ST. PAUL’S GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Religious Education Discussion

Feb. 10, 2021

*Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy*

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Chapter Two: Roman Catholicism

1. In what year did the Great Schism occur?

2. According to the author, is Roman Catholic theology “backwards compatible”? What does that even mean?

3. Rather than developing new dogma, the Orthodox Church seeks to develop the what of the dogma it has already received? Why is the distinction important?

4. Which of the two churches typically expressed dogma as a response to heresy instead of as means of speculation or codification?

5. Which is more important, faith or reason? Not that we don’t need both, but where does Rome seem to place the emphasis according to the author?

6. What are the practical realities of a legalistic approach to theology? What about a therapeutic approach?

7. For the Orthodox, is reason a necessary element in the Christian life?

8. The author believes that the Catholic over-emphasis on human reason leads it to overemphasize other aspects of human nature, or carnality. What are some examples he provides? Do you agree with him?

9. In Orthodoxy, is it a sin not to fast? Why or why not?

10. Define Papal Supremacy.

11. Are these claims still made today by the Catholic Church?

12. Identify some of the grounds on which the Orthodox reject the claim of Papal Supremacy.

13. Describe the differences between papal primacy and papal supremacy.

14. Rome seems to understand wholeness as the relationship to one supreme bishop. How do the Orthodox understand it? Which is more local?

15. Define Papal Infallibility.

16. Name two reasons for objecting to this doctrine.

17. Where does the Orthodox Church place infallibility?

18. What is the *Filioque*?

19. How was its addition to the Nicene Creed an affront to the unity of the Church?

20. How would you contrast the Catholic understanding of Original Sin with the Orthodox understanding of Ancestral Sin?

21. According to the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary was preserved from all stain of original sin when she was conceived. The Orthodox agree she was subject to a pre-purification, but not at her conception. When did this happen according to the Orthodox?

22. How does the Virgin Mary’s death call into question the validity of the Immaculate Conception?

23. The Catholic understanding of salvation seems to emphasize “satisfying” God and avoiding punishment according to the author. What does the Orthodox approach emphasize in contrast?

24. The Greek word, *sozein*, used in Scripture to mean “to save” also means what?

25. What is Purgatory? Is it still on the books?

26. Name some of the Orthodox problems with the doctrine of Purgatory.

27. How does the Orthodox understanding of Apostolic Succession differ from that of Rome?

28. What do *versus populum* and *ad orientem* mean? Which one do the Orthodox use? Why does it matter?