***Catholic Doctrine

Colossians 1:15-20

COL-157***

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Our subject is "The Reconciliation of the Colossians," segment number two in Colossians 1:21-23.

Following the early New Testament hymn of praise at the beginning of the book of Colossians to the Lord Jesus Christ, in verses 15 through 20, Paul now speaks of reconciliation as it was applied to the Colossian Christians personally, in Colossians 1:21-23. Before salvation, the apostle says that the Colossians were alienated from God; that is, they were outside of the sphere of divine blessing, and of all divine viewpoint wisdom. That is the nature of our society today. It's full of religion, but not a religion from God. It is lacking in all divine viewpoint. It is operating strictly on human viewpoint from the sin nature cranked out by Satan. This was the condition of the Colossians at one time. And it is a pity that Christians today are not alerted sufficiently to be aware of the fact that that is the nature of all the people they meet in their lives, starting tomorrow morning.

There are people who are outside of the blessing of God, if they are unbelievers. And they are people who don't have the foggiest notion of what reality is, and of no concept of what God thinks. So, these people are a corrupting influence, and we must walk very carefully in our associations with them. Because the unsaved Colossians were estranged from God, they had a mental attitude of hostility toward Him. That too is the attitude of our society today. Do not let religion make you think that people are not hostile to God. If they're not born again through faith in Christ, they are hostile to God.

These people in Colossae were once the enemies of God, but at the same time they were friends of Satan's world system in society. Now, that too is a problem for Christians – not being friends with the world. And not being friends with the world means not living by the undignified qualities of the world. And the more you think about this, the more amazing it becomes how undignified Christians are in so many ways. And every one of those ways is reflecting the world system. The way people who are outside of the blessing and knowledge of God live – Christians are acting the same way.

We have the standard of reconciliation to God's absolute righteousness. We're not like the clowns of the world system, even if they're the talking heads on the nightly news. These people are without the mind of God.

This mental attitude was the mind of Satan working in the Colossians from their sin nature. All they had was a human viewpoint mentality. The unbelieving Colossians did not have God. They did not have doctrine. So, they had no divine viewpoint.

**Knowledge of Doctrine**

At every moment of the day however, even among those of us who are Christians, a person is thinking either human viewpoint or divine viewpoint, and you act accordingly. Having divine viewpoint is a matter of salvation, and of a knowledge of doctrine, and positive volition to it. It's not a matter of human IQ. And please note what I said: knowledge of doctrine, and positive volition to it.

A lady recently was taking issue with me about the knowledge of doctrine being at the core of the Christian life, and of the ministry of the local church. And I said, "Well, of course, when we say 'knowledge of doctrine,' we mean that you accept what God has said and act accordingly." And I could not believe the light in her eyes as she said, "Oh, I see now." Now, how dumb do you have to be? And this is a Christian. You have to be pretty dumb. Of course, when we tell you that you have to know what God thinks in doctrinal principles, you have to say "Amen" and "Hallelujah," and act accordingly. But if you don't have that, you have nothing. Your human IQ simply makes you an ignorant intellectual when it comes to spiritual things.

Now the consequence of a mind which is hostile to God and His laws was the practice of evil deeds. Overt external evil in the form of human goods are acts of sin. This constitutes evil with God. Both are from the sin nature. Human good is from the sin nature. And the Bible says that the more human good you produce, the greater will be your punishment in the lake of fire. If you spend your whole life making human good pour out of your old sin nature because you are not a Christian, and all you can produce is human good, it's going to be hell for all eternity for you like you wouldn't believe it. And the very people that all the world lauds and honors and praises, and gets all excited about, because they spend the life of human good, do not understand that human good from the sin nature is a devastatingly destructive thing to have on your record when you face God, because it is evil. And punishment in hell is structured according to the degree of your evil.

The unsaved person is not reconciled to God's standard of absolute righteousness, and he cannot do anything by his human efforts to get reconciled to God. Now you must understand that. You are not reconciled to God. By nature, you are alienated from Him. By nature, that makes you His enemy in your thinking. By nature, that makes you a person who practices evil of sins and human good. And consequently, there's nothing you can do to get yourself adjusted to God's standard of absolute righteousness.

Now this helpless condition of spiritual blindness, however, makes all the more magnificent, the divine grace provision of reconciliation to those who do believe the gospel, and trust in Christ for salvation. It is a magnificent gift from God, especially when we compare it to what we could have done on our own. It is like somebody giving you some kind of a magnificent material gift that you could never have dreamed of affording, or being able to secure on your own. And because something like that is so far out of your reach, the fact that you receive such a gift makes it all the more impressive to you.

**Worship**

So, we who could not provide reconciliation to ourselves, and who desperately need it, find it an awesome thing when God does give it to us by an act of His grace. Those who are reconciled to God will worship Him through the godly use of their bodies, or they will worship Satan with evil, immoral acts with their bodies. It goes either way for the Christian. What you do with your body – that's the way you worship God. It's not all the ritual and all the formalism of coming to church – that's not it. You're not going to worship God in here, basically. You do worship in a sense. But the worship is when you walk out of here, and what you do with your thinking, and what you do with your body. That is worship. And every day of your life, when we say that you're either thinking human viewpoint or divine viewpoint, we're telling you that you're either worshiping God with your divine viewpoint acts, or you're worshiping Satan with your human viewpoint acts. We Christians should be what we are: the royal family of God; and, we should not act as lowlife commoners.

All the world, with that as the background from our book of Colossians here, where Paul, in Colossians 1:21, has said, "And although you were formerly alienated (hostile in your mind), and engaged in evil deeds." That is the nature of the human being. And all the world looks for some way to resolve that terrible, dysfunctional separation from God. And how do they do it? They do it by something that human beings can do. And they miss it all together.

**Mother Teresa**

All the world today is now agog in praising the Roman Catholic nun Mother Teresa – praising her for a life of works of mercy which indeed relieved a lot of suffering in the country of India. There is no question about that. And because India is a country that is basically Muslim and Hindu, it is a country which, in the nature of the case, imposes enormous suffering on human beings. It is only Christianity that relieves social suffering.

So, this woman spent her life in doing deeds of relieving human suffering. However she told us that she viewed all religions as leading to God if sincerely followed. She said that she never tried to convert anybody (to Catholicism), but she always tried to convert them to be a better Muslim; a better Hindu; a better Buddhist; a better Protestant; a better whatever you were; and no doubt, a better Catholic, as she was. Jesus Christ to her was not the only way to heaven. And faith was not the only means for salvation. Now you must understand that.

The people on nightly news don't understand that. They have no discernment on these things. All the people who are going to see these specials on Mother Teresa and her life are going to be all agog because of all the good things she did, and they don't have God's viewpoint. Now, here's a little small microcosm example of what all of us are up against to remind us that if we don't think like God (and it's so easy not to), we are going to ball up our lives like you wouldn't believe it. Thinking like God is what it's all about. And once you understand the principles of doctrine, you can look at Mother Teresa, and you can respect what she did, but you also see the danger signal that all religions lead to the same God. That is not true. Now either Bible is true, or Mother Teresa, who is reporting her Catholic point of view, is true.

**Roman Catholic Sainthood**

Her good works were so extensive, however, that she is now being considered, as we pointed out last time, for canonization as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholic Church sainthood is conferred only on a person who has demonstrated that they have earned far more merit, through their good works than was required for them to qualify for entrance into heaven. They have earned excessive grace from their temporal sufferings for their sins. This is a basic principle that you must understand if you are a Roman Catholic: Christ died to pay for the moral penalty of sin. But there is a penance (a temporal suffering) that you must add to what Christ did. The fact that Christ died for moral guilt is not sufficient to take you into heaven. You must suffer sufficiently for your own sins in time, and then you qualify for what Christ did. Theologians like to say that: "You must merit the merit of Christ." You must deserve the merit of Christ by the fact that you have suffered yourself for what you did. Christ's suffering is not enough to take you into heaven on its own. You must also provide your own suffering to that.

Now, that is a very serious error in Scripture, and this is what the Reformation in the 16th century was all about. Mother Teresa is viewed, because of her lifelong service and good works, as one who would probably qualify for having suffered more than she needed to suffer, in time, for her sins. Therefore, Mother Teresa is to be beatified, or declared blessed, as one who has bypassed purgatory, and gone directly into heaven, because she has stored up excessive grace.

**Supererogation**

Now, the Roman Catholic Church does not just throw away the excessive grace. They apply what you needed to meet your temporal suffering quota. These are called works of supererogation.

**The Treasury of Merit**

Then they take the rest of your excessive grace (these are called works of supererogation), and they are placed in the Roman Catholic Church treasury of grace, or treasury of merit, to be dispensed by the pope to release other souls out of purgatory. People who get access to these works of supererogation (these extra grace works), through having Masses said for you by paying the church to say the Mass, or by doing certain good works, or by saying prayers. Every "Hail Mary" and every "Our Father" you say in behalf of a person who is dead, or for yourself, gains for you extra merit with God.

**Indulgences**

So, these extra works are in this treasury of merit. The works of supererogation will then be dispensed through the means (through the technique) of indulgences. These indulgences from the pope make up for any individual's shortage of suffering – to pay for the penalty of his sins as Christ paid for the moral guilt of the sinner.

You won't be fooled by a Roman Catholic who says, "Oh yes, I believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins." What he's telling you, I want you to understand, is that Christ died for your moral guilt, but He didn't pay for your temporal guilt. You have to suffer for your temporal guilt.

**The Doctrine of Indulgences**

So, now we come to the doctrine of indulgences. That should ring a bell with you. In the year 1517, an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther finally had it up to his craw with the selling of indulgences to gather up money for building what is now St. Peter's Basilica in Rome – that magnificent temple to Nimrod and his Babylonian religion. And as Pope Leo needed the money, he sent people out all over the Holy Roman Empire selling indulgences. And one name Tetzel came to Wittenberg, Germany, and he was very effective to move the emotions of people about the suffering of their parents who have died in purgatory – the flames and the agony as they are flushing out, and being purified for the temporal suffering they did not pursue, and secure for themselves, such that you could secure from the treasury of grace: "The Holy Father, in his kindness, will sell you for such and such a sum of money." And he used to have a little jingle ~that went: "When the coin in the coffer (the box) clinks, the soul from purgatory springs." And if you say it in German, the "clink" and "spring" rhyme. And people would wail and moan. And they'd say, "Here, take my money. I want to buy an indulgence for my poor husband, or my poor wife, or my poor mother, or my poor father, or my poor child that died. I want to get him out of purgatory."

And Martin Luther, by this time, had come far enough along to understand the doctrine of justification by faith, and not by works, such that he finally walked up to the church door in Wittenberg, and nailed those 95 propositions of debate (95 theses) which revolved around this issue of indulgences. And he said, "Now, we're going to have a scholarly debate here at this university on such-and-such a date." This was not for the general public. This was for the theologians. This is for the university people (the scholars and the students) that are going to debate this issue. And with that, as he challenged, again and again and again, the whole concept of indulgences, the whole deceit and deception of the concept of the treasury of grace, and helping those who have died out of a place called purgatory, in order to pay for their temporal punishment, was exposed as the fraud that it was. And the Protestant Reformation took place.

The Roman Catholic teaching on salvation is something that you must understand. In a lot of churches, Mother Teresa is being lauded for what she did. But behind that praise is that she earned more than she needed to go to heaven. That's why she's being considered for sainthood. You must not be deceived by that. I do not want you to be a bunch of ninnies. I want you to be able to listen to what people say. And the younger you are, the more important this is, that you understand how they're trying to con you, and the deceit that they're trying to bring upon you, and that you understand what God has to say over against what the church has invented.

**The Roman Catholic Teaching on Salvation**

Roman Catholicism teaches that a person accumulates the grace of God for salvation all through his life, and he does this through participation in seven Roman Catholic sacraments, and through a life of good works.

**Good Works**

Good works include prayers; lighting candles; and, doing all kinds of things that are the ritual that were characteristic of Nimrod's religion in ancient Babylon. You accumulate grace. The Council of Trent met for something like 12 years following the Protestant reformation to button down exactly what Catholicism believed and taught. One of the propositions of doctrines at the Council of Trent was that anybody who said, "You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be instantly justified" is under the anathema of God – the anathema of the church. "Anathema" means that you are condemned to the lake of fire by the church. If you say that you can be instantly justified by faith in Christ as Savior, you are under the anathema of the church, and you will be placed into hell.

**Earning Grace**

The reason they said that is because the Roman Catholic Church says you have to spend all of your life *earning* the grace of God. You must, through your sacraments and good works, earn that grace.

Now the average Catholic secures grace merit toward salvation mainly through the sacrament of the Mass, where the Eucharist (what we call the Lord's Supper) is again perverted into the way they did it in ancient Babylon; such that they ate their god, by taking a piece of bread, and the priest of Babylon would go through certain motions, and that piece of bread became the body of his god. And they ate it. Then they had wine. And the priest did certain motions in the Babylonian system, and converted it into blood, and they drank the blood of their God. And thus came the Mass into Roman Catholicism, as Satan, very cleverly, once Emperor Constantine made it the church the national religion – they combined Christianity with Babylonian concepts, and out came the mass. And a person goes to mass in order to gain merit from God. This shows up even at a Catholic funeral.

I was at a few months ago up in Minnesota. And what did they do at their funeral? I had to sit through the Mass. They do that every time to give you a chance to eat a little more of the Christ, to gain merit, to go to heaven. That's what Mother Teresa taught. That's what she stood for. And that's why she's considered for sainthood – because she had accumulated so much merit through the Masses that she attended.

The mayor of Chicago, Richard Daley, the old man who died a few years ago, had a little worn piece of paper in his wallet of prayers that he said every day as a Roman Catholic. And then he went down, and every day he went to Mass. But when he died, the family was having Masses set. They were taking actions in order to provide merit from the pope's treasury of grace for Mayor Daley in order to help him out of purgatory, even after going to mass every day?

**The Mass**

Usually, a Roman Catholic is not considered to have had a life of sufficient dedication to God to have covered his need of temporal suffering. So, the ceremony of the Mass was invented.

**Transubstantiation**

It is a re-sacrificing of Jesus Christ on the altar by the priest, and through a principle called transubstantiation, which is what the reformers rejected, the bread is converted into the body, and the wine into the very blood of Christ, and the person eats and drinks the blood and the body of Jesus Christ.

Now Jesus used that term, but, of course, he was speaking symbolically as an act of faith, because He is our manna. As the manna nourished the Jew in the wilderness, Christ is the bread of life to us, but he is not an actual loaf that we nibble on. He is symbolizing that what He has done in His death and His resurrection, taking upon Himself our sins, He becomes our source of life. And He compares that to the natural realm where we eat things in order to sustain life. It's a symbol.

Now under the Old Testament sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law, all of you know that the animal sacrifices had to be repeated constantly. Why was that? Well, because they never satisfied the justice of God toward sin. They only symbolize the satisfaction that eventually would come through the future death of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, upon the cross, bearing the sins of the world.

So the animal sacrifices were a symbol. And because they did not accomplish salvation, you had to do them again and again. However, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for sin as the Lamb of God actually fully satisfied the justice of God. So, that sacrifice never has to be repeated again.

Now here's the problem for the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation, Hebrews 9:11-14 says that Christ came. He died once for all. And it's not necessary for Him to sacrifice Himself again. The one time did the job. Hebrews 9:11-14: "But when Christ appeared as a High Priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands – that is to say, not of this creation." He did not come to an earthly tabernacle where He had to repeat the sacrificing of Himself again and again like the Old Testament priest had to do with those animals. He went into the *actual* Holy of Holies into heaven on the basis of the blood which He had shed in payment for sin.

Verse 12: "And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood He entered the Holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." He walked into the Holy of Holies in heaven, of which the tabernacle Holy of Holies was just a sign, or a symbol, or a reproduction. And there, as they used animal sacrifices to symbolize what Christ would do, He walked into the actual Holy of Holies in heaven, and there presented what He had accomplished on the cross for the eternal redemption with His one sacrifice, never to be repeated, and never to be reversed, of those who trust in Him for salvation. He gave them eternal redemption. This was not six minutes of redemption. It was not six hours of redemption. It was not a few seconds until you thought something or did something wrong. This is eternal redemption, apart from anything you are or you do.

Verse 13: "For if the blood of goats and of bulls, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh." This was ritual ceremonial cleansing. Verse 14: "How much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" If animal sacrifices could symbolically cleanse, how much more will the sacrifice of Christ on the cross really cleanse you of any moral guilt? And really, He who is sinless without blemish, be able to give you peace of conscience. He will cleanse your conscience. You will have no sense of moral guilt. If you understand how God works, and you think His thinking, you'll understand that Christ has removed any concern for moral guilt on your part before God, so that you don't have to follow these dead works that Roman Catholicism calls upon people to do, and that Mother Teresa spent her life doing in order to serve the living God.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself then entered the true Holy of Holies in heaven with His own sacrificial blood. He paid with His death fully for the sins of mankind, so His sacrifice never needs to be repeated as it did with the symbolic animals.

Look down at Hebrews 9:24-28: "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands (He went into heaven's tabernacle), a mere copy of the true one (a tabernacle on earth – a copy of the heavenly one), but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor was it that He should offer Himself again as the high priest enters the holy place year-by-year with the blood of his own." Jesus Christ does not have to go into heaven again and again to the holy place with his sacrifice of Himself like the animal sacrifices did: "Otherwise He would've needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world, but now once at the consummation of the ages, He has been manifest to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Now, how on earth can you be a Roman Catholic (to be a sincere Mother Teresa), and read that verse that says He did not have to go again and again to suffer, and to put Himself back on the altar of suffering once more: "Otherwise, if His sacrifice was not once for all, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world. But now, at the consummation of the ages (at the end times), He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." And the Greek language says, "Put away once for all, never to be done again." Now that's pretty clear. And yet Roman Catholicism says, "Oh, no. Every Sunday all through the week, we have to sacrifice Him again and again and again on our altars.

Verse 27: "And in as much as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment." Aha! Well, Catholics say, "Yeah, the judgment is through purgatory though." But that's not what the Bible says.

Verse 28: "So Christ, also, having been offered once (and the Greek says 'once for all), "to appear for the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation, without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await for Him." The next time Jesus Christ comes is not to die on the cross again for someone's sin. When He comes the second time, it's going to be for the glorious victory of taking us to heaven. How different that is – the peace that Jesus gives. How different that is from what a Roman Catholic lives with every moment of the day – uncertainty.

A Catholic could go to Mass every day. He could do all these rituals. He could accumulate all kinds of merit. He could even be buying merit from the treasury of merit through the pope. And then, doggone it, he performs a mortal sin one hour before he dies. And it was all to naught, because he's always involved in whether he goes to heaven or not – whether he qualifies. It's not just what God does.

So, when they put up Mother Teresa, and everybody lauds her in the big television program special coming up, she is telling the world an enormous lie. And her life has been a great deceit, and probably to her personally. If she really believed Roman Catholic doctrine, the one place she is not in is purgatory. We will agree with the Catholics on that. She is in Hades, but she is certainly not in paradise.

The Old Testament animal sacrifices had to be repeated because they did not, once for all, secure justification. So, the Roman Catholic Mass, because it does not secure justification once for all, has to be repeated again and again to try to get enough merit to be justified.

Please notice Hebrews 10:1-4, "For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year-by-year (animal sacrifices), which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near." The Mosaic Law sacrificial system could not save you. Works never can: "Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? Because the worshipers, having been once cleansed, would no longer have consciousness of sins." They would have peace. A Catholic does not have peace. They'll put the poor dude in the casket. And you look at the hands, and they're folded. What do you have? A rosary twisted in there. Right to the end he's doing one more bit of merit. If you look up on the lid of the casket, what do you see? A crucifix of the dead Christ. It is not a victory – still death. And that's all in that room. There is the ominous lack of peace, and the ominous note of death – the hopelessness of it all.

If the animals had done it, they would not have had to repeat it, because people would not be conscious that they're still not reconciled with God. Verse 3: "But in those sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins yet year-by-year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." No human work will take away sins. It is always there, and it is always waiting.

The sacrificial death of Christ, however, was once for all, because it did not merely cover, or atone. The animal sacrifices atoned for sin. The word "atonement" is not the same as "salvation." The word "atonement" means it covered them. It covered them in the eyes of God, so it didn't bring down His wrath. It covered them until Christ got around to paying for them. Jesus did not merely cover or atone for sin. He actually bore them away. He paid the price of death as only He could die – the kind of death only He could die: The death of the sinless God man.

If animal sacrifices actually removed one's moral guilt before God, they would not have had to be repeated constantly. And you may read on your own Hebrews 10:5-13, which describe that this is what God has done through Christ once for all. The Old Testament priests of the Mosaic system, could, furthermore, never sit down after a sacrifice. The poor guy never was off-duty. He never could sit down again in his religious performances. While he was in the midst of his religious life, he could never sit down. He was always on his feet, making another sacrifice – doing it again and again.

However, isn't it interesting that here in the book of Hebrews, which has been written to Christians who are being tempted to go back to the legalistic system of the Mosaic Law, and the writer of this book says, "Wrong, Wrong. What Christ has done has fulfilled all the Mosaic system." And here's one of the ways he proves it. He says, "The priest never sat down under the Mosaic system." What did Jesus do? He went to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God the Father. Why? Because the sacrificial system had been performed to the total satisfaction of God's justice, and never needed to be repeated.

Notice Hebrews 8:1, therefore: "Now, the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a High Priest (Jesus Christ), Who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." Hebrews 10:12 says, "But He (Christ), having offered one sacrifice for sin for all time, sat down at the right hand of God." That's a very significant point. Jesus Christ is not standing around in heaven working to get you saved, or working to get you enough grace and merit to get you in there. That's what Mother Teresa said He's doing. She says that He is dispensing out of the treasury of grace here to you; to you; to you; to those of you who qualify; and, to those of you come and appeal to the church in the magisterium (the cardinals), and dispense it through the pope. That's not what Christ is doing. The pope is not the representative (the vicar of Christ on this earth) in order to dispense that grace in the name of Christ.

The Roman Catholic Mass is claimed to be the same sacrifice as that of Jesus Christ on Calvary, only without the shedding of blood. But Scripture says He doesn't have to be sacrificed again. Yet, Catholics all over this nation, on this Sunday morning, will be sacrificing Christ again.

When a Roman Catholic dies, impure, relative to sin, in spite of many Masses, which is what the average one does, or if he commits a mortal sin at the last moment, they simply never know whether they have enough merit to make it.

When I was in Europe, I think it was at the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, one of the tour guides was speaking to us, and pointing up in the rafters of the church, the little round caps that the cardinals wear. He said they put the cap of a cardinal up there when he dies. And when the cap finally turns to dust, and deteriorates, and falls away, it is a sign that the cardinal has been released from purgatory. Now there's no Bible Scripture for that, but the church, for them, of course, wrote the Bible, and it can keep writing new parts of the Bible. That's its claim. It gets testimony from God.

So, here's a person, a cardinal – that's next to being a pope. And to have all of that religious authority over people, and be so involved in religious activity yourself that you could be elevated to such a position as a prince of the church. And do you know how long it takes for a piece of cloth to deteriorate into nothing? Some of those guys in the Egyptian tombs haven't made it yet on that basis. And what's the point? You never know how long it's going to take. You only know one thing: you're not going to die and go to heaven. You're going to die and go to purgatory.

When Mrs. Danish and I were in Czestochowa, which is the pope's hometown, and we were given the tour of that church, which is devoted especially to Mary, because this pope is a devotee of the worship and the adoration of the virgin Mary, the guide we had spoke very good English. He was from Detroit, Michigan. And he led us around. And that's where they have the black Madonna, a black picture of the virgin Mary. And there are all kinds of stories behind that, that I won't get into. But when we passed through the chapel, it was filled with people in adoration before this black Madonna picture of Mary. And they call it adoration, but it's worship. And the priest was up there doing the bit of the Mass. And after the tour was over (I thought it was over – it was just a little break), I pulled out one of our evangelism brochures, "~Hell or Heaven, Which Will it be for you?" And I told him that I was a pastor from the United States with this tour, and I had written this little booklet about salvation, and he might, as a theologian, be interested in reading it, and see what he thought of it. So, he's standing there, thumbing through it, while we're looking in the gift shop.

Then, all of a sudden, he says, "Alright, we're ready for the next stage." So I said, "Oh, this tour is not over." And he leads us outside, and led us to a place to show us something. And he gathered the crowd around him, and he said, "I've just been given a booklet here from a church in Irving, Texas, and the title says, "~Hell or Heaven, which will it be for you?" Well, I have a joke to tell you: neither. For me, it'll be purgatory." And I thought to myself: "Now that is a joke." He was true to Catholic doctrine. He could not conceive of Christ having done something for him. Even though his doctrine tells him that Christ pays for the moral guilt, he could not conceive that without his payment of sufficient temporal penance that he would make it into heaven itself. And I thought, "How sad that what he was doing was virtually ridiculing the title of that booklet."

Wouldn't it be funny if he ended up in heaven? Wouldn't that be something! At some night, he got under the covers of his bed there at the rectory with the other priest, and put his flashlight on, and he's sitting there reading this book, and sure enough, the truth of God hits him between the eyes like it did Martin Luther, and he realizes that he's never going to make it into heaven on his system.

But this is what Roman Catholicism teaches. They never know when it is enough. The sacrifice of the Mass has to be repeated because it's no more efficacious in securing salvation than the Old Testament animal sacrifices were. They're mere human works.

The Roman Catholic Church, then, teaches that Christ paid for the moral guilt of sin. But to benefit personally from this sacrifice, you must pay the penalty of temporal punishment. And you do that in various ways to qualify for the merit of Christ. That's why, when a Catholic goes to confessional, he says, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned. My last confession was ya-da-da." And then he tells them all the things that he can think of. Usually, he doesn't deal with mental attitude sins, which are the worst ones. And a priest says, "Okay, 50 'Hail Mary's, buster." And he has to perform that punishment (that penance) in order to cover the things he's told them.

I watched an aunt of Mrs. Danish who had converted to Roman Catholicism on her death bed. Her husband and daughter came in, and they were trying to comfort this lady who was on her way out. The priest had done his extreme unction bit, giving her the last jolt of cleansing that he could. And then they said, "We're going to say five 'Hail Mary's' and three 'Our Fathers' for you." And then the two of them, the husband and the daughter, kneeled by this dying woman, and rattled through the ritual of "Hail Mary's" and "Our Fathers." Why? To gain a little more merit for her, and to make her journey out of purgatory all the faster.

Personal expiation of the deeds of penance and suffering have to be added to the cross of Christ's work for moral guilt. Most people don't perform enough sufficient penance to secure forgiveness from God. So, purification has to be completed afterwards in purgatory. That's why they needed purgatory. If you can't make it in this life, you have to have someplace else to make it. And Satan always gives you a second chance out. He does it in Mormonism. You have a second chance to be told the gospel of Mormonism after you die. And somebody on this earth can be baptized in your behalf. That's what they do all the time here in Dallas at the Mormon temple. They're being baptized on behalf of the dead. That's what that geological library (the best in the country) in Salt Lake City is – names of everybody in the world that ever lived that they can find. And they hand them out to people. And people constantly are being baptized all day long in behalf of this name, and this name, and this name. So, when this person is told the Mormon gospel out in eternity, sometime, they've qualified, because they've had water baptism. Otherwise they can't qualify. Well, one nice thing about that job is you never have to take a bath. You're in the water all day long. Of course, you get to looking very old, and crinkled, and shrunk up, because of that water, but this is a service to God.

Now, the Roman Catholic doctrine of temporal punishment required for salvation, of course, is in total conflict with the biblical doctrine of the grace of God. And as we close, we're reminding ourselves what that doctrine is. But I hope you'll have a little better perspective on this adulation toward Mother Teresa, and what it is that she is being exalted to for the treasury of grace.

Romans 3:21-24, "But now, apart from the Law (from human doing), the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets." All the law and the prophets (all the moral code of Moses) did was to tell you what God's standard of absolute righteousness is. And it's a mirror to see how bad we miss it: "Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, for all those who believe, for there is no distinction." A righteousness that can only come through faith, that is the one that counts – faith in Christ.

Where is faith placed by a Roman Catholic? Faith has no value in itself. Faith is only of value relative to the object in which it is placed. Faith in the Roman Catholic Church is ill-placed. Faith in the Bible gives you the information to have faith in Christ. That kind of faith is saving: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; being justified as a gift, not of works." Romans 11:6 and Romans 4:4 says that it can't be grace and works. They're mutually exclusive. Being justified is a gift. Therefore, it couldn't be by works. It is by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That's it. You cannot earn grace for justification through the Mass; through good works; or, through suffering in purgatory, because it comes by faith in Christ Jesus.

Now, out of all fairness, and to give you complete confidence that what you've heard this morning, relative to Roman Catholic doctrine, and this doctrine of purgatory, and where Mother Teresa fits in with that, it would not be fair for me not to let the Catholic speak for themselves. You need to hear their words (not what I have said to you) that they say. Next Sunday you will hear those words.

Our heavenly Father, we thank You for the grace of God and the revelation of the doctrine of the grace of God.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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