerdotal powers of the Roman Catholic **priesthood**, and the **necessity of works** to obtain eternal life." (p. 155)

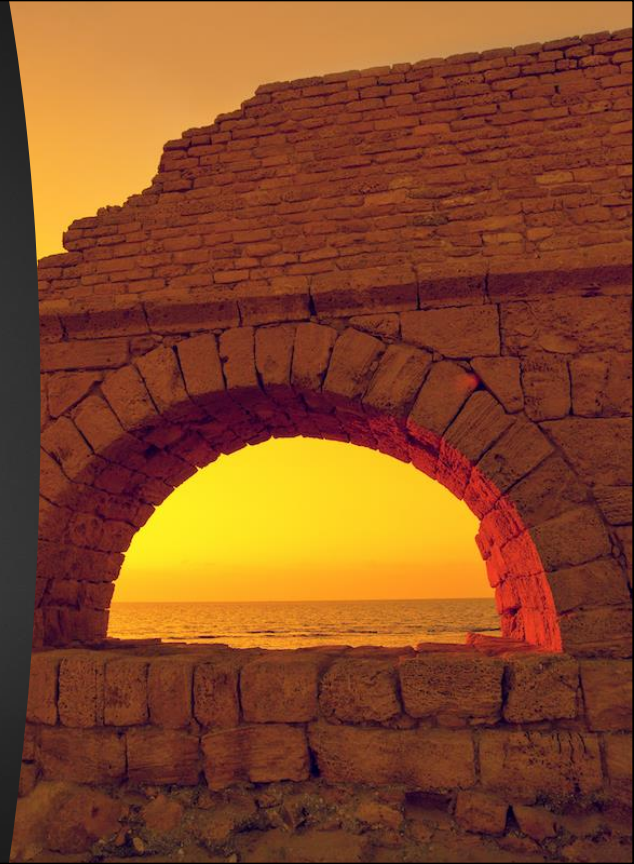


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Roman Catholics and Protestants

- ▶ Summary of agreements & differences
- ▶ **Key differences:**
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 - ▶ Transubstantiation
 - ▶ Is confession required?



Roman Catholics and Protestants

Summary of agreements & differences

Key differences:

It there one true church?

Was Peter the first Pope?

Saved by faith + works?

7 sacraments?

Transubstantiation

Is confession required?

Is There One True Church?

Roman Catholic Church says

- ▶ There is only one true visible church (theirs).

Protestants say

- ▶ There is one true **invisible** church.
- ▶ But many valid **visible** churches too.



Is there One True Church?

Roman Catholic Church says:

There is only one true visible church (theirs)

- The Catholic Church believes that **it is the one true visible church**, founded by Jesus Christ.
- They believe that **Jesus appointed Peter as the first leader** of the church, and this leadership has been passed down through **apostolic succession**, which includes the popes.
- The Catholic Church also values **apostolic tradition**, which they believe has been handed down through the generations.
- The Church teaches that **the pope**, when speaking *ex cathedra* (from the chair of Peter), and **the magisterium** have the infallible interpretation of Scripture.
- The Catholic Church maintains that it is the **only institution with the authority to administer the sacraments**, which are essential channels of God's grace.
- According to Catholic doctrine, salvation is obtained through the grace of God, which is primarily **mediated through the sacraments**.
- The Church asserts the doctrine "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" (outside the Church there is no salvation), but it should be noted that the interpretation of this doctrine has evolved over time, with the Church recognizing the possibility of salvation for those outside its visible boundaries, under certain conditions, since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).
- For Roman Catholics, the **invisible church** is seen as **inseparable from the visible**

Catholic Church.

- The invisible church is closely connected to the visible church, which is represented by the hierarchical and institutional structures of the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestants say:

There is one true invisible church...

- Protestants believe in the concept of the "invisible church."
- The "invisible church" refers to the spiritual **community of all true believers** in Jesus Christ, **transcending denominations and organizational structures.**
- Protestants emphasize that **all those who have put their faith in Christ** are united as part of one body, regardless of denominational affiliation or organizational structure.
- The concept of the "invisible church" is grounded in biblical passages like Ephesians 2:19-22 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, which describe the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.

Ephesians 2:19-22:

"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."

...But many *valid* visible churches too

- Biblical reasons
 - The New Testament emphasizes a spiritual community of believers, rather than a hierarchical institution.
 - Salvation is found in faith in Christ, not membership in a particular church.
 - The New Testament speaks of multiple churches, rather than one institution.
- Historical reasons
 - The idea of one true visible church emerged in medieval Christendom when the Catholic Church held political and social power.
 - The Reformation challenged the notion of one true visible church, emphasizing individual faith and personal relationship with God.
 - The diversity of Christian denominations today makes the concept of one true visible church untenable.

DISCUSS

- ▶ The Bible says that believers in Christ are like the different parts of a single body. They are all united as one. This unity in diversity allows the body to function properly and grow together. How do you understand the concept of the "invisible church" from this passage? What implications does this have for the relationship between believers from different denominations?

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:12–13)

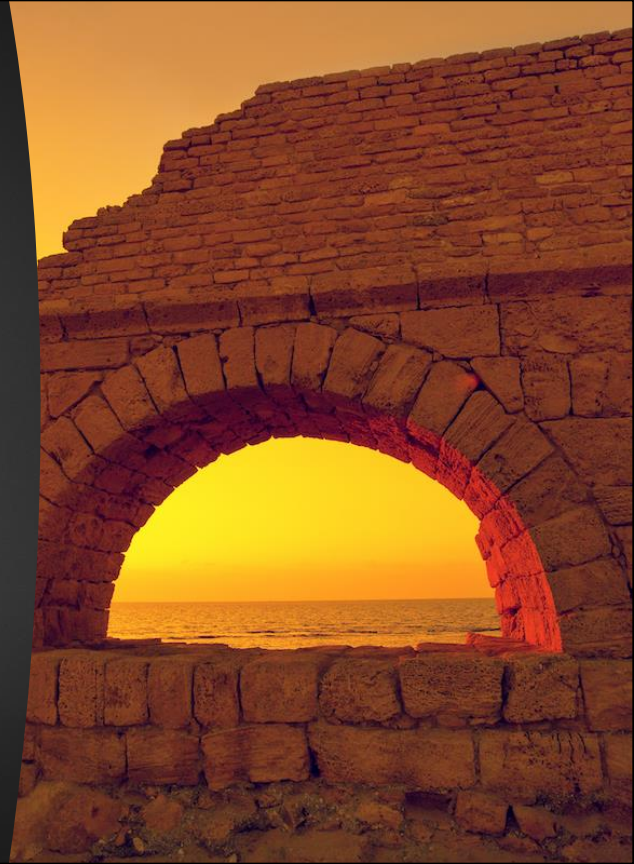
Think About or Discuss

- 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 says that believers in Christ are like the different parts of a single body, all baptized into one Spirit and united as one. This unity in diversity allows the body to function properly and grow together. How do you understand the concept of the "invisible church" from this passage? What implications does this have for the relationship between believers from different denominations?

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Roman Catholics and Protestants

- ▶ Summary of agreements & differences
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Is confession required?

Was Peter the First Pope?

Roman Catholic Church says:

- ▶ Vatican I: "the Apostolic See and the **Roman Pontiff hold primacy over the whole world**, and that the Pontiff of Rome himself is the **successor of the blessed Peter, the chief of the apostles**, and is the true vicar of Christ and **head of the whole Church** and faith, and teacher of all Christians; and that to him was handed down in blessed Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ, **full power to feed, rule, and guide the universal Church**, just as is also contained in the records of the ecumenical Councils and in the sacred canons."

Protestants say:

- ▶ We don't see primacy of Peter in the Bible or history.



Was Peter the first pope?

Roman Catholic Church says:

Peter was the first Pope

- Jesus appointed **Peter as the first pope** to be the visible head of the church (Mt. 16:18; Jn. 21:15-17).
- This is also known as the "**primacy of Peter**."
- Vatican I: "the Apostolic See and the **Roman Pontiff hold primacy over the whole world**, and that the Pontiff of Rome himself is the **successor of the blessed Peter, the chief of the apostles**, and is the true vicar of Christ and **head of the whole Church and faith**, and teacher of all Christians; and that to him was handed down in blessed Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ, **full power to feed, rule, and guide the universal Church**, just as is also contained in the records of the ecumenical Councils and in the sacred canons."

Protestants say:

We don't see primacy of Peter in Bible... see next...



Don't See Primacy of Peter in Bible

Instead, we see:

- ▶ No apostle superior.
- ▶ Peter equal to James and John.
- ▶ James led Jerusalem council.
- ▶ Peter calls self "fellow elder" and "an apostle."
- ▶ Paul had greater Gentile ministry.
- ▶ Acts focuses more on Paul than Peter.
- ▶ Paul rebuked Peter (Gal. 2:11-14)

Protestants say we don't see primacy of Peter in Bible

Instead, we see:

1. No apostle was superior to another (Galatians 2:6,9)

"But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me." (Galatians 2:6)

"and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised." (Galatians 2:9)

2. Peter was only one church pillar mentioned with James and John (Galatians 2:9)

"and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised." (Galatians 2:9)

3. James, not Peter led the Jerusalem council (Acts 15)

"And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, 'Men and brethren, listen to me:...' (Acts 15:13)

"For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." (Acts 15:21)

4. Peter called himself a "fellow elder" and "an (not the) apostle" (1 Peter 1:1; 5:1-2)

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in

Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia..." (1 Peter 1:1)

"The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly." (1 Peter 5:1-2)

5. Paul ministered more to Gentiles, while Peter ministered more to Jews (Galatians 2:8)

"for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles." (Galatians 2:8)

6. Acts pays more attention to Paul's ministry than Peter's

7. Paul rebuked Peter for being wrong (Galatians 2:11-14)

"Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed..." (Galatians 2:11)

"But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, 'If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?'" (Galatians 2:14)

Peter certainly would have rejected the titles used of the pope today: "Holy Father," (cf. Matt. 23:9) "Supreme Pontiff" or "Vicar of Christ."

Don't See Primacy of Peter in History

- ▶ New Testament churches were autonomous.
- ▶ Each church responsible to Christ as head.
- ▶ No early line of ruling popes.
- ▶ Many equal bishops over regions.



Protestants say we don't see primacy of Peter in history either

- In the centuries after the NT, **bishops** were seen presiding over regions but not one over all.
- We don't see an early line of ruling popes in history.
- The term "pope" did not come into use until **several centuries** after Peter's death.
- There is no clear evidence that Peter saw himself as the leader of the entire Church.
- Each NT church was **autonomous** and **elected their own officers** (Acts 6:1-7).
- Each church was responsible for judging and **settling their own disputes** (1 Cor. 5:13; 6:5).
- Each church **bore its own responsibility** to Christ as head (Rev. 1-3).
- Jesus's exhortation to the churches **did not mention a single ruling bishop**, but rather relied on the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 1-3).

So how do Protestants handle Matthew 16 and John 21? We'll look at that next...



What About “upon this rock”?

- ▶ Jesus said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, **you are Peter** [“**Rock**”], and **on this rock** I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’”

(Matthew 16:15-18)

Protestant Views on Matthew 16:18 ("upon this rock I will build my church")

Pic: Caesarea Philippi, Israel, where it is believed Jesus was at with his disciples when he taught this.

Option #1: “upon this rock” means Peter’s confession

- Peter had just said **made a statement** that, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (v. 16)
- Jesus would be saying it’s **upon this statement** that his church would be built.
- “this rock” is **feminine** while “Peter” (“rock”) is masculine.
- Some Church Fathers like **Augustine and John Chrysostom** held this view (was **not consensus**).

Option #2: “upon this rock” means Christ

- Jesus could have been **pointing at himself** while he said that.
- Fits well with Eph. 2:20 where **Christ is the cornerstone** of the church.

Option #3: “upon this rock” means Peter

- Some Protestant agree with Catholics that Jesus is referring to Peter.
- But Jesus would merely be saying that Peter would have an **important role** in bringing the gospel to the Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles (Acts 2, 8, 10).
- But it’s **quite a stretch** to say Jesus was giving Peter infallible authority from this passage.

What About “feed my sheep”?

- ▶ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “**Feed My lambs.**” He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “**Tend My sheep.**” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “**Feed My sheep.**”

(John 21:15–17)



Protestant Views on John 21:15-17 ("feed my lambs/sheep")

- Protestants do not see this passage as evidence for the papal authority of Peter or the primacy of Rome.
- This passage is about Peter’s weakness and need of restoration after **denying Christ three times**.
- There’s **no indication** Jesus is giving Peter **primacy or infallible authority**.
- Peter was later **rebuked by Paul** (Gal. 2:11-14).
- Jesus’s use of the word "feed" in this passage emphasizes the act of nurturing and caring for others in a pastoral sense, rather than hierarchical authority.
- Peter was **not appointed as the first pope here** nor given **special authority over** the other apostles.
- It’s a **reminder for all believers** to care for one another in the Church.

DISCUSS

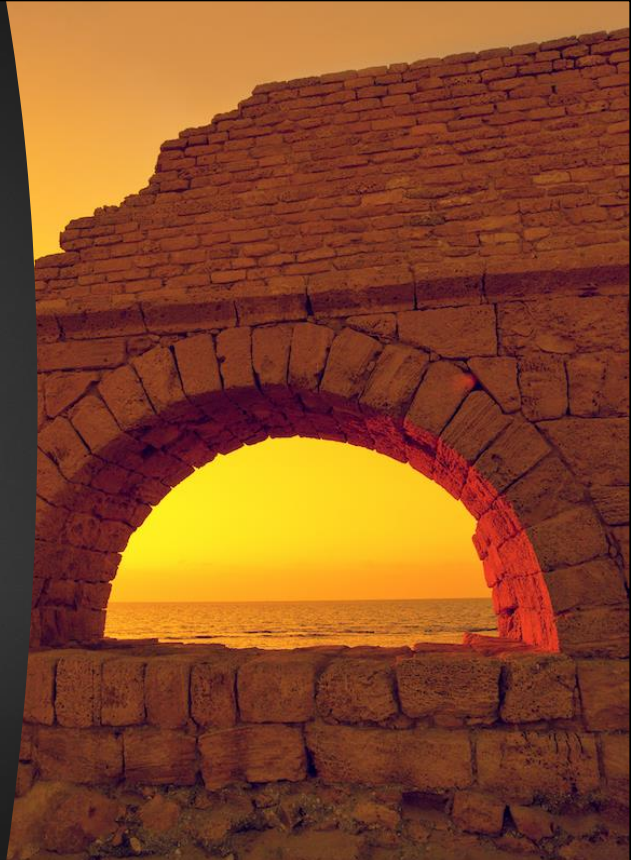
- ▶ In John 21:15-17, Jesus tells Peter to "feed my lambs" and "tend my sheep." How do you think these instructions apply to us as Christians today? In what ways can we nurture and care for others in our faith community?

Think About or Discuss

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Works Required for Salvation?

Roman Catholic Church says

- ▶ Good works required for salvation. "by his good works the justified man really acquires a claim to supernatural reward from God." (Trent in Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, p. 264)

Protestants say

- ▶ We're saved by faith alone.
- ▶ We cannot work for a gift (and salvation is a gift).
- ▶ it's illogical to mix grace/works.
- ▶ Galatians speaks against mixing grace/works.

Good works required for salvation?

Roman Catholic Church says:

Good works required for salvation

- Roman Catholic Church says **works are necessary for salvation**: "by his good works the justified man really acquires a claim to supernatural reward from God." (Trent in Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, p. 264)

Protestants say:

Bible says we're saved by faith alone

- Romans 1:16-17 — "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation **for everyone who believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed **from faith to faith**; as it is written, "The just shall live **by faith**.""
- Titus 3:5-7 — "**he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness**, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
- Romans 5:1 — "Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ"

Bible says we cannot work for a gift (and salvation is a gift)

- Ephesians 2:8-9—"For **by grace you have been saved through faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast."
- Romans 4:4-5 — "Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to **the one who does not work but believes** in him who

justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.”

Bible says it’s illogical to mix grace/works

- Romans 11:6— “But if it is by grace, it is **no longer on the basis of works**; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.”

Galatians speaks against mixing grace/works

- The **entire book of Galatians** speaks against the Judaizers who **taught works were required** in addition to faith.
- Galatians 3:24—“So then, the **law was our guardian** until Christ came, in order that we might be **justified by faith.**”

What about James 2:24, which says "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone"?

- This emphasizes the importance of good works as evidence of a person's faith, rather than as a means of salvation.
- True faith will inevitably produce good works.

Some “Geislerisms” (Systematic Theology vol 3):

"It is impossible to work for grace; we can work only from grace (Rom. 11:6)."

"While we are saved by faith alone, the faith that saves us is not alone—it is accompanied by good works."

"We are not saved by works but by a faith that works."

"We work from grace, not for it."

DISCUSS

- ▶ How does the concept of salvation by faith alone free us from the burden of constantly trying to earn God's favor through good works?

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

“For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works...” (Hebrews 4:10)

Think About or Discuss

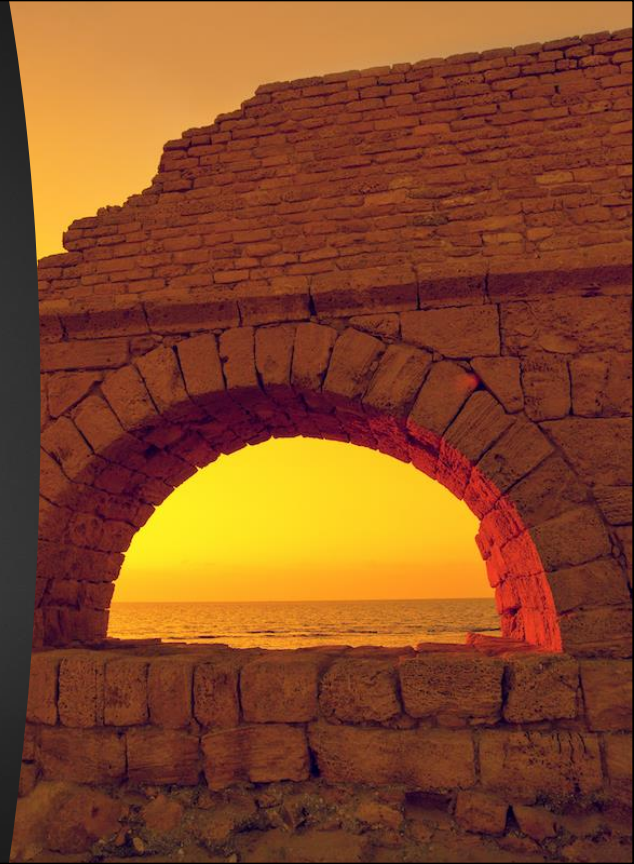
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Must We Receive Sacraments?

Roman Catholic Church says

▶ There are 7 sacraments:

(1) Baptism; (2) Confirmation; (3) The Eucharist;
(4) Penance/Confession; (5) Extreme Unction;
(6) Holy Orders; (7) Matrimony

▶ All are required for salvation.

“If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation... let him be anathema.” (Denzinger, *Sources of Catholic Dogma*, no. 847, p. 262.)

Protestants say

▶ There are 2 ordinances (baptism & communion).

▶ Neither are required for salvation.

Must we receive sacraments for salvation?

Roman Catholic Church says:

There are 7 sacraments:

- The word “sacrament” means a sacred or holy thing. They describe rituals that are believed to convey grace and blessings.
- Roman Catholics must believe that all are required for salvation.
- Council of Trent: ““If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord... let him be anathema.” (Denzinger, *Sources of Catholic Dogma*, no. 844, p. 262.)

1. Baptism

Salvation not possible without this sacrament (they affirm baptismal regeneration).

2. Confirmation

Strengthens the bond between the recipient and God through the Holy Spirit.

3. The Eucharist

The bread and wine are said to be transformed into the body and blood of Christ through transubstantiation.

They believe they can even worship it.

4. Penance (Confession)

For forgiveness to be granted, the recipient must express contrition and confess their sins to a priest.

5. Extreme Unction (Anointing of the Sick)

This involves anointing with oil for healing, restoring health, for forgiveness (if not able to do penance), preparing for death (Last rites).

6. Holy Orders

For ordaining priests, bishops or deacons.

7. Matrimony

For uniting a man and woman in marriage.

The sacraments are required for grace

- Salvation is by grace and the **sacraments give grace**.
- All but two **must be administered by priests** of the Roman Catholic Church (1 & 7 are exceptions)
- “If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation... let him be anathema.” (Denzinger, *Sources of Catholic Dogma*, no. 847, p. 262.)

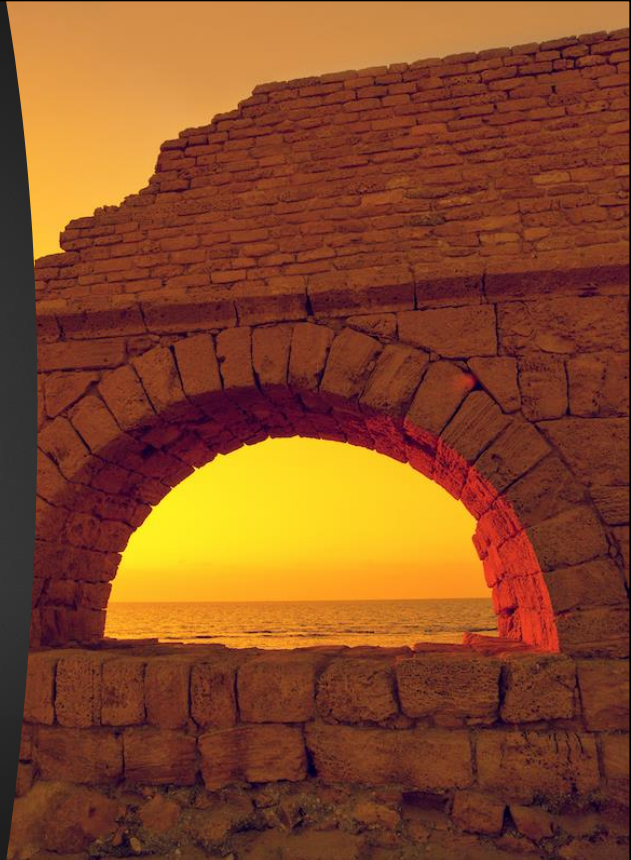
Protestants say:

There are two ordinances (not sacraments)

- Most Protestants prefer the term ‘ordinance.’ This is used in Protestant Christianity to describe symbolic religious practices.
- Only ones are Baptism and Communion.
- They are not required for salvation.

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Are the Elements Transformed?

Roman Catholic Church says

- ▶ The bread/wine are transformed into the physical body of Christ (transubstantiation).
- ▶ Christ is sacrificed again.
- ▶ We can even worship the elements.

Protestants say

- ▶ There are three main views.
- ▶ We should reject transubstantiation.

Are the elements transformed?

Roman Catholic Church says:

- The bread/wine are transformed into the physical body of Christ.
- Christ is actually sacrificed again; can even worship the elements.

Protestants say:

There are 3 main Protestant views:

- Symbolic/memorial view (Zwinglian/Baptist)
- Spiritual/dynamic view (Reformed)
- Consubstantiation/permeation view (Lutheran)

1. Memorial View (Symbolic)

- Communion is a commemoration of Christ's death
- Adherents include Anabaptist tradition, Baptists, Congregational and Independent churches
- Elements symbolize receiving the benefits of Christ's death by faith
- Visual reminder of Christ's sacrifice, distinct from a sermon

2. Reformed View (Spiritual/Dynamic)

- Bread and wine spiritually contain Christ's body and blood
- Christ is present in a spiritual, dynamic sense
- Objective spiritual benefits come from Christ, depending on participant's faith and receptivity

3. Lutheran View (Consubstantiation/Permeation)

- Christ's body is in and under the elements, penetrating like fire in metal
- Christ is present permeationally, not transformationally
- Differences from the Catholic view:
 - No change of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood
 - Priestly action not responsible for Christ's presence
 - Event is a sacrament, providing forgiveness of sins and confirmation of faith

Reasons protestants give for rejecting transubstantiation:

1. The occurrence of miracles during mass is difficult to believe.

- There appears to be **no visible changes** in the **bread and wine**.
- The lack of empirical evidence weakens the argument for the existence of miracles.

2. The concept of transubstantiation does not have unanimous consent.

- There is **no agreement among the Fathers** regarding what communion is.
- Additionally, the **declaration of transubstantiation** as dogma was a **late occurrence**, happening in 1551 at Trent.

3. The idea that there can only be one body of Christ.

- If transubstantiation were true, it would imply the presence of a **physical body of Christ at every mass**.
- The declaration "this is my body" would result in **two incarnations of Christ**.
- This conflicts with the notion that there can **only be one body of Christ**.

4. The Bible says Christ only needed to be sacrificed once.

- According to Hebrews 10:12-14, Christ's single sacrifice for sins was sufficient for all time, making additional sacrifices unnecessary.
"But when Christ had offered for all time **a single sacrifice for sins**, he sat down... For **by a single offering** he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified..."

What About “eat my flesh, drink my blood”?

- ▶ John 6 – “(35) I am the **bread of life**... (53) unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you.”
- ▶ John 6 – “(53) So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you... (61) But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? (63) It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh is no help at all**. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”
- ▶ Luke 22 – “(19) This [bread] is my body... do this **in remembrance** of me” (cf. 1 Cor. 11:24, 26)

What about “eat my flesh/drink my blood”?

The passage is:

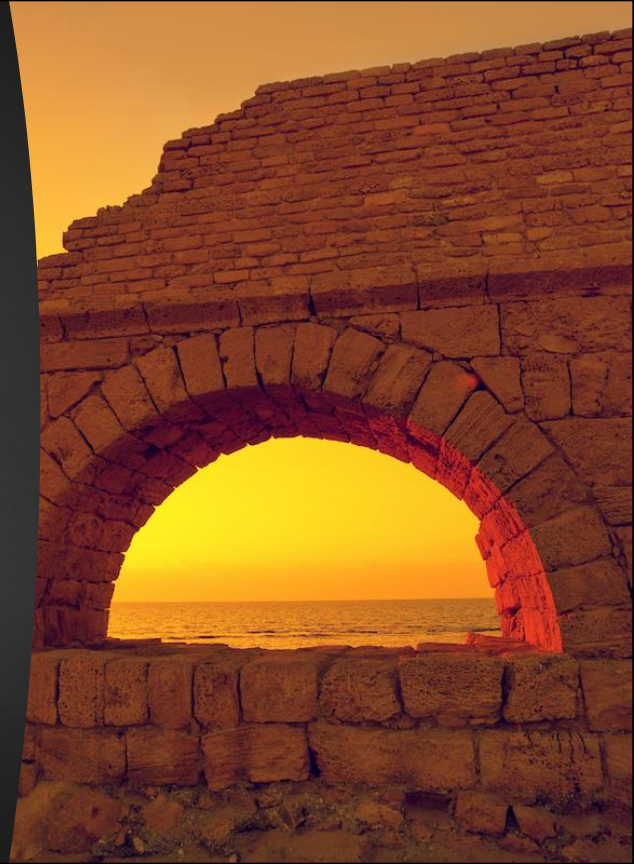
John 6 – “(35) I am the **bread of life**... (53) unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you.”

How do Protestants understand this?

- **Jesus was using a figure of speech**
Jesus also said, “I am **the vine**,” (John 15:5) “I am **the resurrection**,” (John 11:25) “I am **the door**,” (John 10:7,9) “I am **the light** of the world” (John 8:12).
- **Jesus tells us he’s was not speaking literally but metaphorically**
John 6 — “(53) So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink his blood**, you have no life in you... (61) But Jesus, knowing in himself that **his disciples were grumbling** about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? (63) It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh is no help at all**. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”
- Bible says purpose is to **remember**
 - Scripture seems to say that the **purpose of communion** is so we **frequently remember** that Jesus paid for our sin upon the cross (Memorial view).
Luke 22 – “(19) **This [bread] is my body**... do this **in remembrance** of me” (cf. 1 Cor. 11:24, 26)

Roman Catholics and Protestants

- ▶ Summary of agreements & differences
- ▶ Key differences:
 - ▶ It there one true church?
 - ▶ Was Peter the first Pope?
 - ▶ Saved by faith + works?
 - ▶ 7 sacraments?
 - ▶ Transubstantiation
 - ▶ **Is confession required?**



Roman Catholics and Protestants

Summary of agreements & differences

Key differences:

It there one true church?

Was Peter the first Pope?

Saved by faith + works?

7 sacraments?

Transubstantiation

Is confession required?

Confession & Penance



Roman Catholic Church says

- ▶ Penance is required for salvation
- ▶ Penance is ongoing confession to a priest for forgiveness of sins.
- ▶ Must merit the forgiveness by showing contrition.

Protestants say

- ▶ We're completely forgiven at justification
- ▶ Penance based on faulty translation of Bible
- ▶ No mention of confession to priests

Confession & penance

Roman Catholic Church says:

Penance is necessary for salvation

- This penance involves **confessing sins** to a priest on an **ongoing basis** in order to receive forgiveness.
- To merit this forgiveness, one **must also demonstrate genuine contrition** for their sins.

Protestants say:

Why protestants reject the idea that penance is required.

1. We're completely forgiven when we are justified in Christ.

- According to Protestant theology, a person is **completely and forgiven** when they are justified in Christ.
- This means that when a person trusts in Christ's salvation, they are **instantly acquitted of all sin**, and righteousness is transferred (imputed) to them through faith alone (Romans 5:1; Acts 13:38).
 - Romans 5:1—Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - Acts 13:38—Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;
- While ongoing confession can be helpful for making amends or when it impedes a person's walk, it does not merit more forgiveness.

2. Penance based on faulty translation of Bible.

- The idea of penance is based on a faulty translation of the Bible.
- The Latin Vulgate incorrectly translated "repent" as "do penance," an error that was discovered in the 15th century.
- For example, Acts 2:38, where Peter says, "Do penance: and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins," is now understood to mean "repent" instead of "do penance."

3. The New Testament never says to confess to class of priests.

- The New Testament does not instruct believers to confess their sins to a specific class of priests.
- Instead, believers are encouraged to confess their sins to other Christians, as James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another."
- This belief is based on the Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, which emphasizes that all Christians have direct access to God through Jesus Christ as their high priest.

Protestant view of confession:

- Protestants *do* believe in confession
 - 1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- But they believe in the priesthood of all believers, meaning every individual has direct access to God and can confess their sins directly to Him.
 - Psalm 32:5 - "I acknowledged my **sin to You**, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin."
- This also means confessing to each other (ordinary believers, not priests):
 - James 5:16 - "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."
- 1 Timothy 2:5 - "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."

DISCUSS

- ▶ What is the role of repentance in the Christian life? How can we cultivate a heart of repentance in our daily lives, and what are some practical steps we can take to turn away from sin and towards God?

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me..." (Psalm 51:10–13)

"...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God..." (1 Thessalonians 1:9)

Think About or Discuss

- How does the concept of salvation by faith alone free us from the burden of constantly trying to earn God's favor through good works?

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

"For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works..." (Hebrews 4:10)

Complete List of Differences

One true visible church

- Roman Catholic Church believes its theirs.

7 Sacraments Required for Salvation

- **Baptism**
 - Baptism is required for salvation (**baptismal regeneration**).
- **Confirmation**
 - Strengthens the union of person and God.
- **The Eucharist**
 - **Transubstantiation**: the bread/wine become Christ's body/blood.
 - Christ is sacrificed repeatedly; can even worship elements.
- **Penance (Confession)**
 - Idea of confession to a priest for the remission of sin existed in the second century but did not become a widespread practice in the early medieval period.
- **Extreme Unction (Anointing of the Sick)**
 - Anointing with oil.
 - For healing, restoring health, forgiveness (if not able to do penance), preparation for death.
- **Holy Orders**
 - The ordination of priests, bishops and deacons.
- **Matrimony**
 - Confers grace on couple for marriage.

Priestly class

- Sacraments can only be administered through priests (qualified people) only (sacerdotalism).

Papal infallibility

- The "infallibility of the Pope" was pronounced dogma in 1870 at Vatican I.
- Considers pope infallible when speaking *ex cathedra* (lit. "from the chair") on matters of faith and practice.

Apostolic succession

- Peter was appointed by Christ to be the visible head (pope) of the church.
- The present bishop of Rome (Pope Francis) is Peter's successor.

Teaching magisterium

- This is the official interpreter of faith and practice (rejection of perspicuity of scripture).

Infused righteousness

- Protestants believe in imputed righteousness (a person is declared righteous by faith).
- Catholics believe grace is "infused" by keeping the sacraments over time.

Mary

- **Immaculate conception of Mary**: Mary was born without sin.
- **Mary's sinlessness**: Mary continued to be without sin.
- **Bodily assumption** of Mary into heaven.
- Mary's role as **co-redemptrix** (not yet dogma).

Veneration of Mary, saints and icons.

Prayers to Mary and saints.

Purgatory

- **Treasury of merit**
 - The excess merit from the saints is stored in the bank of heaven.
 - Others who need it can draw from this.
- Can obtain this merit through purchase of **indulgence**.
- **Praying for the dead** so they can obtain this merit.

Sainthood

- There's a process for recognizing saints (canonization). Protestants believe all true believers to be saints.

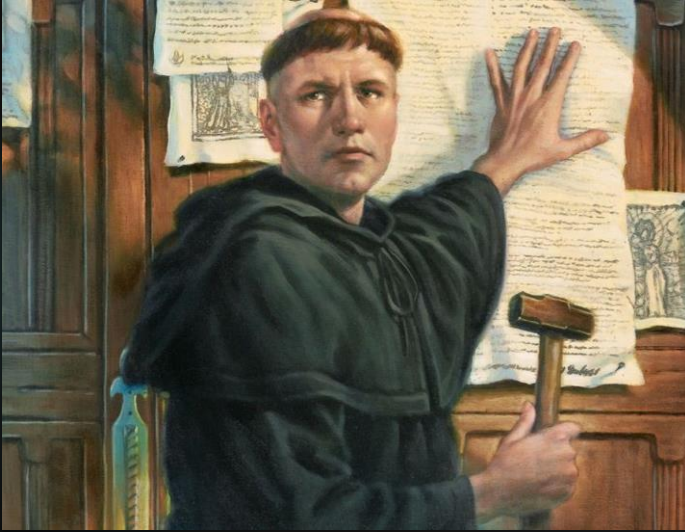
Apocrypha

- Acceptance of additional 11 Old Testament books/texts.

Complete List of Differences

Note: The list above comes from the official dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. There seems to be a growing trend, however, that local parishes are allowed more freedom on these points than in the past.

Five 'Sola's of the Reformation



1. Sola **Scriptura** (by Scripture alone)
2. Sola **Fide** (by faith alone)
3. Sola **Gratia** (by grace alone)
4. Sola **Christus** (by Christ alone)
5. Sola **Deo Gloria** (Glory to God alone)

Five 'Sola's of the Reformation

The Five Solas of the Reformation are key theological principles that emerged during the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. While these ideas are present throughout the writings of the Reformers, they were not systematically articulated until the 20th century. Let's take a closer look at each of the Five Solas:

1. **Sola Scriptura (by Scripture alone):** This principle asserts that the Bible is the sole written authority for faith. In other words, it is through the scriptures alone that we learn about God, his character, and his plan for salvation. This rejects RCC authority and tradition.
2. **Sola Fide (by faith alone):** This principle teaches that faith is the sole means of receiving God's gift of salvation. We cannot earn our salvation through good works or merit, but only through faith in Jesus Christ. This rejects the RCC view that works are required.
3. **Sola Gratia (by grace alone):** This principle emphasizes that salvation is not something that can be earned or merited. Rather, it is a free gift from God, given to us by his grace. This also rejects the RCC teaching on merit and the treasury of merits.

4. **Sola Christus (by Christ alone):** This principle excludes any priestly class and affirms that Christ is the only mediator between God and humanity. We do not need any other intermediaries to approach God, but only Christ. This rejects the RCC priestly class, denies the role of priests in the Mass, and the special status of the Pope.

5. **Sola Deo Gloria (Glory to God alone):** This principle rejects the special glory given to people in the church, such as popes, priests, and canonized saints, and asserts that all glory belongs to God alone. This rejects the veneration of the saints, special status of the Pope, and the adoration of relics and sacred images.

By understanding these Five Solas, we gain insight into the heart of the Protestant Reformation and the enduring principles that emerged from it.

DISCUSS

- ▶ What are some key differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism? How do these differences impact one's relationship with God?
- ▶ For those with a Roman Catholic background, how did you encounter Jesus under Protestantism? Did this experience differ from your experience with the Roman Catholic Church? If so, how?
- ▶ Can someone be both Roman Catholic and Protestant? Why or why not? How do these identities intersect and/or conflict with each other?
- ▶ How can we foster respectful and constructive dialogue between Roman Catholics and Protestants, even when we disagree on key theological and practical issues? How can we work towards greater unity and understanding in the Christian Church?

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Overview of Church History

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| DONE | EARLY CHURCH FATHERS TO CONSTANTINE |
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| DONE | SHARED BELIEFS BETWEEN ROMAN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS |
| DONE | OVERVIEW OF KEY DIFFERENCES |
| ▶ UPCOMING | ORIGIN OF DENOMINATIONS SINCE THE REFORMATION |

Overview of Church History

| | |
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| DONE | Overview of Key Differences |
| ▶ NEXT | Origin of Denominations Since the Reformation |