

# Catholic Cults Part 1

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Why even address the issue of Catholicism? Doesn't such a critical view of a particular religious group bring greater division among moral people in a society? **Won't I have a difficult time witnessing to Catholics if we refer to them as a cult?** All are questions that represent a myriad of interrogatives that will no doubt be leveled against this series. However, isn't it the historical precedence of evangelicals, coming from a biblical mandate (I John 4:1-3), to examine the culture, even religious groups, under the light of Scripture? **And how will you ever lead a Catholic out of his sin** and into the only sufficient grace of Christ if you do not clearly point out his sin? **Surely we do not believe that we can lead anyone to Christ by generalizing or minimizing his sin.** I doubt anyone would have a problem with a series on the dangers inherent within Islam, or the lies rampant in Mormonism, or the fallacies of the Jehovah's Witness movement. But the dangers, lies, and fallacies are necessary to know before witnessing and winning those within each of those groups.

We would be well served to implement the biblical call and reflect on where we would be today had men like John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Hus, and Ulrich Zwingli shied away from the controversy of calling sin, sin. One result, more than likely, is the Protestant church would not exist today and we would all be Catholics, depending on Mary, bowing to the Pope, and believing that a human priest is necessary for confession due to the inadequacy of Christ alone as the Great High Priest. I believe the subject is worth addressing. The criticism that will surely come is one I do not fear. In the words of Frelinghuysen, "I seek not praise, I fear not blame." My goal in this series is to equip the church of Jesus Christ to defend their faith to a large portion of our society and ultimately see a reformation of the Catholic Church that is not just a schism but a harvest of Catholics coming to Christ alone for salvation.

I would like you to take some time and consider the following criteria as the baseline of a cult. In the coming days and weeks, each of these marks of a cult will be applied to Catholicism. It will be clear from such an examination that Catholicism meets every criterion, and on multiple levels, of a cult.

Brooks Alexander, co-founder of the Spiritual Counterfeits Project, notes that a cult has a false or inadequate basis of salvation and/or a false basis authority. Danny Akin lists four criteria of a cult that includes Alexander's criteria. These four will be used for our analysis.

## 1. ADDITION

Books equal to the Bible either as corrections or additions.

## 2. SUBTRACTION

Either from Christ's perfect Divinity or His perfect Humanity, so He is either not God or not sinless.

## 3. MULTIPLICATION

Of the paths to salvation, bringing in adherence to variant and extra-biblical steps, usually in allegiance to the movement. Salvation is not by grace but continuing works.

## 4. DIVISION

Of the Body of Christ, so they are the only group through which man can be saved. Allegiance is usually to a particular leader.