

Apostasy in the Doctrine and Practices of the Church

Change in Authority

- **“The doctrinal apostasy from the New Testament, for the most part, was contemporaneous with the rise in the power and importance of the general councils” (Shackelford 42)**
- **“Cyprian saw the bishops as having a parallel position in the church to that of the apostles. As the apostolate was jointly shared by all the apostles, who had their source of unity in Peter, so the episcopate is the universal property, jointly shared by all the bishops”**
- **“Cyprian identified Peter as representing the local bishop” (Ferguson Vol. One 167)**

Pouring for Baptism

- **“7:1 But concerning baptism, thus shall ye baptize.
7:2 Having first recited all these things, baptize {in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit} in living (running) water.
7:3 But if thou hast not living water, then baptize in other water;
7:4 and if thou art not able in cold, then in warm.
7:5 But if thou hast neither, then pour water on the head thrice in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
7:6 But before the baptism let him that baptizeth and him that is baptized fast, and any others also who are able;
7:7 and thou shalt order him that is baptized to fast a day or two before” (*Didache*)**

Sprinkling for Baptism

- **Concerning Novatus, Eusebius writes, “Who aided by the exorcists, when attacked with an obstinate disease, and being supposed at the point of death, was baptized by aspersion, in the bed on which he lay; if, indeed it be proper to say that one like him did receive baptism” (Ecclesiastical History Book VI Chapter XLIII, 266)**

Defense of Pouring and Sprinkling

- **“Cyprian defended ‘the divine abridgements’ of pouring or sprinkling in place of washing. When ‘necessity compels and God bestows his grace,’ he claimed the divine benefits were not weakened, as long as the modified baptism was done in church and the faith of the giver and receiver was sound” (Ferguson Vol. One 150)**

Sprinkling Was Not the Norm

- “affusion was slow in winning favor and continued to be confined to cases of emergency, being the exception as late as the ninth century” (Ferguson as quoted in Shackelford 44)**
- Pope Stephen III was driven from Rome by the Lombards in 753. He told the monks of Cressy in Brittany that, in case of necessity, baptism performed by pouring water on the head of an infant would be lawful. More than 560 years later, a council held at Ravenna declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent (summary of Shackelford quote 44)**

Infant Baptism Seemingly Ruled Out

- **“The theology of baptism presented in the New Testament would seem to rule out infant baptism, in spite of its long history in Catholic and Protestant churches. Against the practice are the following facts. (1) There is no mention of the baptism of infants in the New Testament. (2) Every account of baptism in the New Testament shows it to be response by believers (cf. Acts 18:8 as representative). (3) The evidence of church history places the beginning of infant baptism at the end of the second century” (Ferguson, *The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today*, 195-196)**

Infant Baptism

- **“Origen...was the first to advocate the baptism of infants....He said, ‘None is free from pollution, though his life be but the length of one ray upon the earth. And it is for that reason, because the sacrament of baptism that pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized’” (Origen *Works*, Vol. I:65 as quoted in Shackelford 43)**

Baptizing Infants

- **“For He came to save all through means of Himself-all, I say, who through Him are born again to God -infants, and children, and boys, and youths, and old men” (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book II, Chapter 22, Section 4)**
- **“...according to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children....The Lord does indeed say, ‘Forbid them not to come unto me.’ Let them ‘come,’ then, while they are growing up; let them ‘come’ while they are learning, while they are learning whither to come; let them become Christians when they have become able to know Christ....Let them know how to ‘ask’ for salvation, that you may seem (at least) to have given ‘to him that asketh.’” (Tertullian, *On Baptism*, Chapter XVIII)**

Infant Baptism Gradually Changed to Sprinkling

- **“During the eighth century in the administration of baptism, triple immersion of the newborn was normal, but effusion (the pouring of water over the head of the candidate) began the long process of replacing immersion in the West not only in cases of sick-bed baptism (in which it was normal) but as the ordinary practice. Baptism was supposedly administered soon after birth, but unless there was an emergency it was delayed until Easter or Pentecost” (Ferguson Vol. One 369)**

Heretical Baptism

- **“In the third century Cyprian insisted that HERETICAL BAPTISM (i.e. administered by one not a member of the catholic church) was not valid but bishop Stephen of Rome’s view that it was valid (if performed with the trinitarian formula) prevailed” (Ferguson I 38)**

Confession

- **Public confession and repentance, by the end of the 2nd century, usually included: public confession of sin, repentance shown in wearing mourning clothes, weeping, fasting, requesting prayers while kneeling or prostrating before the church**
- **“prayer was offered; and restoration to fellowship was shown by the laying on of the hands of the clergy and admission to communion. It was often stated that only one such formal ‘second repentance’ was available” (Ferguson Vol. One 146)**

The Sacrament of Penance

- **“The sacrament of Penance and priestly absolution included three elements: contrition of heart, confession by the mouth, satisfaction by good works. On these conditions the priest grants absolution, not simply by a declaratory but by a judicial act....The idea of repentance was externalized and identified with certain outward acts of self-abasement or self-punishment for the expiation of sin. The public penance before the church went out of use during the seventh or eighth century except for very gross offenses and was replaced by private penance and confession” (Schaff quoted in Shackelford 44)**

Confession to the Priest

- **Canon 21 of the fourth Lateran council (1215):
“commands every Christian who has reached
the years of discretion to confess all his, or her,
sins at least once a year to his, or her, own (i.e.
parish) priest” (Catholic Encyclopedia)**

Council of Trent (1551)

- **“the Lord then principally instituted the Sacrament of Penance, when, being raised from the dead, he breathed upon His disciples saying: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained' (John 20:22-23). By which action so signal and words so clear the consent of all the Fathers has ever understood that the power of forgiving and retaining sins was communicated to the Apostles and to their lawful successors, for the reconciling of the faithful who have fallen after Baptism.” (Sess. XIV, c. i)**

Priests Have the Power to Remit or Retain Sins

- **“our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left behind Him priests, His own vicars, as rulers and judges, to whom all mortal sins into which the faithful of Christ may have fallen should be brought in order that they may, in virtue of the power of the keys, pronounce the sentence of remission or retention of sins” (Sess. XIV, c. v)**

Punishments, or “Satisfactions”

- **“Although the guilt (culpa) of sin was forgiven on the basis of penitence and confession, the medieval practice, influenced by Germanic legal theory, required in addition punishment (poena), ‘satisfactions.’ These ‘punishments’ for sin might be worked off either on earth or in purgatory, which received greater stress in the twelfth century” (Ferguson Vol. One 410)**

“Redemptions” or Commutations

- **“‘redemptions’ or commutations that substituted praying the Psalms or giving alms were in use from Carolingian times. These practices set the background for the development of indulgences” (Ferguson Vol. One 410)**
- **“Private confession once a year at Lent, common since Carolingian times, was made obligatory by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215”**
- **“From the beginning of the eleventh century it was customary to grant absolution after confession and before imposing the satisfaction. From the twelfth century a declarative formula instead of prayer was in use, and by 1350, ‘I absolve you’ was the common formula”**

Purgatory

- **Gregory the Great “supported reverence for saints and relics and the idea of purgatory, teaching that the sacrifice of the mass helps souls there” (Ferguson One 321)**
- **“the scholastic theologians of the twelfth century—in developing the theology of penance—formulated the view that in purgatory were completed the punishments for sins not satisfied by penitential acts in this life” (462)**
- **“doctrine of purgatory was...given classical formulation by Thomas Aquinas, officially defined at the Council of Lyons (1274)” (Ibid)**

Indulgence Defined

- **“An indulgence is the extra-sacramental remission of the temporal punishment due, in God’s justice, to sin that has been forgiven, which remission is granted by the Church in the exercise of the power of the keys, through the application of the superabundant merits of Christ and of the saints, and for some just and reasonable motive” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07783a.htm>)**

Granting an Indulgence

- **“the grantor (pope or bishop)... does not offer his personal merits in lieu of what God demands from the sinner. He acts in his official capacity as having jurisdiction in the Church, from whose spiritual treasury he draws the means wherewith payment is to be made. The Church herself is not the absolute owner, but simply the administratrix, of the superabundant merits which that treasury contains. In applying them, she keeps in view both the design of God’s mercy and the demands of God’s justice. She therefore determines the amount of each concession, as well as the conditions which the penitent must fulfill if he would gain the indulgence” (Ibid)**

Indulgences

- **“An indulgence was the remission of the temporal punishments (whether inflicted on earth or in purgatory) for sin. The guilt of sin (eternal punishment) was forgiven by absolution in response to the contrition and confession by the sinner, but satisfaction (temporal punishment) still had to be made for sins” (Ferguson Vol. One 415)**

Sale of Indulgences

- **“To obtain an indulgence some good work was prescribed. From earlier in the eleventh century, bishops in France and Spain had granted indulgences to those who contributed to church buildings”**
- **Indulgences were also given for campaigning to retake the Holy Land, which Urban had done for fighting the Muslims in Spain (Ferguson Vol. One 415)**
- **“The gross abuses of this shameful traffic in merits culminated under Leo X, who employed John Tetzel to sell indulgences for the ‘holy’ purpose of enlarging and furnishing St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome” (Shackelford 46)**

John Tetzel

- **Tetzel was a Dominican monk, an eloquent preacher and “super salesman. In his sermons, he would dwell on the flames and torments of purgatory, and of those dear friends and loved ones who were at that very moment crying to their families and friends to help loose them from the torments of that place. Concluding his sermon, he would rush over to the indulgence box and begin to take contributions for the liberation of souls from torment” (Ibid)**
- **Tetzel supposedly said, “As soon as the gold in the casket rings, the rescued soul to heaven springs” (The Catholic Encyclopedia says this is spurious, but true).**