

A Historical-Theological Analysis of Evangelicals and Catholics Together

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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 agreed 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. As time passed, they would surely come to understand and agree with his interest in partnering with the old wolf. Therefore, over several years the old wolf grew to know many of the relatives of the significant lamb. Later relatives of the significant lamb 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 who 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 and Evangelical Christians, and he had inroads among the Russian Orthodox. Cardinal Wojtyła

seems to have allowed and encouraged Campus Crusade staff members to teach his priests personal evangelism. The cardinal had personally met Campus Crusade staff and their key supporters at a mountain retreat in Poland (one friend saw him come out of the shower with a towel around him). 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 people. In his 1995 book on the subject, Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie close their theological assessment with a last chapter titled "Evangelism." They conclude their book, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals*, with the following paragraph:

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 teaching of the Apostle Paul that "A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough" (Galatians 5:9).²

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

² For further evidence of leaven, 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). In reality there are very few doctrines which remain uniquely biblical in Roman Catholicism. This author can think of none. For example, let's just take the deity of Christ as an example. What does the role of Mary do to the unique position of Christ as Mediator (1 Tim 2:5)? Note the following quotes from John Paul II's encyclical (thus deemed inerrant) *Redemptoris Mater* (25 Mar 1987): "She [Mary] puts herself 'in the middle,' that is to say she acts as a mediatrix not as an outsider, but in her position as mother" (sec 21); "In this way Mary's motherhood continues unceasingly in the Church as the mediation which intercedes, and the Church expresses her faith in this truth by invoking Mary 'under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix and Mediatrix'" (sec 40); quoting from Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium*, "She was exalted by the Lord as Queen of the Universe, in order that she might be the more thoroughly conformed to her son, the Lord of lords (cf. Rev 19:16) and the conqueror of sin and death" (sec 41); "for if as

Likewise, in his 1998 Ph.D. dissertation, “From Conflict to Cooperation? Changing American Evangelical Attitudes toward Roman Catholics: 1960-1998,” Donald Sweeting 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

Virgin and Mother she was singularly united with him in his first coming, so through her continued collaboration with him she will also be united with him in expectation of the second” (sec 41); “For these reasons Mary is honored in the Church with special reverence. Indeed, from most ancient times the Blessed Virgin Mary has been venerated under the title of ‘God-bearer.’ In all perils and needs, the faithful have fled prayerfully to her protection. This cult is altogether special: it bears in itself and expresses the profound link which exists between the Mother of Christ and the Church. As Virgin and Mother, Mary remains for the Church a ‘permanent model.’” (sec 42); “Thus also is exercised that motherhood in the Spirit which became Mary’ role at the foot of the Cross and in the Upper Room” (sec 45); quoting Paul VI, “We believe that the Most Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, the Mother of the Church, carries on in heaven her maternal role with regard to the members of Christ, cooperating in the birth and development of divine life in the souls of the redeemed” (sec 47); “Indeed, as Paul VI hopes and asks, the Church must draw ‘from the Virgin Mother of God the most authentic form of perfect imitation of Christ.’” (sec 47); “Thus the Church, throughout her life, maintains with the Mother of God a link which embraces, in the saving mystery, the past, the present and the future, and venerates her as the spiritual mother of humanity and the advocate of grace” (sec 47) “She is also the one who, precisely as the ‘handmaid of the Lord,’ cooperates unceasingly with the work of salvation accomplished by Christ, her Son.” (49); and “Let the entire body of the faithful pour forth persevering prayer to the Mother of God and Mother of mankind. Let them implore that she who aided the beginning of the Church by her prayers may now, exalted as she is in heaven above all the saints and angels, intercede with her Son in the fellowship of all the saints. May she do so until all the peoples of the human family, whether they are honored with the name of Christian or whether they still do not know their Savior, are happily gathered together in peace and harmony into the one People of God, for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity” (sec 50); and finally “‘Assist, yes assist, your people who have fallen!’ This is the invocation addressed to Mary, the ‘loving Mother of the Redeemer,’ the invocation addressed to Christ, who through Mary entered human history. Year after year the antiphon rises to Mary, evoking that moment which saw the accomplishment of this essential historical transformation, which irreversibly continues: the transformation from ‘falling’ to ‘rising.’” (sec 52). By the way, this teaching regarding Mary’s role presumably comes to us from the Holy Spirit (and is thus infallible and inerrant), in fact to disagree with it is to sin against the Holy Spirit, which is unforgivable: “The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops held in 1985 exhorted everyone to follow faithfully the teaching and guidelines of the Council. We can say that these two events—the Council and the Synod—embody what the Holy Spirit himself wishes “to say to the Church” in the present phase of history” (sec 48).

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 a 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 tactics in relation to cooperation (ecumenism) and evangelism (proselytism). My contention is that there is very little reason or need for Baptists and Evangelicals to cooperate with Roman Catholics at any level, especially in fulfilling the Great Commission. We 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 1950.⁶ 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 shrewd approach

³ Donald Sweeting, “From Conflict to Cooperation? Changing American Evangelical Attitudes toward Roman Catholics: 1960-1998” (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1998), 145-48. Sweeting cites such key Evangelical leaders as James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 402.

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

⁶ Graham 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.

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:

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 with 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 autobiography, *Just As I Am*, Graham wrote of his crusades in Latin America:

⁸ In 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).

⁹ Billy Graham, *Just As I Am*, 161.

¹⁰ Walter 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], 101-02).

¹² Martin, 294.

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 that *Just As I Am* was written thirty-two years after the fact and was probably edited by John Akers, but the passive stance soon morphed into a positive stance. Graham (or Akers) 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 Catholics and Protestants.”¹⁴ By the way, Graham’s purported concern for “coming together” with Roman Catholics is incomprehensible to any Evangelical who has lived in and tried to win souls in a predominantly Roman Catholic country.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

This symbolic uniting of Orthodox and Catholic occurred prior to the 1968-1969 “Healing” of the 1054 mutual anathema between Orthodox and Catholics.¹⁷ Could it be that the 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

¹³ Ibid., 357.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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).

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

¹⁷ E. 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 broaden significantly his ecumenical approach. I 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: "Haraszi 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 Martin 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:

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

²¹ Martin, 484.

²² Ibid, 489.

²³ Ibid., 490.

²⁴ Ibid., 491.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Johnston, 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

I have included under 500 words of this copyrighted letter in my footnote as found in the *National Catholic Reporter*.²⁸ This letter provides a

²⁷ Bishop Lawrence Welsh, "Catholics and a Billy Graham Crusade," *National Catholic Reporter* (2 September 1982): 185.

²⁸ "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

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

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. Yet this coincides with Graham's efforts to gain ecclesial support following his 1949 crusade in Los Angeles. We will briefly touch on Graham's cooperative efforts with the Anglican Church and the Lutheran World Federation.

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 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" (ibid., 185-86).

²⁹ Billy Graham, *Just As I Am*, 599. My father was involved in the discussions on the benefits and hindrances of Graham being on the same platform as Pope John Paul II. Perhaps Graham was not as comfortable as John Paul II in coming out of the closet.

³⁰ Ibid., 740.

Beginning with his publishing of *Peace with God* in 1952, Graham worked very hard to get the support of the Anglican Church. He finally received it in 1954 London Crusade at Harringay, as Ian Murray explained:

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 of St. Paul, Minnesota (Fr. Martin Fleming was on the Executive Committee of the crusade). We can conclude that Graham valued cultivating and gaining the support of hierarchical and/or territorial (state) churches.

Two contemporary events provide milestones for United States Evangelicals as regards their/our relationship with the Roman Catholic church: (1) the 1994 Evangelicals and Catholics Together Statement,³⁵

³¹ Murray, *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).

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

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

which was explained and expanded in the 1994 Colson-Neuhaus Declaration,³⁶ and (2) the 2005 funeral of John Paul II that was attended by President George Bush with 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?

By the way, the 1994 ECT was nothing more than a national or regional agreement, never having the official imprimatur of Rome. The Catholic church had prepared themselves for such regional and/or national statements with the 1975 publication of the SPCU (Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity), "Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National, and Local Levels."

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 has done 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. We will begin by noting the "Shifting Ecumenical Posture" of the Vatican, and then examining its impact upon American Evangelicalism.

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

³⁶ Geisler 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/funeraljpjii05.htm>).

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

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

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:

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

The 1993 Pontifical Commission on Biblical Interpretation shows just how far Catholicism has accepted higher criticism (everything but feminism [split vote] and Fundamentalism).⁴³

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:

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

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

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

⁴³ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Président, Commission biblique pontificale, *L’interprétation de la Bible dans l’Église* (Quebec: Éditions Fides, 1994).

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.⁴⁴

By the way, this encyclical puts a definite damper in the Rogers-McKim proposal that Princeton theologians invented the doctrine of inerrancy.⁴⁵ One must note, however, that Leo XIII simultaneously affirmed that Catholic church tradition was also without error,⁴⁶ which included the infallibility of the Pope.⁴⁷

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

⁴⁴ Leo XIII, *Proventissimus Deus*, (18 Nov 1893), in *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1903), 296-97.

⁴⁵ Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

⁴⁶ "This supernatural revelation, according to the belief of the universal Church, is contained both in unwritten Tradition, and in written Books, which are therefore called sacred and canonical because, 'being written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author and as such have been delivered to the Church.'" (Leo XIII, *Proventissimus Deus* [18 Nov 1893], par 1; accessed 8 Mar 2002; available from <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pope0256b.htm>).

⁴⁷ For example Leo XIIIth ended his infamous *Apostolicae Curia*, which rendered the Anglican Orders null and void in this way, "40. We decree that these letters and all things contained therein shall not be liable at any time to be impugned or objected to by reason of fault or any other defect whatsoever of subreption or obreption of Our intention, but are and shall be always valid and in force and shall be inviolably observed both juridically and otherwise, by all of whatsoever degree and pre-eminence, declaring null and void anything which, in these matters, may happen to be contrariwise attempted, whether wittingly or unwittingly, by any person whatsoever, by whatsoever authority or pretext, all things to the contrary notwithstanding" (Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Curia* [15 Sept 1896]; accessed: 21 Oct 2005 at <http://www.catholictradition.org/apostolicae-curae.htm>).

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 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.⁴⁸

Third, and most important for this paper, Pius XII lifted the ban on “pan-Christian” activities of Pius XI. First let’s hear from 1928 Pius XI’s ban for Catholics to be involved in pan-Christian activities (i.e. the ecumenical movement):

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.⁴⁹

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 Cyprian,⁵⁰ Augustine’s *Contra Donatisten*, the Great Schism of 1054, and the inquisition. For example, The Council of Trent (1545-1564):

. . . 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

⁴⁸ Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, sections 1, 11, 21.

⁴⁹ Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos: On Religious Unity*, 6 Jan 1928, section 8.

⁵⁰ “Whosoever is separated from the Church is united to an adulteress. He has cut himself off from the promises of the Church, and he who leaves the Church of Christ cannot arrive at the rewards of Christ. . . . He who observes not this unity observes not the law of God, holds not the faith of the Father and the Son, clings not to life and salvation” (quoted by Leo XIIIth in *Satis Cognitum* [29 June 1896]; accessed 8 Sept 2004; available from: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/ENCYC/L13SATIS.HTM>).

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.⁵¹

Clement XI wrote in his 1713 *Unigenitus*,

29. Outside the Catholic Church, no grace is granted.⁵²

Pius IX said in his "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, 1863.⁵³

Leo XIII wrote (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.⁵⁴

⁵¹ *Council of Trent* (online); accessed 8 Jan 2005 at http://www.forerunner.com/chalcedon/X0020_15_Council_of_Trent.html.

⁵² Clement XI, *Unigenitus* (8 Sept 1713) (online); accessed 30 June 2003; available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Clem11/c11unige.htm>.

⁵³ Pius IX, "Syllabus of Errors" (online); accessed 8 Sept 2004; available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>.

⁵⁴ Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Cureae* (15 Sept 1896) (online); accessed 21 Oct 2005; available from <http://www.catholictradition.org/apostolicae-curae.htm>.

Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane* (1907), also included many points which condemned Protestants.⁵⁵

Even with this long history of antagonism (and without any doctrinal change), Pius XII formed the Unitas Ecumenical Center (“Associazione Unitas”) in 1945,⁵⁶ building on the work of the Dominican Congar who wrote *Chrétiens désunis* in 1937, as well as the *Una Sancta* movement born in Germany in 1938.⁵⁷ 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 [The Netherlands] from 1975-1983) as its Secretary, under the presidency of Cardinal Bea.⁵⁸ 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:

⁵⁵ For 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).

⁵⁶ “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).

⁵⁷ “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”; accessed 10 July 2001; available at http://fr.encyclopedia.yahoo.com/articles/ni/ni_1212_p0.html).

⁵⁸ “A Tribute to Johannes Cardinal Willebrands,” <http://www.interchurch-families.org/journal/2000jul02.shtm>; accessed: 25 February 2005.

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.⁵⁹

Vatican II left Evangelical workers in Catholic countries puzzled, and caught some Evangelicals by surprise. It was notable that in Berlin 1966, reports from predominantly Roman Catholic countries felt that Vatican II had somehow changed the theology of Catholicism.⁶⁰ At the London 1888 Centenary Ecumenical Missionary Conference an entire session was devoted to expose the tawdry missionary methods of Roman Catholic;⁶¹ later this subject became taboo. At Berlin 1966 there was also

⁵⁹ John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adviente*, 14 November 1994, section 18.

⁶⁰ "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).

⁶¹ James 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

little negativism toward Roman Catholicism with the exception of a few lines expressing caution. 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.”⁶² Augusto A. Esperança of Portugal 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.)⁶³

By the way, cooperation always begins with social issues, guided by a common (Socinian) moral philosophy or Christian (moralistic) worldview.⁶⁴

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 today 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).

⁶² Jacques Blocher, “French-speaking Europe,” in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 1:250.

⁶³ Augusto A. Esperança, “Portugal,” in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, 1:246.

⁶⁴ Note 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

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.⁶⁵

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 “Mexico Ever Faithful” as recorded in the official newspaper of the Vatican, the *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.⁶⁶

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

Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999], 295-96; emphasis mine).

⁶⁵ Sweeting, *From Conflict to Cooperation*, 394.

⁶⁶ John 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).

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 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.⁶⁷

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, Vatican II was a mute point. But this public relations ruse seemed to work.

⁶⁷ "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: *Lumen Gentium*" (online); accessed: 10 October 2005 at [www.http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/vaticanii/lumen-gentium.html](http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/vaticanii/lumen-gentium.html).

In the uncertainty of the post-Vatican II era, some Evangelicals and Evangelical agencies let their guard down. Like Sweeting, they assumed that the few superficial changes of the Roman Catholic church had actually changed its theology of salvation. 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 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 was 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).⁶⁸ 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.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ “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>).

⁶⁹ Jude 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.

The return model has always been the goal of the Catholic church. It was the desire of Paul VI in 1975.⁷⁰ 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 the compiling of the 1993 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and was president of the 1993 *Pontifical Commission on Biblical Interpretation* (which was strongly anti-fundamentalist).⁷¹ 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 the 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. However, it must have seemed wise to Ratzinger to postpone publication until after the Amsterdam 2000 conference to avoid any communication to and fallout from the 10,000 worldwide participants.⁷² 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

⁷⁰ “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, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 Dec 1975) (online); accessed 8 Sept 2004; available at <http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/papal/paul.vi/p6evang.txt>).

⁷¹ “The fundamentalistic approach is dangerous, for she is attractive to persons who are looking for biblical answers to their life problems. She can trick them by offering them pious but illusory interpretations, rather than telling them that the Bible does not necessarily contain an immediate response to each of these problems. Fundamentalism invites, without saying it, a form of intellectual suicide. It places false sense of security to life, for it unconsciously confuses the human limitations of the biblical message with the substance of the divine message” (Commission biblique pontificale, *L'interprétation de la Bible dans l'Église*, 50; translation mine).

⁷² “The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, at the Audience of June 16, 2000, granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with sure knowledge and by his apostolic authority, ratified and confirmed this Declaration, adopted in Plenary Session and ordered its publication. Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 6, 2000, the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord” (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect, Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B., Archbishop Emeritus of Vercelli, Secretary, Declaration ‘*Dominus Iesus' on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church* [Rome: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 6 Aug 2000], sec 23).

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.⁷³

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, Evangelicals 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 evangelizing. This mandate is not accomplished without her, and still less against her.⁷⁴

Nor do those without the Roman hierarchy 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.⁷⁵

Also, without the proper Eucharist, Evangelicals and Baptists do not have the full Gospel message:

⁷³ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Dominus Iesus* (6 Aug 2000) (online); accessed: 21 Mar 2001 http://search.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html; Internet.

⁷⁴ This 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]).

⁷⁵ This 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).

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.⁷⁶

And further, evangelism without the 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 capable of having a message which can be heard by all, regardless of regional frontiers.⁷⁷

So there we are, Baptists and Evangelicals, like little lost sheep out in the cold: no commission, no evangelism, no message, no power, and on top of that, no church!

It would seem clear that those Evangelicals who choose to cooperate with the Roman Catholic church in evangelism or in any other way must not be fully cognizant of their teaching. According to post-Vatican II encyclicals and apostolic letters, if you are not properly aligned to the Bishop of Rome, not only do you and can you not properly interpret the Bible, but you have no Commission, no evangelism, no Gospel, no power, and no church.

Last of all, the issue comes down to “sheep and wolves finding food together,” in other words, 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

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

religious freedom compels us to defend the legal freedom to proselytize even as we call upon Christians to refrain from such activity.⁷⁸

The “Colson-Neuhaus Declaration” quoting the ECT also ended with a strong 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 another community for the purposes of denominational or institutional aggrandisement.”⁷⁹

It is no surprise that the underlying issue came back to aggressive evangelism or proselytism. Similarly the last chapter of Geisler’s and MacKenzie’s *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences* is titled “Evangelism.” The ECT and Colson-Neuhaus Declaration were not saying anything new. Prior to the ECT statement, there was a barrage of ecumenical and Catholic anti-proselytism statements. 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.⁸⁰

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

⁷⁸ “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.

⁷⁹ Geisler and MacKenzie, 493.

⁸⁰ “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.

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.⁸¹

In 1975, the following paragraph appeared in “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.⁸²

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

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).⁸³

The 1982 WCC Committee on World Mission and Evangelism described the growth of mission 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.⁸⁴

Therefore, the ECT statement and the “Colson-Neuhaus Declaration” were not breaking any new ground. They merely borrowed the anti-proselytizing rhetoric from the Roman Catholic church and the World

⁸¹ “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.

⁸² “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.

⁸³ “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.

⁸⁴ “Mission and Evangelism—An Ecumenical Affirmation,” WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, 1982; in Kinnamon and Cope, 373.

Council of Churches, but they did it in the name of American Evangelicalism—now that was breaking new ground!

In 1966, Jacques Blocher warned of the dangers of this ecumenical anti-proselyzing 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.⁸⁵

Blocher was right on target. Anti-proselytizing is perhaps the most serious issue. Not being allowed to share the Gospel with adherents of other denominations undermines the plain reading of the Great Commission, “to all creation” (Mark 16:15). It undermines the need to “Do the work of an evangelist.” It undermines salvation by grace alone through faith alone. And it undermines the Evangelical view of the need to be “born again.” These concessions are why 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.⁸⁶ Vatican II was an effective public relations ploy 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.

⁸⁵ Jacques Blocher, “French-speaking Europe,” 1:250.

⁸⁶ See my paper, “Dying for the Great Commission: A 13th Century Struggle over Definition” (2005; available at www.evangelismunlimited.org), which examines the inquisition against the Albigenses and Waldenses using contemporary French historiography.