

Differences Between Orthodoxy and Protestant Denominations

COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY (2)

CHRISTIANITY'S BASIC BELIEFS

- ❖ Trinity
- ❖ Incarnation
- ❖ Redemption
- ❖ Resurrection of the Bodies
- ❖ Eternal Life
- ❖ The Church
- ❖ Holy Bible (O.T. & N.T.)

PROTESTANTISM

☒ Reformist movement 1517 - 1521 AD

+ Anabaptism

+ Calvinism

+ Lutheranism

+ Zwinglianism

Evangelical

Lutheran

Baptist

Methodist

+ >33,000 denominations

☒ Church of England 1538 AD

☒ Anglican & Episcopalian Churches

ANGLICAN / EPISCOPALIAN

- ❑ Start: King and Bishop... Marriage and Divorce
- ❑ Current: Scores of Autonomous Churches
- ❑ Celibacy no longer required for Hierarchy
- ❑ Fasting is no longer required
- ❑ Ordination of Women
- ❑ Acceptance of Homosexuality (Christ-like love!)
- ❑ Homosexual Marriages
- ❑ Ordination of Homosexuals

ANGLICAN / EPISCOPALIAN

- ❑ Worship: High, Low and Broad Church
- ❑ 3 Sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist & “*Ministry*” + Ordinances
- ❑ Biblical Authority (or of parts of it) & Bible Criticism
- ❑ Deutero-Canonical Books
- ❑ Unbelievers are saved without faith or baptism
- ❑ Polygamy is allowed for African members
- ❑ Liberal Thinking (heresies) allowed in hierarchy

THE REFORMATION MOVEMENT

- ✘ Protests against Catholic Church corruption culminated in Martin Luther, a Catholic monk, posting his 95 *Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church
- ✘ Debates, small wars in Europe, John Calvin, excommunication of Luther 1621, 30-year war (1618-1648)

PROTEST AGAINST WHAT?

- ✘ Many corrupt practices in the Roman Catholic Church, leading to false doctrines, mainly:
 - + Infallibility of Pope of Rome
 - + Banning the reading or owning a Bible by laypeople
 - + Indulgences
 - + Simonism
 - + 7 Sacraments, in general
 - + Salvation by grace and works

THE BIBLE ISSUE

Orthodoxy:

Word

Rituals

Catholicism:

Word

Rituals

Protestantism:

Word

~~Rituals~~

THE BIBLE ISSUE

- × Orthodox:

Christ founded the *Church* through His Apostles; the *Church* gave us canons, mysteries, bible,...

- × Protestant:

The *Bible*, word of God, is the basis of all & contains all: Church, teachings, rules,...

- × Catholic:

Christ founded the Church, it gave us the bible as God's word, should only be read in Church, in Latin, read and interpreted only by priests; anyone else to be executed by burning

THE BIBLE ISSUE

✘ Protestant:

Bible is translatable in all languages, must be read by everyone; even a 10-year old reading and interpreting the Bible is inspired by God (statement caused many denominations, regretted by Luther on his death bed)

✘ Orthodox:

Bible is very important, contains teachings & commandments OT &NT, but it is not the only source, as it does not contain all; correct interpretation to be found in writings of the Fathers

INDULGENCES & SIMONISM

- ✘ Indulgences are documents signed by the pope, sold to individuals, granting them pre-absolution that would release them from purgatory punishment on their way to heaven; basically a licence to sin
- ✘ Simonism is the practice of buying and selling of ordinations and positions in the Church

PROTESTANTISM

- ✘ 5 Solas: Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, Soli Deo Gloria
- ✘ Salvation & Eternal Security
- ✘ No Church Mysteries (Sacraments):
Communion? Child Baptism?
- ✘ Eschatology
- ✘ Trinity?!

5 SOLAS

- ✘ Solus Christus: Christ Alone
- ✘ Sola Scriptura: Scripture Alone
- ✘ Sola Fide: Faith Alone
- ✘ Sola Gratia: Grace Alone
- ✘ Soli Deo gloria: Glory to God Alone

SOLUS CHRISTUS

- ✘ Christ is the only Mediator between God and men (1Tim 2:5)
- ✘ Pope is not God's vicar on earth, therefore not head of the Church
- ✘ No man is infallible except J.C. who is alone without sin
- ✘ Reject the concept of meritorious works, and the idea of veneration of the saints
- ✘ Royal priesthood in which everyone can equally minister before God

SOLUS CHRISTUS

- Their ordained ministers are a matter of church order and discipline rather than spiritual hierarchy or priesthood
- ❖ The Orthodox Church believes in a "royal priesthood" which encompasses all believers. However, it recognizes that the Lord set apart certain individuals for specific roles, some were Apostles, others healers, others teachers

SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ✘ The Bible alone has the authority; it contains all rules and requirements
- ✘ Downplay history, doctrine, Fathers' teachings as non-authoritative human tradition
- ✘ All scripture is inspired by God
- ✘ For some: sayings of Christ (in red) has higher authority
- ✘ Some allow biblical criticism

SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ❖ Orthodox: Bible does not contain everything. It says so about itself
- ❖ Example: Acts 1 :3 ... *“speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God”*
- ❖ Are these “things” important?
- ❖ Where are they written in the Bible?
- ❖ They are not. They can be found in the canons of the Apostles

SOLA FIDE

- ✘ Faith in Christ alone is enough for eternal salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- ❖ Apostolic churches believe that the phrases "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20) and "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." (James 2:24); point to salvation needing to be earned.

SOLA FIDE (REBUTTAL)

- ❖ Orthodox: This is the danger of using one verse or part of it, without context
- ❖ “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works...” (Ephesians 2:10)
- ❖ “not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2Corinthians 3:6)
- ❖ Jesus Christ Himself spoke of the importance of good works (Mt 25:31-46) at the end of days discriminating between people on right and left

SOLA GRATIA

- ✘ No one deserves salvation
- ✘ Salvation is God's act of free grace (a gift of God), dispensed by the Holy Spirit owing to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ alone, and not depending on good works.
- ✘ The believer is accepted without regard for the merit of his works

SOLI DEO GLORIA

- ✘ Saints and church hierarchy are not worthy of the glory the believers accord them
- ❖ “The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance” (Psalm 111(112):6)
- ❖ “... wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her” (Mt. 26:13)
- ❖ We glorify God in them

DENOMINATIONS

- ✘ Lutheran
- ✘ Evangelical
- ✘ Methodist
- ✘ Pentecostal
- ✘ Baptist
- ✘ Church of God

CHRISTIANS?! ✓ NON-CHRISTIANS

- ✘ 7th Day Adventists
- ✘ Jehovah's Witnesses
- ✘ Mormons (Church of J.C. Of Latter-Day Saints)
- ✘ Scientology
- ✘ Free- Masons
- ✘ New-Age
- ✘ Cults