

So What's The Difference? Eastern Orthodoxy Chapter 3

Taken from So What's The Difference
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Chapter Three

PLUMB LINE

1 Cor. 15:3-4: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...he was buried...he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

<http://www.hdwallpapersinn.com/>

AP

Map of Eastern Hemisphere



History of Eastern Orthodoxy

See Handout

- *The Term Byzantine Empire was derived from the name **Byzantium**. This was originally a Greek colony on the European side of the Bosphorus strait.
- The city was a natural transition point between Europe and **Asia Minor**.



- It was called the “new Rome” by the emperor Constantine I in 330 A.D.
- The city later became known as **Constantinople**, the city of Constantine.
- Today Constantinople is Istanbul.
- The religion is primarily **Muslim**.



<http://khanlearning.weebly.com/byzantine-empire.html>

- From 330 A.D. to 1453 A.D. the power of the old Roman Empire shifted east and was referred to as the **Byzantine** empire.
- The Ottoman Turks seized Constantinople in 1453 A.D., thus ending the 1,000 reign of the Byzantine Empire.



<http://khanlearning.weebly.com/byzantine-empire.html>



<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00maplinks/medieval/easternhem1025/easternhem1025.html>



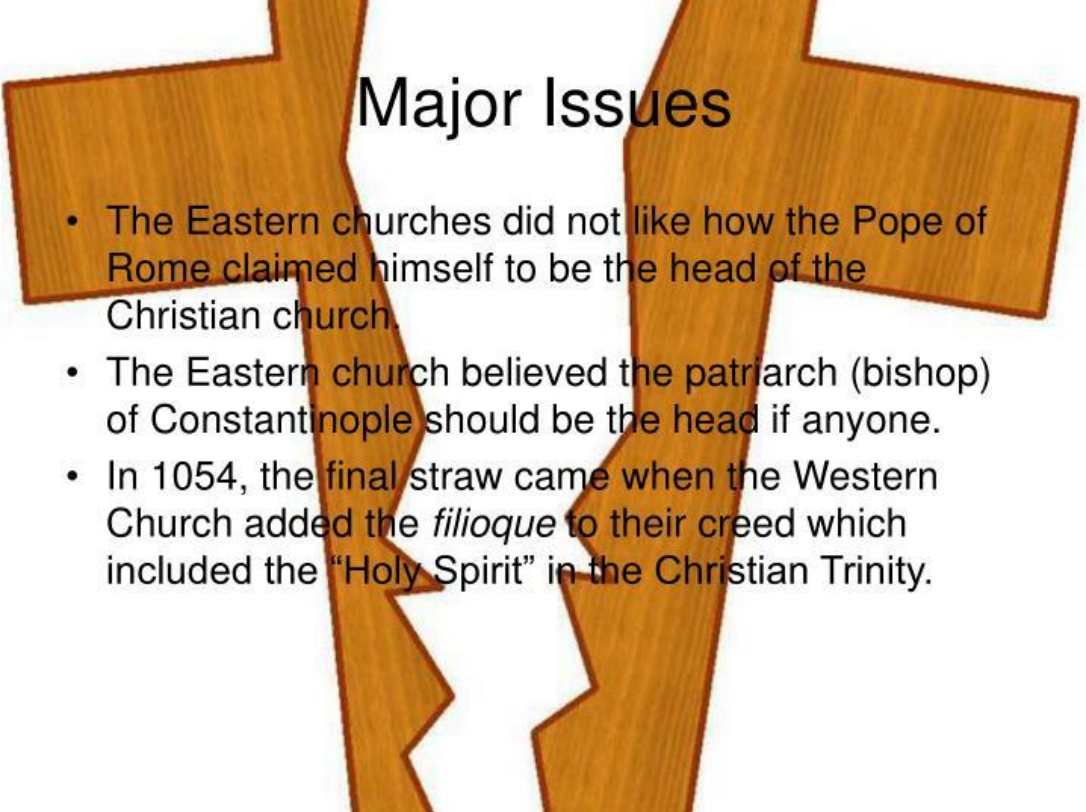
<http://khanlearning.weebly.com/byzantine-empire.html>

- In 1054 the church split (the Great **Schism** of 1054) into the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.



<https://www.slideserve.com/mary/the-great-schism>

- The Three causes of the Great Schism in Christianity are:
 - Dispute over the use of images in the church.
 - The addition of the Latin word Filioque [file-oak; fele-o-quay] to the Nicene Creed.
 - Dispute about who is the leader or **head** of the church.

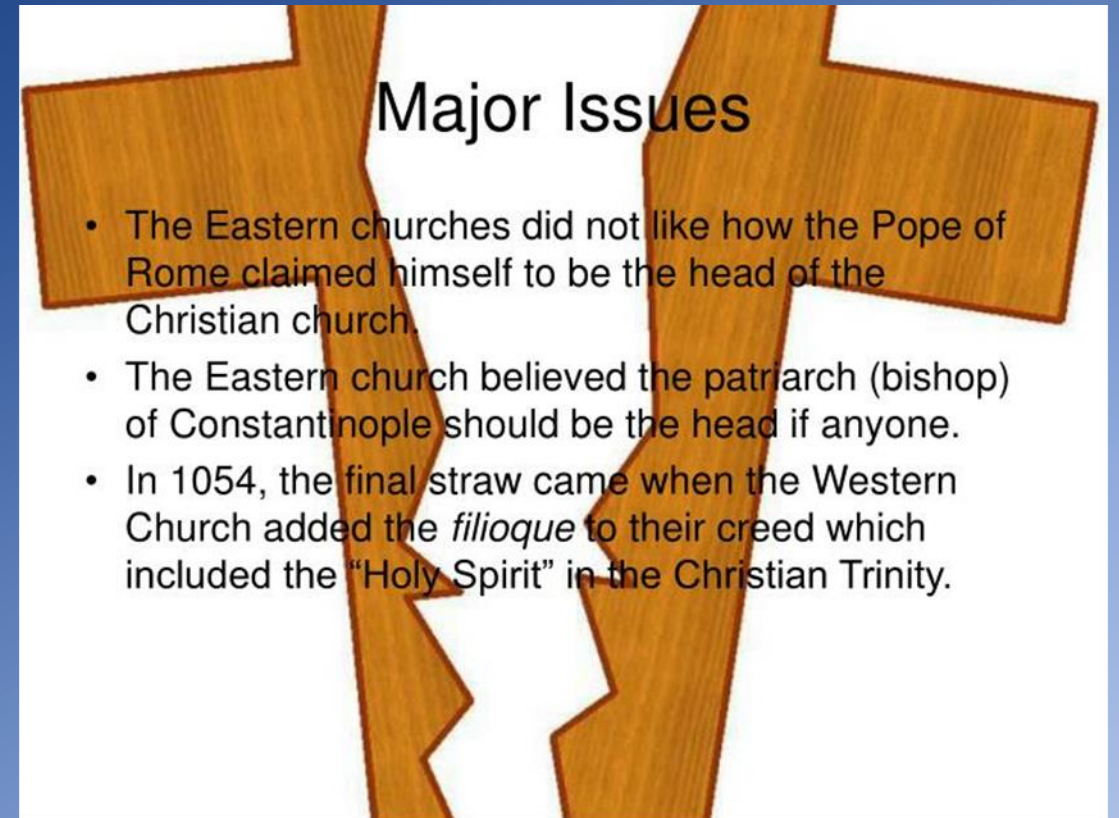


Major Issues

- The Eastern churches did not like how the Pope of Rome claimed himself to be the head of the Christian church.
- The Eastern church believed the patriarch (bishop) of Constantinople should be the head if anyone.
- In 1054, the final straw came when the Western Church added the *filioque* to their creed which included the "Holy Spirit" in the Christian Trinity.

<https://www.slideserve.com/mary/the-great-schism>

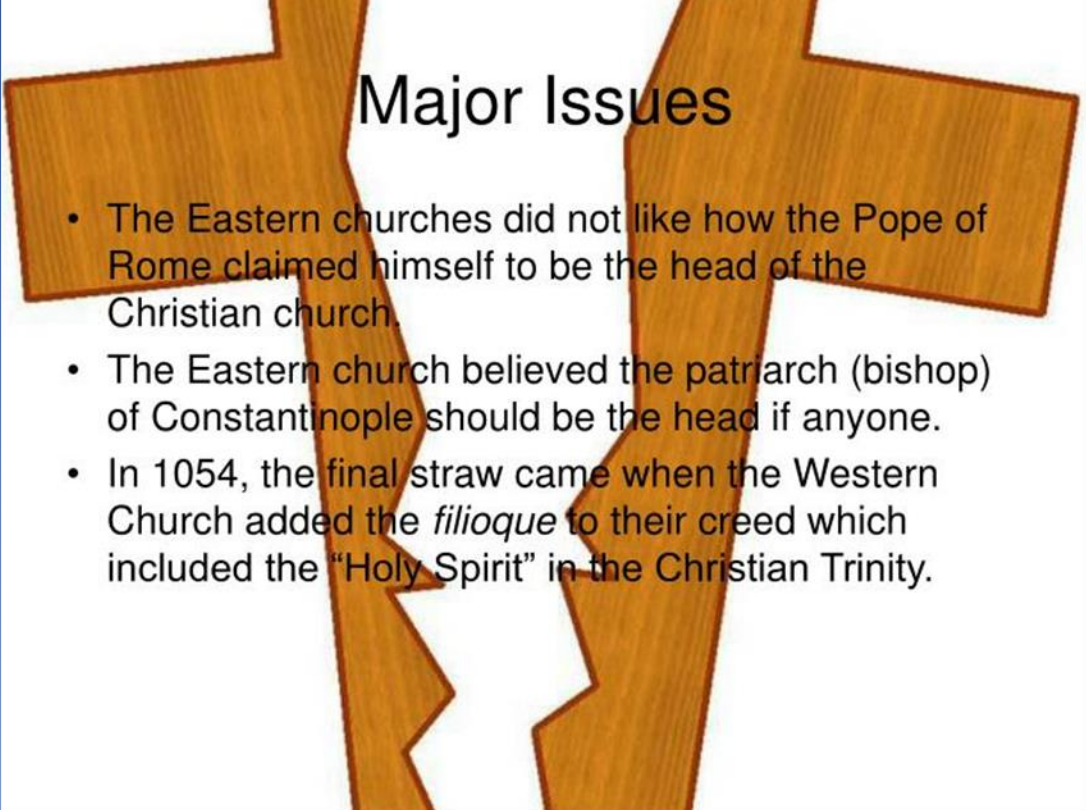
- *Filioque [file-oak; fele-o-quay] is a Latin term that deals with the church controversy concerning the phrase “and from the Son,” which intended to indicate that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son (double procession) and not from the Father alone.
- Over---



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- The controversy contributed to the split between the Eastern and Western churches in A.D. **1054**. The Eastern Church, or the Orthodox Church, rejected the filioque and maintained that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, where the Western church, the Roman Catholic church, accepts it.



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<https://www.slideserve.com/mary/the-great-schism>

Synopsis of Eastern Orthodoxy

Back to Notes

- There are possibly 6 million members of the Orthodox church in the United States.
- Orthodoxy is not one big church that split away from the Roman Catholic Church at Rome in 1054.



- There are at least 13 independent and self-governing churches, including the four ancient patriarchates that still exist in the Middle East: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.
- The current number of Orthodox believers worldwide exceeds 200 million.



<http://khanlearning.weebly.com/byzantine-empire.html>

- Most of those who are heads of Orthodox churches are called patriarchs, archbishop, or metropolitan.
- For historical reasons, the Orthodox Church at **Constantinople** and its patriarch enjoy a certain “primacy of honor” but have no power to interfere in the internal affairs of the other Orthodox churches.



Constantinople/
Istanbul



Beliefs and Worship of Orthodoxy

- Orthodox **disputes** that Rome has claim to be the one true Church.
- Orthodox beliefs teach that there is one true church-Orthodox
- Constantinople and Rome split in **1054**.



- The Eastern Church (Orthodox) sought to preserve the faith as they had understood it for 1,000 years, sticking closely to the decisions of the first seven General Councils of the Church, held between 325 and 787.



Orthodoxy's View of Apostolic Succession

- Like Roman Catholics, the Orthodox place much stock in apostolic succession, but their viewpoint of the role of bishops differ.
- Orthodox believe the bishops have continued in apostolic succession, but while they give Peter (and even today's pope) a certain primacy, they do not grant the pope supremacy.



<https://www.dreamstime.com/bishop-performing-liturg-eastern-orthodox-church-st-sedmochislenitsi-sofia-bulgaria-august-image171556219>

- Evangelical **Protestants** do not agree with apostolic succession, thereby differing with both Orthodoxy and Roman Catholic.
- (See Acts 6:7; 2 Pet. 1:16-19; Jude 3-Protestants see the message of the New Testament itself as what “succeeded” the apostles)
- [*]



- Scripture is silent concerning anyone succeeding the original apostles by being endowed with their supernatural power and divine capabilities.
- The apostles appointed pastors (bishops) and deacons to lead local congregations that sprang up, but they could not give these men the power to be apostles.



<http://www.catholiccourier.com/news/local-news/bishop-to-ordain-former-protestant-minister-to-transitional-diaconate/>

- Pastors, bishops and deacons only had authority inasmuch as they held true to the proclamation of the gospel as given by the original apostles.



<http://www.catholiccourier.com/news/local-news/bishop-to-ordain-former-protestant-minister-to-transitional-diaconate/>

Orthodoxy Adds Tradition to Scripture

- Orthodox believes that the Church is **authoritative**.
- Protestants believe that only the Scriptures are authoritative and all believers have the right and responsibility to examine Scripture for themselves.



- Orthodox speak of an “**internal norm**” for determining authority-the Spirit of God living within the Church
- Orthodoxy believes that authority comes from the Bible but also the Nicea/Constantinople Creed, the Decrees of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, the writings of the Fathers, the canons of the Church, the service books (liturgy) and holy icons.



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/468374429994772270/>

- Orthodoxy believes that the Bible gets its authority from the **Church**, not vice versa. Orthodox believes that the Church existed and flourished before any of the New Testament books were ever written.
- The Orthodox stress that the Church originally decided which books would be in Holy Scripture; therefore, only the Church can interpret Holy Scripture with authority.



- Protestants believe the Bible does not get its authority from the Church, but as John Calvin put it, the Word of God gave **birth** to the Church.
- The Bible gets its authority from being the inspired (“God-breathed”) writings of men who were led by the **Holy Spirit** (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). [*****]



<http://www.earthend-newbeginning.com/wholesale-christian-bibles/157-gently-used-christian-bibles/>

- The Church did not “decide” which books would be in Holy Scripture; the church took approximately 200 years to recognize which writings had “divine authority” and belonged in the canon of Scripture.



Orthodoxy Believes the Reformers Were Wrong

- Orthodox refers to “the sin of the Reformation” when the Reformers put the Bible above the Church and tradition and believing in subjective interpretation of Scripture.



<https://fedsoc.org/commentary/fedsoc-blog/reformation-and-law>

- Roman Catholics and Orthodox believers feel that the **Reformation** led to the many Protestant denominations that have sprung up due to personal interpretation.
- This possible weakness is viewed by the Protestants as a strength since no one group can be in total control of interpreting Scripture.



<https://fedsoc.org/commentary/fedsoc-blog/reformation-and-law>

How the Orthodox view the Seven Sacraments

- The Orthodox observe the same **seven** sacraments practiced by the Roman Catholic Church but differ at certain points regarding interpretation and emphasis.
- For the Orthodox, everything starts with **baptism**-it is the foundation of the believer's life in the Church.



- Orthodox baptism is administered to infants as well as adult converts through whom a person is born again and cleansed from **original** and actual sins.
- The Eucharist (Holy Communion)-The Orthodox believe that the very body and blood of Christ are present in the elements of the bread and wine but they hesitate to use the Roman Catholic term “transubstantiation.”



- The Orthodox believes that Christ's sacrifice on the cross was only once and for all time.
- The Last Supper, Crucifixion and Resurrection are made present even though they are not repeated.



- In Orthodoxy, sins committed following baptism are atoned for through **confession** or repentance.
- Confession is open and the priest stands to one side symbolizing that only God is the judge.
- The priest may give advice and may occasionally assign a penance.
- Compare 1John 1:9; Romans 5:19 [✳]



<https://pemptousia.com/2016/04/confession-the-sacrament-of-repentance-and-reconciliation/>

- Orthodoxy does not teach the paying for temporal punishments nor are there any indulgences invoked to expiate sins for persons living or dead.
- Orthodoxy does not teach **purgatory**. However, they do pray for the dead since they are in a place of rest and are in a state of preparations for the judgment seat of Christ on the Last Day. [✱]



<https://pemptousia.com/2016/04/confession-the-sacrament-of-repentance-and-reconciliation/>

Look At Your Insert Notes

What is the difference between the Judgment Seat of Christ and the Great White Throne Judgment?

Judgment Seat of Christ

2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 [[*](#)]

Great White Throne Judgment

Revelation 20: 11-15 [[*](#)]

Why the Orthodox Pray to Saints and Icons

- The orthodox feel that Mary and other saints are not mediators but **intercessors** and praying to them is not worshiping but venerating them.
- Mary is the saint considered to have most completely achieved the goal of **deification**.



- Orthodox believe, like the Catholic Church, in Mary's perpetual virginity but they do not agree with the Roman Catholic doctrine of her immaculate conception (Mary was conceived without sin).

Romans 3:23 [*



- Great emphasis is placed on **icons**-colorful stylized paintings of Christ, the apostles, Mary and other saints.
- Some orthodox believers prostrate themselves before the icons, kiss them and burn candles in front of them.



- The icon is not an idol but a **symbol** of the one being venerated.
- The icons also serve as a learning tool or as a time to study the Church's teaching of the faith especially to those who lack learning or the time to study.
- The icons are considered a source of revelation equal to the Bible.



Orthodoxy Stresses Deification Above Justification

- Orthodoxy teaches that Adam's fall did not separate us from God but brought us death, mortality and corruption.
- Through Christ's death, we become deified-Gods with a human nature.

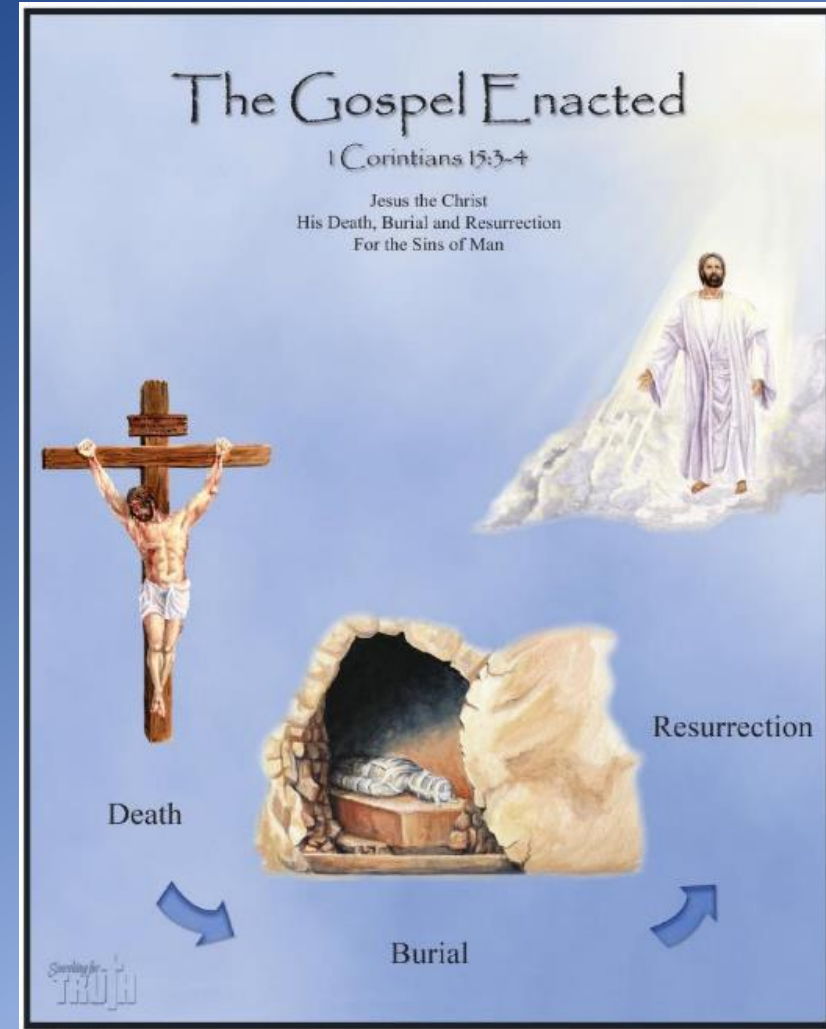


- Orthodoxy leaves out the doctrine of justification by **faith**.
- Orthodox understanding of salvation actually pertains to sanctification (becoming mature in Christ).
- They take 2 Peter 1:4 and interpret its meaning as taking on a divine nature. [*]
- 2 Peter 1: 3-11 talks about sanctification (becoming mature in Christ) not becoming deified. [*]

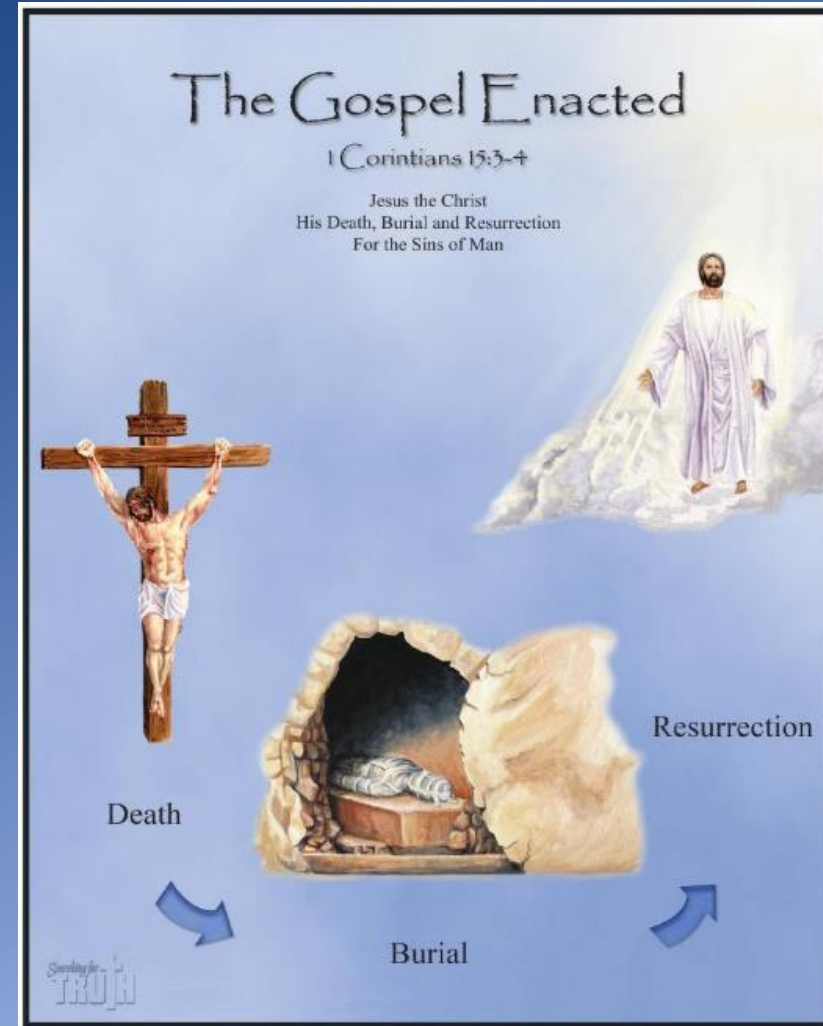


Jesus Christ: The “Someone at the Center”

- Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestant beliefs **all** center on several important themes:
 - Jesus Christ, Lord of the universe, who died, was buried and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.



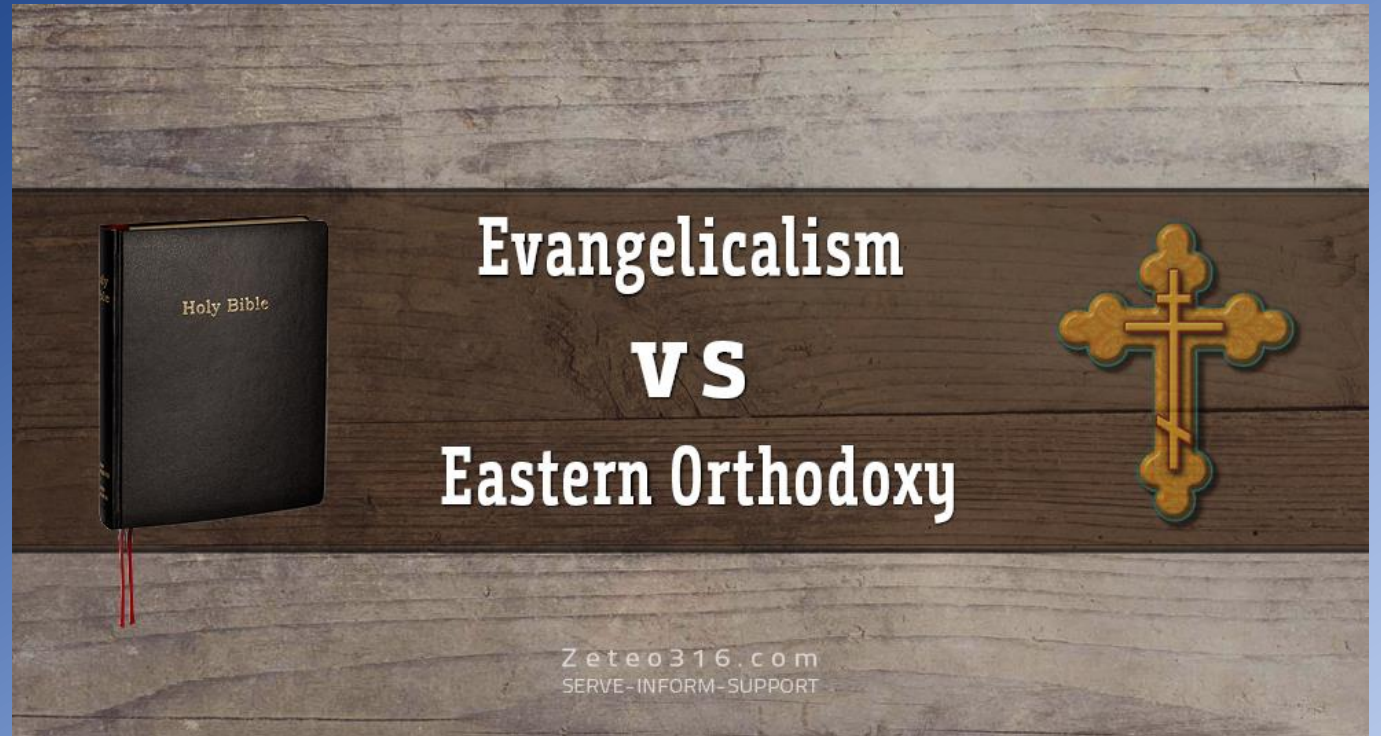
- His words of invitation are open to **all** who are willing to put their faith directly in Him alone: “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away” (John 6:37)



Summing up Major Differences Between Orthodox Believers and Evangelical Protestants

Regarding authority

- Orthodoxy teaches that apostolic succession occurred through bishops and **Church fathers** who developed a tradition equal to Scripture.



- Evangelical Protestants say the apostles were succeeded, not by bishops or Church fathers, but by the Scriptures only (Titus 1:1-4) [*]
- Orthodoxy also says the Church is in authority over Scripture, which is only part of a larger tradition.
- Protestants believe the Scripture is in **supreme** authority over the Church, the sole guide for faith and practice.



<https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/bs-md-usccb-catholic-bishops-fall-assembly-20161114-story.html>

Regarding salvation

- Orthodoxy teaches that man did not fall from perfect fellowship with God but departed from the path for attaining perfect fellowship and that man inherited mortality and corruption but not Adam's guilt.



<http://www.lostseed.com/extras/free-graphics/images/jesus-pictures/adam-and-god.php>

- Protestants teach that man fell from his perfect state with God and **inherited** Adam's guilt (see Rom. 5:12-21). [*]
- The Orthodox believe salvation is attained through the process of theosis, becoming deified (like God).



<http://www.lostseed.com/extras/free-graphics/images/jesus-pictures/adam-and-god.php>

- Protestants say justification comes through **faith** in Christ (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8-9), [*] and then the Christian becomes sanctified by walking with Christ (Eph. 2:10; 2 Pet. 1:3-11). [*]

End---



<http://www.lostseed.com/extras/free-graphics/images/jesus-pictures/adam-and-god.php>

Acts 6:7

7 The word of God kept spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

2 Peter 1:16-19

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such a declaration as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory: “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased”— 18 and we ourselves heard this declaration made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

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Jude 3

3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all time handed down to the saints. [^{*}]

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture becomes a matter of someone's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. [*]

2 Peter 1:4

4 Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust. [[*](#)]

2 Peter 1:3-11

3 for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust. 5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

Over---

7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they do not make you useless nor unproductive in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For the one who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choice of you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. [[*](#)]

Titus 1:1-4

1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, 3 but at the proper time revealed His word in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior; 4 To Titus, my true son in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. [*]

Romans 5:12

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned...[*]

Romans 3:23-24

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [*]

Eph 2:10

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

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1John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 5:19

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. [*]

2 Timothy 4:6-8

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

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Philippians 1:23-24

23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes.

Luke 23:43

42 And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!” 43 And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” [*]

2 Corinthians 5:10

10 For we [*Christians*] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.

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1 Corinthians 3:12-15

12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, 13 each one's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each one's work. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet only so as through fire.

(All sins have been forgiven so no judgment) [*]

Revelation 20:11-15

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

Over---

13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each one of them according to their deeds.

14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

[*]

Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...[*]