

## What's The Difference? Catholic vs. Protestant

### Matthew 16:13-19

1. What are your experiences with the Roman Catholic Church? Do you know any Roman Catholics? What differences have you noticed in the way they practice their faith?
2. Pastor Mark tells the story of Martin Luther leading the Protestant Reformation. When you disagree with the Church on a specific issue, how do you decide when you need to speak up or when you need to accept differences of opinion?
3. Can you recall a time when you were part of a church in conflict? What were the issues? How were they resolved?
4. What do you think about the idea of Papal Infallibility? Why do you think the Roman Catholics give so much spiritual authority to the Pope?
5. Read Matthew 16:13-19. How do Roman Catholics interpret this passage, as compared to Protestants?
6. How do you understand the connection between faith and works? Why is it important to understand that good works are an evidence that we have been saved, rather than thinking that we are saved by our good works?
7. Pastor Mark explained the Roman Catholic idea of "Transubstantiation," the doctrine that the bread and wine of communion are literally transformed into the body and blood of Jesus during the Roman Catholic Mass. What do you think about this doctrine? How does this help explain why non-Roman Catholics are prohibited from receiving Holy Communion in Roman Catholic churches?
8. Pastor Mark described the Roman Catholic idea of Purgatory, a place between heaven and hell where people go to be "purged" from their sin so that their souls can eventually enter into heaven. Pastor Mark describes this as "Spiritual Prep School" for Heaven. How do you feel about the idea of Purgatory? Why do you think that Protestant Churches don't teach this doctrine?
9. Pastor Mark points out that while the Roman Catholic Church might sometimes have a reputation for being inflexible, legalistic and judgmental, there is something noble and admirable about standing on your principles and not compromising with a secular culture that wants to make Christianity easy and comfortable. How can the modern day Protestant

Church stand firm in truth but also not come across as legalistic and judgmental to an increasingly secular culture today?