

The Gift of Salvation ECT II

The Lie Documented

by Richard Bennett

On November 12, 1997, a document entitled “The Gift of Salvation” was signed and published by Evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders. Its expressed intention is to demonstrate the “common faith” of Evangelicals and Roman Catholics and to further “acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.” Since the gift of salvation according to the Scriptures is found nowhere else than in the gospel of Jesus Christ, this critique examines that document in light of the Biblical declaration of His gospel.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DOGMA: CONSPICUOUS BY ITS ABSENCE

“The Gift of Salvation” was published in the December 8, 1997, issue of *Christianity Today* with a cover article by Timothy George stating, “We reject the kind of ecumenical euphoria that assumes the way to peace in the church is to down play doctrine and theology. . . . We are committed to an ecumenism of conviction, not an ecumenism of accommodation.”

Very openly the Roman Catholic (RC) signatories state in the document that they are “Catholics who are conscientiously faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church.” Since the doctrine of justification is central to a Biblical understanding of what salvation is, one would expect to find in the document itself some official statement of Roman Catholic Church (RCC) teaching on the doctrine of justification. While this is missing, the RCC doctrine of conferred justification is the conclusion to which the document comes.

EVANGELICALS JOIN ROME

The document states, “Justification is central to the scriptural account of salvation, and its meaning has been much debated between Protestants and Catholics.” Areas of alleged agreement are then pointed out.

It is to be held firmly in mind that Evangelicals throughout the centuries have maintained that justification by faith alone is the way in which sinful human beings are made right and just before the all Holy God.¹ Justification itself is a judicial declarative act on the part of God alone by which He declares that only in Christ is a man perfectly just before Himself, who is the morally perfect Being and Holy Judge over all human beings. His judicial declarative act is not made on the basis of anything within a man, but rather it is made solely and wholly upon the righteous life and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ who lived a perfect life and paid the just penalty for sins upon the cross. Historically, Evangelicals have been in agreement with the Apostle Paul, “*to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*” (Romans 4:5).

The Bible teaches the manifestation of God’s righteousness, not man’s. “*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets*” (Romans 3:21). The Gospel good news is the declaration of God that His

¹ See *The Westminster Confession of Faith, 1646*; *The Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689*; *The Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Adopted by The Baptist Association, 1742*; and others.

righteousness is upon believers, i.e., credited to them. “*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe*” (Romans 3:22). Only the Lord Christ Jesus is declared to be, and actually is the Righteousness of God. The believer has His righteousness only credited to him. This is the historical position of Evangelicals.

Historically, and conversely, the Roman Catholic Church teaches as dogma that justification is conferred through her sacraments and that it consists of inner righteousness whereby a man, it is stated, becomes just within himself. The Church of Rome condemns the Biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone. This was done at the Council of Trent. Present day dogma of the RCC not only upholds the teaching of the Council of Trent but also declares that such Councils are infallible.² The Council of Trent proclaims the following curses:

If anyone shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone by which we are justified: let him be anathema [cursed].³

If anyone shall say that by the said sacraments of the New Law, grace is not **conferred** from the work which has been worked [*ex opere operato*] but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices to obtain grace: let him be anathema.⁴

Rome's reason for such a curse on those who hold to “justification by faith alone” is logical because of what she refuses to concede. For her, justification is not an immediate declaration of God and received by faith alone; rather, she teaches that grace is conferred through the sacraments. Thus she is able to make a place for herself as a necessary means through which inner righteousness is given. She teaches, “Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ. **It is granted us through Baptism.**”⁵

That same teaching stated clearly 450 years ago, that physical mediation through the sacraments is necessary for salvation, is stated emphatically by Rome in the present time: “The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are *necessary for salvation*. . . .”⁶ “Justification **is conferred** in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. **It conforms us** to the righteousness of God, who **makes us inwardly just** by the power of his mercy.”⁷ This is what the Roman Catholics who signed the document state that they believe. It is what the Evangelicals who signed the document should know the Catholics mean when the Catholics affirm in writing that they are “Catholics who are conscientiously faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church.”

In the face of such clarity, both on the part of Scripture and on the part of the RCC, this new ecumenical document claims that now both sides agree on what had been the primary dividing point between Protestants and Roman Catholics for several hundred years. The document states:

We agree that justification is not earned by any good works or merits of our own; it is entirely God's gift, conferred through the Father's sheer graciousness, out of the love that he bears us in his Son, who suffered on our behalf and rose from the dead for our justification.

² *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1994) Para. 891. Hereafter referred to as CCC.

³ Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, Tr. by Roy J Deferrari from *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 13th ed. (B. Herder Book Co., 1957), #822, Canon 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, #851, Canon 8. Bolding in any quotation indicates emphasis added in this paper.

⁵ CCC, Para. 2020.

⁶ CCC, Para. 1129.

⁷ CCC, Para. 1992.

Jesus was “put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification” (Romans 4:25). In justification, God, on the basis of Christ's righteousness alone, declares us to be no longer his rebellious enemies but his forgiven friends, and by virtue of his declaration it is so.

This statement teaches traditional Roman Catholic doctrine, for by careful reading one comes to see that what the two pivotal sentences state grammatically is this:

...it [justification] is entirely God’s gift, conferred [rather than imputed]...and by virtue of his [Holy God’s] declaration it [justification conferred] is so.

To employ the word “conferred” instead of the Biblical word “imputed” is tantamount to putting aside Scriptural authority on the issue of justification. This is precisely because the same Romans Chapter Four that is quoted clearly teaches the concept of imputation or crediting eleven times; and what the RCC means by conferred justification is just as clearly laid out in her dogma (see above). Since medieval times, the RCC has clearly distinguished between the concept of imputation and the concept of God’s grace conferred as a quality of the soul.⁸ The Roman Catholic signatories, “Catholics who are conscientiously faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church,” know this dogma.

In the Bible, while there is no mention whatsoever of “conferring” justification, the theme of the imputation of the righteousness of God to the believer is constant.⁹ Yet through centuries and in the face of Scriptural clarity, the teaching of Rome tenaciously holds to justification conferred rather than imputed, the present document under consideration being a case in point. Part of the perversion by which the Biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone is accomplished in this document is by the use of the RCC terminology, “conferred”. It may be Idris Cardinal Cassidy’s “very active support throughout the process [of drawing up the document]”¹⁰ which accomplished the accommodation to Catholic terminology. Through that accommodation, the Biblical teaching of the righteousness of God imputed to the believer is subsumed under Rome’s traditional concept of inner or infused righteousness. Evangelicals are accustomed to the Biblical word, imputed. For them to agree to the Roman Catholic word, conferred, signifying the bringing of God’s grace into the soul as a quality, is a major compromise.

Cardinal Newman's famous *via media* built-in

The part of the statement that is most frightening is the subtle concept of Cardinal Newman, which it incorporates and propagates. The document adopted Newman's thought in its statement,

“... and by virtue of his [Holy God’s] **declaration it** [justification conferred] **is so**”.

Newman's famous *via media* has come back to life. Newman's doctrine was that creation and justification are exactly alike. When God justifies a person, Newman claimed, it is as if He

⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2 vols., Great Books of the Western World Series, Tr. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952) Part I of the Second Part, Question 110, Article 1, Obj. 3 and Article 2, Reply Obj. 1.

⁹ *Psalm 32:2, 71:15-16, 130:3; Isaiah 45:24-25, 54:17, 61:10; Jeremiah 23:6, 33:16, 51:10; Daniel 9:24; Luke 18:14; Romans 1:17, 3:21-22, 4:6, 11, 5:18-19; I Corinthians 1:30; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 2:10, 3:3; II Peter 1:1*, and elsewhere.

¹⁰ Prologue to “The Gift of Salvation”, *First Things*, January, 1998, p. 20.

commanded, "Let this man be righteous," just as He had commanded, "Let there be light." Such a teaching has a form of godliness since it uses a Biblical example. It is blasphemous however, in that it denies the repeated statements concerning imputed righteousness. In justification Holy God does not speak in imperative sentences. Rather, He speaks in declarative sentences. A declaration is a declaration, and not an operation or process. Newman's theological octopus makes it possible to depend on Church sacraments to be filled with goodness, as a filling station through which grace is channeled in to the soul. Newman sought to blend justification into sanctification and, in a more polished form, to continue to teach subjective righteousness, a theological monstrosity. It is thoroughly shocking to find leading evangelical men agreeing to such sophisticated deceit.

To teach that such a declaration of justification is conferred and not simply credited to the believer is a subversion of the truth. Likewise to state that "... [justification conferred] **is so**", is professional fraud.

This teaching of justification being "conferred" is the same as that of the Pharisees or that of Rome, "*For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*" (Romans 10:3). The statements of this document perpetrate the age-old heresy that justifying righteousness is within man, because wittingly or unwittingly, the document teaches the lie of Satan that you can be as God.

As we showed above even the summation to which this heretical paragraph comes is dead wrong, for the subject of the paragraph is justification conferred, so that the last line reads logically that "by virtue of his [Holy God's] declaration it [justification conferred] is so." But this vibrant conclusion, echoing with all the tones of RCC finality, "Rome has spoken, the matter is finished", should register in the minds of those Scripturally attuned as "another gospel." With like subtlety Rome has always taught, from the Council of Trent to the present day. Now so-called Evangelicals join them.

A DOCUMENTED LIE

The launching article did refer to the condemnations of the sixteenth century. "New questions are being asked about the status of the mutual condemnations of the sixteenth century, including those concerning the doctrine of justification," wrote Timothy George. This remark shows that he has failed to grasp the fact that such questions are not possible for the Roman Catholic. By definition, a conscientious Catholic knows and obeys RC dogma. Equally, an educated Evangelical ought to know the errors of the teaching of Rome. The signatories to this document have not simply ended up with egg on their faces; far more serious than that, they have, wittingly or unwittingly, documented publicly their own espousal of a lie regarding the Gospel. The document that they have signed agrees to the Roman Catholic doctrine of conferred righteousness; by signing it, they deny the Biblical truth of imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer and embrace a false gospel.

NO AGREEMENT ON THE GOSPEL REALLY ESTABLISHED

Towards the end of the document an astonishing statement is made,

While we rejoice in the unity we have discovered and are confident of the fundamental truths about the gift of salvation we have affirmed, we recognize that there are necessarily interrelated questions that require further and urgent exploration. Among such questions are these: the meaning of baptismal regeneration, the Eucharist, and sacramental grace; the historic uses of the language of justification as it relates to imputed and transformative righteousness; the normative status of justification in relation to all Christian doctrine; the assertion that while justification is by faith alone, the faith that receives salvation is never alone; diverse understandings of merit, reward, purgatory, and indulgences; Marian devotion and the assistance of the saints in the life of salvation; and the possibility of salvation for those who have not been evangelized.

These two long sentences state two things which are false: first, what is said to be fundamental truths about the gift of salvation is the RCC's declared inner righteousness rather than the Lord's everlasting righteousness credited to the believer. Then, what are given as secondary questions are rather the heart and core of the differences that Protestants and Catholics have had over the justification of sinners throughout the centuries. Most of the doctrines designated by this document as "necessarily interrelated questions" deny the Biblical doctrine of justification.

THE BELIEVER'S EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS

While both imputed righteousness and transformative righteousness are mentioned, the opposition between them is not acknowledged. Rather, in a deft swipe, both concepts are lumped together as if they were one more innocuous detail to be tidied up. The document treats as if it were simply a matter of vocabulary what in the Bible is the very crucial difference between the righteousness of Christ by faith and that of self-righteousness. The inner righteousness that Rome claims, as a basis of being right with God is what the Bible condemns. Thus the document has downgraded to the status of a "necessarily interrelated question" "the historic uses of the language of justification as it relates to imputed and transformative righteousness."

Attempting to cloud or to dismantle the Biblical distinction between the two is a most serious matter. The Biblical Gospel maintains that transformed living is a result of, and not the cause of, the believer's right standing before the Holy God. This is an exact issue in which Rome upholds man in himself as being pleasing to God, thereby showing that doctrinally she has confused justification with sanctification. As was seen above, the Church of Rome teaches, "**Justification is conferred in Baptism**, the sacrament of faith. **It conforms us** to the righteousness of God, who **makes us inwardly just** by the power of his mercy."¹¹ That inner righteousness can be achieved by means of her physical sacraments is what the RCC consistently teaches: "The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized [person] sanctifying grace, the grace of justification"¹² According to RC doctrine then, "the grace of justification" is here clearly defined as "sanctifying grace." It is this infusion (i.e., sanctifying grace) which the Church of Rome claims makes a person pleasing to God—rather than being credited with Christ's righteousness alone, as the Scriptures teach. Rome therefore states, "Sanctifying grace makes us 'pleasing to God'. "¹³ Such infused righteousness as a basis of justification is a negation of consistent Biblical teaching of positional legal righteousness in Christ alone.¹⁴ To minimize this

¹¹ CCC, Para. 1992.

¹² CCC, Para. 1266.

¹³ CCC, Para. 2024.

¹⁴ See Ephesians 1:3-14, Philippians 3:8-9, Colossians 3:3-4, Romans 3:24, 5:19, Isaiah 45:24-25, Psalm 71:16,

signal doctrine rather than to address it as key to justification disguises Catholicism on the very point where Scripture is most exact.

The power of God unto salvation of which Paul speaks is the gospel in Romans 1:16. It is clarified in v. 17 as “*the righteousness of God revealed.*” True to promise, Holy God Himself has provided the permanent finished work of justification for sin. Herein is the love of God shown through his Son, Jesus Christ, in that the gift of righteousness, which cost Christ Jesus his life, is a finished work and is freely given. Justification is located in Christ's righteousness alone and is imputed to the believer who has been placed in Christ by God alone. This righteousness cannot be diminished; neither can it be increased. The believer is justified by the imputation of Christ's “*everlasting righteousness*”¹⁵ to him, and hence forever. With the Apostle Paul, therefore, the believer can proclaim boldly, “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*”¹⁶ God's primary and ultimate purpose for such imputed righteousness is given in Romans 3:26, “*To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*” This is because of who God is; He alone justifies those who believe, because He alone is Holy. Under the law, for God the Father to judge any sinner righteous means that a perfect life under His perfect law had to be lived. Only the God-Man Christ Jesus could do this, and He has done it. It is finished.

Again and again the Bible states, therefore, that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer freely by God, or by God's grace alone. The Apostle Paul makes the distinction in the clearest of words,

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.
(Philippians 3:8-9)

And in Galatians 2:21,

I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

In the Prologue to her 1994 *Catechism*, however, the Church of Rome has given her official teaching,

The third part of the Catechism deals with the final end of man created in the image of God: beatitude [the blessedness of heaven], and the way of reaching it - through right conduct freely chosen, with the help of God's law and grace (*Section One*), and through conduct that fulfills the twofold commandment of charity, specified in God's Ten Commandments (*Section Two*).¹⁷

This is as clear as if a Pharisee had written it: to reach beatitude [the blessedness of heaven], right conduct and the keeping of God's Law are required. Grace, where mentioned, is merely a help rather than the sovereign act of God. Yet this very distinction of counting on God's

Jeremiah 23:6. See also the longer list already cited.

¹⁵ Daniel 9:24

¹⁶ Romans 8:1

¹⁷ CCC, Para. 16.

righteousness and not one's own was at the center of the conflict between the Lord and the Pharisees, Paul and the Judiazers, the Reformation and the Roman Catholic Church. To denigrate this crucial distinction is exceedingly serious, for imputed righteousness is an essential element of the Gospel of Christ. In Roman Catholic teaching, one's conduct and keeping of the law are the way of reaching beatitude. This goal no human being can obtain since by definition a human being is imperfect. The Bible Good News to the sinner is "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*" (Romans 4:5). The Biblical distinction is light in the place of darkness. To intimate sameness is to protectively whitewash Catholicism.

ROME'S FREEDOM FROM SIN THROUGH BAPTISM

Under the rubric of "interrelated questions" as if it were a subordinate matter and not effecting justification, is also the mention of baptismal regeneration. RC teaching on baptismal regeneration is contrary to Scripture. Rome teaches, "Baptism, the gate to the sacraments, necessary for salvation in fact or at least in intention, by which men and women are freed from their sins, are reborn as children of God. . . ." ¹⁸ Rome also officially teaches that "The [Roman Catholic] Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude" ¹⁹; that "By Baptism *all sins* are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin" ²⁰; and that "The sheer gratuitousness of the grace of salvation is particularly manifest in infant Baptism. The Church and the parents would deny a child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer Baptism shortly after birth." ²¹ According to the Bible, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). To propound that new birth is through the application of a physical sacrament is to negate the Gospel of grace alone through faith alone.

THE EUCHARIST AND THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The Eucharist is also a lucid example of a rejection of the Gospel of grace. Formally the Church of Rome expounds,

The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*: 'The victim ²² is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.' 'In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner.' ²³

Such an assertion in itself contravenes the total sufficiency of Christ's once offered sacrifice. "*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*" (Hebrews 1:3). If Christ is a victim being offered through priests each day on thousands of Roman Catholic altars, then His sacrifice was flawed and imperfect since continual offering by definition means incomplete. The confidence that the signatories to

¹⁸ *Code of Canon Law*, Latin-English Ed. (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1983) Canon 849.

¹⁹ CCC, Para. 1257.

²⁰ CCC, Para. 1263.

²¹ CCC, Para. 1250.

²² Christ was never a victim and the idea of His being victimized is nowhere in Scripture. Rather it was of His own free will that He chose to go to the cross. See John 10:15, 18 and elsewhere. The use of the term, victim, in this context makes clear the erroneous doctrinal base from which the Roman Catholic theology proceeds.

²³ CCC, Para. 1367.

this document state that they have in “the fundamental truths about the gift of salvation” is totally invalidated by the Roman Catholic understanding of a victim-like “Christ” needing to offer Himself daily on their altars. To the signers of this document the words of the Lord apply, “*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen*” (Romans 1:25).

BELITTLING THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE GOSPEL

“Marian devotion and the assistance of the saints in the life of salvation” is another key Gospel issue. To claim, as does Rome, that Mary is “Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix” is not only something that voids the Gospel message, it also denigrates and belittles the Person and the role of the Holy Spirit. The exact words of Roman dogma are,

Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. . . . Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of **Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix**.²⁴

What is so serious regarding these titles is the fact that in the Bible the Comforter, **the Helper sent to take the Lord’s place in the believer, is the Holy Spirit**. He abides with the believer forever (John 14:16). He brings to mind Christ’s words (John 14:26). He testifies not to Himself but to Christ (John 15:26). He guides believers into all truth (John 16:13). Truly the Holy Spirit is another Advocate, a divine Helper, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth. The seriousness of teaching that these divine roles of the Holy Spirit belong to the Roman Catholic Mary is that such teaching disparages the divine Person of the Holy Spirit. This is grave heresy. Salvation comes by the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

When it comes to the claim that Mary is Mediatrix, Rome is bold enough to assert this in face of the clarity of Scripture. She decrees, “This, however, is so understood that it neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator.”²⁵ Here is a classic example of Roman Catholic double talk. While presenting two mediators, the allegation is made that Mary does not “obscure or diminish from this unique mediation of Christ.” Rather than upholding the truth of one mediator, they add to the truth to make place for a feminine mediator whom they call Mediatrix. Such naturalistic dogma and reasoning are set up “*against the knowledge of God*” (II Corinthians 10:5). For Evangelicals to mention Marian devotion as having any place in salvation is to promote falsehood pure and simple. For Evangelicals not to know the official teaching of Rome as they make formal statements about Catholicism is inexcusable ignorance.

THE SAINTS AND SALVATION

In a similar way to call “the assistance of the saints in the life of salvation” a “necessarily interrelated question” rather than to call it a heresy is deception of the first order. Rome’s teaching on this topic is lucid, clear, and distinctly occult. She teaches:

In the treasury, too, are the prayers and good works of all the saints, all those who have followed in the footsteps of Christ the Lord and by his grace have made their lives holy...In this way they attained their own salvation and at the same time cooperated in saving their brothers in unity of the Mystical Body.²⁶

²⁴ CCC, Para. 969.

²⁵ *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Austin Flannery, O.P., Editor, 1981 edition (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1975) Vol. I, pp. 418-419.

²⁶ CCC, Para. 1477.

Rome also declares,

Communion with the dead. In full consciousness of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church in its pilgrim members, from the earliest days of the Christian religion, has honored with great respect the memory of the dead...Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective.²⁷

Scripture declares, “*There shall not be found among you... a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer [one who call up the dead].*”²⁸ The whole concept of calling up the dead to help with salvation is an abomination to the Lord and His Gospel truth. To lay aside the Scripture that exposes the RCC practice as heretical and then to declare “we have discovered and are confident of the fundamental truths about the gift of salvation” is to promote knowingly that which has been set up against the Biblical knowledge of God.

PURGATORY AND INDULGENCES

Both the topics of purgatory and of indulgences obviously detract from the all sufficient finished work of the Lord. Knowing RC dogma on these subjects and the history of conflict surrounding them, it is astonishing that these topics could be mentioned as if they were secondary matter and not pertaining directly to the Gospel.

IN BIBLICAL LIGHT: THE VERDICT

The document ends with the statement, “we affirm our unity in the gospel that we have here professed. In our continuing discussions, we seek no unity other than unity in the truth. Only unity in the truth can be pleasing to the Lord and Savior whom we together serve, for he is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6)”. Indeed only unity in the truth can be pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ. After a scrutiny of the document in the light of Biblical truth and official RC dogma, the unhappy conclusion is that “unity in truth” has not in fact been reached. The precise reason for this is that the affirmation of unity in the Gospel is a falsehood; rather what has been reached is a proclamation of Rome’s doctrine of conferred justification and a concealment of what Catholicism really is.

What is compromised in this document is the Gospel itself. Remembering the warning of Scripture, we truly fear for those who have composed it and those who have endorsed it. “*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed*” (Galatians 1:8-9).

In summary, the section on the Eucharist documented clearly that “the victim” on RC altars each day is in the words of 2 Corinthians 11:4 “*another Jesus.*” The Mary displayed by Rome as “Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix” is a message that both voids the Gospel and denigrates the Person and the role of the Holy Spirit. Rebirth and the forgiveness of all sin in the sacrament of Baptism have been recorded in official RC teaching. It disparages Christ’s words in John 6:29, “*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*” “Communion with the dead” is not just Rome’s words, they are her practice.

²⁷ CCC, Para. 958.

²⁸ Deuteronomy 18:10-11.

The heart of the Gospel is justification that is the LEGAL, JUDICIAL, IMPUTED, DECLARED RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Lord Jesus Christ upon all them who believe. Not only does Rome deny this Gospel, but also she has cursed officially all that do. For men holding that they are Evangelicals, to cover up these heresies is a horrendous thing. It is like unto what the Lord spoke in Luke 11: *“as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them”*. In the words of the Lord Jesus Christ the admonition solemnly given is, ***“Take heed that no man deceive you.”*** ♦

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