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NEW EVANGELICALISM AND BIBLE VERSIONS

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One of the many myths surrounding the subject of Bible versions is the idea that Evangelical scholarship today is trustworthy. Following is a letter from the late Dr. James Boice to missionary doctor Tom Hale on the subject of Bible texts and versions. In this letter, Dr. Boice advises Dr. Hale to lean on “current evangelical scholarship”:

“There are some in this country and elsewhere who are very zealous for the textus receptus, prepared by the humanistic scholar, Erasmus, and used as the basis for the King James translation. This has led some, quite unwisely in my judgment, to defend the King James Version as the only true and faithful English text. Let me say that the concerns of some of these people are undoubtedly good. They are zealous for the Word of God and very much concerned lest liberal or any other scholarship enter in to pervert it. But unfortunately, the basis on which they are operating is wrong, and I have always tried to do what I could in a gentle way to lead them to appreciate good, current evangelical scholarship where the Greek text and the translations are concerned” (Letter from James M. Boice, Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Dr. Thomas Hale, United Mission to Nepal, Kathmandu, September 13, 1985).

Dr. Hale, a medical doctor in Nepal, had written to Boice for counsel on the matter of Bible texts and versions. In the summer of 1985, Dr. Hale visited our home in Kathmandu and began a discussion about Bible versions. Dr. Hale was involved with a Nepali Bible study translation project and wanted to know what I could share with him about the texts and versions. We had an interesting time going through some of the reasons why the new versions differ from the old Protestant ones, and after he returned to his hospital in central Nepal, we continued our conversation via correspondence. I also gave him some books on the subject, including, if I remember correctly, Dr. Edward F. Hills' *Defending the King James Bible* and D.O. Fuller's *True or False?* On July 28, 1985, Dr. Hale wrote the following:

“Thank you very much for your long and thoughtful letter to me about the Greek texts. I greatly appreciate the time you took to answer me, and I have found what you have written to be most informative, and indeed, worrisome. I hadn't realized that the battleground, as it were, is in the area of the Greek texts.”

I was amazed at this. The man is a student of the Scriptures and has sat under the ministries of key Evangelical leaders, yet he had never heard that one of the major differences between the King James Bible and the modern versions is the different Greek texts upon which they are founded.

As time passed it became evident that Dr. Hale had rejected the Received Text in favor of the modern critical text. A chief factor in this decision was the counsel he received from Dr. Boice, pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, and head of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. Hale wrote to Boice to seek his opinion on Bible versions, and Hale sent me a copy of Dr. Boice's letter when he concluded our conversations on the subject.

As we have seen, Boice encouraged Dr. Hale to trust Evangelical scholarship, ignoring the heretical New Evangelical leaven that has permeated Evangelicalism in the past 50 years.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Evangelicalism in America was identified with Fundamentalism. Many historians make this connection, including Mark Ellingsen (*The Evangelical Movement*) and George Marsden (*Reforming Fundamentalism*). Marsden says, “There was not a practical distinction between fundamentalist and evangelical: the words were interchangeable” (p. 48). When the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) was formed in 1942, for example, participants included such staunch Fundamentalist leaders as Bob Jones, Sr., John R. Rice, Charles Woodbridge, Harry Ironside, David Otis Fuller, and R.G. Lee.

By the mid-1950s, though, a clear break between separatist Fundamentalists and non-separatist Evangelicals occurred. This was occasioned largely by the ecumenical evangelism of Billy Graham. The stronger men dropped out of the NAE. The terms Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism began “to refer to two different movements” (William Martin, *A Prophet with Honor*, p. 224).

The sons of Evangelical-Fundamentalist preachers determined to create a “New Evangelicalism.” They would not be fighters; they would be diplomats, positive rather than militant, infiltrators rather than separatists. They would not be restricted by a separationist mentality.

The term “New Evangelicalism” defined a new type of Evangelicalism to distinguish it from those who had heretofore born that label. Thus, in the very label is the witness to the fact that Evangelicalism of old, regardless of any weaknesses, was biblically dogmatic, militant, and separatistic. The term “New Evangelicalism” was possibly coined by the late Harold Ockenga (1905-1985), probably the most influential Evangelical leader of the 1940s. He was the pastor of Park Street Church (Presbyterian) in Boston, founder of the National Association of Evangelicals, co-founder and one-time president of Fuller Theological Seminary, first president of the World Evangelical Fellowship, president of Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, a director of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and chairman of the board and one-time editor of *Christianity Today*. In the foreword to Dr. Harold Lindsell’s book *The Battle for the Bible*, Ockenga stated the position of New Evangelicalism:

“Neo-evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. While reaffirming the theological view of fundamentalism, this address repudiated its ecclesiology and its social theory. The ringing call for a repudiation of separatism and the summons to social involvement received a hearty response from many Evangelicals. ... It differed from fundamentalism in its repudiation of separatism and its determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day. It had a new emphasis upon the application of the gospel to the sociological, political, and economic areas of life.”

While Ockenga may or may not have coined the term “New Evangelicalism,” it is certain that the movement itself was not “born” with his convocation address. He did not create the movement; he merely labeled and described the new mood of positivism and non-militancy that was quickly permeating his generation. Ockenga and the new generation of Evangelicals, Billy Graham figuring most prominently, determined to abandon a militant Bible stance. Instead, they would pursue dialogue, intellectualism, and appeasement. They determined to stay within apostate denominations to attempt to change things from within rather than practice biblical

separation. The New Evangelical would dialogue with those who teach error rather than proclaim the Word of God boldly and without compromise. The New Evangelical would meet the proud humanist and the haughty liberal on their own turf with so-called scholarship rather than follow the humble path of being counted a fool for Christ's sake by standing humbly and simply upon the Bible. New Evangelical leaders also determined to start a "rethinking process" whereby the old paths were to be continually reassessed in light of new goals, methods, and ideology.

Dr. Charles Woodbridge, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in its early days, a founding member of the National Association of Evangelicals, and a friend of men such as Harold Ockenga and Carl Henry, rejected the New Evangelicalism and spent the rest of his life warning of its dangers. In his 1969 book, *The New Evangelicalism*, he traced the downward path of New Evangelical compromise:

"The New Evangelicalism is a theological and moral compromise of the deadliest sort. It is an insidious attack upon the Word of God. ... The New Evangelicalism advocates toleration of error. It is following the downward path of accommodation to error, cooperation with error, contamination by error, and ultimate capitulation to error!" (Woodbridge, *The New Evangelicalism*, pp. 9,15).

Each passing decade witnesses more plainly to the truth of Dr. Woodbridge's observations. Toleration of error leads to accommodation, cooperation, contamination, and ultimate capitulation. This describes the history of New Evangelicalism precisely.

In 1958, William Ashbrook wrote *Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism*, which began with the following warning:

"This is the age of 'isms,' some good, mostly bad! One of the youngest members of Christendom's fold is called The New Evangelicalism. It might more properly be labeled The New Neutralism. This new 'Evangelicalism' boasts too much pride, and has imbibed too much of the world's culture to share the reproach of fundamentalism. It still has enough faith and too much understanding of the Bible to appear in the togs of modernism. It seeks neutral ground, being neither fish nor fowl, neither right nor left, neither for nor against--it stands between! ... Bible-believing Christians would do well to beware of the New Evangelicalism for four valid reasons. First, it is a movement born of compromise. Second, it is a movement nurtured in pride of intellect. Third, it is a movement growing on appeasement of evil; and finally it is a movement doomed by the judgment of God's Holy Word."

In *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Dr. George Dollar observes:

“It has become a favorite pastime of new-evangelical writers, who know so little of historic Fundamentalism, to call it offensive names, as if to bury it by opprobrium. The real danger is not strong Fundamentalism but a soft and effeminate Christianity--exotic but cowardly. It is sad that these men would not heed the warning of W.B Riley about the menace of ‘middle-of-the-roadism’” (Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 1973, p. 208).

Pastor Rolland Starr, who in the 1960s wrote *The New Evangelicalism: The Deadliest Ism of All*, warned that “Apostasy Avenue is a one way street and it is all downhill.” The history of New Evangelicalism has demonstrated the truth of that simple statement.

God says, “Walk ye in the old paths,” but the New Evangelical reassesses the old paths. God says, “Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set,” but the New Evangelical has removed them one by one. God says, “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,” but the New Evangelical reasons that such fellowship is necessary. God says, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,” but the New Evangelical thinks he can reform the already leavened lump. God says, “Evil communications corrupt good manners,” but the New Evangelical thinks good manners can uplift evil communications. God says, “I resist the proud but give grace to the humble,” but the New Evangelical thinks the way to reach the world is by meeting them on their own proud territory, matching them scholarly degree with degree.

NEW EVANGELICAL PHILOSOPHY HAS PERMEATED EVANGELICALISM

The New Evangelical leaven spread rapidly. It was popularized through pleasant personalities and broadcast through powerful print, radio, and television media. *Christianity Today*, for example, was founded in 1956 to voice the new philosophy. New Evangelicalism became the working principle of large interdenominational organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals, National Religious Broadcasters, Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Evangelical Foreign Mission Association, World Evangelical Fellowship, the National Sunday School Association, etc. It was spread through educational institutions such as Fuller Theological Seminary, Wheaton College, Gordon-Conwell, and Moody Bible Institute. Historian David Beale observes that the New Evangelical philosophy “captured many organizations, fellowships, associations, and denominations that originated as strictly Fundamentalist groups” (Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity*, p. 263).

The Evangelical movement today is the New Evangelical movement. For all practical purposes, they are one and the same.

“Part of the current confusion regarding New Evangelicalism stems from the fact that there is now little difference between evangelicalism and New Evangelicalism. The principles of the original New Evangelicalism have become so universally accepted by those who refer to themselves as evangelicals that any distinctions which might have been made years ago are all but lost. It is no doubt true to state that ‘Ockenga’s designation of the new movement as “New or Neo-Evangelical” was abbreviated to “Evangelical.” ... Thus today we speak of this branch of conservative Christianity simply as the Evangelical movement” (Ernest Pickering, *The Tragedy of Compromise*, p. 96).

NEW EVANGELICALISM IS NOT A DENOMINATION OR A GROUP. It is a spirit or mood of compromise. . It is a rejection of many of the negative aspects of New Testament Christianity. It is an attitude of positivism. Old-line Presbyterians can be New Evangelical. Old-line Methodists can be New Evangelical. Fundamental Bible churches can be New Evangelical. Southern Baptists can be New Evangelical. **INDEPENDENT FUNDAMENTAL BAPTISTS CAN BE NEW EVANGELICAL.** Many are, and the number appears to be growing rapidly. Beware, friends. Don’t be deceived by the label. Examine the content, and avoid that which is contrary to the Word of God.

“The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going” (Proverbs 14:15).

NEW EVANGELICALISM PAVED THE WAY FOR ACCEPTANCE OF MODERN VERSIONS

It can be demonstrated that New Evangelical compromise has paved the way for today’s wholesale acceptance of the modern versions in the Evangelical world. It is important to understand that the phenomenon of New Evangelicalism had only recently arrived on the scene when the Revised Standard Version was published. Already in 1952 Billy Graham, New Evangelicalism’s foremost popularizer, accepted a copy of the RSV and told a crowd of 20,000 people:

“These scholars have probably given us the most nearly perfect translation in English. While there may be room for disagreement in certain areas of the translation, yet this new version should supplement the King James Version and make Bible reading a habit throughout America” (Graham, cited by Perry Rockwood, *God’s Inspired Preserved Bible*, nd., p. 15).

Graham's endorsement of the Revised Standard Version foreshadowed Evangelicalism's capitulation to the endless stream of modern versions. Graham has endorsed practically every new version to appear on the scene, no matter how flippant and unfaithful, including the Living Bible (which he almost single-handedly rescued from oblivion), J.B. Phillips' New Testament (Phillips, *The Price of Success: An Autobiography*, p. 116), and the blasphemous Good News for Modern Man (Today's English Version) which replaces the word "blood" with "death" in speaking of the atonement of Jesus Christ and which corrupts the passages presenting the Godhead of Jesus Christ.

As New Evangelicalism has gradually leavened the entire Evangelical world over the past fifty years, the modern versions have increased in popularity. Many seem confused by the fact that most Evangelical leaders today give wholehearted endorsement to the critical Greek text as well as to the versions based upon them. "How could all of these men be wrong?" they muse. The answer, which many find difficult to accept but which is based upon historical reality, lies in the fact that New Evangelicalism is a form of apostasy. It is founded upon a willful repudiation of many of the negative aspects of biblical Christianity.

THE APOSTATE FRUIT OF NEW EVANGELICALISM

It is God who has commanded that His people separate from error; it is God who has commanded that His people "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." When these and other aspects of old-time Evangelicalism were rejected, the power and blessing of God was removed.

Even influential Evangelical leaders have noted the rapid and frightful spiritual decline of their own movement. Dr. Harold Lindsell, (1913-1998), who was vice-president of Fuller Theological Seminary and editor of *Christianity Today*, made this amazing statement at the 27th annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in April 1969: "Evangelical Christianity is in spiritual jeopardy right now. Complacent, affluent, self-satisfied, we are lacking of great spiritual dynamic" (D.A. Waite, *What's Wrong with the N.A.E. - 1969?*).

In 1979, Dr. Lindsell was even bolder:

"I must regretfully conclude that the term evangelical has been so debased that it has lost its usefulness. ... Forty years ago the term evangelical represented those who were theologically orthodox and who held to biblical inerrancy as one of the distinctives. ... **WITHIN A DECADE OR SO NEOEVANGELICALISM, THAT STARTED SO WELL AND PROMISED SO MUCH, WAS BEING ASSAULTED FROM WITHIN BY**

IN-CREASING SKEPTICISM WITH REGARD TO BIBLICAL INFALLIBILITY OR INERRANCY” (Harold Lindsell, *The Bible in the Balance*, 1979, p. 319).

By 1985, Lindsell had become even more forceful about the decline of evangelicalism: “Evangelicalism today is in a sad state of disarray. ... It is clear that evangelicalism is now broader and shallower, and is becoming more so. Evangelicalism’s children are in the process of forsaking the faith of their fathers” (*Christian News*, Dec. 2, 1985).

Another popular Evangelical leader, Dr. Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984), gave a similar warning at the 1976 convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Washington D.C. He spoke on “The Watershed of the Evangelical World,” which is the infallible inspiration of Holy Scripture. Schaeffer observed: “What is the use of evangelicalism seeming to get larger and larger in number if significant numbers of those under the name of ‘evangelical’ no longer hold to that which makes evangelicalism evangelical?” (D.A. Waite, *What’s Wrong with the N.A.E. - 1976?*).

A 1996 Moody Press book entitled *The Coming Evangelical Crisis* also documented the apostasy of Evangelicalism.

“Although most of today’s professing evangelicals would acknowledge that theology, in some sense of the word, does matter, a recent survey in *Christianity Today* revealed that this is more lip service than anything else. According to this survey ... theology, in any sense of the word, is really not all that important to the very people to whom it should matter most: those in the pew and in the pulpit. BOTH GROUPS LISTED THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AS LAST IN TERMS OF PASTORAL PRIORITIES. ... WE ARE SADLY EXPERIENCING, ON A RATHER LARGE SCALE, A SUBJECTIVISM THAT BETRAYS ITS WEAKENED HOLD ON THE OBJECTIVE TRUTH and reality of Christianity by its neglect or even renunciation of its distinctive objective character. ... Men ... really wish to have a creedless Christianity. ‘Creeds,’ they shout, ‘are divisive things; away with them!’ ... Where does this leave us? An undogmatic Christianity is no Christianity at all” (Gary L.W. Johnson, “Does Theology Still Matter?” *The Coming Evangelical Crisis*, Moody Press, 1996, pp. 58,66,67).

“... evangelicalism in the 1990s is an amalgam of diverse and often theologically ill-defined groups, institutions, and traditions. ... THE THEOLOGICAL UNITY THAT ONCE MARKED THE MOVEMENT HAS GIVEN WAY TO A THEOLOGICAL PLURALISM THAT WAS PRECISELY WHAT MANY OF THE FOUNDERS OF MODERN EVANGELICALISM HAD REJECTED IN MAINLINE

PROTESTANTISM. ... Evangelicalism is not healthy in conviction or spiritual discipline. Our theological defenses have been let down, and the infusion of revisionist theologies has affected large segments of evangelicalism. Much damage has already been done, but a greater crisis yet threatens” (R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “Evangelical What’s in a Name?” *The Coming Evangelical Crisis*, 1996, pp. 32,33,36).

These are sad testimonies. It is strange to note that these men, though they see the apostate confusion in modern Evangelicalism, do not clearly see that this is the product of the rejection of biblical separation and absolutism. These leaders continue to reject and misrepresent Bible-believing Fundamentalism. This present Evangelical generation is polluted with the Modernism and Ecumenism and Romanism and Humanism and Psychology and Worldliness from which it has refused to separate. God is not mocked. A “little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” and “evil communications corrupt good manners.” A man, church, denomination, or movement cannot reject biblical separation and a zealous defense of the whole counsel of God without paying the consequence of apostasy.

EVANGELICALISM’S APOSTASY IS SEEN IN ITS COZY RELATIONSHIP WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Most popular Evangelical men and organizations have strong and growing sympathies toward the Roman Catholic Church. In the book “Evangelicals and Rome” we give extensive documentation of this. *Christianity Today*, founded by Billy Graham and other New Evangelical leaders, has three Roman Catholic editors. Evangelical publishers are busy putting out books sympathetic to Rome and calling for ecumenical relationships.

As early as 1971 Fleming H. Revell published *A PREJUDICED PROTESTANT TAKES A NEW LOOK AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH* by James Hefley. The author is a graduate of the Southern Baptist Seminary in New Orleans and pastored a Baptist church for eight years. He describes how his prejudice against the Roman Catholic Church has dissolved in recent years because of the alleged changes in Catholicism since Vatican II. He praises “the increasing willingness of Catholics to join together in evangelism, Bible study, solving community problems, and ecumenical relations” (p. 122). He thinks it is great that Catholics have begun to work with Evangelical organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ, Youth for Christ, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Wycliffe Bible Translators, and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (pp. 118,122,123). In one chapter, Hefley describes in glowing terms his experience of visiting with Catholic leaders at the archdiocese headquarters in New Orleans. He calls the priests “father.” He “felt a warmth” while attending a Catholic mass (p. 109).

In 1979, Tyndale House Publishers came out with *THREE SISTERS* by Michael Harper. This book called for ecumenical unity between Evangelicals, Charismatics, and Roman Catholics. The author stated, “It is my own conviction that a growing unity between the three forces in the Christian world is both desirable and possible” (p. 41).

In 1984, Thomas Howard’s book *EVANGELICAL IS NOT ENOUGH* (Thomas Nelson Publisher) called for a movement toward liturgical, Catholic-style worship among Evangelicals. Howard, who was a professor at Gordon College for 15 years, is from a family of prominent Evangelicals. His father, Philip, was editor of the *Sunday School Times*; his brother David Howard was head of the World Evangelical Fellowship; and his sister Elizabeth married the famous missionary Jim Elliot, who was martyred by the Auca Indians in Ecuador. The year after the publication of *Evangelical Is Not Enough*, Thomas Howard converted to the Roman Catholic Church and left Gordon College to teach at Catholic seminaries in Boston. Other converts to Rome in recent years have testified that Howard’s book assisted them in taking their journey. When asked about Howard’s conversion to Catholicism, J.I. Packer gave the following amazing reply, “I don’t think becoming a Catholic is anything like the tragedy of a person becoming a theological liberal and losing touch with objective authority altogether. Catholics are among the most loyal and viral brothers evangelicals can find these days” (J.I. Packer, *Christianity Today*, May 17, 1985).

In 1985, InterVarsity Press stirred the ecumenical waters with *A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES* by George Carey (who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury). Carey called for the “eventual reunion of the two streams [Protestantism and Roman Catholicism] of Western Christendom.” The foreword to this book, subtitled *Can Protestants & Catholics Get Together*, was written by J.I. Packer.

Also in 1985 Wheaton College professor Robert Webber published *EVANGELICALS ON THE CANTERBURY TRAIL*, describing his journey from a Baptist (his father was a fundamental Baptist preacher) and fundamentalist (he is a graduate of Bob Jones University) heritage to the ecumenical Episcopal-Catholic philosophy he holds today. Webber accepts the Roman Catholic Church as a true apostolic church, tracing his “family tree” from Jesus Christ “through the Apostles, the primitive Christian community, the Apostolic Fathers, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church,” to “the Church of the Reformation” (p. 66). He describes his experiences at graduate school, in which he first tasted of ecumenical relations with Roman Catholics (p. 62). He describes his love for sacramentalism (pp. 47-56). He says he has to “swallow hard” when he hears missionaries to Latin America describe Roman Catholics as unsaved (p. 68). He calls the “concept of the purity of the church” a “strait-jacket that made me increasingly uncomfortable,”

because it “stifled my experience of the whole church” (p. 71). He looks upon the Reformation as an evil thing because of the division it created from Rome, and he looks forward to the day when the division will be healed (p. 171).

In 1990, Thomas Nelson published *EVANGELICAL CATHOLICS: A CALL FOR CHRISTIAN COOPERATION TO PENETRATE THE DARKNESS WITH THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL* by Keith Fournier, a Roman Catholic apologist. The foreword was written by Charles Colson. “But at root, those who are called of God, whether Catholic or Protestant, are part of the same Body. . . . It’s high time that all of us who are Christians come together regardless of the difference of our confessions and our traditions and make common cause to bring Christian values to bear in our society. When the barbarians are scaling the walls, there is no time for petty quarreling in the camp. Keith Fournier stands in the breach truly orthodox in his adherence to Catholic doctrine and fully evangelical in his relationship to Christ and His creation. Keith’s ministry is one of healing. . . . I pray that his book will be a bridge across many of the historic divisions in the church that have weakened our stand in today’s culture. . . . We have much to forgive, much to relearn. But Evangelical Catholics can help us do both so we can band together against the rising tides of secularism which threaten to engulf us” (Chuck Colson, foreword, *Evangelical Catholics*, p. vi).

In 1994, InterVarsity Press came out with the *HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS* by two Roman Catholic authors, Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli. Kreeft is a Catholic apologist who believes that Mary will ultimately conquer Satan and who believes that even Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists will probably go to Heaven. Tacelli is a Jesuit priest and a professor at Boston College. Why would InterVarsity choose Catholics to write such a book, or why would they publish such a book by Catholics? If asked about Catholic theology, InterVarsity leaders would doubtless reply that they do not agree with a large part of it. That being the case, why not have Bible-believing authors, or at least thorough-going Protestants, write a book on Christian apologetics? The answer is the ecumenical agenda of these “evangelical” organizations.

In 1994, the Navigators’ NavPress published *A HOUSE UNITED? EVANGELICALS AND CATHOLICS TOGETHER: A WINNING ALLIANCE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY*. The authors are Roman Catholic Keith Fournier and Evangelical William Watkins, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. The foreword is written by Pat Robertson. In 1991, Robertson invited Fournier to become executive director of the American Center for Law and Justice at Regent University. In the foreword to Fournier’s book, Pat Robertson said that Catholics and Protestants “have a moral imperative to join together” to oppose cultural evils such as abortion, and he praised Fournier for his “deep dedication to helping to heal the divide” that “separated the Body of Christ.” The back cover of *A House United?*

has recommenda-tions by seven men, including Terry Lindvall (President of Regent University), Ralph Reed (formerly Executive Director of the Christian Coalition), and Vinson Synan (Pentecostal chairman of the North American Renewal Service Committee). Synan sets the tone with his comments: “Keith Fournier is truly a twentieth-century apostle of unity for the Body of Christ. His back-ground as an evangelical and charismatic Catholic has prepared him well to write *A House United?* a book that adds light and grace to the current religious situation in America.”

In 1995, Baker Books encouraged the Evangelical-Roman Catholic alliance with the publication of *ROMAN CATHOLICS AND EVANGELICALS: AGREEMENTS AND DIFFERENCES* by Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie. Though the authors acknowledge vast dif-ferences between Evangelicals and Catholics, they conclude that these should not be a cause for separation. This statement from the book’s foreword sets the tone for the whole: “Nevertheless, when all is said and done, evangelical Protestants and tradition-alists, believing Roman Catholics have so many convictions and com-mit-ments in common that it would be foolish as well as wrong in the sight of the One whom we all claim as our Lord Jesus Christ to wrangle with each other in the face of the common enemy” (Foreword by Harold O. J. Brown, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences*, p. 12).

Also in 1995, Word Publishing came out with *EVANGELICALS & CATHOLICS TOWARD A COMMON MISSION Together*, edited by Charles Colson and Richard John Neuhaus. Contributors to the book include J.I. Packer (Regent College), Mark Noll (Wheaton College), and Avery Dulles (Jesuit priest and professor at Catholic University). Chuck Colson is the well-known and popular Evangelical leader who founded Prison Fellowship, and Richard Neuhaus is a convert to the Roman Catholic Church from Lutheranism. These are the two men most responsible for the controversial Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) statement that was released in 1994 and signed by 38 Evangelical and Catholic leaders. The back cover to *Evangelicals & Catholics Together* says: “This courageous book seeks a way to allow sectarian strife between the two groups to give way to a decision to work together to mend the fabric of values that has been relentlessly rent in the last thirty-five years. Here, both evangelical and Roman Catholic authors ask whether the time has come to present a united front against the onslaught of publicly sanctioned unbelief in the land.”

In 1997, InterVarsity Press published *RECLAIMING THE GREAT TRADITION: EVANGELICALS, CATHOLICS AND ORTHODOX IN DIALOGUE*. It was edited by James Cutsinger and contained articles by Harold O.J. Brown, Peter Kreeft, Richard Neuhaus, J.I. Packer, and others. The book is a collection of material from an ecumenical dialogue held at Rose Hill College, May 16-20, 1995. The objective of the dialogue was to answer the question: “How can Protestants, Roman Catholics

and Eastern Orthodox Christians talk to each other so as together to speak with Christ's mind to the modern world?" (p. 8). The answer, of course, is that this is impossible among those who do not hold the same doctrines, nor even believe the same gospel. Paul did not seek to dialogue with those who corrupted the gospel; he rebuked them and announced God's curse upon them (Galatians 1). In doing so, he was not expressing hatred or bigotry; he was demonstrating love toward those who were in danger of being deceived by false teachers.

These books were published by major Evangelical publishers, and they illustrate the rapidly growing sympathy between Evangelicals and the Roman Catholic Church.

While most of these books acknowledge that there is doctrinal error in the Roman Catholic Church, they claim that Rome has changed for the better, that Roman Catholicism is not a cult, is not total apostasy. They speak of Rome's heresies in gentle, "understanding," scholarly tones rather than labeling them the blasphemies they really are. Let me give an example. *In Roman Catholicism: Evangelical Protestants Analyze What Divides and Unites Us*, John Armstrong says, "For centuries the magisterium had insisted that there was no salvation outside the church ... which meant, of course, the Roman Catholic Church. This sometimes caused a *decidedly uncharitable response* to Protestant evangelicals, who were considered lost outside of Rome and her sacramental system" (emphasis added). To describe Rome's fearful, bloody, centuries old persecution of Bible-believing Christians as "decidedly uncharitable" is insanity.

Many of today's Evangelicals want to believe that Rome's official doctrinal position is not the real position of the so-called evangelical Catholic today. These books call upon Evangelicals to lay aside the age-old divisions and to work hand-in-hand with Roman Catholicism in social, religious, and political causes.

The cover jacket for *A House United?* quotes Pentecostal Vinson Synan's recommendation of the book: "Keith Fournier [a Catholic apologist] is truly a twentieth-century apostle of unity for the Body of Christ." This unscriptural unity in the so-called Body of Christ is one of the apostate keynotes of late twentieth-century Evangelicalism. It is obvious that NavPress, publisher of this book, and the Navigators organization that owns NavPress, have succumbed to the Evangelical-Roman Catholic juggernaut.

EVANGELICALISM'S APOSTASY IS ALSO SEEN IN ITS QUESTIONING OF BIBLICAL INFALLIBILITY

The downgrade of the doctrine of biblical inspiration has been documented even by Evangelicalism's own leaders.

In 1976, Carl F.H. Henry, first editor of *Christianity Today*, lifted his voice to warn of this frightful problem:

“A GROWING VANGUARD OF YOUNG GRADUATES OF EVANGELICAL COLLEGES WHO HOLD DOCTORATES FROM NON-EVANGELICAL DIVINITY CENTERS NOW QUESTION OR DISOWN INERRANCY and the doctrine is held less consistently by evangelical faculties. ... Some retain the term and reassure supportive constituencies but nonetheless stretch the term’s meaning” (Carl F.H. Henry, chairman for the 1966 World Congress on Evangelism, “Conflict Over Biblical Inerrancy,” *Christianity Today*, May 7, 1976)

Almost 25 years ago this leader warned of Evangelical scholars who disowned or questioned biblical inerrancy. Henry even warned that some Evangelical scholars are deceitful in their use of biblical and traditional Christian terms. They use terms like “infallible” and “inerrant,” but they do not mean by this that they believe the Bible is without error.

The same year that Dr. Henry warned of Evangelical graduates disowning inerrancy, Richard Quebedeaux, author of *The Young Evangelicals* and *The Worldly Evangelicals*, added the following details:

“Most people outside the evangelical community itself are totally unaware of the profound changes that have occurred within evangelicalism during the last several years in the movement’s understanding of the inspiration and authority of Scripture, in its social concerns, cultural attitudes and ecumenical posture, and in the nature of its emerging leadership. ... evangelical theologians have begun looking at the Bible with a scrutiny reflecting THEIR WIDESPREAD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF HISTORICAL AND LITERARY CRITICISM ... The position affirming that Scripture is inerrant or infallible in its teaching on matters of faith and conduct but not necessarily in all its assertions concerning history and the cosmos IS GRADUALLY BECOMING ASCENDANT AMONG THE MOST HIGHLY RESPECTED EVANGELICAL THEOLOGIANS. ... these new trends ... indicate that evangelical theology is becoming more centrist, more open to biblical criticism and more accepting of science and broad cultural analysis. ONE MIGHT EVEN SUGGEST THAT THE NEW GENERATION OF EVANGELICALS IS CLOSER TO BONHOEFFER, BARTH AND BRUNNER THAN TO HODGE AND WARFIELD ON THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE” (Richard Quebedeaux, “The Evangelicals: New Trends and Tensions,” *Christianity and Crisis*, Sept. 20, 1976, pp. 197-202).

Another warning appeared a year later:

“A SURPRISING ARRAY OF EQUALLY DEDICATED EVANGELICALS IS FORMING TO INSIST THAT ACCEPTANCE OF HISTORIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES DOES NOT REQUIRE BELIEF IN AN INERRANT BOOK. ... What has made it a new ball game today is the emergence of A NEW TYPE OF EVANGELICAL. These persons accept the cardinal doctrines of Christianity in their full and literal meaning but AGREE THAT THE HIGHER CRITICS HAVE A POINT: THERE ARE ERRORS IN SCRIPTURE, and some of its precepts must be recognized as being culturally and historically conditioned” (G. Aiken Taylor, “Is God as Good as His Word?” *Christianity Today*, Feb. 4, 1977).

That same year Pastor Mark Buch of Vancouver, British Columbia, who was involved in the Fundamentalist movement from the 1930s, gave this testimony to Evangelicalism’s corruption:

“[Evangelicalism] today has fallen away from the old faith and this is not the case of an exception among them, it is common and general. They no longer believe in the veracity, the verbal inspiration of the Holy Bible and they have gone a whoring after all sorts of innovations and foolishness in order to fill their churches...” (Buch, *In Defence of the Authorized Version*, 1977, p. 33).

In his 1978 book, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, Richard Quebedeaux warned that many Evangelical scholars are deceitful about their doctrinal heresies:

“Prior to the 60s, virtually all the seminaries and colleges associated with the neo-evangelicals and their descendants adhered to the total inerrancy understanding of biblical authority (at least they did not vocally express opposition to it). ... But it is a well-known fact that A LARGE NUMBER, IF NOT MOST, OF THE COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES IN QUESTION NOW HAVE FACULTY WHO NO LONGER BELIEVE IN TOTAL INERRANCY, even in situations where their employers still require them to sign the traditional declaration that the Bible is ‘verbally inspired,’ ‘inerrant,’ or ‘infallible in the whole and in the part,’ or to affirm in other clearly defined words the doctrine of inerrancy that was formulated by the Old Princeton school of theology and passed on to fundamentalism. SOME OF THESE FACULTY INTERPRET THE CRUCIAL CREEDAL CLAUSES IN A MANNER THE ORIGINAL FRAMERS WOULD NEVER HAVE ALLOWED, OTHERS SIMPLY SIGN THE AFFIRMATION WITH TONGUE IN CHEEK” (Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, p. 30).

We must not forget that these statements describe conditions 20 YEARS AGO and things are much worse now!

The aforementioned Harold Lindsell published two volumes on the downgrade of the Bible in Evangelicalism, with particular focus on Fuller Seminary, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Lindsell's *The Battle for the Bible* was first published in 1976. The sequel, *The Bible in the Balance*, came out in 1979. This careful documentation by a man who was in the inner circle of Evangelicalism's leadership for decades leaves no doubt that the Evangelical world of the last half of the twentieth century is leavened with apostasy.

“MORE AND MORE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS HISTORICALLY COMMITTED TO AN INFALLIBLE SCRIPTURE HAVE BEEN EMBRACING AND PROPAGATING THE VIEW THAT THE BIBLE HAS ERRORS IN IT. This movement away from the historic standpoint has been most noticeable among those often labeled neo-evangelicals. This change of position with respect to the infallibility of the Bible is widespread and has occurred in evangelical denominations, Christian colleges, theological seminaries, publishing houses, and learned societies” (Harold Lindsell, former vice-president and professor Fuller Theological Seminary and Editor Emeritus of *Christianity Today*, *The Battle for the Bible*, 1976, p. 20).

In 1984, well-known Evangelical leader Francis Schaeffer published *The Great Evangelical Disaster*. The book's title describes the thesis. The cover jacket says, “In this explosive new book Dr. Francis Schaeffer exposes the rise of compromise and accommodation, and the tragic consequences of this, within the evangelical church.” The issue that Schaeffer called “the watershed of Evangelical-ism” is the inspiration and authority of the Bible. He testified, “Within evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the full authority of Scripture is completely undercut” (*The Great Evangelical Disaster*, p. 44).

A more recent exposure of the corruption of doctrine in the Evangelical world is found in *No Place for Truth: or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (1993) by David F. Wells, at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. *Time* magazine described Well's book as “a stinging indictment of evangelicalism's theological corruption.” Though Wells is himself a committed New Evangelical he properly identifies Evangelical-ism's chief problem as its repudiation of biblical separation and its accommodation with the world:

“Fundamentalism always had an air of embattlement about it, of being an

island in a sea of unremitting hostility. Evangelicalism has reacted against this sense of psychological isolation. **IT HAS LOWERED THE BARRICADES. IT IS OPEN TO THE WORLD.** The great sin of Fundamentalism is to compromise; the great sin in evangelicalism is to be narrow” (emphasis added) (David Wells, *No Place for Truth*, p. 129).

Wells also made a telling statement that acknowledges precisely where the New Evangelical world is today:

“But in between these far shores [Anglo-Catholicism and Fundamentalism] lie the choppy waters that most evangelicals now ply with their boats, and **HERE THE WINDS OF MODERNITY BLOW WITH DISCONCERTING FORCE, FRAGMENTING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE EVANGELICAL.** This is because evangelicals have allowed their confessional center to dissipate” (p. 128).

In 1995, Dr. Carl Henry was continuing to warn about unbelief within Evangelical circles: “Much of the same revolt against truth emerged during the recent theology conference of postliberal speak-ers sponsored jointly with Inter-Varsity at Wheaton College. **NOT A SINGLE REPRESENTATIVE OF HISTORIC EVANGELICAL ORTH-O-DOXY COMMITTED TO THE UNBROKEN AUTHOR-ITY OF THE BIBLE WAS FEATURED...**” (*Calvary Contender*, July 1, 1995).

Consider the following summary of the downgrade of the doctrine of inspiration by today’s Evangelical leaders:

My main concern is with those who profess to believe that the Bible is the Word of God and yet by, what I can only call surreptitious and devious means, deny it. This is, surprisingly enough, a position that is taken widely in the evangelical world. Almost all of the literature which is produced in the evangelical world today falls into this category. In the October 1985 issue of *Christianity Today*, (the very popular and probably most influential voice of evangelicals in America), a symposium on Bible criticism was featured. The articles were written by scholars from several evangelical seminaries. Not one of the participants in that symposium in *Christianity Today* was prepared to reject higher criticism. All came to its defense. **IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT ALL THE SCHOLARS FROM THE LEADING SEMINARIES IN THIS COUNTRY HELD TO A FORM OF HIGHER CRITICISM.**

These men claim to believe that the Bible is the Word of God. At the same time, they adopt higher critical methods in the explanation of the Scriptures. This has become so common in evangelical circles that **IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO**

FIND AN EVANGELICAL PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF OUR LAND AND ABROAD WHO STILL HOLDS UNCOMPROMISINGLY TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE INFALLIBLE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES. The insidious danger is that higher criticism is promoted by those who claim to believe in infallible inspiration (Herman Hanko, *The Battle for the Bible*, pp. 2,3). [Hanko's book should not be confused with Harold Lindsell's book by that same name.]

The author of the above critique is a professor at the Protestant Reformed Seminary, Grandville, Michigan.

EVANGELICALISM'S APOSTASY IS SEEN IN ITS REPUDIATION OF BIBLICAL HOLINESS

Evangelicalism's apostasy is not only seen in its relationship with Rome and its downgrade of biblical inspiration, it is also seen in its repudiation of biblical holiness. The old Fundamentalism was staunchly and boldly opposed to worldliness. The New Evangelical crowd has rejected and redefined this. The result has been incredible to behold. R-rated and PG-13 movies are given positive reviews in Evangelical publications. Evangelical music groups look and sound exactly like the world. Many Evangelical Bible College campuses have the look and feel of secular colleges. The students wear the same clothes (or lack of clothes) as the world; they drink the same liquor; they dance to the same music; they celebrate the same worldly events; they care about the same worldly concerns. Richard Quebedeaux documented this more than 20 years ago in his book, *The Worldly Evangelicals*.

“The Gallup Poll is correct in asserting that born-again Christians ‘believe in a strict moral code.’ But that strictness has been considerably modified during the last few years ... the monthly question and answer column (patterned after ‘Dear Abby’) in *Campus Life*, Youth for Christ’s magazine, gives the impression that more born-again high school age couples are having INTERCOURSE than is generally supposed. Among evangelical young people, MASTERBATION is now often seen as a gift from God. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE are becoming more frequent and acceptable among evangelicals of all ages, even in some of their more conservative churches. This new tolerant attitude toward divorce has been greatly facilitated both by the publication of positive articles and books on the problem by evangelical authors and by the growth of ministry to singles in evangelical churches. ... Some evangelical women are taking advantage of ABORTION on demand. Many younger evangelicals occasionally use PROFANITY in their speech and writing (though they are generally careful to avoid traditional profanity against the deity). Some of the recent

evangelical sex-technique books assume that their readers peruse and view PORNOGRAPHY on occasion, and they do. Finally, in 1976 there emerged a fellowship and information organization for practicing evangelical LESBIANS AND GAY MEN and their sympathizers. There is probably just as high a percentage of gays in the evangelical movement as in the wider society. Some of them are now coming out of the closet, distributing well-articulated literature, and demanding to be recognized and affirmed by the evangelical community at large” (Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, 1978, pp. 16,17).

Describing this moral apostasy in *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, Francis Schaeffer said:

“How the mindset of accommodation grows and expands. The last sixty years have given birth to a moral disaster, and what have we done? Sadly we must say that the evangelical world has been part of the disaster. ... WITH TEARS WE MUST SAY THAT ... A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL WORLD HAS BECOME SEDUCED BY THE WORLD SPIRIT OF THIS PRESENT AGE” (Schaeffer, p. 141).

The rejection of biblical holiness is particularly evident on the campuses of Evangelical colleges and seminaries. This was observed by James Hunter in his book *Evangelicalism The Coming Generation* (1987). He documents “the evolution of behavioral standards for students at these colleges”

“What has happened at Wheaton College, Gordon College, and Westmont College is typical of most of the colleges in this subculture. From the time of their founding to the mid-1960s, the college rules unapologetically prohibited ‘profaning the Sabbath,’ ‘profane or obscene language or behavior,’ playing billiards, playing cards and gambling, using intoxicating liquors or tobacco, theater and movie attendance, and any form of dancing both on- and off-campus” (Hunter, p. 169).

Hunter goes on to observe that these rules have largely been dropped, and the worldliness on Evangelical college campuses has increased significantly in the twelve years since his book was published.

In 1996, the moral apostasy of today’s Evangelicalism was affirmed by the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals in the Cambridge Declaration. The declaration, signed by 80 theologians and church leaders, was released on April 20, 1996, at the end of a four-day conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The signers included James Montgomery Boice, J.A.O. Preus III, David Wells, Albert Mohler, and Michael

Horton, and represented Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Congregational, and Independent denominations.

“Today the light of Reformation has been significantly dimmed. The consequence is that THE WORD ‘EVANGELICAL’ HAS BECOME SO INCLUSIVE AS TO HAVE LOST ITS MEANING. ... As Biblical authority has been abandoned in practice, as its truths have faded from Christian consciousness, and its doctrines have lost their saliency, THE CHURCH HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY EMPTIED OF ITS INTEGRITY, MORAL AUTHORITY AND DIRECTION. ... As evangelical faith becomes secularized, its interests have been blurred with those of the culture. THE RESULT IS A LOSS OF ABSOLUTE VALUES, PERMISSIVE INDIVIDUALISM, AND A SUBSTITUTION OF WHOLENESS FOR HOLINESS, recovery for repentance, intuition for truth, feeling for belief, chance for providence, and immediate gratification for enduring hope” (The Cambridge Declaration, 1996).

Warnings such as these have been largely ignored by the Evangelical world.

EVANGELICALISM’S APOSTASY IS SEEN IN ITS ACCEPTANCE OF HERETICS

Evangelicalism’s apostasy is also seen in its acceptance of heretics. We could give dozens of examples, but I will mention one to illustrate the point: Bruce Metzger.

The February 8, 1999, issue of *Christianity Today* contains an editorial by Michael Maudlin, Managing Editor, entitled “Inside CT.” Maudlin’s editorial boasts that “never before in the twentieth century has the church amassed so many highly skilled, believing scholars to illumine our Scriptures, our theology, our traditions, our church work.” Who are these “believing scholars”? He mentions five of them: Craig Blomberg, Bruce Metzger, Edwin Yamauchi, Ben Witherington III, and D.A. Carson.

Maudlin’s definition of “believing” is strange. Take Metzger, for example. He is a Princeton Theological Seminary professor, an editor of the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament, and the head of the continuing RSV translation committee of the apostate National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. The Revised Standard Version was soundly condemned for its modernism when it first appeared in 1952. Today its chief editor sometimes is invited to speak at Evangelical forums. The RSV hasn’t changed, but Evangelicalism certainly has! Metzger was the chairman for the *Reader’s Digest Condensed Bible* and wrote the introductions to each book in this butchered version of the Scriptures. In these, Metzger questions the authorship, traditional date, and supernatural inspiration of books penned by Moses, Daniel, and

Peter, and in many other ways reveals his liberal, unbelieving heart. Consider three examples:

Genesis: “Nearly all modern scholars agree that, like the other books of the Pentateuch, [Genesis] is a composite of several sources, embodying traditions that go back in some cases to Moses.” (Metzger’s introduction to Exodus).

Exodus: “As with Genesis, several strands of literary tradition, some very ancient, some as late as the sixth century B.C., were combined in the makeup of the books” (Metzger’s introduction to Exodus).

Deuteronomy: “It’s compilation is generally assigned to the seventh century B.C., though it rests upon much older tradition, some of it from Moses’ time” (Metzger’s introduction to Deuteronomy).

These statements are not “believing” statements. They are outright lies and heresy. Bruce Metzger is an unbelieving heretic. The Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles told us that the Pentateuch was written by the historical Moses (who is mentioned 843 times in the Bible). It is not a compilation that gradually took shape over many centuries.

Metzger's heresy is further evident in the notes to the *New Oxford Annotated Bible RSV* (1973). Metzger co-edited this volume with Herbert May. It first appeared in 1962 as the *Oxford Annotated Bible* and was the first Protestant annotated edition of the Bible to be approved by a Roman Catholic authority. It was given an imprimatur in 1966 by Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, Massachusetts. Metzger wrote many of the rationalistic notes in this volume and put his editorial stamp of approval on the rest. The notes claim that the Pentateuch is “a matrix of myth, legend, and history” that “took shape over a long period of time” and is “not to be read as history.” The worldwide flood of Noah’s day is said to be a mere “tradition” based on “heightened versions of local inundations.” The book of Job is called an “ancient folktale.” The book of Isaiah is said to have been written by at least three men. The stories of Elijah and Elisha contain “legendary elements.” Jonah is called a “popular legend.” The Gospels gradually took shape after the deaths of the Apostles. Peter probably did not write the book of 2 Peter.

These statements are unbelieving lies. The Pentateuch was written by the hand of God and Moses and completed during the 40 years of wilderness wandering hundreds of years before Samuel and the kings. The Old Testament did not arise gradually from a matrix of myth and history, but is inspired revelation delivered to holy men of old by Almighty God. The Jews were a “people of the book” from the beginning. The Jewish nation did not form the Bible; the Bible formed the Jewish

nation! Jesus Christ affirmed the historicity of Jonah. The historicity of Job is affirmed by Ezekiel (14:14,20) and James (5:11).

In his "Introduction to the New Testament" in the *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Metzger completely ignores the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit and claims that the Gospels are composed of material gathered from oral tradition. The Bible says nothing about this, but Jesus Christ plainly tells us that the Holy Spirit would guide the Apostles into all truth (John 16:7-15). The Gospels are divine revelation, not some happenstance editing of oral tradition.

Christianity Today calls Bruce Metzger a "believing scholar." In reality, he is an unbelieving heretic, and the fact that so many Evangelical leaders recommend his writings is a testimony to the apostasy of Evangelicalism today.

THE LAST DAYS TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY APOSTASY

The fact that the walls between truth and error are being torn down in one generation, though grievous, should not surprise us. Did the Apostles not prophesy of apostasy, compromise, spiritual decline, doctrinal confusion, and religious duplicity? Note passages such as Matthew 7:15-23; 24:3-5,11,24; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4, 11-15; Colossians 2:4,8,18-19; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12; 1 Timothy 4:1-6; 2 Timothy 3-4; 2 Peter 2-3; 1 John 2:18-24; 4:1-3; Jude; and Revelation 13 and 17. According to these prophecies the course of the church age is characterized by deepening religious apostasy and a false unity which will grow throughout the age and will come into full blossom just prior to Christ's return in power and glory.

This is exactly what has happened during the past 1900 years of church history, yet this present generation has witnessed a tremendous increase in the pace of the apostasy. Not only are the Protestant denominations moving back toward the Roman fold, but also those who had not before affiliated with Rome's deep error are being enticed by her ecumenical overtures.

The Last Days apostasy is like a river flowing toward Rome. Those who do not resist the flow and paddle up stream will be swept away. Evidence of this is contained throughout this report.

The apostasy is also like a strong wind. In the Northwest, where we live, we have powerful winds that sweep in off the Pacific Ocean during the winter season. I live on an island and our house is located a mile from the west shore. We have learned that unless you stake a newly planted tree, it will be bent by the winds and will remain bent and crooked. That is similar to what happens today if a Christian does

not actively resist and separate from the spirit of error.

Behold Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, Bill Bright, Jack Van Impe, James Robison, Pat Robertson, and a myriad of other Evangelical leaders who have associated with the Roman Catholic Church through ecumenical activities and have become sympathetic with Rome and blinded to the horror of its blasphemous errors. They admit that Roman Catholicism teaches error, but they do not have heartfelt convictions about the blasphemous character of those errors.

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Rome hasn't changed, but Evangelicalism certainly has.

Thus the situation we find among Evangelical leaders today concerning Bible texts and versions is not surprising. They believe in a “concept Bible.” The inspired Word of God is not to be found in one place, but it is scattered throughout the texts and versions. What are we to say to this? I say that in light of the carnal, apostate condition of Evangelicalism, it is not surprising that its leaders and institutions cannot see the truth about Bible versions. A man who thinks the pope is a great evangelist (as Billy Graham does) or that Karl Barth was a great Christian (as many of today's Evangelical leaders do) could not be trusted to give sound advice about Bible versions or any other spiritual matter. Men who are unwilling to proclaim Romanism an abomination or who hesitate to label the historic-critical views of Scripture as wicked heresy simply cannot be trusted.

The pure Gospel and the pure Bible have always been held by the minority, the remnant. In light of the prophecies of the New Testament Scriptures that foresee the apostasy of the visible “church,” I do not find it strange that the pure Bible is rejected by the majority of those who profess to be Christians today.

[This message is excerpted from the book [*MYTHS ABOUT THE MODERN BIBLE VERSIONS*](#). This 360-page book is available from Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061.]

See ["Fundamentalism, Modernism, New Evangelicalism."](#)

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