



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

STATEMENTS

Toward True Reconciliation.

A Comment on Lutheran-Roman Catholic Relations.

You may have heard that a declaration was signed that claims to resolve a key difference between the Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholic Church. What you may not have heard is that more than 45 percent of the Lutheran church-bodies in the world did not support the declaration.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the oldest and second-largest Lutheran church-body in the United States. We would like to explain why we could not support the declaration.

We rejoice that we have much in common with our fellow Christians in the Roman Catholic Church. Because of what we have in common, we are committed to working toward true reconciliation of our important differences. We could not support the declaration because it does not actually reconcile the difference between us concerning the most important truth of Christianity.

What is that truth? God loved the world so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect life in our place and to die for our sins. God declares us to be totally righteous and completely forgiven because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God gives us eternal life as a free gift through trust in Christ alone.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that something more than trust in Christ is necessary for us to be saved. It teaches that we are able to merit, through our works, eternal life for ourselves and others. We believe this teaching obscures the work of Jesus Christ and clouds the central message of the Bible.

Therefore, despite what has been reported in the public media about the Lutheran-Roman Catholic declaration, very significant differences remain in regard to how we understand salvation, a fact that the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges.

We pray for genuine reconciliation of differences among Christians. Our church is intent on working for the day when the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed with one voice. We will continue to work toward true reconciliation.

*A Statement from The Office of the President
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