

WATCH: Justification in Rome and Wittenberg | Conversation with
Dr. Jordan B Cooper and Erick Ybarra

This week I had the opportunity to host a conversation between Dr. Jordan B Cooper (Lutheran) and Erick Ybarra (Catholic) on the topic of justification.

I found this conversation to be quite interesting and fruitful. Ultimately, Traditional Catholics need to be able to be involved in these sorts of conversations, and that starts with being informed. Not only should we want to know the positions of Protestants to better help converse with them when they are inquiring about our faith, but we should do so to grow in knowledge of our own faith. Indeed, the Summa of St. Thomas is built upon responding to objections.

Dr. Cooper represents a type of “steelman” for the Lutheran position. As many of us know, Protestantism is rooted in the concerns that Luther and the other early Protestants had, especially regarding justification. What I think can be clearly seen in this discussion is that the Catholic position can certainly hold up and respond to even the most educated and knowledgeable Protestant interactions.

Traditional Catholics should feel confident in knowing that our position is not a house of cards, nor is it built upon a weak foundation. Our faith is built upon centuries of intelligent and learned men interacting with those who dispute with the Catholic Church. For too long have these conversations been dominated by Catholics who are either disloyal to the Magisterium and the traditions of the Church, or those uninformed, seeking to convert those to the faith by dishonest polemics. This is why I asked Erick Ybarra to be the Catholic representative in this discussion, as I believe him to be the antithesis of these things, being a man both faithful to Mother Church and also honest and knowledgeable of his opponent’s positions.

For those who are interested in growing in understanding on this topic of justification I would highly suggest reading the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, especially his Commentary on the Book of Romans where he so excellently covers many of the issues brought up in this conversation.