

# **The Poison and Sin of Heresy**

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Heresy is defined as “denial of a revealed truth by a baptized member of the One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church”. Heresy is a falsehood spread either unwittingly or wittingly by teachers eager to express a private opinion, not universally accepted by the entire Body of the Faithful.

Heresy seeks to deny decisions and canons of the One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church held to be the tenets of the faith and these carefully encompass the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, since the very beginning, as believed by all since the inception of the Faith received by the Lord Jesus Christ. Such deviations from the truth, as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ, are poisonous to the universal salvation of men and women offered by the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself. Because of this fact, heresy is a sinful act because it operates to attempt to destroy the One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church from within. The Apostles and Bishops of the Genuine Holy Church that the Lord Jesus Christ administers and operates, are charged with the task of defending the Genuine, Authentic Faith that He established for all to follow for the safety of their universal salvation.

When heresy enters within, to a congregation, it seeks to divide and conquer and destroy the congregation from within by expressing “false dogmas” that are foreign to the One Gospel (Good News) of Christ preached everywhere from the very beginning. Such a scheme to defraud the members of the Body of Christ is a serious offense and is punishable by the sentence of anathema being pronounced in unison from and by the Apostles and Bishops of the Church, by order and command of the Lord Jesus Christ. Heresy represents a poison, for it pollutes the thoughts of the universal mind of the Body, with an attempt to lead them astray, into a separate distinct “congregation” set apart from the One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Congregation established by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Church in Christ does not create new Dogma; it builds fences around accepted dogma that protect members from falling victim to a heresy or heresies. The Ecumenical Council, Chaired and Directed by the Holy Spirit of God, protects the Holy Church from adopting or accepting heresies of any kind. This happens because the members of the Council come into one accord and achieve unity and concord by unanimous declarations powered by the Holy Spirit of God.

It is proper to make reference to St. Irenaeus, who, in his Fifth Book in the compendium, “Against Heresies”, Chapter 20, has this to say:

Chapter XX.—Those pastors are to be heard to whom the apostles committed the Churches, possessing one and the same doctrine of salvation; the heretics, on the other hand, are to be avoided. We must think soberly with regard to the mysteries of the faith.

1. Now all these [heretics] are of much later date than the bishops to whom the apostles committed the Churches; which fact I have in the third book taken all pains to demonstrate. It follows, then, as a matter of course, that these heretics aforementioned, since they are blind to the truth, and deviate from the [correct “ὀρθῶς”] way, will walk in

various roads; and therefore the footsteps of their doctrine are scattered here and there without agreement or connection. But the path of those belonging to the Church circumscribes the whole world, as possessing the sure tradition from the apostles, and gives unto us to see that the faith of all is one and the same, since all receive one and the same God the Father, and believe in the same dispensation regarding the incarnation of the Son of God, and are cognizant of the same gift of the Holy Spirit, and are conversant with the same commandments, and preserve the same form of ecclesiastical constitution, and expect the same advent of the Lord, and await the same salvation of the complete man, that is, of the soul and body. And undoubtedly the preaching of the Church is true and steadfast, in which one and the same way of salvation is shown throughout the whole world. For to her is entrusted the light of God; and therefore the “wisdom” of God, by means of which she saves all men, “is declared in [its] going forth; it uttereth [its voice] faithfully in the streets, is preached on the tops of the walls, and speaks continually in the gates of the city.” For the Church preaches the truth everywhere, and she is the seven-branched candlestick which bears the light of Christ.

2. Those, therefore, who desert the preaching of the Church, call in question the knowledge of the holy presbyters, not taking into consideration of how much greater consequence is a religious man, even in a private station, than a blasphemous and impudent sophist. Now, such are all the heretics, and those who imagine that they have hit upon something more beyond the truth, so that by following those things already mentioned, proceeding on their way variously, inharmoniously, and foolishly, not keeping always to the same opinions with regard to the same things, as blind men are led by the blind, they shall deservedly fall into the ditch of ignorance lying in their path, ever seeking and never finding out the truth. **It behoves us, therefore, to avoid their doctrines, and to take careful heed lest we suffer any injury from them;** but to flee to the Church, and be brought up in her bosom, and be nourished with the Lord’s Scriptures. For the Church has been planted as a garden (paradisus) in this world; therefore, says the Holy Spirit of God, “Thou mayest freely eat from every tree of the garden,” that is, Eat ye from every Scripture of the Lord; **but ye shall not eat with an uplifted mind, nor touch any heretical discord.** For these men do profess that they have themselves the knowledge of good and evil; and **they set their own impious minds above the God who made them. They therefore form opinions on what is beyond the limits of the understanding.** For this cause also the apostle says, “Be not wise beyond what it is fitting to be wise, but be wise prudently,” that we be not cast forth by eating of the “knowledge” of these men (that knowledge which knows more than it should do) from the paradise of life. Into this paradise the Lord has introduced those who obey His call, “summing up in Himself all things which are in heaven, and which are on earth;” but the things in heaven are spiritual, while those on earth constitute the dispensation in human nature (secundum hominem est dispositio). These things, therefore, He (the Lord Jesus Christ) recapitulated in Himself: by uniting man to the Holy Spirit, and causing the Holy Spirit to dwell in man, He is Himself made the head of the Holy Spirit, and gives the Holy Spirit to be the head of man: for through Him (the Holy Spirit) we see, and hear, and speak.

It should be remembered that St. Irenaeus said that a heretic is **a blasphemous and impudent sophist!** I agree with St. Irenaeus and say further that such of these heretics are the well-spring of division, discord, destruction, and they spread and inject poison, as of the venom of a Rattle-Snake with regard to disturbing and doing everything they can to render void the universal salvation of the Holy Church's membership; and thus, their actions are sinful and blasphemous as regards their prideful display of sophistry which amounts to a level below worthlessness, because it is founded upon hearsay, and inconsistent opinions and doctrines of men, instead of embracing the sure trust-worthy Commands and Doctrines of God, the Holy Trinity! Therefore, heretics are enemies of God; and, from their heretical branches springs the Anti-christ himself, embodied by him, who poses as the "chief bishop" of all bishops of the Holy Church, when, in fact, the Lord Jesus Christ is the HEAD, (the ONLY HEAD!!!), of all His Apostles and Bishops of His One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the All-Powerful-Ruler of all the Members of the Body of Christ, consisting of His Entire Holy Church!

One writer commented that **heresy is a sin against faith**; and that **schism** (a fruit of heresy) **is a sin against unity**. In speaking about the Donatist Schism, a precursor to the Great Schism of 1054 A.D., St. Optatus, the African Bishop of Milevis has some very pertinent things to say in his work, "On the Schism of the Donatists Against Parmenian". The reader is directed to look up this treatise and to read it cover to cover!