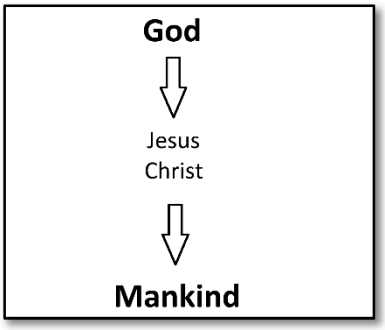
Understanding Roman Catholicism

"A Funny Thing Happened in 313AD"

146BC – Battle of Carthage, Rome expands
4BC – Jesus Christ born
33AD – Crucifixion, Resurrection, Pentecost
33-100 – Apostolic Age; New Testament is written
70 – Roman General Titus destroys Jerusalem
33-313 – Church grows rapidly during persecution
313 – Constantine becomes Emperor of Rome
Church grows in wealth & power
Becomes more "Roman"
325 – Council of Nicea
380 – Edict of Thessalonica
476 – Fall of Western Roman Empire *(East remined)*
600 – Gregory I, Bishop of Rome *(birth of Catholicism?)*
629 – Muhammad captures Mecca
732 – Battle of Tours, France *(slows Muslim conquest)*
800 – Charlemagne crowned by Leo III
1054 – Great Schism - Roman & Eastern Churches
1517 – Protestant Reformation
1545 – Council of Trent / Counter Reformation
1962 – Vatican II

Key Doctrines

- Authority – The Bible and Church Tradition
- The Church
- The Bible & the Apocrypha
- Apostolic Succession & the Priesthood
- Mediation between God and man.
  Jesus, The Church, The "magisterium", Saints esp. Mary, Sacraments…
- Salvation
  - *Original Sin & baptism*
  - *The church's Treasury of Merit*
  - *Grace verses Graces – "the bucket"*
  - *Mortal verses Venial Sin*
  - *The Sacraments, especially confession & Eucharist*
  - *Hell, Purgatory and Heaven*



- The Sacraments: *"Instruments to confer grace throughout one's life"*
  1) baptism 2) confirmation 3) Eucharist 4) penance 5) anointing of the sick 6) holy orders 7) marriage
- Baptism: *"Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ"*
  - The Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.
- Communion: Eucharist, *"The source and summit of the Christian life".*
  - The Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

The Five "solas" of the Reformation

We are saved…

1. *By Grace alone (Sola Gratia)*
2. *Through Faith alone (Sola Fide)*
3. *In Christ alone (Solus Christus)*
4. *According to Scripture alone (Sola Scriptura)*
5. *For God's Glory alone (Soli Deo Gloria)*

Issues to understand when talking with Catholics about the Gospel

1. Simply share the Gospel
2. Assurance of Salvation
3. Personal relationship with God. Necessity of receiving Christ as Savior & Lord.
4. Conceptions about Protestants / Evangelicals

Key verses for explaining the Gospel

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time. " – 1 Timothy 2:5-6

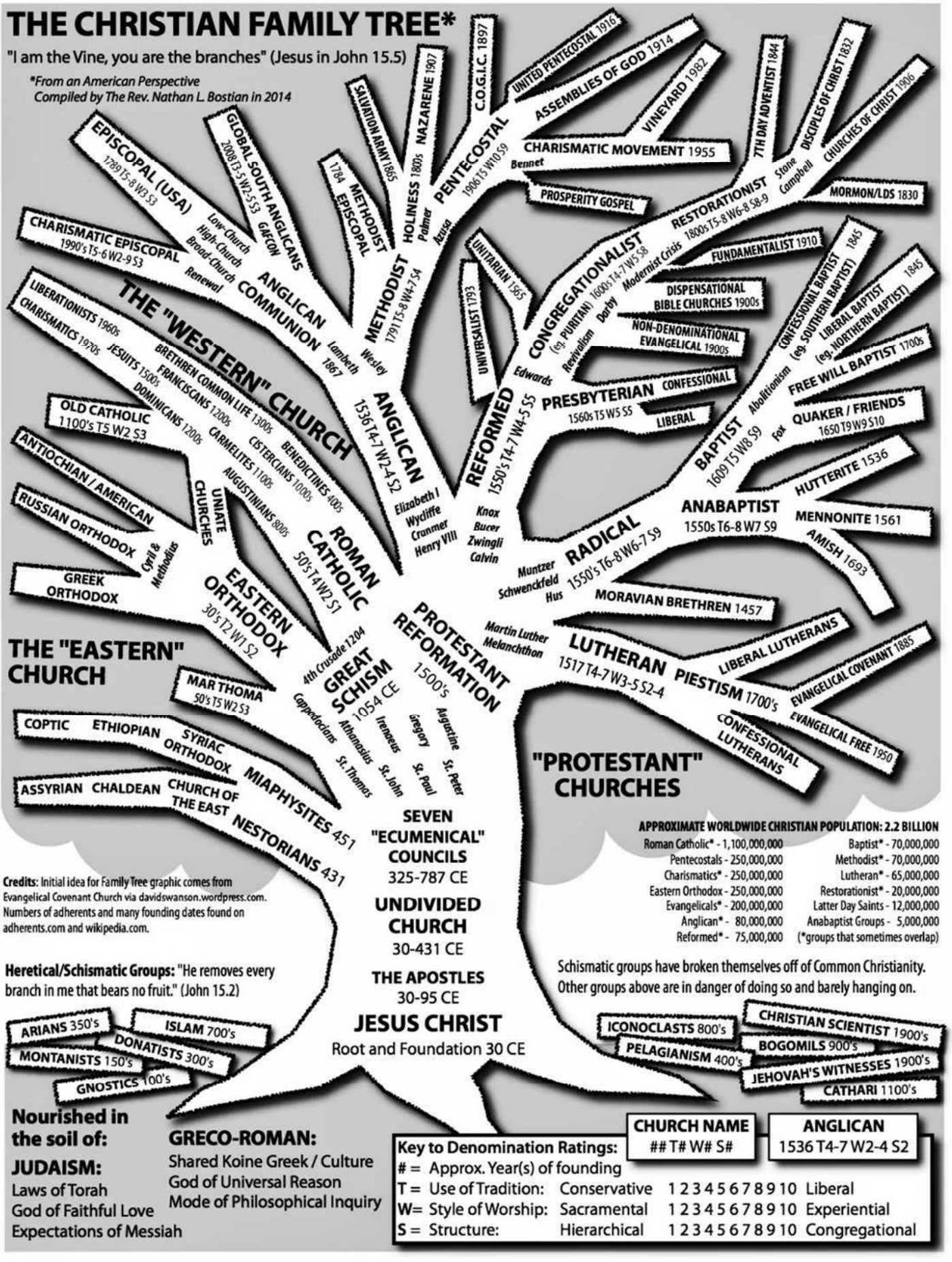
11Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God."– Hebrews 10:11-12

"In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence." – Ephesians 3:12

"**8** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." – Eph 2:8-10

Guidelines for Talking with Catholics

- Don't generalize. Ask questions about each person believes.
- Remember that salvation does not depend on church membership, but comes through faith in Jesus Christ *(Eph. 2:8-9).*
- Don't assume that a Catholic is or is not saved. Ask diagnostic questions about their personal faith. Don't expect them to use "Evangelical" vocabulary.
- Pray and trust in the Holy Spirit to use the gospel message to reach the hearts and minds of those who are lost.
- Share a testimony of your personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.
- Communicate that your assurance is derived from trusting Jesus and not from your good works or your ability to remain *faithful (1 John 5:13).*
- Avoid getting bogged down with secondary issues that are not central to salvation.
- Keep the conversation centered on Christ.


THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY TREE*
"I am the Vine, you are the branches" (Jesus in John 15.5)
*From an American Perspective
Compiled by The Rev. Nathan L. Bostian in 2014
EPISCOPAL (USA) 1789 T5-8 W3 S3
GLOBAL SOUTH ANGLICANS 2008 T3-5 W2-5 S3
GAFCON
Low-Church
High-Church
Broad-Church
CHARISMATIC EPISCOPAL 1990's T5-6 W2-9 S3
Renewal
ANGLICAN COMMUNION
1784 METHODIST EPISCOPAL
SALVATION ARMY 1865
NAZARENE 1907
HOLINESS 1800s
Palmer
Azusa
PENTECOSTAL 1906 T5 W10 S9
C.O.G.I.C. 1897
UNITED PENTECOSTAL 1916
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD 1914
VINEYARD 1982
CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT 1955
Bennet
7TH DAY ADVENTIST 1844
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST 1832
CHURCHES OF CHRIST 1906
Stone
Campbell
RESTORATIONIST 1800s T5-8 W6-8 S8-9
MORMON/LDS 1830
PROSPERITY GOSPEL
UNITARIAN 1565
UNIVERSALIST 1793
CONGREGATIONALIST (eg. PURITAN) 1600s T4-7 W5 S8
Modernist Crisis
FUNDAMENTALIST 1910
DISPENSATIONAL BIBLE CHURCHES 1900s
Darby
NON-DENOMINATIONAL EVANGELICAL 1900s
Revivalism
Edwards
CONFESSIONAL BAPTIST (eg. SOUTHERN BAPTIST) 1845
LIBERAL BAPTIST (eg. NORTHERN BAPTIST) 1845
Abolitionism
FREE WILL BAPTIST 1700s
BAPTIST 1609 T5 W8 S9
Fox
QUAKER / FRIENDS 1650 T9 W9 S10
PRESBYTERIAN CONFESSIONAL 1560s T5 W5 S5
LIBERAL
REFORMED 1550's T4-7 W4-5 S5
Knox
Bucer
Zwingli
Calvin
ANABAPTIST 1550s T6-8 W7 S9
HUTTERITE 1536
MENNONITE 1561
AMISH 1693
RADICAL 1550's T6-8 W6-7 S9
Muntzer
Schwenckfeld
Hus
MORAVIAN BRETHREN 1457
Martin Luther
Melanchthon
LUTHERAN 1517 T4-7 W3-5 S2-4
LIBERAL LUTHERANS
PIESTISM 1700's
EVANGELICAL COVENANT 1885
EVANGELICAL FREE 1950
CONFESSIONAL LUTHERANS
"PROTESTANT" CHURCHES
PROTESTANT REFORMATION 1500's
ANGLICAN 1536 T4-7 W2-4 S2
Elizabeth I
Wycliffe
Cranmer
Henry VIII
THE "WESTERN" CHURCH
LIBERATIONISTS 1960s
CHARISMATICS 1970s
JESUITS 1500s
BRETHREN COMMON LIFE 1300s
FRANCISCANS 1200s
DOMINICANS 1200s
CARMELITES 1100s
CISTERCIANS 1000s
BENEDICTINES 400s
AUGUSTINIANS 800s
OLD CATHOLIC 1100's T5 W2 S3
ROMAN CATHOLIC 50's T4 W2 S1
ANTIOCHIAN / AMERICAN
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX
UNIATE CHURCHES
Cyril & Methodius
GREEK ORTHODOX
EASTERN ORTHODOX 30's T2 W1 S2
THE "EASTERN" CHURCH
4th Crusade 1204
GREAT SCHISM 1054 CE
MAR THOMA 50's T5 W2 S3
Cappedocians
Athanasius
Irenaeus
Gregory
Augustine
St. Thomas
St. John
St. Paul
St. Peter
COPTIC
ETHIOPIAN
SYRIAC ORTHODOX
MIAPHYSITES 451
ASSYRIAN
CHALDEAN
CHURCH OF THE EAST
NESTORIANS 431
SEVEN "ECUMENICAL" COUNCILS 325-787 CE
UNDIVIDED CHURCH 30-431 CE
THE APOSTLES 30-95 CE
JESUS CHRIST
Root and Foundation 30 CE
APPROXIMATE WORLDWIDE CHRISTIAN POPULATION: 2.2 BILLION
Roman Catholic* - 1,100,000,000
Pentecostals - 250,000,000
Charismatics* - 250,000,000
Eastern Orthodox - 250,000,000
Evangelicals* - 200,000,000
Anglican* - 80,000,000
Reformed* - 75,000,000
Baptist* - 70,000,000
Methodist* - 70,000,000
Lutheran* - 65,000,000
Restorationist* - 20,000,000
Latter Day Saints - 12,000,000
Anabaptist Groups - 5,000,000
(*groups that sometimes overlap)
Schismatic groups have broken themselves off of Common Christianity.
Other groups above are in danger of doing so and barely hanging on.
ICONOCLASTS 800's
PELAGIANISM 400's
CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST 1900's
BOGOMILS 900's
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES 1900's
CATHARI 1100's
Credits: Initial idea for Family Tree graphic comes from Evangelical Covenant Church via davidswanson.wordpress.com. Numbers of adherents and many founding dates found on adherents.com and wikipedia.com.
Heretical/Schismatic Groups: "He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit." (John 15.2)
ARIANS 350's
ISLAM 700's
DONATISTS 300's
MONTANISTS 150's
GNOSTICS 100's
Nourished in the soil of:
JUDAISM:
Laws of Torah
God of Faithful Love
Expectations of Messiah
GRECO-ROMAN:
Shared Koine Greek / Culture
God of Universal Reason
Mode of Philosophical Inquiry
CHURCH NAME
T# W# S#
ANGLICAN
1536 T4-7 W2-4 S2
Key to Denomination Ratings:
# = Approx. Year(s) of founding
T = Use of Tradition: Conservative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Liberal
W= Style of Worship: Sacramental 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Experiential
S = Structure: Hierarchical 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Congregational