

Dear Friend,

This article is on mysticism may be one of the most important topics that I have addressed. I am quite amazed that the strong influence of Catholic mysticism has helped mightily to transform the New Age Movement from being counter-culture to being embraced by Evangelicals, and Western civilization as such. Like a plague, Catholic mysticism has affected almost every facet of life without being noticed or perceived.

Sickly sentimental syncretistic mysticism has crossed the threshold of the Gospel even among evangelicals; it is time to make a stand. Kindly forward this article to others, and if possible place on your WebPage.

In the Lord's truth and grace,
Richard Bennett

The Mystic Plague

Catholicism sets a Spiritualist Agenda

The Roman Catholic Church is persistent in her quest to draw all to herself. One of her major venues is the marketing of mysticism under various guises. This is because, as different world religions begin to adopt the idea that they must work together for the well-being of civilization, Rome truly believes that "well-being" can only come through unity with herself as "the mother of all believers."¹ Through crises such as famine, war, racism, human rights, ecological problems, and poverty, Rome is appealing for togetherness at the level of faith. Her attempted appropriation of Evangelicalism and false ecumenism with Christian churches to promote her gospel we have already documented.² Very dangerous, and for the most part unnoticed, is her effort to bond with the pagan religions of the world. The common ground among them all is mysticism, which easily puts within her grasp the religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and the Islam. Stemming from her own mysticism and that of these pagan religions comes the tide of secular mysticism now freely flowing through the Western world in health programs, education, and entertainment. Public programs and private services now openly promote a mystic agenda all around us, the consequences of which are becoming apparent in our society. Mysticism has always been the highway into the occult, as many seek to find their identity in God consciousness. Mystical God consciousness is an attempt to replace Christ's redemption and salvation.

The Infiltration of Catholic Mysticism

Mysticism is an attempt to gain ultimate knowledge of God by a direct experience that by-passes the mind. The strong influence of Catholic mysticism has helped immensely to transform the New Age Movement from being merely a counter-culture sub-culture to becoming a new source of spiritual vision for the world. Catholic mysticism has very effectively and subtly invaded many facets of life without being recognized or critically examined. This has been actively promoted through self-help medical, educational and psychological programs employing

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second edition (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997) Para. 181

² See our articles on "The Alignment of New Evangelicals with Apostasy", "The Roman Catholic-Lutheran 'Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification'" and "Biblical Unity or Papal Conformity?"

methods such as meditation, philosophical programming, and self-hypnotic contemplation. In melding Eastern subjective spirituality with Western self-assurance, Catholic mysticism has done much to effectively hijack public and private religious life and to invert core beliefs and values of the West.

Catholicism Married to Pagan Religions and Pantheism

For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church has assimilated to herself the mystery elements of pagan religions. Subjective religious experience, or mysticism, continues to be the meeting point of pagan religions and Catholicism, particularly so since Vatican Council II, when Rome changed her major strategy in an attempt to bring Protestants back under the papal fold. The marriage between Romanism and paganism is documented in official statements from Rome. For example, in Vatican Council II documents she states,

“ . . . In Hinduism men explore the divine mystery and express it both in the limitless riches of myth and the accurately defined insights of philosophy. They seek release from the trials of the present life by ascetical practices, profound meditation and recourse to God in confidence and love. Buddhism in its various forms testifies to the essential inadequacy of this changing world. It proposes a way of life by which man can, with confidence and trust, attain a state of perfect liberation and reach supreme illumination either through their own efforts or by the aid of divine help. . . . The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. ”³

Jesuit priest William Johnston explains how it happened,

“Then came the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Overnight the Catholic Church which had been a Western institution exporting its wares to the East became a world community. Asian and African bishops and theologians assembled in Rome and, with their European and American confreres, acknowledged that the Spirit of God is at work in all peoples and in all religions. Since then, most theologians recognize non-Christian religions as “valid ways.”⁴

It is on such a quagmire that Catholicism stands hand-in-hand with Buddhism and Hinduism, and out of which well-known Catholic mystics such as William Johnston and Thomas Keating have emerged. For example, Johnston describes the effect of enlightenment, “Self-realization lies at the very heart of Buddhism. . . . In self-realization I become one with God just as the object is one with the mirror and just as Jesus is one with his Father.”⁵ The famous mystical monk, Thomas Merton, developed this pantheistic identification with God, as does his present day devotee, William Shannon. Merton states,

“ . . . now I realize what we all are. And if only everyone could realize this! . . . I suddenly saw all the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God’s eyes. If only they could or see themselves as they really *are*. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed. . . . I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship each other.”⁶

³ Vatican Council II Documents, No. 56, *Nostra Aetate*, “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” 28 Oct. 1965, Vol. I, Para. 2, p. 739.

⁴ William Johnston, *The Mirror Mind* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990) p. 7

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33, 39

⁶ Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, Image edition Dec. 1989 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966) pp. 157, 158. This book has official Roman Catholic approval.

Shannon endorses the idolatrous self-identification with God and cites his mentor, Merton, “A person of true faith travels, not without difficulty, towards the heart of mystery. Such a person, as Merton puts it, ‘works his way through the darkness of his own mystery until he discovers that his own mystery and the mystery of God merge into one reality, which is the only reality.’ *DQ* 180”⁷. These quotations are standard descriptions of the pantheistic myth that we are all in God. In their own minds, Merton and Shannon have literally transmuted God Himself into their own image, having exchanged Him for human beings as an object of worship. Have they not, in the words of Romans 1:23, “*changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man...* ”?

Leading Buddhists acknowledge Soul Unity with Catholicism

Leading Buddhists recognizes the marriage of Rome and paganism. Thich Nhat Hanh, states, “Buddhists and Christians know the nirvana, or the Kingdom of God, is within their hearts [sic]. The Gospels speak of the Kingdom of God as a mustard seed planted in the soil of consciousness [sic]. Buddhist sutras speak of Buddha nature as the seed of enlightenment that is already in every one’s consciousness. The practices of prayer and meditation help us touch the most valuable seeds that are within us, and they put us in contact with the ground of our being.”⁸

The Buddhist leader Dalai Lama on visiting the grave of Thomas Merton at Gethsemane Abbey prayed, “Now our spirits are one....”⁹ It is an appalling blasphemy to affirm of the thrice-Holy God that the Kingdom of God is “as a mustard seed planted in the soil of consciousness” and that “meditation help[s] us touch the most valuable seeds that are in us” and that it “put[s] us in contact with the ground of our being.” Listen to the razor-sharp words of the Redeemer, “*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”¹⁰ The Holy Spirit’s unique office is to lead true believers into all truth by convicting us of “*sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*”¹¹ It is not by the darkness of meditation on “the ground of our being” that leads us to the kingdom of Christ; rather in the words of Scripture, it is the Father “*which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*”¹²

Evangelical Endorsement of Pantheism

A leading Evangelical, Richard Foster, lauds this pantheistic identification with God. Foster states, “Contemplative Prayer immerses us into the silence of God. How desperately we in the modern world need this wordless baptism!...Progress in intimacy with God means progress toward silence.”¹³ Foster asks rhetorically, “What is the goal of Contemplative Prayer?” And he answers, “To this question the old writers answer with one voice: union with God... .Bonaventure, a follower of Saint Francis, says that our final goal is ‘union with God,’ which is a

⁷ William Shannon, *Seeds of Peace Contemplation and Non-Violence* (New York: Crossroad Publ. Co, 1996) p. 73

⁸ Thich Nhat Hanh, Introduction to *Contemplative Prayer* by Thomas Merton, Image Book edition (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996) p. 5

⁹ <http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Jan1997/feature1.asp> 10/8/2002 The website also states that Merton died in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1968, apparently electrocuted by a faulty room fan.

¹⁰ John 3:3

¹¹ John 16:8

¹² Colossians 1:12-13

¹³ Foster, Richard J., *Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992) p. 155

pure relationship where we see ‘nothing.’¹⁴ Seeing “nothing” and the “wordless baptism” are just an Evangelical rehashing of Catholic irrational superstitious myth. Rather, as II Corinthians 4:3 states, *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*

The Catholic priest Thomas Keating agrees with Foster as he writes, “Contemplative Prayer is the opening of mind and heart - our whole being - to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words and emotions.”¹⁵ Thus Keating depersonalized God to the nameless “Ultimate Mystery” in mythology. This impersonal, “Ultimate Mystery” is a non-speaking, non-judgmental, “god”. Is Keating in the twenty-first century any better off than the men on Mars Hill to whom Paul spoke regarding their *“altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, whom therefore ye ignorantly worship”*¹⁶? Nor is any morality derived from Keating’s “Ultimate Mystery”. Thus Keating Merton and Shannon with their pantheistic identification with God have attempted to destroy God’s self-sufficiency as Creator, and the Lord God Almighty. They have endeavored to clone God into the image of humans. According to Romans 1:25, have they not *“changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever”*? No wonder Merton admits, “If only they could or see themselves as they really are.....I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship each other.” In the place of the true worship of God, they have set about to establish pantheistic idolatry.

Dramatized Mysticism

The Pentecostal Word of Faith movement is simply a dramatized form of mysticism. In a sermon tape, Kenneth Copeland states, “You don’t have a god in you, you are one.” In a 1987 crusade, Copeland is documented as saying, “I say this and repeat it so it don’t upset you too bad. [sic] When I read in the Bible where He (Jesus) says, I AM, I say, Yes, I am too!”¹⁷ Kenneth Hagin in Word of Faith says, “You are as much the incarnation of God as Jesus Christ was. Every man who has been born again is an incarnation and Christianity is a miracle. The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth.”¹⁸ Casey Treat, known for the infamous quote, “When God looks into the mirror, He sees me! When I look into the mirror I see God!”¹⁹ proclaims on his WebPage, “God dwells in you. God walks in you. When you walk, God walks. When you show up, God shows up. When you show up, a winner shows up. You won’t lose.”²⁰ Paul Crouch, Benny Hinn, Charles Capps, Robert Tilton, Paul Yonggi Cho, Marilyn Hickey, Morris Cerullo, T.L. Osborn, and Jerry Savelle are just few more of the well-known names that stage-managed mysticism. As one might suspect, many of the gurus of dramatized mysticism promote fellowship with Catholicism. The Trinity Broadcasting Network, one largest radio and TV networks in the world today, through its founders, Paul and Jan Crouch,

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p 159

¹⁵ Thomas Keating, "The Method of Centering Prayer" <http://www.thecentering.org/centering> 10/22/02

¹⁶ Acts 17:23

¹⁷ www.watchman.org/rektop/unbiblcl.htm 11/11/02

¹⁸ www.watchman.org/rektop/unbiblcl.htm 11/11/02

¹⁹ Michael Horton, *The Agony of Deceit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990) p. 91

²⁰ www.caseytreat.org/godsword Being_In_Christ 11/11/02

fosters fellowship with Roman Catholics, amid mysticism presented in the whirling garments of charismania. For example,

“The world of Benny Hinn is a strange, confusing world. He fits perfectly into the category of a Charismatic Catholic priest, dispensing theological bondage and mystical superstition... a recent Benny Hinn three hour video which presented him ‘as a ‘twentieth century’ ‘Holy of Holies’, a ‘point of contact’ for the power and anointing of God much as Roman Catholic priests were presented during medieval times. They also suggested that he is becoming a kind of ‘Charismatic Pope.’”²¹

Catholic Charismatics have all the traditional mysticism of the sacraments, the Word of Faith movement, and Catholic and Zen Mystics from which to draw. In Biblical terms they are thrice dead in deceit, for what has been quoted here are pieces of insolence, blasphemy, and falsehood. The Copelands, the Crouches, Hinn, Hagin, and others like them would have you rejoice in the light within by claiming that you are a god within. The Lord God Almighty proclaims, *“I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”*²² The Word of the Lord still stands, *“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”*²³

The Pope official approval of Traditional Mystical

In an official “Apostolic Letter” the Pope has endorsed Rome’s own mystical tradition and the “great mystical tradition of the Church both East and West.” His official teaching is,

“...we are greatly helped not only by theological investigation but also by that great heritage which is the ‘lived theology’ of the saints. The saints offer us precious insights...through their personal experience of those terrible states of trial which the mystical tradition describes as the ‘dark night’. Not infrequently the saints have undergone something akin to Jesus’ experience on the Cross in the paradoxical blending of bliss and pain. In the Dialogue of Divine Providence, God the Father shows Catherine of Siena how joy and suffering can be present together in holy souls: ‘Thus the soul is blissful and afflicted: afflicted on account of the sins of its neighbour, blissful on account of the union and the affection of charity which it has inwardly received. These souls imitate the spotless Lamb, my Only-begotten Son, who on the Cross was both blissful and afflicted’...What an illuminating testimony!...Is it not one of the ‘signs of the times’ that in today’s world, despite widespread secularization, there is a widespread demand for spirituality, a demand which expresses itself in large part as a renewed need for prayer? **Other religions, which are now widely present in ancient Christian lands, offer their own responses to this need, and sometimes they do so in appealing ways....**The great mystical tradition of the Church of both East and West has much to say in this regard. **It shows how prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved...**”²⁴

This is a brilliant piece of political bridge building on the Pope’s part. By citing experiences of “saints”, he attempts to make these experiences universal standards of deep and authentic

²¹ Benny Hinn, Catholic Mystic www.deceptioninthechurch.com/hinnccatholic.htm 11/11/02

²² Isaiah 42:8

²³ Isaiah 8:20

²⁴ OFFICIAL APOSTOLIC LETTER OF POPE JOHN PAUL II “NOVO MILLENNIO INEUNTE”

www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte_en.html+Novo+Millennio+Ineunte Para 27, 33 Bolding in any quotation indicates emphasis added in this paper.

spirituality. Then he grants approval to other religions by stating that they meet the “renewed need for prayer” in ways which are “appealing”, affirming the idea that the process of prayer can become so consuming that it “render[s] the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved.” High thoughts, vain imaginations, and carnal reasonings about the greatness of human efforts have always exalted themselves against the knowledge of God. If “a progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved” were true, there would have been no need of salvation by the Redeemer. Scripture declares the reality and truth, “*not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.*”²⁵

Truth Contrasted to Crafted Mythology

True Christianity is unique among the religions of the world in that it is a rational-historical faith. For the Christian, salvation is based on something entirely outside of man. Salvation is found in the faithfulness and perfect sacrifice of the Christ of history. Catholic and Eastern mystics claim to discover God in the depths of their being. The true Christian looks away from himself to the righteousness of Christ Jesus. Before God, Christ’s satisfaction for sin is a reality that is all-sufficient. It does not need to be supplemented by any other reality. God’s verdict of justification is not grounded on any state of being within the believing sinner, rather it is established on Christ Jesus alone. The principle that man can save himself by his experience and by his own life has been the foundation of every pagan religion, as it is of Catholicism. What is so sinister about the present communion of Rome with paganism is that it is contaminating our entire society.

The deadly deceptions of mysticism arrogantly advertise a way of direct access to the All Holy God and thereby repudiate any need of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One Mediator between God and men. The believer’s worship and approach to God is in the Lord’s own words to be with “*all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*”²⁶ In the words of the Apostle Paul, “*I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.*”²⁷ The same Apostle warned believers, “*Let no man beguile you of your reward ...intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.*”²⁸ The censure of the Lord God remains on those who have issued lies, “*Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!*”²⁹ Because of this debasement of Christ and His Gospel we again outline the essentials of historical faith.

Objective Salvation in the Lord of Glory

As Mediator, Christ Jesus is the only means of union between God and man, “*that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; in him.*”³⁰ Christ Jesus is exalted to “*the right hand of the Majesty on high*”³¹ as the One Savior. He and His Gospel are objective and real! This Gospel is not an idle tale, nor a piece of incomprehensible mysticism; rather it is the

²⁵ Titus 3:5

²⁶ Matthew 22:37

²⁷ I Corinthians 14:15

²⁸ Colossians 2:18

²⁹ Ezekiel 13:3

³⁰ Ephesians 1:10

³¹ Hebrews 1:3

proclamation of the awesome historical work of redemption accomplished by God Himself. The Father appointed Christ Jesus as the guarantee of real salvation. Christ Jesus was glorified in finishing the Father's mightiest work. In Christ's own words, *"I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."*³² He had fulfilled all the Father's will and so gloriously honored the Father. As Savior He is exalted high above *"all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."*³³ He alone, and not some mystic charm of Rome or Buddha, has been given all authority in heaven and in earth. He has been given power over all flesh that He should in His own words, *"give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."*³⁴ He alone has been given a name, which is above every name, *"that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*³⁵ It is God's commandment that we trust on Christ, *"This is His command, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ"*³⁶

True faith involves a repudiation of the self-deceit of experiential mystical means of reaching God, *"for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."*³⁷ The Lord Jesus stands ready to receive every sinner who will throw away his rebellion and pride and trust in Him alone for salvation! Preaching the real historical Christ and His Gospel is the answer to the mindless adumbrations of Rome and the ecumenical mystics. Thus alone can the true Church, God's People *"go forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."*³⁸ The Gospel is a mighty deliverance from the groveling religious subjectivism of Rome and her pagan mistresses. To know God is life itself to a Christian, in the words of the Lord Himself, *"this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."*³⁹ Knowledge of God, and faith in Him, are the means whereby all spiritual supports and comforts are conveyed to the true believers. *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."*⁴⁰

The Fulfillment of the New Age Aspiration?

The goal of the New Age Movement has consistently been to bring in the Age of Aquarius when all will recognize "the God with themselves". A major step towards this in the words of the New Age prophetess Alice Bailey, is "the regeneration of the churches."⁴¹ Her vision was that "The Christian church in its many branches can serve as a St. John the Baptist, as a voice crying in the wilderness, and as a nucleus through which world illumination may be accomplished."⁴² In a word, she desired the time when the "Christian churches" would embrace the New Age concepts

³² John 17:4

³³ Ephesians 1:21

³⁴ John 17:2

³⁵ Philippians 2:10-11

³⁶ I John 3:23

³⁷ I Timothy 2:5

³⁸ Song of Solomon 6:10

³⁹ John 17:3

⁴⁰ II Peter 1:3

⁴¹ Alice Bailey, *Problems of Humanity* (New York, NY: Lucis Publ. Co., 1964) p. 152

⁴² Alice Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Pub. Co., 1957) p. 510.

of illumination and self-realization. The New Age plan to bring in world peace cannot fully establish the Golden Age of Aquarius until Biblical Christianity is outlawed or destroyed.

Now that the Church of Rome has entered into liaison with paganism, she has again concocted another successful work of syncretism. As Catholicism has become the religion of the European Union,⁴³ the desires of New Age leaders appear to be coming true. Even at the local parish level according to William Shannon “contemplative spirituality” has now widely replaced old-style Catholicism.⁴⁴ With New Age convictions being voiced by leading Catholics and Evangelicals, it appears that the desired goal is closer to being achieved. The New Age aspiration to establish a one-world order lead by “a Christ Leader” is being met by the Pope and his Church. All of this ought not to surprise any believer, for the Bible has persistently warned believers of the enormity, growth and prevalence of the apostate church system and her mistresses.

The Gospel Power and Final Destruction the Apostate Kingdom

The ruin of the Antichrist’s kingdom is declared by the Apostle Paul, *“Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*⁴⁵ In our article, “The Antichrist Unveiled”, much of the signs and lying wonders of the Papal System was pointed out. Its machinations, however, will have come to completion only when it has rejected the Christ of history, and has received “the christ of Satan”, which “christ” is “enlightenment”, “Ultimate Mystery” and “self realization”. The Lord in His Word has foretold the destruction of Antichrist’s reign as *“...that Wicked... whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”*⁴⁶ In the meantime, the victory of the Gospel is present for those who wait on Him. His power has always been greatest in the day of utmost need. The character of God in His gracious Gospel is *“the spirit of his mouth”*. This has been understood and lived out as *“the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”*⁴⁷ We see His power as we boldly proclaim His graciousness, every individual who is saved *“being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*⁴⁸

Conclusion

What has been shown here regarding Catholic mysticism’s outright invasion of Evangelicalism and its commandeering of New Age verbiage and paraphernalia, should cause serious individuals to examine carefully the foundation upon which his or her hopes are built. A mere “I hope I am saved” is not enough, nothing short of the full assurance of faith on the solid Rock, the Lord Christ Jesus, will suffice. It is in God’s light, and in it only, that *“we see light.”*⁴⁹ True Christians interpret all religious experience by the normative revelation of God recorded for them in the Holy Bible. The wicked love darkness; but God’s people love the Light! Mystics have not scrupled openly to equate the true God with “the god” within. They have thought to divest themselves of God Himself by turning to inward self-realization and enlightenment.

⁴³ This fact of syncretism in the EU we wish to deal with in our next newsletter.

⁴⁴ Shannon, *Seeds of Peace*, p 25.

⁴⁵ II Thessalonians 2:10b-12

⁴⁶ II Thessalonians 2:8

⁴⁷ Romans 1:16.

⁴⁸ Romans 3:24.

⁴⁹ Psalm 36:9

Rather, the values that they set are based on personal inner feelings that are often incapable of reasoned explanation. The Gospel is the exact opposite, the historical message of the Cross of Christ for a lost world. The Gospel proclaims Christ Himself, and the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who in His love gave His Son to die for sinners. There is no valid excuse for true believers to be deceived by “false apostles”, who transform themselves into the “apostles of Christ”, *“for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”*⁵⁰ There are many false prophets gone out into the world, if we study diligently these things, which God has recorded for our safeguard against the subtle deceptions of Satan, we will not mislead nor be misled. True believers in Christ must take to heart solemn warnings of the Apostle Paul, *“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? ... be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”*⁵¹ *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”*⁵²

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve”

In 1986, Pope John Paul II seized the inter-faith initiative by gathering 160 of the world’s religious leaders for a prayer summit at Assisi, Italy. They flew in from around the globe, Islamic Mullahs from nine nations, the Dalai Lama, (traditionally regarded by Buddhists as a living deity), native American Shamans and Indian cultists, African animists, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Catholics and, of course, Protestants. “We will stand side by side asking God to give us peace,” declared the Pope.⁵³ The grand encore to this initial dramatization of Luciferian unity occurred in January 2002, as Pope John Paul II led 200 leaders of different religions once again at Assisi, Italy. By public demonstration, by official sanction, in countless books and seminars, as well as WebPages with broad ecumenical support, Popedom has set a mystical agenda, which the world loves and accepts. Any believer or confessing fellowship group that remains silent in the face of such bald-faced blasphemy inevitably lends credence to the Pope’s deceit. For Rome still assumes her ancient legal principle to stand, “He who is silent is understood to consent.”⁵⁴ *“The lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,”*⁵⁵ are Satan’s strongholds in the souls of many as proud conceits; exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. The Lord God Almighty commands each one of us to cast *“down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”*⁵⁶ *“Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”*⁵⁷ ♦

Richard Bennett of “Berean Beacon” WebPage: www.bereanbeacon.org

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⁵⁰ II Corinthians 11:13-14

⁵¹ II Corinthians 6:14,15,17

⁵² Ephesians 5:11

⁵³ *L’Osservatore Romano*, English version of the official Vatican newspaper, Oct. 27, 1986, p. 1

⁵⁴ *“Qui tacet consentire videtur.”*

⁵⁵ Ephesians 2:3

⁵⁶ 2 Corinthians 10:5

⁵⁷ Malachi 3:18