

"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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PROBLEMS FACING EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTISM

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

The present-day ecumenical movement now includes the major elements in Protestantism. And when this development among the Protestants is coupled with the important sessions recently held during the Second Vatican Council, one will find that the evangelicals are practically cut-off from the main-streams of Christianity. The recent overtures and dialogues between representatives of the Roman Church and Protestant bodies indicate clearly a trend in the direction of a world church union. Many Protestant Churchmen are elated over these developments, and prominent spokesmen of the Catholic Church feel that the schism of nearly 450 years will be healed eventually. In fact, certain Protestant leaders are now openly talking about the mistake of the 16th century Reformation, and that it was initiated by impatient zealots and schismatics, who rendered a disservice to the cause of Christianity through fragmentation. Recently Dr. Carl E. Braaten, professor of systematic theology and ethics at the Lutheran School of Theology in Maywood, Illinois said, Protestantism is faced by this question: "Since the

Roman Catholic Church holds out an open invitation for us to return at any time, are we justified in continuing our separation?" The Lutheran theologian spoke before the faculty and student body of Clark College, a Roman Catholic women's school. His subject was "The Tragedy of the Reformation and the Recovery of Catholicity." In his extended address, he regarded the Protestant Reformation as the road which led to illegitimate and idiotic off-shoots. Other Protestant spokesmen have couched their views in almost similar statements. The Protestant-Catholic Dialogue goes on:

Roman Catholic Bishop Leo F. Dworschak received a standing ovation for nearly two minutes from the students at Concordia College when he completed an address to the student body on December 10th. Bishop Dworschak was the first Catholic Prelate to speak to that Institution. Monsignor Theodore F. Thome of Madison, speaking to 400 men at a leading Protestant Church in Minneapolis, Friday, Dec. 7th, said, "Christians can no longer be isolationists." And he went on to point out that Catholics and Protestants have much

in common. At an ordination service for Rev. Richard H. Baker an Episcopal priest at Palmyra, Mo., on December 12th, a Roman Catholic priest read the ordination litany. This arrangement had the approval of the Episcopal and Catholic bishops of the area. In view of these present-day trends and developments, what are some of the problems confronting evangelical groups in our time?

THE PROBLEM OF A MINORITY STATUS

To be in the minority, or to be out of step with present-day developments, is not a position which is exactly coveted by any group. Even the magnificent prophet Elijah felt depressed by his minority status. In a moment of discouragement he prayed to God that he might be removed from the earthly arena altogether. But God comforted the prophet with the statement that he was not all alone, and that there were seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal. We are witnessing today the religious handwagon rolling, ecumenically speaking, and even some evangelicals are beginning to wonder if the minority status is the right one to adhere to after all. It takes great stamina and tremendous convictions to stand apart from a religious movement which is both popular and international. It is important in these days to keep before us the Pauline injunction, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17). Evangelicals need to guard against the temptation of moving with the majority. It is well for us evangelicals who are in the minority to bear in mind that it was the majority who crucified our Lord. Because a religious system may repre-

sent the majority view and have massiveness, does not imply that it is in the right or enjoying God's approval. The harlot church depicted in Revelation, Chapters 17 and 18, will be occupying a strategic position at the conclusion of the age. But that spurious international system of religion is condemned and will be dismantled by divine judgment. This passage clearly reveals that the spiritual apostasy will reach a maturity in the latter-days. In fact, Paul writes about the great falling away of those days within the whole domain of Christendom.

As evangelicals we need to learn, even with conviction, that it is necessary to remain in the minority. Luther reached that position at the Diet of Worms. Religious bodies which are strictly evangelical simply cannot be enthusiastic over current developments because these trends are certain to culminate in a super-church. It is imperative for God's people to stay out of this massive ecumenical program. It does not imply that evangelicals should fail to cooperate and work together wherever it is possible. Evangelicals have more in common than that which may divide them. It is from the structural and the indiscriminate activities of the ecumenical movement as now promoted, that believers must be separated.

THE PROBLEM OF BEING CONSIDERED UN-COOPERATIVE

Evangelicals are facing more and more the charge of being un-cooperative and even unrealistic towards a cause which has as its objective of achieving church unity. We hear continually these days the evils of fragmentation within Christianity. And external unity is held out as being the primary goal which must be achieved. These promoters of ecumen-

icity repeat again and again the prayer of our Lord, "That they may be one, as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may also be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou has sent me" (Jn. 17:21). Unfortunately these present day promoters of an external church union fail entirely to understand that Christ did not pray for ecclesiastical unity, neither was his prayer directed to His Father for a massive merger of denominations, or the creation of an external church union. His prayer involved the desire for spiritual unity among His own redeemed children. These precious words of our Lord are misconstrued to imply that Christ was primarily concerned about establishing external harmony and oneness. Consistently Christ taught separation and the cost of cross-bearing.

Evangelicals are regarded by the ecumenically-minded majority as being stubborn and un-cooperative by opposing the current popular efforts directed towards the achievement of an external church union. More and more, evangelicals will need to harken to the exhortation given by the author of Hebrews, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13). It is easier, of course, to be identified with the popular trend and move with the majority. But this temptation we must resist despite the stigma which evangelicals will have to bear of being un-cooperative.

THE PROBLEM OF SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

It is entirely true that the leaders of the ecumenical movement are setting forth in glowing terms the merits of unity in Christ. It all sounds very plausible and even appealing. It must be remembered, however, that cultists of nearly every hue and color

also find it expedient to present favorable statements with respect to the person of Christ. Usually all such expressions by them have no theological significance. In other words, the Deity of Christ, His Virgin Birth, His efficacious Atonement, and His bodily Resurrection, are never spelled out in a precise manner. Ecumenically-minded leaders are very clever in maneuvering with appealing phrases, all of which are very misleading. Glittering generalities are meaningless when used in the manner in which the promoters of ecumenicity are using them. To illustrate: At the Second Assembly of The World Council of Churches, held at Evanston, Illinois, a decade ago, the theme for the conclave was "Christ, The Hope of the World." Yet at that same gathering, in the attempt to reach an agreement of the meaning of Christ's Coming to be proclaimed, it was found expedient for that body to spiritualize the matter of Christ's Coming to mean mainly His coming into human affairs, and the permeation of His teachings in all areas of life. Such a declaration is nothing less than a repudiation of the literal promises of the New Testament concerning our Lord's personal return. The leaders of the ecumenical movement are committed to the program of building the kingdom through such means as church mergers, federations, and a world church union. These leaders are not among those who "wait for the Son from heaven." In view of all this confusion in the use of terminologies and phrases one needs to doublecheck all present-day ecclesiastical pronouncements because they can not be taken at face value as presented. Accommodation and expedience are the key-principles with-

in the modern ecumenical movement. Many of their religious periodicals manipulate the printed page in order to place their program in the best light possible. Evangelicals cannot be satisfied to stand on anything less than a solid doctrinal base.

We who are in opposition to the current trends must fortify ourselves to withstand the increasing pressure directed against the evangelical minority by those who are promoting a world church union. Those who lack the capability of discrimination may easily be swept into this popular unity movement. It should be stated with emphasis that evangelicals are not promoting disunity or fragmentation simply because they do not go along with the trends moving towards an external church union. The believing minority must continue to oppose all spurious and unscriptural programs even though they may be popular and widely embraced. Evangelicals need to keep abreast of all major developments within present-day Churchianity.

We have now identified some of the major problems facing evangelical bodies of our time. It requires

stamina, knowledge of the Scriptures, and a total dedication to Christ in order to be kept on an even keel. We need to be reminded of the words of the wise man, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). This is the day for popularization of Christianity. Never in the annals of church history has there been a greater effort directed towards external church unity than in our generation. Such a spirit is dominant today, and we may well anticipate that the efforts will be intensified right along. These, then, are problems which evangelicals will have to face. We may have already witnessed the prelude to the last great apostasy on earth. At times it may be necessary to stand alone and like Daniel of old who refused to conform to the spirit of the times. The minority also needs the spirit of Joshua and Caleb who refused to accept the verdict of the majority. God is not dependent on numbers and in nearly all periods of history He has empowered a consecrated minority to maintain a clear testimony for the truth.

LISTINGS FROM OUR CATALOG

1. **THE FOUR MAJOR CULTS**, by A. A. Hoekema. A thorough and scholarly analysis of the major doctrines of Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventism Christian Science, using the original sources. Invaluable appendices and excellent bibliographies. 447 pages. \$5.95.
2. **THE TWO BABYLONS**, by Alexander Hislop. Has 7 chapters dealing with Distinctive Character of The Two Systems; Objects of Worship; Festivals; Doctrine and Discipline; Rites and Ceremonies; Religious Orders; The Two Developments Historically and Prophetically Considered. Has many illustrations, extended Appendix and Index. 330 pp., \$3.50.
3. **ROMANISM IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE**, by Dr. J. D. Pentecost. Has 7 chapters answering the following questions: Is Rome a Church or State? Is Mary the Mother of God? Is Mary Co-Redemptrix? Was Peter the First Pope? Is Salvation by Works or by Faith? Is There a Purgatory? What if the Vatican Controls the White House? It is an informative volume. \$2.50.
4. **CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM**, by J. Gresham Machen. Walter Lippman says: "It is an admirable book. For its acumen, for its saliency, and for its wit. This cool and stringent defense of orthodox Protestantism is, I think, the best popular argument produced (in the controversy between Christianity and Liberalism). We shall do well to listen to Dr. Machen." \$1.75.

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THE PROTESTANT MOVE TOWARD ROME

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One of the most amazing religious spectacles of the twentieth century is the headlong rush which ecumenical Protestants are making into the arms of the Roman Catholic Church. It is almost unbelievable, and certainly fearful to behold. Every day new headlines announce some further evidence of cooperation between Protestants and Catholics. The ecumenical spirit has completely engulfed the minds of the multitudes of religious leaders to the extent that it has become an obsession with them. In its earlier stages it encompassed mainly the various brands of Protestantism, but has expanded in recent years to include at least fraternal relationships with Roman Catholic leaders. Ecumenical leaders are rejoicing in the strong progress which they see toward closer cooperation with the Papacy.

There are several areas in which rapport between Rome and ecumenical Protestants may be seen.

I. Sympathetic Viewpoints

Many are hailing a break-through in attitudes which they feel will be the fore-runner of more fruitful cooperation. It is the fashion of the day to decry "suspicion," "intolerance," and "bigotry" between Protestants and Catholics and to emphasize a warm spirit of brotherly love." Several Protestant theologians have publicly declared that no longer should Protestants have an unfriendly and antagonistic attitude toward Catholics, but that they should seek to understand them, to enter into dialogue with them, and to find a new appreciation of Catholic liter-

ature, doctrine, and ritual. Attempts are being made to reevaluate the Reformation in light of modern ecumenicism. Not a few have declared that the Reformation was a huge mistake which should now be corrected by ecumenical efforts. Some have suggested that John Calvin was favorable toward unifying efforts with Rome. W. M. Smyth in discussing Calvin's thought in this area concludes that Calvin was not as vitally interested in cooperation with Rome as some might believe ("John Calvin: Passionate Ecumenicist?" *Christian Heritage*, May, 1964).

For many years evangelical periodicals and speakers have strongly denounced the evils of the Roman Catholic Church, pointing out its unscriptural character, its vicious system of work-merit, its loose ethics, its undercover political machinations, and a host of other unsavory and wicked characteristics. Such an approach is definitely not in vogue currently. Even periodicals long dedicated to the exposure of such things have taken a softer tack, become more "scholarly," "loving," and "gracious" and also less Biblical. Voices crying with vehemence against the demonic system of Rome have become fewer and fewer as the tidal wave of ecumenicism engulfs more and more. The thunderings of Martin Luther are forgotten; the blood baths of the Inquisition are lost to memory in the heady atmosphere of the ecumenical discussion, and the adamant, anti-Biblical harlot is being received with open arms.

Apostasy is generally preceded by

a softening of attitude toward sin and doctrinal deviation. The attempt to break down "suspicions" and "hostilities" between Biblical Christians and Roman Catholics, while bearing the appearance of magnanimity, will only result in furthering the causes of the Wicked One whose purpose for ages has been to amalgamate the people of God with the children of Satan.

II. Theological Discussions

Movements of the sort under discussion here do not ordinarily originate in the hearts and minds of the average person, but are born in the academic hallways and the studies of the scholars. There are regular meetings of Protestant and Catholic theologians being held in various parts of the world. Suggestion has been made that a Protestant-Catholic translation of the Bible would be a commendable project. Cardinal Koenig of Austria declared, "A common Bible is a real possibility because Catholic and non-Catholic biblical scholars agree more and more about the reading of the ancient texts." (*The Dialogue*, October, 1963). Catholic writers are contributing to Protestant journals and vice-versa. A joint effort is being made on the translation of the literature of the Essene community. Dr. John Dillenberger's address to St. Albert's College was hailed as the first time a Protestant theologian has addressed an American Catholic seminary. Dr. Dillenberger is a Presbyterian.

One excuse for the advancement of Catholic-Protestant theological discussions has been the fact that Catholics are now giving the study of the Bible more attention than heretofore. Some, looking for favorable things to say about Rome, have greeted this as the dawn of a new day in the Ro-

man Church. They are now studying the Bible—we ought to study it **with them**. Perhaps we will all be enlightened further. It should be noted, however, that the widely-hailed Bible studies of the Catholics **have not resulted in the repudiation of a single major error** of the Roman faith, and, according to the statements of reliable Catholic leaders, must not be expected to do so. Dr. Edward J. Carnell, a leading Protestant theologian, declared, "The Roman claim to infallibility precludes the possibility of unity through gestures of mutual repentance. But this grim fact should not prejudice the value of sincere exploratory conversation. A more perfect understanding of the issues will bring sweeter attitudes into what is and will remain a tragic division in the body of Christ" (*Christianity Today*, 10/10/60).

That Roman Catholics, who bow to shrines and venerate images, are in the body of Christ, is a statement contrary to Biblical fact. To seek fraternal relations with such is to completely obliterate distinctions that God has made between truth and error.

III. Joint Religious Gatherings

On local levels more and more there is an effort to include both Protestants and Catholics in public and more private religious gatherings. At a recent meeting of 200 Episcopalian ministers in Boston Cardinal Cushing "praised the Protestant clergy for their scholarship and good will and called for a broadening of ecumenical ties" (*Our Sunday Visitor*, 4/29/64). When Dr. John C. Bennett was inaugurated as the new president of Union Theological Seminary, New York, a Protestant institution, the press noted that there were representatives of several Roman Catholic

institutions present for the ceremony. On the opposite coast Dr. Robert McAfee Brown, a Presbyterian, was honored by the University of San Francisco, a Jesuit institution, with an honorary degree, and in his remarks expressed delight with this fine display of ecumenicity. The national Episcopal church convention held in the fall of 1964 at St. Louis featured a joint Episcopal-Catholic service in which nuns and monks participated and the sermon was preached by a Catholic priest.

Local and state church gatherings not uncommonly now have both Protestant and Catholic participation. A strenuous effort is constantly put forth by ecumenical church leaders to bring the Catholics into the ecumenical frame-work wherever and whenever possible.

What great surprise greeted readers of the *Christian Century* (7/8/64) when they read of a "demonstration mass" held in the chapel of the University of Chicago, sponsored by 20 Protestant churches and seven Roman Catholic groups. Here, in this former Baptist institution, the pagan ritual of the mass was performed. How far will men go in their compromise with error?

IV. Ritualism

One has only to visit many prominent Protestant churches these days to view with sadness the increasing trend toward ritualism the likes of which at one time was seldom seen except in Roman Catholic circles. Dr. Kyle Haselden, editor of the *Christian Century*, and a Baptist minister, stated in an address in Louisville, Kentucky, that he felt changes in Roman Catholic liturgy were making it possible for closer cooperation with Catholics. He said, "Protestants have found many similarities in our ser-

VICES" (*Our Sunday Visitor*, 11/22/64). It is certainly true that many Protestant services today are more akin to Roman Catholic services than to the simple type of worship set forth in the New Testament. Large numbers of Protestant churches now feature divided chancels, altars, candles, prayer books, chants, and other such paraphernalia as part of their worship ceremonies. Preachers are garbed in robes and often turn their backs to the audience and their faces to the altar in the likeness of Roman Catholic priests. The preaching which once characterized Protestant churches has now been sidetracked for "worship," falsely so called.

Love of formalism, ritual, and liturgy has brought Catholics and ecumenical Protestants much closer to each other than could ever be dreamed a few years ago. The solemn deadness of many a "worship" service is only witness of the fact that the fire has long since gone out.

V. Attitudes of Ecclesiology

Historically, Protestants who believed the Bible have refused to recognize Rome as a Scriptural church. Polemical Protestant literature for centuries has criticized the Catholic position concerning the Papacy, the bishopric, and other distinctive Romish doctrines. Now apologies are being heard in some quarters for the "disaster" of the Reformation. One noted Protestant scholar is reported as saying that the revolution under Martin Luther was most unfortunate as it "drove us farther apart."

One of the problems that Protestants have found in conversing with, and cooperating with, Roman Catholics, is the divergence of views on the nature of the church. The Roman Catholic view of the infallibility of the church has proved a great ob-

stacle and yet even this has not caused ecumenicists to falter in their attempts. The Catholic leaders have made it clear that they do not intend to repudiate their doctrine of infallibility. They have, however, made notable attempts to placate their Protestant friends in this area by affirming the doctrine of "collegiality" at the recent Vatican Council. This was not done without knowledge that it would greatly assist in bringing the "separated brethren" into the fold.

In scholarly discussions Protestant teachers and leaders have suggested (and some have openly declared) that they believe any future ecumenical church will be constructed upon bishops, and that all who wish to enter it will of necessity accept the authority of bishops. No doubt this will be true because Rome will never divest her bishops of their power. To do so would be to topple the entire Catholic system. A hierarchical system is dependent upon its hierarchy. The *Christian Beacon* cites the Anglican bishop, Bishop John R. Moorman of England, as saying, "I think we realize that if there is to be a final unity among Christians, there will have to be a central head of the Church, and that head will clearly have to be the bishop of Rome (4-5-64).

VI. Attitudes Toward The Vatican Council

It is a well-publicized fact that Protestant leaders world-wide were enthusiastic about the purpose of the Vatican Council, originally called by Pope John XXIII and continued by his successor. While not all Protestants agree with every action that was taken, there was great friendliness toward the idea of having such a council, and great rejoicing that it accomplished what it did toward the

unification of Protestantism and Romanism. News media recorded the statements of a number of Protestant leaders who hailed the Council as a great step forward in bringing closer bonds of fellowship between the two groups.

One of the notable facts about the Council was the presence of Protestant "Observers" who were invited there by the Roman Catholic Church. They were briefed on the events of each day, and were given every courtesy that could be extended. The very fact that Protestant leaders would attend such a gathering certainly points up the fact that Protestants are interested in moving toward Rome, or at least, in having Rome move toward them. The latter will never be accomplished, but the former seems to be progressing rather well. Bishop Fred Corson of the Methodist Church spoke highly of the work of the Council in an interview over a Philadelphia TV station. He said he thought the efforts of Pope Paul in this regard "will advance this movement, until the time comes when we have that unity for which our Blessed Lord prayed." (*Our Sunday Visitor*, 4/5/64).

Conclusion

It seems clear that there is a rapidly-developing attitude of conciliation, yes, admiration, for many aspects of the Roman Church on the part of ecumenical Protestants. Such breath-taking steps have been taken in the last few years toward closer cooperation with Rome that one can scarcely believe them. And yet there they are. The Spirit-taught and Bible-led believer can have no part in such affairs, but must ever pursue the course of separation unto God which is so clearly marked out in His Word.

IS ROMAN CATHOLICISM REALLY CHANGING?

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It is now almost six years since Pope John XXIII first issued his call for the ecumenical council we speak of as Vatican II. The three autumn sessions now held have claimed the attention and evoked the interest of the entire world as have few religious events in history. Never have so many press releases, articles and appraisals been issued from a religious conclave as this one.

Vatican II has been heralded as the dawn of a new day in the Roman Catholic Church. Some have seen Pope John's celebrated "aggiornamento" (bringing up to date) as the triumph of modernism in Catholicism. Some Protestants have been unrestrained in their enthusiasm for what they feel is the new face of Rome. Others have more cautiously but nonetheless emphatically expressed their optimism as to the prospects of Roman Catholic-Protestant unity. Karl Barth has warned his Protestant friends that "Reformation is beginning within the Roman Catholic Church, and if that movement should gather sufficient momentum the Roman Church becomes a formidable claimant to the allegiance of all Christendom."

As now the third session has come to a conclusion with the promise of but one more to be held, it is time to assess the developments by the Tiber. Has Roman Catholicism really changed? There certainly have been some changes made. The whole Roman-Protestant climate has changed. But have there been any real changes?

For many centuries the Roman

Church discouraged and in some cases even forbade the reading of the Scriptures by its adherents. There has been an observable change here, a change which began to take place long before Vatican II but which has become quite marked in recent years. This change began as early as Leo XIII who in 1893 expressed "earnest desire that greater numbers should daily adopt and perseveringly maintain the cause of the Sacred Scriptures." It might also be pointed out that in this same encyclical, "Providentissimus Deus," Leo XIII made clear the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Scripture: "It will never be lawful to restrict inspiration to merely certain parts of the Holy Scriptures, or to grant that the sacred writer could have made a mistake."

We can be most grateful for increased Roman Catholic interest in the Bible and the evidence that many Roman Catholics possess and read their copies of the Scripture. The Holy Spirit speaks through and blesses the Word and we rejoice at every copy distributed. Ironically however, as modern Roman Catholics are challenging the accepted positions of the church in many areas, the traditional doctrine of inspiration has also come under fire by some Catholic Biblical scholars. The inroads of destructive higher criticism are being clearly seen in Catholic circles.

Another very obvious change is the flourishing dialogue between Catholics and Protestants. Who could have believed ten years ago that it ever would be so soon possi-

ble? The presence of Protestant observers at Vatican II and Cardinal Cushing bowing in prayer in an Episcopal Church are cases in point. Jointly published commentaries, Roman Catholic use of Protestant hymns and Bible translations, and common ecclesiastical action bespeak the softening of the hard line. Many missionaries from Catholic dominated lands testify to a relaxed atmosphere in certain places. Although the "new look" comes slowly to the grass roots, it is clearly increasingly widespread.

Changes in liturgy and the use of the vernacular are most striking. On November 29th sweeping changes in the mass were initiated. The introduction of English in half of the service will now require audience participation in word and song to an extent hitherto unknown. The new mass is to be celebrated on a plain altar by a priest facing the congregation. We are told that a liturgical commission is preparing an even more drastic recasting of Catholicism's central act of worship.

Other changes have been instituted. Pope Paul has reduced the length of fast before communion. For centuries the precommunion fast began at midnight and included only water. In 1957 Pope Pius XII changed this to three hours for food and alcoholic drink, one hour for non-alcoholic drink and no time limit on water. This has now been reduced to fasting from food or drink to only one hour. Greater emphasis on the laity is being stressed. Discussion of the birth control question is evidence of striking changes.

It is in view of such changes as these that some Protestants have eloquently and sincerely hailed the liberation of the Roman Catholic Church from its frozen and formal monolithic

reactionism. Many Protestants advocate replacing Reformation Day with a Christian Unity Day. Some Protestant leaders are saying we should forget the past and begin over again. Dr. Howard Schomer, president of Chicago Theological Seminary recently stated: "The time has finally come for Protestants to recognize publicly that their Reformation was a failure, and for Catholics to recognize that their Counter-reformation was an equal failure," (*Presbyterian Journal*, Dec. 2, 1964, p. 12). Indeed, for any easing of intolerance and misunderstanding we can be grateful, but we must press the question, IS ROMAN CATHOLICISM REALLY CHANGING? There are obvious changes, but what basic or fundamental alteration has there been in the Roman Catholic position which necessitated under God the Protestant Reformation?

It is quite clear at this point that the Roman Catholic principle of authority has not changed. Protestants must insist that we prove all things by the authority of the Word of God. It is now quite clear that Pope Paul VI is not about to modify his position as the infallible vicar of Christ upon earth.

Hopes have been high as Pope Paul VI has spoken approvingly of the principle of collegiality, i.e. that the pope will share authority with the bishops of the church. But even the liberal *Christian Century* observed "Pope Paul's high-handed control of the council during its closing days. The Pope's actions left no doubt in the minds of the Protestant observers that he had said a powerful and crushing No to meaningful collegiality," (*Christian Century*, Dec. 2, 1964, p. 1483). One Protestant observer said, "We have seen

the naked face of what we have always feared in Rome." Concludes the *Century* editorial: "The monarchical and hierarchal structure of the Roman Catholic Church and the absolute supremacy of the Roman pontiff remain *unchanged* and *undiminished*." In view of the Pope's action, even Dr. Douglas Horton said: "Do we want to be tied to a church like that?"

Pope Paul VI is quite a different man from Pope John XXIII. Pope John's "opening to the left" has been shut tight by Pope Paul's hard line against communism. This is an important shift. So rather than being weak and indecisive as at first feared, the Roman pontiff is proving to be a man of resolute determination. He is not about to abdicate his position. In his first encyclical, "Ecclesiam Suam," the Pope offered his services for the mediation of international disputes. These aspirations however sincere, but bring to mind the ultimate destiny of apostate Christendom in the religio-political drama of the end-time (cf Rev. 17-18).

In one midweek address at Vatican II, Pope Paul denounced the "Protestant and modernist mentality which denies the need and legitimate existence of an intermediate authority between man and God." This is of course a bold and forthright challenge to the very essence of the Protestant principle of authority. We believe with all our hearts that faith is an unmediated relationship between our souls and the God who reconciled us to Himself through the blood of Jesus Christ His Son. "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." But Pope Paul declared that "before the authority of the Church we must feel ourselves before Christ. To refuse it

means to reject the love of Christ, for the authority of the church is also an instrument of love," (*Christian Century*, Nov. 18, 1964, p. 1421). Nothing could be more clear. We "separated brethren" have rejected the love of Christ by not submitting to the mediatorial office of Pope Paul VI. To the Roman Catholic, the church is the mediator, and this we absolutely reject.

The issue is as clearly drawn now as it was in the Reformation. Roman Catholicism still believes that Christ exercises His authority through an infallible church, that the church is the living extension of Christ's incarnation and that the pope is the vicar of Christ. This is a fundamental chasm between Roman Catholicism and Evangelical Protestantism. There has been no change here.

How naive and unrealistic are those Protestants who have expected basic changes in the rigid structures of Roman Catholicism. Cardinal Bea, one of the most progressive members of the hierarchy, has stated from the beginning that Catholicism will make no concessions in doctrine. Shortly after the first session of Vatican II, I heard Auxiliary Bishop Cowley of Minneapolis warn a group of Protestants not to expect any basic change in doctrine. Liberal Protestants accustomed to playing fast and loose with doctrine are prone to overlook the general stability and consistency of Catholic doctrine. There may be fringe concessions in Roman Catholicism to dramatize modernity, but there has been no basic alteration of principle.

A significant clue as to how the winds blow in Rome was given as the Pope and the council's presidency blocked a vote on the declaration on religious liberty at the very end

of this session. Although 1400 prelates signed a petition and interceded with the Pope to permit a vote, the archconservative curia succeeded in postponing it. The declaration set forth the idea that "No man can be made a victim of coercion on the part of others . . . the state must recognize and defend the free exercise of religion by all its citizens." Bishop Desmedt of Belgium in pleading for the vote stated that "The Roman Catholic Church has changed its attitude toward religious liberty," (*Minneapolis Star*, Nov. 21, 1964, p. 10A). It yet remains to be seen whether there has indeed been a change. Several recent arrests of Protestants in Spain rather pointedly raise the issue.

Although the council fathers had studied the schema on ecumenicity for three years before finally adopting it at this session, many were disappointed that the Pope himself added 19 last-minute amendments to the schema. In one of these amendments the Pope indicated that "separated brethren (i.e. Protestant and Orthodox) seek God's grace through the Holy Spirit and Scripture." Before the amendment was adopted, the document said that the separated brethren "find" God's grace. This was a rather meaningful and significant change.

In promulgating this schema at the close of the session, Pope Paul VI made the following statement regarding ecumenicity: "We trust this doctrine (on the church) will be kindly and favorably received by Christians as yet separated from us. May it have for them the role of a stimulus to that revision of ideas and attitudes which may bring them closer to our communion, and finally, God willing, make them one with us. In this doc-

trine they can know that the Church, as she traces the outline of her own image does not restrict but rather widens her charity and does not slow down the march of her progressive, multiform and inviting catholicity," (*Our Sunday Visitor*, Dec. 6, 1964, p. 2A). With every outward appearance of charity and progressive change, the Roman Catholic Church invites Protestants to her communion and to unity. The arrogant pretension of this apostate system has not changed an iota. The only possible unity is capitulation at her terms.

Another last minute surprise at the end of the council is most revealing. Although the conciliar fathers had discussed, debated and decided against proclaiming Mary as "Mother of the Church," this the pontiff proceeded to do. Said one observer, "The Pope's arbitrary action was interpreted by some reporters as 'a calculated assertion of papal supremacy to counteract emphasis placed on collective rule,'" (*Christian Century*, Dec. 2, 1964, p. 1483).

The Constitution on the Nature of the Church adopted at this session "contains a glowing tribute to Mary and clarifies her role in the church's makeup and life. Referring to this chapter, the Pope pointed out that it is 'the first time an ecumenical council presents such a vast synthesis of the place of Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church . . . knowledge of the exact doctrine of the Church on Mary will always be the key to a precise understanding of the mystery of Christ and His Church. For the glory of the Virgin Mary and for our own consolation, we proclaim Mary the Mother of the Church, that is of the whole people of God, of the faithful as well as of the pastors, and we wish that through this title

the Mother of God should be still more honored and invoked by the entire Christian people," (*Our Sunday Visitor*, Dec. 6, 1964, p. 2A).

Here is clear and unmistakable evidence that there is no basic change in Roman Catholicism. How can glib Protestants be taken in by all this? What point is there to all of our dialogue and excitement when most obviously we are dealing with an intransigent foe of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Nothing crucial has been changed at all. The vast mountains of superstition and ignorance still surround the faithful of Rome. Pope Paul's last words to the concluding session were an announcement of his intention to send a special mission in the near future to Fatima, Portugal, "to send a golden rose to the sanctuary of Fatima, in this manner, we intend to entrust to the care of this heavenly Mother the entire human family with its problems and worries, with its lawful aspirations and ardent hopes." No change here.

There has been no change in the

soul-deadening and error encrusted sacramental system which enslaves millions. There has been no change in the idea that "Baptism grafts us onto the vine which is Christ, makes us living stones in the temple of God, gives us safety in that ark, Holy Church, which overrides the flood."

At each strategic and crucial juncture where Biblical Protestants have down through these years felt it necessary to draw a line and in some cases even give their lives, there has been no real change. The only change is the now smiling face and warm hand-clasp which seem to be enough for some modern Protestants. Without further elaborating or documenting our argument, it would seem abundantly clear that there has been no real change in Roman Catholicism. This is no hour in which to relax our efforts to sound out the Gospel of grace and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ in all its simplicity and power. Let us not be sidetracked into this ecumenical dead-end alley. This shining "angel of light" is another snare of Satan.

Continued from page 5

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STANDING AND WITHSTANDING

by Rev. Don Howard

No longer than a decade ago, the main battle in Christendom was being waged between Modernism and Fundamentalism—those who believed the Bible and those who did not. The lines were distinct. One's position was easily defined.

Satan's method (Modernism) was not subtle enough to accomplish his goal so he devised a new approach. From a satanic standpoint, it is a well devised plan. It is so subtle, only the well-taught, awakened Christian with real discernment can detect it. I speak of New Evangelicalism.

New Evangelicalism has invaded the ranks of Bible-believing, born-again Christians. Many good men who are soul-winners have been taken in by this new ideology. From my observation, I see that a good portion of inter-denominationalism is already in the New Evangelical camp.

Perhaps New Evangelicalism could best be defined by saying it is that notion or idea that the gap between Modernism and Fundamentalism can be bridged. The advocates of the new theology believe in a neutral position. They seem to be interested only in the positive. They are endeavoring to take the reproach out of the gospel and make the Bible-believing position accepted by the world. In other words, they would like to make "cross-bearing" attractive.

As I see it, the difference between these conflicting ideologies (the Fundamental Bible-believing position and the New Evangelical position) is a difference between those who insist on "standing" and those who insist on "withstanding." The difference

being that to withstand one must resist or be on the offense. The very best one can do by standing is just to hold his own. Regardless of how good a team may be, playing only the defense, they can do no better than tie their opponent—make the score nothing to nothing. Of course, the opponent of the Bible-believing Christian is apostasy. It is something we must guard against—*"earnestly contend for the faith . . ."* (Jude 3).

Ten years ago I had no idea fellowship among believers would ever be affected over differences between "standing" and "withstanding." When one considers the vast differences between Fundamentalism and Modernism, the two ideologies referred to seem small—too small for some to be concerned about. Due to the fact, however, that trends are always down, I am compelled to favor the "withstanding" position. Christendom needs to be concerned about standing on her feet. "Extremism," a favorite term among the New Evangelicals, is no threat. The depravity of human nature will take care of that. To the discerning Christian, New Evangelicalism is a reality. It is not just a coined term. It is a step toward the Modernistic camp. History, both Biblical and secular, teaches me it is wise to "withstand"—resist, be on the offense, keep possession of the ball, take the battle to the enemy. When Paul said, ". . . take unto you the whole armour of God . . ." (Eph. 6:13), he did not mean we should take a siesta. One can't relax in armour. The armour is to be used in the good fight of faith. Don't be satisfied with just a "standing" position. Withstand!"

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Pastor "Mac" (Rev. R. F. McInay)

director of the radio program—Family Altar Broadcast, Waterloo, Iowa.

QUESTION . . . *What is the meaning of the word mediator? Does it say in the Bible that there can be only one mediator between us and God?*

ANSWER . . . Webster tells us that a mediator is one "who interposes between parties at variance for the purpose of reconciling them; an intercessor." Now read through carefully Romans 5:1-11, and also note that the word for atonement in verses eleven is reconciliation (see margin reference in your Bible). As you study this passage I believe that you will agree with me that only Christ can be the Reconciler between God and man. That is why it does say in the Bible that there can be only ONE mediator between God and man—see I Timothy 2:5, 6. This includes all beings, even angels! Perhaps I should remind you that this passage in Timothy does not even allow the Virgin Mary to act as a mediator. No one in heaven or earth can take the position of Christ in God's plan of salvation, and Christ does not share with any one the work that the Father gave Him to accomplish. Notice what Jesus said in verse four of the 17th chapter of John—"I (not we) have finished the work which thou gavest ME (not us) to do."