

**Table 5: Some Contrasts Between
the Gospel of Jesus Christ and “catholic” Christianity**

GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST	CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY
God is experienced in creation and interpersonal relationships	God is experienced (increasingly over time) in official church buildings and rituals (sacraments)
“Salvation” calls people out of empire into the Body of Christ on earth	“Salvation” is of individual souls after death
“Belief” or “trust” in God is an embodied stance that involves the whole person	“Belief” is intellectual assent to a series of theological propositions (e.g., creeds)
People are called to renounce individual wealth and status	People are called to renounce sexuality
Communal boundaries are open	Communal boundaries are tightly policed for “orthodox” thinking
Women are welcomed and included as equals in the churches	Women are seen as sources of male (sexual) temptation and are rejected from official authority in the churches
The hierarchical social order is to be replaced by egalitarian fellowship	The hierarchical social order is embraced and replicated in church structures
The patronage system of loyalty “from below” in exchange for benefits “from above” is rejected	The patronage system is embraced and replicated in church structures and practices
Differing perspectives are engaged	Differing perspectives are excluded and demonized, eventually, by the power of the Roman Empire