

Why it all matters.

Recently, my son asked me “why I like mass so much?” I thought for a second, because I was first stunned by the question, but my answer came quick to my mind. I said, “If you actually knew what was happening at the mass, you would love it too!”

This question, and my immediate answer, while accurate, began to haunt me. I asked myself how come more people don’t understand what this actually happening at mass? I decided to set out to come up with a way to explain this. This presentation represents the culmination of all of my studies up to this point in my life. My hope is that this will pique your interest and start you on a journey of your own.

The Big Questions.

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- Have you ever wondered if... ***Is the trinity really one god in three persons?***

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- Have you ever thought... ***did Jesus really DIE for our sins?***

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- Have you ever asked yourself... ***Why do we need the eucharist, Does the Mass really matter?***

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The answer is YES!

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thank you for coming! Any Questions

New Slide →

God’s order in the kingdom of heaven.

To properly understand, we have to go back to the beginning of everything and work forward. What follows is a very brief overview of the history of the church, provided simply to refresh your memories, and to give context to the points that I will be making later.

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- God – Always Existed, creator of all things, he is, was, and ever shall be.

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- Angels – St. Thomas, through Divine revelation helps us here...

- 1st Sphere

- Seraphim - the highest angelic class and they serve as the caretakers of God's throne — Satan was the morning star, he was the first of the seraphim, he was the highest of all angels.
- Cherubim - have four faces: one of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle. They guard the way to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden and the throne of God
- Thrones - described as adoring elder men who sat at the foot of god and listened to the will of God and present the prayers of men.

- 2nd Sphere

- Dominations - regulate the duties of lower angels
- Virtues - These angels are those through which signs and miracles are made in the world

- Powers - supervise the movements of the heavenly bodies in order to ensure that the cosmos remains in order
- 3rd Sphere
 - Principalities – they guide and protect nations, or groups of peoples, and institutions such as the Church.
 - Archangels – they are the guardian angels of nations and countries, and are concerned with the issues and events surrounding these, including politics, military matters, commerce and trade
 - Angels - They are the ones most concerned with the affairs of living things. Within the category of the angels, there are many different kinds, with different functions. The angels are sent as messengers to humanity. Personal guardian angels come from this class.

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- The Universe of Planets and Stars

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- Humans & Animals

In the kingdom of heaven it was thought that the things created first were of greater importance than those things created later. Thus the humans were thought to be the lowest of the intelligent beings in the kingdom of heaven. But as we will see, God had a different plan. Jesus always said the last will be first, and the first will be last.

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The last thing god created was man.

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- Gods plan was for his last creation to be the most beloved.
 - He gave man free will. He gave us the ability to choose God or reject him
 - Freely given love is the greatest of all love, and God knew that that would make man his most beloved creation.

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- Satan falls because of this... after learning gods plan to become man and walk among us, he refuses to worship god in human form.
 - Satan, like many #2's in history could not deal with not being #1. One step below god, but not god. Envy overtook him and he set out to destroy Gods beloved creation, and to prove God wrong.

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- The Story of Adam & Eve has great importance to understanding His plan.
 - Adam and Eve were innocent, they were like 5-year-olds.
 - As they got older, they started to question the world around them, much like all of us did at a certain age...
 - God gave them free will, and this makes us unique in god's kingdom. The angels, and stars, and plants and animals don't have free will..., only Man was given this gift.
 - And freedom has consequences, Adam and Eve show us why.
 - It is important to remember that there were Two trees in the garden, tree of life would allow you to live forever, and the tree of knowledge which would give you knowledge of good and evil.
 - They were allowed to eat from the tree of Life but not the other. Why?
 - Because when Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge they would be **forever** changed.

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- Fr. Longenecker (at the men's conference) describes it this way... The Knowledge of good and evil *is* the consequence of simply making the choice of choosing the apple
 - The choice ultimately results in three consequences – Power / desire / Pride
 - Choosing gives you a sense of **power**, in that you get to feel like you are in control.
 - Choosing leads to **desire**, because you are picking one thing over another
 - Choosing results in **pride** as a result of making one choice over another.
 - This single choice will never satisfy though, it leaves us wanting more, ultimately wanting it all
 - We then find ourselves feeling envy for the things that we don't have and...,
 - This power, desire and pride end up preventing us from blaming ourselves...,
 - So instead of facing that truth we look at others as the cause of our pain, and a continuous cycle of blame begins.
 - This cycle continues and becomes exponentially compounded forever.
 - For some it becomes a religion. Be it politics, activism, etc., we become blind to the evil that we, ourselves, are doing.
 - This cycle will continue forever until we recognize that we are ultimately the ones responsible for our own pain.

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- Adam and Eve started this cycle, and consequently passed it on to all of their posterity, and we all grapple with these sins even today.
 - They had defied God. They choose themselves, their wants and their needs over what god wants.
 - This is what is called original sin. And it is this sin that separates us from God and his plans for us.

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- So now that Adam and Eve had sinned so egregiously, the only recourse that god had left, was to evict them from the garden forever.
 - But it is really important to recognize here that getting kicked out was actually a beautiful act of mercy.
 - If Adam and Eve were allowed to stay in the garden, with the tree of life, the tree of life would have given them the ability to live forever.
 - But God did not want them to live forever in a state of sin so death, for them, was a mercy and not a punishment.

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Man try's to follow god's law, but is overcome by sin.

- Kicked out, but God never abandoned us, even now, after our eviction, he had a plan to restore us to glorification, but it would take some time to unfold.
 - Gods plan was always to give us a way to find our way back to the kingdom of heaven..., That is of course, if we humans don't reject it.
 - Moving forward in biblical history, I want to talk about the jewish people and their journey from slavery into the promised land and then into and out of exile, and finally with the arrival of Jesus.
- **The Parable of the Tenants** — Mathew 21:33-42
 - I Always thought that this parable very concisely describes the struggles of the Jewish people

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- There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

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- God started by sending us the leaders like Noah, Abraham, Jacob, etc. Examples to show us the way to live as faithful subjects of God, and they produced much fruit.

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- Then he sent us Moses, Joshua, etc, They established the law and put a hedge around it to protect from ever transgressing the law, and establishing clearly how to live
Describe hedges around the law. Use examples of a lamb and his mothers milk or doing anything that could be considered work on the sabbath..

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- Then he sent judges and kings, to build the temple and begin the sacred rituals. He put these kings in charge of guarding his kingdom, and then left us a lone for awhile.

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- When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.

- The people did not do so well with all that responsibility.

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- Corruption entered the temple, the human leaders did terrible things to each other...,

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- The fruit that god had left them to produce, withered on the vine.

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- The leaders ended up putting hedges around their hedges to the point that they forgot the original law.

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- The Jewish Talmud gives us a good example (Bava Metzia, 59b).

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Achna'i Oven: The rabbi's were arguing about whether or not this particular oven could be defiled in the same way that jars of clay could be, if unclean things were put into the oven.

On that day Rabbi Eliezer brought forward every imaginable argument [to prove that the achna'i oven is not subject to ritual defilement], but the sages did not accept his arguments.

Said Rabbi Eliezer, "If the halachah agrees with me, let this carob tree prove it."

Thereupon the carob tree was uprooted and moved a distance of a hundred cubits; others say, four hundred cubits.

"No proof can be brought from a carob tree," they retorted.

Again Rabbi Eliezer said to them, "If the halachah agrees with me, let the stream of water prove it," whereupon the stream of water began to flow backward.

"No proof can be brought from a stream of water," they rejoined.

Again he urged, "If the halachah agrees with me, let the walls of the academy prove it," whereupon the walls inclined to fall.

But Rabbi Yehoshua rebuked the walls, saying, "Scholars are engaged in halachic dispute; what right have you to interfere?"

The walls did not cave in completely in deference to Rabbi Yehoshua, nor did they resume their upright position in deference to Rabbi Eliezer; and they are still standing thus inclined.

Again, Rabbi Eliezer said to them, "If the halachah agrees with me, let heaven prove it."

Thereupon a heavenly voice proclaimed, "Why do you dispute with Rabbi Eliezer? The halachah follows his opinion on all matters!"

Rabbi Yehoshua rose to his feet and exclaimed, "The Torah is not in heaven!"

— *The Talmud, Bava Metzia, 59b*

- As you can see the “hedges” got so ridiculous that simply helping someone who fell down on the sabbath was considered a sin against God. I think that we can all agree that they were missing the original point of god’s law here.

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- But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned.

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- So the lord sent prophets (Elijah & Elisha, Jonah, Isaiah, etc.), to warn the kings and the people to repent.

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- Some where successful, most weren’t. Jonah was swallowed by a whale..., and Isaiah died in one of the most horrifying ways imaginable.

Click → **Show image of Isaiah Death →**

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- Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way.

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- The Jews are then Exiled from the promised land by the Babylonians...,

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- More prophets are sent (Jeremiah , Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi, etc.).

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- They are all tortured and killed.

- Jeremiah – Starved, Ezekiel – Burned Alive, Daniel – Killed, Zechariah – Stoned

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- Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’ They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

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- Finally god sends his own son into the world. Man cannot be relied upon to do the will of God, so he sends us his Son, to show us how to live. He too is tortured and killed. Man has decided that they now know best how to manage god’s kingdom, and they no longer need his input.

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- The rabbi’s were so wrapped up in their law and so convinced of their knowledge of it, that when the lord god himself returns as the messiah, these rabbi’s were not able to even notice it.

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- What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?” They answered him, “He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.”

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- After Jesus is crucified, the jewish temple is destroyed.

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- And the new tenants are the christians that will produce fruit at the proper times.

- This is the story of the old testament in a single parable. It shows very simply, how most of the jewish people failed to see the messiah as Jesus, and heed his message of the new covenant.

- How did this happen, how were we so blind to gods gift of sending himself to us.

- Well you have to look at prophesy and see that there are two messiah’s predicted.

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Jesus WAS the messiah, that was prophesied, but the Jews missed it!

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- Prophecy predicted both a conquering king, and a suffering servant. — The Jews were expecting a king, riding on a chariot of fire, who would eradicate evil, and bring peace and justice into the world.

-- Anglican Scripture scholar N.T. Wright – Wrote this:

When a first-century Jew spoke of the arrival of God's kingdom, he was taken to mean something very specific. He was announcing that the Temple was going to be restored; that the proper worship of Yahweh would obtain; that the enemies of Israel would be dealt with; and that, above all, the tribes of the Lord—and through them, the tribes of the world—would be gathered.

This is what the Jews were waiting for, what we got was the other Messiah, the one predicted in Isaiah, Ezekiel, and in the psalms.

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- Jesus was **born** as a **child** in Nazareth..., He cures the sick, makes the deaf hear, lets the blind see, and allows the lame to walk..., just as was prophesied by Isaiah and Ezekiel
 - He shows us how to live the way God's wants, by his own example, and according to God's will

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- Jesus came the way Isaiah foretold as a meek and humble man that would die for us.

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- The Jews thought he was an imposter, because they had so clouded their minds with their own assumption, and bastardized the law so badly, that they no longer could see Jesus, the messiah, even though he was standing right in front of them.
 - So, they killed him to hang on to their power, and prestige.
 - But I do not think that Elijah's prophecy was wrong, I just think that they got the order wrong. I do believe that when the Lord returns for the end times, that he will come with thunder, riding on a chariot of fire....

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- The Second coming of the Lord, for us, will be the first coming for the Jews. And all of God's people will finally be reconciled with the ONE true God.

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Summary of Session #1

- God created everything in the universe and created man last.
- Man was his most beloved creation, and Satan could not stand this.
- Adam and Eve sinned by choosing their own wants and needs over what God wants for us.
- God gave us his law, and Man created rules around those laws to the point that God's intent was lost.
- The Jewish leaders got comfortable with their power and their lording it over the Jewish people.
- So-much-so, that when Jesus arrived they thought that he was a heretic, and not the messiah.

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Lets review those questions...

Is the trinity really one god in three persons?

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- From the beginning of everything God has always been the father, the son, and the holy spirit.
 - This is hard to understand because how can ONE God be the three distinct beings?
 - The church calls it a mystery, and we will not fully understand until we meet them in heaven.
 - But here is my stab at it...
- God has always existed. There was never a time that God in the trinity was not around
 - God's word is creative. All he has to do is to speak and it will be. "Let there be light." All of genesis is full of examples of this.
 - God's word is all goodness/ beauty / truth / love / greatness / etc. Everything in the world that is NOT evil, is god's, comes from God, and reflects his eternal essence.
 - This goodness, is so majestic, so awesome, and so wonderful, that it became a new being of itself. This new creation is the word made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.

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- It is said that Grace is poured out on you in direct proportion to how much you give it away.
 - God pours out his love completely on his son, and Jesus returns that love in equal proportion.
 - This interchange magnifies love infinitely..., So much that that their love pours out on the rest of the world in such abundance that we have named this love. This is what we call the holy Spirit.

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- It is through the Trinity that God is able to model his pure and perfect love for all his kingdom.
 - See, if God were ONE being..., as the maker of all creation, god's love, with regard to us, would simply be misconstrued by all of his creation as a reward for good behavior, and god's anger would conversely be interpreted as wrath, for something that we did wrong.
 - This is how all mankind viewed all God's before the Jews. Think Zeus, Baal, Jupiter, Ra, etc... They were all fear-full beings, and nobody thought for a moment that God would care about us lowly people, let alone love us. This was unthinkable.
 - The creator by his very nature is the creator and the highest of all beings. And all of his creation by their very nature are lower than him.
 - The reality of the relationship we have with God, is completely unequal. We can never aspire to be on and equal footing with God.

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- So how can a human learn to love god, Jesus shows us the way.
 - Jesus, was begotten (not made) of the father. Jesus is equal in every way to the father, and so their love for each other is completely selfless, and completely free, and completely equal.

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- But here is the most crazy thing of all of this. Jesus was also 100% man, and because He is equally both man and god, he can bridge that gap and model for us how to love god the way he does.
 - So, even though humans are the lowest in the kingdom of heaven, God wants more than anything to have that same relationship that he has with Jesus, with each and every one of us.

Click → Show Bill Nye Video → Click →

- BOOM! Mind blown. Can you BELIEVE THAT!!! GOD loves YOU the way he loves Jesus.
- And he wants YOU to participate in that relationship with God as well.

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- God created man as lowest in the kingdom of heaven, but He gave us free will. Unlike every other creature in the kingdom of heaven, we have the ability to reject god, and we have the ability to love and accept him. It is COMPLETELY UP-TO-YOU!
 - But get this. If you decide to love him the way Jesus did, he will pour out more love, more joy, more grace on you that you could ever believe. All you have to do is ask him into your life.
 - Just as god and Jesus, modeled perfect love for us, he tells us that he wants that same relationship with each of us.
 - He wants to pour his love, and his spirit into each one of us, if only we would accept it...
 - The angels are not capable of this type of relationship. They are more akin to servants of God, rather than equal partners in a loving relationship with Him, the way humans were created to be.
 - When Jesus entered into human form to show us the way, Satan could not accept it, because he only knew God as king, and he saw mankind as the lowest in the kingdom of heaven, and the servant of all.
 - When Satan refused to worship Jesus in human form, he fell from heaven, and set out to destroy gods kingdom and corrupt His beloved possession. His rejection is that of envy, pride, and lack of Humilty.
 - Jesus on the other hand is proof that Mankind can have the kind or relationship God wants with each of us. Jesus was 100% man and 100% god. And shows us the way, the way to love god completely, and totally, in the perfect agape relationship that He wants for us all.

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- So yes the trinity is real, and it is ONE God. And thank god for it. Because without a god that loves us this much we would never know how to love him back, or even that it is possible.

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Why this Matters!

- Because without the trinity how could we ever truly understand love. I mean the **agape** love that Jesus offers to everyone, regardless of who they are.
- This love is undeserved, unearned, but it is freely given to all of us

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Did Jesus really die for our sins?

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- Remember the cycle of blame we discussed earlier, the original sin started by Adam and Eve, in the garden when they ate the apple. The sin of defying god.
 - Jesus came to earth to break that cycle of blame. How? He ended it by saying blame me! He said stop blaming each other for your sins. Put it on me, and I will take it.
 - Jesus tells every one of us..., blame me, put your sin, your weakness, your anger, your pain, your everything on me, and I will take it, and it will end with me.
 - In so doing, he wins the battle with the devil! He breaks this perpetual cycle from the inside out.

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- In his sacrificial love God counteracts the trick that the Devil played on Adam and Eve.
 - The Devil sought to turn God's beloved creation against Him. And in-so-doing prove to God that he (the Devil) was right about Man. God knew better and set out a plan to reconcile his people with him.

- St Gregory of Nyssa, had a very interesting vision, and wrote that he believed that at some point god made a deal with the devil, that God would give the devil dominion over the world, and any of the sinners within it, but the righteous had to be left alone. This is similar to the Story of Job, and it follows that same pattern. But in Gregory's vision, **God Tricks Satan**. When the slaves and minions of Satan killed Jesus, the most perfect and righteous of all Mankind, the deal with Satan was broken.
- This resulted in two things happening, First, Jesus died so that **ALL** mankind, not just the righteous could be redeemed and saved unto god, but it also defeated the devil for all eternity, and it took away his total control over Mankind. If you simply follow God's precepts, make use of the sacraments, and go to mass, the Devil cannot touch you. If you live in a state of grace, you are under God's protection.
- Jesus said "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." — John 15:13.
- Jesus in the last supper discourses, tells us his plan. That he is going to take on the sins of the world and bear them on his own shoulders, and die so that our sinfulness can be forgiven.

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- How??? This is the BIG question!!! I want you to think about someone you love. Be it a child, a spouse, a parent, or someone who is a dear friend. Would you take a bullet for them, would you step in front a bus to push them out of the way? What would you **not** you do for them? — Got it!?!? That is how god thinks of all of us!!!
 - God wants us to be in love with him like that. That is how he loves each and every one of us.

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- When Jesus died, it was as if he took that bullet for all of us. Those born, and died, and those who have not yet existed. How is that possible?
 - Well, like earlier in this talk, that is what the church calls a "Mystery"!
 - Click → Show Mystery Video → Click →
 - But I think that it can be understood like this.
 - God exists outside of time. He is what is, was, and ever shall be. Wrap your head around this.... God created time! He created it! to give us the ability to understand creation. To help us understand our place in this universe, our origin and creation, and our dependence on our creator, God.
 - When Jesus told his disciples that he would die and raise himself from the dead. He told us to remember this "last supper" and to do this remembrance always.

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- Catholics believe that the eucharist is a real, active, and true participation in the last supper, **not** a reenactment.

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- Every time you go to mass, every time the Eucharist is transubstantiated we are there with Jesus at the last supper, in suspension of time, and we are sitting with Jesus himself.
 - He is taking our sin..., our offerings, our prayers, our weakness, our failures, our inadequacy, and he puts them on his shoulders and carries them to the cross.

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- He takes it all and then he turns to God the father and says, "Pray, brothers and sisters, that **MY** sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty father."

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- Jesus, takes all of our sins, every mass, and GOD forgives us..., and he **ACTUALLY DIES** for us, and he makes clear the way to kingdom of heaven and the Glory of God.
 - If we could only go forward, and not sin, and live in a state of Grace, then we would not ever need to go back to church again, and we would, in fact, already be in the kingdom of heaven.
 - But alas, mankind is weak, and the devil is very clever at his craft, thus we need to go to Mass **often**.
 - Do you remember the Power / Pride / Desire that I mentioned as the consequences of original sin?
 - Well Fr. Longenecker gives the remedy for that as well. With God's sacrifice and forgiveness, we can strive for redemption by doing the following.

- To counteract the sin of Pride, we need to repent, accept that we are responsible and the pain of the sin in our own lives, make reparations, and ask for forgiveness from those we hurt.
- To counteract the sin of Desire, we need to have faith. Trusting in god is the cure for wanting more than you need. God will provide all that you need and nothing more.
- To counteract the sin of Power, we need to get on our knees, humble ourselves and be of service to others. By putting others first, we find redemption for thinking only of ourselves.

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- Jesus did indeed die for our sins, **once** and for **all time**, but we fully participate in this, act every time we go to mass!?!
 - How, remember that time is different for God. This is why we no longer have to sacrifice lambs, and burn grain, at a temple in Jerusalem, because Jesus' sacrifice, on the cross 2000 years ago, is timeless, yet it echoes through time, as the **one, true, last, and final** sacrifice for all time, and for all the world. It is a mystery, but it is understandable, if you think the way god does. ;-)'

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Why this Matters!

- Without Jesus' death on the cross, there is no one to stop the cycle of blame, and no one to forgive us even though we don't deserve it.
- No person on earth is good enough, strong enough and loving enough to do this... ONLY GOD!
- And the most amazing thing of all...! We get to fully participate in this miracle, every time we go to mass!

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Why do we need the eucharist, Does the Mass really matter?

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- When man fell from grace and was kicked out of the garden, Mankind was no longer under the God's divine protection. We were left to our own devices to sin and succumb to evil or to reject and overcome it! To rise above, or fall to temptation. To die, or to strive to find our way back the kingdom of heaven.

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- Man needed a way to reconcile with god, and god in his compassion provided.
 - God gave us leaders like Abraham, Noah, and Moses, man did not follow.
 - He gave us laws for how to live, laws where we could strive to do good and resist evil, But man's need for power and control temped us, and we turned those laws into a convoluted mess, and separated ourselves even further from God.
 - Then He gave us prophets, and wise men to help us correct our ways, but we tortured and killed them.
 - Finally, He gave us Jesus, and we killed Him too.

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- When Jesus suffered and was executed, he tore down the temple, and in three days he restored it in the resurrection. Jesus' resurrection changed everything, for all time.

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Before Jesus	After Jesus
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Jews traveled to the temple once a year, from miles away.	Go get to go to mass at your local parish, anytime you want
Forgiveness was only possible if you went to the temple, presented a sacrifice or offering, and followed the laws of the scribes and pharisees precisely and exactly	Forgiveness is automatic. If you repent, ask for forgiveness, and make restitution, God's love and compassion are guaranteed for all people at anytime
The temple was the dwelling place of the lord. Behind walls separated by a veil, and inside an ark of gold. The temple instilled fear, it instilled separation, and it prevented closeness.	Through the eucharist, we become the new dwelling place of the lord. So approachable is Jesus, that he now resides inside of us, as part of us, merging His essence with our own.
God was an ominous, vengeful, and scary God, who demanded sacrifice for atonement of sin.	Jesus is caring, loving, and forgiving, who does not need your sacrifices, but wants nothing more than to simply just be in a loving relationship with you.
Jewish law bound and constrained people so much that they were forbidden to even help each other if it was the Sabbath.	Jesus, while honoring god's law as perfect, said that the greatest of all law is to love God and Love your neighbor.

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- The eucharist is the **REAL** manifestation of this new reality. God now dwells among us, he lives within us, and works to make us all better from the inside out.

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- The eucharist nourishes us, it cleanses us from our sins, and it protects us from the onslaught of the devil.
 - I don't believe that there is anything more important than that.

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- The process of perfection, however, is incremental and continuous. This process is called living in a "State of Grace"

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- What is needed to live in a state of grace? It starts by being baptized and confirmed, but that is only the beginning.

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- We must work daily to study and learn our faith, we must strive to do good and resist evil. And when we fail we must make frequent use of confession.

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- But most importantly we must go to mass every week. Mass is the center of everything.
 - Mass is where we learn God's word, where we celebrate the wedding feast of the Lord, and we are blessed to get the nourishment and sanctification of the Eucharist.

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Why this Matters!

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, it is the only way that we can be redeemed unto Christ, and the mass is where this all becomes real.

Final thoughts

- I want to give you some final ammunition for your battles to come.

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- Let's start with the 9 commandments
 - Yeah yeah, I know I am probably teaching blasphemy, but I have a point to this.
 - When you read either Exodus 20:1-14 or Deuteronomy 5:6-21 in the NABRE the decalogue is written out in 9 paragraphs instead of 10

- There is an interesting article on this that I encourage you to read if you want to know more about the 9 commandments: <https://www.latimes.com/tn-dpt-me-0207-god-squad-20150206-story.html>
- But basically the Jews and protestants split the first commandment into 2 and the Catholics break the last commandment into 2. Either way, if you write it as nine, they are all there, and I honestly if is more poetic this way.

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- Regardless of the order, I like 9 because it splits into 3 groups very nicely.

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- The first three are concerned with man's relationship with god. The second three relate to man's relationship with the community, and the last three are related man's relationship with their neighbor.

You must understand your relationship with god

1. I am the lord your God, you shall not put other gods before me.
2. You shall not do evil in God's name (Invoke god's name in vain).
3. You shall Remember the Sabbath day. You, your children, slaves, and animals will rest.

You must respect your place the community

4. You shall Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not commit murder.
6. You shall not commit adultery.

You must honor your relationship to your neighbor

7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or your neighbor's goods.

- Well it should not be a surprise, but The devil from the very beginning has always tried to mock, twist, and destroy all that is good, true and beautiful in the world. Taking his law and sacred things, and turning them into ridiculous caricatures of the original (ex. Goat versus lamb, raven wings over a dove's, reason over faith, dark versus light, etc.)
- He hates God for exalting humans as his greatest creation, and he wants more than anything to convince God that He was wrong about us.

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- Satan has also mocked God's Commandment as well. He has his own list of 9 commandments

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- And it should not be a surprise that Satan's list can be broken down into three divisions as well... They are:

You are the god of yourself...

1. Satan represents indulgence instead of abstinence.
2. Satan represents vital existence instead of spiritual pipe dreams.
3. Satan represents undefiled wisdom instead of hypocritical self-deceit.

No one has the right to command you...

4. Satan represents kindness to those who deserve it, instead of love wasted on ingrates.
5. Satan represents vengeance instead of turning the other cheek.
6. Satan represents responsibility to the responsible instead of concern for psychic vampires.

You can do anything you want...

7. Satan represents man as just another animal who, because of his "divine spiritual and intellectual development", has become the most vicious animal of all.
8. Satan represents all of the so-called sins, as they all lead to physical, mental, or emotional gratification.
9. Satan has been the best friend the Church has ever had, as he has kept it in business all these years.

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- Satan has many ways to tempt you, but they all come down to one of these three things...

- I got the 3 main sections from Mark Veazie... I got the rest from Wikipedia, I am too afraid to do more research than that. I am not definitely not holy enough to open myself up to that kind of thing.
- Nevertheless, I know that we all have found ourselves contemplating one or many of these.
- But if you find yourself ever thinking one of these thoughts, and trying to rationalize it, there is one think I know for sure... I **GUARANTEE** that these thoughts are not coming from GOD.

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- Satan tempted Adam and Eve with these three thoughts, and they fell. Genesis 3:1-8. he also tempted Jesus with the same three temptations in the desert, Luke 4:1-13 or Matthew 4:1-11, but Jesus overcame them.
 - Jesus wants you to reject these temptations too, and thus to reject sin.
 - Where mankind fell to these temptations, and still does, every moment of every day, Jesus overcame them, and in so doing showed us, that not only can it be done, but that with him we can do it too.

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- God became man, to show us that rejecting these sins is possible. That a Man can do this. It is not out of the reach. We all fall short of that perfection but it is possible.
 - By rejecting sin we counteract the fall in the garden, and we establish a place for ourselves in Heaven.

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- How do we reject the devils temptation? Here are my thoughts.

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- ***You are the god of yourself...***
 - The devil here says that if you simply worship him, that he will give him dominion over all the world. But it is not his to give. He did not create the world, and he does not own it.
 - Jesus responds *"the lord your God, shall you worship, and him alone you shall serve."*
 - Jesus says *"the lord, **your** god..."*, Jesus knows that even the devil owes his existence to god alone, and if there is one thing that I know for sure, is that the Devil **believes** in god.
 - The temptation is to shirk man's need for God, and to rely only on ourselves... or as Bishop Sheen says... *"to have a new religion without a Cross, a liturgy without a world to come, a city of man without a city of God, a religion to invoke a religion, or a politics which is a religion. — one that renders unto Caesar even the things that are God's."*
 - We must identify our need for God! We owe our lives, our blessings, everything we see before us, to God. You cannot be god, if you are created by and subject to, something greater than you. So instead of loving yourself, you should direct that love where it belongs. **TO God!**

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- ***No one has the right to command you...***
 - Really?!?! This is stupid right on it's face. The world surrounds us with commands, Parents school, Government, everywhere you look we are told what to do and how to live.
 - But when Jesus confronted this temptation, the devil told him to jump off the parapet, and test whether god will allow him to be hurt, and send his angels to save him.
 - Jesus responds that *we do not put the lord, **YOUR** god to the test.*
 - The temptation here, fulton sheen says *"...is to desert the lofty pinnacles of truth where faith and reason reign, for those lower depths where the masses live on slogans and propaganda."*
 - The devil hates immutable truth, and instead wants us to follow and serve the hollow political and social movements of the day. Like Bishop Sheen says *"Opinions not truths, commentators not teachers, Gallup polls not principles, nature not grace..."*
 - The reality is that there really is authority in this world, and if it is right and just, it is to be respected. And if that authority is God, your eternity depends on how you respond.

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- ***You can do anything you want...***

- No you CANT!!!
- When the devil said that Jesus can make the stone into bread if he wants, Jesus said *“no one lives on bread alone, but from every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*
- The temptation here is to sell your freedom for security, and the freedom god provides is infinitely more valuable than the temporary comfort you might find in the devils promises.
- You cannot do whatever you want you must submit to God and his rules. But in-so-doing you will find more joy and freedom then can ever be imagined.
- ***The devil believes that god exists, but he tries more than anything to convince you he doesn't.***
Fulton Sheen once said...
“His [The Devil's] logic is simple: if there is no heaven there is no hell; if there is no hell, then there is no sin; if there is no sin, then there is no judge, and if there is no judgement then evil is good and good is evil.”

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- ***So how do we reject temptation...?***

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- The Mass, the eucharist, the sacraments, and living in a state of grace for as long as you possibly can.

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- When you fail, sin, or break your promises, start over.

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- Get back to confession, go to mass and get your spiritual nourishment, and try to go and sin no more.

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- It is a very simple idea, but hard work to accomplish.

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- But like all things in life worth having, they are not easy to obtain, and hard to hang on to, but when you do, they will provide more joy, more happiness, and more love than you could ever imagine.

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Jesus shows us... the way... and the truth... and the life

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Thank You for your time! I hope you learned something. Any Questions!