

PURGATORY & THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Some historians say that the R.C.C. was practicing some form of Purgatory as far back as the sixth century. However, The Council of Florence in A.D. 1439 made it a dogma of the R.C.C..

It is declared to be a "place" where the souls of the dead go and are punished until they depart for heaven.

In A.D. 1546 at the Council of Trent, it was determined that suffering of the dead souls was lessened by prayers said & masses conducted by those still living.

It is declared by the R.C.C. that when deceased R.C.C. Saints did works beyond their needed duties (called "Works of Supererogation"), these "Good Works" were stored up in an unknown place called the "treasury of Merits". Now - when a R.C.C. member dies, his soul goes to Purgatory & suffers for his past sins. He must stay there until he satisfies God, that he has suffered enough. Now, in order to shorten this stay in Purgatory, the living priest prays & conducts masses in behalf of the departed one. This normally involves a donation for this practice. His prayers are to cause a transfer of the good works of a former R.C.C. Saint out of the "Treasury of Merits" to the benefit of the dead person. Thus, God will say, "Okay, you can go on to heaven early since the living have sought to assist you".

A real flaw in this doctrine is - no one knows when the deceased is freed from Purgatory & goes on to heaven. Thus, the money from many well meaning R.C.C. members keeps coming into the church treasury. It was stated in the past that when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, literally millions of dollars flowed into the R.C.C. treasury, due to prayers said in his behalf, as well as masses conducted for his benefit.

I am sorry to say that this doctrine has no Scriptural foundation, as far as my Bible knowledge extends. In fact it is very contradictory to plain Bible teaching. The Bible teaches that a person's eternal destination is determined by oneself, prior to his physical death & not by someone else (see Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:19-31). As far as this Christian is concerned the Purgatory doctrine is a money making gimmick, which will continue in force because of the huge amount of revenue generated.

