

AD RELIGION & MORALS: PROTESTANTISM & CATHOLICISM

Each of the two main streams of Western Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism, involves its own moral-philosophy. According to Catholicism, salvation requires good works as well as faith, whereas for Protestants faith is necessary and sufficient. (In particular, according to Calvin good works are useless because every individual is predestined from birth.) Thus, whereas Catholicism is consequentialist and optimistic, Protestantism is nonconsequentialist and pessimistic (at least with regard to most of us, poor sinners). Hence, at least in theory, Catholic morality is closer to humanism than Protestant morality. As for practical matters, this is another story. Thus whereas the Quakers have done more for peace and for humanitarian causes than any other

religious groups, the Catholic "liberation theology" is doing more for the
dispossessed in the Third World than any other religious groups.

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