Issue # 15 ◆ Feb. / March 2016

"Watchman, what of the night ?"

" The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you, the hour and the end!" Ezekiel 7:6 (Moffatt)

▶ THIS ISSUE'S READING

IS THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION DEAD?
A Further Examination of the Tony Palmer / Pope Francis Appeal and Its Implications

The Foundation's Newest Publication: *The 21 Ecumenical Church Councils* **pg. 7**

Editor's Preface

This issue of WWN takes us into our third year of publishing the thought paper anew here at the Iowa Foundation. When we first began this effort, which is a continuance of the late Elder William Grotheer's work, we had planned to write our own evaluation of the then current "news" of Tony Palmer's address given at the Kenneth Copeland Conference. However, because the affair was already receiving extensive coverage shortly afterward, along with the fact that earlier - just before the incident - we had planned a series of articles on the "Sanctuary Truth," we decided to postpone our analysis until a more opportune time. Since then, in light of the ever increasing importance being placed upon the authority of the Ecumenical Church Councils, Apostolic Tradition and Apostolic Succession, we now present the following articles.

"Maybe now we're all Catholics Again!" ... Really?

Two years ago on January 21, 2014, Bishop Tony Palmer of the Communion of Evangelical

Episcopal Churches, an Anglican breakaway church rooted in the Convergence Movement, was sent by Pope Francis as a special emissary to a Charismatic Evangelical Leadership Conference hosted by televangelist Kenneth Copeland. Palmer, who was well acquainted with Copeland and his ministry, presented to the mostly charismatic / neo-Pentecostal attendees at the Conference a message of reconciliation and unity between themselves and the Roman Catholics. The follow up and high point of his address was the showing of a video, which Palmer had recorded on his iPhone about a week before the Conference, featuring Pope Francis delivering to the assembly greetings, blessings, and his own personal appeals for healing, reconciliation and unity. The audience, following the lead of Copeland's own zealous public endorsement, enthusiastically embraced both the pope and the message. The entire affair went "viral" with many lauding it as another significant, major step forward to bring about full visible unity within Christendom. And while this event afterward did serve as a catalyst to initiate a number of visits to the Vatican by various popular Evangelical leaders, including a delegation spearheaded by Kenneth Copeland, the untimely death of Tony Palmer resulting from a motorcycle accident on July 20, 2014, has curbed much of the excitement that had been building up till then. Now that the fervor appears to have subsided somewhat, we thought it would be beneficial to revisit this incident and take a fresh look at some of the issues that surfaced at this time.

First, under the guise that the message was being proclaimed "'in the spirit of Elijah'" (a reference to John the Baptist - see Luke 1: 13-17), it was actually an apologetic (i.e., a formal defense) used by Palmer at the Conference to make an appeal for all professed Christians to return and reunite with the Roman Church. Citations of Jesus' prayer for unity in John, chapter 17 aside, the primary focus revolved around Palmer's announcement that Protestant Reformer Martin Luther's "protest is over." His 'proof' to confirm the truthfulness of this assertion was based on *The Joint Declaration On The Doctrine of Justification*, a document agreed upon and signed by representatives of the Papacy and the Lutheran World Federation in behalf of their respective faith traditions on October 31, 1999.[1] Claiming that the centuries old rift between Catholics and Protestants had then been resolved by a mutual agreement that salvation is by faith alone - with an emphasis on the fact that the word "alone" is used in the *Declaration* (sec. 3, par. 15) - Palmer jubilantly declared: "This [agreement] brought an end to the protest of Luther. Brothers and Sisters, Luther's protest is over. Is yours? ... so, the protest has been over for 15 years ... If there is no more protest, how can there be a Protestant church? Maybe now we're all Catholics again!"

Next, what Palmer and many in the media since then have failed to disclose is the fact that this document did not settle the differences concerning justification in the manner which they purport. Rather: "In substance, the Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity [in behalf of the Roman Church] and the Lutheran World Federation [in behalf of the

Lutheran Church] acknowledge in the *Declaration* that the excommunications relating to the doctrine of justification set forth by the council of Trent do not apply to the teachings of the Lutheran churches set forth in the text; likewise, the churches acknowledge that the condemnations set forth in the Lutheran Confessions do not apply to the Catholic teachings on justification set forth in the document."[2] And even this is a misleading ploy! The Vatican has carefully affirmed that it has not set aside the Council of Trent. The decrees of the council still remain authoritative, binding dogma by the Roman Catholic Church. This was clearly set forth by Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the single individual most responsible for Rome's involvement in the *Declaration*. The day after its formal ratification, he went out of his way to clarify this point at a press conference: "Asked whether there was anything in the official common statement contrary to the Council of Trent, Cardinal Cassidy said: 'Absolutely not, otherwise how could we do it? *We cannot do something contrary to an ecumenical council*. There's nothing there that the Council of Trent condemns'" (Ecumenical News International, 11/1/1999, emphasis added). How is it possible that a document alleged to be a true, faithful Lutheran statement on justification contains nothing that Trent condemned? Were not the anathemas (condemnations) issued by this council specifically directed at the doctrinal teachings and practices of the Lutherans / Protestants? In addition, over a year before the formal signing of the agreement, Pope John Paul II issued a *Response Of The Catholic Church To The Joint Declaration of The Catholic Church And The Lutheran World Federation On The Doctrine Of Justification*. In the "Declaration" of this document it is frankly admitted: "The Catholic Church is, however, of the opinion that we cannot speak of a consensus such as would eliminate every difference between Catholics and Lutherans in the understanding of justification. The *Joint Declaration* itself refers to certain of these difficulties. On some points the positions are, in fact, still divergent." And in regard to the question concerning the condemnations issued by the Council of Trent, the "Clarifications" section (n. 5, par. 2) plainly states: "If, moreover, it is true that in those truths on which a consensus has been reached the condemnations of the Council of Trent no longer apply, *the divergences on other points must, on the contrary, be overcome before we can affirm, as is done generically in n. 41 [of the document], that these points no longer incur the condemnations of the Council of Trent*. That applies in the first place to the doctrine on 'at the same time righteous and a sinner'" (emph. added).[3] Undoubtedly, Rome considers the decrees of the Council of Trent as the standard of conformity in this matter. It is evident that in order for Protestants to achieve full visible unity with the Roman Church, there will have to be some major compromises, in addition to the concessions already made, in order for them to come completely into line with the Tridentine dogma.

Which finally draws the attention to what all, beside the doctrine of justifica-

tion, would Protestants be required to subscribe to in order not to fall under the Tridentine anathemas? The following is a list of some of the decrees set forth at the council. Bear in mind, the Roman Church has not rescinded any of these pronouncements (the latest ecumenical council, Vatican Council II (1962-1965) reaffirmed Trent's Decrees):

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STILL HOLDS TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

The Council of Trent was a Roman Catholic council held from 1545 to 1563 in an attempt to destroy the progress of the Protestant Reformation. This council denied every Reformation doctrine, including Scripture alone and grace alone. Trent hurled 125 anathemas (eternal condemnation) against Bible-believing Christians, including these:

■ FOURTH SESSION: DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES: "If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts [the 66 books of the Bible plus 12 apocryphal books, being two of Paralipomenon, two of Esdras, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Sophonias, two of Macabees], as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA."

■ SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 12).

■ SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works, but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 24).

■ SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that the Catholic doctrine of justification as set forth by the holy council in the present decree, derogates in some respect from the glory of God or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and does not rather illustrate the truth of our faith and no less the glory of God and of Christ Jesus, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 33).

■ SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that in the Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all churches, there is not the true doctrine concerning the sacrament of baptism, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 3).

■ SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 5).

■ SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that children, because they have not the act of believing, are not after having received baptism to

be numbered among the faithful, and that for this reason are to be rebaptized when they have reached the years of discretion; or that it is better that the baptism of such be omitted than that, while not believing by their own act, they should be baptized in the faith of the Church alone, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 13).

■ SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON CONFIRMATION: "If anyone says that the confirmation of those baptized is an empty ceremony and not a true and proper sacrament; or that of old it was nothing more than a sort of instruction, whereby those approaching adolescence gave an account of their faith to the Church, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Confirmation, Canon 1).

■ THIRTEENTH SESSION, CANONS ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST: "If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ, but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or figure or force, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, Canon 1).

■ THIRTEENTH SESSION, CANONS ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST: "If anyone says that Christ received in the Eucharist is received spiritually only and not also sacramentally and really, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, Canon 8).

■ FOURTEENTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: "If anyone says that in the Catholic Church penance is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord for reconciling the faithful of God as often as they fall into sin after baptism, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of Penance, Canon 1).

■ FOURTEENTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: "If anyone denies that sacramental confession was instituted by divine law or is necessary to salvation; or says that the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, which the Catholic Church has always observed from the beginning and still observes, is at variance with the institution and command of Christ and is a human contrivance, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of Penance, Canon 7).

■ FOURTEENTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: "If anyone says that the confession of all sins as it is observed in the Church is impossible and is a human tradition to be abolished by pious people; or that each and all of the faithful of Christ or either sex are not bound thereto once a year in accordance with the constitution of the great Lateran Council, and that for this reason the faithful of Christ are to be persuaded not to confess during Lent, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of Penance, Canon 8).

■ FOURTEENTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: "If anyone says that God al-

ways pardons the whole penalty together with the guilt and that the satisfaction of penitents is nothing else than the faith by which they perceive that Christ has satisfied for them, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of Penance, Canon 8).

■ TWENTY-SECOND SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: "If anyone says that in the Mass a true and real sacrifice is not offered to God; or that to be offered is nothing else than that Christ is given to us to eat, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 1).

■ TWENTY-SECOND SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: "If anyone says that by those words, Do this for a commemoration of me, Christ did not institute the Apostles priests; or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His own body and blood, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 2).

■ TWENTY-SECOND SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: "If anyone says that the sacrifice of the Mass is one only of praise and thanksgiving; or that it is a mere commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross but not a propitiatory one; or that it profits him only who receives, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 3).

■ TWENTY-SECOND SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: "If anyone says that it is a deception to celebrate Masses in honor of the saints and in order to obtain their intercession with God, as the Church intends, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 5).

■ TWENTY-THIRD SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRAMENT OF ORDER: "If anyone says that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood, or that there is no power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord and of forgiving and retaining sins, but only the office and bare ministry of preaching the gospel; or that those who do not preach are not priests at all, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 1).

■ TWENTY-THIRD SESSION, CANONS ON THE SACRAMENT OF ORDER: "If anyone says that the bishops who are chosen by the authority of the Roman pontiff are not true and legitimate bishops, but merely human deception, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 8). ❖ GLP

1. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation, *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (Augsburg, Germany: Official Signing, October 31, 1999), http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html

2. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (San Francisco, CA: Wikipedia Foundation, Inc., Online Article), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint _Declaration _on _the_Doctrine_of_Justification

3. Roman Curia, *Response Of The Catholic Church To The Joint Declaration Of The Catholic Church And The Lutheran World Federation On The Doctrine Of Justification* (Vatican City, Rome: Papal Document, June 25, 1998), http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_01081998_off-answer-catholic_en.html

A New Evangelistic Booklet

December the 8th is a very significant date in the Catholic Church. In 1854, Pope Pius IX pronounced and defined the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Vatican II concluded on December 8, 1965. At that ecumenical church council, one of its documents has the Virgin Mary a key negotiator (Co-Mediatrix) in the plan of salvation. In April of last year, Pope Francis declared that 2016 was to be a special year of jubilee, focusing on God's mercy. To start it off, a ceremony was held at St. Peter's Basilica. The pope opened a pair of large bronze doors, where believers can walk through other designated holy doors to receive forgiveness of all their past sins. This event took place on December 8, 2015, to mark the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of Vatican II. All quite symbolic.

Many professed non-Catholic Christians have little knowledge of the decisions and conclusions which were set forth as authoritative dogma at the various "ecumenical church councils" held throughout the Christian Era. At a time where the leaders and representatives of these faith bodies are striving to achieve full unity with the Catholic/Orthodox type of churches, it is urgent that they understand what they will have to accept in order to do so.

The Foundation's newest publication deals with all of the 21 ecumenical councils. To inspire further investigation, this 8-page booklet gives a brief description of the actions taken at each one. For example, the following is an excerpt from Lateran IV (1215 AD): "This council, held under Pope Innocent III, marked the culminating point of ecclesiastical life and papal power. It published 70 reformatory decrees. Sanctioned a definition of the Eucharist in which the word 'transubstantiation' was used officially for the first time. Through this divine power (the bread and wine truly containing Christ's body and blood), exhibited by the priests, and administering the seven sacraments, those who are outside of the Universal Church have absolutely no chance of being saved. ..."

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