

# Roman Catholicism, Eastern Traditions and WBC Compared

Historical Theology

November 5, 2023

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## I. WHO IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH?

- A) RC: Pope
- B) E/O: Ecumenical council (maybe)
- C) WBC: Christ (Colossians 1:15-20)

## II. WHAT IS SCRIPTURE AND ITS ROLE IN THE CHURCH

- A) RC: Guide for Christian living as interpreted by the Pope and Church tradition.
- B) E/O: Guide for Christian living as interpreted by Church tradition and the councils.
- C) WBC: 1 Timothy 3:16-17,  
2 Peter 3:14-18

## III. IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH TRADITION

- A) RC: Lens for interpreting scripture, history and all of life. Believe the Pope to be the Apostle Peter's successor. Only those in RC are truly Christians

B) E/O: Lens for interpreting scripture, history and all of life. Believe themselves to be the descendants of the ancient church and the best source for true Christian worship and discipleship. Christians may belong to a different tradition, but only to their own significant detriment.

- C) WBC: We can gain wisdom and encouragement by studying the lives of past Christians. The church consists of all true Christians who currently live, ever have lived or ever will live; it has both an invisible, universal component and a local visible component.

## IV. ICONOGRAPHY

- A) RC: Graven and images encouraged and often held as objects for worship and aids in prayer or for gaining special favor from those people depicted.
- B) E/O: Images OK, but no graven. Veneration of saints encouraged.

c) WBC: NO (Exodus 20:4-6)

## **V. UNDERSTANDING THE TRINITY**

A) RC: begin adding the word “Filioque” to the Nicene Creed to describe the Holy Spirit as coming from the Father and the Son instead of from the Father alone.

B) E/O: Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father similarly to how the Son is begotten by the Father, but without the Son there could be no Father, and without the Spirit they could not be forever connected

C) WBC: Father, Son and Holy Spirit eternally coexistent, eternally equally God, but not equivalent.

## **VI. SALVATION, FINISHED, ON GOING, ... ?**

A) RC: Christ must be re-sacrificed for believers’ new sins and believers must be baptized and avoid mortal sins to enter Purgatory and must strive to keep the sacraments to reduce time in Purgatory. Saints and Mary often called upon to aid

believers in pursuit of Earthly sanctification.

B) E/O: Those who come to faith will be saved if they demonstrate fruit of repentance and salvation and if they persevere to the end of life.

C) WBC: All the elect have been saved or will be saved by Christ’s finish work on the cross in which their faith is placed. They live lives of hope as they look forward to participating in Christ’s resurrection. God keeps the elect safe from apostasy until their days are complete. Elect people will hear the Gospel and respond to it in repentance and supplication for forgiveness and salvation. Elect people will live by faith and will be moved by the Holy Spirit to complete good works which provide evidence of their salvation and bring Christ honor.