

The Roman Church

and

Its un-biblical view of Justification

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{all quotations, with a paragraph number, are from the 1994 Roman Catholic Catechism}

Introduction by John Paul II

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the result of very extensive collaboration; it was prepared over six years of intense work ... The project was the object of extensive consultation among all Catholic Bishops, their Episcopal Conferences or Synods, and of theological and catechetical institutes. As a whole, it received a broadly favourable acceptance on the part of the Episcopate.

It can be said that this Catechism is the result of the collaboration of the whole Episcopate of the Catholic Church ... the harmony of so many voices truly expresses what could be called the "symphony" of the faith.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, lastly, is offered to every individual ... who wants to know what the Catholic Church believes.

1. The RC catechism teaches that Justification is something we “attain”

161 Believing in Jesus Christ and in the One who sent him for our salvation is necessary for obtaining that salvation. 42 "Since "without faith it is impossible to please [God]" and to attain to the fellowship of his sons, therefore without faith no one has ever **attained justification**, nor will anyone obtain eternal life 'But he who endures to the end.'"]

The word “attained” according to the dictionary means:

“To gain as an objective; achieve:”

No where do the scriptures teach that we attain or achieve Justification.

The word of God clearly shows that we are granted Justification as a gift of Gods grace alone!

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” Romans 3:24

The Apostle Paul would never have spoken in such language as “Achieving or Attaining Justification”

2. The RC Catechism teaches that we can “lose” and “recover” the “grace of justification”

1446 Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance for all sinful members of his Church: above all for those who, since Baptism, have fallen into grave sin, and have thus lost their baptismal grace and wounded ecclesial communion. It is to them that the sacrament of Penance offers a new possibility to convert and to recover the grace of justification. The Fathers of the Church present this sacrament as "the second plank [of salvation] after the shipwreck which is the loss of grace." 47

We note here;

1. If Justification is of grace then it is by its very nature something that we can neither gain, lose or recover!
2. The sinner here is exhorted to look, not to the cross as the source of justification but to "Penance".

We quote the Council of Trent to get a fuller idea of their position on this point.

{Council of Trent (1547): DS 1542}

“Those who by sin have **fallen away from the received grace of justification**, will again be able to be justified [can. 29] when, roused by God through **the sacrament of penance**, they by the merit of Christ shall have attended to the recovery of the grace lost. For this manner of justification is the reparation of one fallen, which the holy Fathers have aptly called **a second plank after the shipwreck of lost grace**. For on behalf of those who after baptism fall into sin, **Christ Jesus instituted the sacrament of penance**, when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" [I John 20:22, 23].”

It is very interesting to see the “Scriptural Evidence” for this “doctrine” of Penance. They even say that Christ instituted this sacrament!

This scripture they quote is in reality no evidence for the un-biblical “Doctrine” of Penance.

John Calvin’s words are helpful here.

“Most absurdly do the Papists, on the other hand, torture this passage, to support their magical absolutions. If any person do not confess his sins in the ear of the priest, he has no right, in their opinion, to expect forgiveness; for Christ intended that sins should be forgiven through the Apostles, and they cannot absolve without having examined the matter; therefore, confession is necessary. Such is their beautiful argument. But they fall into a strange blunder, when they pass by the most important point of the matter; namely, that this right was granted to the Apostles, in order to maintain the credit of the Gospel, which they had been commissioned to preach. For Christ does not here appoint confessors, to inquire minutely into each sin by means of low mutterings, but preachers of his Gospel, who shall cause their voice to be heard, and who shall seal on the hearts of believers the grace of the atonement obtained through Christ. We ought,

therefore, to keep by the manner of forgiving sins, so as to know what is that power which has been granted to the apostles.”

3. The RC Catechism teaches that Justification is the same as;

{1} “Remission of sins”

{2} “Sanctification”

1989 The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 38 Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. **Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man.**

The fact is that Justification is neither of these!

Remission is the taking away of our sins, whereas justification is the declaration of judicial righteousness.

An illustration of this is found in Zechariah chapter 3:1-5

1. .And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

2.. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen

Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

3. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

4. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

5. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.

Note here;

The taking away of the filthy garments represents remission of sins and the provision of the new represents Justification. They are clearly not the same thing even though there is a connection between the two.

Also they are wrong in confusing Justification with Sanctification.

Justification is a declaration of God about our standing before him.

Sanctification is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit conforming us into the image of Christ. The one, justification, is the basis of the other, Sanctification. But they are by no means the one and the same!

Again, in another place the catechism states:

1995 The Holy Spirit is the master of the interior life. By giving birth to the "inner man," ⁴⁴ **justification entails the sanctification of his whole being:**

And again:

2019 Justification includes the remission of sins, sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man.

4. The RC Catechism confuses Justification with Glorification.

1990 **Justification detaches man from sin** which contradicts the love of God, **and purifies his heart of sin**. Justification follows upon God's merciful initiative of offering forgiveness. It reconciles man with God. It frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals.

Let us ask the question of Paul, was he detached from sin?

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Romans 7: 23-25

Paul knew nothing of a detachment from sin! Certainly he spoke of being delivered from the penalty of sin.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1

Note;

Detachment from sin will only happen at the moment of Glorification;

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: **but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him;** for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John 3:2*

Note also;

There was no doubt in the mind of the Apostle John that this would happen. Romanism would call this *“the sin of presumption”*.

5. The RC Catechism teaches that Justification is something that we do!

Note the wording at the beginning of the following paragraph.

<p>1991 <u>Justification is at the same time the acceptance of God's righteousness</u> through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness (or "justice") here means the rectitude of divine love. With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.</p>

So, according to Rome, it is we who do the accepting!

Whereas, according to the apostle Paul it is God who accepts us.

*Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace,
wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

Never in the scriptures are we the ones who accept God. God does not need us to accept him!

Whatever does the next clause mean?

“Righteousness (or "justice") here means the rectitude of divine love.”

This statement simply makes no sense. It is theological mumbo jumbo!

6. The RC Catechism teaches that Justification is something that is in us.

1991 With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.

1992 It {Justification} conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life

Again, this is a complete denial of the clear biblical teaching that justification is something that takes place outside of us!

How in the world can Justification be poured into our hearts???

Can you imagine a judge in a court-room saying; “I am going to pour justification into your heart” That would be foreign to its meaning. Justification is a judgement or declaration that the judge make’s, not something that he gives.

7. Rome teaches that Justification is “Conferred in Baptism”

1992 Justification has been *merited for us by the Passion of Christ* who offered himself on the cross as a living victim, holy and pleasing to God, and whose blood has become the instrument of atonement for the sins of all men. **Justification is conferred in Baptism**, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life:⁴⁰

Let us look at a verse that is often quoted by those who teach the Immediate Efficacy of Baptism.

Note:

They will often just quote the first part of the verse.

1Pe 3:21

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us

(not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Note:

Baptism does not have Immediate but Intermediate Efficacy!

Baptism is the Sign

The Resurrection of Christ is the Power.

Illustration: A journey.

If you were going to a certain place you would not stop at the first sign post that had the name of that place and consider yourself to have arrived.

8. The RC Catechism teaches that we must Co-operate with God in Justification.

1993 **Justification establishes cooperation between God's grace and man's freedom.** On man's part it is expressed by the assent of faith to the Word of God, which invites him to conversion, and in the cooperation of charity with the prompting of the Holy Spirit who precedes and preserves his assent:

[Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus](#) - Cite This Source - Share This

Main Entry: Cooperate

Part of Speech: *Verb*

Definition: Assist

Synonyms: agree, aid, back up, chip in, collaborate, comply with, contribute, help, partner, pitch in*, pool resources, pull together, take part, work together

Antonyms: hinder, impede, oppose, prevent, undermine

It gets worse!!!

Listen to this;

2001 The *preparation of man* for the reception of grace is already a work of grace. **This latter is needed to arouse and sustain our collaboration in justification through faith**, and in sanctification through charity. God brings to completion in us what he has begun, "since he who completes his work by cooperating with our will began by working so that we might will it:"⁵⁰

Does God need us to cooperate or collaborate with him in order to show us his grace?

Rom 5:19-21

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

*Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. **But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:***

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace

reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Note:

Verse 20 does not say “Where cooperation abounded but where sin abounded” “grace did much more abound”

9. The RC Catechism teaches that we merit Justification.

2010 Since the initiative belongs to God in the order of grace, *no one can merit the initial grace* of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of conversion. **Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life.** Even temporal goods like health and friendship can be merited in accordance with God's wisdom. These graces and goods are the object of Christian prayer. Prayer attends to the grace we need for meritorious actions.

“Merit”

[*Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus*](#) - *Cite This Source - Share This*

Main Entry: merit

Part of Speech: *verb*

Definition: be entitled

Synonyms: be worthy, deserve, earn, have coming, incur, justify, lump it, rate, warrant

I did word search in the KJV for the word Merit. It does not occur. I checked a number of other modern versions. It was not there.

We cannot merit Eternal life.

Rome once again is wrong and in serious error.

10. The RC Catechism leaves all the work down to us when it comes to Justification.

2018 Like conversion, justification has two aspects. Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, and so accepts forgiveness and righteousness from on high.

Consider:

What does “Moved by grace” mean?

Is this the language of scripture?

No!

We are not “Moved by grace” we are “Saved by grace”

Let us close with the words of Paul in Romans 3

Rom 3:20-31

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.
But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:
For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;
To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.
Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.
Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.
Is he the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:
Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.
Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Soli Deo Gloria

26th February 2008