



Proclaiming

The Gospel

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." - Romans 1:16

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Editor - Evangelist Mike Gendron

*"My righteous
one shall live by
faith; And if he
shrinks back, My
soul has no
pleasure in him."
([Hebrews 10:38](#))*

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Let Us Never Forget The Reformation

Last month Jane and I enjoyed the wonderful experience of walking in the steps of the Reformers throughout Germany, France and Switzerland. What an awesome blessing it was to see the historical sites where godly men were used by our Sovereign Lord to re-establish His Word as the supreme authority for faith and life. As we traveled from site to site and heard how the Reformers boldly and courageously reclaimed and proclaimed the Gospel, I realized there is a critical need for godly men and women to do the same thing today.

The Gospel must be reclaimed again because compromisers have exchanged it for a perverted man-centered gospel that does not call sinners to repentance. Those who are promoting ecumenical unity and church growth prefer this gospel because it is more inclusive and tolerant of doctrinal error and sin. We must continue to reclaim the biblical Gospel and remain sanctified by the truth!

Join me as I share the highlights of my trip back into Church history. You can marvel at the way God worked through the Reformers to restore His Church with His Word. As we look back, let us ask some questions of ourselves. How is God working through me? Am I faithfully doing His will or being complacent out of fear or apathy? What impact am I having on the circle of influence God has placed me in? Am I speaking the truth in love or remaining silent as Satan's lies continue to hold precious souls captive?

In Worms we witnessed a dramatic irony as we were viewing a monument erected in memory of the Reformers. A Catholic procession, made up of about 300 people with

several bishops and priests, 30 altar boys, and the Eucharist mounted in a monstrance and carried under a canopy of fine linen, paraded right in front of us. My heart was burdened with compassion for those Catholics who are still blinded from the truth that the Reformers gave their lives to proclaim.

I was inspired by Luther's single-mindedness and unwavering fidelity to the truth of Scripture and how he remained steadfast against all opposition, even under threats of death. He was the flash point which caused the long-smoldering moral and doctrinal corruption within the church to suddenly break into flames. Initially, he saw himself as a great reformer of the Catholic Church, but in the end, Christianity was divided into two separate churches.

After surviving a severe thunderstorm, Luther kept his promise to become a monk and take the high road to heaven. The life of a monk during Luther's time was hard, and consisted of fasting, prayer and silence. Luther went beyond the strict demands of the monastery because he was so burdened with his sin. He would fast three days instead of one and sleep without a blanket in order to suffer for his sins. He also took the sacrament of penance to an extreme, often spending hours in the confessional box several times each day. In 1507, Luther was ordained as a priest in Erfurt and started studying Theology at the University of Erfurt. As Luther celebrated his first Mass and spoke the words: "I sacrifice to You the living God" he became so terror stricken that he felt like running from the church. This gives us a deep insight into Luther's great fear of God.

[\(see Reformers on page 2\)](#)

(Reformers from page 1)

He could not bear the thought of standing before God without a mediator.

In 1510 Luther traveled to Rome and was appalled at the horrid religious corruption that he saw, including the buying and selling of church offices and the sexual immorality of popes and bishops with their mistresses, prostitutes and illegitimate children. During his 4 week stay, Luther climbed the sacred stairs in Rome to gain an indulgence for his grandfather. On each step he recited the Our Father, but when he arrived at the top he asked: "Who knows if this is true?" How can this appease a holy God?

After returning to Germany, Luther lectured through the Psalms, Romans, Galatians and Hebrews and came to realize a sinner could only be forgiven by divine grace through faith in the crucified and resurrected Savior. This was in direct conflict with the common practice of the 16th century church by which forgiveness could be obtained through the sale of indulgences. Luther became outraged by the scare tactics and high-pressure sales pitches for indulgences by a Dominican Monk named John Tetzel. He would manipulate people's emotions with words such as these: "Listen to the voices of your dear dead relatives and friends, beseeching you. 'Pity us, pity us. We are in dire torment from which you can redeem us for a pittance. Will you let us lie here in flames?' Remember as soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs."

Luther regularly listened to the confessions of people who had purchased indulgences but never expressed any sign of repentance or sorrow for their sins. This made him furious and inspired him to write his 95 Theses at Wittenberg to show that God's pardon could not be bought with money. Within a year of posting his theses on the door of the Castle Church, October 31, 1517, the Papal Court in Rome began an inquisition on the alleged "heretic."

In 1521, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, demanded that Luther appear before the diet of the Holy Roman Empire at Worms. He appeared before the Emperor twice; each time he was told to recant his teachings. Luther didn't see that there was any Scriptural reason to recant. He said, "Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason I do not accept the authority of the popes and

councils, for they have contradicted each other, my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen."

He was immediately outlawed by the Holy Roman Empire and banned from the Catholic Church. Realizing the threat of death, Fredrick the Wise staged an abduction of Luther and he was taken to the Wartburg Castle in Eisenach. Luther hid in the castle for ten months and translated the New Testament into German. He felt that the Scriptures should be available for all to read, understand and believe as the supreme authority for faith.

Pope Leo declared 41 articles of Luther's teachings heretical, and his books were publicly burned in Rome. Luther, in turn, burned the Papal Bull announcing his excommunication from the Church.

In Augsburg we visited St. Ann's Church where [The Augsburg Confession](#) was written by [Phillip Melancthon](#) with Luther's approval in 1530. However, five years ago, this church became the place for another historic event when the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) grossly and deliberately betrayed Luther by signing a *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* with Roman Catholics. By signing this accord the LWF embraced the Council of Trent, and in so doing, formally denied the very doctrine upon which the true church stands or falls. Justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone.

We also visited Eisleben, the town where Luther died just a few hundred yards from his place of birth. In his 62 years God worked through him in a mighty way to impact the world and the future of the church.

Following are two of Luther's most memorable quotes:

"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God, except that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not professing Christ, however boldly I may be confessing Him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved."

"We cannot attain to the understanding of Scripture either by study or by the intellect.

[\(See Reformers on page 8\)](#)

The Ministry of Proclaiming the Gospel

OUR PURPOSE

The ministry was established in 1991 and is incorporated in the State of Texas as a non-profit [501\(c\)\(3\)](#) corporation for the purposes of: 1) glorifying, honoring and serving the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming His Gospel of man's redemption with clarity, conviction and consistency; 2) providing evangelistic training and resources with an emphasis on biblical integrity; 3) exposing any doctrines that oppose or nullify the Gospel of grace so that people can discern truth from error, avoid deception and come to a knowledge of truth; 4) contending earnestly for the faith against the agents of compromise who suppress doctrinal truth for the sake of ecumenical unity; 5) encouraging and supporting former Roman Catholics who may be feeling a sense of guilt, ostracism or persecution from their family or friends for leaving the Catholic religion and culture.

OUR METHOD

In a spirit of love and humility, we teach evangelistic seminars, conferences and workshops to train and encourage Christians to be effective witnesses to Roman Catholics and others who may be lost in their religion. We also offer resources designed to teach, equip and encourage others to labor in this huge mission field.

OUR NEWSLETTER

Proclaiming the Gospel's bi-monthly newsletter is designed to extend the purposes of the ministry throughout the world. The editor is [Evangelist Mike Gendron](#), a graduate of [Dallas Theological Seminary](#) and a former Roman Catholic of over 34 years.

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, satisfied the righteous justice of God by paying the complete penalty for sin when He died as man's substitute on Calvary's cross. Any person who repents and receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior by grace through faith in His life, death and resurrection, ceasing to trust in anything else for salvation, becomes a child of God and receives the gift of eternal life, which can never be revoked.

OUR PROVISION

Everything we do is made possible through the prayers and financial support of those who share our burden for the lost. We recognize the sacrifices God's people make to sustain our work and pledge to use these resources effectively and efficiently. Donations (except for products) are tax deductible.

Christian Coalition President Converts to Roman Catholicism

John Giles, president of the Christian Coalition of Alabama, remembers well the time he got lost in a Roman Catholic Church. "I couldn't even follow the order of service, it was so foreign to me," Giles says of that day some six years ago. Since then, he's found his way and a new home in the Roman Catholic Church – a home that might seem foreign to the overwhelmingly Protestant church population of Alabama. In any case, Giles and his wife, Deborah, were received into the Catholic Church at St. Peter's Parish in Montgomery on Easter Sunday. Such a decision normally wouldn't be a matter of public interest, but Giles says he anticipated the questions that have followed his conversion from the Protestant faith. He found himself in awe of its history and ritual, particularly its use of site, sound, smell, taste and touch in each service. Giles said, "There is a perception among Protestants that if you're Episcopal or Catholic, you're not even saved, you're not born again, which is totally a myth." Giles hopes to build bridges where there weren't bridges because Christians are Christians. "There's no such thing as Christians and Catholics," he said. (Associated Press, 5/26/04)

Where Mike is Speaking

- June 27 [Bayside Community Church](#)
Tampa, FL (813) 286-1463
- June 27 (eve) [Grace Bible Church](#)
Brandon, FL (813) 662-9622
- Aug. 7-8 [Cox's Creek Baptist Church](#)
Cox Creek, KY (502) 348-4974
- Aug. 21 [Frisco Bible Church](#)
Frisco, TX (972) 335-8150
- Aug. 28 [Steeling the Mind Bible Conf.](#)
Denver, CO (800) 977-2177
- Sept 11-12 [Providence Church](#)
Duluth, GA (770) 497-1309
- Sep. 25-26 [Tulsa Bible Church](#)
Tulsa, OK (918) 499-1513
- Oct. 30 [Steeling the Mind Bible Conf.](#)
Coeur d'Alene, ID (800) 977-2177
- Nov. 20 Park Plaza Hotel - PTG Seminar
Buffalo, NY (716) 674-8458

To schedule Mike Gendron to speak at your church or event, contact him at:
phone: (972) 495-0485
e-mail: ptg@pro-gospel.org

PTG Under Attack

Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries and Cheryl Schupbach of [SX Web Solutions](#), who hosts our web-site, have come under massive attacks in the last few months. Those who are trying to shut down PTG have been hitting us with a constant barrage of viruses and also succeeded in having a seminar in NY cancelled. Enormous amounts of e-mail have been sent in attempt to "jam" and crash the server. This was followed by a new attack strategy against other ministries on the server. The attackers began forging emails to make spam appear as if it was originating from PTG. AOL alone has been receiving about 500,000 emails every hour for 2 months that have been forged with the names of *Proclaiming the Gospel* and other ministries on the server. The result is that AOL, Earthlink, Verizon, Comcast, and other providers have had to block legitimate business and personal email to stop these forged emails.

These attacks, many of which have been traced back to their points of origin from Italy and Catholic Parishes, have caused Cheryl Schupbach a great deal of stress. The situation is not only affecting her business and the ministries she hosts, but her health as well. All she wants to do is to serve God by publishing His truth! Please pray for Cheryl and PTG. Only God can bring these attacks to an end.

Steeling the Mind Set for August 28th in Denver

Plan on attending [The Steeling the Mind Bible Conference](#) at Calvary Chapel-South Denver on August 28th where top Bible teachers will be hammering away on tough subjects.

The schedule of speakers and their messages will be as follows: Jim Fleming, all the way from Israel, *The Last Supper-More than meets the eye!*; Gary Habermas, *The Shroud of Turin-Could it be Real?*; Kent Hovind, *100 Scientific Reasons Evolution is Stupid*; Mike Gendron, *Israel, Islam & Armageddon*; Mike Riddle, *Big Bang and the Bible*; Chuck Missler, *Could New Iraq be New Babylon?* and Frank Peretti, *A Few Things I learned Since I knew It All*. Praise and Worship will be led again by Andy Day.

Call Compass at (800) 977-2177 to register or for more information.

Quick Quotes

"Some would send you to a Roman Catholic priest to be forgiven. But he, practicing his false Satanic Babylonish pagan ritual, only loads down the poor sinner with more burdens and can promise him no eternal life. He will send you to Masses, to confessions, to penances, to worshipping Babylon's idols: the crucifix, the rosary and the queen of heaven. He will send you to worshipping saints and relics and adoring Mary and Lady Fatima. He will make you wear scapulars, charms and beads. He will send you on pilgrimages to Rome's shrines, and have you repeat numberless prayers, and follow after mysterious superstitions, and awe-inspiring ceremonies and ordinances. He will keep you in spiritual ignorance and bondage with his pagan mystery ritual while he cleverly robs you of your money. And you will find in the end, all the priest can do for you is to bring you to an emotional form of heathen worship, which will never bring any lasting peace to your guilty and hopeless soul."

[R. F. Becker](#), *Are You Forgiven?*

"The loneliness of the Christian results from his walk with God in an ungodly world. His God-given instincts cry out for companionship with others of his kind, others who can understand his longings, his aspirations, his absorption in the love of Christ; and because within his circle of friends there are so few who share his inner experiences he is forced to walk alone. The man who has passed on into the divine Presence in actual inner experience will not find many who understand him. He finds few who care to talk about that which is the supreme object of his interest, so he is often silent in the midst of noisy religious shoptalk. His inability to find human companionship drives him to seek in God what he can find nowhere else. It is an open question on whether or not the evangelical movement has sinned too long and departed too far from God to return again to spiritual sanity."

[A. W. Tozer](#)

"The Roman Christ must have help from others to redeem the lost. Popes must dispense indulgences, priests must perform blasphemous rituals, a goddess must share her favors, sinners must execute works and purgatory must provide purification."

[Ralph Ovadal](#), *More Than These*

Seeking His Truth

Letters to the Editor



After watching your program on our accessible channel I am convinced more than ever that the Catholic Church is the one, true, universal Church of our Lord. I am sure He is outraged by the hate that you have against His Church. And He would never condone the abuse of His Blessed Mother that you have demonstrated. I see the similarities of your tactics and those of the terrorists. Like you, they do despicable things in the name of God. In both cases, God is the furthest thing from what is preached. Like other newly founded churches, each was founded by a man, just like your "ministry." Only the Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ. May our Blessed Mother Mary intercede to our Lord to save you from yourself. May you come to see the errors of your teachings and the harm you do and cease from serving your own selfish and misguided needs. I do not wish to receive a response from you. I have heard more than enough.

George J., Internet

What a great God we have! I'm so glad I spoke to you yesterday. I would be going down the deceptive path of ecumenism if I hadn't gone to Word of Life and heard you speak the truth. It was an awakening for me, and it turned me around to seek the truth and truly opened my eyes to give me discernment. I remembered when you said, "Catholics *accept* Jesus every time they receive communion." But I didn't understand the difference between "accept" and "trust" until yesterday when you told me to use biblical integrity and "trust" Jesus. So, after we talked, I looked in the concordance for all the verses with "accept." I did not find anyone "accepting" Jesus for salvation. I will start asking Catholics to trust Jesus because, since they already "accept" Jesus, I've told them nothing new. Wow! Thanks Mike! I always get the truth from you.

N.C., E Syracuse, NY

Everywhere the apostle Paul went there was either a riot or a revival. Yet our evangelical pastors persist in a gospel designed to avoid offending the gospel perverters and conse-

quently fail to get the revival they seek. Salvation is a free gift but there are two ways to reject a gift. One is by outright rejection, and the other is by seeking to pay for it. All the glory goes to the gift giver, and God says He will not share His glory with anyone ([Isa. 42:8; 48:11](#)). Adding rituals to it makes the work of Christ of no effect ([Gal.5:4](#)). As a former RC, I pray for my lost RC loved-ones day and night, and understand their blindness, but what about evangelicals who should be more aware? They remind me of the 5 virgins of [Matthew 25](#) who had the oil, but they slept. Mike, thanks for being our watchman on the wall, and as you encounter controversy, it is to be expected because the enemy has been aroused.

M.W., Preston Hollow, NY

The Roman Catholic Church is using all means to advertise Catholicism in films, TV, radio, mailings, money drives on PBS to bring Christians back to Rome. The devil is working very hard through this religious institution. It is of no surprise to me that born-again Christians are unaware of this and therefore condemn your ministry. Be encouraged, God is in control.

A.H., Glenview, IL

As a former Catholic, who was saved 8 years after hitting rock bottom, I am very thankful to the Lord for you and your ministry. My life changed dramatically as Jesus became the new focus of my life. He delivered me from many things, least of not was my addiction to alcohol. Soon my mother started having friends in the Catholic Church write me letters and send me literature from people such as Scott Hahn. Since that time I have tried to talk to my mother about the truth, but as many have experienced, this has been a strain on our relationship even though she always calls me a good Christian man. I asked her, how can a good Christian man be condemned to hell over 100 times by the Council of Trent. So she went to talk to her local priest and this is her quote: "I met with Father Tom regarding the so-called curses you believe are upon you from the Council of Trent. He stated the Council of

Trent is no longer in effect and was superseded by Vatican II. There are no curses! Many times people use ancient history to justify their position against the Catholic Church. He also suggested that, in the future, we discuss the weather." This priest either doesn't know his own doctrine or he is just telling my mother anything to calm her down.

A.B., Sharpsburg, GA

Before we got married four years ago, my wife converted from Catholicism and joined the Baptist Church we were attending. Since then, I often questioned the authenticity of her conversion. She is troubled by a lot of the differences between Catholicism and Evangelicals. She has become more and more reluctant to go to church with me and often indicates her desire to go back to the Catholic Church. I have done a lot of research, studying the Catholic Catechism, comparing it to the Bible and reading about church history. It is blatantly obvious to me that the Catechism is a bold face lie. I know I can't approach her that way and I know that I have to approach her with gentleness and respect. I have recently discovered your web site and it is very helpful and encouraging. I know that God can do anything and, with prayer, a true conversion of my wife is possible. I have been fervently preparing myself to defend the true faith with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and would like to be on your prayer list. Please pray that my wife will see the truth and that God will use me as His instrument to be adequately equipped to defend the faith.

J.J., Houston, TX

While returning from a trip, I saw a sign for the *Grotto of Lourdes* National Shrine. Located high up on a hill is a statue of the Catholic Mary, made of a gold color that brilliantly reflects the sun rays, standing on a high tower. I was saddened that such a beautiful location was devoted to idolatry rather than giving glory to our wonderful Lord Jesus. I was able to slide some *Proclaiming the Gospel* tracts underneath the windshield wipers of some vehicles with Catholic bumper stickers. I pray that the Lord will grant repentance to those individuals.

J.L., Manassas, VA

I am interested to know why you believe Catholics are not Christians. I happen to be both. We believe in Christ as Messiah, that he died and rose for us, and that we will someday be with him in Heaven. If you want

to know what we believe, ask us, instead of judging us. Only He knows us well enough to judge our lives. NO ONE ELSE!!! I don't want this to sound like a hate letter. I have friends of all faiths, and instead of witnessing to those who are already believers, we need to focus on those who ARE NOT!
Mary H., Internet

If you define a Catholic as one who adheres to the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, then it is impossible for a Catholic to also embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No one can believe two diametrically opposed gospels simultaneously. Catholics must repent of Rome's gospel of works and sacraments and believe the Gospel of grace to be a Christian (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Having said that, there may be born-again Christians in the Catholic Church who have yet to come out of their apostate church to worship God in Spirit and truth (John 4:24). As these new converts are disciplined in the truth of God's word and are taught to observe ALL that Christ commanded, they will leave and not participate in the serious sin of idolatry any longer (Mat. 28:19-20). The Judaizers believed as you do, that Christ was the Messiah, that He died and rose from the dead, and that they would someday be with Him in Heaven. However, because they distorted the Gospel by adding requirements for salvation (as the Roman Catholic Church has also done), Paul condemned them. (Gal. 1:6-9). We are all called to make judgments using the Bible as our final court of appeals. When I ask Catholics how they hope to be forgiven and reconciled to God and they respond without mentioning the name of Jesus, I make a judgment. When I read the Catechism of the Catholic Church and see teachings that oppose and nullify the Gospel of grace, I make a judgment. Paul judged Peter for not acting in line with the truth of the Gospel (Gal. 2:11-14). Scripture tells us to judge righteously and that we will be judged by the same standard we use to judge others (Prov. 31:9; Mat. 7:2). We are to judge the teachings of others and expose deceivers (2 Pet. 2:1, Eph. 5:11). Hopefully you will now judge the teachings of your priests and popes with the word of God because God's word is what will judge you on the last day (John 12:48).

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God called us out of the Catholic Church four years ago but we still peruse *The Catholic New World* newspaper to stay aware of any new erroneous teaching. Recently, we

found that their gospel is now being replaced with "the gospel according to Mel." We agree with you on Mel's movie. God would not bless a movie filled with such deceptions and distortions as a tool for evangelism. May God continue to make you bold for His truth as you contend for the faith.
G. B., Tinley Park, IL

I sent an e-mail regarding your ministry to two ladies in my Bible Study (one has a degree from Dallas Theological Seminary) because I see a trend with them to join together with Catholics and to be tolerant regarding doctrinal issues. It's obvious that I need to learn how to convey the truth in love and be willing to suffer and pay the cost to defend the faith. I know yours is not an easy ministry; yet I know there are times it must be very rewarding as well. May God bless your ministry abundantly and may those who are in the darkness see the light of their salvation. Your newsletter helps me so much.
D. R., San Diego, CA

It is teacher appreciation week and I can think of no better time to heartfully thank you for broadening my knowledge of scripture; sharpening the cutting edge of my discernment with love; and doing all with such patience and kindness and wisdom. Truly you are fulfilling a great need for this generation. May the Lord grace your efforts even more in the years to come.
B.W., Marshall, VA

My soul grieves each time I read the letters you receive from the foolishly ignorant brute beasts whose only defense is an institution of man and not the word of God. Might our Holy God give them a heart to seek out the truth for themselves. Keep persevering in your ministry of truth based on the word of God and not man! Satan is well aware of man's bent to rob God of His glory by contributing something of ourselves for salvation. It is humbling to admit that we are like the Publican who would not even raise his head, but beat his breast saying "have mercy on me oh God for I am a sinner."
R.K., Lewisville, TX

I was saddened/stunned to see that the president of Alabama's Christian Coalition has converted to Catholicism. In talking with mutual church friends throughout the state, no one seems to think of this as a problem. It is distressing to find such apathy and lack of concern from pastors and leaders of Christian movements and schools. Truly there is

much ignorance and lack of knowledge in the Word and church history. It is for this reason that I share your *Is a Roman Catholic Christian An Oxymoron?* tract every opportunity I get.
M. E., Tusculumbia, AL

I was on John Ankerberg's site today and read and enjoyed the articles by you. I have also read and reread your book *Preparing Catholics for Eternity* and my desire is to really memorize the most relevant scriptures that you cite. What incredible spiritual warfare we face today. My daughter who recently converted to Catholicism has told us, "You have no one on your side. Everyone knows that Catholics are Christians. You are religious bigots." This is my precious only child who has always been so gentle, and I felt so sure that she was a believer. At the University of Victoria, the Catholics are aggressive, and I guess they must have found fertile soil in her. She is captivated by 'their love', the grandeur, the mysticism, the Mass, the liturgy, everything that is an abomination to the Lord, and as you said in your own article, it is a terrible religious pride. She talks like a person who has been brainwashed. I can hardly believe that she now consults with the dead! She is truly under a 'powerful delusion', and I feel so alone in this battle for her soul. I do feel like we are living in the scariest times, when the Reformation has been forgotten, and no one seems to be contending for the faith. It is so alarming. I feel like we must be very close to the Lord's return. Mike, I will find some way, if you are willing, to get you here. I know that it is up to the Holy Spirit to unveil her eyes, but I do know that you would share the whole truth with her, like the apostle Paul, and admonish her as well. She is so deceived that she does not even fear God. She is so precious to me, and I would covet your prayers for her.

Name Withheld by Request

How clear you have made the Gospel! No one can read all that truth and be able to say they did not know the way.
V. H., Dallas, TX

Please submit questions or comments to:
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Holy Roman Empire

The leader of the world's one billion Roman Catholics, Pope John Paul, welcomed the 10 new nations of the European Union but said the bloc could only face the challenges of the 21st century if it defended its Christian roots. The pope, whose native country, Poland, is one of the new countries in the 25-strong EU, told a packed St Peter's Square Europe's identity would be "incomprehensible" without Christianity. "Only a Europe that does not remove, but rediscovers its Christian roots will reach the stature needed for the great challenges of the third millennium: peace, dialogue between cultures and religions, the safeguarding of creation," he said. He has repeatedly called for the bloc to enshrine Christianity in its constitution, but this has been resisted by secular politicians. (Reuters, 5/2/04)

Catholics & Islam Together

Roman Catholic Cardinal George Pell and a prominent Muslim cleric led hundreds of Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists and Hindus in a prayer for global peace and tolerance. Worshippers packed St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney for the inter-faith prayer meeting featuring New York Imam Feisal Rauf. Rauf told the gathering that in today's world people from all religious faiths, and even those with no religion, must talk and seek to understand their different points of view. He prayed, "O Almighty Creator, we call upon you to inspire all of us present to seek a deeper global commitment to world peace because in that commitment lies one of the purest paths to self-perfection and compassion and intimacy with you." (AFP, 4/1/04)

Eucharistic Dimension of Mary in "The Passion"

The relationship between *The Passion of the Christ* and the Eucharist contains a reference to the Eucharistic dimension of Mary, says Vatican theologian, Father Castellano Cervera, who is a specialist in Marian studies. As of Monday, the movie had taken in \$579 million in receipts worldwide. Q: A priest acknowledged that Gibson's film has enabled him to understand more profoundly the sacrament of the Eucharist, in regard to the meaning of the sacrifice and of the blood poured out to wash away the sins of men. What is your opinion? Cervera: "The priest who acts in the person of Christ cannot live the celebration without seeking to identify himself with Christ's feelings, as the words of the Missal indicate. A correct way to celebrate Mass...is to offer the sacrifice of Christ and to offer oneself and the Church, together with the holy and immaculate Victim, in communion with Christ who offered himself and continues to offer himself for us." Q: No other film has ever represented in such a precise

way the figure of Mary who says to Jesus: "Body of my body, blood of my blood." What would you say in this respect? Cervera: "Mary indicates that that flesh that suffers and that blood that is poured out in the flagellation, and all through Calvary and on the cross, is flesh of her flesh and blood of her blood. Deep down it affirms that...she feels in her flesh and in her blood all that her Son suffers, as if each pain was lived and suffered by her, with exquisite maternal sensitivity. She had heard it from Simeon as a prophecy. But now she was living it with a realism that is unimaginable." ([Zenit](#), 5/5/04)

"Left Behind" Series Labeled Anti-Catholic

The "Left Behind" series of Christian apocalyptic novels denies a number of Catholic teachings and "is both subtly and overtly anti-Catholic," says an article in the U.S. Bishops' quarterly publication. Catholics could easily be drawn into fundamentalist teachings if they have not received solid formation in Catholic teaching. The Pontifical Biblical Commission says that any literal reading of portions of the Bible written in nonliteral, literary forms distorts the meaning. A seven-year tribulation between the 'rapture' and the return of Christ is not biblical. The postrapture, prejudgment scenario in the 'Left Behind' books borders on Pelagianism because characters seem to be working to redeem themselves. Pelagianism holds that grace depends on human initiative, not on God's initiative. The books present a "harsh and judgmental" image of God, offer a theology of suffering that is not Catholic - the rapture saves the good from the trials of the end time - and deny the efficaciousness of baptism. The series portrays a self-centered, obese American cardinal becoming pope in an election rigged by the Antichrist and then leading the Antichrist's new one-world religion. (CNS, 4/12/04)

Mary's Extreme Makeover

The Holy Mother is getting a makeover. She is a modern, multitasking mama fighting for social justice. She is a healer. She doesn't disappear after her son is crucified. She moves his ministry forward, teaching until she is in her 50s. There is much more to Mary than the 13 brief references to her in the Gospels, according to several experts' research. New books about Mary are capturing the public's interest and kindling debate over her place in Catholic life. They come at a time when some Catholic scholars are questioning a Vatican II decision that, "radically minimized" Mary's spirituality. Some parishes have overreacted to the swinging pendulum by draping or taking down old-fashioned statues of Mary. Chapel renovations at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving will include removal of a large image of Mary suspended on a cross that features Jesus and God the Father on either side, holding a crown over her head. Holy Trinity officials said the image isn't being removed for theological reasons. Through all the changes, Mary's mystery and spiritual meaning still have vitality for millions of believers. There are more reported sightings of her than of any other holy figure. The Catholic Church only recognizes as authentic the sightings at Guadalupe, Mexico; Lourdes, France; and Fatima, Portugal. But Web sites abound with claims, information, speculation, and trivia about her. The depiction of Mary in *The Passion of The Christ* is certain to become one of her most touching and enduring popular culture images, several scholars said. (Dallas Morning News, 5/8/04)

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*"Therefore having
been justified by
faith, we have
peace with God
through our Lord
Jesus Christ."*

([Romans 5:1](#))

Doctrinal Differences of the Reformation

Protestant

- Justification by faith alone. Christ's sacrifice atones for all the believer's sins and provides a permanent right standing before God. Human effort has no effect.
- All believers are priests and have equal access to God through the mediation of Jesus who is the only mediator.
- The scriptures as the only divine source of true doctrine.
- Christ's sacrifice happened once and cannot be repeated.
- Mary, the saints and angels should not be the objects of prayer or veneration. The making of images encourages idolatrous worship that should be directed to God.
- God chose and predestined believers to adoption as sons according to the good pleasure of His will.
- The Bible speaks of two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper and no priestly status is required to perform them.

Roman Catholic

- Justification is by faith and good works. Acts of devotion, charity, the sacraments, good works, etc. are necessary for salvation.
- The Catholic priesthood is necessary to perform the sacraments necessary for spiritual health and salvation.
- Scripture and tradition, as interpreted by bishops, provide the rule of faith.
- The Eucharist is a mystery in which the sacrifice of Christ is reenacted.
- The intercession of Mary, the saints and angels is valuable and necessary in helping Christians achieve salvation. Christians should venerate Mary.
- God's omnipotence does not restrict human will and each person is responsible for earning their own salvation.
- There are seven sacraments: baptism, Eucharist, penance, confirmation, marriage, holy orders, extreme unction.

(Reformers from page 2)

Your first duty is to begin by prayer. Entreat the Lord to grant you, of His great mercy, the true understanding of His Word. There is no other interpreter of the Word of God than the Author of this Word, as He Himself has said, 'They shall all be taught of God.' Hope for nothing from your own labors, from your own understanding: trust solely in God, and in the influence of His Spirit."

Tragically, many evangelicals have forgotten the Reformation and the important doctrines that set us apart from the Catholic Church. Unless we all learn from history, the same errors will undermine our future. Whenever Scripture is not the supreme authority, Christ will be dishonored, the Gospel will be distorted, faith will be misplaced, the church will be ineffective and men will steal glory from God. It is no wonder Satan and his false teachers constantly attack the authority, sufficiency and message of God's eternal word. For it is the Word of God, acting with the Spirit of God, that brings forth life to souls dead in sin. Let us never forget the blood Christ shed to save us or the blood the Reformers shed to reclaim the Gospel!