



# Messenger Project Newsletter

## The Messenger

messengerproject.com  
714.537.8362

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A NONPROFIT CORPORATION PROMOTING THE BIBLE THROUGH THE ARTS

### Messenger Project Members

Lionel De Leon, President-Founder,  
Editor-Publisher of *The Messenger*  
Raymond Genovese, Treasurer  
Joie De Leon, Secretary

### Messenger Notes



**Mike Reilly** recently donated a partial Rogers drum-set (kick drum and toms) to **Messenger Project** that will be converted into a recording set. Bassist **Bart Broadnax** caught

pneumonia in February, pushing our scheduled recording start-date into early-mid March.

### Christian Denominations

**Roman Catholicism** is led by the Pope, who is appointed by a college of bishops. He sits on the *see of Peter* and holds the authority given to Peter, ruling for life. The pope and bishops make up the *Magisterium*, which determines the faith through the interpretation of Scripture and the use of tradition. Papal doctrines are deemed to be infallible. Catholicism includes nine apocryphal works of the second century BC as a part of the Old Testament: Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, the extended Esther, additions to Daniel, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and Baruch 3. Catholicism has seven sacraments (holy deeds): baptism, confirmation, Eucharist (communion), Penance (confession), Anointing of the Sick (last rites), Holy Orders (clergy), and Matrimony. According to Catholicism, Mary (mother of Jesus) "illuminates" the faith in Christ, was conceived without sin, was sinless, was a perpetual virgin, and was assumed at death. Mary is often prayed to by Roman Catholics to intercede on their behalf in the presence of Christ. Catholics who have led pious lives may be eligible for canonization (sainthood) after their death. Catholicism teaches two kinds of sins, mortal and venial. Mortal sins are considered to be those of grave matter, those condemned by the Ten Commandments, and done purposely. Venial sins are considered to be either not of grave matter or those of grave matter not done purposely. The church teaches that it can forgive sins. Penance for sin is often done with praying the Rosary and pilgrimages. In Catholicism,

vows of chastity and poverty are noble things, leading to a religious life (seen most often in monasteries and convents). Catholicism teaches three levels in the afterlife: Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell.

**Eastern Orthodoxy** is confederation of many national churches, all having the same doctrinal positions yet governed separately. The church uses a translation of the Septuagint for their Old Testament. The church is considered the ultimate interpreter of the Scriptures and has essentially the same seven sacraments as Roman Catholicism. Eastern Orthodoxy regards Mary highly, but not as much as Roman Catholicism. Eastern Orthodoxy denies the concept of Purgatory and has formulated the idea of theosis, or "becoming god." The church also believes in icons (religious art painted on wood displaying a spiritual message), giving great reverence to these icons (kissing them and worshipping in front of them). Eastern Orthodoxy is governed nominally by five Patriarchs, sitting in seats in Constantinople (Istanbul), Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Moscow).

**Lutheranism's** main tenet is the doctrine of *faith alone*, the belief that God gives the gift of faith to individuals by the Holy Spirit (leading to salvation). God does this through the act of baptism, which is considered to be administered by God Himself. The Lutheran church teaches that the Scripture alone is to be used for the faith (the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds, along with The Book of Concord are used as books of religious instruction and training). Lutheranism places a strong emphasis on the Lord's Prayer (used as a prayer and as a way of instruction) and teaches that the church can forgive sins. The pastor can be the vehicle of the forgiveness of sin and if one does not confess their sins in this way, he/she is not considered a Christian.

**Anabaptism** teaches that the crucifixion gave us a new covenant and the Mosaic Law is not to be followed or used for doctrinal purposes. The church denies the need for infant baptism, and stresses the need for *believer's baptism* (one is baptized after believing in Christ). Anabaptism stresses unity within its group (calling themselves brethren and not a church).

Its teachings also embrace nonconformity. One of the practices that unite many of the Anabaptist groups is nonresistance (one should not fight an opponent, but be at peace with all men). Believers live in a commune with all goods and possessions held in common. Some parts of the Anabaptist movement keep the old languages (German and Dutch), wear clothing worn in the 1600s, and only use machinery of that era.

**Calvinism** believes that God has already determined who will be saved. The three main branches of Calvinism are the Presbyterian Church, the United Church of Christ and the Reformed Church of America. The Presbyterian church denies limited atonement (Christ died only for the sins of a few). The Presbyterian, and especially the United Church of Christ, is known today for a "historically critical" interpretation of the Scriptures, believing that Scripture must be understood in its first-century context. Calvinism is summarized in the acrostic TULIP: *Total Depravity* (man's inability to come to God by his own means), *Unconditional Election* (God has predestined whom He desires to be saved), *Limited Atonement* (Jesus died only for those predestined to be saved), *Irresistible Grace* (God calls whom He has elected with His grace) and *Perseverance of the Saints* (those who are chosen must be saved and cannot fall away).

**Baptists** preach the need for immersion in water as baptism and that it was for believers, not for infants. There are hundreds of different groups ascribing to different sets of beliefs. In general, Baptist groups range from being Calvinists to believing in the truth concerning baptism, salvation, and God's final Judgment. Many Baptist groups hold to a doctrine called *Once Saved, Always Saved* (once you have been saved, no matter what you should do, you will still be saved).

Additional Christian denominations will be examined in next month's newsletter. Although there are varying beliefs and practices among Christians, one common thread that all Christian denominations have is the Holy Bible. We encourage everyone (including non-Christians) to read this sacred book that shaped Western Civilization.