

*The following is an article by former Roman Catholic priest Richard Bennett (above). Bennett's work has been a tremendous blessing to me, and his website is a storehouse of information pertaining to Romanism's history and heresies as well as other subjects. At the end of this article he asks the reader to share and post it on the internet. A link to the original is here.*

## **Roman Catholic Endeavors to Overturn the Reformation**

by Richard Bennett

May 24, 2016

Just as the primary response of the Roman Catholic Church to the Biblical faith of the Reformers was the Counter-Reformation through the Jesuits, now Pope Francis a Jesuit leads the Roman Church's endeavors to overturn the Reformation. Thus it is of vital importance that we understand what is involved in these endeavors so as not only to impede them but to advance Reformation faith.

In the sixteenth century, the most important response of the Roman Catholic Church to the biblical faith of the Reformers was the Counter-Reformation through the Jesuits. In an aggressive manner, they led a movement to restore to the Roman Catholic Church the political and ecclesiastical power it had before the Reformation. The Jesuits led the main Counter-Reformation efforts for four centuries by upholding Papal authority, restoring the sacramental system, and promoting mysticism along with superstitions to those many nations that had been touched by the biblical principles of the Reformation. They sought out persons of position and power and worked at gaining favor by those who were in their circles of influence, particularly by teaching their children.

This Jesuitical practice was incorporated into Vatican Council II of 1962-1965. Its major accomplishment was a planned strategy of false ecumenism. The resolve was that all other "Christian" institutional denominations and their members are now to be drawn back into full communion under Papal Rome. Thus, since Vatican Council II, Papal Rome has been working tirelessly to have itself recognized as the only Christian Church. All others, especially Evangelicals, are designated as "separated brethren." and may only obtain recognition as authentic Christians by returning to union with the Mother Church. Thus the Roman Church continues to work towards the time when she will be accepted as in fact the

Head of Christendom.

## **Endeavors to Overturn the Reformation through the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)**

In 2016, the skilled Jesuit, Pope Francis, leads the Roman Church's latest activities to overturn the Reformation. It is of vital importance that we understand what is involved in these activities so as not only to obstruct them but also to advance Reformation faith. On January 25, 2016, the Catholic News Service reported that Pope Francis would visit Sweden on October 31, 2016,

“to participate in an ecumenical service and the beginning of a year of activities to mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Pope Francis will lead the ecumenical commemoration in Lund alongside Bishop Munib Younan, president of the Lutheran World Federation, and the Rev. Martin Junge, federation general secretary, said a joint press release by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the LWF.”[1]

The apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation has already been attested to, when on October 31, 1999, they together issued an accord entitled, “The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.”[2] The official common statement under the heading entitled, “The Justified as Sinner,” stated, “We confess together that in Baptism the Holy Spirit unites one with Christ, justifies, and truly renews the person.”[3]

Biblical truth, however, is that the believer's faith cannot be based on any physical work whatsoever, as true faith is in Christ Jesus' perfect life, and sacrifice alone justifies a person by grace alone through faith alone.[4] To claim that the causative effects “in Baptism” justifies an individual before the Holy God is to attempt to negate the Lord's grace and His finished work on the cross. It is “to preach another gospel.”[5] Justification by God's grace alone through faith alone was Martin Luther's great principle, the very principle that the Lutheran World Federation totally compromised in 1999 through an extended ecumenical dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

## **The Rome Church Advances its Ecumenical Grip on the Church of England**

Furthermore, on February 9, 2016, the same Catholic News Service reported that,

“...[the] **archbishop of Westminster hosted an evening service at the former home of King Henry VIII.** It is the first time a service has been conducted at the palace’s Chapel Royal according to the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church in more than 450 years.”[6]

This latest intrusion was predictable since Pope Benedict XVI made a Papal visit to the United Kingdom in September of 2010. The visit was called “an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen ties between the United Kingdom and the Holy See on global initiatives, as well as the important role of faith in creating strong communities.”[7] The Pontiff addressed the British civil society at Westminster Hall [both houses of Parliament].” [8]

Although King Henry VIII broke politically with Papal Rome, he personally never renounced Roman Catholic doctrine. Consequently, the present-day Church of England, represented by **the Archbishop of Westminster and mimicking** Roman Catholic doctrine, **is being ever more closely united with the apostate Roman Church by ecumenical dialogue, precisely as Vatican Council II document No. 32 stated is the Papacy’s objective.**[9]

Now, in 2016, the two reports that we have documented announce the realization of 500 years of papal efforts to “nullify” the Reformation. It is necessary, therefore, to review the historical facts of the Reformation in order to demonstrate that the intended Roman Catholic ecumenical meetings with both the president of Lutheran World Federation {LWF} and **the Archbishop of Westminster are specifically intended to promote apostate betrayals of the Reformation faith.**

### **Authentic Reformation Faith**

Martin Luther in Germany; John Calvin, Lefevre, and Farel in France; and Zwingli in Switzerland all represent authentic Reformation faith. The essential nature of their Reformation faith was salvation before the Holy God by His grace alone. United by the truth of God’s Word, they believed that each individual is saved by God’s grace alone as Scripture states, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*”[10] They each taught the biblical truth that, “*all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...that he [God] might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*”[11]

The Reformation possessed definite characteristics, many of which set it apart from any

other revival in history. One of the distinguishing features was its territorial outreach. It began simultaneously and independently in various European countries. Men such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Lefevre, and Zwingli preached in unison against rituals of Romanism and exalted faith in Christ alone as the sole means of salvation. Although Luther is called the originator of the Reformation, the other Reformers, also proponents of Scripture alone, being the basis of truth, preached the same gospel of grace.

### Sola Scriptura: The Power Principle of the Reformation

After what seemed endless years floundering in the heretical Papal Tradition, seeing the light of the Reformation, Europe began to come to biblical Christian faith. Martin Luther spoke eloquently to the heart of God's people when he said, "Unless I am convicted by scripture and plain reason-I do not accept the authority of 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. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me. Amen." [12] Indeed, Luther had simply discovered what had been the standard attested to by our Lord and His Apostles. In the wilderness temptation, the Lord Jesus three times rebuffed *the prince of the devils*, saying, "*It is written.*" For example, "*he answered and said, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*" [13] In stating, "*It is written,*" the Lord used the precise phrase that is used eighty times in the Holy Bible. This repeated phrase underlines its importance. The Lord's complete acceptance of the authority of the written Word is evident in His words, "*Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. For verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.*" [14] So elsewhere it is written, "*Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name.*" [15] The Reformers bowed in submission to the sole authority of God's Word, as the Apostle Paul had taught them, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" [16]

Thus, Luther and the Reformers whom the Lord raised up at that time knew that a person's conscience is bound to God's written Word: "*Thy Word is truth.*" [17] Indeed, all true disciples must acknowledge that there is an absolute standard by which a thing may be judged to be truth or falsehood, and afterward pleasing or displeasing to God. It is not possible to own Jesus Christ as Master or Lord and simultaneously refuse the rule of the Father's Word in and by Him. If a person loves God he will love His Word alone; that is,

without the contamination of tradition. *“Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.”*[18] A person cannot say he loves God and not love His Word; for the marks of authentic spiritual affection are obvious in Scripture: *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.”*[19]

Having placed their faith in subjection to God’s written Word, the Reformers could not do otherwise than condemn the false Roman Catholic dogma that “Sacred Tradition” was essential to the knowledge of the truth. Yet this untrue belief remains the system of belief of the Church of Rome as stated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. “Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together and communicate one with the other.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* also states, “And [Holy] Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit.” “As a result the [Roman Catholic] Church...does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the Holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”[20]

### **Learning the Way of Truth and Life for the Reformers**

At the time of the Reformation, scholarship and the pursuit of truth had become a staple of life. A great friendship and fraternization developed among the Reformers, as the movement grew across Europe and the British Isles. A frequent interchange of ideas ensued, and hospitality was freely extended. One of the surprising features of the Reformation was this extent of contact and cooperation among the Reformers as they encouraged each other in their efforts. The Reformation spread with great rapidity. Of course consolidations, refinements, and extensions were inevitable; but it is difficult to imagine so tremendous a revival on such a vast scale could be executed in so short a time, bringing with it a complete change in thought and in peoples’ lives. This was necessarily providential; for at that time there were educated men who knew the Hebrew, Latin, and Greek necessary to read the Bible as it then existed. And it was essential that the Bible be translated into the common language of each country so that the people would have the privilege of reading the Scriptures in their own tongue. This task demanded scholarship. All the preaching of many Luthers, Latimers, Zwinglis, Knoxes, and Wisharts would have failed to accomplish the Reformation if, at the same time, the Bible in the common language had not been provided for the people. If at the moment Latimer was preaching at Cambridge, it had not happened that Tyndale, who had fled to the Continent, was smuggling back thousands of copies of the English New Testament so that every Englishman could

read the way of salvation for himself, there would have been no Reformation in England. A similar situation occurred in Germany, France, and other countries.

The Reformation proper, the break with Roman Catholic totalitarianism, was accomplished in a relatively short time. The Reformation was a constant, all-encompassing moving of the Holy Spirit. It was truly a glorious spiritual awakening when multitudes were freed from bondage of the superstition and ritualism of an apostate Papacy, and converted by the Gospel of Grace. The recovery of the sole authority of Scripture led to obedience to God and His Word, just as the rediscovery of the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone led every true believer into direct and personal contact with the God of revival.

### **The Heritage of the Reformation**

What then is the heritage of the Reformation? How are we to learn from it for our time? The Reformation itself was a revival, grounded not only in the Word of God, but also in prayer as each previous and subsequent revival has been. Spurgeon clearly described the prayer that was the support sustaining the Reformation. Spurgeon said, "Think not that Luther was the only man that wrought the Reformation! There were hundreds who sighed and cried in secret, 'O God, how long?': in the cottages of the Black Forest, in the homes of Germany, on the hills of Switzerland, in the palaces of Spain, in the dungeons of the Inquisition and the green lanes of England." [21] Thus, prayer was the bedrock of this great movement as the dedicated prayer requests of numberless hearts across Europe pleaded the Lord to send a mighty moving of His Spirit.

The first great awakening after the Reformation occurred in the 18th century in both America and Britain, which was associated with Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Prior to the outpouring of the Lord's grace, we find prayer in the lives of these men and in the lives of their associates. Also, in Ulster Northern Ireland in 1859, and the end of the 19th century, and in the beginning of the 20th century at Wales, prayer anticipated these Reformations.

### **Conclusion**

The Reformers proclaimed in their biblical teaching that God alone is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in His being, goodness, holiness, justice, power, truth, and wisdom. Thus, He alone hears prayers; He alone is the all Holy One; He alone is the Holy Father; in a word, to God alone be the glory. Thus, plans for Pope Francis to visit Sweden on October 31, 2016,

and **the Archbishop of Westminster hosting an evening service at the former home of King Henry VIII, are obvious examples of the Roman Church's apostasy.** In 2016, sin indeed abounds. The holiness of God, the fear of God, the conviction of sin, and the gospel of grace are necessary. With all this abounding sin and deception, how do we live and reign with Christ Jesus at this time? The Scripture gives us the answer, *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."*[22] As you receive the abundant grace given by Christ, you are redeemed from the dominion of death; you will live and reign with Christ as you are sanctified daily through His Word by the Holy Spirit, and by constant fellowship with Him. Also with Him, you shall reign forever and glorify Him for all eternity. Believe on Him alone and you will be secure in Him, *"to the praise of the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved."*[23]

It is by the power of grace of the Lord Jesus Christ alone that we can truly live the Christian life, as did the Reformers in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The Lord's sacrifice is for the believer, in that He substituted Himself in the place of sinners who would come to believe, and thus satisfied the law on their behalf. So authentic was this substitution that His sacrifice for them eliminated all necessity of punishment. In becoming the substitute for His people, Christ Jesus took their legal responsibility. In the wonderful words of Scripture, *"when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*[24] The Lord God has promised to be a Father to true believers—that they shall be His sons and daughters. This is the greatest honor possible. What rank ingratitude that anyone should slander such a gift and spurn Christ Jesus and eternal life in favor of the apostate Roman Catholic Church. Hence, the Lord promised, *"all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*[25] Those who come at the call of God are given to Christ, because it is through His blood alone that they can be saved. The Lord God, by His Spirit, convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment those who acknowledge their iniquity and their need of salvation. Is the Lord God calling you? Only in the Lord Jesus Christ is found freedom and eternal life! By His grace believe on Him and Him alone, *"for by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*[26]

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I would like to have your response to the article with any proposals that you may have. You

can email me at; [richardmbennett@yahoo.com](mailto:richardmbennett@yahoo.com) Or else send your comments to Pastor Glenn with whom I work at; [bereanbeaconmail@yahoo.com](mailto:bereanbeaconmail@yahoo.com)

Thank you,

Richard Bennett

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[1]  
[www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/01/25/pope-francis-to-visit-sweden-for-reformation-commemoration/](http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/01/25/pope-francis-to-visit-sweden-for-reformation-commemoration/) 2/23/2016

[2] [www.bereanbeacon.org/new-blog/2015/10/17/the-catholic-lutheran-accord](http://www.bereanbeacon.org/new-blog/2015/10/17/the-catholic-lutheran-accord)

[3] Lutheran-Catholic Accord, "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification," October 31, 1999, Sect. 4.4

[4] John 6:29; Romans 2:28, 29; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Colossians 2:11; Romans 3:21-26

[5] Galatians 1:9

[6]  
[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3439293/Hampton-Court-Palace-chapel-holds-Catholic-service-Henry-VIII-broke-away-Rome-16th-century.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3439293/Hampton-Court-Palace-chapel-holds-Catholic-service-Henry-VIII-broke-away-Rome-16th-century.html) 5/18/2016

[7] <https://zenit.org/articles/uk-queen-government-welcome-papal-visit>

[8] <http://www.zenit.org/article-28654?l=english>

[9] Vatican Council II Document "Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue" August. 1970

[10] Ephesians 2:8-9

[11] Romans 3:23-24, 26

[12]

<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1501-1600/martin-luthers-most-noble-words-11629925.html>

[13] Matthew 4:4

[14] Matthew 5:17-18

[15] Psalm 138:2

[16] 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

[17] John 17:17

[18] Psalm 119:140

[19] Jeremiah 15:16

[20] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Para. 80, 81 and 82

[21] [www.the-highway.com/revival-reformation\\_Lamb.html](http://www.the-highway.com/revival-reformation_Lamb.html) 2/23/2016

[22] Romans 5:17

[23] Ephesians 1:6

[24] Galatians 4:4-5

[25] John 6.37

[26] Ephesians 2:8-9

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