



THE  
RISE

AND

FALL

of

BABYLON

BY  
DR. LEHMAN STRAUSS

LIBRARY OF  
WORD OF LIFE  
HALLWAY OF  
TEMPLE  
1032





**Dr. Lehman Strauss**

**The author is an outstanding Bible teacher and speaker, and is a devout student of Bible prophecy. Naturally he is keenly alert to the Ecumenical movement, and as such is qualified to relate current events to God's Holy Word.**

**THE RISE AND FALL**  
**of**  
**BABYLON**

**The Ecumenical Movement  
Related to Scripture**

**by**  
**LEHMAN STRAUSS**

**LIFELINE PUBLICATIONS**  
**P. O. Box 445** **Levittown, Pa. 19058**



# THE RISE AND FALL of BABYLON

## THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Ecumenicity is a term frequently seen in the news but rarely heard from evangelical pulpits. To the majority of truly born-again persons it is an almost meaningless mixed mass of letters making up a nasty word which stirs up a bad reaction.

Christians should acquaint themselves with the meaning and use of the word *ecumenical*. Since 1944, when the World Council of Churches was formed, and fifteen years later when the late Pope John XXIII called together an ecumenical council, the term has loomed larger in the vocabulary of religious leaders and in the press.

The word "ecumenical" means earthwide in extent and influence. In this present study we shall use the term as it applies to the coming world church, that union of all branches of Christendom which presently



is in the making and moving steadily forward with surprising momentum.

When the late Pope John called for an Ecumenical Council, it was only the third such gathering in four hundred years, the other two being the Council of Trent in 1545 and the Vatican Council in 1869. These first two Councils, which are now history, caused no small stir in their times. The records still show that a multiplicity of controversial publications came out almost overnight after the announcement of the Vatican Council. The present Ecumenical movement is meeting little resistance.

### **Some Favorable Response**

As a matter of fact, it amazes some clear thinking persons to see so large a number of protestant leaders looking with approval upon the efforts of Rome. In *The Detroit News* there appeared some comments taken from a sermon by the Reverend Charles F. Kesting. After stating in his sermon that the early church was influenced strongly by the Roman Empire, Mr. Kesting added,

We can only pray that out of such efforts as proposed by Pope John may emerge a new expression of the Christian Church . . . I see in the invitation both a compliment and a challenge, and it is a compliment to be recognized rather than ignored. Protestants should accept this as a challenge to redouble their efforts for unity, liberty and peace, not as an expression of ill will, intolerance and hate. Rather, they should seek through goodwill and understanding among all Christians to establish a spirit of unity beginning with our neighbor, be they Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant.

On Thursday, July 8, 1965 there appeared in *The Evening Bulletin* in Philadelphia some interesting ecumenical developments under the headline, "Ecumenical Spirit Hailed by Corson and Damiano." Corson (Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, bishop of the Philadelphia Methodist Conference and President of the World Methodist Conference) who attended the Vatican Ecumenical



Council, praised the late Pope John for his efforts in this direction, and then added,

A new dimension has come to the ecumenical movement in the effort to draw all Christians closer together and to promote a brotherhood that includes Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches. Inspired by the attitude of the Second Vatican Council, Christian bodies are now emphasizing the things that they all hold in common and not the things that separate them.

Damiano (The Most Reverend Archbishop Celestine J. Damiano), bishop of the Camden, New Jersey County Diocese, said,

Ecumenism is not a dialog, not a fashion of theologians. It is the kiss, not of death, but of life. We may not see eye to eye, but we can go arm in arm.

In the same issue of *The Evening Bulletin* there appeared an item taken from the *New York Times News Service* under the headline, "Lutheran, Catholic Clergy Find Agreement on Creed."

Spiritual descendants of Martin Luther and Jesuit sons of Ignatius Loyola, the towering Protestant and Roman Catholic giants of the embattled Reformation period, completed two days of rigorous theological discussions here yesterday.

There was no disagreement between them on the formulation of Christian faith found in the creed. Spokesmen for both groups said that the wording of the ancient creed summed up their own beliefs.

In the August 12, 1965 edition of *The Evening Bulletin* there appeared a news item under the heading, "Catholic Churches to Bless Mixed Marriages Here."

Mixed marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics may now be solemnized at Nuptial Masses in churches under a directive issued by the Holy Office in Rome, it was disclosed today.

The new directive ends centuries of tradition under which Nuptial Masses and nuptial blessings were not allowed at mixed marriages.

A spokesman for the National Catholic Welfare Conference said the change is expected to have 'great ecumenical consequences.' The Holy Office also granted bishops permission to allow non-Catholic clergymen to give a sermon, prayer or blessing in the house of one of the marriage partners following the wedding.



## Rome Takes The Lead

The late Pope John XXIII, who reigned on the papal throne from 1958 to 1963, started a movement in his generation which produced dramatic changes considered impossible a decade ago.

The last two Councils, Trent (1545-63) and Vatican I (1869-70), took a strong defensive stand against Protestantism. How different the attitude in the Vatican II Council! On the surface, at least, the counter-Reformation spirit does not prevail. Dr. Edwin Palmer draws attention to those speeches, made at the Council in the presence of Protestant observers, and which were liberally sprinkled with the phrases, "beloved observers," "brothers in Christ" and "our common Lord and Master."

Martin Luther is no longer considered "an insane, adulterous perverter of moral." The Jews are no longer charged with the sole responsibility of Christ's death. The pope publicly embraces and kisses the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church. Cardinal Cushing of Boston sat with Dr. Billy Graham to be photographed by the press, and then he publicly endorsed the Graham crusades and encouraged his parishioners to go and hear the evangelist. When Dr. Graham delivered a sermon in Belmont Abbey College, North Carolina, in 1963, an audience of 2000 persons, including Roman Catholic priests and nuns, gave the evangelist a standing ovation.

What does this all mean? Is Rome *really* changing? Now I am aware of the view of some of my brethren who insist that a *yes* or *no* answer cannot be given to the above question. They tell me that the situation is not such so as to come up with an either-or answer. While I recognize that there have been some changes made in the Vatican's attitude toward the Bible, tradition, mixed marriages, birth-control and a closer tie with Protestants, I am suspicious that their changes are subtle moves prompted by ulterior motives. At the



risk of being accused of judging and becoming unchristian, I unhesitatingly announce my convictions that I can see no good evolving from the proposed ecumenical church. Rome will never change. Cardinal Ottaviani, a strong conservative who is opposed to religious liberty and who insists that it is the duty of the state to support the church, expresses the true Roman Catholic viewpoint in the insignia of his official crest — *semper edem* — always the same.

Many unthinking, untaught Christians see on the surface of Rome's efforts a God-sanctioned movement toward a union and unity of all Christians. They think they see the Christian world moving steadily and rapidly toward that unity for which our Lord prayed when He said to the Father, ". . . that they may be one, as we are" (JOHN 17:11).

But is the present ecumenicity, spearheaded by Rome, the answer to Christ's prayer? My answer to this question is an unhesitating No. The unity which the present ecumenical movement seeks, this Vatican inspired, man-made, visible, external and organizational unity is *not* the unity which the Holy Scriptures teach. This modern ecumenicity is a subversion of what the New Testament teaches.

### **The Presbyterian Church and Ecumenicity**

In *Presbyterian Life*, May 1, 1965 there appeared an editorial on page 34 entitled, "Protestant-Roman Catholic Wall Lowers in Presbyterian Heartland." The editorial reads as follows:

For ecumenical-minded Presbyterians, Pittsburgh will always have a special status. Just seven years ago this month the western Pennsylvania city was the locale of the General Assembly in which the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. joined to form The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. In 1965 Pittsburgh Protestants and Roman Catholics, in company with their fellow churchmen across the nation, are engaging in a number of cooperative ventures that



were not even fondly envisioned at the time of the Presbyterian merger in 1958.

On Sunday, May 2, for example, some fifteen hundred young people from Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in the area will participate in a Youth Choir Festival. The theme of the hour-long service will be "Sacred Music Through the Ages;" high-school-age, junior, and boy choirs will sing choral selections from the great periods of church music. As this issue goes to press, thirty-eight congregations, sixteen of them Presbyterian and four Roman Catholic, are planning to send choirs to the service. The festival is being sponsored by the area Council of Churches and the National Choral Committee of the American Guild of Organists.

In late March, more than seven hundred persons, including seventy-five nuns and a dozen priests, attended a demonstration of Presbyterian worship in the East Liberty Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. Designed to acquaint Roman Catholics with Presbyterianism, the program was followed by discussion sessions in which some forty ministers assembled by Pittsburgh Presbytery explained their church's practices and answered questions.

Co-sponsors of the demonstration were the Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Commission of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Monsignor Thomas F. Henninger, commission chairman, said that he hoped similar programs would be sponsored for Catholics with other Protestant denominations.

The Reverend Charles P. Robshaw, pastor of the East Liberty Church, saw the demonstration as further evidence of "the working of God's spirit in the hearts of Christian people . . . Pope John XXIII must be given credit for the urgency with which he saw the hampered witness of a divided Christendom in a world that so desperately needs the gospel."

### **Fort Worth Area Council of Churches**

On page 35 of the same periodical, the following appeared:

#### **CATHOLIC CHURCH JOINS FORT WORTH COUNCIL**

The Holy Family Roman Catholic Church was received into membership in the interdenominational Fort Worth Area Council of Churches at its recent annual assembly.



Holy Family thus becomes the first Roman Catholic church in Texas and the third in the country to become affiliated with a church council traditionally made up of Protestant and Orthodox congregations.

Presenting Holy Family Church's application for membership was Dr. Granville T. Walker of the University Christian Church, former president of the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ).

After the application was accepted, Father Vincent J. Wolf, pastor of Holy Family, and several parish laymen were introduced and received a standing ovation from assembly delegates.

At least two Catholic churches and an archdiocese are known to have joined church councils. They are the Church of the Madalene in Tulsa, Oklahoma; St. Andrew's Cathedral in Grand Rapids, Michigan; and the Santa Fe, New Mexico, archdiocese.

### **Merger — A Sign of the Times**

Students of the Bible are not surprised to see two or more Protestant denominations merging into one, and Protestant leaders looking with favor upon the late Pope John's ecumenical church. One of the significant signs of the times to indicate the approaching end of the age is that of consolidation. Our generation is witnessing its rise on every hand.

We are seeing the rise of consolidation in the matter of international finance. The European Common Market is but the forerunner of a common world market. Following the Bretton Woods Conference in 1945, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) was established. On July 10, 1965, just twenty years later, the United Press International released a news item announcing President Lyndon B. Johnson's request for a world conference to find ways of consolidating the international monetary system. Secretary of the Treasury, Henry H. Fowler, announced that President Johnson authorized him to publicize that the United States now stands prepared to attend and participate in an international monetary conference. This comes as no surprise to him who studies the prophetic Scriptures. The Bible



predicts a day when an international leader "causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (REVELATION 13:16, 17).

### **The Bible Predicts The Ecumenical Church**

Likewise the Word of God teaches that there will be a merger of all religions under one head, that is, one ecumenical or earth-wide church. Turn in your Bible to Revelation, chapter 13. This chapter prophesies the activity of two demon-inspired men who will take over the rule in the earth after Christ's true Church has been caught up to Heaven to be with her Lord. The first of these two Satan-controlled men, the Beast that appears out of the sea (13:1-10), is the Antichrist.

Now notice that the chapter deals largely with the subject of *worship* (13:4, 8, 12, 15). The worship of the first Satan-controlled man, who is the Antichrist, is enforced by a second Satan-controlled man who is called three times "*the false prophet*" (REVELATION 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). Revelation 13 is teaching clearly that there will be a time on the earth during which all people will worship a Satan-controlled man. The worship will be enforced, and any who refuse to enter into it will do so under penalty of death (vs. 15). Of course all of the worshippers at that time will be those "*whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb (Jesus Christ) slain from the foundation of the world*" (vs. 8). The true Church, which consists of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, will have been caught up to Heaven. Those who might refuse to fall in line with the ecumenical church in that day will be those who will be saved during the Tribulation (See REVELATION 7).

Now some of my readers might shrink from the idea of an earth-wide church under the rule of a Satan-



controlled man forcing all people to worship him. If you are one such reader, I urge upon you to take one look at Babylonian history as recorded in Daniel, chapters 3 and 4. Nebuchadnezzar's dream-image was recalled and interpreted by Daniel as he was guided by God. The head of the image, which was of gold, represented Nebuchadnezzar himself (DANIEL 2:36-38).

Upon hearing the interpretation of his dream, the Babylonian monarch made a huge image of gold, after which he issued a decree that, at a given time, all persons in his empire must "*fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoseo falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*" (DANIEL 3:5, 6). Here is an accurate historical account of forced worship throughout an entire empire, refusal of which would result in death.

Since it happened in the past, no person should be startled at the Bible's prediction that it shall happen again. As a matter of fact, there is no branch of Christendom which has held its followers in fear and bondage as has the Roman Catholic Church.

Roman Catholics *must* believe the unscriptural lie, declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854, that Mary was born free from original sin, a Romish invention for which there is not one shred of evidence, not even in the Roman Catholic Bible. The Word of God is crystal clear in its teaching that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (ROMANS 3:23), that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (ROMANS 5:12), and that of Christ only can it be said, "In Him is no sin" (I JOHN 3:5).

Roman Catholics *must* believe the decree of Leo XIII in 1891 that no one could go to Christ without first going to Mary, and who, in 1896, called Mary the "Medatrix to the Mediator," in spite of the clear teaching of God's Word that "There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man (not the



woman) Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (I TIMOTHY 2:5, 6).

Roman Catholics *must* believe the declaration of Pius XII who, on November 1, 1950, issued *Munificentissimus Deus* in which he infallibly pronounced that the body of the Blessed Virgin did not corrupt when she died, but that it was secretly raptured to heaven. They *must* accept this extra-scriptural, fantastically unbelievable nonsense in spite of the fact that there is nothing in God's word or in history to support it. Yes, millions of persons in Christendom are regimented, like dumb animals, into accepting theories, traditions and dogma which are totally without Divine origin and Divine authority. And this limited regimentation is leading to a regimentation of the whole inhabited earth under the rule of the ecumenical church.

Some of the more naive neo-evangelicals and liberals tell us that the ecumenical church will not insist upon uniformity and that it will not apply pressures against those who do not conform. They argue their view on the ground that the World Council of Churches has no authority over its member churches. But is this any proof that it will never have any such authority? Certainly not! No earth-wide organization involving millions of members can avoid becoming hierarchical and authoritarian. The Bible makes it clear that the ecumenicity of the last days will eventually sound the death-knell of all religious liberty.

### **Satan and Worship**

The question as to the origin of a personal Devil has plagued many disturbed minds. We may be certain that God did not create the Devil and demons as such. All men are sinners, but God did not create man a sinner. In his original creation man was in the likeness and image of God (GENESIS 1:26, 27); he became a sinner by choice. The same is true of the Devil.



In his original state as God created him, he was Lucifer an unfallen angel. He became the evil being he now is when he attempted to dethrone God and enthroned himself (ISAIAH 14:12-15).

But why did Lucifer want to be like God? There is but one answer to this question. It is found in the passage which discusses our Lord's temptation. When the Devil showed to Christ the kingdoms of this world, he said to Him, "*All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me*" (MATTHEW 4:9). The Devil is seeking to be worshipped, and he works through men whom he possesses in order to achieve his goal. When the antichrist appears on this earthly scene, after the true Church has been raptured to Heaven, he "*opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*" (II THESSALONIANS 2:4). This Satan-controlled man is that first Beast of Revelation 13, so that actually the people on the earth are said to be worshipping "*the dragon,*" who is identified as Satan (REVELATION 13:4 cf. 12:9). The ecumenical church of the last days is not Christ's true Church; it is the Devil's church.

### **Identifying the Ecumenical Church**

Revelation 17 and 18 are two most solemn chapters in the Bible. They depict both the description and the doom of this vast international system of error, religious in character, and so close in resemblance to Christianity that millions on earth are deceived by it. This system of religion is called by God "*the great whore*" (or harlot) (17:1). It is a combination of the religions of this world, the vast ecumenical church of the last days. God calls her a harlot. A wife who is unfaithful to her husband is an adulterous woman. A church which calls itself Christian, and which courts an alliance with the godless system of this world, commits spiritual adultery (JAMES 4:4).



In the Book of the Revelation, the figure of a woman is used symbolically of religion not less than four times. Jezebel represents the pagan idolatry of the past (2:20); the woman clothed with the sun represents Israel (12:1); the Bride of Christ represents His true Church (19:7, 8; 21:9 cf. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2; EPHESIANS 5:25, 26). But who is the whore?

This false church which dominates the world scene in these climactic hours immediately preceding the second coming of Christ to earth, is shown first as a woman, a filthy and dissolute harlot. She is seen "*sitting upon many waters*" (17:1) The symbolic phrase "many waters" is interpreted in the chapter, and it means "*Peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*" (17:15). This shows the scope of the seducing harlot's influence. She sways the surging masses of humanity throughout the whole earth in an ecclesiastical rule.

In verse 3 John sees the woman sitting "upon a scarlet coloured beast." The beast is the Antichrist, the same beast who appeared in chapter 13. Here he is seen supporting the harlot woman. Of course he does so for the sake of the advantage he hopes to derive from her bid for power during the last part of the tribulation. The "ten horns" represent the ten confederated kingdoms, the revived Roman Empire, which will be under his jurisdiction. Here the woman, the great religious system of the end times, is controlling and directing the beast. This superchurch will actually be ruling the nations, an ambition the Roman Catholic Church has had for centuries. But the world she rules is a spiritual "wilderness," the true Church having been taken from the earth by her Lord.

Now look at verse 9. "*The seven heads are the seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*" Every high school graduate knows that Rome is known as the seven-hilled city. Propertius spoke of it as "the lofty city on seven peaks, which rules the whole world." Here



then is a prophecy referring to papal Rome, not history referring to pagan Rome. I know of no more direct explanation than that Rome is the city intended. All religions will unite with Romanism. The headquarters will be in Rome, and under this religious system with world-wide influence, all political and educational systems will submit.

In verse 4 the woman's wealth is described. The huge amount of wealth accumulated in religious traffic is hardly believable to the average person. The wealth of the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant denominations combined adds up to many billions of dollars. The major religious denominations are not poor, but possess rich holdings in real estate, stocks, cash, and many different kinds of investments. In 1952, J. J. Van Gorder stated that a survey showed that the Roman Catholic Church maintained in the United States "337 seminaries, 228 colleges, 1,596 high schools, 7,777 elementary schools, 348 orphan asylums, 731 general hospitals, 110 special hospitals, 244 homes for the aged." Add to this the wealth of Jews and Protestants held in the name of religion, and you have a possible contribution factor to the alliance between the Antichrist and the great world church, called here the "great whore." In verse 4 we see a symbol of the wealth and luxury of the ecumenical church under the leadership of Rome. But in reality she is the rich poor church of this Laodicean period, to whom our Lord addressed His solemn warning in REVELATION 3:14-22.

The system is exposed further in verse 6. It will stop at nothing to achieve world dominion, not even the death of those who refuse to join its ranks. Nebuchadnezzar had his fiery furnace for those who would not bow down to his image, and Rome has had hers. Her hatred is against the "saints." Rome makes her own saints, but those whom she has put to death are God's saints. Sir Robert Anderson, of Scotland Yard



fame, estimated that Rome was guilty of the death of 50,000,000 Christians. The Inquisition, the stake, and the torture chambers are all history. Recent persecutions against Christians in Spain, Colombia, and elsewhere confirm this. While Rome has put to death her millions, we must keep in mind the fact that Babylonianism did likewise before Rome came into existence. But here John is permitted to see the bloody martyrdoms to take place at the hands of the harlot at the close of the tribulation. These persecutions might well be those spoken of by the Psalmist (see PSALM 44:22; 79:1-3).

Babylon has not changed. She continues to the end as she began in Genesis. This we should expect for if she loves the world, she will hate the saints who "love not the world" (I JOHN 2:15) and will rejoice in their death. Robert Govett has pointed out that when the massacre of St. Bartholomew took place, and Protestants throughout France were butchered, Rome appointed religious services of thanksgiving, and struck medals in commemoration of the joyful event. It is strange, yet true, that while claiming to be Christ's church, she persecutes to death Christ's true followers.

Babylon is clearly identified. "*The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*" (17:9). History records a city which is so designated. It is Rome, called "the lofty city of seven peaks." The first signification of the "seven heads" then is geographical, or territorial. They are identified with the woman, pointing her out clearly to be Rome. The names of the seven hills are Aventine, Caelian, Capitoline, Esquiline, Palatine, Quirinal, and Viminal. Students of ancient coins remind us that the coin of Vespasian represents Rome seated on seven hills. The Roman Catholic Church itself, in the Confraternity Edition of the New Testament (new edition, New York, 1963 page 337), claims that Rome is Babylon.

The second signification of the "*seven heads*" is per-



sonal. John adds, "*And there are seven kings*" (17:10). Double types are not uncommon in Scripture. For example, Satan is likened to a lion (I PETER 5:8), as also is Christ (REVELATION 5:5). The woman Hagar is a symbol of both a mountain and a covenant (GALATIANS 4:24-25). The heads of the Roman Empire, then, are indicated here. When John received his vision, five had fallen. They were Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. The angel then said to John, "*and one is,*" meaning, I take it, Domitian, the last of the Caesars who was alive when John wrote.

"*And the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space*" (17:10). The identity is clear. Pagan Rome is but the forerunner of papal Rome. Another head of the revived Roman Empire is to arise. He is the Antichrist who was alive, is now dead, but who comes to life again (17:8, 11; cf. 13:3). The extent of their rule, under the influence of the harlot woman, will be the whole inhabited earth (17:15). But that rule will not be for long, only "a short space" (17:10). Three-and-one-half years will be a short time.

Now the true character of this whole apostate system is shown for what it is. "*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen and faithful*" (17:14).

The opposition all along has been against Christ. This verse (14) introduces the final conflict described in chapter 19. With self-confidence and daring the Antichrist leads his empire against the Son of God. The anti-God system reaches its zenith before it is finally overthrown in the last great conflict to take place on the earth. At once we can see that Satan has been the power behind every operation of this combined religious and political ecumenical system. How blind can intelligent men become? Already we can see the



power of Satan deceiving the minds of world leaders, both Romanists and Protestants. If only men would study the Bible and accept it literally for what the Holy Spirit says in it.

### **The Collapse of the Ecumenical Church**

Now will you please take your own Bible and read REVELATION 17:16-18. The King James Version reads as follows — *“And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”* The ten horns, the United States of Europe, is that great political power of the last days referred to by some Bible scholars as the Revived Roman Empire. These world leaders gave the ecumenical church recognition because of her influence over hundreds of millions of people and her vast wealth materially. But then realizing that they were mere puppets of this religious system led by Rome, this coalition of nations rises up against the ecumenical church and completely destroys her influence. We are witnessing small uprisings against the Roman Catholic Church today, such as have taken place in Cuba. I mention this merely to illustrate the possibility of such an overthrow. And it has been interesting to me to observe that Communism has prevailed against Rome chiefly in those countries that were completely dominated by the Roman Catholic Church.

The superchurch of the last days will duplicate the spirit of Babylon. And because of her apostasy she is loathed and looked upon with disgust by the leaders of the confederated nations. She is stripped of her purple and scarlet robes and her wealth. But keep in



mind that all of this carnage is the execution of the sovereign will of God. Babylon from the beginning has been the fountainhead of all idolatry. Rome and the ecumenical church had their source in this fountainhead, therefore the whole system must be judged. She has been pampered and extolled for centuries by the nations of the world, but this must all come to an end. First they were all for her, but now they are united in a bold stand against her. They want both her power and her wealth. The beast, weary of the domination of the harlot, turns against her with hatred. But he is fulfilling the will of God. Once more God will make the wrath of man to praise Him (PSALM 76:10), even as He used Nebuchadnezzar to punish Judah (JEREMIAH 25:9-12). What a change! At last the religious forces of the world meet their doom, and the secular powers confiscate their wealth.

In Revelation, chapter 18 the doom of Babylon is described further. An angel from Heaven announces with a mighty voice, "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*" (18:2). Here is an amazing revelation. A religious system which claims to be Christ's true church houses demons whose abode is the abyss in the underground world. The true Church is the habitation of God through the Holy Spirit (EPHESIANS 2:22), but Babylon has become "*the hold of every foul spirit;*" the "*spirit of the world*" (I CORINTHIANS 2:12); "*the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*" (EPHESIANS 2:2); "*the spirit of error*" (I JOHN 4:6); "*the spirit of bondage*" (ROMANS 8:15); and "*the spirit of man*" (I CORINTHIANS 2:11). There are many foul spirits contending for the mastery of man's mind. We need to heed the admonition, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I JOHN 4:1).



*“And a cage of every unclean and hateful bird”* (18:2). In our Lord’s parable of the mustard seed Christendom is depicted as an abnormal mustard “tree” in whose branches the birds of the air have come to lodge (MATTHEW 13:31-32). Throughout that series of parables recorded in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8, the birds are used symbolically of Satan (MATTHEW 13:4, 19; MARK 4:15; LUKE 8:15). Here is Christendom at the end of the age, a monstrosity, a freak. The church had a humble beginning, but gradually it was infiltrated by unregenerated men. Today the huge organization which calls itself the church of Jesus Christ is taken over by men who do not subscribe to the essential doctrines of historic Christianity as set forth in the Bible. Satan’s emissaries are occupying the top branches in Babylon’s great religious system. They are being taken in by it, so that after the true Church has been caught up from the earth to be with her Lord, the residue of religious leaders, by far in the majority, will be literally caged (or imprisoned) within the Babylonian system. There are some today who are caught in it and feel they cannot get out. Yes, Babylon is the habitation, not of saints and angels, but of demons and every foul spirit.

The extent of Babylon’s influence is stated once more in verse 3. She has wooed and won the nations by her flirtations. She becomes the pride of the world as she makes the nations rich through the abundance of her delicacies. The peoples of the earth have drunk so eagerly from her intoxicating cup, they no longer have power to resist her. I watched the nationally-televised funeral of Pope John XXIII and saw the masses of men, women, and children, Protestant and Roman Catholic, drinking from Rome’s cup. They sip slowly at first, perhaps a bit doubtful and apprehensive, but after a while they gulp it freely, too intoxicated to know its contents.



## The Appeal To God's People

Read Revelation 18:4-8. Here is a clear call to separation. In its primary interpretation it is prophetic, addressed to the tribulation saints of that day. However, it is a warning to believers in our own day who even now can discern the true character of this rising religious system. There are always those well-meaning people who feel that they can remain within an apostate religious system and reform it. But the command from Heaven is unmistakably clear, "*Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her guilt*" (18:4). To just what degree they would have been requited, we have no way of knowing. Achan paid with his life for hiding the Babylonish garment in his tent (JOSHUA 7:16-26). Dr. Ironside has said, "And there is many a Babylonish garment today hidden in Protestant tents, or even displayed upon Protestant shoulders."

The call to separation has come to the people of God in every age. It came to Abraham (GENESIS 12:1); to Lot (GENESIS 19:12-14); to Moses (NUMBERS 16:23-26). "Go ye forth of Babylon" (ISAIAH 48:20), said God to His people Israel. "Remove out of the midst of Babylon" (JEREMIAH 50:8). "Flee out of the midst of Babylon" (JEREMIAH 51:6). "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord." (JEREMIAH 51:45). And in the New Testament we read, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (2 CORINTHIANS 6:14, 17). "Neither be partakers of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (I TIMOTHY 5:22).

God's people are not of this world system (JOHN 17:14, 16). When professing Christians ally themselves with Babylon, or with any other worldly society, on the pretence that they are going to give a testimony and attempt to change those who are in it, they violate the plain teaching of God's Word. The reason why is



plain. "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (18:5). Babel's tower of stones did not reach to Heaven, but her sins did. God says of His own people, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (JEREMIAH 31:34), but the sins of unchanging, unrepentant Babylon He will remember and punish. Therefore, come out of her! (The student should examine ISAIAH 47:1-15 and JEREMIAH 51:24).

For myself I am convinced that no true evangelical Christian can become a part of man's ecumenical church in view of the religious trends of our times. I must reject all proposals to become affiliated with a single world church. Following are some of my reasons:

*First*, the Bible unreservedly repudiates the Roman Catholic concept of an ecumenical church under the rule of a Pope. The Lord Jesus Christ said,

And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ (MATTHEW 23:9, 10).

Now these words from Christ do not mean that Christians are not to show the proper esteem for God's servants. To the contrary the Bible says,

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves (I THESSALONIANS 5:12, 13).

But we must exercise care lest we allow the leaders of religion, and even within the true Church, to come between Christ and ourselves. No man is infallible. No man can forgive sins. No man should be called "Father," or submitted to as a master over us in matters pertaining to religion. The minister, rabbi, priest, or pope might have a gift which can enrich others, but he has no authority. Only Christ can impart and sustain spiritual life, and He only is the Christian's Master. He said,

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am (JOHN 13:13).



*Second*, the ecumenical leaders in Protestantism have as their representatives men who deny the basic and essential doctrines of our historic Christian Faith. Take as an example the inspiration of the Scriptures. Since the appearance of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick's book in the year 1924, under the title *The Modern Use of the Bible*, to the neo-orthodoxy of our day, the time-honored Biblical view of inspiration has had no place in the thinking of many leaders in Protestantism. Some men tell us that the modernism which to a large extent characterized Fosdick's book is out of date. Don't believe such statements. Fosdick's destructive teaching is still with us. Some men refer to it as "neo-orthodoxy." Call it what you will, but I prefer to keep it in the category of Modernism because I believe that is where it belongs.

Men like Emil Brunner and Karl Barth have been most outspoken in their refusal to identify the Bible with the actual Word of God. They tell us that the words of the Bible are not themselves the Word of God, but rather a framework or sign by means of which the Word of God is conveyed to the reader or hearer. This more modern Modernism would have us all believe that the Bible is not then as such the Word of God, nor does it become such until it is accepted and appropriated by the believer. But does the Bible become the Word of God only when I recognize it as such? Is the Bible merely a witness to the Word, a word about the Word? Does the Bible merely become the Word of God when it overpowers us and gains the mastery over us?

It is the duty of everyone who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and is not ashamed of Him, to protest against this heretical separation between the Bible and the Word of God. The reformers spoke out against any attack upon the Holy Scriptures. Calvin and Luther had much to say and both were in agreement that "to hear or to read the Scriptures is nothing else than to



hear God.” The neo-orthodox view of Revelation and Inspiration is subjectivism of an offensive and obtrusive kind. From such turn away. The ecumenicity of the World Council of Churches is not based on the true ecumenical doctrine of the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

*Third*, Christians cannot fraternize with “one-worlders” because of the Scriptural teaching on the subject of separation. I do not doubt that there are some men in the ecumenical movement who are truly saved and love Christ and His Word, but because the ecumenicity of the World Council compromises the distinctly evangelical character of Christ’s true Church, true believers should not affiliate with it. Read the contexts in which the following Scriptural quotations appear and you will be convinced, I feel certain, that the principle of separation applies to the proposed ecumenical church.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them (ROMANS 16:17). Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (2 CORINTHIANS 6:14).

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (EPHESIANS 5:11). Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself (1 TIMOTHY 6:5).

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away (2 TIMOTHY 3:5).

Mark well the statements, “*avoid them*,” “*be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers*,” “*have no fellowship with*” them, “*from such withdraw thyself*,” “*from such turn away*.” I have not lifted these exhortations out from their context wrongfully to make them apply to Pope John’s proposed ecumenical church or to Protestantism’s world church. Please read for yourself those sections in the Bible where these statements appear and allow the Holy Spirit to instruct you as



He will. I am merely passing on to you my convictions as the result of a personal study of my subject.

*Fourth*, no child of God should, in this writer's opinion, associate himself with man's ecumenical church because, in its passion for rule and recognition, it tends to hide from view the true priesthood of all believers, thereby silencing the voice of its so-called lay members. This always has been the practice in the Roman Church and it is becoming increasingly so in Protestantism.

The holy and royal priesthood according to Scripture is the true priesthod of all believers. Because of his relation to Jesus Christ the High Priest, every child of God is therefore a priest.

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (I PETER 2:5).

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (I PETER 2:9).

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (REVELATION 1:6).

Every saved person in this present dispensation is a priest unto God. First, he offers himself to God (ROMANS 12:1), then he offers praise and spiritual sacrifices to God (HEBREWS 13:15). As the priest in the Old Testament was the people's representative before God, even so all true believers have access to Him to pray in behalf of others. The ministry of intercession is the right of every one who is truly Christian.

The Roman Catholic Church refuses to recognize this fact, thereby limiting the access of Roman Catholics to God through men whom they have designated as priests, or else through Mary whom the church has appointed a mediatrix. And some branches of Protestantism are following closely enough to the Roman system so as to make any saved person adverse to the whole ecumenical movement.



## True Christian Ecumenicalism

The major purpose of Christ's coming into the world is to save sinners (MATTHEW 1:21; LUKE 2:11; 19:10; I TIMOTHY 1:15). Sinners are always saved one by one, never en masse. Now whenever a sinner becomes saved he likewise becomes united to Jesus Christ his Saviour. Since all saved persons are related to Jesus Christ, it follows that they all have a relation to each other. There is therefore a society of believers, and among the several terms in the New Testament used to designate this society of saved sinners, the word "Church" is most significant.

The true Church (ekklesian) is Christ's assembly of called-out ones. God is not now saving the world as the testimony of James at the Jerusalem council shows.

And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (ACTS 15:13, 14).

God is summoning out from the nations of the world this company of believing sinners, and one by one they are being added to the true Church. "It is Christ Who places us in the Church, not the church that places us in Christ."

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (I CORINTHIANS 12:12, 13).

The Church is Christ's, and the entire enterprise of building it is His. He alone does the calling out, saving and perfecting of His Church. He said,

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (MATTHEW 16:18).

The Church is Christ's possession. He never relinquished that possession to turn it over to anyone else. Speaking on this point Paul said,



Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (EPHESIANS 5:25, 26).

All who belong to Christ's Church acknowledge a Biblical Ecumenicalism. First, what evangelical Christians profess ecumenically is the doctrine of the Apostles as set forth in their writings in the New Testament. On the day of Pentecost, when the Church had its commencement, we are told that the members "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine" (ACTS 2:42). True ecumenicity expresses itself in close adherence to the basic teachings of historic Christianity according to the Word of God. Modernistic Protestantism has changed these doctrines, setting aside the Virgin Birth of Christ on the ground that it involves "a biological impossibility," disclaiming the literal bodily resurrection of Christ and substituting in its place a kind of "spiritual resurrection" (whatever that means). Romanism has added to these apostolic doctrines her own dogma including purgatory, the infallibility of the Pope, the worship of Mary, the confessional, etc., etc. We believe the only ecumenicalism God recognizes and approves is that oneness and unity which is based upon the doctrine of the Apostles with nothing added and nothing taken away.

Second, true ecumenicalism must be recognized for what it is, namely, a spiritual entity and unity and not an organizational unity. The inspired record says,

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (EPHESIANS 4:3).

Nowhere are Christians told by God to attempt to bring the Church together in unity. The Church is one. Her unity is not dependent upon any external organization or central ecclesiastical authority, but by the fact that her members enjoy the common possession of the Holy Spirit. There is one household of God; there is one family; there is one holy temple; there is one Holy Church. We are not told to make one Church since



the one true Church exists already. We are merely told to "guard," or to "preserve" that essential unity of the Church.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (EPHESIANS 4:4-6).

You see, there is one Body. The Bible does not say that we are to create a Body of uniformity. True believers in Jesus Christ recognize the fact of the "one Body" and leave the preserving of its unity to God. The Body of Christ, which is His Church, has never been rent, nor can it ever be. Dr. H. A. Ironside wrote,

The Body of Christ is not composed of all the different sects and denominations. If you were to gather all the different Catholic sects together, the Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic, the Chaldean Catholic, the Anglican Catholic, the Coptic Catholic, etc., and then gather all the Protestant sects together and unite them all in one big church, that would not be the Body of Christ. That would contain a great many people who are in the Body of Christ but it would also include a great many who are not. On the other hand, after you had gathered all these denominations and sects together, there would be a great many outside that would be members of the Body of Christ, for "The Church which is His Body," and the Church, which some call the visible Body of Christ, are not the same thing. The Body of Christ consists only of those who are regenerated and born again by the Holy Spirit and linked to Christ in glory by the Spirit's baptism, and all the divisions in Christendom cannot rend that Body. But what have they done? They certainly have denied the unity of the Spirit. The apostle would have us recognize this unity which God Himself has constituted, and so he says, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Third, true ecumenicalism expresses itself in a simple fellowship of kindred minds that have been renewed by the supernatural regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

They continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship . . . (ACTS 2:42).

This fellowship was expressed in the Apostles' Creed



in the words, "I believe in the communion of saints." The day the Church was born "they were all with one accord" (ACTS 2:1), and in the "one accord" spirit of fellowship they continued.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (ACTS 2:46, 47).

This simple fellowship was a prayer-fellowship, for we are told that "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (ACTS 4:24).

This simple fellowship found expression in sharing their material goods with their brothers and sisters in Christ, for

. . . neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common (ACTS 4:32).

Fourth, true ecumenicalism finds expression in a common witness to the crucified, risen, ascended and coming Christ. Read the Book of the Acts and the Epistles of the New Testament, and you will see that the ministry of the Apostles was Christ-centered. The early Church was not organized as a clearing house for a world-betterment program. History will prove that wherever Christ was preached in all His fulness, social conditions have improved, but the main burden of the Apostles' preaching and program was to introduce Jesus Christ as the only hope for lost sinners and for the world.

And, this, my reader, I believe to be God's program for His Church until Christ returns to take His Bride unto Himself. The ecumenical movements of men are far removed from God's plan as set forth in the New Testament, therefore the true believer in Jesus Christ must shun them. But in the meantime, let us so live that our lives and labors will witness to the Exalted Head of the true Church, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



Now I recognize that there are good and godly saints who serve in Protestant churches, the denominations of which look with favor upon the rising ecumenical movement led by Rome. I do not judge my brethren in this matter. Each of us must answer to God for himself. But of one thing I am certain, that at the rapture of the Church, all the redeemed persons who are in such churches will leave them at once.

And if this message comes to anyone who is not saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, I beg of you to accept Christ at once, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved (ROMANS 10:13).

\* \* \* \* \*