



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

“The Christian, Ecumenism and the Bible” Part 2.



The second part of a tract written some years ago by Rev. Ivan Foster on the outworkings of Rome’s “Decree on Ecumenism” issued by Pope Paul VI in 1965, following the Second Vatican Council. Christians may still find the tract useful in their battle against the increasing advances of ecumenism today.

Having indicated the nature of the ecumenical movement and the goal of unity under the pope of Rome, in the first part of this article published last month, and having begun to consider what it is God would have His people who are in denominations affiliated to its objectives and programme (the three main Protestant denominations in Ireland) are to do — namely get out, we come to the concluding part of the article.

II. WE MUST GET OUT IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD OUR OWN SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Separation is the very essence of Christ's religion. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world, James 1:27.

As an unhealthy environment causes disease in the body, so an evil environment will result in unhealthiness of the soul. Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: and ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. Moreover it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them, Numbers 33:51-56. You forfeit God's blessing when you maintain links with those of whose ways and practices He disapproves.

If we would be holy, then we must strive to be separated from that which is sinful. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, Hebrews 7:26. Conformity to Christ is the highest goal of the believer. That cannot be achieved if we walk with the devil's crowd. Be not deceived: evil communications (company) corrupt good manners (morals), 1 Cor. 15:33.

If we would be effective Christians, with the fragrance of Christ in our lives, we must be separated from the world. A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; cam-



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phire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits, Song of Solomon 4:12-16. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God, Romans 12:2. When we walk with those who are in dispute with God and His Word, as the ecumenists are, we indicate that we are in agreement with them. Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos 3:3. If we share in the transgressions of evildoers, then God says we shall share in their judgment. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues, Revelation 18:4. How many lives are befouled, besmirched with the stench and stains of ecumenism! As there went up from Sodom an evil stink to the nostrils of God, so there goes up from the activities and associations of ecumenism, an odour that cries out for God's judgment. Christian, separate yourself from this defilement, wash and be clean from this wickedness. It ought to be remembered by all Christians that contamination is caused, not only by embracing evil, but also by the merest TOUCH. Be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, 2 Cor. 6:17.

III. WE MUST GET OUT IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE GOSPEL FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

If we raise our children in churches tainted with the lie of the devil can we be surprised if they imbibe those lies? Jehoshaphat, the Old Testament king of Judah, foolishly linked himself to the house of Ahab, the king of Israel. He even went as far, on one occasion, as saying, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses, I Kings 22:4. Ahab was an evil man, as was his son Ahaziah. Jehoshaphat's fellowship with them resulted in his son, Jehoram, marrying Ahab's daughter and learning the ways of Ahab. Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel. Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD, II Chronicles 21:4-6. The sad and tragic consequences of Jehoshaphat's folly had been prophesied: And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD, II Chronicles 19:2.

The difficulties that many Christian parents encounter in their children, stem, for the most part, from a failure to observe God's rule of separation from sin within the home. This is true, not just of those Christians who refuse to separate from ecumenical denominations but also of those Christians who have left the ecumenical denomination but brought many of its worldly practices with them. They obeyed God regarding their denominational links but went no further. They had an outward separation but no separation of heart and soul. Consequently, their children show all the attitudes and notions of the world. It is frequently seen in Christian homes and families that the children disregard the parents' views and go



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their own way to the shame of their parents. Lot's family laughed at him when he relayed God's warning message to them. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law, Genesis 19:14. How many children treat as a laugh the message of the gospel when it is presented to them by their parents? Is this not because, as it was in the home of Lot, such a message had never before been seriously presented. The standards of God had little place in Lot's home. His children thought it funny, therefore, when their father suddenly became alarmed.

How different it is when God's Word rules the home. Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel, Psalm 128.

There is a great need for Christians, in obedience to God's Word; for the sake of their own spiritual wellbeing and for the salvation of their children, to separate TODAY from all that is contrary to God's Word. Each day that passes makes that action more difficult. Like Lot in Sodom, the family roots run deeper and deeper into the soil of the society to which their ecumenical church connections introduce them. If a person is truly converted there will come a point when they must, whatever the cost, own the Saviour and break with all that dishonours Him. But by that time the family of the disobedient believer will neither heed his exhortations nor regard his pleas. Leaving the apostasy will mean leaving his family, careless and indifferent, in the arms of unbelief facing certain damnation. This is the dreadful price paid for disobedience. Let the theme and the tone of the grand old hymn be our watch word

Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King? Who will be His helpers Other lives to bring? Who will leave the world's side? Who will face the foe? Who is on the Lord's side? Who for Him will go? By Thy call of mercy, By Thy grace divine, We are on the Lord's side; Saviour, we are Thine.

Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Not with gold or gem, But with Thine own life-blood, For Thy diadem. With Thy blessing filling Each who comes to Thee, Thou hast made us willing, Thou hast made us free. By Thy great redemption, By Thy grace divine, We are on the Lord's side; Saviour, we are Thine.

Fierce may be the conflict, Strong may be the foe; But the King's own army None can overthrow. Round His standard ranging, Victory is secure; For His truth unchanging Makes the triumph sure. Joyfully enlisting, By Thy grace divine, We are on the Lord's side; Saviour, we are Thine.