

conviction *not* culture

WEEK 3 | Romans 1:16-17, 3:21-24

“The Roman Catholic View of Justification”

Introduction

Albert of Brandenburg – 23 yrs old, needed cash to pay for his archbishopric. Asked for indulgences to be sold to raise the money. After expenses, half would go to Albert to pay off his debt to Pope Leo, and the other half to the construction of St. Peter's Basilica.

Frederick the Elector – prevented Tetzel from coming to Wittenburg, for he had relics. Twig from the burning bush, bread from the Last Supper, Hair from Jesus' beard, hair from Mary, pieces of her girdle, milk from her breast, splinters from the Cross, etc. By 1520, there were over 19K objects; if one viewed them all, you could reduce time in Purgatory by 1,902,202 years and 270 days!

Tetzel – official of the Pope. “As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs.”

The indulgence system was based upon the concept of supererogation. Christ, Mary, and the saints performed a great number of good works that were stored up as a treasury of merit because they did not need them since they were sinless. Ordinary Christians died with more sins than merits, so a penalty had to be paid in purgatory before one could get to heaven. Friends and relatives could purchase or earn an indulgence to reduce time in purgatory by;

Be detached from all sin. Mortal (it killed justification infused at baptism) and venial.

There are two types or classifications of sin: mortal and venial. One sin is called mortal because it is serious enough to cause the death of the justifying grace that was infused at infant baptism.

What is penance? Penance involves confession, an act of contrition, works of satisfaction, followed by the priestly absolution.

What are works of satisfaction? It could be reciting so many Our Fathers or Hail Marys or making restitution or giving alms or going on a pilgrimage.

Condign Merit - Works that are so meritorious that they demand a reward. God would be unjust if he didn't reward condign merit. Works of satisfaction would never rise to the level of condign merit.

Congruous Merit - this is a merit that's dependent upon previous grace, sometimes referred to as prevenient grace, which makes it fitting for God to restore the person to a state of grace. So, if a person undergoes penance and performs the works of satisfaction prescribed by the priest, it would be incongruous for God not to restore that person to a state of justification.

- » Sacrament of Confession & Holy Communion
- » Pray for the Pope
- » Do the indulged work.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

“righteousness of God” and “righteousness,” our right-standing with God, the fact that we are now in a new and right relationship with God through Christ.

JUSTIFICATION

God declares the unjust to be just based upon Christ's work for them.

SANCTIFICATION

indicating the holy status Christians have through our union with Christ. This forms the foundation from which we grow in holiness and godliness in our lives and relationships; we strive to be what we are.

I. Justification in Roman Catholicism

Justificare – “to make righteous” – early church fathers, reading the Latin Vulgate rather than the Greek, developed their doctrine of justification on the Roman Empire’s legal system. As the church developed its doctrine of justification, it asked, “How is an unrighteous person, a sinner, made righteous?” The idea emerged that justification occurs AFTER sanctification. That is, to be just, we must first be sanctified to the point where we exhibit a righteousness acceptable to God. God will not declare us righteous until we actually are righteous.

From the Roman Catholicism perspective, justification is the function of the church’s sacerdotal operations. That is, justification comes primarily through the sacraments, which begin with pedobaptism. In Roman Catholicism theology, justification begins with infant baptism.

WHY?

It operates *ex opere operato*, “through the working of the work.” The baptized infant is by “the working of the work” placed in a state of grace/justification. The infant/person must have a certain predisposition or at least not have any opposition to the reception of the sacrament for it to function.

RC places incredible emphasis on the efficacy of baptism in bringing about a change in a person’s status to a state of grace.

At baptism, the grace and righteousness of Christ are poured out or infused into the soul, resulting in that person being in a state of grace.

1. A quantitative (measured, amount) grace that can be increased or diminished.

2. This is a conditional grace because the person must cooperate with that grace.
3. This grace is by no means immutable (unchanging). It can change, and it may be totally lost, which not only removes the person from a state of justification but also places them under the threat of damnation. How? When that person commits a mortal sin. There are two types or classifications of sin: mortal and venial. One sin is called mortal because it is serious enough to cause the death of the justifying grace that was infused at infant baptism.

II. Justification in Protestantism

Dikaioisune – which means “to declare righteous” – reformers, having access to the Greek manuscripts (Ottoman Turks invasion, humanism) focused on the Greek concept of justification. In Protestantism, justification comes BEFORE sanctification. You can see that there was a completely different order between the two.

1. Grace is superabounding: *Romans 5:20*
2. Grace is an unconditional free gift: *Romans 5:15-17*
3. Grace cannot be lost: *John 4:14, 5:24, 6:37-39, 11:25-26*

For the reformers, justification by faith alone rejects any kind of merit, like baptism, that adds to the satisfaction for sin that was accomplished by Christ alone!

Conclusion: *Ephesians 2:1-10*