

THEOLOGICAL PROBLEM ON THE TRUTH AND EXISTENCE OF THE PAPAL PURGATORY:

Whether it is, or truly exists?

Proposed for public disputation at the Illustrious University of Groningen & Omlandia:

UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF

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Respondent: HERMAN BEECMAN of Groningen.

Scheduled for December, at the usual time and place.

Translated into English by from Latin by Christian E. Opong

Of PURGATORY

Thesis I.

The definition of the Pontifical Purgatory is rightly prefaced by a discussion of the problem, so that it is clear what is being questioned about its truth and existence.

Thesis II.

Bellarmino delivers it in Book 1 of Purgatory, chapter 1, in these words: "Purgatory is a certain place, like a prison, where souls are purified after this life, which were not fully purified in this life, so that, thus purified, they may be able to enter heaven, where nothing defiled shall enter."

Thesis III.

With this definition, it fully encompasses and states four of its circumstances: the Place, Object, Mode, and End of purification.

Thesis IV.

The Place, according to the common opinion of the Scholastics, is taught to be within the bowels of the earth, close to hell: lib.2. cap. 6.

Thesis V.

The Object is the souls of those who die with venial sins: lib. 2. cap. 1.

Thesis VI.

The Mode is the purification from venial sins itself: which occurs through true and proper fire, of the same species as elemental and infernal fire: lib. 2. cap. 10.11

Thesis VII.

The end is that souls thus purified may enter heaven: concerning which, however, they are certain in Purgatory itself: lib. 2. cap. 4.

Thesis VIII.

We deny that such a Purgatory exists or truly exists with this argument:

Thesis IX.

That neither wholly nor in part does Scripture teach it, but rather openly rejects and condemns it: Scripture denies its truth or existence itself.

Pontifical Purgatory is neither wholly nor in part taught by Scripture, but rather openly rejects and condemns it. Therefore.

Thesis X.

The minor is threefold. Firstly, it is evident that no testimony of Scripture is either produced by the Pontiffs or can be produced which adequately embraces the definition set forth.

Thesis XI.

Indeed, what has been said about those passages which Bellarmine adduces from the Old and New Testaments in Book 1, Chapter 3, 4, and following, will be shown in the course of the disputation.

Thesis XII.

However, other things sought from the apocryphal books, having no power of proof, are dismissed with the same ease with which they are approved.

Thesis XIII.

Finally, those things which are brought forward as auxiliary evidence from Plato's "Phaedo" and "Gorgias," Cicero's "Somnium Scipionis," Virgil's "Aeneid," and others, elevate the belief in Purgatory more and weaken it, than they establish and confirm it.

Thesis XIV.

The second and third parts of the Minor Circumstances themselves will become apparent through induction and refutation.

THE PLACE

Thesis XV.

I. Scripture mentions only two separate receptacles for souls, heaven and hell.

Therefore, it ignores, indeed denies, the place of Purgatory, distinct from both.

Thesis XVI.

The antecedent is proved partly by the statements in Luke 16:22-23 and Matthew 25:34-41, partly by reason: There are only two orders of men, Matthew 25:32-33, Mark 16:16, John 3:18, 36; few enter, Matthew 7:13-14; likewise, there are two states for them after this life, Matthew 25:34-41, Luke 16:22-23, John 5:29, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Therefore, there cannot be more places than two for them.

Thesis XVII.

II. Scripture does not specifically define even the place of hell.

Therefore, it is of great rashness not only to precisely confine it to the bowels of the earth but also to construct purgatory upon it with a superimposed roof.

THE OBJECT

Thesis XVIII.

I. No one dies with venial sins. Therefore, are the souls of no one purged from them in purgatory?

Thesis XIX.

It is evident from the antecedent: Because every sin committed against the Law of God is mortal: Deuteronomy 27:26, Matthew 5:19, Romans 6:23, James 2:10.

Thesis XX.

II. There is no condemnation for the faithful: as testified by the Apostle in Romans 8:1. Therefore, there is also no remaining punishment to be endured by the soul in purgatory.

THE MODE

Thesis XXI.

I. Those who are cleansed from all sins by the passion, blood, and death of Christ are not cleansed from them, or even from any of them, by the elemental fire of purgatory. The faithful are thus cleansed; 1 John 1:7, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Hebrews 9:14. Therefore.

Thesis XXII:

II. That neither gold, nor silver, nor the blood of bulls and goats, nor any other thing besides the blood of Christ, could accomplish; it is in vain and futile to expect it from elemental fire.

Purification from sins, neither gold, nor silver, nor the blood of bulls and goats, nor any other thing besides the blood of Christ could accomplish. 1 Peter 1:18-19, Hebrews 10:4-5, and following. Therefore.

Thesis XXIII.

III. In which there is not a worthy price of satisfaction for sins, in it there cannot be expiation and purgation of sins. In temporal sufferings from elemental fire (which are imagined to be the sufferings of purgatory), there is not a worthy price of satisfaction for sins, Rom. 8. v. 18. Therefore.

THE END

Thesis XXIV.

I. What faithful believers deposit together with the remains of the body in death, they cannot bring into Purgatory.

Faithful believers deposit sin together with the remains of the body Rom. 7. v. 26. 27. Heb. 4. v. 10. cap. 12. v. 23. Therefore

Thesis XXV.

II. Those who are immediately received into heaven upon death are not detained or tormented for some time in Purgatory to obtain entry into heaven with consummate purity. Faithful believers are immediately received into heaven upon death. Therefore

Thesis XXVI.

The truth of the minor premise is confirmed both by clear statements: Revelation 14:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:13 and following, 2 Corinthians 5:8, John 5:24, and by illustrious examples of believers; who, animated by this confidence, desired death: Luke 2:29, Acts 7:56, Philippians 1:23, and were immediately received into heaven from it: Luke 16:22, 25, and chapter 23, verse 43.

Thesis XXVII.

Therefore, we conclude with Augustine in Book 1 of "On Merit and the Forgiveness of Sins," chapter 28: "Nor is there any middle place for anyone to be, except with the Devil, who is not with Christ." And in Sermon 14 on the Words of the Apostles: "Between the right and the left, there is no middle place left."

Thesis XXVIII.

And with Justin Martyr in his Discourse to the Greeks: "The soul, freed from evils, departs to Him who created it."

Thesis XXIX

With Cyprian, finally, against Demetrius: "When one has departed from here, there is no longer any place for repentance, no effect of satisfaction. Here life is either lost or held; here, through the worship of God and the fruit of faith, eternal salvation is provided."

Glory to God

