

**News and Current Events :: Bible Answer Man' converts to Eastern Orthodoxy****Bible Answer Man' converts to Eastern Orthodoxy - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/4/13 18:06**

Well...what say, folks?

Bible Answer Man' converts to Eastern Orthodoxy

Read more at <http://www.wnd.com/2017/04/bible-answer-man-converts-to-greek-orthodox-church/#LR3e7HluksJqYIMu.99>

Don't want to stir up a hornets nest but must admit this took me by surprise, or maybe I was not in tune to what he was saying? The fact is I rarely listen, or read these guys writings' anymore...

Sandra

**Re: Bible Answer Man' converts to Eastern Orthodoxy - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/4/13 18:16**

Famous Christian celebrities - oxymoron?

My mind goes to Thomas Howard, Franky Shaeffer, John Howard Yoder, and others (these just came to my mind) - all well-known ...just goes to prove how important it is to allow the WORD to be our sole authority for doctrine and life. So many times famous people who have helped us will end up disappointing.

Sandra

EDITED

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/13 18:42**

He goes into answering this on the latest broadcast: answering these 2 questions

I understand the Nicene creed predates the New Testament scriptures. What scriptures were this creed based on?

Have you changed you views on the nature of the elements in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

<http://www.equip.org/broadcast/jesus-cleansing-temple-qa/>

This is the official reply from the CRI Ministry on their facebook page to a person asking about this:

Hank Hanegraaff is still faithful to Christ and a faithful Christian.

To understand more on Hank joining the Eastern Orthodox Church, please check out his responses to related questions on the following Bible Answer Man broadcasts:

Did you leave the Christian faith to become Greek Orthodox? <http://www.equip.org/broadcast/islamic-terrorism-persecuted-christians-qa/> (4/10/2017)

What are the distinctive doctrines of Eastern Orthodoxy and why are you interested in Eastern Orthodoxy? <http://www.equip.org/broadcast/sounding-alarm-qa/> (4/4/2017)

What church do you attend? <http://www.equip.org/broadcast/incoherence-transgenderism-qa/> (2/7/2017 at 23:05)

CRI Staff

P.S. Hank takes on many responsibilities as President of CRI and host of the Bible Answer Man broadcast, which is why he commissions members of the research staff to oversee the needs of social media pages.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/13 19:02**

Wasn't Jesus, Himself enough for Hank Hanegraaff? One wonders?

Bro Blaine

**Re: - posted by wayneman (), on: 2017/4/13 20:13**

The Credal Answer Man.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/13 21:57**

Next step for Hank? Catholicism. Its the Erasmus spirit. In the end it is not hard to see some men who will go down this path.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/4/13 22:26**

QUOTE:

"Next step for Hank? Catholicism."

Thomas Howard did as did Franky Shaefer. Shaeffer really went off the rails, declaring himself eventually to be an atheist. (Franky found the arts drawing him to the Orthodox Church...so he said one time.)

I am no judge as to Hanks salvation but find it very odd to see folks going this route. I do wonder what factored into these decisions - was it easy Believism with no structure? Catholicism and Eastern Orthodox have a lot of structure. I have observed there are people out there who find severe structure, culture appealing. Is this why some go there? Am asking the question..

Sandra

**Re: , on: 2017/4/13 23:09**

I had a chance to talk to Hank at length. I personally found no witness in my spirit. There is a certain kind of man, who outside of an actual encounter with the living God, who only has a "relationship" with God in his head, will go down this route. Consider this scripture.....

Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.  
(Joh 2:23-25)

There is a certain kind of man who for reasons other than encountering and falling in love with Jesus, announce their belief in the Son of God. When a man genuinely commits his life to Jesus, Jesus commits himself to that man. They become one because they are genuinely born again. Only time can tell. Like the parable of the sower and the seed, the seed can take decades to identify itself.

Many are standing on the edge of the river Tiber. Many in these end times will flock back to Catholicism. They are not free therefore they love legalism and will be drawn to it. He who the Son sets free is free indeed. Free from the bondage of legalism. Paul would not stand for it, not even for an hour. If a man has been a captive for years and then set free by the Lord Jesus, nothing will compel him to return again to the bondage of legalism. This is part and parcel of the great falling away.....bro Frank

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 6:55**

I have to ask the question again. Was not Jesus, Himself enough for Hank Hannagraff? Often times, Evangelicals who convert to liturgical churches often say there is more meaning in the liturgy. There is something more substantive in the smells and bells.

Yet in the midst of all of this, I ask again, where is Jesus? Is not a relationship with the living Son of God enough to satisfy the spiritual longings of one's heart?

I find it interesting that our brothers and sisters in persecuted nations find the relationship with Jesus to be far more satisfying than a church structure. But then they are in a situation where a church structure is not available to them. And that may be a blessing of persecution. But then, in the midst of persecution, you are either driven away from Christ or you are driven to Christ. And the fires of persecution often reduce one to a radical simplicity to Jesus and Him alone.

A little over 2 years ago, 21 Coptic believers died on the shores of Libya. The heads were sliced off by ISIS. These 21 brothers came out of an Orthodox Coptic background. On the day of their martyrdom. One Name became precious to them. One Person became their focus. And that Name was Jesus Christ. And their focus was the Son of God. On that day, 21 Coptic believers realized that none of the liturgy meant nothing. The only name that really mattered was the name of Jesus. Each one died with the name of Jesus Christ on his lips.

So I ask again of Hank Hanegraaff or any believer thinking of going into the RCC or orthodoxy or any religious system. Is Jesus Himself not enough?

Bro Blaine

**Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/14 10:04**

I am not defending the move but simply posting this so that we can better understand what has led him to this move.

"...This week, Hanegraaff spent some of his airtime answering questions about his decision to leave Protestantism for Orthodoxy.

"People are posting this notion that somehow or other I've walked away from the faith and am no longer a Christian," Hanegraaff said on his Tuesday broadcast. "Look, my views have been codified in 20 books, and my views have not changed."

Hanegraaff and his wife Kathy have been attending the Orthodox church for more than two years, he said on his Monday broadcast.

His journey to Orthodoxy began with a trip to China, when "I saw Chinese Christians who were deeply in love with the Lord, and I learned that while they may not have had as much intellectual acumen or knowledge as I did, they had life," he said.

On the flight back, Hanegraaff wondered if he was even a Christian. "I was comparing my ability to communicate truth with their deep and abiding love for the Lord Jesus Christ."

He began to study the work of Watchman Nee and the idea of theosis (the Eastern Orthodox teaching on seeking union with God), which led him back to the early Christian church.

"I've been impacted by the whole idea of knowing Jesus Christ, experiencing Jesus Christ, and partaking of the graces of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist or the Lord's table," he said. "Nothing has changed in my faith."

CT reported in 2009 how CRI critiques of Watchman Nee in the 1970s (prior to Hanegraaff's tenure) led other theology watchdogs to label the Chinese Christian's "local churches" movement a cult, but Hanegraaff acknowledged "we were wrong" and endorsed the movement's orthodoxy in 2008. (The Local Church sued over the cult label in 2003.)

Hanegraaff's move to Orthodoxy took a decade, and has put him and his wife on the same spiritual page, he said Tuesday.

"I have been typically more skewed toward truth and, quite frankly, Kathy more skewed towards life," he said on air. "But today we are on precisely the same page in life and in truth, and we're loving it. Daily we thank God that he has saved us by grace alone through an active faith in our dear Lord Jesus Christ."

Hanegraaff's move was welcomed by Rod Dreher, author of *The Benedict Option* and an Orthodox Christian.

"What astounding news," he told *The Christian Post*. "Many evangelicals seek the early church; well, here it is,

in Orthodoxy.â€

The Eastern Orthodox Church is divided into 14 separate branches; last summer they attempted their first meeting since 787. Not everyone came; some boycotted over items missing from the agenda. (In more than 1,200 years, a lot of issues cropped up; the original list stretched to more than 100 items.)

Another historic meetingâ€between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirillâ€also took place last summer, as the leaders of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches met at an airport in Cuba to discuss record levels of Christian persecution. Meanwhile, Hanegraaffâ€™s conversion gives evangelicals one more bridge to Orthodoxy after the loss of two leaders in 2012. Evangelical-friendly Metropolitan Jonah resigned under pressure, and Peter Gillquist, who led around 2,000 Protestants into Eastern Orthodoxy in 1987, passed away."

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2017/april/bible-answer-man-hank-hanegraaff-orthodoxy-cri-watchman-nee.html>

**Re: Likely to continue as a critic of Israel - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/14 10:26**

That's not to say that Israel is or should be immune from any and all criticism. It sure isn't doing everything right but on the behavioral scale Israel has always acted several steps up the ladder from its neighbors and the way they treat their own people and other peoples. Hangegraaff has come down pretty hard against Israel and this seems to be a tradition of sorts in the Orthodox communion so he will find some common ground there. In the future, the Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican faith and many in the Evangelical world will end up being some of Israel's strongest critics and adversaries. Mr. Hangegraaff has already shown signs of belonging to that camp.

**Docs - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/14 11:35**

As bizarre as the actions of Mr. Hangegraaff are they are not nearly as bizarre as Joel Richardson's former colleague and co-author, Walid Shoebat and his conversion and defense of Roman Catholicism.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 11:36**

Hanegraaff writes.....

"His journey to Orthodoxy began with a trip to China, when â€œI saw Chinese Christians who were deeply in love with the Lord, and I learned that while they may not have had as much intellectual acumen or knowledge as I did, they had life,"â€ he said.

On the flight back, Hanegraaff wondered if he was even a Christian. â€œI was comparing my ability to communicate truth with their deep and abiding love for the Lord Jesus Christ.â€

Here we see a man struggle with the notion that true salvation has nothing to do with intellect. A head knowledge and mere mental assents to abstract truth is not, nor ever has been salvation. There are literally millions just like Hanegraaff in Christendom.

He further writes.....

"Iâ€™ve been impacted by the whole idea of knowing Jesus Christ, experiencing Jesus Christ, and partaking of the graces of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist or the Lordâ€™s table,"â€ he said. â€œNothing has changed in my faith.â€

And there we have it, life is, apparently, to be found in the "Eucharist," the key fundamental tenet of Catholicism. How many millions of saints were martyred over their thoughts on "The Eucharist." Now theologians will rush in and tell you about transubstantiation and consubstantiation, do not be fooled brothers and sisters. The Lord Jesus dwells in the hearts of every genuine saint. He does not dwell in a piece of bread and neither does He dwell around a piece of bread.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved Romans 10:9.

We must believe in our hearts unto salvation. In genuine salvation there is a change of heart. What Hanegraaff is involved in, and always has been, is religion and the path of all religions undoubtedly leads to the champion of all religions, Rome! .....bro Frank

**Re: Docs - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/14 12:34**

Well, that leaves Joel Richardson in the clear.

**Re: Docs - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/14 13:13**

The point of my response was to show that ones view of Israel pertaining to eschatology is irrelevant when it comes to discussing there conversion to Catholicism.

clarity

**Re: Perhaps - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/14 13:43**

I take your point. But be ready and forewarned of a coming storm against Israel.

Funny thing, I went to a Orthodox service a few times and it was among the most beautiful services I have ever been to even in charismatic circles. I knew I likely didn't agree with their doctrines, and I don't agree with all of them, but the ancient songs being sung in a Gregorian type of style among others was absolutely beautiful. The artwork and paintings and intricately carved wood were awesome and took on more meaning afterwards when a man explained to each aspect of these and the reason behind them. I'm not a believer that art work does not belong in churches. One of the first things a member asked me afterwards was if I read scripture on a regular basis. Sort of eye opening. And as goes without saying, Jesus Christ of Nazareth is my chief prize and object of desire. Rubbing shoulders with these Orthodox a bit though was a learning experience. No harm at all.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/14 14:08**

Quote:

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-----  
Glad to hear this approach brother as I have had a similar experience with my run-in's with orthodox believers.

One time I was distributing tracts on a corner of a street to business men during a lunch time. I believe the Gospel is not just for people who go to bars but for business men, families etc. I was in prayer and felt the Lord was with me, I looked obviously strange amidst the business people in suits, I had a simple white long shirt not tucked in, long beard and tracts about Jesus Christ (mini-bibles essentially).

I noticed one person watching me across the street and came towards me, I thought he was a seeker and offered him a gospel booklet. He told me he was a believer and started to share a very encouraging word from God that encouraged me a lot, as I remember there was a lot of spiritual warfare and I was having a hard time doing what I was doing so it was a timely encouragement.

I asked him what church he went to after awhile and he said without blinking "orthodox church". He was very kind and I sensed Christ with the man. I never ended attending his church as he did invite me at the end in a very gracious way. Experiences like this opened my eyes more about this "hidden" people in the western culture.

Towards brother Frank's comments, what I would disagree with is lumping Orthodox with Rome, as they are totally different things. If researched they are actually opposite of each other and protestants have a lot more in common with orthodox than Roman Catholics. Rome split from the Orthodox church in AD 1054. And protestants split from Rome in 1500's.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 15:52**

...His journey to Orthodoxy began with a trip to China, when I saw Chinese Christians who were deeply in love with the Lord, and I learned that while they may not have had as much intellectual acumen or knowledge as I did, they had life, he said...

I think our brother missed something about the Chinese church. They are a church under persecution. The reason the Chinese church endures and even thrives in persecution is because of intimacy with Jesus. Not because they are members of the Orthodox Church. This is why I keep posing the question. Is not Jesus Himself enough for Hank Hannagraff?

Bro Blaine

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/14 16:05**

Quote:  
-----I think our brother missed something about the Chinese church. They are a church under persecution. The reason the Chinese church endures and even thrives in persecution is because of intimacy with Jesus. Not because they are members of the Orthodox Church. This is why I keep posing the question. Is not Jesus Himself enough for Hank Hannagraff?  
-----

I personally think Hannegraff saw the spirit of "worship" in the Chinese church, they celebrate communion every service in most house churches and they usually do it very meaningfully with tears.

Perhaps that gave him a sense of importance towards communion and how modern evangelical churches in the west have side-stepped that practice by-in-large.

We are not missing Christ if we are doing the very things he reminds and tells us to do. We cannot have Jesus only as the NT and OT come also with belief in the Son of God and all the traditions and commands and practices of early believers in the Scriptures. So seeing something of Christ in the communion is probably right, how far we take that is another story, but treating it as mundane is obviously not in accord with the New Testament.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 16:08**

...On the flight back, Hannegraff wondered if he was even a Christian. I was comparing my ability to communicate truth with their deep and abiding love for the Lord Jesus Christ. He began to study the work of Watchman Nee and the idea of theosis (the Eastern Orthodox teaching on seeking union with God), which led him back to the early Christian church...

Again, our brother missed something regarding Watchman Nee. Watchman Nee was a believer who was imprisoned by the Chinese Communists for over 20 years. He died in prison. Because he spoke so much about Jesus Christ, the Chinese communists cut out his tongue. This is when the Lord opened up the writing ministry of the brother we call Watchman Nee. Again, it was because of intimacy with Jesus that Watchman Nee gave us his incredible books.

How our brother, Hank Hannagraff could be exposed to the persecuted church in China. And read the works of Watchman Nee. And jump to the Orthodox Church is one connection. I am missing.

It is only through an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ can one truly be satisfied. Joining the Orthodox or the Roman Catholic church or any other organized church will not satisfy the longing of one's heart. That longing which is Jesus dwelling in one's heart through faith.

Our persecuted brothers and sisters in places like China do not have religious churches such as the Orthodox or even the Catholic church. But our persecuted brothers and sisters do have access to a relationship with Jesus Christ. They know Him through the Holy Spirit and by communing with him in prayer. This makes Jesus all the more precious to them. Thus, the word becomes all the more precious to them.

I think it is sad that Hank Hannegraff feels he has to go to the Orthodox church to find a deeper relationship with Jesus.



When all he has to do is call out to the Lord Jesus Christ and develop an intimate relationship with him alone.

Simply my thoughts.

Bro Blaine

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 16:18**

...We cannot have Jesus only as the NT and OT come also with belief in the Son of God and all the traditions and commands and practices of early believers in the Scriptures...

Brother. Respectfully, we have only one command and that is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. When we start elevating commands and traditions on that same par, then we are missing Christ. In other words, if we start adding to faith in Christ plus something. Then we are missing the message of the gospel of the New Testament.

Bro Blaine

**Re: , on: 2017/4/14 17:10**

Greg writes.....

"Towards brother Frank's comments, what I would disagree with is lumping Orthodox with Rome, as they are totally different things. If researched they are actually opposite of each other and protestants have a lot more in common with orthodox than Roman Catholics. Rome split from the Orthodox church in AD 1054. And protestants split from Rome in 1500's."

Since I came out of the Catholic tradition brother, you might imagine that I know something of the difference. Your above statement is simply incorrect and I would advise you similarly to do even some basic study and you will find there is little to choose between Catholics and Orthodox. Yes they reject the position and office of a pope and their priests are married, but outside of that there is little to choose between the two and they are both hostile to anyone who claims to be born again and both have the martyrs' blood on their hands. Pope John Paul rather eloquently describes the two Churches as both lungs in the same body. Here below Pope Paul VI writes.....

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, citing documents of the Second Vatican Council and of Pope Paul VI, states:

"The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honoured by the name of Christian, but do not profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter" (Lumen gentium 15). Those "who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church" (Unitatis redintegratio 3). With the Orthodox Churches, this communion is so profound "that it lacks little to attain the fullness that would permit a common celebration of the Lord's Eucharist" (Paul VI, Discourse, 14 December 1975; cf. Unitatis redintegratio 13-18).

**Re: - posted by beekpr, on: 2017/4/14 19:57**

I sense that some on this forum, like myself, come from a religious background where tradition cast a veil over the glorious truth of the gospel. It may not have totally obliterated the truth but cast a fog over what should have been unmistakably clear. When God in His mercy lifted the veil and brought us into a glorious relationship with Himself through Christ we felt as though we were partakers of a feast of love rather than being fed a meager diet of gruel. Consequently, any reminder of what once held us in bondage grates on our spirit and we feel to cry out against it. Recently, at a funeral at the church of my boyhood (there are real believers in this church) I attempted to express the sentiments of my heart in this sonnet.

Tradition Versus Eternal Life

Religious orthodoxy's ways are taught  
By fathers to their sons through endless days.  
Each generation walks within its ways,

And hopes, somehow, the virtue by it wrought  
Will be a refuge with some comfort fraught  
When Death its icy hand upon them lays,  
And leads them through the dark and shadowy haze  
To realms beyond where mortal eye sees not.

But God a great salvation does provide  
That we may now His sons and daughters be!  
He sends His Spirit's presence to abide  
With us in sweetest camaraderie.

Not ritual but eternal life He gives.  
He who receives the gift forever lives!

**Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/14 21:09**

In response to Hank Hanegraaff's becoming a member of an Orthodox Church, "Answers in Genesis" has written a lengthy article on the subject.

How Is Eastern Orthodoxy Different?

<https://answersingenesis.org/world-religions/eastern-orthodoxy/>

**Re: Authority? - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/14 21:14**

from the article :

**Authority**

The Orthodox, like Protestants and Catholics, regard the Bible as the inspired Word of God. But like the Catholics, the Orthodox Bible contains a few books not found in the Hebrew Scriptures (that is, books called the Apocrypha and written between the close of the Old Testament and the writing of the New Testament).

The inclusion in the canon of Scripture of some books not regarded as canonical by Jesus and the Apostles (based on their lack of reference to them) is not an unimportant matter.<sup>3</sup> However, even more important and resulting in more serious consequences is the place of tradition in connection with the Scriptures.

The Orthodox view of tradition is more complex than the Roman Catholic view. In the Catholic view, Scripture and tradition are both authorities. In other words, tradition exists alongside of Scripture as another authority. In the Orthodox view, the Scriptures are a part of tradition. According to their theologians, it is a mistake to pit Scripture against tradition. They are both part of one great tradition. They affirm that Scripture may be the highest tradition, but it is still tradition. But Scripture is not, in their view, the highest and final authority for faith and practice in the way Protestants since the Reformation have seen it and confessed it to be. Scripture, as part of the great tradition, must be interpreted authoritatively. Though the Orthodox do not have a Magisterium<sup>4</sup> comparable to the Roman Catholic Church, they do, practically speaking, have something functionally similar.

For the Orthodox, the church's tradition is the authoritative interpretation of the Scriptures. This means, practically, that no believer has the right to interpret Scripture on his or her own, so to speak. The proper way to read Scripture according to the Orthodox is with the writings of the church fathers<sup>5</sup> alongside the Bible, guiding us in our understanding of what the Bible says. Of course, in practice, there may be very few Orthodox who literally read their Bibles with the writings of the church fathers open beside them. But what they do seems (to this outside observer) to be: (1) they read the church fathers a good deal more than the Scriptures and then (2) when they do read Scripture, they come up with their understanding of what the Scriptures are supposed to mean from the church fathers and thus find in the Bible what they have already become convinced of by reading the church fathers. No doubt, this may facilitate a quicker and correct understanding of some parts of the Bible. However, the possibility that one or more of the church fathers has misunderstood or misinterpreted Scripture does not seem to come into play. When the church fathers and the church's tradition as a whole are used as a means of understanding Scripture, rather than using Scripture to correct and guide the church's beliefs and practices, the result is often seen in putting the church's tradition as an authority over or above the Scripture.



re.

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add :

I am in agreement with AIG response :

The Bible teaches its supreme authority repeatedly. For example, Moses taught the Israelites to trust and obey God's Word and teach it to their children (Deuteronomy 6:1-9). God told Joshua not to turn to the right or the left from following His Word (Joshua 1:6-9). Psalm 1 blessed the person who clings to God's Word, Psalm 19 says it is far superior to any truth we learn from nature, and Psalm 119 magnifies the importance of Scripture, making the believer wiser than his teachers (119:97-104). The prophets continually called the Jews back to the Word of God (e.g., Isaiah 8:20; Jeremiah 6:16-19; Hosea 4:6). Jesus condemned the Jewish religious leaders of His day for undermining the teaching of Scripture by their traditions (Mark 7:6-13). And the Berean Jews were commended for evaluating the truthfulness of Paul's teachings in the light of the Old Testament (Acts 17:11). Scripture is the only sure foundation and authority for the Christian.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/15 6:42**

To hear Hank Hannegraff himself share answers to what some are asking here you can listen to this:

"Hank starts the broadcast by addressing the question, Have I Left the Christian Faith?"

Have I Left the Christian Faith and Q&A  
<http://www.equip.org/broadcast/left-christian-faith-qa/>

**Re: Was I even the Christian? - posted by TakeUpTheCross, on: 2017/4/15 7:43**

Well, I do not know Hanegraaff personally, but... the question he asked himself "Was I even a Christian?" - is not an unusual one, if you have ever glimpsed the persecuted church. I myself and even older brethren share the same - that when you see the courage, the love and simplicity of those followers of Jesus in the persecuted countries - our Christianity in the West seems so shallow, so common, so far away from what these brethren out there are professing and living.

But then I think, God has placed them there and us here and our ultimate joy and calling is to glorify the Lord wherever we are. And we should sustain and help each other.

How from Watchman Nee you come to Eastern Orthodoxy, I also do not know. It may be true that in the Orthodox, as well as in the Catholic church there are single individuals, who really fear the Lord and strive to know Him... I do not know BUT that does not mean that we should ever approve these institutions!

As for the beautiful services: may be they seem beautiful to you and me. But what does God think about the matter? If we go to church because of the songs, or because of the preaching or because of anything else but God, is this not idolatry? The same can be said of almost any church gathering? Do we come to meet God or satisfy our emotions and social needs?

Lastly, I won't be very much surprised if the organized official churches unite against Israel. The Evangelicals are nowadays friends of everybody: they go even to pray in a mosque! (unbelievable) and the Evangelicals are very, very befriended with the Catholics at least here in Germany. I was shocked... the Land of Martin Luther tries as if to reverse the very thing Martin Luther did!

"We must get back to the belief that Protestants are to protest, dissenters are to dissent and nonconformists must refuse to conform." - A.W.Tozer

My sheep hear My voice. - John 10:27

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/15 7:50**

Quote:  
-----Well, I do not know Hanegraaff personally, but... the question he asked himself "Was I even a Christian?" - is not an unusual one, if you have ever glimpsed the persecuted church. I myself and even older brethren share the same - that when you see the courage, the love and simplicity of those followers of Jesus in the persecuted countries - our Christianity in the West seems so shallow, so common, so far away from what these brethren out there are professing and living.  
-----

It is good to note that a large part of the persecuted church are coptic (orthodox christians) almost all the persecuted believers 80% are these in middle eastern countries. I do not believe that is an exaggeration. All persecuted church ministers ask for prayers and acknowledge these martyrs as true martyrs.

**Re: - posted by ArthurRosh, on: 2017/4/15 8:50**

Hebrews 2-10

We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified:

“What is mankind that you are mindful of them,

a son of man that you care for him?

You made them a little lower than the angels;

you crowned them with glory and honor

and put everything under their feet.”

In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says,

“I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;

in the assembly I will sing your praises.”

And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again he says,

“Here am I, and the children God has given me.”

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house," bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

So, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts  
as you did in the rebellion,  
during the time of testing in the wilderness,  
where your ancestors tested and tried me,  
though for forty years they saw what I did.

That is why I was angry with that generation;

I said, "Their hearts are always going astray,  
and they have not known my ways."

So I declared on oath in my anger,

"They shall never enter my rest."

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. As has just been said:

"Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts  
as you did in the rebellion."

Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed. Now we who have believed enter that rest, just

as God has said,

“So I declared on oath in my anger,

“They shall never enter my rest.”

And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “On the seventh day God rested from all his works.” And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.”

Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience, God again set a certain day, calling it “Today.” This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage already quoted:

“Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts.”

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.

In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him,

“You are my Son;

today I have become your Father.”

And he says in another place,

“You are a priest forever,

in the order of Melchizedek.”

During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good

od from evil.

Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so.

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your caseâ€”the things that have to do with salvation. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, â€œI will surely bless you and give you many descendants.â€ And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the king and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means â€œking of righteousnessâ€; then also, â€œking of Salemâ€ means â€œking of peace.â€ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the peopleâ€”that is, from their fellow Israelitesâ€”even though they also are descended from Abraham. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthoodâ€”and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthoodâ€”why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. For it is declared:

â€œYou are a priest forever,

in the order of Melchizedek.â€

The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

“The Lord has sworn

and will not change his mind:

“You are a priest forever.”

Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he is always alive to intercede for them.

Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.

Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said:

“The days are coming, declares the Lord,

when I will make a new covenant

with the people of Israel

and with the people of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant

I made with their ancestors

when I took them by the hand

to lead them out of Egypt,

because they did not remain faithful to my covenant,

and I turned away from them,

declares the Lord.

This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel

after that time, declares the Lord.

I will put my laws in their minds

and write them on their hearts.



I will be their God,

and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbor,

or say to one another, "Know the Lord,"

because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest.

For I will forgive their wickedness

and will remember their sins no more.

By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.

Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

The first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand and the table with its consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.

When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning. This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.

But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when someone has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. This is why even the first covenant was not put in effect without blood. When Moses had proclaimed every command of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. He said, "This

This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep. In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said:

“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,

but a body you prepared for me;

with burnt offerings and sin offerings

you were not pleased.

Then I said, “Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll”

I have come to do your will, my God.”

First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them—though they were offered in accordance with the law. Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says:

“This is the covenant I will make with them

after that time, says the Lord.

I will put my laws in their hearts,

and I will write them on their minds.”

Then he adds:

“Their sins and lawless acts

I will remember no more.”

And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For,

"In just a little while,

he who is coming will come

and will not delay."

And,

"But my righteous one will live by faith.

And I take no pleasure

in the one who shrinks back."

But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

#### More from Answers in Genesis - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/15 9:09

Salvation and the Sacraments

"What must I do to be saved?" This was the question the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas in Acts 16:30. It remains the critical question for all of mankind. Indeed, if we are given the wrong answers to this question, a catastrophic loss is the prospect we face. Strangely, in contrast to both Protestants and Catholics, the Orthodox do not seem to focus very much on this question. There are, of course, reasons for this.

Like Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy places great emphasis on the "sacraments." Like Catholicism, Orthodoxy sees baptism as bringing about the regeneration of the person receiving the sacrament. The Orthodox typically baptize infants, but, of course, adult converts to Orthodoxy are baptized as well. In contrast to Roman Catholics, the Orthodox baptize by immersion. Immersion is carried out three times in succession, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Gold Vessel for Chrism

A gold vessel for chrism

Unique to the Orthodox is a second sacrament applied immediately following baptism, called *chrismation*. Chrismation is performed by the priest on the newly baptized individual by anointing him or her with oil and making the sign of the cross over the various parts of the body (the forehead, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, chest, hands, and feet) of the newly baptized and saying, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, Amen." According to Orthodox teaching, this sacrament brings about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the newly baptized individual. In the Orthodox view then, even if the individual being baptized is an infant, he or she is consequently a full member of the church from that point on. The oil used in the anointing of the person being baptized is called the *chrism*. According to Orthodox belief, the chrism may be administered by a priest but the chrism must have first been blessed by a bishop.

The Orthodox do not believe that faith on the part of the person being baptized is necessary in order for these sacraments to be effective. Indeed, Orthodox theologians take great pains to clarify and emphasize that the effectiveness of the sacraments is entirely independent of any faith or particular desires for God or sanctity. To quote a prominent Orthodox theologian: "In no way is the efficacy of the sacrament contingent upon the faith or moral qualifications of either celebrant or recipient."<sup>10</sup> How is such a thing possible? The answer becomes clearer when we read Karmiris's explanation of what happens when the sacraments are dispensed: "Baptism and chrismation transmit justifying and regenerating grace."<sup>11</sup> Quite explicitly then, these two sacraments, according to Orthodox teaching, automatically transmit God's saving and regenerating grace.

How is it possible that a person can be baptized without any faith or spiritual hunger, by a priest of whom no moral qualifications are required, and yet that baptism be effective without fail? The answer to this question is that the sacrament itself, by virtue of being a genuine sacrament of the Orthodox Church, is certainly effective. In other words, all that is necessary is that the priest or bishop celebrating the sacraments must be a duly ordained minister of the Orthodox Church. The baptisms that take place in the Protestant Church or even the Roman Catholic Church are not regarded as valid baptisms. Why not? Karmiris explains this quite clearly:

Furthermore, the Orthodox Catholic Church believes that divine grace is not dispensed outside of the true church, and thus the church does not recognize in their fullness sacramental acts which are performed outside of her, except in extraordinary cases.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, it is because of the belief of the Orthodox that the ancient maxim of Cyprian (3rd century) is true, that is, "outside of the church there is no salvation." Since only the Orthodox Church is the true church, then only the ministers of the Orthodox Church are genuinely in the apostolic succession.<sup>13</sup> Thus these ministers play the role of transmitting God's grace when they administer the sacraments.

It is ironic that the Orthodox regard the faith of the one being baptized as inconsequential while they at the same time believe that all baptisms administered by legitimate Orthodox ministers are effective. From the perspective of an outside observer, their faith is great, but it is in the wrong thing. The Bible makes the faith of the believer the decisive thing. Notice Paul's response to the question of the Philippian jailor: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). As a result of his faith, the Philippian jailor was then baptized (Acts 16:33). What a perfect situation for Paul to have clarified the effectiveness of baptism to bring salvation! All he would have had to say was "Receive baptism from us and you will be saved!" But, of course, he did not say that. He placed the emphasis squarely on the faith of the individual sinner as the essential thing to receive salvation.

Two things must be said to clarify the picture further. It is quite true that Eastern Orthodoxy is a very sacramental tradition. The portal to enter the Orthodox Church is through the sacraments. Great emphasis is placed on these sacraments. There is a deeply rooted belief that the visible acts of the church's priests and bishops signify the invisible works of God. Because of the authority of the church to perform these acts and transmit the grace pertinent to the particular purpose, grace is transmitted to the recipient by virtue of the work of God through the church's ministers. Thus the members are taught that these sacraments are the means of salvation and becoming *deified*. (More will be said about *deification* momentarily.) The point I want to make is this: the members of the Orthodox Church naturally assume that they can depend on the sacraments and that they will be effective. Consequently, the great majority of those within the Orthodox Church rely on the sacraments to *get* them through (that is, to gain their salvation for them).

The second thing that needs to be said here is to clarify to people outside of the tradition that the salvation believed to have been imparted at one's baptism and chrismation is not viewed within Orthodoxy as a permanent possession. In fact, it is viewed merely as a beginning. Whether or not one will end up actually saved depends on a number of other things. Thus, it would be a misrepresentation of Orthodox teaching to leave people with the understanding that all that was needed was to be baptized and chrismated. Though it is true that the Orthodox believe that baptism and chrismation bring regeneration and justification, it is not true that they regard the new member of the church as having a *free pass* to

o heaven,â€ so to speak. The spiritual life in this newly baptized and chrismated individual must be nurtured. This is especially done through participation in â€œthe Eucharistâ€ (i.e., the Lordâ€™s Supper). But other matters are important as well. The main thing I wish to make clear at this point is that salvation in Orthodoxy is regarded as a process, indeed a life-long process. The sacraments play a very great role, but other things matter as well.

**Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/4/15 15:07**

Quote:  
-----It is good to note that a large part of the persecuted church are coptic (orthodox christians) almost all the persecuted believers 80% are these in middle eastern countries. I do not believe that is an exaggeration.  
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I do not know where do you take this statistics from. Even if it was true (which I cannot prove), let's remember that still doesn't justify Orthodoxy!

Bulgaria's official religion is Eastern Orthodoxy. This has helped probably that the nation retains something about God in their thoughts - like celebrating the Resurrection, the Birth of Christ. Another good thing, I find, is that Christian media still somehow reaches the nation through the national television etc. BUT apart from that, brother, (and I am very grieved to tell you this) they preach POISON. The additions to and subtractions from the Word of the Lord are horrible. And the point is not only that certain things are not even mentioned in the Bible, but they are taught and believed as truth!

I will give you just one example regarding Easter: (apart from the eggs and bunnies, which are also unbiblical)  
- "The Holy Fire" - which they claim "falls down from heaven" in Jerusalem on Pascha and only to the Orthodox Church. Pilgrims and clergy claim that in the first minutes the fire does not burn them.

All these bowing to icons, kissing images, doing this and doing that - where is God in all that? It sounds much more like..  
"God, your way of worship is way too simple. We will enhance it." And therefore they add doctrine upon doctrine, and tradition after tradition until you cannot even discern what was from man and what is really in the Bible, except you really know the Word of God or God's Spirit leads you.

Nothing justifies the Orthodox Church! Just like I will never, by God's grace, accept the Pope as a successor of Apostle Peter or Head of the Church or Spokesman of Christ or whatever he holds himself to be, I will never accept also Orthodox Christianity - and for me in essence they are the same!

**Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2017/4/15 17:39**

James White answer is very right for this time as does he become the Eastern Orthodox Answer Man

Can a Consistent Eastern Orthodox Believer Be the Bible Answer Man?  
<https://youtu.be/F5EPs9Eqlsc>

As Eastern Orthodox does not believe in Sola Scriptura and the Solas which make protestantism, if Walter Martin was alive he would convince him to repent.

Walter Martin the Greatest Danger in the Church Today  
<https://youtu.be/78wRKmmnwhY>

it is worthwhile listening to Walter Martins library on  
<http://www.waltermartin.com/>

It is convenient that the article on the Eastern Orthodox has been conveniently pulled from CRM.

The doctrines he has pulled himself out of, have put himself outside the Christian faith.

To me he is one of many Dominos that in the Mere Christianity Crowd that have sold their souls to the ecumenical movement even though it is not the Catholic Church, the icons and the bells and smells are very like it

<https://answersingenesis.org/world-religions/eastern-orthodoxy/>  
"Salvation and Deification

One of the great points of confusion among outsiders trying to understand Orthodoxy is the concept of "deification" or "theosis." Translated, the thought is "becoming god." To most Westerners this concept is totally alien. Paul does, of course, speak of being "conformed to the image of Christ" (Romans 8:29). Is that all the Orthodox mean by theosis? No, it is not. In fact, the Orthodox have a major and complex theology built around the idea of deification."

he defends this  
<http://www.equip.org/video/eastern-orthodoxy-theosis/>

How if you defend this can you defend against the cults and other groups

I think it turned me of Hank Hanegraaff support for Stephen Sizer and then his Old Earth Creation View

Jill Martin saw the dangers of him early on  
<http://www.waltermartin.com/2007/12/tim-lahaye-and-hank-hanegraaff-men.html>

Jill Martins is Walter Martins daughter

It is so hard with the Apostasy that is almost like a swamp in the church at the moment.

2 Thessalonians 2 New King James Version (NKJV)  
The Great Apostasy

2 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

I remember working in the Christian bookshop and going through the books and just going through the books and just going on Walter Martin definition of what a cult is and wanting desperately to find books to recommend to people and not being able to find any it makes me so sad as I desperately want to find some and Christian music

I desperately feel so dry in the Holy Spirit and need Life so much and am probably the worst sinner in the world.

If Walter Martin was alive he would find more Cults to add such as the New Apostolic Reformation movement people like Bill Johnson and crew. There are so many other such as Rick Warrens Purpose Driven Life. Andy Stanley, Steven Furtick.

Then the emergent church movement and others. It seems people are selling out to the Catholic Church seeing it is another denomination or the Interfaith Movement.

William Lane Craig saying that Roman Catholic Church is just another denomination

The Reformation is important and it is the thing that differentiates us from the Catholic Church  
The Pope Video "Inter-religious Dialogue - January 2016



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nq7us5Lf5IU>

**William Tyndale and others did not give there blood for no reason. We are coming up to the 500th Celebrations of the Reformation, I think we need another one.**

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/4/15 17:50**

I did more checking on the web and discovered more issues about Handergraff that I believe one should sit up and take notice.

Here is one:

<https://answersingenesis.org/blogs/ken-ham/2013/05/09/hank-hanegraaffs-abuse-of-biblical-truth/>

James teaches us "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one , he has become guilty of all." I have observed that one cannot just be guilty of one sin. One sin may be obvious to all but there are other sins in its infancy lurking about just ready to be exposed at the opportune time.

As in Handergraff's case one can with more checking find other issues that give one pause.

If Handergraff is on a journey to authenticity I hope he will find it but you will not find it in a brick and mortar facility or intellectualism.

Sandra

**Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2017/4/15 18:00**

this is a scary one about the Local Church

<https://www.moriel.org/component/k2/item/690-hank-hanegraaff-supports-the-local-church.html>

He should resign from being the Bible Answer Man as he cannot become the Bible and Traditions Man!

**Re: , on: 2017/4/15 18:37**

...He should resign from being the Bible Answer Man as he cannot become the Bible and Traditions Man!...

Well our brother Wayne suggested HH could be

The Credal Answer Man. ðŸ˜Š

Bro Blaine

**Re: Note to all - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/4/15 20:06**

Just want to add that before we go on and search through the whole life of Hanegraaf we should beware ourselves that we do not miss the point! That we ourselves know Christ and worship Him and serve Him as we ought to!

As for our brethren in the Middle East, brother Greg, do not think that I despise them or anything. I do not know much about the Christians in the Middle East. This much I know that "in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." So God is the Judge and the One, who justifies! And having said that, I still stick to the statement that Orthodox religion is not what the Bible teaches and we are called to follow Christ not traditions of men.

**Re: The Other Suffering Church in the Middle East , on: 2017/4/16 7:21**

There are many in the Middle East who are coming out of Islam. They are choosing to follow Jesus. These former Muslims call themselves "Christ followers" or "Jesus followers". These Muslim Background Believers or MBB's are not welcome in the Coptic or Orthodox Church. Thus they meet underground in house fellowships.

This I believe is the true remnant church as many of these former Muslims who follow Jesus endure persecution. For they are in the shadow of the cross.

Bro Blaine

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/16 8:52**

Here is an official response by Hank H. on his website:

Through Christian Research Institute staff and friends, I have become aware of chatter on the Internet the gist of which is that I have walked away from the Christian faith. Amid Holy Week I pray that those forwarding this notion may have an ever-deeper encounter with our crucified and resurrected Lord. May they and their loved ones be blessed and their faith strengthened. If I have caused any to stumble, I humbly ask forgiveness.

My purpose in this post is not so much to respond but to reassure. As I have never been more in love with my wife and family, so, too, I have never been more in love with the Lord Jesus and His body the church. As such, I confess my faith in the deity of Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.

I affirm the doctrine of original sin sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned (Romans 5:12).

I am deeply committed to the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15) and to the Holy Scriptures, the only infallible repository of redemptive revelation (2 Timothy 3:15-16).

I love the Holy Trinity one God revealed in three Persons eternally distinct. And am deeply grateful that the true and living God invites us to participate in the loving relationships that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have enjoyed throughout eternity.

I hold to the glorious reality that Jesus arose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

I am grateful to the Lord Jesus who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.

I thank God daily that I am a new creation in Christ. For by grace I have been saved through faith, and that not of myself; it is the gift of God, not of works lest I should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (see Ephesians 2:8-10).

I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come.

While there are many secondary issues genuine believers will continue to debate this side of eternity, I have and will always champion what C.S. Lewis called mere Christianity. In essentials unity, non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.

Hank Hanegraaff  
Holy Week 2017

from: <http://www.equip.org/article/left-christian-faith/>

**Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/16 9:27**

I found it disturbing that Hank said of the Roman Catholic Church that he believed that it was a truth Church.

I am not against believing that there might be some true Christians whom have not yet totally left the RCC but to claim that the system of the RCC is a truth church I find extremely disturbing.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/16 11:28**

I found Hank's response, shared here by Greg, very sad. It reminded me of the first three chapters of Bonhoeffer's book "The Cost of Discipleship." In those first three chapters Dietrich lays out exactly what had happened to the second generation of the Lutheran church. It went from an alive vital, radical changed heart generation to a generation who had a mere mental assent to abstract truth. If they could say yes to a series of theological questions then they considered themselves saved, when in fact they were not new creatures in Christ at all but men who had head knowledge.

I want all married people to consider this for a moment. You meet someone who claims to know your husband or your wife. They begin to describe them too you. It quickly becomes apparent if they actually know them or not. There is a knowing, a witness of the spirit. It is not a head knowledge but a heart's witness.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2017/4/16 17:38**

Frank,

You underlined the difference between knowing a person and knowing about a person.

I don't know much about Hank to render judgment. But what would you advise Hank if he was reading this thread?

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/16 19:01**

Quote:

-----I found it disturbing that Hank said of the Roman Catholic Church that he believed that it was a truth Church.

-----

Brother,

For what it is worth, I did listen to 3 of his shows and he said in one of them that he believes there are true brothers and sisters in the Roman and Orthodox churches as there are in protestant churches and that statement alluded to (or at least seemed to me) to state that there are also unbelievers in all the churches including protestant, evangelical.

He also said that he could never join the roman church, and he did not underline exact reasons, but made it clear he sees things that would hinder him from ever being in that church.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/16 20:20**

Hi Yuehan,

My advice to Hank, having listened to his show for many years and meeting him in person would be to put down the theology books and seek the Lord in person. It was sad to listen to his comments about the "Eucharist."

If He found Jesus, it would radically change his whole life and the last place he would be found is in the depths of the Orthodox church, a great enemy of all those who have been genuinely born again.

I have an orthodox family living in my cul-de-sac. The oldest son (adult in his 30s) encountered Jesus and was born again. He was kicked out of the house. They were especially angered when he was baptized. His younger brother (27 years old) was also born again and they did not kick him out, but they refused to go to his baptism, my friend and I attended. I had a Bible study with this young man for about 3 months. He would tell you the difference between being born again and being a member of the Orthodox church is the difference between being dead and alive. I could testify to that having grown up in the Catholic religion.

Hank may say he would not join the Catholic church but I am sure there was a time when he would have said he would never join the Orthodox church. I wonder what Hank will do when the two churches reconcile their differences.....bro Frank

**Re: mutually exclusive - posted by savannah, on: 2017/4/16 21:29**

"...put down the theology books and seek the Lord in person."

This statement implies that the two are mutually exclusive. It does not necessitate that it be one or the other. Many mystics promote the same, as they are of that mind themselves.

There is much edification in being of a studious spirit, and certainly does not make it irreconcilable with seeking the Lord in person.

Every Word of God is pure! Psalm 119

**Re: , on: 2017/4/16 22:01**

PP writes.....

"I found it disturbing that Hank said of the Roman Catholic Church that he believed that it was a true Church."

Hank has always believed that PP.....bro Frank

**I find this disturbing - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/16 22:29**

<http://www.equip.org/broadcast/left-christian-faith-qa/>

starting at around 11:40 Hank says :

"..... the bottom line for me is that the Roman Catholic Church ,and this is not a unique statement for me, and it is something that I have said for many many years.

I think it is a truth Church,

I think it has significant error which of course as I just mentioned could be said about other bodies of believers. But we also have to remember the incredible work that the Roman Catholic Church has done on common causes issues like abortion, thank God for there unfailing stand in this regard...

**Re: , on: 2017/4/16 22:47**

put down the theology books and seek the Lord in person."

Agreed. It seems that it is the educated theologians who are turning away from the truth.

Dr.John MacArthur believes one can still be saved after taking the mark during the tribulation. I also understand he denies the blood of Christ. Not to mention denying the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now we have another educated apologist, Hank Hanegraaff converting to Eastern Orthodoxy. He follows in the line of Frankie Schaeffer who converted to Eastern Orthodoxy. Frankie Schaeffer was the son of Francis Schaeffer. Now I understand Frank Schaeffer has become an atheist.

So it would not be surprising if Hank Hannagraff converts to Roman Catholicism.

It seems like that the more of an alphabet on has behind their name. The more prone they are to error.

Just my thoughts.

Bro Blaine

**Re: others - posted by savannah, on: 2017/4/17 6:42**

"It seems that it is the educated theologians who are turning away from the truth."

And just who might these be to whom you refer? If you would, please do furnish us with a list that we may avoid them.

Thanks.

**Re: I find this disturbing, on: 2017/4/17 9:38**

Thank you PP for sharing that. I know there are some folk who would like to derail the thread by trying to start argument s and so on but this is important information. Hank has always said that Roman Catholicism was within the " pale of orthodoxy." There may be many on SI who think so as well, that would be a great error.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/4/17 10:56**

QUOTE by Frank:

" to put down the theology books and seek the Lord in person"

AMEN!

This is true for all.

Sandra

**Re: John MacArthur and the blood of Jesus - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/17 23:44**

<http://www.romans45.org/articles/blood.htm>

**Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/4/18 12:48**

Brothers/Sisters,

Mark 9:38-42

'Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.'

Why are we slaughtering this man in the presence of God and everyone on the internet?

I don't get to come to Sermonindex much anymore (largely because internet access is very limited), but when I come here, I would love to see good fellowship, encouragement, and that which is necessary for edification.

The only thing I really have to say is this: when persecution does explode on American soil, many of you will be glad to find a brother or sister in an Orthodox or Catholic church who will give you a cup of cold water because you claim the name of Christ. You'll be surprised as you are turned over by your own family and friends while saints you declared didn't

even exist in these other churches take you in. I'm not prophesying, but wiser men than myself can attest to this.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/18 13:13**

Hi Havox,

I think there is a little of the dramatic when you use the term "slaughter." I do not consider Catholics in general to be my brother or my sister in Christ so I disagree with your premise.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/18 14:17**

Over 200 million Catholics have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the past decades beginning about 1960 or so. I don't see how one can acquire this experience without being born again. It's a challenge to many and is a challenge to my view but I know it is a fact and has happened. I grew up Catholic and would not at all want to go back in but I have Catholic friends who speak in the language of the Spirit and who openly confess Christ as Savior.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/18 14:24**

Quote:

-----Brothers/Sisters,

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I appreciate the heart behind this meaningful post. I personally still consider Hank Hanegraaff a brother in the Lord Jesus Christ. We all see in part and soon the fullness will be soon. Persecution does seem to bring things more to light as our true brothers and sisters become more apparent.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/18 15:11**

There is a great whore church emerging, an amalgam of religions and churches from around the world. Many are/will be deceived by this, very sad.

As far as their being 200 million born again Catholics, I find that this would be a number impossible to prove. I know many Catholics who came to know Jesus and left Catholicism behind because it is a teacher of heresy and idolatry. The very first thing you do when you go into a Catholic church is you must kneel before a statue and make the sign of the cross. Most Catholic charismatics who "speak in tongues," were taught to, as preposterous as that sounds. Repeating syllable over and over again rapidly is not speaking in tongues and of course we have counterfeit gifts, especially in the last day



S.

I would suggest David that you speak to missionaries in Catholic countries and see what they would tell you. The Catholic church is still a great enemy of born again Christians. Just a few facts. You cannot be a Catholic and not believe in the infallibility of the Pope. You cannot be a Catholic and not believe in transubstantiation. You cannot be a Catholic and simply make up your doctrine as you go along. The reformers referred to the popes as anti-christ and rightly so. Nothing has changed, accept the gullibility of evangelicals.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/18 16:06**

/I know many Catholics who came to know Jesus and left Catholicism behind because it is a teacher of heresy and idolatry/

I know many of the same and even go to church with them. I'm one of them.

/The very first thing you do when you go into a Catholic church is you must kneel before a statue and make the sign of the cross./

That never was my experience when I was a Catholic.

/Most Catholic charismatics who "speak in tongues," were taught to, as preposterous as that sounds. Repeating syllables over and over again rapidly is not speaking in tongues and of course we have counterfeit gifts, especially in the last days./

It's not remotely possible to know if these Catholics were taught to speak in tongues. I would be careful going there. Sounds like a urban myth to me. I've been around Catholics speaking in tongues and it was the real thing. What first hand evidence is there that nearly 200 million Catholics were taught to speak in tongues?

/I would suggest David that you speak to missionaries in Catholic countries and see what they would tell you./

Been there done that. Besides growing up Catholic, I have visited missionaries and mission fields in Central America and saw the damage that Catholicism has done.

/Just a few facts. You cannot be a Catholic and not believe in the infallibility of the Pope. You cannot be a Catholic and not believe in transubstantiation. You cannot be a Catholic and simply make up your doctrine as you go along./

Yet believing or not believing these things is not what saves a person. Doctrines and beliefs don't save but the person Jesus Christ Himself saves - HE Himself! If one is in the Catholic Church and makes contact with the living person of Christ and believes in His atoning crucifixion and resurrection then I propose they can be saved. By Christ Himself. Whether they choose to remain Catholic or not is another matter. I would likely urge them to leave. Yet my Catholic friends don't treat me as an enemy.

/The reformers referred to the popes as anti-christ and rightly so./

Yes, this is so. For all their important contributions, it's too bad the Reformers kept Roman Catholic eschatology which has survived in the Reformed tradition even unto this day.

Yet if one is in the Catholic Church and comes into contact by faith with the risen Savior and believes in Him I can't say at that point they aren't Christian. Being a Christian following bad doctrine is not the same as not being a Christian at all. The same with Hanegraff.

Thank you. Blessings.

**Re: , on: 2017/4/18 16:40**

Not interested in arguing David, you will need to find someone else. Let us agree to disagree.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/4/18 16:51**

No problem I hear you and appreciate it and appreciate you.

I'm thinking that in the perils and trials of the end days that many brothers and sisters from just about every communion will come out from under the rocks as they say and emerge and embrace the rest of their brothers and sisters and fellow saints in the Lord. The true church will get through the end days TOGETHER.