



YOU MUST BE ROMAN CATHOLIC OR GO TO HELL

Is this a lie, a libel on the Church?

WHOSOEVER WILL BE SAVED, BEFORE ALL THINGS
IT IS NECESSARY THAT HE HOLD THE CATHOLIC FAITH.
WHICH FAITH
EXCEPT EVERYONE DO KEEP WHOLE AND UNDEFILED,
WITHOUT DOUBT HE SHALL PERISH EVERLASTINGLY.

These are the opening words of the Athanasian Creed which the *Catholic Encyclopedia* says is “One of the symbols of the Faith *approved by the Church and given a place in her liturgy.*” It goes on to say, “The fact alone that it is approved by the Church as expressing its mind on the fundamental truths with which it deals, is all we need to know.”

If this is not true, why is this creed still “approved by the Church, given a place in her liturgy, and all we need to know”?

Well, this is another of those truths, like the 24-hour-a-day roasting torments in hell, which the Magisterium allowed to be used to terrify people for centuries, but now sees as so embarrassing that in 1999, Pope John Paul claimed, “Rather than a place, Hell indicates the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God...”

If it is not a place, why does the creed go on to say Jesus “suffered for our salvation, descended into Hell, rose again the third day from the dead.” Did he descend into a “state” of those rejecting God?

In this day the Church cannot be seen as declaring what this creed plainly says, you *must* be a Roman Catholic or *go to Hell*. So the *Catholic Encyclopedia* says it applies, “*as is evident*, only to the culpable and willful rejection of Christ’s words and teachings”.

Evident? Evident to whom? It would be evident if the creed said, “Whosoever has heard the words and teaching of Jesus Christ, before all things, it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith.” But it does not say that.

Is it unreasonable to think the writer did not say those words simply because he did not *mean* those words?

Why does the Church approve it “as expressing its mind on the fundamental truths with which it deals and why does it still use it in its liturgy”?

Is it a way of warning Catholics, in the good old-fashioned way, that they better not stray? Whether that is the intent, it certainly fills that function. How does it look to you?

If this *escape-clause* “interpretation” works to excuse from Hell all those who have never heard of Jesus, what of all the Protestants and other non-Catholic Christians? They *have* “heard the words and teachings of Jesus Christ” and still reject the Catholic Faith?

Is this a *furtive re-assertion* of the line used during the Reformation that you *must* be Roman Catholic to avoid Hell? For anyone who believes it, it is exactly that.

And what about me, and my fellow non-believers who also *have* “heard the words and teaching of Jesus Christ” and are convinced they are the words of mere, horribly mistaken men?

We are by no means convinced that a God who is an all-good, all-perfect, loving-just-merciful and forgiving Father would ever create beings he knew beforehand he would consign to Hell to suffer for eternity – no mercy, no forgiveness, ever.

We don’t believe for a minute that a God so defined would ever:

- Condemn all innocent humanity for the sins committed by Adam and Eve.
- Require, as needed for salvation, true belief, or else if you don’t, you will spend forever in Hell. That is the definition of *forced* love, *compelled* love. No one could know his/her belief was true under such a threat, especially, when that threat is made by God! You might try to *make* yourself believe, given the alternative, but you’d know you were kidding yourself. And so would God!

In our view, that is the definition of an evil God. This conclusion is further proved by these acts and words from the Bible, which both Catholics and Protestants say is without error, because written under the guidance of God:

- Striking Uzzah dead for merely trying to steady the ark. “And when they came to the threshing floor of Nachon, Uzzah put out his hand to the Ark of God forth his hand and took hold of it: for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the Ark; and he died beside the Ark of God.” (2 Samuel 6:7)
- Striking dead, first Ananias and a few hours later his widow, Sapphira, for holding back a portion of their own property from the commune that “Saint” Peter established. This looks like vindictive and cold-blooded murder to us.
- “Therefore kill all that are of the male sex, even of the children: and put to death the women, that have carnally known men. But the girls, and all the women that are virgins save for yourselves.” (Numbers 31:17)
- “Now therefore go, and smite Amalec, and utterly destroy all that he hath: spare him not, nor covet anything that is his: but slay both man and woman, child and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” (1 Kings (1 Samuel) 15:3)

Can these be the acts and words from the ONE and ONLY GOD Christians worship, the God, who also said (Matthew 5):

- “But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
- “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”
- “But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Non-believers think this is all conclusive evidence that men constructed this religion. They made an irreparable mess of it—not to mention the scores of other ways—by claiming these opposites are true

Are we immoral for honestly believing a good God would not commit and command these acts?

Do you insist, “Oh, yes he did?”

If you accept this God as worthy of your faith and worship, aren’t you saying “yes” to it all – thus, becoming a willing accomplice?

Is there *anything* he might do that you would find objectionable?

Are you a cowering flatterer, willing to brook *anything* in order not to forfeit that promised ticket to Heaven?

**IF SO,
DO YOU REALLY DESERVE
TO GO THERE?**