

# Letter re Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millenium

by

Bernie Koerselman

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Letter to Chuck Colson from Bernie Koerselman

RE: Evangelicals and Catholics Together

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May 15, 1995

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Dear Chuck:

Thanks, brother, for your letter of March 1, 1995 explaining your leadership in the ecumenical union with the Roman Catholic Church.

My lack of response to date has not been from lack of interest. Dar and I were in New Zealand; we became permanent residents of that country on March 10, 1995. We returned to two U.S. Mail tubs full of mail. It took Dar nine hours to sort it.

When I read your letter and the enclosures I didn't want to respond immediately. I needed the Lord to guide my thinking, to permit me to discern what I had read, and to be shown how to respond, if at all, to your letter. I know I must respond and trust I will do so over several days.

Chuck, I know you as a fellow attorney. I've always been amazed at our minds, how we attorneys can honestly come up with logical-sounding arguments to defend or advance our position. It must be one of the requirements for the mindset that permits us to be effective advocates. It is also one of the traits that I have to pray to God to take from me as I write. I want to be emptied of me, not to advance any supposed agenda of my own, but only to have the mind of Christ. There's no doubt in my mind, Chuck, that you have the same desire.

There are other things you and I have in common. I just turned 60 the 15th of April and have been a believer about 16 or 17 years. You also were mature in your thinking when you came to the Lord. You were obviously very bright, being part of prestigious law firms and then advising the president of the United States. I was also regarded as bright, but went to Pepperdine University School of Law when I was 37, graduating first in the history of the law school, their first summa cum laude. You must, as I do, feel a special kinship to the Apostle Paul who was also mature and highly educated when the Lord supernaturally appointed him an Apostle for the Gospel.

You, far more than me, may also feel kinship with Paul because of the incredible way God has used you to raise up Prison Fellowship, not just here but around the world. The Lord has not permitted notoriety (the good kind) for me as he has for you, likely because of my tendency to become prideful. I know how God hates pride; I pray one day he will consider me worthy to serve him in a speaking-teaching ministry.

As I mentioned to you before, in some ways you've been a mentor to me through your books. They encouraged me at times when I felt very alone. It was a needed blessing to read that someone else understood Scripture as I did.

But . . . here we go with that word again. The very skills and attributes that make us potentially effective for the Lord can also be our undoing. Our tools and mindset as attorneys can be ways in which we can pervert the Kingdom. Please don't take personally all that I say; I'm trying to make a point of our human proclivities which seem prone to misuse in those of us who have attorney

mindsets. I'm thinking of our ability to defend our positions, as you ably did in your three-page letter to me. But . . . my fear is that, as we dig in to defend or advocate, we may lose the essence of the truth. We become devoted to an idea that may appear laudable and we adjust our mindset to advance and/or defend that idea.

Don't for a second think that I believe you have anything but the best intentions, Chuck, for what you've done and are doing. I believe you are trying to put Jesus' prayer in John 17 into practice, to help believers become one in Christ Jesus just as Jesus and the Father are one. I cannot agree more with the goal. I've often agonized in prayer over that chapter as I see the fragmented Church and wonder how Christ's desire could be so ignored by those who claim to be his disciples.

Nor, Chuck, do I think that you are less than brilliant in your capabilities. But . . . let me remind you of Solomon, the wisest of men, gifted by God with the wisdom he asked for. That wise man lost sight of the primary goal, that of serving the Lord God only. His wealth and pleasures finally eroded him to the point he worshipped the gods of his pagan wives. Ultimately, he was very wrong, horribly wrong, perhaps eternally wrong.

Surely it is to be applauded that Catholics, Protestants, and anyone else -- Muslims, Buddhists, Mormons, atheists, etc. -- together oppose the evils of abortion. But if those various groups jointly opposed the abortion movement, would you for that reason jointly declare that you share similar theological beliefs? Of course not! Joining together for a social good in itself says nothing about each participant's standing before God.

Could you be wrong in your participation in this ecumenical movement, Chuck? I think so. I pray you will take the time to consider the possibility that a good idea has been taken to a wrong conclusion, for some of the reasons I will detail. Solomon had all power in his world; no one could tell him anything. You exercise great power in your sphere of influence; I pray God will permit you to listen and to hear. I know, however, that it will be a great struggle (for you) to hear what I have to say. If you agree that I'm right, you would have to renounce what you've advocated. What a humbling action that would be, perhaps more than mortal men are capable of these days.

Chuck, let me try to show you my understanding from Scripture, the same way I write my books. I'll use sub-headings and footnotes to make it easier for you to follow. As I refer to the document *Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium*, for brevity I'll refer to it as the Accord or the Ecumenical Accord. Likewise, I may refer to the Roman Catholic Church as the Church, the Roman Church or Rome.

### **Initial Premise Is Flawed**

When we start out to make an argument or defense, if our initial premise is flawed, the entire argument is tainted. So it is with this ecumenical effort. *The effort is based on the proposition that Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ.* If that be true, you are on the right track; I applaud your efforts and will join you in any way I can. But your argument begins fatally flawed.

## ARE WE TO JOIN TOGETHER WITH ALL OTHERS WHO CLAIM SOMETHING IMPORTANT IN COMMON WITH US?

The Accord begins with the statement that the signatories are Protestants and Roman Catholics who have common convictions about Christian faith and mission. Later is stated the true statement that all who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ. An untrue statement immediately follows: *Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ*. I will later give evidence to prove that contention.

### JESUS' EXAMPLE

Did Jesus practice ecumenism to all who shared the Jewish faith of his day? Jesus spent almost his entire time in his country of origin, in Israel under Roman political domination. The people were of the same faith but with religious rulers -- Pharisees and Sadducees -- who had differing religious beliefs. Was Jesus loving and accepting to all, fulfilling the present-day understanding of ecumenism?

Not at all! One on one, Jesus treated the religious rulers kindly, as he did Nicodemus to whom he taught the need to be born again. But as to the religious leaders as a group, Jesus had nothing good to say. He called them vipers and hypocrites. But most on point, he described their father: "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."<sup>1</sup>

Though the religious leaders all *professed* the same one God, Jesus said *their father* was the devil. I hope to show you the parallel between those Jewish leaders -- the religious establishment -- and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Accord speaks of evangelization by the Catholics. Jesus spoke of evangelization by the Jews: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are."<sup>2</sup>

Just as Jesus was with Nicodemus, we should be loving and accepting *of individual Catholics* who desire to know more and/or worship God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. But we should no more accept the Roman Catholic Church than Jesus did the Jewish religious leaders of his day.

### JUDAIZERS AND CATHOLICS

Peter was afraid of the circumcision group -- the Judaizers. The Judaizers claimed to be Christians, but they forced Jewish customs upon the Gentile Christians. When they were around, Peter acted like a Jew; otherwise he lived like a Gentile.<sup>3</sup> Paul stated the present evangelical Christian belief when he said:

"We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by *faith in Jesus Christ*. So we, too, have put our *faith in Christ Jesus* that we may be justified by *faith in Christ* and *not by observing the law*, because by observing the law no one will be justified."<sup>4</sup>

The Catholic Church does exactly as the Judaizers did. It says Catholics must follow rules established by the Catholic Church in order to have salvation. This is heresy!

## WHAT CONSTITUTES SPIRITUAL TRUTH VS. HERESY?

Paul's letter to the Galatians showed that Paul considered the Judaizers teachings heresy:

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to *a different gospel*--which is really *no gospel at all*. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to *pervert the gospel of Christ*. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, *let him be eternally condemned!* As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, *let him be eternally condemned!*<sup>5</sup>

What had the Galatians have done that was so awful that Paul would use such forceful language to denounce it? Were they denying Christ? No. Had they deserted Christianity? No. The Galatians had been influenced by the Judaizers who taught them that *in addition to* the Christianity taught by Paul, they should also observe Jewish customs and laws, among which was circumcision. Please remember, Chuck, there is no evidence that the Galatians denied Christ or did not confess Jesus as their Lord. They simply added to the requirements for salvation by accepting the teaching of the Judaizers that they must also obey the rules and customs of the Jewish religion.

Isn't the parallel remarkably similar between the Judaizers and the Catholic Church? Like the Judaizers, the Catholic Church added rules and regulations to Christianity which they falsely claim must be observed in order to have salvation.

How incredible that the signatories to the Accord acknowledge exactly what Paul condemned in those who had perverted the faith of the Galatians: "Evangelicals hold that the Catholic Church has *gone beyond Scripture, adding teachings and practices that detract from or compromise the Gospel* of God's saving grace in Christ."

## FAR WORSE THAN JUDAIZERS

Actually, the Catholic Church is far worse than the Judaizers, having introduced lie upon lie to the belief system of Catholics everywhere. Examples are the claim of an unbroken line of apostolic succession, infallibility of the Pope, confession, the mass, purgatory, Maryology, and claiming salvation can be had only in *the true Church* -- the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>6</sup>

## ARE CATHOLICS CHRISTIANS?

Were the Galatians Christians with a saving faith? No, they had added to their faith. Paul was in despair over them.<sup>7</sup> Are the Catholics Christians with a saving faith? It would be hard to justify that they could be. Though there is surely a small remnant who have knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord, who believe they must follow Jesus as their Lord, the vast majority appear to rely on the Roman Catholic Church for their salvation. They believe that salvation is possible only through --

not the Lord Jesus Christ -- but through the one and only true Church -- the Roman Catholic Church.

Just last evening I spoke with a pastor about his efforts to convert Catholics, to disciple them and to teach them what Scripture says. The Catholics could hardly believe Mary had other children and ran to get their Catholic bibles to see what it said. They often could not accept that there is but one mediator between God and man -- the man Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> As you know, Catholics are taught that their priests -- and most particularly the pope -- are mediators between God and man. Even after knowing the false claims of the Roman Catholic Church, this pastor said it was amazing these people would still not leave the Church.

*Catholics are enslaved by the Roman Church* which claims they will go to purgatory at death and can only be released from purgatory by the prayers and masses given for them in the one true Church -- the Roman Catholic Church. These teachings are lies.

Chuck, experiential evidence abounds from former Catholics who are now Christians. Do they now believe they had salvation as Catholics? Invariably not. They deplore their former faith, the untruths, the lies, the fear. There are many books detailing their experiences. Two examples are the books of Patricia Nolan Savas, *Gus: A Nun's Story*,<sup>9</sup> and Bartholomew F. Brewer, *Pilgrimage from Rome*.<sup>10</sup> Pat Savas details the little-known story of nuns who had a heart for God, who tried so hard to please him, but who never found peace or joy. Bart Brewer was eager to be a priest, was so happy to become one, but became increasingly disillusioned as he learned Scripture until he felt compelled to leave Catholicism. Two of our best friends are former Catholics who are now glowing, enthusiastic, joyous Christians. They now know they had no salvation as Catholics even though they did the things required of them by the Church. Another converted, former, 20-year Catholic who regularly practiced his faith said he had not once heard the gospel in the Catholic Church.

*The fundamental tenet of the Accord is thus flawed.* Generally speaking, Catholics are not Christians.<sup>11</sup> They are Roman Catholics who believe salvation is *in The Roman Church*.

## **Catholic Church Is Condemned in Scripture**

In my first letter, I mentioned to you that Chapters 17 and 18 of Revelation refer to the Roman Catholic Church. You didn't respond to that, Chuck. Admittedly, it takes study and discernment to understand this and I don't know if you've spent much time in Revelation. I have, and the more I study it, the more open it becomes. There are books which establish beyond reasonable doubt that it is, in fact, the Roman Catholic Church described in these chapters.<sup>12</sup> [As an aside, it is interesting how the Lord prepares us for coming assignments. I have been specially studying chapters 17 and 18 in the last months, before I read other books on the subject, and before I learned of your ecumenical efforts via the Accord.]

Consider how astonishing that God would spend *two chapters* of his Word prophetically describing an evil religious system which over centuries had spilled the blood of his saints<sup>13</sup> and which would exist in the last days. That suggests the subject is of extreme importance to God.

God told us how he views the present condition of Mystery Babylon: "She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird."<sup>14</sup>

In Revelation 16:19 it states: "God remembered Babylon the Great [the Roman Catholic Church] and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath." What will God cause to be done to her? "Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup. Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself."<sup>15</sup> In one day her plagues will overtake her: *death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire*, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.<sup>16</sup> They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire."<sup>17</sup>

## PROPHECY OF DESTRUCTION OF ROME

Over 800 years ago in Ireland, a bishop predicted the exact day and hour his life would end. When making a pilgrimage to Rome, he fell into an ecstatic trance upon seeing the city and in short three word phrases -- a coded list -- predicted the next 112 popes *until doomsday*. The list was lost for ages in Vatican archives.

When it was finally brought to the attention of the public, it was found that all Malachi's predictions had come true up to, and including, the present Pope. With it was an ominous warning. *There are only two more popes after John Paul II.*

Malachi said the final pope will be Peter the Roman, bearing the same name as the first pope. *The final pope, he prophesied, will bear witness to the destruction of Rome. Malachi prophesied that the city of seven hills<sup>18</sup> will be utterly destroyed and the awful judge will judge the people.*

Chuck, note that Malachi prophesied the same judgment for Rome as the prophecy in the book of Revelation.

## ECUMENISM OR REJOICING AT HER DESTRUCTION?

In Revelation 6, we see pictured the souls of the saints under the altar who are asking the Sovereign Lord to avenge their blood. They are told to wait a little longer until their fellow servants and brothers are killed, as they had been.<sup>19</sup> After the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church (chapters 17 and 18), the command is, "Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you."<sup>20</sup>

No, not ecumenism, but judgment. As surely as night follows day, the Roman Catholic Church will suffer God's wrath and Rome will be destroyed.

### Babylon's Crimes Before God

What wrong has she done? God told her: "By your magic spell all the nations were led astray."<sup>21</sup>

John saw her future:

I saw that the woman [Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Prostitutes] was drunk with the <i>blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.</i> <sup>22</sup> "In her was found the <i>blood of prophets and of the saints, and of all who have been killed on the earth.</i> <sup>23</sup> God has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the <i>blood of his servants.</i> " <sup>24</sup>
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In the history of the world, there has been *only one* religious organization that -- over hundreds of years -- persecuted to death the true saints of God: *the Roman Catholic Church*. As they developed one false doctrine after another, the Roman Church persecuted to death true believers who resisted her lies and idolatries.

What are these adulteries by which the Roman Catholic Church corrupted the earth? What are the idolatries and lies which were resisted to the death by the saints? Let's look closely at just three.

## THE MASS

Each mass is a sacrilege,<sup>25</sup> a claim that the priest is offering again the body and blood of Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of the people. It is a *false* claim! It is a lie. Scripture repetitively teaches, *as though there might be a future date when such explicit explanation is necessary*, that Jesus died once for all.<sup>26</sup>

Canon I, "On the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist," reads, "If anyone denieth, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but saith that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema."<sup>27</sup>

Charles H. Spurgeon said,

"The worship of what is called the Blessed Sacrament is as vile an idolatry as the worship by the Egyptians of onions and other pot-herbs which grew in their own gardens." <sup>28</sup>
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According to former priest, Bartholomew F. Brewer, "Today in several American convents where the wafer is prepared and baked, a wafer is placed on a monstrance -- a gold or silver vessel -- and kept on the altar for all to see. Twenty-four hours a day, every day, nuns take turns kneeling before the altar in perpetual adoration of the Host."<sup>29</sup> Is this idolatry more of the sins [of Revelation 18:5] piled up to heaven?

## MARYOLOGY

Maryology -- a mass of lies. In the Roman Catholic Church Mary has been elevated to a position virtually above Christ, a god-like position. The prohibition of the second commandment is violated constantly within the Roman Catholic Church which erects statues of "saints" to whom the faithful bow down and pray. Scripture says, "Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image of anything in the heavens above or the earth beneath or the waters under the earth. Thou shall not bow down to them or worship them. . . ."<sup>30</sup> Are these more of the millions of sins committed daily within the Roman Church [Revelation 18:5]?<sup>31</sup> But perhaps it is argued that the elevation of Mary is really of the past and not truly subscribed to by this Pope. If so, that argument is also fatally flawed. Closing the mass in Denver, August 1993, John Paul II said,

"Mary of the New Advent, we implore your protection on the preparations that will now begin for the next meeting. Mary, full of grace, we entrust the next World Youth Day to you. Mary, assumed into heaven, we entrust the young people of the world . . . the whole world to you!"

The Rosary, the most recited Catholic prayer, concludes: "Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our signs, mourning and weeping, in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary."

The false claims and untruths about Mary are proclaimed by and subscribed to by many leaders in the Roman Church. St. Bernadine said:

[A]ll gifts, all virtues, and all graces are dispensed by the hands of Mary to whomsoever, when, and as she pleases. O Lady, since thou art the dispenser of all graces, and since *the grace of salvation can only come through thy hands, our salvation depends on thee.*<sup>32</sup>

Another more recent author declares: "The Church and the saints greet her thus: 'You, O Mary, together with Jesus Christ, *redeemed us . . . O Mary, our salvation is in your hands' . . . She is co-Redemptrix of the human race, because with Christ she ransomed mankind from the power of Satan. Jesus redeemed us with the blood of His body, Mary with the agonies of her heart . . . suffer[ing] in her heart whatever was lacking in the passion of Christ.*"<sup>33</sup>

A tract titled "Heaven Opened by the Practice of the THREE HAIL MARYS" states:

One of the *greatest means of salvation* and one of the surest signs of predestination is unquestionably the *devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin*. All the holy doctors of the Church are unanimous in saying with St. Alphonsus of Liguori: "A *devout servant of Mary shall never perish. . .* " *I consecrate to Thee [Mary] my heart with all its affections, and beseech Thee to obtain for me from the Most Holy Trinity all the graces necessary for salvation.*<sup>34</sup>

You know Scripture, Chuck. You don't need my explanation to show how grossly Scripture is violated by these statements and prayers. Are these the people who share a common belief in Christ with Protestants? All of this is extra-biblical. All of this creates an object of worship, an idol, a substitute for the person of Christ Jesus.

How different was Jesus' response when people sought to honor Mary. There are two instances which teach exactly what Jesus wanted us to know about the importance of Mary. The first is *recited three times in Scripture*. When a passage is included three times -- in Matthew, Mark, and Luke -- I'm certain there is something of special importance God wants us to know.<sup>35</sup> There are two truths contained in this passage that bear on the subject of this letter. Matthew wrote:

While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother *and brothers* stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For *whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.*"<sup>36</sup>

First, the three similar passages dispel the lie that Mary was a continuing virgin.<sup>37</sup> Jesus had brothers; Mary was their mother. Second, Jesus gave *no special honor* to his mother, instead he

accorded the same honor to all who do the will of his Father; he regarded all those as his brothers and sisters and mothers.

Is there more corroboration for not specially honoring Mary? Yes, and even more on point. A woman in the crowd attempted to give honor to Mary as Christ's mother. She called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." What did Jesus reply? "Blessed *rather* are those who hear the word of God and obey it."<sup>38</sup> Not only did Jesus *deflect* special honor from Mary, but said it should go *instead* to those who hear the word of God and obey.

I know you know these Scriptures, Chuck. It does not occur to me that I'm showing you something you haven't seen. But I'm hoping you will see them in a new light and re-evaluate old evidence.

## PURGATORY

What does the present Catholic Church<sup>39</sup> say about purgatory?

The doctrine of purgatory clearly demonstrates that even when the guilt of sin has been taken away, punishment for it or the consequences of it may remain to be expiated or cleansed . . .

[I]n purgatory the souls of those who died in the charity of God and truly repentant but who had not made satisfaction with adequate penance for their sins and omissions are cleansed after death with punishments designed to purge away their debt.

Remember Galatians 1? There Paul said of those who added to the Gospel: "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!"<sup>40</sup> What gospel is it that teaches Christ's sacrifice on the cross does not take the full punishment for the sins of those who are justified before God? Is there partial justification? Must there be punishment to purge away the remainder? Paul said about such, "Let them be eternally condemned." Yet, inexplicably, you and others wish to declare unity with the Roman Church that claims this.

## The Cult of Babylon

Why is the Roman Catholic Church referred to as *Mystery Babylon* in Revelation? Consider the following.

"Attalus, the Pontiff and King of Pergamos, died in 133 B.C. and bequeathed the headship of the *Babylonian priesthood to Rome*. When the Etruscans came to Italy from Lydia (a region of Pergamos), they brought with them the *Babylonian religion* with all its rituals. They also set up a Pontiff who was head of the priesthood.

"Later, the Romans accepted this Pontiff as their civil ruler. Julius Caesar was made Supreme Pontiff of the Babylonian Order, thus becoming heir to the rights and titles of Attalus, the Pontiff of Pergamos, who had made Rome his heir. Thus, the first Roman Emperor became the head of the *Babylonian Priesthood*, and *Rome became the successor of Babylon*.

"The emperors of Rome continued to exercise the office of Supreme Pontiff until 376 A.D. when Emperor Gratian, for Christian reasons, refused it. Consequently, *Damascus, the Bishop of the*

*church at Rome, was elected to the position. At that time, he had already been Bishop for 12 years -- since 366 A.D. Interestingly, Damascus had attained the office as Bishop through the influence of the monks of Mt. Carmel, a college of the Babylonian religion originally founded by the priests of Jezebel.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, in 378 A.D., the head of the Babylonian Order became the ruler of the Roman Church. As a result, Rome and Babylon were united into a single religious system."<sup>42</sup>*

## rites of Babylon appear in Roman Church.

"Soon after Bishop Damascus was made Supreme Pontiff, the rites of Babylon began to come to the forefront.

"The worship of the Virgin Mary was set up in 381 A.D., and since that time all the outstanding festivals of the Roman Catholic Church have been of Babylonian origin. Easter, for instance, is not Christian. The name refers to Ishtar, one of the titles of the Babylonian queen of heaven whose worship by the children of Israel was an abomination in the sight of God.<sup>43</sup> The decree for the observance of Easter and Lent was given in 519 A.D.

"The name queen of heaven is as paganistic a title as anyone has ever borne.<sup>44</sup> The teaching depicting Mary as 'queen of heaven' is a direct transfer of title from the Babylonian goddess Ashtoreth. This is the same goddess who appears in other pagan religions under other names. She is the Babylonian 'Semiramis,' the Assyrian 'Astarte,' the Egyptian 'Isis,' the Greek 'Aphrodite,' and the Roman 'Venus.' Each was worshipped as the queen of heaven in her respective land.

"Likewise, the rosary and the 'sign of the cross' had their origin in the mystic Tau of the Chaldeans and Egyptians. It came from the letter 'T,' the first initial of the name Tammuz, and was used in the Babylonian mysteries for the same magic purposes as the church now employs it.

"Celibacy, the Tonsure and the order of Monks had no warrant or authority from Scripture, nor did the order of nuns which came into existence through the "vestal virgins" of Babylonianism.

"There is absolutely no doubt about it. Romanism is Babylonianism in mystery form, or Mystery Babylon."<sup>45</sup>

Additional heretical teachings were added to Christendom on the following approximate dates: Veneration of angels and dead saints: 375 A.D.; The Mass as a daily celebration: 394 A.D.; The worship of Mary: 431 A.D.; The doctrine of Purgatory: 593 A.D.; The title, "Pope": 610 A.D.; Worship of the cross, images and relics: 788 A.D.; Holy water instituted: 850 A.D.; Canonization of dead saints: 995 A.D.; Fasting on Fridays and during Lent: 998 A.D.; The celibacy of the priesthood: 1079 A.D.; The rosary copied from the Hindu and Mohammedan prayer wheels and introduced by Peter the Hermit: 1090 A.D.; Confession of sins to a priest, instituted by Pope Innocent III: 1215 A.D.; Papal infallibility: 1870 A.D.; and the assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven: 1959 A.D.<sup>46</sup>

None of these doctrines and practices were part of Christ's church during the first 300 years of its existence. The majority were accepted from Babylonianism.<sup>47</sup>

Is it any wonder The Revelation describes the Roman Catholic Church as *Mystery Babylon the Great*, The Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the Earth?<sup>48</sup>

## Second Vatican Council

The Accord signatories "rejoice together that the Roman Catholic Church -- as affirmed by the Second Vatican Council and boldly exemplified in the ministry of John Paul II -- is strongly committed to religious freedom and, consequently, to the defense of all human rights." Really? That same section on religious liberty states:

We believe that *this one true religion continues to exist in the Catholic Church*, to which the Lord Jesus entrusted the task of spreading it among all men. . . .

So while the religious freedom which men demand in fulfilling their obligation to worship God has to do with freedom from coercion in civil society, it leaves intact the traditional Catholic teaching on the moral duty of individuals and societies towards the true religion and the one Church of Christ. . . .

Throughout the ages she [the Roman Catholic Church] has preserved and handed on the doctrine which she has received from her Master and the apostles . . . in forming their consciences the faithful *must pay careful attention to the sacred and certain teaching of the Church*. For *the Catholic Church is by the will of Christ the teacher of truth*. It is her duty to proclaim and teach with authority the truth which is Christ and, at the same time, to declare and confirm by her authority the principles of the moral order which spring from human nature itself. [Emphasis added.]

The Roman Catholic Church, as stated in Vatican II does not believe there is salvation in the Protestant Church. They say, "this *one true religion* . . . exists in the Catholic Church . . ."

Not quoted in the Accord, perhaps ignored by its authors, was another quote in Vatican II:

This sacred council accepts loyally the venerable faith of our ancestors in the living communion which exists between us and our brothers who are in the glory of heaven or who are yet being purified after their death; and <i>it proposes again the decrees of the Second Council of Nicea, of the Council of Florence, and of the Council of Trent.</i> <sup>49</sup>
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You are likely aware that the Council of Trent decreed over 100 anathemas that were directed at the believing Christians of that day (1545-1563) who would not accept the idolatry and false claims of the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican Council II, *by proposing again the decrees of the Council of Trent, agrees that those same anathemas continue today*. Consider just one pertaining to confession:

If anyone *denies that sacramental confession was instituted by divine law or is necessary to salvation*; or says that the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, which the Catholic church has always observed from the beginning and still observes, is *at variance with the institution and command of Christ* and is a human contrivance, let him be **anathema**.<sup>50</sup>

Chuck, do you believe that confession was not instituted by divine law and *is not necessary to salvation*? Do you believe it is at variance with the institution and command of Christ? If you do, you are anathema to the Roman Catholic Church.

Or, how about purgatory. Do you subscribe to that? The position of the Catholic Church remains:

*If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be **anathema**.*

Remember Chuck, if you don't agree that there remains a need for further punishment -- that Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient -- *you are anathema to the Catholic Church*, notwithstanding the relationships you have with your fellow signatories of the Accord.

Perhaps to understand the full force of those anathemas we should review the meaning of the word:

**Anathema:** (1 a) a ban or curse solemnly pronounced by ecclesiastical authority and accompanied by excommunication (b) the denunciation of anything as accursed; (2 a) one that is cursed by ecclesiastical authority (b) one that is intensely disliked or loathed.

Whichever meaning you choose from that definition, Chuck, defines how you and I are regarded by the Roman Catholic Church if we hold a traditional evangelical belief in salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you really believe you are somehow joining together in a Christ-like manner with those who loathe you, who denounce you as accursed?

You may say, "They surely do not!" Who does not, Chuck? The few Catholics with whom you've worked on the Accord? The position of The Roman Catholic Church is as stated above. It is naive (hard to believe that of you) to think the Roman Church now finds Protestant theology acceptable and agrees that Protestants may have salvation without accepting the dogmas of the Catholic Church. Actually, knowing the above, it is more inconceivable that Protestants can (and would) welcome professing, practicing Catholics into the brotherhood of believers.

## LIARS OR HYPOCRITES

Do you begin to see a problem with the Catholics with whom you worked in preparing the Accord? These are people who are claiming to share evangelical views with you and who claim to regard you as a believing Christian. Aren't they claiming this? Yet, they belong to an organization which decrees anathema to you because of your beliefs. It curses you, bans you, loathes you.

Isn't there something wrong here? Can a person believe white is black and black is white? Or do these same people who claim that "All who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ" mean something quite different than Protestants do when they say that. Are they *also* saying that [for them at least] true faith and salvation is only in the Roman Catholic Church. Do they still believe in confession and purgatory? Do they honor Mary and pray to her?

If the Catholics you've worked with do *not* believe the things recited above,<sup>51</sup> *they are anathema to the Catholic Church and are not Catholics at all*. Then why don't they obey the command of

Christ, "*Come out of her, my people*, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues?"<sup>52</sup> Are they remaining in the Church because they don't want to lose their influence and power? Is it because deep down they believe they must be in the Roman Church in order to have salvation and be rescued from purgatory? If the Catholic signatories *do believe* those doctrines, they have added much to the faith and are deserving of the condemnation Paul heaped upon the Judaizers. If the Catholic signatories *do not believe* the doctrines stated above, the Accord is misnamed and should not pretend to deal with Catholicism at all.

## DIFFERENT MEANINGS

Do Catholics confess Christ as we do? Chuck, you know at law that many conflicts arise because people do not use words in the same way -- the meanings they ascribe to the words are different though the words are the same. I can hardly think of a more appropriate venue for this principle than the Evangelical-Catholic union expressed in the Accord. As I read the Accord, I was struck by how differently both sides likely viewed what they were signing.

I think of the misstatement of Scripture that is at the heart of the Accord: "We affirm together that we are justified by grace through faith *because of Christ*." There is no statement in Scripture which states that. "Because of Christ"? What does that mean?

Hopefully, for the Protestants, it means "we are justified by faith in Christ Jesus."<sup>53</sup> That's from Scripture.

For the Catholics the meaning can be very different. They can say: "Because of Christ the Roman Church exists. Thus because of Christ we have confession, the Mass, the doctrine of purgatory, the worship of Mary, the knowledge that the Catholic Church is the one and only true Church." Thus for the Catholic, "we are justified by grace through faith -- in the Church, in the sacraments, in the teachings of the one true Church -- because of Christ."

## HOW MUCH DEVIANCE, LIES, AND IDOLATRY?

Chuck, how much is enough? How much idolatry, how many lies, how many false claims can the Roman Catholic Church have in it and still have Protestants embrace it in the name of ecumenical unity?

Is the Catholic Church a totally different church now, today, than in the past when it slaughtered hundreds of thousands of reformers (those with what would be regarded today as an evangelical Protestant faith)? No, it has not changed except, perhaps, that the indulgences which were so discredited in the past are not so obvious today. In some areas, Maryology, for example, the Catholic Church has continued to propound new heresies in the last decades, e.g. the Ascension of Mary as late as November 1, 1950 when Pope Pius XII made that (allegedly) infallible *ex cathedra* declaration in his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*.

Persecution to death of Protestants continues in those countries firmly under the control of Catholicism. Perpetuation of the "one true Church" as the only source of salvation has not abated. So what is new that could cause Protestants now, with knowledge of the issues of the Reformation, to proclaim unity with Roman Catholics? Only that *certain* Catholics now use a vocabulary the Protestants believe they can understand.<sup>54</sup>

How much, Chuck, can be tolerated before one says, "This cannot be true faith in Christ Jesus as Lord? Does one say that all those who claim -- through words -- to honor Christ as Lord are Christians? Apparently those who signed the Accord<sup>55</sup> are willing to tolerate almost any amount of deviance in practice if the words seem acceptable.

What about fruit, Chuck? Jesus commanded, "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. *By their fruit you will recognize them.* Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."<sup>56</sup> These false prophets come saying good sounding words. Is their fruit good or bad? Over the centuries, when the Catholics were in the majority, they persecuted Protestants (Reformers); they slaughtered tens of thousands of God's saints. In solidly Catholic countries -- even today -- Protestants are sometimes persecuted to the death by the Catholic church. Indeed they are ferocious wolves. Their fruit is bad! For the fruit of their true beliefs, look at the Canons of the Church, not the persuasive words that come from the mouths of a few. Its Canons declare heresy.

The Roman Catholic Church is following a different Christ just as the Mormon Church follows a different Christ. They have devised a Christ of their own making, one that suits their ends. When a Roman Catholic speaks of Christ, he may or may not be speaking of Christ Jesus who is the Lord of the true Protestant believer. He may be speaking of that Christ whose name is used so loosely in the Catholic Church, who is offered up as a sacrifice in every mass, and who is constantly portrayed on a cross.

## MIRACLES AND DRIVING OUT DEMONS

You may have seen, as I have, Roman Catholic services in which there were apparent healing miracles. We know that through the centuries the Roman Catholic Church had priests who exorcised demons. Isn't that evidence that these are true believers! I wish it were. But that is not evidence of being a true believer or a believer at all. In one of the most frightening passages of Scripture (to me), Jesus said:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but *only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.* Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"<sup>67</sup>

Remarkable, isn't it? Demons can be driven out in Jesus' name; miracles can be performed in Jesus' name, and still such people are not saved if they do not do the will of God the Father.

Do Catholics do the will of God? How can anyone say they do? Aren't they the ones who for centuries said only The Church can interpret the Scriptures? A desperate lie! Don't Catholics claim Christ's sacrifice is insufficient so that more punishment must be exacted in order to gain entrance to heaven? Lies! Doesn't the Catholic Church claim confession was instituted by divine law and is necessary to salvation? Lies! Haven't Catholics devised lies about Mary, from her continued virginity to her ascension into heaven? Don't they call her the Queen of Heaven? Don't some claim there is no salvation without her efforts on their behalf? All lies!

Where God says thou shall not make unto thee graven images, the Catholic church makes such images. God says thou shall not bow down thyself to them nor worship them. The Catholic church teaches its supplicants to pray to Mary and the saints (graven images) and worship them.

Obedience? No! Disobedience? Yes. Truth? No. Lies? Yes. Scripture makes clear that liars will not enter the Kingdom of God<sup>58</sup> and that the place for idolators and liars will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur.<sup>59</sup>

### **The Ecumenism Accord Is Directly Contrary to Scripture**

Chuck, the reason you may be receiving such impassioned opposition may be that you are doing that which is the opposite of the command of Scripture.<sup>60</sup> The spiritual damage that can and will result from the Accord is immeasurable.

The following statement is in the Accord: "We do know that God who has brought us into communion with himself through Christ intends that we also be in communion with one another." That is wrong -- the opposite of what is taught in Scripture. I'll show you why.

First, the Accord legitimizes Catholicism. The most visible Christian leaders are endorsing the Roman Catholic Church, claiming that Catholics are Christians and share a common faith. In one step, the Accord has reassured Catholics that they're all right, that their faith is a true faith which will give them salvation. It has given them a false assurance. Those that could have been saved may now be damned. J. I. Packer's explanation of the Accord<sup>61</sup> agrees, saying that the Accord rules out "associating salvation or spiritual health with churchly identity, as if a Roman Catholic cannot be saved without becoming a Protestant or vice versa."<sup>62</sup>

### **A WARNING FOR THOSE WHO ARE PART OF THE ROMAN CHURCH**

Second, the Accord does exactly the opposite of that called for by Scripture. John wrote: Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, *so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues*; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes."<sup>63</sup>

God says, "Come out of *her, my people*."<sup>64</sup> Who is "her"? It is the Roman Catholic Church. Who are "my people"? They are those who have faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord, but who are still in the Roman Catholic Church. God says, "*Come out!*" But the Accord says, "it is neither theologically legitimate nor a prudent use of resources for one Christian community to proselytize among active adherents of another Christian community." They are the very persons in the Catholic Church -- those active adherents who have a saving faith -- the Accord says Protestants must not proselytize, i.e., urge Catholics to leave the Roman Catholic Church. Though God commands believing Catholics to leave, the Accord says Protestants must not urge them to do so. Protestants who follow the Accord will knowingly permit Catholics who have knowledge of the truth (but perhaps not of the prophecies of Revelation 17 and 18) to be subject to the plagues which will be visited upon the Roman Catholic Church. From the passage, it appears that those believing Catholics who continue in the Roman Catholic Church will share in her sins.<sup>65</sup>

The call of Scripture is *not ecumenism* with Rome, but instead *to distance ourselves* from her. We are to warn those in the Roman Catholic Church to leave the false church so they will not share

in her sins -- idolatry, lies, false faith, etc. -- so they will not share in her sins and receive her punishments.

## Summing It Up

Likely few Protestants know these facts about the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Many who oppose the Roman Church do so from prejudice based on what they've been told, not what they know to be true. *But the facts are true.* The Roman Catholic Church fulfills all the elements of the description found in Revelation 17 and 18. God says *it* is **anathema**.

I find a contradiction in your logic as you defend the Accord. On the one hand, you say that Protestants have been disturbed at how the Catholics have used the power of the state to persecute Christians.<sup>66</sup> Apparently the Accord is intended to help. On the other hand, you've said repeatedly that no one has signed the Accord on behalf of those organizations which they represent. Both Protestants and Catholics signed individually. Could persecution in Latin America be affected by individual Catholics signing as individuals? Of course not. It would have no effect at all. Persecution could not be expected to cease unless the hierarchy of the Roman Church agreed and executed the Accord as a form of truce or treaty.

Is it possible, as has happened so often on the macro-political stage, that you were out-negotiated? I suspect each side approached the Accord with very different objectives. You sought the unity Christ prayed for in John 17. The Catholic side sought legitimization by the Protestants, and to stop the Protestants from evangelizing their adherents. *They achieved their goal.* Publicly some of the best known Christian leaders have now endorsed Roman Catholics as Christians. Those who support the Accord will no longer evangelize Roman Catholics.

Doubtless you've already noticed a result you did not intend. While you sought to promote unity, the Accord has caused great discord and disunity among Protestants. In past years I had prayer times for pastors in my home. Pastors from different denominations and widely varying theological positions attended. I was so pleased to see unity develop as they prayed together. But now a new divisiveness has occurred between those who seek unity with Rome and those who remember the reformation, the past persecution and slaughter, who know the Roman Church has only changed cosmetically, and who understand Bible prophecy about the Roman Catholic Church. I fear the cause of unity has been set back terribly. Whole churches and denominations may splinter over this issue.

You sent me J. I. Packer's "Why I Signed It." Have you noted the divisiveness in his article? He calls those who oppose the Accord isolationists who are unwilling to rethink or to change. Their objections, he says, are motivated by fear, are defensive responses that drive wisdom out of the window. He calls their comments untrue, bleak, skewed, fearful, and fear-driven. That's not a good start for promoting unity, is it?

Chuck, my brother in Christ Jesus, I believe your heart is pure. I cannot believe otherwise. I believe you have and are committed to serving Jesus Christ as your Lord. I believe you are committed to extending his Kingdom through the prisons and Prison Fellowship. Now you have sought to extend the Kingdom through an alliance as evidenced in the Accord.

I've tried to give you a little of the evidence -- there is much more -- of why the Catholic church is not what it may appear to be. Truly it is cursed of God -- anathema.

There is no way believing Christians can make a deal with the devil, no way we can work together with evil for good. That was never Christ's way. We are to be different, to stand apart, to be of a different Kingdom, not of this world. You know all this.

I suspect this effort is part of the great deception prophesied to take place at the end of the age. There will be a "spiritual leader" of a one-world religion. I suspect that will be the Roman pontiff. But that spiritual leader is not of God; he is the right-hand man of the anti-Christ.

One of the great errors (in my opinion) of the Accord is a statement it claims as fact: "The only way to face world opposition is through unity between Protestants and Catholics." That statement seems a prideful declaration, that certain people have determined that Christ's Gospel can only be advanced by major organizations joining together or not opposing each other. I disagree. I believe it is only through revival -- a restoration of the understanding that all who would be true believers must daily follow Jesus Christ as Lord.

Chuck, as I said early on, my call to you is to renounce the Accord, to admit it was a mistake, to distance yourself from it as fully and completely as possible. You now know some reasons why. I pray you will listen closely to hear the voice of the Lord on this matter. It truly is a time to discern the spirits.

Your brother in Christ,

Bernie Koerselman

**Later addition:**

Pope John Paul II's recent four-nation Latin America trip kept tensions between Catholics and evangelicals in the region bubbling . . . [T]he pope called for all who had abandoned the faith [i.e., Catholicism] to return to the fold. "All those who have at some time prayed to the Most Holy Virgin, even though they may have strayed from the Catholic church, conserve in their hearts an ember of faith which can be revived," he said. "The Virgin awaits them with maternal arms open wide."

[TBC: Prayers are to Mary. She is the heart of Catholicism, and the Pope's concern is not to bring sinners to Christ for salvation but to Mary and thus to Catholicism.]

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> John 8:44.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 23:15.

<sup>3</sup> Galatians 2:11-14.

<sup>4</sup> Galatians 2:15-16.

<sup>5</sup> Galatians 1:6-9.

<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, page 223, states: "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day."

Which is worse? That Muslims are also saved or that the Catholic Church is the one true Church?

<sup>7</sup> Paul wrote, "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much *for nothing*--if it really was for nothing? (Galatians 3:3-4) My dear children, for whom I am *again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you*, how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!" (Galatians 4:19-20).

<sup>8</sup> 1 Timothy 2:5.

<sup>9</sup> Bridge Publishing, 1993, S. Plainsfield, New Jersey.

<sup>10</sup> Bob Jones University Press, 1982, Greenville, S.C.

<sup>11</sup> This is greatly reinforced by speaking with former Catholics who have been converted. They are almost universally vehement in their condemnation of their former bondage, saying with certainty that they had no salvation in the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, they claim they did not know the biblical way of salvation until they came out of the Roman Church.

<sup>12</sup> A current work which thoroughly establishes the identity of the Roman Catholic Church in Revelation 17 and 18 is by Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, published by Harvest House in 1994.

<sup>13</sup> Revelation 17:6, 18:24, 19:2.

<sup>14</sup> Revelation 18:2. Consider the parallel with 1 Timothy 4:1-3.

<sup>15</sup> Revelation 18:6-7.

<sup>16</sup> Revelation 18:8.

<sup>17</sup> Revelation 17:16. Consider also 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will *abandon the faith* and *follow deceiving spirits* and *things taught by demons*. Such teachings come *through hypocritical liars*, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They *forbid people to marry* and *order them to abstain from certain foods*, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth."

Who do we know that fits that description? Isn't it the Roman Catholic Church that forbids its priests to marry? Isn't it the Roman Church that forbade eating meat on Fridays? As you read further, the other descriptions also fit the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>18</sup> See the identical description in Revelation 17:9.

<sup>19</sup> Revelation 6:10-11.

<sup>20</sup> Revelation 18:20.

<sup>21</sup> Revelation 18:24.

<sup>22</sup> Revelation 17:6.

<sup>23</sup> Revelation 18:24.

<sup>24</sup> Revelation 19:2.

<sup>25</sup> Are the untold millions of repetitions of the mass fulfillment in part of Revelation 18:5, "for her sins are piled up to heaven?"

<sup>26</sup> See 1 Peter 3:18, Hebrews 9:26,28, 10:10, 10:14.

<sup>27</sup> *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees* (Rockford, ILL.: Tan Books), p. 82.

<sup>28</sup> "On Whose Side Are You?" *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (Pasadena, Texas: Pilgrim, 1972) XXVI, p. 214.

<sup>29</sup> Bartholomew F. Brewer, *Pilgrimage from Rome* (Bob Jones University Press, 1982), p. 43.

<sup>30</sup> Deuteronomy 5:8-9.

<sup>31</sup> Revelation 18:5, "for her sins are piled up to heaven."

<sup>32</sup> St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *The Glories of Mary* (Redemptorist Fathers, 1931), pp. 161-62, 170. Many more quotations of the same gist can be found in this source. As this is but a letter, not a book, I don't feel free to include them.

<sup>33</sup> Rev. John Ferraro, *Ten Series of Meditations on the Mystery of the Rosary*.

<sup>34</sup> "Heaven Opened by the Practice of THE THREE HAIL MARYS," Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York.

<sup>35</sup> We should know that nothing in Scripture is by accident. Is this teaching in Scripture to make certain true believers do not fall prey to the false teachings about Mary?

<sup>36</sup> Matthew 12:46-50. See also Luke 8:19-21, and Mark 3:31-35.

<sup>37</sup> Even more explicit is Matthew 13:55-56, "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us?"

<sup>38</sup> Luke 11:27-28.

<sup>39</sup> Statement by the Vatican II Council.

<sup>40</sup> Galatians 1:8.

<sup>41</sup> Jezebel was wife of Ahab. See 1 Kings 18-19.

<sup>42</sup> Peter LaLonde, *Omega Letter*, Special Report: Babel Becomes One, 1990.

<sup>43</sup> Jeremiah 7:18, 44:17,18,19,25.

<sup>44</sup> Study Jeremiah 7:18, The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me to anger. Study also Jeremiah 44:17-24.

Jeremiah 44:25-26, "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: You and your wives have shown by your actions what you promised when you said, 'We will certainly carry out the vows we made to burn incense and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven.'

"Go ahead then, do what you promised! Keep your vows! But hear the word of the LORD, all Jews living in Egypt: 'I swear by my great name,' says the LORD, 'that no one from Judah living anywhere in Egypt will ever again invoke my name or swear, "As surely as the Sovereign LORD lives.'"

<sup>45</sup> Peter LaLonde, *Omega Letter*, Special Report: Babel Becomes One, 1990.

<sup>46</sup> Jack Van Impe. The date may also be 1950.

<sup>47</sup> Peter LaLonde, *Omega Letter*, Special Report: Babel Becomes One, 1990.

<sup>48</sup> Revelation 17:5.

<sup>49</sup> Vatican Council II, Vol. 1, p. 412.

<sup>50</sup> *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. H. J. Schroeder, O.P. (Tan Books, 1978), Fourteenth Session, Can. 6, pp. 102, 103.

<sup>51</sup> Relating to the Mass, confession, and purgatory.

<sup>52</sup> Revelation 18:4-5.

<sup>53</sup> Galatians 2:16,17.

<sup>54</sup> For example, the phrase "because of Christ," earlier discussed. Some of those Catholics may be born-again believers with a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>55</sup> Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium."

<sup>56</sup> Matthew 7:15-17.

<sup>57</sup> Matthew 7:21-23.

<sup>58</sup> Revelation 22:15.

<sup>59</sup> Revelation 21:8.

<sup>60</sup> God has commanded those in the Catholic Church who have knowledge of the truth, "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:5).

<sup>61</sup> "Why I Signed It."

<sup>62</sup> J. I. Packer's conclusion does not agree, of course. His premise is that Catholics can be and are Christians.

<sup>63</sup> Revelation 18:4-5.

<sup>64</sup> Revelation 18:4.

<sup>65</sup> Revelation 18:4. Will that also affect their possibility of salvation? We know our sins must be forgiven in order to appear before our holy God. They will "share in the sins" of the Church if they remain in it.

<sup>66</sup> Why should they be surprised? It has been thus for centuries.