

Christianity, Judaism, Catholicism

Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – April 15, 2020

The first thing we need to do is distinguish between “Christianity” and “Christendom.” Christendom includes every church that claims to be Christian no matter what Gospel they preach. This includes all denominations, Catholicism, and even some cults.

All of these different “churches” believe in God in one way or another. They also believe in Jesus Christ in one way or another, but they differ in their description of the character of Jesus.

Catholicism

To **Catholics**, Jesus is divine (he is God in his essence); but they also believe that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was immaculate, which means that, before Jesus was born, God made Mary immaculate (without sin) so that she would be sure to birth a sinless child. Their name for this doctrine is “Immaculate Conception.” That is the reason that they say “Mary, the mother of God.” They do not mean that Mary birthed God but that Mary birthed Jesus, a human who is God in his essence.

The Catholic Church is a part of Christendom but not a part of Christianity, which by that I mean “true Christianity.” The basic reason is that they believe they go to heaven by their works and their church activity and through the priest and the pope. They preach seven (7) sacraments (seven holy things) that a person must believe in so they may go to heaven.

- **Baptism** – They baptize babies, which is unscriptural, and they now sprinkle the babies for baptism, and baptism means *to plunge under*.
- Eucharist (Holy Communion) – This is something like our Lord’s Supper. They believe that they crucify Christ again every time they do the Eucharist. This must be done by Catholics before they can go to heaven, and they must do it every week.
- **Confirmation** – In the confirmation (usually done at age 13 or in adults at their first baptism) to bring them “into the faith.” That is, this brings them officially into the True Church (the Catholic Church). This is done by the

laying on of hands by the priest and anointing the head with “holy oil.”

- Reconciliation (confession, or penance) – This is a confession done by individual Catholics to the priest and is done weekly, during Eucharist, or during Lent or Advent. The priest is said to have the power to forgive sins.
- Anointing the Sick – The priest prays over an ill person and anoints that person with oil to unite that person with the sufferings of Christ to bring healing. The priest usually also gives Eucharist to that person.
- Marriage – This is a sacrament, because only a *baptized* man and a *baptized* woman can get married. This baptism, of course, must be done by a priest in the Catholic church, usually a few days after a baby is born.
- Ordination – The Church *ordains* men to be priests. Ordination gives that person authority to baptize, to receive confession of sin and to forgive sins through the Church. This is also called Holy Orders.

Judaism

This, of course, is the religion of the Jews. These are the people whom God chose to be his national people, and he blessed them from the time of Moses to our present day. They are not a part of Christendom, but I include them here because of the question that was asked.

The Jews believe in the God of creation. They believe in Jehovah just as Christians do. They believe there is only one God, and he is Jehovah.

They believe in a Messiah (the anointed one). They do not, however, believe that Jesus is that Messiah. They believe that the true Messiah is yet to come; and, when he comes, he will set up a kingdom on the earth, and the Jews will rule the world with this Messiah.

They believe they are “saved” by keeping the commandments of God, not by grace through faith as the Bible teaches (Ephesians 2:8-10). Many Jews have turned to Christ as their Messiah and are saved by grace through faith.

Christianity

True Christianity is the belief that Jesus (the true Messiah) was sent to earth by his Father, God, to live a perfect life and to die in order to pay for the sins of those

who will repent (turn away from) their sins and believe in Jesus Christ. So, it is by **grace** through **faith** that God saves people, not by good works.

Any church that teaches that a person can be saved by works is not a part of true Christianity. Christians may disagree on some doctrine but not on this one. Paul the Apostle calls these good works “the law” especially in the book of Galatians.

Islam

I am adding this, because the three major religions of the world are listed as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Mohammadanism). Catholics are usually listed with Christians.

Mohammad lived during the century of the 600's AD. He supposedly had a vision from God to write down some things in a book called the Koran.

Mohammad is their Messiah, and he is dead.

They, of course, believe in Jesus as a man but not as God. If Jesus were only a man, he could not have died for our sins, because he had to pay an eternal price for our sins, and he had to be an eternal being in order to do that.

Scriptures On Faith, Not Works

- Ephesians 2:8-10 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*
- Titus 3:5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*
- Galatians 2:16 *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*
- Galatians 2:21 *I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness*

come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Conclusion

So, every organization (or person) that believes that a person goes to heaven by his good works is not a part of true Christianity, although they might be a part of Christendom.

Paul gives us the Gospel in several passages of Scripture.

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*
- Romans 10:9-10 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
- John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
- Acts 16:31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*