

Is the Reformation Over? Key Differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism 500 Years Later

This workshop will outline both the commonalities between Catholicism and Protestantism (e.g., the doctrines of revelation, God, the Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, humanity, sin) as well as the differences between the two (Scripture and its relationship to Tradition, the Apocrypha, interpretation of Scripture, the image of God, original sin, the role of Mary, the nature and role of the church, the sacraments and how they work, baptism, the Lord's Supper/Eucharist, salvation, and purgatory). Undergirding these differences are the two axioms of Catholic theology: the nature-grace interdependence and the Christ-Church interconnection.

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I. Introduction

- A. The Reformation in brief

- B. Roman Catholic theology (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*) and Protestant theology (Reformed, Arminian, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal)

II. Roman Catholic theology as a system grounded on two axioms

- A. The nature-grace interdependence

- B. The Christ-Church interconnection

III. Roman Catholic and Protestant commonalities

- A. The Triune God

- B. The nature of God

- C. The revelation of God

- D. The person of Jesus Christ
- E. The saving work of Jesus Christ
- F. The Holy Spirit
- G. The dignity of human beings
- H. The depravity of human beings
- I. Salvation initiated by God
- J. The people of God
- K. The living hope

IV. Roman Catholic and Protestant differences

- A. Divine revelation: Scripture and Tradition, or Scripture alone
- B. The canon of Scripture: OT plus the Apocrypha, or OT without the Apocrypha
- C. The interpretation of Scripture: multiple meanings, single meaning, allegory, typology, the Magisterium, the illumination of the Holy Spirit, pastors

- D. The image of God: reason, the divine likeness, latent struggle, whole person

- E. Sin and its consequences: original sin, mortal sins, venial sins, depravity, inability

- F. The role of Mary: predestination, Eve-Mary parallel, immaculate conception, obedience of faith, sinlessness, perpetual virginity, suffering, bodily assumption

- G. The church: the sole Church of Christ, ecclesial communities, the papacy, marks

- H. The sacraments: sacrament or ordinance, 7 (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing, Holy Orders, Matrimony) or 2, *ex opere operato*

- I. Salvation: justification as forgiveness, sanctification, and regeneration by infusion of grace, or as forensic declaration of imputed righteousness

- J. Good works: as meriting eternal life or the fruit of justification and regeneration

- K. Perseverance and assurance: deny or affirm

- L. Purgatory: a temporary purgation for full cleansing from sin, or not needed

Suggested Readings:

Gregg R. Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014)

Chris Castaldo, *Holy Ground: Walking with Jesus as a Former Catholic* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2009); and *Talking with Catholics about the Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015)