

THE SHIFTING ECUMENICAL POSTURE
OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Thomas P. Johnston, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Evangelism
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
tjohnston@mbts.edu

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Once upon a time there was a significant lamb who wanted to meet with an old wolf. He thought that he might be able to work together with the old wolf in finding food. At first the old wolf did not want to meet with the significant lamb. After all, what do lambs know about finding food for wolves? They eat different foods.

As it turned out, however, the lamb population was increasing rapidly, much to the consternation of the old wolf. When the significant lamb came properly supplied with a gift in his hand, the old wolf decided to meet with him. The old wolf considered that it might be beneficial to meet with the significant lamb and get to know his relatives. The meeting went very well, and an unwritten partnership was established between the significant lamb and the old wolf.

Now the significant lamb had to hide his agenda from his relatives as they would not understand his motives. However, over several years the old wolf got to know many of the relatives of the significant lamb. Later his relatives went to pains to write books explaining how sheep and wolves could work together in finding food. Sheep who mentioned that they eat different food than wolves, or questioned the wisdom of lambs working together with the wolves were shunned. They were considered intolerant and not understanding of their times. And so the story goes....

The dates were 1981 and 1982. The old wolf was Pope John Paul II. The significant lamb was Billy Graham. And now you know the rest of the story—or do you?

First, a few words about Pope John Paul II: Karol Józef Wojtyła, Archbishop of Krakow and Cardinal, was an ideal candidate for Pope when he was elected by the College of Cardinals in 1978. He had good relationships in Eastern Europe with Jews

Evangelical Christians, and had inroads among the Orthodox. Cardinal Wojtyla seems to have allowed and encouraged Campus Crusade staff members to teach his priests personal evangelism. The cardinal had personally met with Campus Crusade staff and their key supporters at a mountain retreat in Poland. Through Bill Bright and Campus Crusade, Pope John Paul II had an immediate entry point into conservative Evangelicalism in the United States of America.

Second, a few words about Billy Graham: Graham's cooperation with Catholics has been noted by several. In your 1995 textbook for this seminar, Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie close their book with a chapter titled "Evangelism." They conclude their book in this way:

Billy Graham has set the example for evangelical cooperation with Catholics in mass evangelism without compromising the basic gospel message. Despite ecclesiastical and doctrinal differences (see Part Two), there are some important things many Catholics and evangelicals hold in common not the least of which is the good news that Jesus died for our sins and rose again. Thus, there seems to be no good reason why there should not be increased ways of mutual encouragement in fulfilling our Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18-20). Catholics and evangelicals do not have to agree on everything in order to agree on some things—even something important. We do not need to agree on the authority of the church before we can cooperate in proclaiming the power of the uncompromising gospel (Rom. 1:16).¹

The erudite Geisler and MacKenzie seem to have forgotten the injunction of the Apostle Paul, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*," Galatians 5:9.²

Likewise, Donald Sweeting in his 1998 Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Ph.D. dissertation "From Conflict to Cooperation? Changing American Evangelical Attitudes

¹Norman L. Geisler and Ralph E. MacKenzie, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 428-29.

²For further evidence, please note Jacques Blocher, *Le Catholicisme à la Lumière de l'Écriture Sainte* (Nogent-sur-Marne, France: Éditions de l'Institut Biblique de Nogent, 1979).

toward Roman Catholics: 1960-1998” discussed Graham’s work with Roman Catholics as providing others an example:

Why rehearse the changes that have taken place in Billy Graham’s own thinking about Roman Catholics? First of all because the influence of Graham has been great, not only in the United States and the world, but within American Evangelicalism.... Secondly, the historic significance of Graham’s actions in cooperative evangelism and ecumenical outreach have been duly noted.... Thirdly, Graham’s example is now being held up as a model for the future.... Finally, not only has Graham’s example been noted and commended, it has been followed by key Evangelical leaders and parachurch organizations.³

He then went on to say, “Regardless of what happens in the wider world, I believe that when we reflect on relations between Evangelicals and Catholics there are reasons for hope.”⁴

Similarly, Mark Noll and Carolyn Nystrom discuss unity with the Catholic church in positive light, using Billy Graham’s work with Roman Catholics as an example. In their 2005 book *Is the Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism*, Noll and Nystrom wrote, “Graham, however, was undergoing a personal transition that mirrored and then led developments in the larger world of evangelical-Catholic relations.”⁵

This paper will begin with an examination of Graham’s “personal transition” as a backdrop to evaluate the Vatican’s tactical change as regards ecumenism. Next, we will consider the tactical change in Rome which preceded and set the stage for this Evangelical *rapprochement*. Finally we will discuss the implications of this change in

³Donald Sweeting, “From Conflict to Cooperation? Changing American Evangelical Attitudes toward Roman Catholics: 1960-1998” (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1998), 145-48.

⁴Ibid., 402.

⁵Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom, *Is the Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 18.

tactics for cooperation (ecumenism) and evangelism (proselytism). It is my contention that there is very little reason or need for Baptists and Evangelicals to cooperate with Roman Catholics on any level, especially in fulfilling the Great Commission. We will begin with an overview of the transition in Billy Graham's view of cooperation with Roman Catholics.

Boston Roman Catholic Archbishop Cushing's "Bravo Billy" stunned Graham in the New Year of 1950⁶—it went completely against his training at Trinity Bible Institute and Wheaton College. Maybe his Bible training was a bit parochial after all! Cushing went on to receive the Cardinal's red hat as announced in the *Boston Globe* on January 14, 1950.⁷ It seems that Pope Pius XII rewarded him for his wise approach toward the rising star in Evangelicalism.⁸ In his 1997 autobiography, Graham wrote of Cushing's comment, "Heartening us also was the response of the Roman Catholic Church, especially in light of the fact that the landmark decisions on ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council were still years away."⁹

In the following years Graham sought or allowed avenues for increased cooperation with Roman Catholics:

⁶Graham spoke in Boston from 31 Dec 1949 to 16 Jan 1950. The "Bravo Billy!" article was written during the crusade (Billy Graham, *Just As I Am* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 161.

⁷"Abp. Cushing to Get Red Hat, Rome Hints," *Boston Evening Globe*, 14 January 1950, 1, 2.

⁸In 1947, Graham assumed the presidency of the Northwestern Schools in Minneapolis, Minnesota, fulfilling the deathbed wish of its founding President, the fundamentalist W. B. Riley (William Vance Trollinger, Jr., "God's Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism" [Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1990]), 152). Also note Billy Graham's early publications: *Calling Youth to Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1947), *Revival in Our Time* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen, 1950), and *America's Hour of Decision* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen, 1951).

⁹Billy Graham, *Just As I Am*, 161.

- 1952: According to William Martin’s official biography, Graham avoided preaching against the White House appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican. Martin quoted a 1952 personal letter of Graham to President Truman, “I have refused to make any comment on the Vatican appointment because I didn’t want to be put into a position of opposing you.”¹⁰ Graham then seems to have assisted Ronald Reagan’s appointment of an Ambassador in 1984.¹¹
- 1961: William Martin also wrote of Graham’s widening relationships:

Graham’s ever-widening acceptance of others who professed to be Christians manifested itself not only in his continued association with the World Council of Churches—he attended its general assembly in New Delhi in 1961 at the council’s invitation—but also in an improved relationship with Catholics, especially after John XXIII assumed the papal chair. Following John Kennedy’s election, he scrupulously avoided any statements that could be construed as anti-Catholic, a relaxation of wariness that bothered some of Graham’s colleagues.¹²

- 1962: In His biography *Just As I Am*, Graham wrote of his crusades in Latin America:

My goal, I was always clear, was not to preach against Catholic beliefs or to proselytize people who were already committed to Christ within the Catholic Church. Rather it was to proclaim the Gospel to all those who had never truly committed their lives to Christ.¹³

It must be granted *Just As I Am* was written thirty-two years after the fact, but the passive stance soon morphed into a positive stance. Graham added that Ken Strachan, son of the founder of Latin America Mission, felt the same as him, “Ken held the same view I did: that there needed to be a coming together in some way and some form between

¹⁰Walter Martin, *A Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1991), 144.

¹¹“The President asked Graham to help the national security adviser, William P. Clark, to gather responses for establishing formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See” (“Billy Graham: General Teaching/Activities,” [online]; accessed 19 Oct 2005; available at <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/graham/general.htm>; Internet. This statement notes (*Charisma* [May 1984], 101-102).

¹²Martin, 294.

¹³*Ibid.*, 357.

Catholics and Protestants.”¹⁴ By the way, it seems that any Evangelical who has lived in and tried to win souls in a predominantly Roman Catholic country finds incomprehensible Graham’s purported concern for “coming together” with Roman Catholics.¹⁵

- 1967: Graham appears to have had on his platform Orthodox and Catholic leaders for the first time. Donald Sweeting explained, “This [Zagreb, Yugoslavia] appears to be the first time that Graham had Roman Catholics on the platform in his meetings.”¹⁶

By the way, this was in the midst of the “Healing” of the 1054 mutual anathema between Orthodox and Catholics!¹⁷ Could it be that this healing of the longest standing schism between territorial churches in Christian history was a part of Graham’s peacekeeping legacy which he described later in 1982,¹⁸ as well as in his biography *Just as I Am*?¹⁹

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵“Many evangelicals (not all) consider the institution, theology, and everyday practice of Latin American Catholicism as unbiblical. The commitment to evangelize those within that Church becomes for them a genuine duty” (M. Daniel Carroll R[odas], “The Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue: Issues Revolving Around Evangelization—An Evangelical View from Latin America,” *Trinity Journal* 21, no. 2 [Fall 2000] 200).

¹⁶Donald Sweeting, *From Conflict to Cooperation?* 126.

¹⁷E. J. Stormon, SJ, *Towards the Healing of a Schism*, “Ecumenical Documents III” (Mahwah, NY: Paulist, 1987).

¹⁸“There has been an epic change in the heart of Billy Graham” (Frye Gaillard, “The Conversion of Billy Graham: How a Presidents’ Preacher Learned to Start Worrying and Loathe the Bomb,” *The Progressive* 46 [August 1982]: 30). Gaillard quoted Graham as saying, “I plan to spend the rest of my life,” he [Billy Graham] says, ‘doing two things—preaching the gospel and working for peace’” (ibid.).

¹⁹ Graham begins his autobiography with an introduction entitled “Between Two Presidents: Harry S. Truman, 1950 and Kim Il Sung, 1992” (Billy Graham, *Just As I Am*, xvii). It is clear that he felt that arranging for a crusade in North Korea was a major accomplishment in his life. Also Graham brought messages to President Kim Il Sung from President George Bush, Sr. and Pope John Paul II (ibid., 626).

- 1977: It was in the late 1970s that Graham continued to significantly broaden his ecumenical approach. I will quote from my 2003 book *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism*:²⁰

Several years later, when overseas, Graham began to urge the participation of the RCC [Roman Catholic Church], when it was an important percentage of the population. When planning the 1977 trip to Hungary, Martin wrote:

Haraszti informed the Hungarian ambassador in Washington of the evangelist's concern over the modest agenda the Council of Free Churches had set for him. If at all possible, Graham wished to broaden the scope of the visit just a bit; specifically, to include preaching appointments at major Reformed and Catholic churches and a meeting with key leaders of the Jewish faith.²¹

The request was similar in planning the 1978 trip to Poland: "Graham wanted an invitation from the Catholic hierarchy but did not want the Church to control the visit."²² During that trip, Graham just missed meeting [Karol Cardinal Wojtyla], as he was in Rome being elected Pope John Paul II.²³

- 1981: In 1981, John Paul II "welcomed him [Graham] to the Vatican for a half-hour visit, the first time any pope had received him."²⁴ Graham explained their discussion:

Noting that they had talked of "inter-church relations, the emergence of Evangelicalism, evangelization, and Christian responsibility towards modern moral issues" (an indication it had been a full half-hour), Graham told a press conference that "we had a spiritual time. He is so down-to-earth and human, I almost forgot he was the pope."²⁵

- 1982:²⁶ In 1982 Sterling Huston became the North American Crusade Director for the BGEA, and in the Spokane Crusade, Bishop Lawrence Welsh wrote a letter in his diocesan paper encouraging his people to attend the crusade. The preface to his letter in the National Catholic Reporter explained:

²⁰Thomas P. Johnston, *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 397-98.

²¹Martin, 484.

²²Martin, 489.

²³Ibid., 490.

²⁴Ibid., 491.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Johnston, 398.

Bishop Lawrence Welsh wrote in the Inland Register, Spokane's diocesan newspaper, recognizing that if the experiences of other cities held true, numerous Catholics would attend the crusade. He said organizers of the crusade and officials of the diocese were developing plans for cooperation to follow-up people who ask during the crusade to be contacted by the Catholic Church. "This follow-up—which is more important than the crusade itself—often goes unnoticed and unpublicized as part of a Billy Graham crusade," Welsh stated.²⁷

²⁷"Dr. Billy Graham, the worldwide evangelist, will be conducting a crusade in Spokane at Joe Albi stadium Aug. 22-29. This crusade both poses some concern for us in the Catholic tradition and provides us with opportunities to reflect on the nature of evangelization and our relationship to Protestants who profess faith in Jesus Christ.

"The Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, reflecting on the Gospel, reminds us that despite historical and theological differences "all who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers and sisters by the children of the Catholic Church" (no. 3). We cannot forget this basic principle of charity and faith when dealing with our Protestant brothers and sisters.

"That spirit of charity and eagerness for the spread of the good news of Jesus Christ welcomes Dr. Graham to Spokane and eastern Washington. As members of that community and as Catholics, we also welcome Dr. Graham as he comes to share the Gospel with us. Those who have seen Dr. Graham in person or have watched his frequently televised crusades know of his enthusiasm for Christ and his personal conviction to preach the Gospel. Such virtues are laudable in an age which tends to treat faith and religious matters with apathy, if not disdain.

"It is true that Dr. Graham's preaching style leaves some of us uncomfortable. For some his interpretation of holy scripture seems too literal and fundamentalistic; for others his themes are too simplistic and not sufficiently nuanced with an integrated theology. In varying degrees those responsible for leadership in the Christian community voice these criticisms of Dr. Graham's evangelistic style and content. Each of these concerns is in itself subject matter for ongoing discussion and examination.

"Our Catholic tradition and teaching have clear positions regarding some of these concerns, but it would be unfair for Catholics to look with disdain on Dr. Graham and his effort. Taken in broad perspective the Gospel he preaches is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Because for all Christians Jesus is at the center of life, Dr. Graham always ends his sermons with what he terms an "altar call," an opportunity for personal commitment to Jesus Christ. This kind of activity is foreign to Catholic celebrations; the very vocabulary may leave us puzzled. Our theological perspective tells us that we are saved, that we belong to Christ because of what God has done for us in baptism. For the believing Christian conversion is a life-long process of dying to self and rising in Christ, it does not depend upon peak moments such as those experienced at religious crusades.

"By this observation I do not intend to belittle the validity of religious experiences enjoyed by numerous people at Dr. Graham's crusades (or in other circumstances). It is important to note, however, that our Catholic understanding of conversion places such experiences within a broader context. The Gospel calls all of us to rely on personal and living relationship with Christ, theology comes afterward.

"For many people the Graham crusade will be a catalyst for evoking that rich awareness. Such an experience does not mark a participant as disloyal to the Catholic Church but it can be if not nourished by a community of faith. Without community support and sharing, faith experiences quickly fade. This is one of my chief concerns in relationship to Dr. Graham's crusade.

"Dr. Graham and his organizers share that concern and have developed an elaborate follow-up system for those who seek a deeper walk with Christ as a result of the crusade. This follow-up—which is more important than the crusade itself—often goes unnoticed and unpublicized as part of a Billy Graham crusade.

"Recently several priests and deacons met with me and with representatives of the crusade to discuss Catholic involvement with this follow-up program for Catholics who seek guidance and spiritual

I have included under 500 words of this copyrighted letter in my footnote as found in the National Catholic Reporter.

This letter seemed to mark the beginning of Graham's [full] cooperation with the RCC [Roman Catholic Church] in crusades in the United States.²⁸

- 1987: John Paul II asked Graham to participate in a combined ecumenical worship service in Columbia, South Carolina. Both Tex Reardon and John Akers of the BGEA were assisting in arrangements. Graham, however, had to cancel the meeting due to a prior invitation to China.²⁹
- 1992: Graham shared in his biography that he brought a message from the Pope to President Kim of North Korea. He wrote:

Pope John Paul II had also asked me to convey a message—a rather detailed one—to the North Korean leader. President Kim listened carefully but had no response. Our contacts later indicated that the pope had presented too comprehensive a proposal for the North Koreans to accept at that stage, given the lack of previous contact between the Vatican and the D.P.R.K.³⁰

Graham's approach to Roman Catholics seems a bit naïve if we use hindsight to evaluate it. Graham went to pains to gain ecclesial support since 1949. We will briefly note Graham's cooperative efforts with the Anglican Church and the Lutheran World Brotherhood.

Graham worked very hard to get the support of the Anglican Church. He finally received in 1954 London Crusade at Harringay, as Ian Murray explained:

direction after their experiences at the crusade. Explicit steps are currently under way to assure that necessary support and guidance are provided.

“ . . . Catholics who attend the crusade are not acting against Catholic teaching; the church recognizes the power of events such as the Billy Graham crusade for the building of faith among Christians. Those who may choose to attend are invited to bring the graces of the crusade back to their home communities” (Bishop Lawrence Welsh, “Catholics and a Billy Graham Crusade,” *National Catholic Reporter* [2 September 1982], 185-186).

²⁸Johnston, 398.

²⁹Billy Graham, *Just As I Am*, 599.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 740.

Archbishop Fisher of Canterbury (who had previously declined to give his approval) pronounced the benediction at a final London gathering estimated to number more than one hundred thousand.³¹

That prayer of benediction opened the countries of the British Commonwealth to Graham's ministry, as well as the world.³²

Graham also worked on getting the support of the Lutheran World Federation. According to Robert L. Kennedy, Graham never received the support of the Lutheran World Federation, based in Germany, even though he had multiple crusades in Germany in 1955, 1960, 1963, 1966, and 1970. The reason for the lack of support from German Lutherans was a desire to maintain good relations with American Lutherans.³³

Dannenhaus concluded that since Lilje was president of the Lutheran World Federation, any strong support of a Baptist would compromise his position. It was not even certain whether Lilje would be permitted to do anything of that sort [support Billy Graham] "in light of the American Lutherans."³⁴

So although he did not gain official sanction from the Lutheran World Federation in the late 1960s, by the time of the 1996 Greater Twin Cities Crusade, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America was fully involved, as was the Roman Catholic diocese. It seems that Graham valued cultivating and gaining the support of hierarchical churches.

Two contemporary events that provide milestones for United States Evangelicals as regards their/our relationship with the Roman Catholic church:

³¹Murray, *Evangelicalism Divided*, 34.

³²"It [Harringay, 1954] did for the evangelist on the world stage what the Los Angeles Crusade of 1949 had done in the USA" (ibid., 33-34).

³³"The faith taught by Graham is, therefore, not the same faith as taught in the Confessions" (Wilhelm Stoll, *The Conversion Theology of Billy Graham in the Light of the Lutheran Confessions* [St. Louis: Concordia Student Journal, 1980], 64).

³⁴Robert L. Kennedy, "Best Intentions: Contacts Between German Pietists and Anglo-American Evangelicals, 1945-1954" (Ph.D. diss., University of Aberdeen, 1990), 506.

- First, the 1994 Evangelicals and Catholics Together Statement.³⁵ Which was explained and expanded in the 1994 Colson-Neuhaus Declaration.³⁶
- Second, the 2005 funeral of John Paul II was attended by President George Bush and his wife Laura, two former presidents, and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.³⁷ Was this in keeping with Graham's assistance in sending an Ambassador to the Vatican Court?

Why did no other presidents of the United States attend funerals of any prior Roman Catholic Popes? Just in 1950 the American Library Association named Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*³⁸ as one of the 50 outstanding books of the year. In the next year Blanshard published *Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power*.³⁹ America's attitude toward Catholicism did an about face in the past 50 years!

But what of the change of heart among Evangelicals in the United States? This change seems to be the result of Vatican ingenuity when they elected Pius XII Pope in 1939. To properly understand the "Shifting Ecumenical Posture" of the Vatican, it is helpful to see its impact upon Evangelicalism, and particularly on Billy Graham's ministry.

The answer to the Evangelical *rapprochement* with Roman Catholicism is found in a tactical change just before and during the pontificate of Pius XII (1939-58). There

³⁵"Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium," *First Things* (May 1994), 15-22.

³⁶Geisler and MacKenzie, 491-93.

³⁷"About two million people came to Rome to see the Pope John Paul II over the week before the funeral. President George W. Bush was the first US President to attend a funeral for a Pope. Two former Presidents also went - President Clinton and President Bush. Also there at the funeral were Laura Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice" ("Roman Catholic Funeral for Pope John Paul II," (on-line); accessed 19 Oct 2005; available from <http://catholicism.about.com/od/popejohnpaulii/a/funeraljppii05.htm>; Internet).

³⁸Paul Blanshard, *American Freedom and Catholic Power* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1949).

³⁹Paul Blanshard, *Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951).

were three landmark changes in Vatican policies that led to a climate of *rapprochement*: (1) openness to higher criticism of the Bible, (2) change to a limited inerrancy position, and (3) openness to ecumenism.

First, Pius XII changed the anti-modernism hermeneutic of Leo XIII (1902) to openness to higher criticism in his 1943 encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. Listen to Leo XIII:

The main point to be attained is that Catholics should not admit the malignant principle of granting more than is due to the opinion of heterodox writers.... “It is therefore not permitted to any one to interpret the Holy Scriptures in any way contrary to this sense, or even in any way contrary to the universal opinion of the Fathers.”⁴⁰

Now here is Pius XII:

30. For thus at long last will be brought about the happy and fruitful union between the doctrine and spiritual sweetness of expression of the ancient authors and the greater erudition and maturer knowledge of the modern, having as its result new progress in the never fully explored and inexhaustible field of the Divine Letters. . . . Let the interpreter then, with all care and without neglecting any light derived from recent research, endeavor to determine the peculiar character and circumstances of the sacred writer, the age in which he lived, the sources written or oral to which he had recourse and the forms of expression he employed.⁴¹

In doing so, Pius XII went against the famous “Oath against Modernism” required by Pius X.

Pope Saint Pius X issued this mandatory oath on September 1, 1910. It was mandated to be sworn to by all clergy, pastors, confessors, preachers, religious superiors, and professors in philosophical-theological seminaries:

⁴⁰Leo XIII, *Vigilantiæ* (30 Oct 1902), *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII*, 539-540.

⁴¹Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (30 Sept 1943); (on-line); accessed 15 July 2001; available from <http://www.ewtn.com/library/ENCYC/P12DIVIN.HTM>; Internet, sections 30, 33.

I firmly embrace and accept each and every definition that has been set forth and declared by the unerring teaching authority of the Church, especially those principal truths which are directly opposed to the errors of this day.⁴²

Second, again in his encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, Pius XII moved from Leo XIII's inerrancy position, to a limited inerrancy position on biblical authority. I will note Leo XIII:

For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Ghost; and in so far as possible that any error can co-exist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the Supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true. . . . And the Church holds them as sacred and canonical not only because. . . they contain revelation without error, but because. . . they have God for their Author. . . . It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration or make God the author of error.⁴³

By the way, this encyclical puts a damper in the Rogers-McKim proposal that Princeton theologians invented the doctrine of inerrancy. One must note, however, that Leo XIII went on to say that Catholic church Tradition was without error, which includes the authority of the Pope.

Now let's listen to the shrewd approach of Pius XII:

When, subsequently, some Catholic writers, in spite of this solemn definition of Catholic doctrine, by which such divine authority is claimed for the 'entire books with all their parts' as to secure freedom from any error whatsoever, ventured to restrict the truth of Sacred Scripture solely to matters of faith and morals, and to regard other matters, whether in the domain of physical science or history, as 'obiter dicta' and—as they contended—in no wise connected with faith, Our Predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII in the Encyclical Letter *Providentissimus Deus*, published on November 18 in the year 1893, justly and rightly condemned these errors and safe-guarded the studies of the Divine Books by most wise precepts and

⁴²Pius X, *Oath against Modernism* (1 Sept 1910); (online) accessed 30 June 2003; available from: <http://www.dailycatholic.org/history/oathvmod.htm>; Internet.

⁴³Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*, (18 Nov 1893), in *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1903), 296-97.

rules.... There is no one who cannot easily perceive that the conditions of biblical studies and their subsidiary sciences have greatly changed within the last fifty years.... Hence this special authority ... is shown ... to be free from any error whatsoever in matters of faith and morals.⁴⁴

Third, and most important for this paper, Pius XII lifted the ban on “pan-Christian” activities of Pius XI. First let’s hear the 1928 Pius XI on involvement in pan-Christian activities:

This being so, it is clear that the Apostolic See cannot on any terms take part in their [pan-Christian] assemblies, nor is it anyway lawful for Catholics either to support or to work for such enterprises; for if they do so they will be giving countenance to a false Christianity, quite alien to the one Church of Christ.⁴⁵

The ban on Pan-Christian activities followed a flurry of anti-Protestant and anti-ecumenical writings of the Popes going back to the writings of Augustine, *Contra Donatisten*, the Great Schism of 1054, and the inquisition. For example:

- Council of Trent (1545-64): “yet it must not be said that sins are forgiven or have been forgiven to anyone who boasts of his confidence and certainty of the remission of his sins, resting on that alone, though among heretics and schismatics this vain and ungodly confidence may be and in our troubled times indeed is found and preached with untiring fury against the Catholic Church” (“Against the Vain Confidence of Heretics”). “Canon 9 [on Justification]. If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.” “Canon 11 [on Justification]. If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and remains in them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the good will of God, let him be anathema.” “Canon 12 [on Justification]. If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ’s sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, sections 1, 11, 21.

⁴⁵Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos: On Religious Unity*, 6 Jan 1928, section 8.

⁴⁶*Council of Trent* (online); accessed 8 Jan 2005; available at http://www.forerunner.com/chalcedon/X0020_15._Council_of_Trent.html; Internet.

- Clement XI wrote in his 1713 *Unigenitus*, “29. Outside the Catholic Church, no grace is granted.”⁴⁷
- Pius IX, “Syllabus of Errors” (1864), “IV. Socialism, Communism, Secret Societies, Biblical Societies, Clerico-liberal Societies. Pests of this kind are frequently reprobated in the severest terms in the Encyclical ‘Qui pluribus,’ Nov. 9, 1846, Allocution ‘Quibus quantisque,’ April 20, 1849, Encyclical ‘Noscitis et nobiscum,’ Dec. 8, 1849, Allocution ‘Singulari quadam,’ Dec. 9, 1854, Encyclical ‘Quanto conficiamur,’ Aug. 10, 1863.”⁴⁸
- Leo XIII, (1896) “36. Wherefore, strictly adhering, in this matter, to the decrees of the Pontiffs, Our predecessors, and confirming them most fully, and, as it were, renewing them by Our authority, of Our own initiative and certain knowledge, We pronounce and declare that ordinations carried out according to the Anglican rite have been, and are, absolutely null and utterly void.”⁴⁹
- Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane* (1907), included many points which condemn Protestants.⁵⁰

Even with this long history of antagonism (and without doctrinal change), Pius XII formed the Unitas Ecumenical Center (“Associazione Unitas”) in 1945,⁵¹ building on the work of the Dominican Congar who wrote *Chrétiens désunis* in 1937, as well as the

⁴⁷Clement XI, *Unigenitus* (8 Sept 1713) (online); accessed 30 June 2003; available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Clem11/c11unige.htm>; Internet.

⁴⁸Pius IX, “Syllabus of Errors” (online); accessed 8 Sept 2004; available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>; Internet.

⁴⁹Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Curea* (15 Sept 1896) (online); accessed 21 Oct 2005; available from <http://www.catholictradition.org/apostolicae-curae.htm>; Internet.

⁵⁰For example, “22. The dogmas the Church holds out as revealed are not truths which have fallen from heaven. They are an interpretation of religious facts which the human mind has acquired by laborious effort.” “54. Dogmas, Sacraments and hierarchy, both their notion and reality, are only interpretations and evolutions of the Christian intelligence which have increased and perfected by an external series of additions the little germ latent in the Gospel.” “55. Simon Peter never even suspected that Christ entrusted the primacy in the Church to him.” “56. The Roman Church became the head of all the churches, not through the ordinance of Divine Providence, but merely through political conditions.” (Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane* [3 July 1907] [online]; accessed 11 Nov 2002; available at <http://www.rc.net/rcchurch/popes/pius10/syllabus.asc>; Internet.

⁵¹“Associazione Unitas, Via del Corso, 306, I-00186 ROME, ITALY, Tel. (+39) 06 68 90 52, F[ounded]: 1945, A[gency]: Roman Catholic supported, P[eriodical]: *Unitas* [frequency] (4/yr)” (“Centro Pro Unione” [on-line]; accessed 10 July 2001; available from http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dir-dir/e_dir-list_ie.html; Internet).

Una Sancta movement born in Germany in 1938.⁵² Thus Pius XII set in motion the machinery by which the Vatican shifted its educational and financial attention towards unity, both in the area of ecumenicity and in the area of biblical research. Later, John XXIII took ecumenism a step farther by founding the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity (SPCU) in 1964 and by naming Jan Willebrands (Archbishop of Utrecht from 1975-1983) as its Secretary, under the presidency of Cardinal Bea.⁵³ The Vatican II Council and the push for unity toward a common Eucharist in the year 2000 were a part of “the intellectual legacy left by Pius XII.” John Paul II wrote:

The Second Vatican Council is often considered as the beginning of a new era in the life of the church. This is true, but at the same time it is difficult to overlook the fact that the council drew much from the experiences and reflections of the immediate past, especially from the intellectual legacy left by Pius XII. In the history of the church, the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ are always closely interwoven. The ‘new’ grows out of the ‘old,’ and the ‘old’ finds a fuller expression in the ‘new.’ Thus it was for the Second Vatican Council and for the activity of the popes connected with the council, starting with John XXIII, continuing with Paul VI and John Paul I, up to the present pope.⁵⁴

Vatican II left Evangelical workers in Catholic countries puzzled, and caught some Evangelicals by surprise. It was notable that in Berlin 1966, reports from

⁵²“Jusque-là les catholiques qui s’étaient consacrés à la construction de l’unité étaient des pionniers isolés, souvent suspectés, voire suspendus dans leur tâche. Ces initiatives personnelles permirent, toutefois, cette ouverture récente. Mentionnons les conversations de Malines (1920-1926), menées à l’initiative de l’abbé Portal et de Lord Halifax, sous la présidence du cardinal Mercier, qui entamèrent le dialogue avec l’Église anglicane. En 1925, Dom Lambert Beaudouin fonda l’abbaye de Chevetogne; en 1926, le dominicain C.J. Dumont créa «Istina». Ces deux institutions, officiellement vouées aux contacts œcuméniques avec l’Orient chrétien, ont joué un rôle important et élargi progressivement leur intérêt à l’ensemble des problèmes œcuméniques. En 1937, un autre dominicain, le père Congar, publia *Chrétiens désunis*, ouvrage qui a été pendant vingt ans la charte théologique de l’œcuménisme catholique. En 1939, se créa en Allemagne le mouvement *Una Sancta*. Mais, sauf quelques ouvertures en faveur de l’Orient, les autorités romaines restèrent le plus souvent en retrait sur ces initiatives” (“L’œcuménisme” [on-line]; accessed 10 July 2001; available from http://fr.encyclopedia.yahoo.com/articles/ni/ni_1212_p0.html; Internet).

⁵³“A Tribute to Johannes Cardinal Willebrands,” from: <http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/journal/2000jul02.shtm>; accessed 25 February 2005; Internet.

⁵⁴John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adviente*, 14 November 1994, section 18.

predominantly Roman Catholic countries felt that Vatican II had somehow changed the theology of Catholicism.⁵⁵ While at the London 1888 Centenary Ecumenical Missionary Conference an entire session was devoted to expose the tawdry missionary methods of Roman Catholic,⁵⁶ later this subject became taboo. At Berlin 1966 there was also little negativism toward Roman Catholicism with the exception of a few lines expressing caution:

⁵⁵“We must also mention the progressive influence of the Second Vatican Council which is penetrating the mentality of a number of Spanish Catholics; this is creating a climate of more respect, understanding and tolerance toward the ‘separated brethren.’ . . . Ecumenism and the newer thinking within Catholicism also affect the position of many sincere Catholics. Several years ago these persons may have felt dissatisfied with their faith and with the church, but now they are discovering new spiritual possibilities within post-Council Catholicism, enough to satisfy them without having to join another Christian group outside the Catholic church” (José M. Martínez, “Spain,” *One Race, One Gospel, One Task: World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966, Official Reference Volumes: Papers and Reports*, eds. Carl F. H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham [Minneapolis: World Wide, 1967], 1:242, 243).

⁵⁶James Johnston, ed., *Report of the Centenary Conference of the Protestant Missions of the World, Held in Exeter Hall (June 9th—19th), London, 1888*, Vol. 1 (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1888), 73-90. The following provides an understanding of the views of participants of London 1888 and New York 1900: Principal D. H. MacVicar, Montreal, Canada, addressed the subject of Roman Catholic missions. A copy of his outline will suffice to note his emphasis in his speech to *Centenary Conference of the Protestant Missions of the World*. “So much for the extent of Roman Catholic Missions. What of their character? They are distinguished:— 1. By unity and comprehensiveness of plan. . . . 2. Aggressive and persistent zeal in gathering all into the one fold. . . . 3. A third element in the character of these Missions is the use of coercive measures. . . . 4. A fourth factor in the character of these Missions is the dominancy of ecclesiastical authority. . . . 5. These missions are characterized by unworthy and unjustifiable methods of support. . . . 6. The sixth and worst feature of Romish Missions is the practical suppression of the Word of God” (D. H. MacVicar, “The Missions of the Roman Catholic Church to Heathen Lands, Their Character, Extent, Influence, and Lessons,” *Report of the Centenary Conference of the Protestant Missions of the World*, 74-76). Following MacVicar was Dean Vahl of the Danish Evangelical Missionary Society, who said, “As to the Roman Catholic Church, I have not much sympathy with her, I cannot look upon her as a true branch of the Holy Catholic Church. . . . the more I see how old Mission-fields of the Roman Catholic church have, not all, but many of them, been totally neglected and new fields taken up, where Evangelical Missions have already begun, as it seems only, that they may be spoiled. . . . the Roman Catholic Missions have been rotten in themselves” (ibid., 78-79). Then the chairman spoke, “the object of our meeting to-day is not to discuss the Roman Catholic Church, about which we are all tolerably unanimous, if not wholly unanimous. . . .” (ibid., 80). The next speakers all spoke likewise of the tone and character of Roman Catholic Missions: Rev. Henry Stout of Japan and Rev. G. E. Post of Syria, with discussion by Rev. J. A. B. Cook of Singapore, Rev. G. W. Clarke of China, Rev. H. Williams of Bengal, Rev. J. Murray Mitchell of India, Count van Limburg Stirum of Celebes, Rev. E. E. Jenkins regarding India, Rev. John Hesse of India, and Rev. N. Summerbell of the United States. Twelve years later, though not listing Roman Catholic Missions as a category in the 1900 “Ecumenical Missionary Conference,” missionaries from predominantly Roman Catholic lands made mention of their difficulties. Hence, among others, Senor F. de Castells, agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Costa Rica said, “We find there [South America] the lowest and most degraded form of Romanism that can be conceived” (Senor F. de Castells, “South America,” *Ecumenical Missionary Conference, New York, 1900* (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), 477).

Jacques Blocher of France noted, “French-speaking Europe has been sprinkled with the blood of martyrs for the Gospel; it still appears to be a mission field almost without fruit.”⁵⁷

Augusto A. Esperança of Portuguese wrote, “Another obstacle to evangelism is the religious oppression of many Roman Catholic priests and the individual influence of many Roman Catholics upon the political administration of the country. There are a few who sympathize with us.... We need a united program of social work in order to fight the poverty and miserable conditions of the people, (Here we could co-operate with the Roman Catholics.)”⁵⁸

By the way, cooperation always begins with social issues, guided by a common [Socinian] moral philosophy or Christian [moralistic] worldview.⁵⁹

What of Vatican II, has it changed the Roman Catholic church? Before hearing the answer of John Paul II, let’s listen to Donald Sweeting’s answer:

“Can Rome change?” This is the question Evangelicals have repeatedly asked. In the past, many have answered with a resounding “no.” However, during the years 1960-1998, numerous Evangelicals have revised that opinion. As we have seen in chapters two and six, the Roman Catholic church has shown itself quite capable of change. Vatican II brought forth a number of major changes in the church. Among other things, the Roman Catholic church showed itself to be less isolationist. It affirmed religious freedom. It opened the doors to a new emphasis on the Bible.⁶⁰

On the contrary, however, John Paul II made it clear that Vatican II had made no changes to the essence of the Roman church! The following quote comes from his speech

⁵⁷Jacques Blocher, “French-speaking Europe,” in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 1:250.

⁵⁸Augusto A. Esperança, “Portugal,” in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 1:246.

⁵⁹Note what Charles Colson had to say about the place of a Christian worldview for unity: “It is our contention in this book that the Lord’s cultural commission is inseparable from the great commission. That may be a jarring statement for many conservative Christians, who, through much of the twentieth century have shunned the notion of reforming culture, associating that concept with the liberal social gospel. The only task of the church, many fundamentalists and evangelicals believed, is to save as many lost souls as possible from a world literally going to hell. But this explicit denial of a Christian worldview is unbiblical and is the reason we have lost so much of our influence in the world. *Salvation does not consist simply of freedom from sin; salvation also means being restored to the task we were given in the beginning—the job of creating culture*” (Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999], 295-96; emphasis mine)

⁶⁰Sweeting, *From Conflict to Cooperation*, 394.

“Mexico Ever Faithful” as recorded in the official newspaper of the Vatican, *Osservatore Romano* (5 Feb 1979):

The Second Vatican Council wished to be, above all, a council on the Church. Take in your hands the documents of the Council, especially “Lumen Gentium”, study them with loving attention, with the spirit of prayer, to discover what the Spirit wished to say about the Church. In this way you will be able to realize that there is not—as some people claim—a “new church”, different or opposed to the “old church”, but that the Council wished to reveal more clearly the one Church of Jesus Christ, with new aspects, but still the same in its essence.⁶¹

For example, the reader of the landmark decree of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* cannot help but notice the unusual nature of an addendum added by the Pope to reaffirm his absolute authority over the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church:

The following explanatory note prefixed to the modi of chapter three of the schema The Church is given to the Fathers, and it is according to the mind and sense of this note that the teaching contained in chapter three is to be explained and understood.

The commission has decided to preface its assessment of the modi with the following general observations.

1. The word College is not taken in the strictly juridical sense, that is as a group of equals who transfer their powers to their chairman, but as a permanent body whose form and authority is to be ascertained from revelation....

2. A man becomes a member of the college through episcopal consecration and hierarchical communion with the head of the college and its members (cf. art. 22, end of par. 1). ...

3. There is no such thing as the college without its head: it is “The subject of supreme and entire power over the whole Church.” This much must be acknowledged lest the fullness of the Pope’s power be jeopardized. The idea of college necessarily and at all times involves a head and in the college the head preserves intact his function as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the universal Church... It is for the Pope, to whom the care of the whole flock of Christ has been entrusted, to decide the best manner of implementing this care, either personal or collegiate, in order to meet the changing needs of the Church in the course of time. The Roman Pontiff undertakes

⁶¹John Paul II, “Mexico Ever Faithful,” *Osservatore Romano* (5 Feb 1979), 1. The “old” and “new” language has been regularly used by the Roman church to equivocate on the role of Vatican II (e.g. John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adviente*, 14 November 1994, section 18).

the regulation, encouragement, and approval of the exercise of collegiality as he sees fit.

4. The Pope, as supreme pastor of the Church, may exercise his power at any time, as he sees fit, by reason of the demands of his office.... The point is expressly stated in art. 22, par. 2 and it is explained at the end of the same article. The negative formulation "only with" (*nonnisi*) covers all cases: consequently it is evident that the norms approved by the supreme authority must always be observed (cf. *modus* 84).

Clearly it is the connection of bishops with their head that is in question throughout and not the activity of bishops independently of the Pope. In a case like that, in default of the Pope's action, the bishops cannot act as a college, for this is obvious from the idea of "college" itself. This hierarchical communion of all bishops with the Pope is unmistakably hallowed by tradition.⁶²

In other words, the Vatican II council had no extraordinary power, and was not much more than a public relations ploy for Protestants. The Pope could have sent out encyclicals containing the identical teaching, and it would have been no less valid—in fact without the Pope's agreement, the council was a mute point. But this public relations ploy seemed to work!

In the uncertainty of the post-Vatican II era, some Evangelicals and Evangelical agencies let their guard down. Like Sweeting, they assumed that the Roman Catholic church had changed. Such seems to be the case with Billy Graham, Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie, Donald Sweeting, and Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom.

Now what was the goal of Pius XII, and what is the goal of the "Shifting Ecumenical Posture of Roman Catholicism"? It seems that Pius XII was working toward making Roman Catholicism the one world religion. He set into motion a new approach toward the World Council of Churches, the Orthodox churches and Evangelicals, that

⁶²“Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: *Lumen Gentium*” (online); accessed: 10 October 2005; available from <http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/vaticanii/lumen-gentium.html>; Internet.

would seek to absorb them as “rites” of the Catholic church. The goal seems to have been a common Eucharist of all these churches in the year 2000.

The idea of gathering all churches as one is not new to the Vatican. In 1894, Leo XIII published *Christi Nomen* in which he explained his work toward reuniting with the Eastern Church (as a counter to the Lambeth movement).⁶³ Throughout all these years the model of reunion that has been put forth is the “Return Model,” in which Protestants apologize for the Reformation, repent, and return to the rightful primacy of the Seat of Peter. Jude Weisenbeck in his second doctorate received in 1986 from the University of St Thomas in Rome explained the “Return Model:”

According to this model—stated quite simply and directly—those who have, for whatever reasons, severed their bonds with the one true, visible Church should acknowledge their error, repent of their sinfulness, and return to the Church of Christ which they have abandoned.”⁶⁴

The return model has always been the goal of the Catholic church. It was the desire of Paul VI in 1975.⁶⁵ And it appears to be the goal of the current pope, Benedict XVI, formerly known as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, who by the way was responsible for

⁶³“2. From the apostolic letter ‘Praeclara’ published last June, you know that We invited and urged all nations to the unity of the Christian faith. Thus, through Us the divine promise of ‘one sheepfold and one Pastor’ would be realized. You have learned from Our recent apostolic letters concerning the safeguarding of the Eastern Rites that We look with special care to the East and its churches, renowned and venerated by many names. From these same letters you have learned the procedures by which, in consultation with the Eastern patriarchs, We have investigated how to bring about more readily the desired end, namely the union of the Roman and Eastern Catholic Churches” (Leo XIII, *Christi Nomen* [24 Dec 1894] [online; accessed 11 Dec 2002; available from <http://www.rc.net/rcchurch/popes/leo13/113east.txt>; Internet).

⁶⁴Jude D. Weisenbeck, S.D.S., S.T.L., “Conciliar Fellowship and the Unity of the Church,” Ph.D. Thesis (Rome: Pontifica Studiorum Universitas, A S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, 1986), 68.

⁶⁵“61§2. This is how the Lord wanted His Church to be: universal, a great tree whose branches shelter the birds of the air, a net which catches fish of every kind or which Peter drew in filled with one hundred and fifty-three big fish, a flock which a single shepherd pastures. A universal Church without boundaries or frontiers except, alas, those of the heart and mind of sinful man” (Paul VI, *Evangeliis Nuntiandi* (8 Dec 1975) (online); accessed 8 Sept 2004; available at <http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/papal/paul.vi/p6evang.txt>; Internet).

the compiling of the 1993 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the 1993 Pontifical Commission on Biblical Interpretation (which was strongly anti-fundamentalist). Three days after the end of the Billy Graham sponsored conference, Amsterdam 2000, Ratzinger, at that time the Prefect of the Doctrine of the Faith, published a “Declaration ‘*Dominus Iesus*’ on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church (6 Aug 2000). In the final section, the reader finds that John Paul II approved the declaration in an audience on June 16, 2000 prior to Amsterdam 2000. Possibly it seemed wise to Ratzinger to wait until after the Amsterdam 2000 conference to avoid any communication to and fallout from the 10,000 worldwide participants. The document caused consternation among many who had signed consiliar documents with the Catholic church as it read:

17§2. “On the other hand, the ecclesial communities which have not preserved the valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery, are not Churches in the proper sense; however, those who are baptized in these communities are, by Baptism, incorporated in Christ and thus are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the Church. Baptism in fact tends per se toward the full development of life in Christ, through the integral profession of faith, the Eucharist, and full communion in the Church.”⁶⁶

The new old wolf speaks. He makes it clear that we need to be in full communion with the life of the Catholic Church in order to be a church. In fact, according to Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 Dec 1975), without the Catholic Church we are not obeying the Great Commission:

16. There is thus a profound link between Christ, the Church and evangelization. During the period of the Church that we are living in, it is she who has the task of

⁶⁶Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Dominus Iesus* (6 Aug 2000) (online); accessed 21 Mar 2001; available at http://search.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html; Internet.

evangelizing. This mandate is not accomplished without her, and still less against her.⁶⁷

Nor do those without the Catholic church have complete evangelism without the sacraments:

47. Evangelization thus exercises its full capacity when it achieves the most intimate relationship, or better still, a permanent and unbroken intercommunication, between the Word and the sacraments. In a certain sense it is a mistake to make a contrast between evangelization and sacramentalization, as is sometimes done.⁶⁸

Also, without the proper Eucharist, we don't have the full message:

28. ...For in its totality, evangelization—over and above the preaching of a message—consists in the implantation of the Church, which does not exist without the driving force which is the sacramental life culminating in the Eucharist.⁶⁹

And further, evangelism without a universal church has no power:

63§3. Evangelization loses much of its force and effectiveness if it does not take into consideration the actual people to whom it is addresses, if it does not use their language, their signs and symbols, if it does not answer the questions they ask, and if it does not have an impact on their concrete life. But on the other hand, evangelization risks losing its power and disappearing altogether if one empties or adulterates its content under the pretext of translating it; if, in other words, one sacrifices this reality and destroys the unity without which there is no universality, out of a wish to adapt a universal reality to a local situation. Now, only a Church which preserves the awareness of her universality and shows that she is in fact universal is

⁶⁷This portion continues as follows: “It is certainly fitting to recall this fact at a moment like the present one when it happens that not without sorrow we can hear people--whom we wish to believe are well-intentioned but who are certainly misguided in their attitude--continually claiming to love Christ but without the Church, to listen to Christ but not the Church, to belong to Christ but outside the Church. The absurdity of this dichotomy is clearly evident in this phrase of the Gospel: “Anyone who rejects you rejects me.” And how can one wish to love Christ without loving the Church, if the finest witness to Christ is that of St. Paul: “Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her?” (Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* [8 Dec 1975]).

⁶⁸This portion also continues: “It is indeed true that a certain way of administering the sacraments, without the solid support of catechesis regarding these same sacraments and a global catechesis, could end up by depriving them of their effectiveness to a great extent. The role of evangelization is precisely to educate people in the faith in such a way as to lead each individual Christian to live the sacraments as true sacraments of faith--and not to receive them passively or reluctantly.” (ibid).

⁶⁹Ibid.

capable of having a message which can be heard by all, regardless of regional frontiers.⁷⁰

There we are, Baptists and Evangelicals, like little lost sheep out in the cold: no commission, no evangelism, no message, no power, and no church!

It would seem clearly that those Evangelicals who choose to cooperate with the Roman Catholic church in evangelism or in any other way must not be aware of their teaching. According to the current Pope, if you are not properly aligned to the Bishop of Rome, you have no Commission, no evangelism, no Gospel, no power, and no Church.

Last of all, the issue comes down to Evangelism or as some call it, Proselytism. Isn't it interesting that the "Evangelical and Catholics Together" (ECT) statement decried Christians proselytizing of one another:

Today, in this country and elsewhere, Evangelicals and Catholics attempt to win "converts" from one another's folds. In some ways, this is perfectly understandable and perhaps inevitable. In many instances, however, such efforts at recruitment undermine the Christian mission by which we are bound by God's Word and to which we have recommitted ourselves in this statement. ...At the same time, our commitment to full religious freedom compels us to defend the legal freedom to proselytize even as we call upon Christians to refrain from such activity.⁷¹

The "Colson-Neuhaus Declaration" quoting the ECT ends with admonition against proselytizing:

"There is a necessary distinction between evangelizing [non-Christians] and what is today commonly called proselytizing or 'sheep stealing.'" For "in view of the large number of non-Christians in the world and the enormous challenge of the common evangelistic task, it is neither theologically legitimate nor a prudent use of resources for one Christian community to proselytize among active adherents of another Christian community." Thus, "We condemn the practice of recruiting people from

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹"Evangelicals and Catholic Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium," in Keith A. Fournier, with William D. Watkins, *A House United? Evangelicals and Catholics Together: A Winning Alliance for the 21st Century* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1994), 346.

another community for the purposes of denominational or institutional aggrandisement.”⁷²

It is no surprise that it comes back to aggressive evangelism or proselytism. Prior to the ECT statement, there has been a barrage of anti-proselytism writings:

- For example, the 1970 Catholic-World Council of Churches statement “Common Witness and Proselytism:”

Witness should avoid behavior such as: ... c) Every exploitation of the need or weakness or of the lack of education of those to whom the witness is offered, in view of inducing adherence to a Church. d) Everything raising suspicion about the “good faith” of others –“bad faith” can never be presumed; it should always be proved.⁷³

- In 1973, an Orthodox and Catholic common declaration read:

In the name of Christian charity, we reject all forms of proselytism, in the sense of acts by which persons seek to disturb each other’s communities by recruiting members from each other through methods, or because of attitudes of mind, which are opposed to Christian love or to what should characterize the relationships between Churches. Let it cease where it may exist.⁷⁴

- In 1975, from “A Bolivian Manifesto on Evangelism in Latin America Today”:

We are ashamed of having mistaken proselytism for evangelism, of having satisfied ourselves with an intermittent and organized activism which we have named “evangelism,” of having accepted to be a religious institution closed on itself, dominated by routine, conformity and apathy.⁷⁵

- In 1980, the Lutheran-Catholic Conversation, “Ways to Community, 1980”:

⁷²Geisler and MacKenzie, 493.

⁷³“Common Witness and Proselytism—A Study Document,” from the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, 1970; in Michael Kinnamon and Brian Cope, eds., *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 352.

⁷⁴“1973 Common Declaration,” in Thomas B. Stransky and John B. Sheerin, eds., *Doing the Truth in Charity: Statements of Pope Paul VI, Popes John Paul I, John Paul II, and the Secretariat for the Promoting of Christian Unity*, Ecumenical Documents I (Maryknoll, NY: Paulist, 1982), 248.

⁷⁵“A Bolivian Manifesto on Evangelism in Latin America Today,” in Norman E. Thomas, ed., *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 165.

Naturally *discrimination* must cease if ministers are to cooperate on all levels. Partners cannot cast aspersions on each other and must renounce every form of proselytism (though not mutual criticisms or requests for change).⁷⁶

- The 1982 WCC Committee on World Mission and Evangelism described the growth of missions movements into countries where other churches already existed:

Surely, many ambiguities have accompanied this development and are present even today, not the least of which is the sin of proselytism among other Christian confessions.⁷⁷

Therefore the ECT statement and the “Colson-Neuhaus Declaration” are not breaking any new ground. They borrow anti-proselytizing rhetoric from the Roman Catholic church and the World Council of Churches.

In 1966, Jacques Blocher warned of the dangers of this anti-proselytizing rhetoric:

In fact, today the Protestant theologians who want to be up to date, insist that evangelization should no longer seek to win new members to the church; this would be a type of proselytizing, something severely condemned in this century of ecumenism. According to these theologians, the Christian evangelizes through his activities in the world just by his presence and without trying to win anyone to his ideas. Though this theory of evangelism is not unanimously accepted – far from it – it nevertheless seems to us to be an important cause for the drop off in the number of Protestants, especially of those who do not practice their religion.⁷⁸

Blocher was right on target. Anti-proselytizing is perhaps the most serious issue.

Because if we are not allowed to share the Gospel with adherents of other denominations, it undermines a plain reading of the Great Commission. It undermines the need to “Do the work of an evangelist!” It undermines salvation by grace alone through faith alone. And it undermines our view of the need to be “born again.” These concessions are why

⁷⁶“Ways to Community, 1980,” in Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, *Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level*, Ecumenical Documents II (Maryknoll, NY: Paulist, 1984), 235.

⁷⁷“Mission and Evangelism—An Ecumenical Affirmation,” WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, 1982; in Kinnamon and Cope, 373.

⁷⁸Jacques Blocher, “French-speaking Europe,” 1:250.

we must be very guarded in our cooperation. Paul reminded the Galatian Christians, “A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough” (Galatians 5:9).

It is my contention and I have tried to prove that Roman Catholicism is the same old wolf it ever was. Vatican II was an effective public relations move for Roman Catholicism. Quite a number of significant Evangelicals were fooled into thinking that we have a new or different Roman Catholic church. In so doing, they have cooperated with Catholics, signed the ECT, and even teach against proselytizing Catholics.

So now you know the rest of the story! Yours is to decide what sheep and wolves have in common as they search for food.