**History & Theology – Church History**

**Class 5: Doctrinal Decay and Seeds of Reform: Middle Ages II (900-1415)**

##

## **Main Point:**

* In the Late Middle Ages, a series of official doctrines of Rome undermined the work of Christ and elevated human merit to secure salvation, but seeds for reformation were sown by two men who countered such belief

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## **Class Goals:**

* Define the Late Middle Age developments of The Papacy, The Virgin Mary, Penance, Purgatory, Indulgences, and Transubstantiation
* Summarize how the above are taught by the Roman Catholic Church today
* Explain the work and ministry of John Wycliffe and John Hus

# Introduction

Welcome to week five of the thirteen week Church History Core Seminar. As we’ve discussed we’re following one stream of Christian thought that moves West. It should be noted that there are many other Christians in the world during the time we’ll cover here. But we turn our attention to these events and these doctrines as they are those that most directly influence the heritage of this congregation.

Last week we observed some of the broad developments of the Middle Ages. This week, we turn our attention to several doctrines that compromise the witness of churches. We’ll observe how these developments confused the work of Christ and overvalued human merit as means to secure salvation. We’ll also see that as these doctrinal aberrations grew, the Lord raised up several witnesses to challenge such theology.

# Confusing Christ’s Work

## The Papacy

Two weeks ago we mentioned the rise in influence of bishops in the early church. You’ll remember that certain priority was given to the Bishop of Rome in the early centuries of the church because of persons and ideas he’d encountered. From early on, Bishops were relied on to help the church think through challenges to its doctrine and practices.

By the year 1000 AD the office of Rome’s bishop looked much different than it did in the 4th and 5th centuries. A few items are worth noting to help us see how the authority of the bishop of Rome calcified in the Western Church to demand the allegiance of all Christians to the Pope.

In the 8th century, a forged document named *The Donation of Constantine* decreed the pope as the “universal bishop.” It also argued that the pope was “the teacher, preserver, and godfather of the emperor; the vicar through whom St Peter displayed his power; and…the supreme temporal lord of the West.”[[1]](#footnote-0) Here’s an excerpt.

“And inasmuch as our imperial power is earthly, we have decreed that it shall venerate and honour his most holy Roman Church and that the sacred sea of blessed Peter shall be gloriously exalted above our empire and earthly throne. We attribute to him the power and glorious dignity and strength in honour of the empire, and we ordain and decree that he shall have rule as well over the four principal sees, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, as also over all the churches of God in all the world. And the pontiff who for the time being presides over that most holy Roman Church shall be the highest in chief of all priests in the whole world, and according to his decision shall all matters be settled which shall be taken in hand for the service of God or the confirmation of the faith of Christians.”[[2]](#footnote-1)

In the late 12th and early 13th centuries from roughly 1198 to 1216, Pope Innocent III was in office. Noted by some as the most consequential pope in the history of the papacy.[[3]](#footnote-2) Under Innocent’s reign the power of the papacy expanded. Exchanging the title “Vicar of Peter” for “Vicar of Christ,” Innocent argued referring to popes, “We are the *successor* of Peter the prince of the apostles, but we are not his *vicar*, nor are we the vicar of any man or any apostle; we are the vicar of Jesus Christ Himself.” He went on to say, “The Lord Jesus Christ has established one sovereign [the pope] over all as His universal vicar, whom all things in heaven, earth and hell should obey, even as they bow the knee to Christ.”[[4]](#footnote-3)

Additionally, Innocent called the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 which among other doctrinal aberrations declared the pope to be ruler of all Christendom and provided the first official definition of transubstantiation.

Following Innocent, corruption and worldliness marked the papacy for centuries. Boniface VIII (1294-1303) took bribes and used his powers as pope to coerce rulers into submitting to his authority. Following Boniface, Clement V (1305-1314) was appointed pope though he didn’t move to Rome but occupied the papacy from Avignon, France. Creating quite the controversy because of its proximity to French rulers of the next several decades (until 1377) Roman Catholic historians would dub this period of the papacy of the “Babylonian Captivity.”

For our purposes, it’s worth noting from these events that the papacy was anything but static. The role of the bishop of Rome evolved from the 3rd and 4th centuries. The power of the office was increased and all of Christendom was accountable to the pope—the vicar of Christ.

What the battle for papal supremacy shows is there was dissent over who possessed what authority and more specifically who represented Christ on earth. More emphasis was placed on the man who occupied the office than right confession or character. However, as we will see battles for right doctrine continued in these years as well.

## Mariology

During the Middle Ages, the European church began to increasingly elevate Mary.[[5]](#footnote-4) So developed “Mariology.”[[6]](#footnote-5) Many would apply the language of “*Mediatrix”* -- emphasizing Mary’s role as a mediator between mankind and Christ.[[7]](#footnote-6) This was in part a move to tighten a position on God's transcendence. But what started as an attempt to protect the transcendent holiness of God ended with granting Mary a mediatorial status as means to attract Jesus’s favor.

Elevating Mary was common in the patristic period because of her role as the mother of Jesus—to preserve the immaculate conception and the two natures of Jesus (recall the issues surrounding the Council of Chalcedon). But the during these later years, the claims of Mary were dramatically elevated.

### Examples of Mariology

A few examples are worth noting. Odo of Cluny, an abbot of Cluny, France around 900, said in a sermon, “through Saint Mary the Virgin, who is the only hope of the world, the gates of Paradise have been opened to us and the curse of Eve has been canceled.”[[8]](#footnote-7)

Additionally, Peter Damian, an 11th century Italian monk, wrote of Mary’s prayer causing Christ to look favorably upon us, “by thy pious prayer, make thy Son propitious to us.”[[9]](#footnote-8) And the 12th century French abbot Bernard of Clairvaux preached during an advent sermon:

“Our lady, our mediatrix, our advocate, reconcile us to thy Son, commend us to thy Son, represent us to thy Son. Do this, O blessed one, through the grace that thou hast found [before God], through the prerogative that thou hast merited, through the mercy to which thou hast given birth.”[[10]](#footnote-9)

During the Middle Ages, the Western church increasingly elevated Mary as one who was to be adored and prayed to as well as one who reconciled sinners to Christ. Jesus was no longer the only mediator between God and man. Mary, because of her divinely given office, was now a mediator to appeal to the affection of Christ.

#### Mariology Today

These issues are not entirely in the past. The Roman Catholic church today still teaches an elevated view of Mary. The official Catechism of the Roman Catholic church teaches:

“[969] Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation”[[11]](#footnote-10)

[Discussion Question] - What are some of the problems with this?

## Penance[[12]](#footnote-11)

Many in the medieval period saw baptism as forgiving both original sin and sins committed up to the point of baptism.[[13]](#footnote-12) Yet, as infant baptism slowly became the normal practice during the Middle Ages, the logical question: what about sins committed after baptism as an infant?[[14]](#footnote-13) The problem here was one of expiation. How is it that the consequences of sin are covered, and the sinner restored and cleansed? Here, Penance played a key role.[[15]](#footnote-14)

Penance is doing certain acts as restorative punishment for sins. What started as a means of restoring wrongs committed, Penance began to increasingly take on a redemptive context. Over time, the actions of penance were weighted more toward eternal merit than temporal restoration.

#### Examples of Penance

Boniface (Wynfrith), a Western European Christian living during the first half of the 700s, said in a sermon:

“[Penance became the] second form of cleansing after the sacrament of baptism, so that the evils we do after the washing of baptism may be healed by the medicines of penance.”[[16]](#footnote-15)

Here, penance is seen as a means to cleanse from sins. Its place in the life of Rome was solidified as one of the seven sacraments—a means of receiving grace.

### Penance Today

Today, Rome still teaches a doctrine of penance. The Catechism of the Catholic church teaches:

“[Section 1459ff] Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must ‘make satisfaction for" or "expiate" his sins. This satisfaction is also called "penance.’”[[17]](#footnote-16)

If Rome’s view of Mary diminished Jesus’s role as mediator, what of Penance? Such teaching limits the power and effectiveness of Jesus’ work on our behalf. Certainly, from such texts as Ephesians 4:17-25 and Colossians 3:1-17 we would affirm that the Christian life involves turning from sin and pursuing holiness. But we deny that our efforts are what recover our “full spiritual health by doing something more…” The Medieval and modern-day Roman Catholic church is at odds with the Bible’s teaching about Jesus being full satisfaction for sins in this life and the next.

## Purgatory

A third doctrinal aberration that developed in the Middle Ages was that of Purgatory. What’s meant byPurgatory is an intermediate stage between earth and heaven where we are purged from our sins.[[18]](#footnote-17)

In 1254, Pope Innocent IV officially taught purgatory.[[19]](#footnote-18) In an official letter (*sub catholicae*), Pope Innocent IV’s to Cardinal Eudes of Chateauroux, the papal legate to the Greeks on Cyprus, wrote:

“the souls of those who die after receiving penance but without having had time to complete it, or who die without mortal sin but guilty of venial [sins] or minor faults, are purged after death and may be helped by the suffrages of the Church;.... For, in this temporary fire, sins, not of course crimes and capitol errors, which could not previously have been forgiven through penance, but slight and minor sins, are purged; if they have not been forgiven during existence, they weigh down the soul after death.”[[20]](#footnote-19)

Later this teaching became official Roman Catholic conciliar (or council) doctrine at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274.[[21]](#footnote-20) And later at the Council of Florence in 1439, Rome urged congregants and priests to pray for the dead who may be in purgatory.

“if the truly penitent die in the love of God, before they have made satisfaction by worthy fruits of penance for their sins of commission and omission, their souls are purified by purgatorial pains after death; and that for relief from these pains they are benefited by the suffrages of the faithful in this life, that is, by Masses, prayers, and almsgiving, and by the other offices of piety usually performed by the faithful for one another according to the practice [*instituta*] of the Church.”[[22]](#footnote-21)

Like the development of Mary’s mediatorial role and penance, notice how Christ-less this is.[[23]](#footnote-22) It was thought that by the actions of the faithful on earth that the sins of those in purgatory may be atoned for and the period of trail ended. Whose work is this reliant on? Not, the work Christ completed.

### Purgatory Today

In our day, The Roman Catholic church today still believes in a similar version of Purgatory. Observe, again, the words of the official Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“[1030] All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.”[[24]](#footnote-23)

The Notice that none of these councils or confessions cite any Scripture to support their view. Each of these views begin with a similar question. How can a sinful man or woman come to God without being purified? The question is apt, but each of these answers lack sufficient scriptural support. Though Mary is honored in the Bible, she’s never appealed to as a mediator. Though we are called to put off the “old man” and put on Christ, penance offers an equation for purification the scriptures don’t warrant. And lastly, there is no scripture that supports a view of purgatory.[[25]](#footnote-24)

## Indulgences

As if matters weren’t bad enough, this period also saw development in the use of indulgences. An indulgence is a grant that pays some of the punishment of specific sins. The idea is that the church can apply some of the excess “merits of Christ and the saints” to the recipient.[[26]](#footnote-25) This is called the Treasury of Merit[[27]](#footnote-26)

As practiced in the Middle Ages and into the Reformation, Rome offered indulgences for the living and the dead.[[28]](#footnote-27) It’s worth noting a logical development of thought: personal penance for sins was later connected to monks performing penance or prayers for others and then brought back to paying the church directly for an indulgence. At times, the church even promised indulgences on the condition of participating in a crusade.[[29]](#footnote-28)

## Transubstantiation

Finally, the doctrine of transubstantiation developed in this timeframe as well. Transubstantiation is the belief that the bread and wine (the substance) of the Lord’s Supper became the body and blood (the accidents).[[30]](#footnote-29) The term *transubstantiation* was first used in 1140 to identify a development in the churches position which began to shift in 831. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) made the official pronouncement. It holds,

“[Jesus Christ’s] body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine; the bread being changed (*transsubstantiatis*) by divine power into the body, and the wine into the blood.”[[31]](#footnote-30)

Adherents of this view help that when you eat the bread, you are literally eating Christ’s body. The substance changes while the accidents remain the same.

With such a meaning attached to the elements of the Lord’s Supper, great care was taken to ensure nothing was wasted. Further, laity could only take the bread -- they could not partake in wine. Rome feared that they would spill the blood of Christ. Here only the priest would drink the wine. This was called *Communion in One Kind* -- formally affirmed in 1400s[[32]](#footnote-31)

## Summary

We should note that it is not until the Middle Ages where these practices became ensconced more uniformly in Rome's theology and practice.[[33]](#footnote-32) Though some were debated over hundreds of years, it’s the Middle Ages where these practices are settled for Rome and encouraged to be adopted in all churches.

All these late Medieval doctrines and practices have one thing in common—human merit. We cooperate with God to receive grace. Salvation is a cooperative process. A very popular phrase in the late Middle Ages was,

*facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam*

God will not deny his grace to those who do what lies within them.[[34]](#footnote-33)

But how do these teachings conform to the scriptures? Sadly, these views became the official teaching of Rome and would lead churches to embrace unsound doctrines. But, some voices along the way would challenge such settled beliefs. They would argue for a return to the scriptures and articulate doctrines that the protestant reformers would build upon many years later.

# Seeds of Reform

## John Wycliffe (1320s - 1384)

John Wycliffe, often called the grandfather of the Reformation, entered Balliol College, Oxford at roughly 16 years of age in 1346.[[35]](#footnote-34) A year later in 1347 the Black Plague swept Europe and wiped out roughly 1/3 of the English population.[[36]](#footnote-35) Seeing so many fall sick and die in the Black Plague profoundly impacted Wycliffe and deeply influenced his ministry.

Wycliffe wrote against the abuses of the papacy. He argued the Pope had no authority over the English government or church.[[37]](#footnote-36) At the center of Wycliffe’s critique was his reading and understanding of the scriptures. He aggressively championed the superiority of Scripture over every other human word, most notably that of the Pope.

“It is impossible for any part of Holy Scripture to be wrong... In Holy Scripture is all the truth.”[[38]](#footnote-37)

Given such a high view of Scripture, it is no surprise he initiated the ambitious work of translating the Bible into English.[[39]](#footnote-38) He began work translating from the Latin Vulgate, not the Greek/Hebrew. He completed this work in the 1380s. Receiving help from others who shared similar views and were desirous of seeing the Bible read in the language of the people.

Yet his efforts weren’t without opposition from English officials.[[40]](#footnote-39) Precipitated by the work of Wycliffe and others, in 1408, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundell, published a document called *The Constitutions of Oxford* where he said,

“We therefore decree and ordain, that no man, hereafter, by his own authority translate any text of Scripture into English or any other tongue... and that no man can read any such book...in part or in whole.”[[41]](#footnote-40)

How different is this from our day? We have so many good, reliable, and readable Bible translations. Not so in these days. If a town had a bible it was the property of Rome and written in Latin, a language only few spoke in England.

Yet, efforts by Wycliffe and others working for translation of the Bible into a language many could read would slowly succeed. Those who were associated with Wycliffe or followed his teachings were called the Lollards. This group grew rapidly but faced severe persecution.[[42]](#footnote-41) Wycliffe’s influence and his translation of the scriptures would endure for generations. Over 100 years after Wycliffe, in 1519, at Coventry, England, seven Lollards were burned for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer in English.[[43]](#footnote-42) Imagine if you knew that teaching your children the Lord’s Prayer could result in your being put to death. These men and women where so devoted to teaching the scriptures plainly that they willingly faced martyrdom.

### Justification

Turning for a moment to some of Wycliffe’s teaching. In studying the Scriptures, he began to see justification was by faith alone. He wrote,

“Trust wholly in Christ, rely altogether on His sufferings, beware of seeking to be justified in any other way than by His righteousness. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for salvation, and that without faith it is impossible to please God; that the merit of Christ is able, by itself, to redeem all mankind from hell, and that this sufficiency is to be understood without any other cause concurring.[[44]](#footnote-43)

Contrast this with the teachings of Rome that we discussed earlier. Here, justification is based only upon Christ and His righteousness—nothing in us. Christ’s merit is our basis, we need to add nothing to his work. We trust Christ—and we are justified.

Wycliffe is often nicknamed “the morning star of the reformation” for his elevation of Scripture, teaching about justification, attacks on the papacy, and for his translation of the Bible which persevered in England. And as we’ve seen his work would endure.[[45]](#footnote-44)

# John Huss (1372-1415)

John Huss, preacher at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague and rector of Prague University from 1409, agreed with Wycliffe on his understanding of the authority of the scriptures, predestination, the limits of the papacy, and the sacraments. He dissented from Wycliffe on matters of transubstantiation and to what extent the early church fathers and ecumenical councils were authoritative.

In 1411, Huss attacked the usage of indulgences. He argued that they were useless since God Himself freely forgave all who truly repent of their sins.[[46]](#footnote-45) Additionally, Huss argued that the Church was the entire body of the elect from all ages, known to God, whom God had predestined to be his on the basis of God’s free gift of grace. This church has one head and that is Christ not the pope. Huss pointed out the numerous errors of the pope and challenged papal authority. He argued that preaching, not the eucharist, was the central act of ordained ministry.

By attacking such a foundational belief of Rome, Huss gained many enemies. Even those sympathetic to the cause of reform alienated themselves from Huss because of his views. These matters came to a head when the Council of Constance was called in 1414. Huss was invited to defend his views. Aware of the possibility of being condemned as a heretic, Huss went after being granted safe passage by the Roman Emperor. However, the council ignored the emperor's promise and threw Huss in prison upon his arrival. Though he would be brought before the council in 1415, Huss was never given a chance to defend his views. Instead, he was mocked, bullied, and stripped of his vestments. When the council committed his soul to the Devil, Huss countered, “And I commit myself to my most gracious Lord Jesus.” He was later handed over the Emperor who had vainly promised safe passage. The emperor’s soldiers burned Huss at the stake on July 6th 1415. Refusing a last minute pardon if he would abandon his beliefs, Huss said, “I shall die with joy today in the faith of the Gospel which I have preached.”[[47]](#footnote-46)

Huss’s martyrdom and that of Jerome of Prague (1371-1416) sparked an uproar in Bohemia (modern day Czechia/Czech Republic). Tensions flared amongst the Hussites who mounted military resistance to the Catholic Church. Through a series of campaigns this armed resistance forged a place for a Hussite minority that would continue in Bohemia and, though marked with strife, within the Roman Catholic Church more broadly. This group would be some of the first to welcome the events of the next 100 years.

# Conclusion

The Middle Ages talked about Christ, but when it came to salvation many in the Middle Ages mixed human merit with Christ’s merit. In some ways, such teaching isn’t surprising as the Bible was largely inaccessible and the decrees of the Pope played a large role.

In spite of such doctrinal aberrations, God has always had a people for Himself. Such evidence of that is seen in the work of John Wycliffe and the Lollards as well as John Hus and his followers. These men show that the truths of the gospel never died as God preserved witnesses from generation to generation. The seeds sown in men like Wycliffe and Hus would soon blossom into a forest across Europe.

1. R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. ‘The Donation of Constantine’ in Henry Bettenson & Chris Maunder eds. *Documents of the Christian Church,* 4th ed., (New York: Oxford, 2011), 104-105. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. See Nick Needham, *2000 Years of Christ’s Power: Volume 2, The Middle Ages*, (London: Christian Focus, 2016), 325ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Needham, 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Part of the reason for elevating Mary came from an increasing emphasis on the transcendence of God. If Jesus is very distant, one such as Mary could help bridge the distance. For more on the transcendence of God, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:111-114. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. Throughout church history the development of mariology was diverse. To be clear the medieval period was the ground for most of the development (i.e. Immaculate Conception via Duns Scotus). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Pelikan provides some helpful context: “What sets the devotion [to Mary] and thought of this period apart from the development leading up to it was the growing emphasis on the office of Mary as ‘mediatrix.’ The title itself seems to have appeared for the first time in Eastern theology, where she was addressed as ‘the mediatrix of law and of grace.’ Whether from such Eastern sources or from Western reflection itself, the term came into Latin usage, apparently near the end of the eighth century. It was, however, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that it achieved widespread acceptance.” See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:165. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. Odo of Cluny, *Sermons* 2. Cited in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:167. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. Peter Damian *Hymns {Carmina}* B.38.2. Cited in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:168. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Bernard of Clairvaux *Advent Sermons* 2.5. Cited in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:168. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Complete and Updated* (New York, NY: Doubleday 1995), 275. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. One of the “Seven Sacraments”: baptism, holy communion, confirmation, penance, marriage, ordination and extreme unction (‘last rites’). Peter Lombard (1100-1160) seems to have been the first to list all seven sacraments, appearing in his *Sentences of Divinity* (1145). See Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition, 3:209-10.* [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologica*, pt. 3, q. 68, art. 9. Cited in Gregg Allison, *Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 623. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:32. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
15. Pelikan points out how crucial penance played in the Catholic sacramental system of grace and in the life of the church: “Penance was instituted as a means of grace because those who had received the forgiveness of sins through baptism went on to sin again and needed ‘a second refuge after this shipwreck’ [quoting Rupert of Deutz, c. 1075-. 1130, ‘On Divine Offices’ 5.19] to reconcile them to the church, from which they were alienated by their transgression” (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* [Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975], 3:210). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
16. Boniface (Wynfrith), *Sermons* 8.1. Cited in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3:32. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
17. *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Complete and Updated* (New York, NY: Doubleday 1995), 407. In the next section, 1460, the catechism says: “Such penances help configure us to Christ, who alone expiated our sins once for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ, ‘provided we suffer with him.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
18. Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 258-259. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
19. James B. Gould, *Practicing Prayer for the Dead: Its Theological Meaning and Spiritual Value* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016), 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
20. Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 242-243. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
21. Jerry L. Walls, *Purgatory: The Logic of Total Transformation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
22. “Dead, Prayers for the” in *The Catholic encyclopedia* Volume IV ed. Charles George Herbermann (New York, NY: Robert Appleton Company, 1908), 653. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
23. “Reliable priests celebrated the endowed masses for the salvation of the souls of the dead” (Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006], 53). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
24. *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Complete and Updated* (New York, NY: Doubleday 1995), 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
25. Some evangelicals defend a modified view of Purgatory whereby we undergo a process of perfecting: “I would defend the doctrine of purgatory in this way. It is obvious that Christian character is not perfectly transformed at death. Therefore, it is reasonable to hope that there might be a perfecting process after death.... Evangelicals would not think of purgatory as a place of punishment or atonement because of our view of the work of Christ, but we can think of it as an opportunity for maturation and growth.” See Clark H. Pinnock, “Response to Zachary J. Hayes” in *Four Views on Hell* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
26. Gabriel Biel, *Exposition of the Canon of the Mass* 58.L. Cited in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4:135. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
27. “The Treasury of Merit is made up of both the merit of Christ and the Merit of the saints. The saints live lives of such sanctity that they accrue more merit than they need for themselves. They do this by performing works of supererogation, works done above and beyond the call of duty. Thus the surplus merits of the saints are added to the merit of Christ and may be drawn from the Treasury to aid those who receive indulgences” R.C. Sproul, *Justified by Faith Alone* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
28. Pelikan quotes a bull which referenced “indulgence both for the living and for the departed”. See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4:136. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
29. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4:134. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
30. “Aristotle had spoken of both substance—the essence or nature of a thing — and accidents — the characteristics of a thing that can be perceived by the senses: the appearance, taste, smell, texture, and sound of a thing.” [Allison, *Historical Theology*, 644.](https://www.zotero.org/google-docs/?cbQKtN) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
31. Everett Ferguson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship - Volume 3: Worship, Eucharist, Music, and Gregory of Nyssa* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
32. Session 13 -- 15 June 1415 -- of the Council of Constance decreed: “although this sacrament was received by the faithful under both kinds in the early church, nevertheless later it was received under both kinds only by those confecting it, and by the laity only under the form of bread. For it should be very firmly believed, and in no way doubted, that the whole body and blood of Christ are truly contained under both the form of bread and the form of wine. Therefore, since this custom was introduced for good reasons by the church and holy fathers, and has been observed for a very long time, it should be held as a law which nobody may repudiate or alter at will without the church’s permission” (“Council of Constance 1414-18” <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/councils/ecum16.htm> Accessed March 19, 2018). See also Norman Tanner, *Church in Council: Conciliar Movements, Religious Practice and the Papacy from Nicea to Vatican II* (New York, NY: I.B. Taturis, 2011), 141. Some helpful additional context: “Before the 1520s, throughout Augsburg, Communion in both kinds -- in which both the Host and the wine were offered to the communicant -- was offered only to the religious. The laity received Communion in one kind -- the Host alone” (Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006], 55.). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
33. Some may object by pointing to quotations from the patristic period that show a reverence for Mary, a need for penance, prayers for the dead, etc. However, these quotations do not show the same level of widespread and developed belief as in the late Middle Ages. For an example of this pattern, see Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* 3rd. Ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
34. Michael Scott Horton, *Covenant and Salvation: Union with Christ* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 42. Horton explains the Medieval phrase: “According to this theology, no one deserves salvation in any strict sense, but God has decreed a covenant according to which those who do their best (assisted by grace) will attain final justification as if they had merited it” (42). Alister E. McGrath writes: “This axiom is probably best translated as ‘God will not deny grace to those who do their best.’ The essential principle encapsulated in the axiom is that humans and God have their respective roles to lay in justification; when humans have fulfilled theirs in penitence, God will subsequently fulfil his part. The theological principle underlying the axiom may be shown to have been current in the early patristic period.... The medieval period saw this axiom become a dogma, part of the received tradition concerning justification.” (Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* 3rd. Ed. [New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 107-108). See Alister E. McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* 2nd. Ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
35. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011) 360 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
36. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011) 360 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
37. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011), 361 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
38. John Wycliffe. Cited in John Stacey, *John Wycliff and Reform* (Lutterworth Press, 1964; repr: Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 83. Wycliffe also said: “It is a doctrine of the faith that Christ is infinitely superior to every other man, and therefore His book, or Holy Scripture, which is His law, stands in a similar relation to every other writing which can be named” (John Wycliffe, *Trialogus, B.III*. Cited in Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* [Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011], 362.) [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
39. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011), 363-364. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
40. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011), 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
41. Cited in John Piper, *Filling Up the Afflictions of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
42. Carlos M. N. Eire, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 51-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
43. John Piper, *Filling Up the Afflictions of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
44. *131 Christians Everyone Should Know* ed. Mark Gali (Nashville, TN: Holeman Reference, 2010), 212. Full quote in John Wycliffe, *The Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wycliff* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1847), 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
45. Steven J. Lawson, *A Long Line of Godly Men - Pillars of Grace: AD 100 - 1564* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011), 357, 357-370. Wycliffe’s writings made their way to Prague through students who followed Queen Anne of Bohemia to England for her wedding to King Richard ii in 1382. In Prague, Jan Huss found and read Wycliffe. See Phillip Haberkern, “The Lands of the Bohemian Crown” in *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe* ed. Howard Louthan, Graeme Murdock (Boston, MA: Brill, 2015), 16-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
46. See Needham, 422ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
47. Cited in Needham, 423. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)