

Sunday, May 28, 2017
Did You Know?

Mariology or Mariolatry

For the past several weeks in our Wednesday Bible Study, we've been looking at the differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant or Biblical Christianity. I say Biblical because much of what Catholics believe is not derived from Scripture. Take for instance their doctrine of the mother of our Lord, Mary, known as Mariology. Protestants, for certain, have not given enough credence to Mary. As a very young woman, perhaps even a teenager, she exemplified great faith and trust in God's calling upon her life. She's an example of what godly obedience looks like, and who can imagine the agony she must have personally experienced to watch her own son be crucified, but I think much of our neglect of Mary comes as a reaction against the Catholic's over-emphasis on Mary.

Here are some of the things we've learned. Protestants and Catholics both believe that Mary is *theotokos*, which means "the bearer of God" and that she was a great example of faith. The rest are differences. Catholics believe the following things about Mary, most of which are found in their catechism:

- She is the second Eve, as Christ is the second Adam, and contributes to the coming of life. Nowhere is this idea found in Scripture. See Romans 5 for the Adam/Christ connection.
- She was preserved immune from all stain of original sin. This is the false doctrine of the immaculate conception. It says that throughout her life Mary remained free of every personal sin." contra Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned..."
- She was a perpetual virgin meaning that she remained a virgin even during childbirth, literally that her hymen was not ruptured in birth. As well she remained a virgin for her entire life. Luke 2:7 tells us that Joseph had intercourse with Mary after Jesus was born. Matthew 12:46 tells us he had brothers. In fact, James, the author of the letter and leader of the first church in Jerusalem, was Jesus' brother.
- Mary somehow participates in the suffering of her Son, since she observed his suffering on the cross. Does this then mean that her suffering is efficacious like the suffering of Christ? God forbid!
- Mary never died but was taken directly to heaven because she was sinless. She is now in heaven and is the only person, apart from Jesus to dwell there bodily. This is the false doctrine of the bodily assumption. All dead Christians exist in heaven with Christ as disembodied spirits, awaiting the resurrection of their bodies at the return of Christ.
- She is known to Catholics as the Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix. While giving Mary all these doctrines and titles Catholics maintain that these do not minimize the sufficiency of Christ.

Christians have a term for these beliefs. They're considered heresy, false teachings. Thus, we need to consider again whether, for Catholics, it is Mariology or Mariolatry. What do Biblical Christians, Biblical Protestants believe? *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fide*, *Solus Christus*, *Soli Deo Gloria*. Let's pray for our Catholic friends and the Catholic church, that they would come to the truth of Christ alone!

Pastor Peter