

# Multitudes of Fake Evangelicals on the Road to Papal Rome by Former Roman Priest

By Richard Bennett

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1 Peter 3:15 says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

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What Every Catholic Should Know  
Evangelicals on the Road to Papal Rome

The New York Times of May 30, 2004 carried a remarkable news analysis on how the evangelicals and Catholics joined forces. They stated, "In 1960, the last time a Roman Catholic ran for President on the Democratic ticket, evangelical Protestant leaders warned their flocks that elected John F. Kennedy would be like handing the Oval Office to the Antichrist." Forty years later, less than a fortnight in Christian history, evangelicals and Conservative Catholics have forged an alliance that is reshaping American politics and

culture. More than political expediency is at work here. Once blinded by suspicion, evangelicals and some Catholic leaders have spent more than a decade laying the groundwork for a religious realignment, coalitions of Catholics and evangelicals form the backbone in the fights against gay marriage, stem cell research, and euthanasia, and for religious school vouchers. Catholics and evangelical leaders who forged relationships in the anti-abortion movement which the Baptist theologian, Timothy George, has called the ecumenism of the trenches, are now working side-by-side in campaigns and other culture war issues and for Republican candidates.

Evangelicals have thoroughly adapted Pope John Paul II language on the culture of life to convey their anti-abortion principles. In a recent poll of evangelicals, the pope had higher favorability ratings, 59%, than either Jerry Falwell, 44%, or Pat Robertson, 54%. Audiences of evangelicals and Catholics defied critics and made "The Passion of the Christ" one of the most profitable films ever produced. Catholics regarded the film as a thoroughly Catholic spectacle, focused as it is on the virgin Mary and Jesus' suffering, yet Mel Gibson, a traditionalist Catholic, built an audience with screenings in evangelical megachurches, even hiring Billy Graham's public relations man. Many evangelicals embraced the movie as a way to strike a blow of their own in the culture wars.

Exactly 10 years ago, a group of evangelical and Catholic leaders and scholars released a document called "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." It was the result of a dialog started by two men, the Reverend Richard John Newhouse, a Catholic priest in New York who edits the journal "First Things," and Charles Colson, the former Nixon aide. Mr. Colson said in a recent interview that he had reached out to Father Newhouse. The two men convened a group of prominent theologians and religious leaders. The evangelical side included the late Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, the religious broadcaster Pat Robertson, and theologians like James I. Packer. The Catholic side included the late Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, and the theologian Avery Dulles, now a Cardinal.

Their manifesto was primarily theological but it included overt political pledges to work together on issues like abortion, government aid for religious schools and strengthening the traditional family, in part a reaction to the growing gay rights movement. The document shook the evangelical world. By 2000, Mr. Colson and James Dobson, the broadcaster and founder of Focus on the Family, were invited to the Vatican to address the bishops on the breakdown of the family, the first such appearance ever. Evangelical institutions like Wheaton College in Illinois and Gordon College in Massachusetts began inviting Catholics to speak on campus. Mr. Colson said Father Newhouse confided, "There is much in the evangelical culture that grates against me, the overly confident claims of being born again, the forced happiness and joy, the awful music. But the alliance is an extraordinary realignment that if it continues is going to create a very different kind of configuration of Christianity in America."

This document of the launch of ECT by the New York Times points to the need to address the topic of the evangelicals on the road to papal Rome, and for further insight

into this topic, we turn to Richard Bennet, a former Catholic priest, and Michael De Semlyen, author and historian.

Richard Bennett. Before discussing apostasy, people falling away from the faith, we must be clear that in Scripture it is emphatically stated that true believers, the Lord's own sheep, never fail, that they have everlasting life and that they will remain faithful unto the end. The Lord Jesus himself is emphatic on this. For example, in John's gospel, chapter 10, he speaks about his sheep and he says his sheep hear his voice and follow him. They remain faithful. No one can take them from his hand and no one can take them from the Father's hand. Likewise, in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of the same gospel of John, the Lord himself speaks about the believers as being the gift given to him by the Father, and he gives them everlasting life, and that they will remain faithful by the power of God. These are precious truths in the Scripture that the believer has everlasting life and will remain faithful to the Lord and to his gospel unto the end.

Now this precious teaching does not imply that we are not to be concerned about people who profess or say they are Christians and who fall away from the faith. This is important that we do address this topic because we have many so-called Christians who teach things that deny the Lord and his gospel and we must be concerned. I think it was summarized wonderfully in the day of Charles Spurgeon where he said the following. I'd like to quote directly what Spurgeon said. He said, "It is a great and solemn truth that every child of God will hold on until the end; but it is an equally solemn truth that many who profess to belong to the Lord are self-deceivers, and will turn out as apostates after all." End of quote from Spurgeon.

The Lord himself had warned about grievous wolves, they would be false teachers but act as grievous wolves or as ravenous wolves, and the Apostle Paul spoke about the latter times. He said, "Now the Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils." The Apostle Paul had also warned the elders at Ephesus that there would be wolves coming in amidst the flock to deceive and not to spare the flock. The Apostle Peter warned about damnable heresies that would be taught by false teachers. And so we see that in Scripture there is a warning about apostasy and that apostasy is what we must address today.

Michael DeSemlyen. The new evangelical movement in England developed in parallel with the similar movement in the USA which had begun with the ministries of Harold Ockenga and Billy Graham. The first and second National Evangelical Anglican Conferences met in England at Kiel in 1967 and Nottingham in 1977 respectively. These conferences of Church of England evangelicals launched and furthered the new Anglican policy towards the fast growing ecumenical and charismatic movements. New evangelicals wanted to be united with ritualistic Anglicans who were essentially Roman Catholic in faith and in practice, and also to liberals who believed in a fallible Bible, but as the prophet Amos inquired, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Well respected evangelicals such as John Stott and J. I. Packer, whose writings have been held in high esteem by followers of Christ for many years, endorsed the statements from these

conferences. In so doing, they set aside gospel truth in favor of accepting fellow Anglicans as brothers and sisters in Christ.

John Stott, author of the well-known book "Basic Christianity," chaired the first National Evangelical Anglican Conference known as NEAC for short, at Kiel. He made clear that the conference was accepting not only Anglo-Catholics and liberals but Roman Catholics also, and he gave a warning that, "evangelicals had acquired a reputation for narrow partisanship and obstructionism and that they needed to repent and change." He then declared, "The initial task for divided Christians is dialog, dialog at all levels and across all barriers. We desire," He said, "to enter into this ecumenical dialog fully." He went on to say, "We recognize that all who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, have a right to be treated as Christians, and it is on this basis that we wish to talk to them."

Let us just pause for a moment to consider the enormity of this. Forty years ago, the Church of England's most widely respected evangelicals headed by John Stott determined that all Roman Catholics are saved. It was 27 years before leading evangelicals on the other side of the Atlantic did the same thing. The conference at Nottingham went further than Kiel, giving the compromise that had been made its seal of approval. Nottingham also endorsed and praised the charismatic movement and is remembered for David Watson's reference to the Reformation as "one of the greatest tragedies that ever happened to the church."

The influence of Billy Graham and his new evangelicalism played its part at both of the NEAC conferences. Graham's apparently hugely successful ministry had long since accepted Catholics and liberals as fellow Christians. His example in Martyn Lloyd-Jones' words of charismatic fellowship without agreement in the truth of the gospel had shaken people's convictions as to what exactly it means to be an evangelical. The sea change in the evangelical attitude to ecumenism ratified at Kiel and Nottingham greatly influenced the other Protestant denominations.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, one of the greatest preachers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, led the opposition to this departure from Protestant evangelicalism that has taken place. Lloyd-Jones believed that far from providing the solution to the main problems of the church, the church had now taken on even bigger problems. For example, the question what is a Christian, and another question, what is a church.

Richard. Seventeen years after Nottingham of which Michael just now spoke, a more disastrous occurrence came in the declaration that was published in 1994 in Dallas, Texas. A document was produced called "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." The two main instigators behind this whole ecumenical thrust or downhill thrust were Charles Colson and Richard John Newhouse. Newhouse had before this been a Lutheran pastor, he gave up his Lutheran faith and became Roman Catholic and became a Roman Catholic priest. The famous evangelical signatories included such as J. I. Packer, the late Bill Bright of Campus Crusade, and

such as Pat Robertson of the 700 Club, and Roman Catholic signers were famous equally, such as the late Cardinal John O'Connor, Archbishop Saville, Archbishop Stafford, and Bishop Francis George, now Archbishop of Chicago.

The signers of this agreement "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" readily admitted that there were differences that cannot be resolved here, that could not be resolved in this document. However, they were motivated by moral issues to declare that Catholics and evangelicals are brothers and sisters in Christ, and they gave what they purported was the gospel on page 5 of their statement. They said the following, "We affirm together that we are justified by grace through faith because of Christ. Living faith is active in love that is nothing less than the love of Christ." Page 5 of the document.

Now what were they doing there? First of all, they were subtracting from the true gospel because they did not say faith alone, by grace alone, in Christ alone. They left out this important word "alone." Now "alone" signifies the righteousness of Christ, the perfect life of Christ, his perfect faithful life, and his perfect sacrifice are signified by that word "alone." And so it says in Romans 3:24, "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And they leave this word out so that they do not have to deal with those Scriptures and they do not have to deal with the concept of the justification by faith alone because that would rule out Catholic sacraments and the priests that control them. And so they subtracted from the gospel.

Besides that, they added to the gospel because they use this word to define faith, they said "living faith is active in love, is nothing less than the love of Christ." This addition is quite familiar if anybody is Catholic or conscious of Catholic teachings. The Catholic Church likes to use this phrase "living faith." For example, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the official teaching of the Catholic Church says in paragraph 249, "The very root of the Church's living faith is principally by means of baptism." They want this idea of faith that is living so that they can bring in their sacraments and particularly baptism. And so they add to or purportedly try to add to the gospel this idea of faith plus works and the sacraments in particular.

Now evangelical signers should have been conscious that there was this subtraction from and addition to the true gospel message, but nonetheless they signed it and in that way they denied the very gospel of Christ, the gospel of grace. The Scriptures say emphatically "by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast."

Now there have been disturbing disturbing effects from this false agreement that Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ. There has been compromises across the world where the true gospel is not being proclaimed and in many places where missionaries were going out to Catholic nations, say, for example, in the Philippines and South America and Africa, in Spain, in these countries now there are less missionaries going out and it is becoming evident that this document of accord between Catholics and evangelicals, or so-called accord, has had devastating effect and if this is allowed to continue, it will get worse. This was the exact and precise intent of the document. They

said in the document quotation, "...it is neither theologically legitimate nor a prudent use of resources for one Christian community to proselytize among active adherents of another Christian community." It is never wrong to evangelize. It is never wrong to give the true gospel, but this has been outlawed by this document that has had devastating effect right across the world.

Michael. There was a compounded endorsement of papal Rome in 1997, a second document of "Evangelical and Catholics Together," entitled "The Gift of Salvation." It was signed and published by evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders. Its express intention was to demonstrate the "common faith" of evangelicals and Roman Catholics and further "to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters in Christ." It was published in the magazine "Christianity Today."

The Roman Catholics signatories such as Richard John Newhouse and Jesuit Cardinal Avery Dulles explicitly state in the document that they are "Catholics who are conscientiously faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church." The Roman Catholic doctrine of conferred justification is taught as the gospel. The evangelicals are now joined together in not only giving a clouded gospel justification message but also in a distinctly erudite manner endorsing Rome's doctrine of conferred inner righteousness. We are dealing with a studied denial of the gospel.

This second ecumenical document, ECT 2, states, "Justification is central to the scriptural account of salvation, and its meaning has been much debated between Protestants and Catholics." Then it claims that the signers have reached agreement. Their statement of accord reads as follows, "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. Jesus was," and here's a quote from Romans, "put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.' 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."

The subject under review is stated clearly in the first sentence, "We agree that justification is ... conferred through the Father's sheer graciousness." But it is only by careful reading that one comes to see what the two pivotal statements, sentences state grammatically. "... it," justification, "is entirely God's gift, conferred," rather than imputed, "... and by virtue of his," that's God's declaration, "it," justification conferred, "is so." This is traditional Roman Catholic doctrine. To employ the Roman Catholic word "conferred" instead of the biblical word "imputed" is tantamount to putting aside the authority of Scripture on the issue of justification. Since medieval times, the Roman Catholic Church has clearly distinguished between the concept of imputation and the Thomist, that's from St. Thomas Aquinas, the Thomist concept of God's grace conferred as a quality of the soul. Since the Council of Trent, she has condemned the biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone. Present day dogma of the Roman Catholic Church not only upholds the teaching of the Council of Trent but also declares that such councils

are infallible. The Roman Catholic Church's persistence in using the word "conferred" is an attempt to substitute her sacraments for the sovereign grace of God's Holy Spirit.

The concept that the sacraments automatically convey the grace of the Holy Spirit to people is pivotal to papal Rome, however, what is proclaimed in Scripture is that the Holy Spirit is infinite, supreme, omnipotent, and all-sufficient in convicting of sin and in bringing a person directly to new life in Christ Jesus. In the Lord's own words, "He," the Holy Spirit, "will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment." Nevertheless, Rome will not repudiate the concept of conferred because for her the sacraments are "necessary for salvation." Without her seven sacraments, she has no function as a church in the lives of people.

Richard. The more serious apologetic to uphold these two false documents, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" 1994 and 1997, has been a book and the book uses the same title, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." The subtitle of the book is, "Towards a Common Mission." So we call the book by the subtitle, "Common Mission," to be clear what we're speaking about. In the "Common Mission" book, for example, J. I. Packer sets out to defend the reason why it is important to hold to the documents. He states, for example, quotation, "Neither evangelicals nor Roman Catholics can stipulate that things they believe, which the other side does not believe, be made foundational to partnership at this point; so Evangelicals and Catholics Together lets go of Protestant precision on the doctrine of justification and the correlation between conversion and new birth." That such a compromise is unbiblical is seen from his earlier statements in the same book where he said, for example, "Roman teaching obscures the gospel, indeed distorts it in a tragically anti-spiritual and unpastoral manner." And he further states in the same book, quotation, "Rome's official doctrinal disorders, particularly on justification, merit, and the Mass sacrifice, so obscure the gospel that were I, as a gesture of unity, invited to Mass, which of course as a Protestant I am not, nor shall be, I would not feel free to accept the invitation," end of quote from Packer. Towards the end of the book, Packer gives his reasons why the agreement still should be accepted. He speaks about the evils of humanism, materialism, hedonism and nihilism, and he speaks about a Christian consensus that he proposes to come against these things, and that for this Christian consensus it is necessary that the domestic differences about salvation and the church should not hinder in seeking to re-evangelize the North American milieu. And so that is the reason why Packer upholds these false declarations of so-called unity.

Now this is amazing, the Packer of old that spoke about the doctrine of justification by faith alone as the Atlas that bears a world on its shoulders the entire evangelical knowledge of saving grace. This saving faith saving grace has now been downgraded to domestic differences about salvation. In a 1994 article, "Why I Signed It," the same Packer speaks about faith alone, Sola Fide, as small print. And so the very gospel message in Packer's mind is reduced to small print or domestic differences about salvation. Now the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. It is major. It is the righteousness of Christ through faith, as the Apostle Paul declared, it is manifested, is seen. It is the central part of the gospel message. It is not merely small print or a domestic issue and this is horrendous that the famous J. I. Packer should say such things.

In the same book, "Common Mission," Richard John Newhouse emphatically declared, quotation, "If, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, separation for the sake of the gospel is not necessary it is not justified." Just think of what Newhouse said. If, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, separation for the sake of the gospel is not necessary it is not justified. He is ruling out the gospel message as necessary. For him, it is unnecessary and that seems to be the whole intent or purpose of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" 1994 and 1997, to make the gospel message unnecessary. If we remain still and do not speak about these things and take a stand against these horrendous documents, we are letting this declaration by Richard John Newhouse fall on ourselves and children coming after us.

Separation for the gospel has always been necessary. The words of Spurgeon must be remembered, they applied to his own day, they apply even more now to our day. Spurgeon said, "Since he was cursed who rebuilt Jericho, much more the man who labors to restore popery among us. In our father's day, the gigantic walls of popery fell by the power of their faith and the perseverance of their efforts and the blast of their gospel trumpets." So Spurgeon said and so we must stand for biblical faith in our day. The gospel declared to be unnecessary and J. I. Packer had the audacity to say, so "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," lets go Protestant precision on the doctrine of justification.

Michael. Professor Packers words describing "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," that it, "lets go of Protestant precision on the doctrine of justification," applies also to the New Perspective on Paul movement which too denies the core doctrine of the legal imputed righteousness of Christ by faith alone. The New Perspective has its roots in an academic movement which began with the work of three Oxford University theologians who interacted one with another in the 1980s. Two professors, American E. P. Sanders and James D. G. Dunn, together with N. T. Tom Wright, who is now the Bishop of Durham in the Church of England, were those who were involved in this academic movement at that time. In the USA. Another strand of the movement began in controversy over the dismissal of Professor Norman Shepherd of Westminster Theological Seminary for his heretical denial of justification by faith alone. Shepherd was not the only member of the Westminster faculty who taught justification by faith and works. Many members of the seminary, faculty and board of trustees, approved of Shepherd's teaching and defended him against his critics. The false teaching continued and Westminster Seminary has taught false doctrine to many hundreds of men who now occupy positions of influence. The result has been a wide outbreak of opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith alone among the very churches that claimed to be Reformed.

The New Perspective movement also embodies what is called the Federal Vision or Auburn theology, another Romanizing departure from biblical faith. With well-known authors and pastors Steve Wilkins, Douglas Wilson, Steve Schlissel and John Barrack known as the Auburn Four, their teaching is essentially regeneration and new birth by water baptism under the guise of conditional covenantal union. The Scripture clearly states that, "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." The parameters of salvation are the Lord and his grace as is stated in both Romans and Ephesians but



quoting Romans, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in the word of God is the only channel through which the Spirit of God communicates new life to a sinful human being.

As a result of the New Perspective and its offshoots, many have abandoned the true faith. Churches and families have been split and some Presbyterians have become Roman Catholics. Most importantly, Christ Jesus and his gospel have been dishonored. This movement has been quite lethal in downplaying or denying the true gospel in many of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches in the USA that had been previously known for their defense of the gospel but all the new movements are heading Rome-ward.

Richard. There are other movements that are heading downward and leading people to papal Rome. One of these is called Christian Churches Together. It has very similar proposal to make as "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." It calls itself a movement of historical churches including Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy. It is being organized along the same lines as "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." Much more ominous is another movement called the Coming Home Network. This is a home to Rome movement of those who are somewhere along their journey or have already converted to the Roman Catholic Church. We have such as Marcus Grody and the infamous Scott Hahn in this movement.

We have other movements that are heading towards Rome and using things that belong to traditional Roman Catholicism and major among these is the movement calling the Emergent Church movement or the Emerging Church movement. This incorporates mysticism among its other facets but it's mysticism that really leads to Romanism. The magazine "Christianity Today" spoke about this mystical movement, calling it the Emerging Mystic. It stated, for example, "Not since the Jesus Movement in the early 1970s has a Christian phenomenon been so closely entangled with the self-conscious cutting edge of US culture." And so the Emerging Church movement incorporates many things that are not biblical and it takes onto itself this concept of a mystical union with Christ, purportedly going back to earlier times. It has badly contaminated many churches in the United States, in Ireland, it has infiltrated to some extent into England, and it has had some devastating effect even in places like France and in some of the African countries.

It is necessary to understand its modus operandi, the way that it works. It works through a purported union with Christ through mystical experiences, that is, a direct union with Christ that one can get by different conscious ways in which they do, some of the Ignatian ways or the Jesus Prayer or some other of the ways in which they try to resurrect some of the traditions of the past. Jesus is not the one mediator between God and man at the end of the day for the Emerging Church movement. No, they purport ways of mystical union with God and so they head towards Rome like these other movements that we have mentioned. In the Scripture, however, it is emphatically and clearly stated all principality, power and might and dominion and every name that is named are through

the one mediator Christ Jesus. And so the mystical charms of papal Rome or the so-called Emerging Churches have nothing to give except deception and apostasy.

Michael. We must understand the consequences of evangelicals on the road to Rome and give our response. The reinstatement of Catholics as brethren in the minds and hearts of so many evangelicals has breached the one secure fortress of biblical separation. What is so disheartening is that so many true believers have remained silent as the apostasy increases in numbers and influence. The compromise with error and false religion made by the well-known evangelical leaders of Kiel of Nottingham and of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," is leading inexorably towards acceptance of and then submission to papal Rome.

As we have seen, well-known evangelical leaders have abandoned the biblical gospel regained at such great cost by our forefathers and are hastening rapidly towards total acceptance of papal Rome. Our response must be to separate from those who promote heresy and we must earnestly contend for the faith which was once given unto the saints. The momentum gathering pace from this new evangelicalism may seem to have become irresistible. The new spirit of tolerance and love has outlawed arguments over biblical truths. Unity through compromise of doctrine has been sought as the will of God to transform the church. Conservative evangelicals who would have no truck with ecumenism were and are marginalized, being viewed as "unloving and intolerant." The great doctrines of grace and biblical theology are seen as the province of those living in the past, fighting the same old irrelevant battles behind crumbling ramparts.

In a very real sense, evangelicals have ceased to be evangelicals. Doctrine has been relegated from its position of supreme authority to be viewed now as divisive. We pray again the words of the prophet Joel, "Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" The Lord is intensely interested in the welfare of his people. As of old, we are reminded that if the Almighty should forsake his church and permit her to be reproached, his power would be questioned with the question, "Where is your God?" Scorn directed at the promise the Lord has made to his people is what is at stake. Like believers of old, we appeal to our Lord God to avert this calamity. We pray in the words of the apostle that he, the sovereign head of the church, might present it to himself a glorious church not having any spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. As we have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, to the general assembly and the church of the firstborn, to God the judge of all, we appeal in the name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ that the calamity of the apostasy of new evangelicals and their road to Rome would be resolved in such a way that not only are the perpetrators brought to answer for their sins but the true church of the Lord will be benefited as the true gospel of grace is proclaimed more faithfully.

Richard. As Michael just stated to counteract the decline and apostasy that we have documented in this presentation, we present the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul was brilliantly clear in giving the gospel and he said that it was manifest, it was seen, he said, but now the righteousness of God is manifest, being witnessed by the

law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon them that believe there is no difference, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul giving the message with enthusiasm and clarity. We are all sinners, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We're all dead in trespasses and sins but the good news is that the righteousness of God by faith is manifest, Christ's perfect life, his perfect finished work rests upon all, is credited to all those who believe. That is the gospel message and that is the true message that we give to counteract the apostasy that has been clearly documented in this presentation. The true gospel, we pray, would go forth mightily to dispel the darkness. Christ Jesus, the light of the world, would shine forth in his gospel of grace. The Scripture abundantly says again and again that grace is abundant, that the riches of grace, the abundance of grace. The Apostle John talks about the grace given to all that believe on Christ Jesus, the everlasting life that is in him.

So we pray in our own day that this true gospel would go forth mightily and powerfully, that there would be true revival where wickedness has dared to enter, that grace would be more manifest. And we pray that the sovereign head of the church that Michael spoke about would clearly show that he is the head of the church, that it is Christ Jesus presenting to himself his bride, the church, and showing that she stands on his righteousness, not only any filthy clothes of sacramentalism or mysticism or all the other purported messages that call themselves Christian. This is the true gospel that we stand on, "For you are saved by grace through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," in the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 2. It is God's grace and it's through faith and there is God magnified. It is called the power of God unto salvation and that is our heart cry as we finish this presentation, that the gospel message would be the message that you love and that you give to others.

I ask as this message goes out on the internet and is on DVDs, that you truly stand for what is in the gospel of God's graciousness to us, that you stand personally. And it would be lovely to hear from you that you also are joining in prayer that the true gospel would go forth and that darkness would be dispelled. It would be wonderful to hear from you.

And as we stand on his promises, that is what we expect, we really treasure the words of the Apostle Paul when he said, "I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Now that is speaking about the final day of judgment. We commend that day to the Lord in his grace as we trust on the gospel. But against this day of apostasy, we know whom we have believed and we are persuaded that he, the Lord Jesus Christ, is able to keep that which we have committed. We commit again his church and the gospel of grace into his sovereign hands and we know that he will reign righteously and that his gospel will go forth mightily, and that we will see the glorious gospel reveal the shadows of darkness of the apostasy that we have documented. And to him be praise, glory, worship and honor now and forevermore. Amen and amen. Praise God.

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Larry Wessels. Hello, this is Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers of Austin, Texas, Christian Debate Ministries. I'm pleased to introduce to my audience a dear brother in the Lord, Richard Bennett, Director of Berean Beacon Ministries, an outreach to Roman Catholics.

Richard Bennett. It is great to be here, Larry.

Larry. For people that don't know you, you were a Roman Catholic priest for 22 years, is that right? Please give us a short account of your life.

Richard. Yes, I was a Catholic priest for 22 years. I was a Catholic altogether for 48 years having grown up in Dublin, Ireland and I was trained very early on in my education in what we call secondary and elementary education by the Jesuits, and then I decided to become a Catholic priest and I spent eight years in preparation. It was a novitiate year and then six years to ordination when I was ordained a priest in Dublin, Ireland in 1963, and then one year in Rome, eight years in all, and I spent 21 years in Trinidad, West Indies as a parish priest carrying out the work of a priest. I had the best academic training you could get finishing up in the city of Rome itself near the Vatican, and I really had a desire to bring Catholics to what we thought was a way of being right with God so that they could get to purgatory and then they finally could get to heaven, and I was grateful doing penances and sacrifices, and then I was very devout in Trinidad, baptizing babies and hearing people's confessions and doing all the sacraments.

It was in 1972 I had a very serious accident where I was treated, unconscious after the serious accident and then after that time when I got out of the hospital in the sanitarium, I began searching in the Bible for what is true. That took me 14 years of comparing the Bible to Catholicism before I realized that I was dead in trespasses and sins and it was by grace alone that we are saved. One night I got on the floor in my house and I cried out to God for faith and his grace to save a wretch like me, dead in trespasses and sins, and he gloriously did that.

It was about two months afterwards, I very reluctantly left the Catholic Church because my prayer after I was right with God, my biblical salvation was that I could really love Catholics and give them the real true Gospel of grace, that it is grace alone, faith alone, and in Christ alone. But then in prayer over those two months after I was saved, the Lord showed me that I could best serve him and love Catholics if I left actually the priesthood and the Catholic Church and reached out to Catholics nonetheless, and I did that, I left the priesthood in 1985 and reached the States in 1986, and I just prayed and prayed that I would have a love for Catholics to reach out. I thank the Lord that after one year as a missionary in China, I was able to start the ministry that I now have called [bereanbeacon.org](http://bereanbeacon.org). It is to show Catholics the real truth of where salvation is in a person not in any Church and is by God's grace not by any ritual that any Church does.

So this has been really wonderful I've seen priests saved, I saw two priests in Poland, you know, through our ministry we have a Polish webpage besides many other languages and of course in English and I thank God that I have seen God's grace poured out and that is my heart's desire, Larry, that Catholics would know the truth and that evangelicals in this very false ecumenical age would see the differences. I have a very interesting article on the webpage, "Are Catholics Christians," and we've had tremendous response to that, evangelicals whose eyes have been opened in reading that article. So it's with love for Catholics and to show the truth of Christ Jesus that God would be glorified and many many souls saved particularly Catholic to the glory of his name.

Larry. Outstanding. That was a wonderful testimony, Richard, could you just real briefly tell us about the you've written some books and you've already mentioned your ministry but what are these books you've written and how can people find them?

Richard. Yes, I have written or edited, written some and edited others, and they have been amazing. I just thank God. Our most well-known book is "Far from Rome, near to God: the testimonies of 50 converted Catholic priests." Since 1994 that book has sold steadily across the world in English and in other languages and it's on the third edition now. And the other book that has my heart really displayed and my love for Catholics is the book I've written about Catholicism called "Catholicism East of Eden: insights into Catholicism for the 21st century." This book is published by Banner of Truth Trust like the book of the 50 testimonies of former priests and I thank God for that because the Lord has used that book and brought many Catholics to himself by that book. The other book that my heart was in in editing together with Mary Hertel is a book called "The truth set us free: 20 former nuns tell their stories," and that book has been used mightily of the Lord as well and I thank God for those women most of whom are still alive and active in reaching out to Catholics themselves and it is just a wonderful testimony of God's grace. And the the other book I've written is called "On the wings of grace alone," I've edited that and that is just 30 ordinary Catholics and what we call lay Catholics and how the Lord brought them to salvation. That is a an amazing book too.

How can you obtain these books? Well go to our web page [bereanbeacon.org](http://bereanbeacon.org) and just go to the folder on the left hand side, "books," and when you click on that it gives all the details of how you can get those books.

Larry. Outstanding. Well, Richard, we're gonna go into showing people your videos now here across particularly our audience on YouTube but many people don't know that you and me go to the same church here in Austin, Texas, so it gives me a special opportunity to be around you a lot just so we can do ministry work. But anyway, I want to thank you for allowing us to post your videos on the internet through YouTube and other internet servers.

Richard. Praise God and may souls be saved and the Lord glorified, amen and amen.

Larry. Amen.

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