

Doctrine of Justification

The Council of Trent

1. The Council of Trent was an ecumenical council of Rome held between 1545 and 1563 in Trent, Italy. What was established there, is binding today.
2. The main topics dealt with Protestantism, and Counter Reformation.
3. Pope Paul III (Feb 29, 1468 – Nov 10, 1549) convened the Council of Trent. It would also be presided over by Julius III (Sept 10, 1487 – March 23, 1555), and Pius V (Jan 17, 1504 – May 1, 1572).
4. Different issues were addressed in different sessions at Trent, including the corruptions of the clergy, such as simony, and other moral problems.
5. The sixth session of Trent dealt with the doctrine of justification. The session is divided into two parts.
 - There is the formal teaching.
 - There are the canons which are set forth. These canons deal with the repudiation of the church it believes to be heresy. The formula for each canon, is the same. “If any one says....let him be anathema, meaning, cursed.
6. The Reformation doctrine of justification by faith, Rome anathematized it, which means Rome anathematized the gospel itself! In so doing, the Church of Rome became apostate itself.
 - *Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*
7. In the first section of session six, Rome defined saving faith. Rome clearly teaches that faith is necessary for salvation. It is a necessary condition for justification.
8. Faith has three sections in which it falls.
 - Faith is the initiation of justification. It is the starting place which begins the process.
 - Faith is the foundation, the structure upon which justification is built.
 - Faith is the root of justification. From the root, the radical core of faith grows all the graces of Christian theology.
9. For Rome, faith is not an appendage, but an essential element, without which justification can follow.

10. However, for Rome, faith is not a sufficient condition for justification.
11. A sufficient condition is a condition which, if met, results in an appropriate result. Oxygen is a necessary condition for fire, but it is not a sufficient condition. There is much air without any fire.
12. Faith is not sufficient in and of itself to bring justification. Something else is needed, and that is good works.
13. If good works are not maintained, if a person commits a mortal sin, faith may not be lost, but suffocation, the state of righteousness is lost.
14. A person can have saving faith, without justification, if a mortal sin is committed.
15. Rome believed in an instrumental cause of salvation.
16. Rome believed in several types of causes based on Aristotle's philosophy. Taking the image of a sculpture, Aristotle noted several causes.
- The material cause is that out of which something is made, such as stone, bronze, or marble.
 - The formal cause is the sketch the artist would make. A blueprint.
 - The final cause is the purpose for which the stature was made, such as to beautify a garden.
 - The efficient cause is the sculptor, or artist himself, that brings the matter into shape, or form.
 - The instrumental cause is the tool that brings about the change.
17. In the matter of justification, the instrumental cause of justification that God uses is the sacrament.
18. The Reformers protested, and said, "No. The instrument that produces justification in the heart is faith, alone. Faith is the instrument that links a person to the work of Christ."
- *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
19. The instrumental cause of justification is no small matter.
20. The Roman Catholic view of justification is an analytical view.

21. An analytical view is a statement that is inherently true. It is a formal truth. It is a tautology. For example, $2 + 2 = 4$. Under analysis this is true. For example, "A bachelor is an unmarried man." Nothing new is being said.
22. Both Rome and Protestantism agreed that no one is just until God declares that person just.
23. The question is, "Whom will God declare just?"
24. Rome said that God would declare just, the person who is righteous. Upon analysis, God will not say a person is just, who is not just.

Special Note.

Rome insisted that God will not legally declare a person just unless that person, upon analysis, is just. Justice, or righteousness must inhere in the soul. No one is justified until God reads the life of a person, and sees nothing but righteousness there. A person, who dies in mortal sin, goes to hell. A person, who dies with any sin in the soul, must go to purgatory. In time, righteousness will be produced, and then a person can be declared righteous because their soul is righteous.

25. Such a position of pure righteousness, without any blemish, leads a soul to utter despair, or a cheapening of grace, and a minimizing of sin. There is no hope.
 - *Psalms 130:3 If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?*
26. The Reformers said that God would declare just, the person who is unjust, even a sinner. What must a person do to be saved? They must believe.
 - *Romans 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*
 - *Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*