

EVANGELISM

For the past forty years, the authors have had the opportunity to dialogue with believers of the Roman Catholic persuasion, from both the clergy and the lay side of the house, of traditional as well as a charismatic bent. Indeed, we have participated in efforts to teach the Word of God to Catholic believers. As a result of this, as well as the changing landscape, the question of areas of possible cooperation between Catholics and evangelicals has emerged. Controversial as it is for many Catholics as well as evangelicals, it is our purpose here to explore some contemporary efforts in such cooperation. As Harold O. J. Brown has written, “to the extent that a Catholic and a Protestant are orthodox, there is more by far that unites them than divides them, particularly over against the monolithic secular culture of today.”¹

It is important to note that we must repeat that we are not talking about ecclesiastical union. There are, as we have seen in Part Two, apparently insurmountable obstacles for orthodox Catholics and conservative evangelicals. What we make reference to here is exploring areas of personal and social cooperation, as well as evangelistic efforts, noting some of our common spiritual heritage. We speak here of evangelistic efforts where the gospel is clearly proclaimed (1 Cor. 15:1–6), such as the Billy Graham Crusades, and in which Catholics participate.

MORE THAN SACRIFICE AND OFFERINGS

Merely participating in baptism, confirmation, the eucharistic event, and the rest of the sacramental system, without personally encountering Jesus Christ, will not save anyone. It goes without saying that this is true for all Christian systems: Baptist, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, or Roman Catholic. It is sadly

¹ Brown, *Protest of a Troubled Protestant*, p. 255.

true that a person can be reared in a Christian environment and never be truly converted; knowing *about* Christ, but never believing *in* him.

It may come as a surprise to some Protestants to learn that some firmly entrenched Roman Catholics have come to the same conclusion: Christian salvation involves more than cultural accretion. Léon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, a major participant at Vatican II, writes: “It was not the truth about Jesus but the truth of Jesus which was at the basis of conversion.” Further, “Experiencing Christ comes of necessity before the definition of that experience. St. Thomas Aquinas, a theologian whom no one would suspect of anti-intellectualism teaches that the object of faith is not found in doctrinal propositions concerning God, but in God himself known and loved in a personal relationship.” Suenens adds, “To be a true Christian means, further more, to have met Jesus personally, as Saviour, and as Lord. I must accept Jesus totally, as a reality, the Lord and Master of my life as I live and experience it day by day.” For “During what we call the Christian centuries, it was commonly accepted that a Christian was, in the first place, someone who ‘practiced’ his religion. . . . Faith was judged by a perceptible norm: namely, the practice of one’s religion.”²

In the same volume, Cardinal Suenens quotes from a French bishop, saying, “We held the Vatican II Council in the belief it was self-evident that Christians were essentially destined to be missionaries. But that presupposes that they are believers. . . . In fact, this was true only of a few.”³ Suenens adds, “We must help Christians to become continually more aware of their faith and live it on a more personal level. Many must be helped to exchange a sociological Christianity for a full and active life of faith.” Hence, “Christianity which we have inherited, which has its foundation mainly in the family and education, must mature into a Christianity of choice, based on a personal decision and embraced with full consciousness. As Tertullian said ‘Christians become so, they are not born.’ ”⁴

Noted evangelical and Anglican Bible teacher John R. W. Stott, in a work concerning twentieth-century preaching, offers the following statement from John Chrysostom, who occupied the pulpit of the Cathedral in Antioch before becoming bishop of Constantinople in A.D. 398. Speaking of the healing of the body of Christ, Chrysostom said: “One only means and one way of cure has been given us . . . and that is teaching of the Word.”⁵ Stott also mentions Dominic (A.D. 1170–1221), who was the founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, and Humbert de Romans (d. A.D. 1277), a Minister General in the Dominican order, who said: “Christ only once heard Mass . . . but he laid great stress on prayer and preaching, especially on preaching.”⁶ The Franciscan Bernardino of Siena (A.D. 1380–1444) makes this “evangelical-like” statement concerning preaching: “If of

2 Léon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), pp. 59, 63, 116, 119.

3 Bishop G. Huyghe, *L’ Eglise d’ Arras*; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 120.

4 Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* p. 121.

5 Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, p. 20.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

these two things you can do only one—either hear the mass or hear the sermon—you should let the mass go, rather than the sermon. . . . There is less peril for your soul in not hearing the mass than in not hearing the sermon.”⁷

It seems that Suenens, Chrysostom, Dominic, and Bernardino could share the pulpit with Billy Graham and John MacArthur, and the difference in the essential message content—at least soteriologically—would be inconsequential. Having attempted to show agreement between medieval and evangelical thinking as to the need for and the purpose of preaching, let us examine some contemporary situations.

CONTEMPORARY “EVANGELICAL” CATHOLICS

In a volume edited by David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge we find the following comment by a sociologist: “Into some evangelical groups Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals, and Roman Catholics who have an evangelical spirit are accepted with open arms and a warm welcome.”⁸ Keith A. Fournier, an attorney who serves as General Counsel and Dean of Evangelism at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, calls himself an “evangelical Catholic” because he believes that the Christian’s main task is to proclaim the good news. “I am an evangelical Catholic Christian—without contradiction in terms, logic, theology, or history.”⁹ Fournier continues, “We were made for God. That’s why we respond to political and philosophical ideals that are greater than us.” Therefore, “As Christians, we have the incredible opportunity to tell people that what they are reaching for is summed up in Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ In a later work, Fournier states, “There are times when those who profess to be Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox are not truly followers of Christ. They need to know Him personally as their Savior and Lord.”¹¹ It is this kind of Roman Catholic with whom many evangelicals wish to align themselves to face the unbelief of this culture.

COOPERATIVE EVANGELISTIC CRUSADES

7 Ibid.

8 David O. Moberg, “Fundamentalists and Evangelicals in Society,” in *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing*, ed. David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), p. 144.

9 Keith A. Fournier, *Evangelical Catholics: A Call for Christian Cooperation to Penetrate the Darkness with the Light of the Gospel* (Nashville: Nelson, 1990), p. 21.

10 Keith A. Fournier, *Religious Cleansing in the American Republic* (Washington, D.C.: Liberty, Life and Family Publications, 1993), p. 43.

11 Keith A. Fournier with William D. Watkins, *A House United? Evangelicals and Catholics Together* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1994), p. 143.

When the topic of evangelism is raised, the image of Billy Graham inevitably comes to mind. Born near Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1918, Graham has preached the gospel to more people than any evangelist in history. Reaching nearly one hundred million people in his crusades, in addition to vast numbers by radio and television, two million individuals have declared their faith in Jesus Christ under his ministry.

Although Graham's efforts to keep his evangelistic meetings free of any racial segregation are well known, his acceptance of prayer and active support from Roman Catholics in his crusades is not common knowledge. He has had many Roman Catholic clerics on the platform with him, including such important national figures as Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York and Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston.

NEGATIVE REACTION

On the Protestant side, reaction to cooperative efforts from many fundamentalists is well known. Bob Jones University and those who identify with their stand have opposed cooperative evangelism as compromise. While many are willing to admit that Graham has not compromised the basic gospel *message*, they believe his *methods* compromise the truth. They object particularly to Graham's "fellowship" with "unbelievers" in having them on the platform and even turning over "converts" to these "liberal," that is, non-fundamental, churches.

The problem with fundamentalism began with Billy Graham's New York crusade in 1957. In addition to support from local fundamentalists, Graham accepted aid and endorsement from the city's Council of Churches. This resulted in converts being directed to liberal churches and denominations. Fundamentalists such as Carl McIntire, John R. Rice, and Bob Jones, Sr., took exception to Graham's perceived capitulation with liberalism and attempted to discredit the New York campaign before it even started. Indeed, at the conclusion of the crusade, Carl McIntire stated that the effort was, " 'a distinct defeat for the fundamentalists' and a victory for modernism and apostasy." ¹²

The fundamentalist camp was later to split into two factions: militant fundamentalists and moderate fundamentalists. The militants "not only strictly insist on separation from denominations that tolerate theological liberalism, but also refuse fellowship even with fundamentalist individuals in such denominations." ¹³ This approach became known as "second-degree separation." The distinction would later cause a rupture between Bob

12 "About Billy Graham," *Beacon*, 11 April 1957, p. 1; 25 April 1957, p. 3; quoted in Louis Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement 1930-1956* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963), p. 142.

13 George M. Marsden, "Fundamentalism and American Evangelicalism," in Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston, eds., *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1991), p. 31.

Jones III (more militant) and John R. Rice (more moderate) because of Rice's friendly relationship with fundamentalist leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention.¹⁴

Most evangelicals, however, rejoice in the fact that Graham has never compromised his basic message. They stress the good biblical follow-up material used with converts, being willing to trust them to the continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Interestingly, not all traditional Catholics are as charitably inclined toward Graham's non-sectarian efforts to present the good news as the aforementioned prelates. Consider the following article of concern, which appeared in the weekly Catholic newspaper, *The Wanderer*.

"The cardinal archbishop of Philadelphia has told his people that Dr. Billy Graham has traveled the world preaching the Gospel of Salvation."

On the other hand, he does seem to preach some things that are not recognizable as part of Christ's Good News: the supremacy of the Scriptures as the sole Revelation, the necessity of "putting on Christ" by public testimony of commitment to Jesus, . . . indeed, the general fundamentalist Protestant understanding of what is involved in salvation. . . . The cardinal might have wished only to take advantage of Dr. Graham's generous offer to have Catholic priests present to counsel Catholics who might make themselves known at his "Crusade" last June. But that hardly justifies speaking of and endorsing Dr. Graham as a preacher of the Gospel of salvation, when he is merely one in a line of many Protestant revivalists. . . . It is alien to Christian tradition that the role of preaching the Gospel be done by laymen.¹⁵

We wonder if the author can be totally unaware of the valuable contributions that lay people such as the tentmakers Priscilla and Aquila, who assisted Paul in the formation of the church at Corinth made in early Christianity.

POSITIVE CATHOLIC COOPERATION

Christianity Today made a much more positive statement concerning Billy Graham's Crusade held in Budapest, Hungary, in July 1989, reported to be the largest public evangelistic service ever held in Eastern Europe—some 90,000 people came to listen, and more than 25,000 of them responded to Graham's invitation to "come to Christ." In addition to the support of the local Protestant churches, the effort

also attracted Catholic involvement. Catholic Bishop Endre Kovacs of Miskole was among 2,000 who took training classes held in both Catholic and Protestant churches for prospective counselors and follow-up workers. And the country's Catholic primate,

14 The two positions are detailed in *ibid.*, n. 23.

15 Frank Morriss, "Billy Graham and the Gospel of Salvation," *The Wanderer*, 6 August 1992. Some would say that *The Wanderer* is to traditional Catholicism what John R. Rice's magazine, the *Sword of the Lord*, was to a past generation of Protestant fundamentalists.

Laszlo Cardinal Paskai, issued a strong endorsement of Graham's mission and message from the stadium platform. "We need economic renewal in Hungary," Paskai told the crowd, "but first of all we need spiritual and moral renewal from Jesus." He led in an unscheduled prayer, asking for a special divine anointing of Graham and that "many tonight might recognize Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life."¹⁶

Thus, we have a Roman Catholic cardinal cooperating with a Southern Baptist preacher in an evangelistic crusade—an interesting spectacle to say the least.

COMMENTS FROM ONE WHO HAS BEEN ON BOTH SIDES

Concerning Billy Graham, we will quote from a journal article written by Thomas Howard, a recent convert from evangelicalism to Roman Catholicism. Howard formerly taught English at Gordon College, a respected evangelical institution in Massachusetts. In his book *Evangelical Is Not Enough*, he describes his "pilgrimage from Evangelicalism (which he loves and reveres as the religion of his youth) to liturgical [Roman Catholic] Christianity."¹⁷ Howard writes:

The name of Billy Graham is virtually synonymous in the minds of most people with the word *evangelization*. Here is a man—a Protestant, to be sure—who circles the globe, decade after decade. Literally millions upon millions of men and women, in every continent now, have heard the Christian message as Graham casts it, namely, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, His death on the Cross was the sacrifice for the sins of the world, and His rising from the dead the victory over sin and death. Come to Him—believe in Him—commit yourself in total obedience to Him—accept Him as your Savior—and you will have eternal life. You will be a Christian.

Howard continues,

As you know, Billy Graham appears at the hither end of a lineage which reaches back through Billy Sunday to D. L. Moody, Charles G. Finney, and thence to John Wesley and beyond. A question arises here: is this kind of evangelism a strictly Reformation phenomenon? Is it a vitiated Gospel? What, exactly, was the message which, say, Martin of Tours preached among the Gauls? Or Augustine to Ethelbert and his Kentish subjects in 597 A.D. ? What did Cyril and Methodius preach on the banks of the Danube? Or St. Philip among the Ethiopians, or Thomas on the banks of the Ganges?

About evangelicals, Howard adds:

¹⁶ Edward Plowman, "Glasnost Opens Way for Graham," *Christianity Today*, 8 September 1989. One author (Ralph MacKenzie) had this event personally confirmed to him by Clifford Anderson, dean of Bethel Theological Seminary, West in San Diego, California. Dr. Anderson attended this crusade as a representative of the Baptist General Conference and witnessed the events described in the *Christianity Today* article.

¹⁷ Thomas Howard, *Evangelical Is Not Enough: Worship of God in Liturgy and Sacrament* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984), back cover.

First, they love the Gospel in all of its thrilling clarity; and second, their conversions are genuine. . . . We cannot lump the evangelicals together with groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, or the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's outfit, since the evangelicals are as briskly Nicene, Chalcedonian, and Constantinopolitan as the Catholics. Their critique of the cults would be identical with the Catholic critique: you people have added new and unwarranted notions to the apostolic faith.

When asked about Roman Catholics and evangelism, Howard replies:

There is no Catholic figure analogous to any of the mass evangelists that have sprung from the Reformation. In our own time, Bishop Sheen was probably the closest analogue. In the early centuries of the Church, of course, something like mass evangelism certainly took place with the preaching of figures like Martin of Tours or Augustine of Kent, when whole kingdoms converted. Do we, when we speak of evangelization, visualize some electrifying Catholic figure analogous to Billy Graham?

Howard concludes that the message Billy Graham proclaims is the one that Christians from all jurisdictions should deliver.

But surely the message to us, what with one thing and another in our own decade—the widespread slumping away of loyalty to the *Magisterium* on the part of the Catholic laity, and the plummet in vocations, and the sheer decibel-level and speed and razzle-dazzle of the messages drowning out the Christian Gospel, and the melancholy efforts at shoring up catechesis in our parishes by curricula that will undertake anything in heaven and earth *except* to hail kids abruptly with Christ Jesus the Savior—surely the message to us is, at least: Whatever else you are doing, tell your children, tell your parishioners, tell the yuppies and the paupers and the dying and the disfranchised and the complacent and the perplexed—tell them that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.¹⁸

In contrast to Howard, we believe that “evangelical” is indeed enough, and that Howard's book can be critiqued at a number of points. However, he is irenic and attempts to avoid a triumphalistic attitude. He certainly follows C. S. Lewis who instructed about the Christian church as a whole: “When you have reached your own room, be kind to those who have chosen different doors and to those who are still in the hall.”¹⁹ At any rate, Tom Howard and Billy Graham appear to be “on the same page” concerning evangelism.

Billy Graham spoke to more than 150,000 people during three meetings in Moscow's Olympic Arena in October 1992. Unfortunately, his reception was less cordial with the Russian Orthodox leaders than it had been with Roman Catholics. Despite the Orthodox

18 Thomas Howard, “Witness for the Faith: What Catholics Can Learn from Billy Graham,” *Crisis* (April 1991): 38–41.

19 C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1943), p. 12.

hierarchy's reluctance, Graham received support from individual priests and preached with great power.²⁰

Shortly after the announcement of the Billy Graham 1993 Columbus, Ohio crusade, Roman Catholic Bishop James A. Griffin made the following editorial comment: "Dr. Graham's sermons, which emphasize the basic scriptural message of repentance, conversion and commitment to Christ, appeal to Christians of all denominations, and his crusades have proven to be effective means of reaching secularized people who have never known Christ, and reaching those who have drifted away from active religious involvement."²¹

Sterling Huston, Graham's director of crusades in North America, states that "Roman Catholic involvement has grown significantly during the past 10 to 15 years." Further, "Some Catholic leaders now serve as official representatives on crusade planning committees. And Catholics are welcome as ushers, choir members, and even counselors."²² It should be noted that all counselors, regardless of their ecclesiological affiliation, are required to take Graham's "Christian Life and Witness" classes before participating in a crusade.²³

The recent Catholic catechism directs Christians as follows: "Those who with God's help have welcomed Christ's call and freely responded to it are urged on by love of Christ to proclaim the Good News everywhere in the world."²⁴

THE CATHOLIC RENEWAL MOVEMENT

Whenever the person or work of the Holy Spirit has been ignored or undervalued the body of Christ has suffered. It is important to note that Jesus does not begin his ministry until after his anointing by the Holy Spirit, and he acts only in the Spirit's power and not his own (Luke 4:14 ; 5:17 ; 11:20 ; cf. parallel passage, Matt. 12:28).²⁵

A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

20 "Finally, for the Faithful," *World*, 31 October 1992, pp. 18–19.

21 "Catholics and the Billy Graham Crusade," *The Catholic Times* (Columbus, Ohio), 24 September 1993, p. 4.

22 David Duggins, "Evangelicals and Catholics: Across the Divide," *Moody Monthly* (November 1993): 26–27.

23 The authors wish to thank Dr. John N. Akers, special assistant to Dr. Billy Graham, for much of the information concerning Roman Catholic involvement in crusade activities.

24 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 3, p. 7.

25 D. A. Tappeiner, "Holy Spirit," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp. 733–35.

The early church fathers held the Holy Spirit in high esteem. The same applies to the later Reformers; Calvin could be described as the theologian of the Spirit and the Word.²⁶

The twentieth century has witnessed a great outpouring of the power and influence of the Holy Spirit concerning the kingdom of God. Not only the formation of the Pentecostal churches, but also the charismatic renewal movements in the mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic Church are a part of this outpouring, as well as many evangelistic non-charismatic groups. We should mention the Cursillo Movement which originated in 1949 in Majorca, Spain, under the direction of Bishop Juan de Hervas. A forerunner of the current charismatic renewal movement, Cursillo seeks, mainly through retreats, to motivate Christians to live an integrated Christian life. In 1957, a young Spanish-born Franciscan priest named Gabriel Fernandez gathered a group of seventeen young men on a weekend retreat in Texas for what was to be the first Cursillo in America. The movement has since been adapted by other denominations, including the United Methodist (Emmaus Walk) and the Episcopal church (Episcopal Cursillo). Many leaders of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement (notably Ralph Martin) have come out of the Cursillo movement.²⁷

It is unlikely that any form of charismatic activity would have been accepted by the Roman Catholic Church were it not for Vatican II. First, a decision was made that the Roman Catholic Church should participate actively in cooperation with Protestants. Second, the Catholic church recognized the importance of charismatic gifts to the life of the church (some council members resisted this premise but Cardinal Suenens and his influence carried the day). Third, Vatican II stated that holy living and spiritual activism are to be pursued by the laity as well as the clergy.

It is generally agreed that the formation of the prayer group at Duquesne University in 1967, which consisted of faculty and students, was the beginning of the renewal movement in the Roman Catholic Church.²⁸ The movement soon spread to Notre Dame and Michigan State. In September 1967, Ralph Martin and Stephen Clark (both graduates of Notre Dame) were invited to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to work in campus ministry. Their efforts had a major impact on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) movement; South Bend and Ann Arbor have become the main centers of influence among Roman Catholic charismatics.

The growth rate of this movement can be illustrated by the following statistics: In 1969, 450 people attended the annual CCR Conference at Notre Dame; by 1976 the number of attendants had increased to 30,000 (that year about 500 priests celebrated the Eucharist and Léon Joseph Cardinal Suenens gave the homily at this gathering). CCR has spread internationally and now is thriving in more than 100 countries. Rome has not been

26 Ibid., pp. 742–45.

27 “Cursillo Movement,” *The Concise Dictionary of the Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), p. 113.

28 It is significant that this meeting took place at the home of a Presbyterian lay woman and involved people from the mainline Protestant churches.

immune to the effect of this phenomenon. At Cardinal Suenens' request, a special audience was granted by Pope Paul VI, who warmly greeted a group of charismatic leaders. A second international congress took place in Rome in 1975, with 10,000 in attendance. One gets the impression that the CCR is firmly rooted in the Catholic church and will be around for a while.²⁹

LAY CATHOLIC EVANGELIST JOHN CLAUDER

One local parish that has been influenced by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement is St. Francis Church in Vista, California. The church's pastor, Fr. Douglas Regin, takes the gospel mandate seriously and employs a number of different means to that end. An important member of the St. Francis staff is lay evangelist John Clauder, preacher and drummer extraordinaire. Clauder was bitten by the rock 'n' roll bug at age fourteen and became a drummer, playing with such groups as The Mamas and the Papas, Sonny and Cher, and the Righteous Brothers. Although he had everything the world would consider important he felt empty inside.

When Clauder went on a Charismatic Renewal retreat he found God. Clauder remembers, "All of a sudden my vision was taken away and all I could see was Jesus. The Lord touched me in a very special way."³⁰ He began to turn down secular jobs and play exclusively for Christian groups. In 1989, Clauder, with his wife Sandy and their eight children, moved to San Diego and began working at St. Francis Church. Among his many activities, Clauder has organized a number of Unity Rallies. "Nearly 1,000 people, most of them members of six born-again, evangelical Protestant churches, rallied to the cause of Christian Unity October 22 at St. Francis Church, Vista."³¹

Clauder has also developed a ministry to inmates at the Vista Detention Facility (see chap. 17). He recently spent three weeks in Vladivostok, Siberia, where he helped teach evangelism methods, played his drums, and witnessed for Christ in open-air meetings. We think St. Francis of Assisi would be pleased with the efforts of brother John Clauder.

THE LIGHT AND LIFE MOVEMENT IN POLAND

29 We are indebted in this section to information found in F. A. Sullivan, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," in *Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Regency Press, 1988), pp. 110–14; H. D. Hunter, "Charismatic Movement," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990), pp. 243–44; Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C., *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (South Bend: Notre Dame, Ave Maria Press, 1971); Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., *Let the Fire Fall* (Ann Arbor: Servant Press, 1986); Léon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 63.

30 Kim Horner, "Vistan Drums in the Lord," *North County Blade-Citizen*, 22 October 1993, p. A-1.

31 Steven Saint, "Unity Rally Joins Catholics, Evangelicals," *Southern Cross*, 4 November 1993, p. 12.

One of the results of the Catholic Renewal Movement was the formation of the non-charismatic Light and Life fellowships in Poland. When Fr. Franciszek Blachnicki was ordained in 1950 and sent to the town of Tychy as a vicar, he was concerned about the spiritual temperature of his parish: “Crowds filled the Church at each of the many Masses on Sunday. However, Father Franciszek saw that most people were coming to Church more out of custom and habit than anything else. To most of his parishioners, faith was not a source of happiness and strength. Nor had it any real relevance to their lives.”³² Because of his spiritual concern Fr. Franciszek began retreats first for altar boys and then young people in general. These retreats took place during the height of the Stalinist oppression; the Communists had issued a decree that the State could appoint and remove priests and bishops. The retreats became known as “an Oasis for the Children of God.”

Fr. Franciszek felt that Catholic teaching over the centuries had been limited to an educational process, so he worked to introduce each young person to a personal relationship with Jesus. During the course of each retreat a practical model of Christian life was presented. By 1969, an increasing number of Oasis participants were asking for continuing spiritual instruction and the movement was growing rapidly. Following are some personal testimonies by people of all ages and walks of life: “Oasis has led to a change in my life and my behavior. I want to join a group in which we can study the Bible together. . . . I want Jesus to become my way,” and “At Oasis, I discovered who Jesus really is and what a central role He can play in my life.”³³ In March 1976, the movement became known as Light and Life. Retreats were designed “as a three-year programme, involving three stages of Christian maturity—(1) meeting Christ and conscious acceptance of Him as Lord and Saviour, (2) renewal of baptismal vows and (3) bearing witness to Christ in the community.”³⁴ Fr. Franciszek made evangelism an important factor in the Light and Life movement.

EVANGELICAL SUPPORT OF CATHOLIC RENEWAL IN POLAND

In the mid 1970s, news about this spiritual development in Poland began to reach the West. Talk about faith based on a personal relationship with Christ, systematic

Bible study, and prayer brought Western evangelicals to investigate. The Light and Life Movement identified itself with the growing Catholic Renewal and contacts were later made with Polish Pentecostals, although Light and Life from its outset was non-charismatic. “To Western Protestants, Father Blachnicki’s model of faith, conceived as individual encounter with Christ and total trust in Him, as well as the emphasis put on Bible studies by the Light and Life movement, were a revelation.”³⁵ Fr. Blachnicki

32 Grazyna Sikorska, *Light and Life: Renewal in Poland* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 35. The foreword in this volume contains a message from John Paul II.

33 Ibid., pp. 61–62.

34 Ibid., p. 66.

35 Ibid., p. 70.

began to “establish contacts with Protestant evangelistic groups including ‘Campus Crusade for Christ’—an American-based inter-denominational movement known also as ‘Agape,’ which pursues evangelistic activities in over 80 countries throughout the world with real success.”³⁶

It was at this time (1977) that one of the authors was privileged to go to Poland and minister. I (Norm Geisler) was asked to teach a Bible survey course to about 100 university students. We came across the border from Austria (through Czechoslovakia) incognito, traveling as campers (we actually did meet in a camp in southern Poland). I found spiritually eager young people—scarcely any of whom owned a complete Bible—eating up the Word of God day after day. Upon my return I wrote:

Thousands of people flock to camps to hear the gospel. Young and old, factory workers, doctors, college professors, all cultivate a deep commitment to Jesus Christ. Churches are full and overflowing morning and evening. Farmers sing gospel songs at the top of their lungs. Bands of young people chant, “We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.”

Where is all this going on? In a revival center of the United States? No. In Poland, long an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic land but dominated by Marxism for a full generation.

I saw them. I ate with them, sang with them and knelt with them in their churches and chapels. They call themselves *Oazi* (Oasis). They are an indigenous spiritual renewal group who hold retreats, publish [underground] literature and teach people to be born again by personally trusting Christ as Savior.³⁷

My experience in Poland was exhilarating to say the least. Day after day, hour after hour, we presented a Christ-centered approach to Scripture, following the example of our Lord (Luke 24:27 , 44 ; John 5:39). I shall never forget the parting words of the students: “Before you came the Bible was like a room with furniture but with no lights. You have turned on the lights for us!”

Although there were obvious ecclesiastical and doctrinal differences, I felt a continual, deep bond of spiritual unity with these brothers and sisters in Christ. We loved the same Christ, who died and rose again for our sins. They were utilizing Campus Crusade’s “Four Spiritual Laws” for evangelism, although they believed also in the authority of the Catholic church. Even though they were at that time forbidden by law to witness in the streets, they sang gospel hymns—many of the same ones we sing in Protestant churches—as they walked through the streets. Catholic churches in that area were packed out—even on Sunday evening—as peasant parishioners shouted jubilant praise. What I experienced was a dynamic, joyous, Christian, and evangelistic community of believers who were more eager than most American evangelicals I know to learn and live the Word of God.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Norman L. Geisler, “An Oasis of Living Water,” *Christian Herald* (February 1978): 52.

SOME NEGATIVE CATHOLIC REACTION

News of this spiritual activity in the Catholic church reached some conservative elements in the clergy. Fr. Franciszek was accused of trying to Protestantize the movement.³⁸ In response to the concern that arose in the Polish hierarchy over these cooperative endeavors Fr. Franciszek quoted Pope Paul VI:

We make our own the desire of the Fathers of the Third General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for a collaboration marked by a greater commitment with the Christian brethren with whom we are not yet in perfect unity, taking as a basis the foundation of Baptism and the patrimony of faith which is common to us. By doing this, we can already give a common witness to Christ before the world in the very work of evangelization. Christ's command urges us to do this, the duty of preaching and of giving witness to the Gospel requires this.³⁹

Fr. Franciszek continues:

it was in this close cooperation between the Light-Life movement and the Campus Crusade for Christ that the appeal of the "Vatican Council's Fathers" was being fulfilled. "Catholics must joyfully acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian gifts of our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and the virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ, sometimes even by shedding their blood. For God is always wonderful in His works and worthy of admiration. Nor should we forget that whatever is wrought by the Grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can contribute to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian never conflicts with the genuine interests of the faith, indeed it can always result in a more ample realization of the very mystery of Christ and the Church."⁴⁰

Fr. Franciszek Blachnicki was forced to leave Poland by the Communist authorities, and on February 27, 1987, he died in exile in the small West German town of Carlsberg. In a message that was sent to be read at his funeral, Pope John Paul II said:

"We have lost a devoted apostle of conversion and spiritual renewal as well as a great spiritual leader of young people. . . . He used the talents abundantly bestowed upon him . . . to build God's Kingdom."⁴¹

ALLIES FOR FAITH AND RENEWAL

38 Sikorska, *Light and Life*, p. 72.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid., p. 73.

41 Ibid., foreword.

One of the most impressive results stemming from the Catholic Renewal Movement is the formation of Allies for Faith and Renewal.⁴² In 1980, under the direction of two Catholics, John C. Blattner and Kevin F. Perrotta, a notable group of Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic scholars came together to witness for the faith amidst the hostile cultural environment.

AN IMPRESSIVE LIST OF JOINT PARTICIPANTS

Advisors to and participants in Allies for Faith and Renewal include evangelical leaders such as Donald Bloesch, professor of theology, Dubuque Theological Seminary; Harold O. J. Brown, professor of theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship; Richard Land, director of Christian Life Commission of Southern Baptist Convention; J. I. Packer, professor of theology, Regent College; Charles V. Simpson, pastor of Gulf Coast Covenant Church, Mobile, Alabama; John H. White, Chaplain, Geneva College; and John Wimber, founder of Vineyard Ministries.

Roman Catholics involved include William B. Ball, religious rights attorney; Francis Canavan, S.J., professor of political science, Fordham University; Stephen B. Clark, president, Sword of the Spirit; James Hitchcock, professor of history, University of St. Louis; Cardinal Bernard Law, Boston; Ralph Martin, leader, Sword of the Spirit; Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., president of Franciscan University of Steubenville; Alan Schreck, professor of theology, Franciscan University of Steubenville; Ann Shields, F.I.R.E. Evangelistic Ministries; Janet Smith, professor of classics, Notre Dame; and Paul Vitz, professor of psychology, New York University.

Eastern Orthodox participants include: Deborah Malacky Belonicki, Orthodox Church in America; Stanley Harakas, professor of ethics, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology; Theodore Stylianopoulos, professor, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

A UNITED STATEMENT

The following quotes are from the *Allies for Faith and Renewal Statement of Purpose*. They speak for themselves:

We are Christians who want to work together for the cause of Christ. We want to see the message and teaching of Christ presented clearly in the churches and to the world, and to see individual Christians and the Christian churches renewed in a living relationship with God.

We believe that the Christian people must unite in loyalty to the authority of God's word. Today faith in God's revelation and obedience to it is being attacked, both directly

⁴² Information concerning future conferences and the goals of this organization can be obtained by writing: Alliance for Faith and Renewal, P.O. Box 8229, Ann Arbor, MI 48107, or calling (313) 761-8505.

and indirectly, outside and inside the churches. This is an assault that all Christians must resist.

As a group of Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox, we recognize one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, separated by important differences of belief and church order but united in our desire to obey the one Lord. Many of the challenges we face in our own churches are common challenges that confront all Christians today. Therefore we want to work together for a better understanding of these challenges, fostering communication and supporting one another in our respective roles of service to the Christian people.

Desiring to see a renewal of God's life in his people, we know that renewal must begin in our individual lives with repentance from sin, wholehearted commitment to Christ, and reliance on the Holy Spirit. Moreover, we pray for God to intervene in his people's lives, pardoning us, strengthening us, and extending his kingdom through us.

It is our intention to put our commitment to Christ and his cause in the world above everything else. We want to work together in practical ways to strengthen one another as Christians, to defend Christian teaching, and to bring the world to Christ.⁴³

THE CONTRIBUTION OF OTHER CONFERENCES

The allies have held a number of conferences since 1980. The fifth in the series was "Courage in Leadership," which took place near Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1987. The major speakers were Bernard Law, Boston's Roman Catholic cardinal and evangelical (Anglican) author and speaker James I. Packer of Regent College, Vancouver. Notice their comments on the appropriateness of Catholics and Protestants coming together and making common cause. Cardinal Law told the meeting:

We gather as Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox who are concerned to stand for historic Christian positions in dogmatic and moral theology, to work for spiritual renewal and evangelism, and to cooperate in confronting fundamental human issues. I am happy to be here, because I am convinced that there is indeed being forged a new alliance between—of all people—Catholics and Protestant evangelicals.

Packer rated the Allies conferences as

one of the most important things that is happening in the English-speaking world at the present time. I rejoice to be making common cause with those who want to build a solid wall of defense for Christian supernaturalism—the supernaturalism of the scriptures and the creed—and I rejoice doubly when those who want to do that are also folk who are seeking together the renewal of the life of Christ in his church.

Cardinal Law, in his address titled "The Problem of Faith," spoke concerning the enigmatic subject of fundamentalism.

43 From publicity material for the Allies for Faith and Renewal Conference, "A Society in Peril," 1988, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

To gather as those standing for historic Christian positions in dogmatic and moral theology takes a bit of courage these days. It is a position disdainfully dismissed by some today as “fundamentalism”—read “bad.” It is interesting to observe how “fundamentalism” has recently become an ever larger net to gather together an ever wider spectrum of world views not in conformity with the wisdom of this age. I would suspect that there are not a few who would characterize those of us gathered here as “fundamentalists”—and in so doing no compliment would be intended.

Since “fundamentalism” is now being defined as anti-intellectualism, we would be dismissed as nostalgic romantics at best, as obsessive and dangerous ideologues and zealots at worst. What we have to say need not be examined, then, because it denies the rigid orthodoxy of this day, that orthodoxy that proclaims there is no binding truth. We here think there is, and therefore we are not listened to or taken seriously. The notion that faith rests on truth revealed, and on truth binding on all human beings of all times, is a notion incompatible with the contemporary Western mind-set which has relativized all truth. For us, God is the source of all truth—he is truth. For the contemporary Western mind the individual human person in isolation is the source of his or her truth. . . . Those who take truth seriously are thus seen as rigid “fundamentalists”; those who take truth as relative are seen as flexible, as reasonable.⁴⁴

Obviously, Cardinal Law recognizes that all forms of “fundamentalism” are not totally antithetical to traditional Roman Catholicism, a point the authors have often stressed to their Catholic brethren.

In 1994, a conference titled *John Paul II and the New Evangelization* was called to address “some successful models of evangelization and provide practical help for clergy and lay leaders who want to see evangelization happen in their parish or lay organization.”⁴⁵ The conference also met to “consider what Catholics can learn from Evangelicals and Pentecostals about preaching the good news.”⁴⁶ Roman Catholics participating in the meeting included Bishop Gabriel Ganaka, Avery Dulles, S.J., and the aforementioned charismatic lay leader Ralph Martin. Evangelicals, in addition to Charles Colson, included John Wimber of the Vineyard Fellowship Ministries. This is another example of Christian believers coming from different persuasions and banding together to enlarge the body of Christ through the proclamation of the good news.

THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION OF RALPH MARTIN

Before closing this chapter, we wish to examine the writings of a Catholic layman who has perhaps more than anyone else from his jurisdiction identified the nature of the problem facing historic Christianity. Ralph Martin has also addressed the commonality of purpose and the degree of cooperation between traditional Roman Catholicism and evangelical Protestantism.

44 Law, “Center Update,” *Pastoral Renewal* (September 1987): 13.

45 Announcement, *Faith and Renewal Journal* 18, no. 3 (November/December 1993): 28.

46 Ibid.

Concerning salvation in the Roman Catholic Church, Ralph Martin interviewed Maria Von Trapp of “Sound of Music” fame:

R. Martin: How would you relate this “new Pentecost” that the Church is experiencing to the traditional Catholicism that you grew up in?

M. Von Trapp: Well, I think the baptism in the Holy Spirit is what all Catholics ought to experience in confirmation but don’t. . . . It’s memorizing seven gifts, twelve fruits, fuss about a sponsor and a name, and trying to remember why the bishop is going to tap your cheek. . . . It’s hardly ever a personally desired and experienced commitment to Jesus and release of the Spirit.

R. Martin: Do you have any thoughts about why this is the case?’

M. Von Trapp: Analyze how we Catholics grow up. We’re baptized as babies.

Maria Von Trapp also mentions godparents, first confession, and first communion. In spite of these religious functions, she states that many Roman Catholics never meet Jesus as Savior and Lord. In fact, “We may even go to daily communion all our lives and yet never confront the great issue of whether He is my Savior and Lord.”⁴⁷

Ralph Martin believes that Vatican II has resulted in renewal in the Roman Catholic Church. For example, in some areas, “especially in parts of Latin America, infant baptism is being withheld if there is no assurance that the child will grow up in a community of faith and genuine Christian life.”⁴⁸

Martin addresses the issue of the large number of ex-Catholics he encounters in Protestant charismatic and evangelical churches: “Through my involvement in the Catholic charismatic renewal, I have frequent contact with many Protestant charismatic churches and movements. I am struck by the significant numbers of ex-Catholics I have encountered in Assembly of God churches, the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International, independent Christian centers, or Hispanic Protestant churches in the Southwest.”⁴⁹

While Martin is concerned with people leaving the Catholic church he feels that the common response—to blame Protestant “fundamentalists” for using underhanded evangelization methods—is off the mark. These ex-Catholics are experiencing a more vital relationship with Christ than they had previously. Indeed: “*Many talk as if they encountered the Lord himself for the first time.*” Martin states that the proper response for Catholics is to examine their own consciences as to whether they are properly reflecting Christ in such a fashion as to make him attractive to others. “*As hard as it may be to face, many Catholics who have left the Catholic Church to become part of a vital Protestant congregation may have gone to hell if they stayed, unconverted and with virtually no*

47 Ralph Martin, *Hungry for God* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1974), pp. 67–68.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

49 “Why Catholics Leave,” *New Covenant* (July/August 1990): 6

Christian support, in the Catholic Church!” The large number of people leaving the Catholic Church should “humble us and cause us to turn to the Lord in repentance and in seeking God, asking him to have mercy on us and to pour out his Spirit on us so that men, women, and children may encounter him in our midst.”⁵⁰

What is the remedy for this situation? Martin posits that it is “the rediscovery of the richness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus wants to pour out on his church and each individual Christian [that is] a key to meeting the ‘challenge of the sects’ that the Vatican is currently giving its attention to?”⁵¹ Martin has written a major volume, *A Crisis of Truth*, in which he addresses the extent to which secular humanism and syncretism has infiltrated the Catholic church.⁵² Concerning liberation theology, which plagues both Roman Catholicism and mainline Protestantism, Martin insists that “The claim that political change must precede evangelism is preposterous. Evangelical Protestants and Pentecostals have enjoyed outstanding success preaching the good news to the Latin American poor, often in the very same barrios where secularized Catholic priests and nuns are insisting that you can not preach the gospel to the poor until the revolution comes.” For, “as a result of conversion to Jesus, the power of the Holy Spirit and the sustaining power of the Christian Church, those poor are better able to work together for social change. Cardinal Léon Joseph Suenens of Belgium pointed out the fallacy of the ‘you can’t preach the gospel to the poor unless you first improve their economic situation’ approach as long ago as 1957 in his book, *The Gospel to Every Creature*. ”⁵³

Martin’s chapter “Is Jesus the Only Way?” reads as if it was copied from some of Bill Bright’s Campus Crusade for Christ literature. He contends that “It is Christianity’s unique claim that in Jesus Christ, and only in Jesus Christ, all that is required for man’s salvation is provided. All the requirements are met. God’s Word tells us that through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus, salvation for the human race is accomplished.”⁵⁴ Every Roman Catholic (and indeed every evangelical) would do well to ponder a copy of this excellent book.

50 Ibid., pp. 6–7, emphasis added.

51 “Sects Education,” *New Covenant* (October 1991): 26–27.

52 Ralph Martin, *A Crisis of Truth: The Attack on Faith, Morality and Mission in the Catholic Church* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1982). Martin has recently produced a follow-up to this book: *The Catholic Church at the End of an Age: What Is the Spirit Saying?* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994). This volume addresses the same themes as the earlier one and indicates the positive contributions of Protestant evangelicals and charismatics in “cultural” Catholic settings.

53 Martin, *Crisis of Truth*, p. 97.

54 Ibid., p. 77. In an article on marriage, Martin observes, “Many couples desiring to receive the sacrament of matrimony have been sacramentalized, but neither evangelized to a basic Christian conversion nor adequately catechized to know even the fundamentals of Christian faith” (Ralph Martin, “Catholic Marriage: An Institution in Crisis,” *The Southern Cross*, 12 January 1995, p. 20).

ROMAN CATHOLIC AND EVANGELICAL DIALOGUE

There have been several attempts to bring Roman Catholics and evangelicals together for dialogue. The Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission first met at Venice in 1977, again at Cambridge in 1982, and lastly at Landévennec in France in 1984. Participants were Roman Catholic and evangelical theologians and missiologists from many parts of the world. Evangelicals will recognize such names among the participants as Harvie M. Conn of Westminster Seminary, Anglican John R. W. Stott, David Hubbard of Fuller Theological Seminary, and David F. Wells of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Two documents made the dialogue possible: the “Lausanne Covenant” produced by the Evangelical International Congress on World Evangelization (1974) and Pope Paul VI’s “Evangelization in the Modern World” (1975). Because of perceived commonalities found in these two statements, the two groups came together, not “as a step towards Church unity negotiations,” but in “search for such common ground as might be discovered between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics as they each try to be more faithful in their obedience to mission.”⁵⁵

After exploring such subjects as the nature of Christian mission, revelation, authority and the Gospel, and culture, the participants addressed the possibilities of common witness.⁵⁶ Speaking about common witness in evangelism, the members confessed that “substantial agreement continues to elude us, and therefore common witness in evangelism would seem to be premature. Although we are aware of situations in some parts of the world in which Evangelicals and Roman Catholics have felt able to make a common proclamation.”⁵⁷ We have detailed in this chapter some of these situations.

Another attempt to address the issue of evangelism was the General Assembly of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) which met in Hoddesdon, England in 1980.⁵⁸ The purpose of the gathering was to examine the relationship between evangelicals and Roman Catholics with regard to faith and practice. Two Roman Catholic observers—Ralph Martin, a leader in the Catholic charismatic renewal movement, and Msgr. Basil Meeking, a Vatican official—were also invited.

A number of evangelicals, principally from Italy, Spain, and parts of Latin America, took exception to the inclusion of Roman Catholics in this gathering. They felt that they have been mistreated by Roman Catholic officials for their evangelical stance and found

55 Basil Meeking and John Stott, eds., *The Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), p. 10.

56 *Ibid.*, chap. 7.

57 *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

58 The conference is recorded in Paul G. Schrottenboer, ed., *Roman Catholicism: A Contemporary Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987).

it impossible to feel comfortable in this situation.⁵⁹ Therefore, the WEF General Assembly addressed a number of issues which evangelicals find problematic, including Mariology, authority, and papal infallibility. Although the volume is for the most part critical of Roman Catholic doctrine and practice, it suggests that cooperation and fellowship with Roman Catholics is by no means impossible.

Acknowledging the difficulties of dialogue, the document states: “This does not mean that dialogue between evangelicals and Roman Catholics should continue to be discouraged.”⁶⁰ As to the presence of God in Roman Catholicism: “As evangelicals, we should not be closed to the power of God’s Spirit and God’s Word operating in the lives of people within the Roman Catholic Church.”⁶¹ Addressing theological trends in contemporary Roman Catholicism: “The basic thrust in the writings of Roman Catholic thinkers such as Rahner, Teilhard de Chardin, Küng, Schillebeeckx and Schoonenberg do not differ substantially from those of their secular Protestant counterparts.”⁶² While the above statement is true, it also must be pointed out that the liberal posture of the aforementioned Roman Catholic scholars *does* significantly differ with the thinking of Pope John Paul II and his premier theologian Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger.⁶³ On a more positive note, lay-theologian Ralph Martin reports that concerning the contemporary Roman Catholic Church in Canada “of the 39 percent who attend church weekly or monthly, 21 percent reported experiencing a profound conversion experience or awaking and considered themselves to be evangelicals.” And even more startling, “31 percent of the more faithful Catholics considered themselves to be fundamentalist Christians.”⁶⁴

The most recent example of this sort of endeavor is a document released at a New York news conference during Holy Week 1994. The statement, entitled “Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium,” was produced primarily by Fr. Richard John Neuhaus (formerly Lutheran), Charles Colson (Prison Fellowship founder), Kent Hill (president of Eastern Nazarene College) and George

59 One author, Ralph MacKenzie, faced a similar problem when studying at seminary. The school is located in San Diego and thus a significant number of students come from Mexico and Latin America. Having been reared in a sub-culture of Catholicism which stresses human merit and having not understood Jesus Christ in a personal way, these recent converts to evangelicalism were very suspicious of any positive comments concerning Roman Catholicism.

60 Schrottenboer, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 11.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 49.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 59.

63 For an objective examination of Roman Catholic/Protestant differences, see Peter Toon, *Protestants and Catholics: A Guide to Understanding the Differences among Christians* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1983).

64 “Special Report: The Religion Poll,” *Macleans*, 12 April 1993, pp. 34, 36, 48, 49. Cited in Martin, *Catholic Church at the End of an Age*.

Weigel (Roman Catholic scholar and writer). They were aided in drafting the document by a number of other Roman Catholic and evangelical leaders.⁶⁵

The joint statement has been criticized by some evangelicals (including Carl F. H. Henry, David Wells, R. C. Sproul, and the present authors) for imprecise theological formulation at points. Indeed, even justification by faith alone was not listed as a significant difference between evangelicals and Catholics. This occasioned some evangelicals to charge that the joint statement had given away the Reformation (for a fuller discussion see Appendix F). In spite of its significant problems, the document makes a number of positive statements. In the section “We Affirm Together,” the paper states: “Jesus Christ is Lord. That is the first and final affirmation that Christians make about all reality.” And “All who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ.”⁶⁶ Also, the Scriptures are declared to be “the infallible Word of God” and the Apostles Creed is declared to be “. . . an accurate statement of Scriptural truth.”⁶⁷

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?

The magnanimity of the apostle Paul is not always reflected in conservative Protestant circles when he said, “Of course, some preach Christ from envy and rivalry, others from good will. . . . What difference does it make, as long as in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed? And in that I rejoice” (Phil. 1:15 , 18). One author of this book was asked by a parish priest to teach the gospel to the young people in a particular Catholic church and even to preach at a mass. 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 uncompromised gospel (Rom. 1:16).

65 Arthur H. Matthews, “Cooperation, Not Communion,” *World*, 9 April 1994, pp. 10–13.

66 *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*, final draft, 29 March 1994, p. 5.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 6. We wait to see what final impact this statement has on Roman Catholic/evangelical relationships.