

"LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD"

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Looking Back

PRE-COLONIAL INHABITANTS OF THE PHILIPPINES DID NOT KNOW ABOUT CHRISTIANITY.

Animism

- praying to idols that represented their ancestors
- spoke to streams, fields, forests, and mountains
- rituals to bribe demons, ghosts and elves from plants, birds and animals
- worshiped the souls of the dead
- used magic charms or amulets

Bathala - the supreme deity venerated in the Visayan region (like Zeus, he presided over other gods (agriculture, fire, war, death, love).

Islam - spread to the southern part of the Philippines by the 15th Century (to Luzon by the 16th Century) - Natives converted to Islam without discarding old customs and traditions (religion of fusion)

THE SPANIARDS BROUGHT A CHRISTIAN RELIGION TO THE PHILIPPINES, BUT NOT TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

Easter Sunday, 1521

Magellan went ashore to celebrate mass and to erect a cross on a hilltop in Cebu. Humabon, a local chief, was baptized by Magellan's chaplain on April 21, 1521 and a week later, 2,000 natives were baptized into the Catholic Church.

February 15, 1565

Miguel Lopez de Legaspi (with Friar Andres de Urdaneta, an Augustinian) arrived in Samar. When he went to Cebu a month later, he found no trace of Christianity in the area. Tupas, the local chief, refused to acknowledge Spain's sovereignty. After failing to persuade Tupas, he bombarded the town, causing the inhabitants to flee.

Catholic Religious Orders

Autonomous organizations that maintained and ruled the Catholic Church in the Philippine towns and provinces. These friars came directly from Mexico, bringing with them a religion that was different from European Catholicism.

Luzon - Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans

Visayas and Mindanao - Jesuits and Recollects

Native Catholicism - The friars accommodated to a syncretic compound of Catholic doctrine and animistic practices. The natives would not abandon their ancient beliefs and practices. The friars adapted their prayers to pagan incantations and allowed their church rites to coincide with their ceremonies for appeasing the spirits of nature.

The Catholic "Gospel" - **Council of Trent** (A.D. 1545-63) - Affirmed the **doctrine of merit** (that good works, produced by God's grace, have salvation-attaining value) and condemned justification by faith alone.

Reformation Justification vs. Roman Catholic Justification

Reformation: Justification by faith (**extrinsic** - based on what Jesus did outside the believer), apart from sanctification (the result of justification in the believer), is the basis of God's acceptance of the believer ("**imputed righteousness**").

Roman Catholic: Justification of the believer, based on God's grace (forgiveness) for past sins, and God's grace, working in the believer's life (producing good works), are both the basis of the believer's acceptance (**intrinsic** - "infused righteousness").

THE AMERICAN MISSIONARIES BROUGHT PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES TO THE PHILIPPINES, BUT NOT TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

American Protestant Evangelization

Part of America's "Manifest Destiny" colonization of the Philippines. Missionaries of American denominations came while the Filipinos were still trying to gain their independence. During the war for Philippine independence, the American military committed atrocities and these actions did not harmonize with the Protestant Christian teaching of the American Missionaries.

Protestant Emphasis on Doctrinal Correctness

American missionaries focused more on doctrinal correctness and biblical precision. These proselytizers came from an America that was still largely racist. Most of these missionaries have never had a close relationship with people of another color.

A WHOLISTIC AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CHRISTIANITY MUST BE COMMUNICATED IN THE "WINESKIN" OF A LOVING COMMUNITY.

Luke 5:37-38 *"No one puts new wine into old wineskins. The new wine would burst the old skins, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine must be put into new wineskins."* (NLT)

John 13:34-35 *"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."* (NLT)

Gal. 5:13-14 *You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."* (NIV)

1 John 3:23 *And this is his commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us.* (NLT)

Moving Forward

Gospel Life Strategy MISSION: BUHAT

B - Build spiritual communities.

U - Uplift and assist the underprivileged.

H - Harness and equip local leaders.

A - Aid the sick and prevent disease.

T - Train and educate young people for leadership.