

Aberrations in Christianity Handout

Roman Catholicism

- Liturgical Christianity
- Truthful View of the Nature of God
- (Trinity, Deity and Humanity of Christ, Virgin Birth, Death and Resurrection, etc.)
- Erroneous Views of:
 1. Itself
 2. Salvation



Roman Catholicism sees itself as...

- The continuation of apostolic Christianity, the true church of Christ.
- Having an infallible interpretation of Scripture.

Truth in Roman Catholicism

1. Scripture
 2. Tradition
- Tradition—Doctrine which cannot be changed (perpetual virginity of Mary)
 - tradition—Practices which can be changed (clerical celibacy)

Summary of this Period

“Out of the organism of the body of Christ grew the organization of the Roman Catholic Church. Satan did with the early church what he did with the body of Judaism. As time progressed, so did the drift towards worldliness. With the easing of persecution came the advent of corruption. With the following of tradition came the flock of the goats. With the rise in popularity came the union with the state. As this developed, salvation more and more came in spite of the teaching of the organization, not because of it.”

Salvation According to Rome

- Salvation is not the sole effort of God but rather the joint effort of God and man.
- To go to heaven according to Catholic theology you must die in the state of sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace is received through the seven sacraments.
 - Baptism; Confession; Communion; Confirmation; Marriage; Holy Orders; Extreme Unction
- According to Catholic theology a person is born again in water baptism.
- “Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit...and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: ‘Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word’” (Catechism of the Catholic Church (1995), par. 1213).

- “Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte ‘a new creature,’ an adopted son of God, who has become a ‘partaker of the divine nature,’ member of Christ and co-heir with him, and a temple of the Holy Spirit” (par. 1265).

Sin in Roman Catholicism

- Broken down into two categories:
 1. Venial—lesser sins which do not affect sanctifying.
 2. Mortal—greater sins which eliminate sanctifying grace (murder, adultery, missing Mass on Sunday)
- When someone commits a mortal sin they can only return to the state of sanctifying grace through the sacrament of confession.
- Salvation can therefore never be on the basis of faith alone in Christ alone.
- “If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification...let him be anathema” (Council of Trent, c. 1546, Session 6, Canon 9).
- “If anyone says that a man who is justified...is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe, as if the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema” (Session 6, Canon 20).
- Assurance of salvation is viewed as presumption and no one can know for sure that he is going to heaven.
- Even if a person does go to heaven it is likely that he must spend an indeterminate time in purgatory as a final purging of sins before entering heaven.

What is the best way to witness to Roman Catholics?

- Share with them the Word of God.

Liberal Christianity (Protestantism)

- Errors are everywhere though not all consistent.
- General observation—seeks to remake God into the image of man, seeks to make Scripture acceptable to the carnal mind.
- Psalm 50:21, “You thought that I was just like you.”

Liturgical and liberal error both appeal to world.

1 John 4:5, “They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.”