

Pope Francis and the Future of Charismatic Christianity

by Dale M. Coulter

Note from Roger Oakland follows this article.



A recent meeting of ministers associated with the prosperity-preaching Word of Faith branch of charismatic Christianity received a surprise announcement: Pope Francis had sent a message to the conference. It was something of a historic moment.

Beginning around the thirty-minute mark of the above video, Francis speaks in Italian and English subtitles are provided at the bottom. As part of his greeting, the pope chose to highlight two themes, his joy at their desire to worship together in prayer to the Father for the Spirit to come and his yearning for Christians to become one again.

Francis described the current state of Christianity as one of separated families, by which he meant both biological families and the family of God. It was not lost on the Holy Father that the fractures in Christianity are also fractures between individuals. He asks, “Who is to blame for this separation?” and answers, “We all share the blame. We have all sinned.” Such a statement expresses the fraternity Francis wishes to restore, nothing more, nothing less. He went on to say that his desire is for this separation to end and a communion to begin again.

Francis referenced the reunion between Joseph and his brothers in Egypt. While the brothers journeyed to Egypt to buy food, they in fact discovered a long lost family member. Such a serendipitous union is what Francis desires. He then said that both groups have great cultural riches, religious riches, and diverse traditions, “but we have to encounter one another as brothers. We must cry together like Joseph did. These tears will unite us. The tears of love.”

He concluded his greeting by saying that he was speaking to the group of ministers as a brother and in a simple manner. His desire was that through the joy of proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Lord of history, a desire to embrace one another as family might grow. He then told the audience to pray for him as a way of giving one another a spiritual embrace. When the greeting concluded charismatic minister Kenneth Copeland, who was hosting the conference, took the stage and led the conference in a prayer for Pope Francis.

That the pope would say this to a group of charismatic ministers in the United States is significant, all the more so since a pope who identifies so much with Il Poverello, Francis of Assisi, was speaking to a branch of the charismatic movement that emphasizes prosperity.

It seems to me that Francis models for us how dialogue can move forward. It must begin with a mutual embrace that refuses to give in to stereotypes about the other. Yes, there are clear doctrinal differences, which Francis does not deny. His greeting, however, suggests that the hard task of finding common ground begins with calling one another brother and sister. Francis did not rush to offer a theological critique of the prosperity gospel although he certainly could have. Instead, he presented the option of moving closer theologically by mutual recognition and embrace. I have been privileged to do just that through Evangelicals and Catholics Together and Francis has invited all of us to do the same...

Note from Roger Oakland:

This news item and associated video clip reveals how far the ecumenical movement has gone and how close we are to the unification of Rome with "Charismatic evangelicals" and eventually all religions. This is something that Understand The Times has been predicting for some years as the present Pope Francis and the last two Popes, Pope Benedict and Pope John Paul have been active in promoting the "New Evangelization".

The purpose of the New Evangelization is to promote the Roman Catholic gospel by reaching out to all religions as well as the separated brethren [Protestants] and introducing them to the Eucharistic Christ [the Christ of the Catholic Mass wafer of bread – where the Catholics teach that Jesus is literally there in the piece of bread as they walk the wafer around in public or serve it at Mass].

Evangelicals who believe there will be a great revival (rather than a great apostasy) in the last days centered around the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are candidates for this delusion. Eventually all religions and a false Christianity will form the counterfeit bride also called the harlot [Revelation 17]. This will happen as the result of the "lying signs of wonders" [2 Thessalonians 2:9].

So-called evangelical Bible believing Christians who fall for the Pope's call for unity will become members of the One World Religion that prepares the way for the antichrist. Roman Catholics promote that the outpouring of the "Holy Spirit" in the last days will bring about unity of religions for the cause of peace. They say that "Mary" is the one responsible for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They say that the "Eucharistic Reign of Jesus" will soon be established and the "Kingdom of God will be established here on earth with Rome as the headquarters. "Kingdom Now" evangelicals like Copeland and his followers are more than ready to follow the Pope and his plan.

Also, remember that Pope Francis is a Jesuit. The Jesuit plan is to reunite "Christianity" by declaring that the Reformation was not valid and that the Pope is the Head of the Church.

Christians who have discernment and understand what is happening because of insight from their knowledge of the scriptures will be labeled as troublemakers and persecuted for refusing to accept this final delusion.

The return of Jesus Christ is at hand.

To read this article in its entirety, go to:

<http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2014/02/we-know-pope-francis>