

Billy Graham and His Bible

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Dr. Billy Graham constantly appeals to the Bible as the authority for his teaching. "The Bible says" is one of his most used expressions. It is good to make our appeal to Scripture, for it alone can be our final authority (Isaiah 8:20). But it must be more than empty words. There must be a full submission to what the Bible says. In the case of Billy Graham the question is:

Does the Bible support the statements and actions of Dr. Graham?
We must weigh Dr. Graham's words against the Bible -- with startling results.

DR. GRAHAM DECLARES HIS GOSPEL TO BE THAT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Speaking at the Roman Catholic Belmont Abbey College, North Carolina, Dr. Graham said: "The gospel that **built this school** and the gospel that brings me here tonight is still the way to salvation" (*Gastonia Gazette*, November 22, 1967). That is plain enough. The then executive vice-president of Belmont Abbey College, Rev. Cuthbert E. Allen, agreed. He wrote, "I have followed Billy Graham's career and I must emphasize that he has been more Catholic than otherwise... Billy Graham is preaching a moral and evangelical theology most acceptable to Catholics." (Personal letter, reproduced in *Billy Graham and the Church of Rome*, by I.R.K. Paisley, Appendix. Document No.3).

The question is: *What is the gospel according to the church of Rome?*

1. Rome's gospel denies the full and final authority of Scripture.

The Second Vatican Council flatly decreed: "The Church **does not** draw her certainty about all revealed truth from the Holy Scriptures alone. Hence both Scripture **and Tradition** must be accepted and honored with **equal** feelings of devotion and reverence." (Vatican II. *Dei Verum* II.9).

The Bible says, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). The reason for this is simple -- only in Scripture do we have God's inspired, authoritative Word: "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" (II Timothy 3:16). To be adequately equipped, we need nothing more than Scripture.

Paul's warning is much to the point: "Beware lest any man spoil you... after the **tradition of men**" (Colossians 2:8).

Does Billy Graham preach Rome's gospel, as he claimed?

2. Rome's gospel denies the once-for-all atoning sacrifice of Christ.

"The mystery of the Eucharist is the true center of the sacred liturgy and indeed of the whole Christian life" (Vatican II, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, Intro. A.). In this central act of worship Rome claims that the Mass is "a sacrifice in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated." Again: "In the sacrifice of the Mass our Lord is immolated" [i.e., killed as a sacrifice]. According to Rome, "in it [the Mass] Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering Himself to the Father for the world's salvation through the ministry of the priests" (Vat. II, *Euch. Myst.* Intro. C).

Against all this the Bible says, "This man, after he had offered **one sacrifice for sins for ever**, sat down on the

right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). Jesus exclaimed on the cross, "**It is finished**" (John 19:30), the meaning of which is fully explained in Hebrews 9:24-26: "[Christ is entered] into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself **often** ... for then must he often have suffered ... but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Rome's gospel is a blasphemous denial of Christ's atonement.

Does Billy Graham still claim to preach this gospel of Rome?

3. Rome's gospel denies justification by grace through faith in the merits of the righteousness of Christ.

"If anyone shall say that it is by the **righteousness of Christ itself that men are formally justified, -- let him be accursed**" (Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 10). "If anyone shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than trust in the Divine mercy pardoning sins for Christ's sake; or that it is that trust alone by which we are justified, -- let him be accursed" (Canon 10). Here Rome places her curse on the very Word of God!

The Bible says, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight ... But now the righteousness of God ... which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe" (Romans 3:20-22).

Again it states; "A man is justified by faith **without the deeds of the law**" (Romans 3:28), and "God imputeth righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6).

Rome's gospel is a gospel of human works and merits. "Sins must be expiated. This may be done on this earth through sorrows, miseries and trials of this life and, above all, through death. Otherwise, the expiation must be made in the next life through fire and torments or purifying punishment" (Vat. II, *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, I.2).

In total contrast, the Bible says, "Being now justified by his [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9).

Again: "Therefore being [i.e., having been] justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). The Apostle John gives the reason for this freedom from condemnation: "Your sins are forgiven you for his [Christ's] name's sake" (I John 2:12).

The gospel is "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:7-8). This is the gospel that Rome rejects.

Does Billy Graham still claim to preach this gospel of Rome?

4. Rome's gospel denies the sole mediation of Christ.

"The blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix" (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, VIII Para. 62). Paragraph 61 of the same document says Mary "shared her Son's sufferings as He died on the cross. Thus, in a wholly singular way she co-operated... in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls." Pope John Paul II has flatly stated that in Mary "is effected the reconciliation of God with humanity ..., is accomplished the work of reconciliation" (Pope John Paul II, *On Reconciliation and Penance*, St. Paul Editions, p.139).

It is vain for Rome to claim that all this does not violate the Scripture, which says, "There is ... **one mediator between God and men**, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). The Bible says, "God was in Christ [not Mary], reconciling the world unto himself" (II Corinthians 5:19). Again, the Bible says, "God hath given to us eternal

life and this life is **in his Son**" (I John 5:11). Contrast the slogan adopted by the second Vatican Council, "**Death through Eve, life through Mary**" (*Lum. Gent.*, VIII Para. 56).

This is Rome's gospel.

Does Billy Graham still boast of preaching the same gospel?

If he does he can have no message of salvation. Rome's gospel pronounces a curse on any man who comes to believe that he is assured of salvation and heaven in this life: "If any says that he will for certain ... have that great gift of perseverance unto the end, -- let him be accursed" (Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 16). Has Billy Graham no better message than this?

Does he still preach Rome's gospel?

The Apostle Paul opposed such as preached a gospel like Rome's. He said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed**" (Galatians 1:8). Paul curses Rome's gospel, but Billy Graham boasts that it is the same as the one he preaches.

DR. GRAHAM HAILS THE POPE AS "THE GREATEST RELIGIOUS LEADER OF THE MODERN WORLD."

He wrote this in a lengthy article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Jan./Feb. 1980, and went on to refer to John Paul II as "one of the greatest moral and spiritual leaders of this century," "an evangelist," who "sought to speak to the spiritual hunger of our age in the same way Christians throughout the centuries have spoken to the spiritual yearning of every age -- by pointing people to Christ."

All this is most deceitful. John Paul II proclaims every Roman Catholic heresy noted above -- and then goes even further.

1. The Pope bans sinners from going directly to Christ for pardon.

Confession to a priest to obtain absolution from him "constitutes the only ordinary way in which the faithful who are conscious of serious sin are reconciled with God ... every serious sin must always be stated, with its determining circumstances, in an individual confession." (John Paul II, *On Reconciliation and Penance*, p.132. The emphasis is his. The only extraordinary way he allows is confession to a priest or priests in a group exercise pp. 128, 132.)

The Pope allows no access to Christ for pardon, except through a human priest. Is this "pointing men to Christ"? Nowhere in the New Testament is any man placed between a penitent sinner and Christ.

Jesus said: "Come unto me ... and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

The Bible says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest [Christ] ... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:19-22).

John Paul II utterly contradicts this. Far from pointing men to Christ, he places a barrier in their way to keep them from Christ.

2. The Pope invites men "to turn with me to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of Jesus, in whom 'is effected the reconciliation of God with humanity.'"

He says that to Mary's Immaculate Heart "we have repeatedly entrusted the whole of humanity" (*Reconciliation and Penance*, pp.139, 140).

The Bible knows nothing of such language. Paul said, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace" (Acts 20:32) -- not to Mary.

What kind of spiritual leadership is the Pope giving? Is he pointing men to Christ? How can Billy Graham appeal to what the Bible says and at the same time hail a Mariolator as an evangelist who points men to Christ?

STOP PRESS

Pope John Paul II has just published his twelfth encyclical, *Ut Unum Sint* (May They All Be One). In it he said the Roman Catholic Church would not change its doctrines for the sake of unity, and asserted his rule as the **prime mover** behind the ecumenical movement.

"With the power and the authority without which such an office would be illusory, the Bishop of Rome must ensure the communion of all churches," he wrote in the 115-page document. "For this reason, he is the first servant of unity."

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DR. GRAHAM SENDS HIS ENQUIRERS INTO ROMAN CATHOLICISM, EASTERN ORTHODOXY, LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM, ETC.

Long ago Dr. Graham stated his policy for following up an enquirer: "His name and address and a lot of information about him is taken and within 24 hours that is sent to a minister of the church of his choice regardless of denomination" (Interview in *U.S. News and World Report*, August 27, 1954). This policy has been consistently carried out. For example, in the Milwaukee crusade of 1979, Sister Maureen Hopkins, a Roman Catholic nun, was a member of the crusade committee. She received some 3,500 names and telephone numbers for her church to follow up. All 3,500 were invited to a special mass (remember what we showed about the mass) "to remind enquirers that their commitments to Christ should be nurtured within the sacramental framework of the Church" (*The Christian Courier*, Milwaukee, September 1979).

Does the Bible have anything to say about such a policy? It certainly does.

In the early church, converts "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship" (Acts 2:42). They were not placed under the care of deniers of the gospel. The Bible says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:10). Dr. Graham's policy is a blatant violation of the Bible which he professes to hold as his supreme authority. No converts should be sent to any church where they cannot emulate the converts of apostolic times and fellowship on the basis of sound doctrine.

DR. GRAHAM BETRAYS HIS BAPTIST BRETHERN IN RUSSIA

Of Russia Dr. Graham said, "I think there is a lot more freedom here than has been given the impression in the States because there are hundreds, thousands of churches open." He went on to give the impression that he found more religious freedom in Russia than in England: "In Great Britain, they have a state church ... Here [in Russia] it is a free church, in the sense that it is not headed officially, as the Church of England is headed by the queen." (*Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1982. Emphasis added.)

A woman was arrested at one of his Russian meetings for displaying a banner with the message "We have more than 150 prisoners for the work of the gospel." Dr. Graham defended the police for arresting her. He said, "We detain people in the United States if we catch them doing things that are wrong. I have had people coming to my services in the United States causing disturbances and they have been taken away by the police."

The Bible says, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Hebrews 13:3). Dr. Graham in Russia did not want to be reminded of the Baptist pastors and other Bible believers being held in prisons and concentration camps for their faith. They are brave sufferers for Christ. Billy Graham added to their agony. He stabbed them in the back. He sided with the atheists who arrested a courageous lady who dared to draw his attention to their plight and condemned her as a disturber and a wrongdoer. Dr. Graham should remember that the Bible says, "In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, ... even thou wast as one of them" (Obadiah 11). He identified his Russian friends, and they were not his persecuted Baptist brethren. He stood on the other side with their persecutors.

Dr. Graham appeals to the Bible. Judge his message, his policy, and his fellowship by the Bible. By that standard he stands exposed as blatantly flaunting the plainest statements and standards of Scripture.

God's work cannot be done in such a way. The Bible says: "**Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully**" (Jeremiah 48:10).

If the Bible is right, Dr. Graham is wrong. The Bible is right.

Either Dr. Graham should drop his appeal to the Bible or he should cease his wanton disobedience of its message and methods.

We sincerely pray that even at this late stage Dr. Graham will take the latter course and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).