

Similarities and Differences Between Christian Protestant Churches and Catholic Churches on

Saipan

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Author's note:

This paper was prepared for English 202, Section 01, instructed by Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson.

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Abstract

Christianity has been around for many years. Catholic and Protestant churches are the largest groups. Not many people realize that it has become their lifestyle to do what their church says. As for example not eating pork for seventh day adventist, or giving something up for “lent” for catholics. As said by many, that the religions are completely different and not the same, they may have the same moral “to be good” but other beliefs are wrong. This research essay will give points on differences and similarities of the two church groups. The primary research question is : Is there a difference between the churches on Saipan? And as the research goes on it narrows to its secondary questions: Are the christian churches on Saipan really different? If so, what are the differences between the catholic and protestant churches? To answer these questions, interviews of pastors and priests would be done, also data collection through reading books, articles, and peered reviewed journals, also survey of responses made by everyone else.

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Introduction

In the CNMI there are various church groups. The student writer has been taught in different church schools. Attending those schools the student writer has realized that the church teachings are not so different but similar. The student writer has done research to prove the facts she knows about the christ believing churches. Religion on Saipan has played a big role in the lives of those who stay on Saipan, giving restrictions on their daily living. The information gathered, shows the similarities and differences of the churches.

Background

In the world catholicism and protestantism are the two main church groups(Cole, E.). According to roman catholic being seventeen percent of the world's population and 5.8 percent for protestants(Cole,E.). Protestants and Roman Catholics share the common ground of having faith in Jesus Christ. Both religions both have their information from the same book "the holy bible". Before the holy bible the books the information is gathered from the "Apocrypha, it is a collection of seven complete books and a few additions to others", but there are two books were not used by the protestant churches, because it was not quoted by Jesus. (Dale A. Robins).

The catholic church was said to be the first christian organization group to start sharing the word of God. Many years have then passed and only certain nobles were able to read the scriptures from the original books, translating the books so that only they were able to

understand, translated by Jerome. There are seven complete books, the catholics used the seven books for their teachings, but the protestants did not use “addendum to Jeremiah and short additions to Esther and Daniel” for they said that Jesus did not quote from the two books(Dale, A.R.). As years passed catholics added other traditions to their scripture such as, kissing the foot of the pope, the rosary beads, etc.

The reason to why the Protestants came up was because of a man who was once working for the noble men at the time name Martin Luther. Luther was also basically a researcher wondering where in the scriptures does it say to do what the popes do, and teach. Luther then gathered his information and tried to share it with the noble men, but he got rejected. Later Luther went deeper into his investigation and since no one wanted to hear his findings he posted his notice on the church door. This event then caused a riot with the church and the people. People then began thinking, because of this “Luther was seized and taken to Wartburg Castle under the protection of Frederick of Saxony.” he then, “spent his time translating the New Testament into German so everyone might have access to the Bible”. After a few months Luther returns back to Wartburg, Luther started his group and taught the way he thought was correct, teaching against what the catholics were teaching, he then published many books written in a way so that many people can understand, “as a result, his followers continued to multiply”(Dale, A. R.)

Literature review

The biggest difference, the reason why people go to church is to be saved. Hoping that their souls would all meet in heaven with God, salvation is the main point why people attend church. For the two church groups, have different endings of people’s physical form, Protestants

believe that the Bible alone and by grace by faith is the only way you can be saved, but Catholics believe that the Bible alone is not enough (Cole, E.). Roman Catholics have many things a person has to do in order to go to heaven. They also believe that after physical death, they go through purgatory, when you're in a place for a second chance to see if you go into heaven or not.

In the research it is said that, Protestants believe that no one is equivalent to God, as for the Catholics they believe that the popes are the heads of the church same rank as Jesus Christ. Protestants think that Catholics worship idols, for the statues of saints in their church goes against the ten commandments. Catholics although do not believe that they are idolizing statues, they use the statues to represent the saints, speaking to them to get permission to get their message to God (Doling, T.).

Catholics believe that only the Roman Catholic Church can interpret the Bible. Protestants believe that all Christians have the every right to interpret the Bible through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Cole, E.). Catholics also believe that in order to be saved that in order to be saved the person needs to know the Bible according to their teachings and to do good works, in addition the person needs to go through the process of the seven sacraments: baptism at birth confirmation, the Eucharist, holy orders, anointing of the sick, and matrimony and penance (Cole, E.).

In other research, Tal Davis said "to get the grace of God, Catholics have to go through the Catholic Church and the sacraments" (Cole, E.). On the other hand, Davis said, "We Southern Baptists think that's unnecessary and, in fact, is a hindrance to God, We should go straight to Jesus Christ for salvation by faith alone. No works are involved. You can't save yourself and you can't add anything to God's plan of salvation" (Cole, E.). With this the Protestant belief this is

basically saying that a person can only be save through themselves. Further into the research, it gives information and comments more about salvation, about how the person can be saved.

Research Question

Primary research question: Is there a difference between the churches on Saipan?

Secondary questions: Are the christian churches on Saipan really different? If so, what are the differences between the catholic and protestant churches?

Methodology

For this essay the information that is used is collected by using the following methods, interviewing pastors and priests of the catholic and protestant churches, and used extensive literature. The research student has gone to a couple of different churches and has gotten to experience on how is it like to be apart of the religion. With that experience, the student researcher, has a connection to the priests and pastors of the churches. Since the priests and pastors are the ones who shares the “Word of God” such authority should be able to answer the interview questions in regards to their religion.

The student writer has also used same knowledge to write out the questions that were used to interview the pastors and priest to compare. The student writer has made a list of questions and has gotten it approved by her instructor(please see Appendix A). The student writer has found information online, two peer reviewed journals and two articles, also from the book “Christianity and the World Religions: Paths of dialogue with Islam, Hinduism, and

Buddhism”(1985) from the Northern Mariana college library to back up the other information regarding the responses from the pastors and priest.

Before the interviews were conducted the student researcher called the offices of the pastors and priests before interviewing them for notice. The interviews were then conducted at the church school’s offices. With the response of the pastors and priests the student researcher has analyzed and compared the data that was collected and used the information gathered from the online sources and book source to see what’s similar and back up the information given.

Findings

The student researcher has found that it is said that “Catholic are the only ones to have the concept of the seven sacraments (baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, anointing of the sick, holy orders, and matrimony). Protestants teach that salvation is attained through faith alone” (Doling, T.). As quoted by Cole, “Simply put the roman catholic viewpoint on salvation implies that Christ's atonement on the cross was not sufficient payment for the sins of those who believe in Him, and that even a believer must atone or pay for his own sins, either through acts of penance, or time in purgatory,” wrote God questions Ministries in its website”(Cole, E.).

During the interviews with Priests and Pastors (please see appendix), research shows that the churches are similar. The life style of people such as not eating pork, not drinking alcohol, or do anything that is unhealthy for your body is under the rule that the body is the temple(please see appendix B). Both church groups protestants and catholics believe that it is important to keep your body healthy, not only is it for God but should be for the person’s self. Although some churches are not strict about the “Law of health”, mainly saying that too much of something is

not good ever, not even if the person believes in Christ or not, it should be taught anyway (please see appendix C and D)

The Holy bible, is proven to be the main book to where to find teachings and scriptures, proof of God's character, giving reasons to follow God. Both church groups have gathered their information from the same source, but the catholic containing two more books than the Protestants. From the research, both church groups believe that there is a hell, and that there is satan. In the interview both church groups believe that Satan was once an angel in heaven who betrayed God, and was sent to hell. As seen in the interview the similarities of the church may be the belief of God, the trinity, salvation, Law of health, etc. (please see appendices)

Discussion

The student writer has used google to look for information on churches and their differences and has found 15,900,000 hits on the topic. From the google search the student writer has found two articles about the differences between catholic and protestant churches. One of the articles that was found stated the differences of the behavior of people from the churches, and the other article states the differences in beliefs of the churches.

After finding those articles the student researcher has narrowed her research and found two studies in regards to comparing catholic and protestant religion. One of the studies gave information about the relationship between religion and faith comparing six different christian denominations. As for the other study, it gave information of data that was collected from Springfield Ohio, comparing religious attitudes and behavior between catholics and protestants.

The student has also found information from the Northern Marianas College library, in regards to her topic. The data that was found will be used because the information from the book collected data about different religions that stated their response to a topic towards another religion.

Conclusion

In conclusion, both religion share the same beliefs. The only difference is the tradition of the churches, catholics adding their ways of how the practices should be as for the protestants believe that people should be free and have their choice. As studies shows, that both religion have the same basis. The churches were once a single Christ believing group, but later was broken to two. The teaching of both churches is mainly for a person's character to be good, whether the church teaches that good works may or may not be apart of how to go to heaven, the ten commandments that the church teaches, the character or God's righteousness, and forgiveness, also examples and stories of God's works are all the same, because they share the doctrine, the Catholic having their version of the bible containing seven books, as for the Protestants having the Holy Bible containing the five books.

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Appendices

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Appendix A (interview questions)

1. What is your religion?
2. Based on your religion what are the Ten Commandments you are supposed to follow?
3. Based on your religion what is God's law?
4. Based on your religion who is God?
5. Based on your religion are there any restrictions or prohibited attributes? For example drinking caffeine, eating pig, drinking alcohol etc.
6. Based on your religion who is Satan?
7. Based on your religion do you believe that there is a hell?
8. Based on your religion what does it mean to be religious?
9. Based on your religion what is your interpretation of the bible and God's law?
10. What do you think is the difference between your religion and other Christian religions?
11. Based on your religion what are the requirements to go to heaven?
12. Do you think that there is anything in common with your religion and other Christian religions?
13. Based on your religion how do people become a part of your church?
14. Based on your religion what is the purpose of your church?
15. Based on your religion are there any religions that aren't allowed to go to heaven?
16. Do you have any other comments?

Appendix B (SDA)

1. God's rule not the church; its in the bible 10 commandments exodus 20:3-17
2. God's law tells us who is God. It is a reflection of God's character
3. Most powerful in the vast universe, has no beginning has no end, "I am" "Jehovah" exists by himself. Most powerful.
4. Strictly following law of health, the food and drinks that Seventh Day Adventist will not eat is found in 1 Corinthians 15:16-17, our body is the temple of God, therefore we must take care of it.
5. "In the bible when God turned water into wine, it is actually juice, it is fermented grape juice and has no alcohol"
6. Day of religion is Saturday because of exodus 20:8-11
7. Lucifer rebelled against God. He was an angel who fought against God. A former angel, who is now the enemy of God found in Ezekiel 28, Revelation 12 Lucifer adversary.
8. No such thing as religious. The right word is faithful. Religion cannot save anyone only personal relationship with God. A person who obeys God. A person who is faithful to God.
9. SDA is a person who is keeping the Sabbath as waiting for the 2nd coming. A person who keeps the Sabbath while waiting.
10. Bible is revelation of God and word. God's law is His character.
11. We keep the law, sim. Salvation is grace through faith. After salvation we keep the law of God SDA believes the salvation through faith and keep the law.

12. God's character of Jesus in us, all requirements is character of Jesus; Jesus lives in you

Galatians 2:20.

13. If person accepts Jesus as personal saviour, and to be baptized.

14. Purpose is to serve as a light house to the world people can be enlightened.. To guide people to Jesus to preach good news throughout the world.

15. If life does not change.. No matter how much you say you believe in God but you do not take care of yourself or you do bad, you are only talking, everything else you do is opposite from what you say. Going to heaven is not about what religion you're under, its if you have Jesus in your life.

16. Just believe Jesus in words not by action.. Does not mean that the person will be saved.

Wine is juice, unfermented wine (no alcohol) it is grape juice..

Appendix C (MBA)

1. stumble one stumble all; living by what christ has done no under the law but under grace can be not accused if you believe christ as saviour given by grace of knowing him if by grace no longer under the law. Can live with freedom. (basically saying you no longer need to fully follow the ten commandments, you can base it with self but truly you need to accept God as saviour .. Bible we follow does not matter what translation.
2. Gods law is to believe that jesus christ is our dear lord and saviour its not the law of moses but law that he has given us the opportunity to believe what he has prophesies the law of jesus christ.
3. True religion is christianity.. Its your conviction if you think that you want to please God... why people stop smoking no body Any drunkard starts with one drink. The people from the stories in the bible they were always drunk, any drunkard starts with one, one itself is okay, if its used appropriately.. Not to overuse..
4. Satan at a beginning of his created being is a minister to help other people, but because of his pride he wants to be like god to the extent that he believe that he can be like god he was the angel of light, people think that the angel of light is good but no it is deceiving... satan became the number one enemy of god.. Satan in his nature roams the earth.. He is not powerful he is not omniscient, he has limited sources, he can transform himself and his doom is very near, the demon will be cast into the lake of fire..

Yes, there is a hell

5. Religious is to follow gods word. Those who follow god and believe gods word will be guided.

7. There is no private interpretation of the bible, the bible speaks for itself, in the right of gods word you do not need to interpret it, it can stand alone. Including gods law.

8. Explicitly my belief is a ... you believe with all your heart... if you take out christ in christian it means "I am nothing." christ is the ultimate god, than any other religion...

9. Faith in jesus christ, no amount of work or being a member of a church makes you go to heaven only if you put your trust can bring you to heaven.

10. In some sort of management there are similarities in terms of managing your people, you wanted them to come together a unified body, you want people to behave, most religion wants their people to be good. That will help people know how to become responsible.

11. Number 1 have to have the testimony that you have accepted jesus christ as your person saviour, make a confessional faith, and follow jesus christ. And true baptism, not through sprinkling, not oil but true water emersion.

12. Purpose of church propagate the gospel, matt 28:19-28 ___ work teach all nations,.... Spread the gospel that jesus christ is the only saviour, and preparation of the second coming. Otherwise you will be left behind.

15. Religions that are not allowed in heaven,,, all religion that do not proclaim jesus christ as lord and saviour wont go to heaven.

Appendix D (CCC)

1. Bible.. Main basis 10 commandments it is recorded in the bible.
2. There is no particular bible, all the Holy bibles are the same.
3. God's law is standards of God's holiness that followers must adhere to standard righteous living.
4. God is a personal being who loves us so much He gave His only begotten Son if we believe in Him we will have eternal life.
5. - Sunday is the day of worship: day of resurrection of Christ.
6. - sabbath day is Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, it is optional
7. Sabbath is made for man no vise versa.
8. Anything for health but not afflicted to religion.
9. Believe in hell as eternal place for those who do not believe in God. Heaven: personal faith in Christ and having internal relation with Him.
10. Satan used to be an angel created by God, he opposed God and wanted to be like God.
11. If you are doing what is righteous and control your tongue and do right among others if no church its not religion its practicing faith.
12. Bible is God's word basis on faith and life style God's law is a standard with actions and behavior.
13. Trinity, salvation. Man is saved by grace and not be works through faith and good works is the product of intimate relationship with God.. Faith in God is personal intimate and experienced. Salvation is by faith alone by knowing Christ.

14. Faith not religion its your relationship with God. Not just head knowledge about God
personal commitment. John 3:16
15. Personal commitment with Jesus Christ. If faith is real become baptized with water.
16. Proclaim Good news of salvation of nurture the faith of those who believe to become a
disciple.. 2nd coming... Its not by religion, its by faith through Jesus Christ.

Appendix C: continuation (Chart given by Marianas Baptist Academy Pastor.)

A HISTORICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND PRACTICAL COMPARISON OF DENOMINATIONS
By WENDELL HOLMES ROME

Denomination	Founder and Date	Salvation	Church Membership	Final Perseverance of the Saints	Form of Baptism	Subjects of Baptism	Design of Baptism	Design of Lord's Supper	Qualifications for Participating in the Lord's Supper	Worship of the Church	Government of the Church	Officers of the Church	Authority
BAPTIST	Jesus Christ 30-35 A.D. Mark 8:13-19	By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated.	Only those who profess faith and are immersed.	Eternal security of all who are genuinely saved.	Immersion only	Professed believers only	Symbol of the believer's participation in the Gospel.	Symbol of the death of Christ for the believer's sins.	Restriated to immersed believers walking soberly in a New Testament Church Fellowship.	Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament.	Congregational—Democratic. Autonomy of the local Church.	Pastor Deacons	Bible Only. New Testament Only Law of Christianity
CONGREGATIONAL	Robert Brown 1590 A.D.	By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated.	Only those who profess faith and are sprinkled. Infant Baptism.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Sprinkling	Infants, professed believers	A sign of regeneration and profession	A memorial of the death of Christ for the believer's sins.	All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion."	Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament.	Congregational—Democratic. Autonomy of the local Church.	Pastor Deacons	Bible Only
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST	Alexander Campbell 1807 A.D.	Belief, Repentance, and Immersion the completing act in Regeneration. Historical Faith in Christ.	Only those who profess faith, repent, and are immersed for the remission of sins.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Immersion only	Those who have believed and repented	For the remission of sins, necessary to regeneration.	A memorial feast of the death of Christ. Observed every Lord's Day.	Open to any and all the Baptized of all Denominations. "Open Communion."	Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament.	Semi-Presbyterian. Local church is autonomous.	Pastor Elders Deacons	Bible Only
PREBYTERIAN	John Calvin 1509 A.D.	By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated.	Infant Baptism. All who profess faith and are sprinkled.	Eternal security of all who are genuinely saved.	Sprinkling	Infants, professed believers	A sign, seal or pledge. A means of grace.	A sign of the death of Christ and means of grace. Mystical presence.	All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion."	Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Emphasis part of "Christian Year" Formal.	Presbyterian. Judicial authority in governing bodies.	Pastor Ruling Elders Deacons	Bible (Credo) Confession
METHODIST	John Wesley 1739 A.D.	Gift to all of sufficient Grace. Final salvation to those who improve and co-operate with sufficient Grace.	Infant Baptism. All who desire to be saved and purpose to lead an upright life. Probationary. Baptism by sprinkling.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Sprinkling	Infants, professed believers	A sign of regeneration and profession.	A sign of the death of Christ and means of grace. Mystical presence.	All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion."	Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Emphasis part of "Christian Year."	Episcopal. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies. Semi-Herarchical in practice.	Stewards Pastors Superintendents Bishops	Bible Credo Discipline
LUTHERAN	Martin Luther 1517 A.D.	Sacramental Efficacy of Baptism and Lord's Supper. Nourished through means of Grace.	Infant Baptism. Confirmation, profession of Faith and Baptism by sprinkling.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Sprinkling (Form considered unimportant)	Infants, professed believers	Necessary to regeneration.	A channel through which grace is actually conferred. Consubstantiation.	All who have been Baptized and Confessed. "Open Communion."	Liturgical to some extent. Formal. Emphasis much of "Christian Year."	Modified Episcopacy. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies.	Pastors, Deacons, Teachers in U. S. A. and Bishops in Europe	Bible Credo Confession
EPISCOPALIAN	Henry VIII 1534 A.D.	Sacramental Efficacy of Baptism, Nourished through Eucharist. Baptismal Regeneration.	Infant Baptism. Confirmation. Acceptance of Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Baptism by sprinkling.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Sprinkling (Immersion allowed)	Infants, professed believers	Necessary to regeneration.	A channel through which grace is actually conferred. Consubstantiation.	All who have been Baptized and Confessed. "Open Communion."	Ritualistic. Liturgical. Very formal. Emphasis much of "Christian Year."	Episcopacy. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies. Governed by General Canons.	Vestrymen Deacons Priests (Bishops) Bishops Archbishops	Bible Credo Confession
ROMAN CATHOLIC	Gradual Development from 1st Century to Gregory the Great 590-604 A.D.	Through Church and Sacraments. Nourished through Holy Eucharist. Baptismal Regeneration.	Infant Baptism. Confirmation. All who partake of the sacraments and accept authority of church.	Possibility of total apostasy.	Sprinkling	Infants, all who profess the Catholic Faith.	To effect regeneration.	Instrument of conveying grace. Transubstantiation.	Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Penance, Restricted to members of Catholic Church.	Ritualistic. Liturgical. Mass and confession prescribed. Follow "Christian Year" rigidly.	Hierarchy. Immense religious-political machine. Absolute authority in hands of Pope.	Deacons, Priests, Bishops, Cardinals. The Pope	General Canons Credo, Councils Traditions, Canon Laws, an "Infallible" Church and Pope.