

4. Brief note on Roman reaction

The Roman church did not take all of this "lying down" and responded at the Council of Trent. Justification by Faith was branded a heresy, the Bible was to be kept from the vernacular, the services of the church were required for salvation, the administration of grace was of sacrament and service, not a simple Gospel plan. Rome emerged from the Reformation a much tighter and more sharply legislated body than she was before the Reformers challenged her integrity and right to command the body.

F. The Modern Era

With the divisions produced by the reformation, almost every branch of Christianity began to interpret and speak of a soteriology all its own. (Slight over-exaggeration, of course) It would be impossible to give an account of every idea in a course of the brevity of this one. In general we may divide the community between what may be called evangelical and what is better designated liberal. In the former there has continued a reformational thrust to these matters --with some alterations-- while in the latter salvation has moved into a Pelagian region.

1. Factors affecting modern soteriological views

a. The declension from the faith...and there are two aspects to this:

(1) the denial of faith

(2) the practical dismissal of faith

b. Ecclesiastical humanism...growing from the deistic thrusts of recent centuries, the tendency to regard man as master of his own destiny had minimized the saving roles. As evangelicals respond to this they may go to the other extreme and make man almost unfit for any kind act of God. It is to be noticed that wherever an error is strongly pronounced, those who have the truth for repudiation must be cautious not to err in the opposite direction/

c. The evolved man

d. Cults of personality...where we are all allright.