

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL ORTHODOX CHURCH



CATECHISM - RENUNCIATIONS AND AFFIRMATIONS

EXERCISE

Part of the formal process of conversion is clearly identifying the heresies of one's previous confession and renouncing them. Let's be clear about this. Heresy is from the devil, and all Christians are called upon by God to hate with righteous hatred all heresy. Use the chart below to write down Orthodox doctrines and next to them the doctrines of your former confession which are heretical. Be thorough.

Having identified your heresies you will be asked by the priest who is catechizing and receiving you into the Orthodox Church to renounce these heresies and to affirm Orthodox teachings.

At the same time it is of the utmost importance for converts to realize that *wherever truth is found, it is authored by God Himself*. In virtually all religious traditions there are true beliefs and practices, and in some there are many. In the procession of conversion the catechumen should also be able to identify and appreciate the Orthodox elements of his previous confession and be genuinely thankful for them. It is very important to avoid a critical and negative spirit.

A list of some common contemporary heretical beliefs can be found below the form.



Name _____

Former confession (if any): _____

ORTHODOX BELIEF	HERESIES/ERRORS

LIST OF COMMON HERETICAL BELIEFS REJECTED BY THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

- ✦ FILIOQUE – The word filioque means “and son” in Latin. It is referred to as the “filioque clause” because the phrase “and son” was added to the Nicene Creed, indicating that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father “and Son.”
- ✦ PAPAL INFALLIBILITY – Papal infallibility is a dogma of the Latin Church which states that, in virtue of the promise of Jesus to Peter, the Pope is preserved from the possibility of error “when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church” (Letter of Pope Agatho, 680, on the two wills of Christ, received by the Third Council of Constantinople). This doctrine was defined dogmatically in the First Vatican Council of 1869-1870. The doctrine of infallibility relies on one of the cornerstones of Latin dogma: that of petrine supremacy of the pope, and his authority to be the ruling agent in deciding what will be accepted as formal beliefs in the Roman Latin Church.
- ✦ ICONOCLASM – Iconoclasm constituted a ban on religious images, accompanied by widespread destruction of images and persecution of supporters of the veneration of images. Today this heresy consists of viewing the reverence of Saints through icons as a form of idolatry.
- ✦ MONOPHYSITISM – Greek: monos meaning “only, single” and physis meaning “nature”), is the Christological position that, after the union of the divine and the human in the historical Incarnation, Jesus Christ, as the incarnation of the eternal Son or Word (Logos) of God, had only a single “nature” which was either divine or a synthesis of divine and human.
- ✦ “SYMBOLISM ONLY” SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY – The belief that baptism and the Eucharist are non-efficacious – only symbolic.
- ✦ SOLA SCRIPTURA – The Bible alone is authoritative for Christian dogma.
- ✦ SOLA FIDEI – Salvation by Faith Alone. The doctrine of sola fide or “by faith alone” asserts God’s pardon for guilty sinners is granted to and received through faith, conceived as excluding all “works”, alone. God, on the basis of the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ alone, grants sinners judicial pardon, or justification, which is received solely through faith.
- ✦ MILLENNIALISM/CHILIASM – Christ will come back and rule on earth for 1,000 years before the end.
- ✦ MARIAN ERRORS – The belief that the Holy Virgin was not a perpetual virgin, had other children, committed actual sins, Immaculate Conception, etc.
- ✦ TOTAL DEPRAVITY – Total depravity is the fallen state of man as a result of original sin. The doctrine of total depravity asserts that people are by nature not inclined or even able to love God wholly with heart, mind, and strength, but rather all are inclined by nature to serve their own will and desires and to reject the rule of God. Therefore, in Reformed theology, if God is to save anyone He must predestine, call, or elect individuals to salvation since fallen man does not want to, and is indeed incapable of choosing God.
- ✦ INSTANTANEOUS SALVATION – The belief that justification is a once-for-all, instantaneous pronouncement guaranteeing eternal salvation, no matter how wickedly a person may live from that point on.
- ✦ INVISIBLE CHURCH – The invisible church or church invisible is a theological concept of an “invisible” body of the elect who are known only to God, in contrast to the “visible church”—that is,

the institutional body on earth which preaches the gospel and administers the sacraments. Every member of the invisible church is saved, while the visible church contains some individuals who are saved and others who are unsaved.

- ✦ JUDAIZING ERRORS – Refers to a Christian who has accepted the *necessity* of adhering to specific Old Testament laws such as circumcision, Sabbath observance, or observation of the Passover.
- ✦ SOUL SLEEP – "Soul Sleep," means that after death believers are not conscious of anything and their souls become completely inert until the time of the final resurrection of the dead. During this period of soul sleep, the soul resides in the memory of God.
- ✦ ANNIHILATIONISM – This refers to the belief that when we die, the soul ceases to exist – non-immortality of soul.
- ✦ ORIGINAL GUILT – The belief that man is inherently guilty of the sin of Adam from birth.
- ✦ CHRISTIAN ZIONISM/DISPENSATIONALISM – The belief that the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land, and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, is in accordance with Biblical prophecy. Some Christian Zionists believe that the gathering of the Jews in Israel is a prerequisite for the Second Coming of Jesus. This belief is primarily, although not exclusively, associated with Dispensationalism. It considers God having two separate people - the Jewish nation and the Church. This belief often promotes *Judaizing Errors* (see above), and even the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
- ✦ PURGATORY – is the condition of purification or temporary punishment by which those who die in a state of grace are believed to be made ready for Heaven.
- ✦ INDULGENCES – The full or partial remission of temporal punishment due for sins which have already been forgiven. The indulgence is granted by the Roman Latin Church after the sinner has confessed and received absolution. An indulgence is thus not forgiveness of sin nor release from the eternal punishment associated with hell in Christian beliefs. The belief is that indulgences draw on the Treasury of Merit accumulated by Christ's superabundantly meritorious sacrifice on the cross and the virtues and penances of the saints. They are granted for specific good works and prayers.
- ✦ DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE – the belief that doctrine improves over time.
- ✦ SUPEROGATION – The technical term for the class of actions that go "beyond the call of duty." The special merit of supererogatory acts accredited to their agent can be used both for that individual's own salvation and for the salvation of others. In the Roman Latin Church, the "superabundant merit," most typically collected by the actions of Jesus and the saints, who far exceeded what was required for their own salvation, is deposited in the Spiritual Treasury of the Church to be disposed by the Pope and the bishops for remitting the sins of other, ordinary believers. (See *Indulgences*)