



Christianity

Comparative Theology

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- **As we look at other belief systems and compare them with ours, it is of utmost importance to know what our beliefs are.**
- **What follows is a very brief discussion of some of our beliefs.**

Regarding the Bible

- **We believe that all the scriptures in the Bible are inspired by God, the Holy Spirit and are useful on multifaceted level for the Christian believer.**
- **We believe that God's Word is always true, always applicable and always beneficial.**
- **We believe that the Deuterocanonical books are also God inspired.**
- **We do not believe in "sola scriptura" meaning "relying only on the Bible", since we believe that the Church approved the Bible and not that the Bible makes the Church.**
- **Therefore we better understand the Bible through the teachings and traditions of the church. Additionally all the prayers of the Divine Liturgy are found in the Holy Bible.**

Regarding the Nature of God

- **We believe in One God Who is indefinable, invisible and incomprehensible.**
- **That He is Almighty, Omniscient, and Omnipresent.**
- **The Creator of the universe. He is a triune God of three equal yet inseparable hypostases, which are God the Father, God the Son Who is begotten of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit Who proceeds from God the Father.**

Regarding the Nature of God

- **We believe that He is all powerful and is able to do anything and everything and that He is to be feared and revered and yet He is also the beneficent lover of mankind, Who created man to commune with him in a relationship of true honest Love.**

Regarding the Nature of Man

- **We believe that God created man in His image and that man was in Paradise living freely with God in a state of beauty, freedom, purity and had control over all that God created for him.**
- **We believe that man was deceived by the serpent (the devil) due to his jealousy of God and the object of God's love and affection (man). Man fell in sin by disobeying God's commandment and was to be kicked out of Paradise lest he eat from the tree of life and live forever in a state of sin (separation from God).**

- **We believe that sin is falling short of God's mark for us and that sin separates us from God but not from His love.**
- **We believe that sin leads to death.**

Regarding Sin

- **We believe that we, the children of Adam and Eve, are all born with a corrupt nature as a consequence of the original sin committed by Adam and Eve and that we must be baptized in water and spirit in order to be washed from any previous sins and to kill and bury the old, corrupt nature with Jesus Christ and to rise with a new clean nature with Jesus Christ.**
- **We do not believe that we inherit Adam's guilt, but only the corrupt nature.**

Regarding the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

- **We believe that man (Adam & Eve) was deceived by the jealous deception of the serpent (the devil) and by disobeying God's command, man sinned and separated himself from God and instead of plucking for himself a fruit that is good to eat, man plucked for himself the thorn of death.**

Regarding the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

- **But out of God's immense and infinite love - since He is the Father; the Good Shepherd; the Gentle Healer – He was incarnate as our Lord Jesus Christ the Logos and took the form of a servant (man) and gave Himself up unto death, even death on the cross and descended into Hades and freed the souls of all the righteous and restored mankind to God once again, so that we may have the opportunity to choose Him again instead of sin and to be able to live with Him for all eternity.**

Regarding the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

- **He took what is ours (death) and gave us what is His (life).**
- **Like a Father who gladly goes to the enemy's territory to ransom His lost child who has been kidnapped by the enemy.**
- **The only one who could accomplish this saving work needed to be human (with our nature) and divine (to redeem ALL sin past and present). We find this only in our Lord Jesus.**

Regarding the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

- **Our Lord Jesus Christ is God Himself, the Incarnate Logos, who took to Himself a complete manhood.**
- **His Divine Nature is united with His Human Nature in a complete Hypostatic (personal) Union without mingling, confusion, alteration or separation.**
- **Furthermore, the unity between the two Natures occurred without transmutation. Thus neither the Divine Nature transmutes to the Human Nature, nor did the Human Nature transmute to the Divine.**

Regarding the Holy Spirit

- **We believe that since God's desire is to restore man to his original state before the fall, not only did He purchase man with His precious blood (as the Son), but He also sent Himself as the Holy Spirit to dwell within each one of us after the Chrismation with the Holy Oil, which occurs after baptism.**
- **The Holy Spirit is God within us to guide us, convict us, comfort us and to lead us back to His kingdom.**

Regarding Salvation

- **We believe that Salvation is a life long process and that it does not occur in a moment.**
- **We believe that one becomes sanctified which occurs after the sacraments of baptism and chrismation.**
- **We believe that baptism gives us the opportunity for salvation. We believe that salvation is by grace from our Lord and not by works, but we believe that salvation without works is impossible, since faith without works is dead.**

Regarding Angels

- **We believe that God created the angels as servant spirits to serve Him and His creation.**
- **We believe that Satan was once a beautiful, powerful angel and that he was able to have one third of the original angels join him in his rebellion against God when he desired to sit on His throne. We believe that there are "good" holy angels that serve our Lord.**

Regarding Angels

- **We believe that God has created the angels with different ranks for different functions.**
- **Some are archangels like Michael (the commander of the hosts of the Lord) and Gabriel (God's messenger to man); some are angels created to praise and to minister to our Lord forever without stopping (like the Cherubim and the Seraphim) and other ranks of angels (thrones, principalities, authorities, dominions and powers).**
- **We also believe that God in His great mercy and love for mankind has appointed a guardian angel for every human being who is born.**

Regarding the Church

- **We believe in one, Holy, catholic (universal) Apostolic Church, who is the Bride and the Body of Christ, comprised of both the struggling Church as well as victorious.**
- **We believe that the doctrines of the Church were taught and delivered from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to our fathers the Apostles, who in turn handed the Tradition as they received it to the early church fathers, who in turn hand it down as they received it without change to those who followed them and so on throughout all generations.**

Regarding the Church

- **We believe that our Church Tradition today is the exact same Tradition handed down from our Lord Jesus Christ (while some of the practices may have changed) and we believe that it is our utmost important duty to pass down to those after us the Tradition which we received without adding anything to it or subtracting anything from it.**
- **We believe that the Church is the pillar and foundation for the faith and that salvation outside the church is – like survival outside Noah's ark- impossible.**

Regarding the Last Things

- **We believe that the end of time, at a time that only God the Father knows, our Lord Jesus Christ will come again on a cloud and all mankind will be able to see Him and to have no doubt that it is Him.**

Regarding the Last Things

- **We believe that the books will be open and that the deeds, whether good or bad, of each human being will be read and that our Lord Jesus Christ will judge each of us according to his or her deeds and according to his or her faith in Him and will either set them on His right hand to inherit the kingdom of God which was prepared for them before the foundation of the earth or He will cast them into eternal hell, which is separation from Him forever.**
- **We believe that it is not our place to predict this time but to always be ready for this time.**