

How to Get to Heaven (enterbythenarrowgate.org)

Objective

The objective of this document is to help you and your loved ones attain heaven (salvation). It is sufficiently detailed so that adherence to its prescriptions will make salvation highly likely. It describes the moral truths of the Church in a clear manner, so that the confusion of the last half-century is dispelled.

Life's Purpose

“The very minimum required for intelligent living – namely, the knowledge of the purpose of our life – is dependent upon a revelation from God, that without such a revelation we cannot know our purpose and so cannot have any means of testing the value or the significance of anything that we do.”

The One True Faith

Catholicism is the one true faith. It alone has the authority to teach “how to get to heaven.” Unlike other Christian religions, it was founded by God himself, Jesus Christ. He gave Peter the keys of the kingdom, the authority to “bind and loose,” that the Pope shares in union with the Bishops. This authority is manifest in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the bible, whose New Testament was written by 1st century Catholics.

Eternal Laws

“Very early in life, man becomes aware that he is living in a world of laws. There is no such thing as freedom from [the laws], but only freedom within [the laws]. Given that no one but the lawmaker can know with certainty the text of the laws he has made, [he] has revealed to man the laws that govern spirit because they are essential laws, whose breach is fraught with eternal catastrophe.” These laws, like God their author, can't be changed.

Humility (Meekness)

Without humility, it is extremely difficult to be saved. Unless you humble yourself like a little child, “**you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.**” Salvation requires surrender to the teachings of the magisterium, the Church's teaching authority, since only it accurately transmits the laws of God.

The Odds of Salvation

Jesus, as God, is the only being who knows the number of the saved. When asked if many would be saved, he answered that, “**the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.**” This scary truth results from man's concupiscence (tendency to sinful pride), which leads him to “play God” and define truth for himself, as in the Garden of Eden:

“God said, ‘**You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree [of the knowledge of good and evil] which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.**’ But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”

Supernatural Life

“This life is not only a test that a man must pass in order to obtain the reward of heaven, it is also a preparation a man must successfully undergo in order to live the life of heaven. It follows that whatever is necessary to enable a man to live the life of heaven must, in some way or other, be acquired by man in this life. And just as we should need some extra powers ... to live on another planet, so we need extra powers in our soul, not contained in our nature, in order that we may live the life of heaven ... the Supernatural Life.”

Sanctifying Grace

The Supernatural Life begins right here on earth through the infusion of sanctifying grace in your soul, making you holy in God's sight. The sacraments of baptism, confession and Eucharist are the normal means to obtain sanctifying grace in everyday life. If you commit mortal sin, you need to repent, have faith and go to confession. Worthy reception of the Eucharist provides additional grace to avoid sin; unworthy reception (when in mortal sin) removes sanctifying grace and is a sacrilege.

Holiness and Heaven

A person in sanctifying grace is holy and has no known unconfessed mortal sins on his soul. Only holy men and women are saved; there are no “good” or “nice” people in heaven. Holiness is when our will and God's will are one. According to the author of Hebrews, “Strive ... for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.”

Paths to Holiness

Matrimony is the most common way to live a sacrificial *agape* love, where the mission of each spouse is to work for the salvation of the other. The only other reliable way to sanctification is to consecrate your life to Christ through the priesthood or lay discipleship.

The Three Conditions for a Mortal Sin

(1) Serious (grave) matter, (2) consent of the will and (3) full knowledge that the act is seriously wrong are all required to make a sin mortal. However, you may still be responsible for your sin if you take “little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin.” In such cases, you are responsible for the evil you commit.

Conscience

“Conscience is a judgment of [the] intellect and therefore, like any other such judgment, it can be wrong. But an investigation of conscience will show that by itself it is not sufficient – that man has not within himself an infallible teacher as to what is right and what is wrong. We can only know if we are told. God who made us has told us: his Church, which enunciates his truths, likewise enunciates his laws.”

Even an erroneous conscience must be obeyed, but an erroneous conscience doesn't excuse you. If it is possible for you to know the truth, then you have a moral obligation to seek the truth, and change your understanding of the truth accordingly. Moral truths are like the physical Laws of Nature; opinion doesn't change their effects.

Grave (Mortal) Sins

The following is a selected list of the most prevalent grave sins derived from a keyword search of the Catechism.

A. Sins of Commission

Idolatry - Greater passion for self, people & things than for God - You are required to love God above all things and accomplish your personal mission for Him. The greatest tragedy is living life as if He didn't exist. An undemanding “spirituality” will not suffice.

Interference in God's procreative will including contraception, abortion & formal cooperation in abortion - For most Catholics, being open to children and raising them in the faith is their primary life's mission. This means setting an example of holiness & assuring that the children are raised with orthodox Catholic teaching.

Missing mass on Sundays & Holy Days – Regular Sunday worship is the bare minimum needed to love God and keep His 1st & 3rd commandments. “**Unless you eat [my] flesh and drink [my] blood, you have no life in you.**”

Sins of impurity including fornication & cohabitation, masturbation, homosexual acts and promotion & distribution of pornography - From the beginning, humans were created in God's image and likeness. This is especially true of the gift of procreation, where we cooperate with Him to bring an immortal soul into being through the male/female marital bond. “**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**”

Scandal; leading others to sin including bad example (e.g., missing mass, cohabiting), public dissent from Catholic teaching and failure to proclaim “hard” teachings, especially by those in leadership positions.

Divorce - “[Those who] divorce ... introduce disorder into the family and into society, [bringing] grave harm to the deserted spouse, to children traumatized by the separation of their parents and often torn between them, and because of its contagious effect which makes it truly a plague on society.” “**I hate divorce**, says the Lord.”

Adultery, including divorce & re-marriage

Drug and alcohol abuse - These are prime examples of the “slavery of sin.” Addiction is not a disease, but a manifestation of the rejection of His grace, through which all things are possible.

B. Sins of Omission

Feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned - This can be done through generous charitable giving (e.g., tithing) and direct voluntary service to those in need.

Mercy & forgiveness - “**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**”

Special Note: Great personal kindness & mercy to the poor and others (B) are of no value if one is not in a state of sanctifying grace, through adherence to the Commandments (A). The reverse is equally true.

Grace through Faith brings Salvation

You can't overcome sin only through your own efforts, but also through prayer and a humble response to God's actual grace. “When [sanctifying] grace comes in, intellect and will are supernaturalized – that is, their nature is not destroyed but given the power of higher action.” “[Sanctifying grace is] a partaking of the Divine Nature.”

References

Life's Purpose

- Sheed, Frank. *A Map of Life: A Simple Study of the Catholic Faith*. 1933. Reprint. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994. p. 19.

The One True Faith

- Second Vatican Council. *Dignitatis Humanae*. No. 1.
- Mt 16:18-19

Eternal Laws

- Sheed. pp. 19, 20 & 23.

Humility (Meekness)

- Mt 18:3

The Odds of Salvation

- Lk 13:23-24
- Mt 7:13-14
- Gn 3:3-5

Supernatural Life

- Sheed. pp. 33-34
- Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #1998

Sanctifying Grace

- CCC #1999
- Akin, Jimmy. *How to Go to Heaven*. Catholic.com. Catholic Answers. May 12, 2015.
- CCC #1393-1395
- CCC #1385

Holiness and Heaven

- Kolbe, St. Maximilian. Roman Conference IV.
- Heb 12:14

The Three Conditions for a Mortal Sin

- CCC #1857
- CCC #1791-3

Conscience

- Sheed. pp. 93-97
- Aquinas, St. Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. I-II 88:6 ad 2

Grave (Mortal) Sins

- Idolatry: CCC #1447, 2113
- Interference in God's creative will: CCC #2370, 2399 & 2272
- Missing mass on Sundays: CCC #2181
- Sins of impurity: CCC #2353, 2390, 2400, 2352, 2357 & 2354
- Scandal: CCC #2326, 2284, 2285
- Divorce: CCC #2353, 2384-5, 2400
- Adultery: CCC #2380-1 & 2400
- Drug and alcohol abuse: CCC #2290-1

Grace through Faith brings Salvation

- CCC #2000-2003
- Sheed. pp 126-7
- Aquinas, St. Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. Ia IIae, Q. 112, A. 1