

Drawing Aside the Purple Curtain

The Papal System Today: an Analysis of the News

The 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation (Part Two):

Rome and the Lutheran Institution

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The Historic Protestant Institutions' Protest against Rome is Over

The 31st October 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

On this day in 1517, an obscure German monk named Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the castle door in Wittenberg, Germany – and sparked a spiritual, political and social revolution which shook the world. Within weeks the theses had been widely circulated throughout the country and then throughout Europe. Prophesied of in Scripture (Rev. 10),¹ the Reformation was an event which literally altered the course of history and changed the world.

It is not surprising that its 500th anniversary would be observed by Protestant institutions the world over. But the tragedy is that what should be commemorated as the time when, in the Lord's providence, a massive break was made with the diabolical Roman Papacy, is in fact being commemorated, by many of the historic Protestant institutions, as the time when that very break is being mended! When it should be being commemorated by reminding people of the false doctrines and abominable practices of the Papal system, of why the Reformation occurred, and of the great need to remain *forever separate* from that iniquitous, idolatrous and utterly antichristian religious system with its headquarters in Rome, many of the Protestant institutions are doing the very opposite. They are actually *lamenting* the break which occurred; calling it *a great tragedy*; wishing it had never happened; and doing all in their power to rush back under the wings of "Mother Rome" as fast as their spineless, biblically ignorant leaders will take them!

The remnant of the Lord's people, true Bible-believing Christians who live "without [outside] the camp" of professing Christendom, whether Papist or false Protestant (Heb. 13:13), separate not only from the Mother Harlot of Rome but from her "daughter" harlots as well (Rev. 17:5), are witnesses to *the most momentous religious reversal in all history*: the headlong rush, by the "Protestant" institutions which came into being in the sixteenth century and afterwards, to now *apologise* to Rome for ever breaking away, and to grovel at the feet of the Roman Antichrist, while they cast off every doctrinal and practical barrier standing between them and full and abject surrender to the religious system over which he presides in all his haughtiness and arrogance.

It is true, of course, that many of the blessings which were the fruit of the Reformation are still with us today, to a greater or lesser extent, in various parts of the world. But inasmuch as it gave birth to religious institutions which came to be known as Protestant, and insofar as these once *protested* against Rome, *the Reformation is now over*. As far as the historic Protestant religious institutions are concerned – whether Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, Congregational, Methodist, etc. – *Rome has won*.

This is not an article on the historical events of the sixteenth-century Reformation as such. Innumerable pieces will be written about it for the 500th anniversary, and entire books as well. They will focus on all the different facets of the mighty change which occurred in Europe five centuries ago.

Certainly, the Reformation was one of the most important events in world history, and the more that it is known and understood, the better. This article, however, is not about the *beginning* of the Reformation, or its progress; it is about the *end* of the Reformation, as far as the protest against Rome by the historic, once-Protestant institutions is concerned.

Part One in this series is entitled *The Reformation's Accomplishments and Errors, and the End of Its Protest*. We suggest that this should be read before the present article, as it will place the latter in a proper context, providing the reader with much information, by way of introduction to the present article.

First, we will briefly examine Lutheranism itself.

The Truth about Lutheranism

It has been a great error, on the part of so many Bible-believing Protestants, to assume without proper research and examination that Lutheranism was and is biblical. It has *never* been soundly biblical. At no time in its history could Lutheranism have ever been called a true, Bible-believing denomination.

Yes, Martin Luther broke with Rome. But he retained so much from Romanism within his Lutheran movement, that Lutheranism was really nothing but a “daughter whore” of the Papal system, the “Great Whore” of Revelation 17. In verse 5 of that great prophetic chapter it says: “And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” Rome, the Great Harlot, is the mother of other harlots. And Lutheranism was certainly one of them. It was a rebellious daughter, but a daughter nevertheless. It is simply a modified Romanism, not a true Christian church.

Among other things, Lutheranism retained the damnable heresy of baptismal regeneration – that by baptism, one is born again.² Its doctrine of “consubstantiation” was only marginally different from the doctrine of “transubstantiation” in the Roman Catholic mass. And it also retained the concept of a “State Church”, which meant it kept the persecuting spirit of its mother, believed that the “Church” should be co-extensive with the State, and was as a result filled with unregenerate people who considered themselves to be Christians just because they were baptized Lutherans.

As the inevitable consequence of holding to the Popish concept of a “State Church”, Luther did not insist on a regenerate church membership, and even openly admitted that his “church” did not only consist of those he considered to be sheep, but of goats as well.³ And, also as an inevitable consequence of the “State Church” error, he believed that heresy should be punished by the civil magistrate, even by death, and at times Lutherans certainly did persecute those who differed with them.

All these things reveal that the Lutheran institution was a scaled-down, modified version of its Papal mother. And the seeds of its own destruction were sown back then, when its founder and his assistants retained as much of Popery as they could, and continued to view the monstrous Papal system as Christian, and its people as Christians.

Popery has Conquered Lutheranism

Consider, then, the situation of these past five centuries.

Firstly, Lutheranism was *never* truly biblical. It was *never* a true Christian church! And as the years and then the centuries went by, it grew worse and worse, taking on board various errors which even Luther would not have permitted. Today it is even more of a religious monstrosity than it ever was before.

Secondly, precisely because Lutheranism was nothing but a modified version of Romanism, it was very easy, once the diabolical ecumenical movement began decades ago, for Lutherans to find much common ground with Papists. In this way Rome’s agenda for eventually taking full control of Lutheranism has advanced by leaps and bounds.

And thirdly, the Jesuits have infiltrated Lutheranism for centuries, moving it even further away from the Bible than it was at the beginning (and it was never truly biblical to begin with), putting their own men (and even women!) in positions of authority within it, and *gutting* it from the inside, turning it into an empty shell of its former self.

Therefore, true Bible-believing Christians should not be surprised that now, five centuries after Luther, Lutherans are tripping over their effeminate vestments in their haste to lay the gutted remains of their “church” at the feet of the pope of Rome, and to issue pitiful *mea culpas* for ever breaking with Rome in the first place. Five centuries later, the once-rebellious chickens are coming home to roost. They love to cluck boastfully and claim they taught Rome a lesson, and that it has reformed now to a sufficient degree that they are able to unite with her. But Rome has not reformed at all. It has not changed. It has in fact added greatly to its iniquitous and blasphemous doctrines and practices since the sixteenth century and is even worse today than it was back then. *It is the Lutheran institution which has changed.* Never fully separate from Rome in a number of its doctrines and practices, it has moved even closer to Rome over the years. And now it is on the point of being absorbed into the folds of Rome like a prodigal son.

And make no mistake, the pope and his henchmen have not been slow to begin to grind the Lutherans underfoot. For this is what has been happening, in essence. They may call it “Lutheran/Roman Catholic unity” but this is not what it is. What it really is, is the Papacy sucking the Lutheran institution back into its clutches. These are not equal partners and never will be. Rome is the winner, Lutheranism the loser.

What a sweet victory for Rome! To gather its truant Lutheran chicks under its wings 500 years after they hived off on their own, and to be able to say with a deep sigh of satisfaction: “It’s over. Five centuries of schism are over. The Lutherans have come home to Mother Rome. Lutheranism, as a separate movement, is, for all practical purposes, dead.”

When the *Papacy Itself* is Commemorating the Reformation, then We Know the Reformation’s Protest is Over!

The one religious institution which should want nothing whatsoever to do with Reformation commemorations and celebrations should be the Roman Catholic institution. After all, the Reformation struck the greatest blow to Papal power that it had ever experienced. The Papacy’s vice-grip on Europe was broken in a number of countries. For the first time since the Papacy had assumed control of Europe centuries before, it experienced immense losses, politically and religiously.

No, the Roman Papacy should have no grounds for celebration in 2017.

And yet...

And yet, as unbelievable as it sounds, this very Roman Papacy, which condemned the Reformers as heretics, which has spent the past five centuries trying to destroy the “Protestant” institutions and stamp out Protestantism altogether – this very Roman Papacy *is* commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation alongside “Protestant” institutions!

Of course we know that its commemoration is designed solely to deceive. The Papacy is not *truly* commemorating it. But even so, it is astonishing that such a time has actually arrived, when the Roman Papacy could go through the motions of commemorating the Reformation, and the “Reformed” institutions could fall for it!

Who could ever have imagined that such a day would ever arrive? But it has. It beggars belief. Even Romanists are open-mouthed with astonishment at how times have changed.

What in the world is going on?

It would be more appropriate to ask: what, in the dark regions of hell, is going on? For *that* is where these astounding events were first planned, and what we are witnessing is simply the outworking, in history, of activity in Satan’s underground.

Kicking Off the Joint Reformation Commemorations: Lutheran/Papist Collaboration in Sweden – Led by the Jesuit Pope

Reformation celebrations got off to an early start in Sweden. Instead of waiting for the year 2017 to roll around, late October 2016 saw the Jesuit pope, Francis I, travelling to Sweden to join Swedish Lutherans in their festivities – *at their invitation!*

Let us just stop right here for a moment, and think about this. Roman Catholics celebrating *with* Lutherans? The members of the very religious institution founded by Martin Luther himself? The man Rome denounced as an arch-heretic and a devil? The man excommunicated and damned to hell by the pope at the time? The man who called the pope Antichrist?

Yes, indeed. *That* Luther. *That* Lutheran institution. In 2016 Francis I, the pope of Rome, the current occupant of the throne of Antichrist, travelled to Sweden at the invitation of Lutherans, to commemorate Martin Luther and the Reformation. And there they all were, high-ranking Lutherans alongside the Roman pontiff and his cronies, smiling at one another, embracing one another, and calling one another “brother”.

Extraordinary, extraordinary times.

Why were the 2016 celebrations held in Sweden? It was because this country is the headquarters of the Lutheran World Federation, which invited Francis, and which has been so committed to ecumenical relations with the Papacy for many decades. And so it came to pass that Francis jetted into Sweden “on an ecumenical journey to commemorate the start of the Reformation by focusing on the 50 years of dialogue that have highlighted the points of unity between Catholics and Lutherans.”⁴ There always were many points of unity between the two, but today there are even more – thanks to half a century of devilish ecumenical deception.

Romish cardinal, Kurt Koch, president of the “Pontifical Council for the Unity of Christians”, said, “This is not just the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, but also the celebration of fifty years of dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics.”⁵ And Greg Burke, director of the Vatican Press Office, said that the papal visit to Sweden for this joint ecumenical commemoration was a big step forward because Roman Catholics and Lutherans were “no longer defining themselves in opposition to each other,” but in communion with each other.⁶ In essence he was saying: the Lutheran Reformation is now dead.

His sentiments were echoed by Martin Junge, secretary general of the Lutheran World Federation, who said: “We are working on the last details of what we truly believe is a historic commemoration.... We do this a year ahead of the 500th anniversary, thereby hoping to give a very strong ecumenical signal, that we understand because of our dialogues, because of the trust that has grown among us, because also we have been able to remove some of the obstacles of doctrinal differences among us, that the time is mature, is ripe, to move ‘from conflict to communion’ [the name of the joint Roman Catholic/Lutheran document].”⁷

Yes. The Lutheran break with Rome is now over. The rift is all but healed. It took 500 years, but Rome has conquered, and what Martin Luther began has been, essentially, obliterated. Yes, Lutheranism still exists, but the *protest against* Rome, which was at the heart of the Reformation, is over. That which for so long divided Lutherans from Papists has been resolved. The Lutheran Reformation can now be relegated to the dustbin of history.

Junge also said: “I believe, only a few years ago, if you would have said that there would have been a joint commemoration of the Reformation on the day Lutherans and Protestants all together commemorate and remember the Reformation, and that that would be done together, Catholics and Lutherans, many would have said ‘impossible,’ so I take courage, personally, of the many impossible things that have become possible, because of dialogue and the many different ways in which we have been engaged.”⁸ He was absolutely right in saying that only a few short years ago it would have been dismissed as impossible.

As one Romish writer put it: “This [papal] trip [to Sweden] is further proof that the perception the Lutherans have of the pope has changed. Nobody could have imagined years ago that they would unite to celebrate the anniversary [of the Reformation] together.”⁹ Note well: Lutheran perceptions of the pope have changed – not Papist perceptions of Lutheranism! It is always the “Protestants” who change, the “Protestants” who move towards Rome, the “Protestants” who surrender this, that or the next thing. Rome never changes, never gives up anything. She firmly maintains the errors, heresies and blasphemies she has always maintained, and even adds to them. And what’s more, she has no intention of changing anything. This is not both sides “finding common ground”, as ecumenists fondly imagine. If the two sides come together, it must always be by the “Protestant” side moving Romeward.

And consider the comments of Jens-Martin Kruse, another Lutheran leader. This man played a very prominent part in ecumenical dialogue, with popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis I all having visited his Lutheran “church” in Rome. “I think the world needs a gesture of Christian unity,” he said. “A gesture. A gesture that says Christians are committed to peace. There are no more wars between us. The world needs a gesture that says that peace is possible.”¹⁰

This man feels the need to show that “Christians are committed to peace”, because he thinks that Roman Catholics and Lutherans are true Christians. But we have news for this deceived man: *true* Christians do not need to make any empty gestures about their commitment to peace, for all true Christians seek always to live peaceful lives, harming none, following Christ the Prince of peace. It is only *false* religious systems which have to try to convince an understandably sceptical world that they are peaceful, when their histories prove otherwise.

Also, no true Christian, or true Christian church, would *ever* seek “unity” with the Great Whore, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth, the Papal system! This would be to sin against God (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11; Rev. 18:4,5).

Kruse also said: “We need strong popes and bishops with courage, because we must continue toward the path to unity. There is not enough theological dialogue. We must bear witness together.”¹¹ Now why would a Lutheran pastor be longing for “strong popes”? And where in the Bible does it say that everyone must continue on the path to this false “unity”? Certainly neither the Lord Jesus Christ, nor His apostles, ever taught such a thing! As for “bearing witness together”, light cannot bear witness *with* darkness. It is impossible. Therefore, if Lutherans are able to bear witness together with Papists, there is only one conclusion we can draw: they are *both* in spiritual darkness – for there is no Gospel light in Rome, and therefore any other institution in fellowship with Rome has no Gospel light in it either.

The “Nice” Things Francis Said at the Joint Ecumenical Service about Luther and the Reformation

A joint ecumenical prayer service was held in the Lutheran cathedral in Lund, Sweden. When Francis arrived, he was welcomed by the primate of the Swedish Roman Catholic institution, and by the Romish bishop of Stockholm. They accompanied him in procession to the main altar (an *altar?* in a Lutheran place of worship? Yes, they retained those from Rome as well). The procession also included representatives of the Lutheran World Federation. There were hymns and readings, then a sermon was preached by the general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Martin Junge. And after the sermon, Francis gave a homily.¹²

He began by speaking of the desire for “unity”. Then he said, “As Catholics and Lutherans, we have undertaken a common journey of reconciliation. Now, in the context of the commemoration of the Reformation of 1517, we have a new opportunity to accept a common path”. He called it a “common path”, but this was deliberately deceptive. He is leading Lutherans up the proverbial garden path: a nice, rose-scented garden path, paved with good intentions, bordered by cardinals, bishops and priests all smiling broadly and encouraging the Lutherans to keep right on up the garden path, which culminates at the “Welcome” mat at the Vatican’s door.

When he spoke of this “common path”, Francis went on to say that it was “one that has taken shape over the past fifty years in the ecumenical dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church. Nor can we be resigned to the division and distance that our separation has created between us. We have the opportunity to mend a critical moment of our history by moving beyond the controversies and disagreements that have often prevented us from understanding one another.” The divisions which came into being at the Reformation do not need mending, because to mend them implies that they should never have happened. As for failing to “understand one another” because of “controversies and disagreements”, the Lutherans, having never truly broken with all things Papal in the first place, eventually came to question what the separation was all about anyway, and to wish it had never happened.

Francis then said that “our division distanced us from the primordial intuition of God’s people, who naturally yearn to be one, and that it was perpetuated historically by the powerful of the world rather than the faithful people.” Oh, he was sly, this Jesuit pope. Always the appeal to the “yearning to be one”, which is the ecumenical movement’s false interpretation of Jn. 17:21. But this prayer of the Lord Jesus *has been fulfilled* through the years, in that each and every *true* Christian *is* one with every other *true* Christian. And also, *no* true Christian yearns for “unity” with false “christians” – and Roman Catholics are false “christians”.

Then something came out of Francis’ mouth which revealed what was really happening: he said, giving a quotation from a document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, 17 June 2013: “With this new look at the past, we do not claim to realize an impracticable correction of what took place, but ‘to tell that history differently’”.

To tell the history of the Reformation differently: this is what Rome desires to do. And this means, of course, nothing less than to *revise* history! To ignore the facts and to make it appear to be something other than what it really was. And so it has come to pass that the Protestant Reformation is seen as simply a gigantic misunderstanding, a big mistake that should never have happened, a failure on both sides to “understand each other”. Books will be written to reflect this Jesuit-inspired revisionist view of history, lectures will be delivered, university courses will be altered so as to tell this history differently.

“Certainly,” Francis went on, “our separation has been an immense source of suffering and misunderstanding, yet it has also led us to recognize honestly that without [Jesus] we can do nothing; in this way it has enabled us to understand better some aspects of our faith.”

Assuredly, Rome experienced suffering as a result of the Reformation. As for the Reformation being an immense source of misunderstanding, we ask: to whom? Both sides knew why it occurred. This was Jesuit subtlety on Francis’ part, trying to get everyone to feel that because it was all the result of a big misunderstanding, it could have been avoided.

So then, *which* “aspects of our faith” was Francis referring to, which he said the Reformation caused them to understand better? Let us see:

First, he said, “With gratitude we acknowledge that the Reformation helped give greater centrality to sacred Scripture in the Church’s life.” Oh, this man was *jesuitically* subtle! The Reformation produced *no* such “improvement” in the Roman Catholic institution! Rome, no less after the Reformation than before it, did all it could to destroy all copies of the Bible which were printed, and even hunted down and burned to death the translators of it whenever it could catch them. Its Jesuits controlled the counter-Reformation, and moved the Papist Council of Trent to declare *against* sacred Scripture, and to uphold Roman Catholic tradition as *equal* to Scripture. It condemned Bible societies for printing the Bible in various languages. It forbade its own people from reading the Bible, except under the guidance of its own “interpreters”. What a lie this was from Francis’ lying mouth!

He went on, “Through shared hearing of the word of God in the Scriptures, important steps forward have been taken in the dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation, whose fiftieth anniversary we are presently celebrating.” It would have been lost on most Lutherans

assembled to hear him, but note the careful way in which the Roman pope expressed himself. He spoke of the “hearing of the word of God *in* the Scriptures”. For Rome, the written Scriptures are *not* all there is to “the word of God”! For Rome, “the word of God” consists of the Bible, *and* the traditions of Rome! Therefore, according to the pope, one may hear the word of God in the Scriptures – but *not only* in them. Although we do not venerate Luther as so many Protestants do, this is one aspect of his teaching where he would have been utterly at variance with Rome.

Second, Francis said, “The spiritual experience of Martin Luther challenges us to remember that apart from God we can do nothing. ‘How can I get a propitious God?’ This is the question that haunted Luther. In effect, the question of a just relationship with God is the decisive question for our lives. As we know, Luther encountered that propitious God in the Good News of Jesus, incarnate, dead and risen. With the concept ‘*by grace alone*’, he reminds us that God always takes the initiative, prior to any human response, even as he seeks to awaken that response. The doctrine of justification thus expresses the essence of human existence before God.”

At this point Francis almost sounds like a Protestant! – talking of Luther’s search for a personal relationship with God, and of his teaching on grace and justification. But we must never forget that a Jesuit will readily become a Protestant to the Protestants, a Lutheran to the Lutherans, etc. Francis was thus simply following this Jesuit tactic to the letter. It would have fooled multitudes of Lutherans and other ignorant “Protestants”. The hated Martin Luther – condemned by the pope as an arch-heretic and devil – now praised by a Jesuit pope for the “reminder” he gave to the “Church”! As if the *true* Church ever loses the doctrine of grace alone, or of justification! Any “church” which does not possess these truths is simply not a true Christian church! Within the Roman Catholic religion the truth about grace, and about justification by faith, was not and is not taught, for it was not in the past, and is not now, a true church!

In essence the pope was trying to convince the world that he was saying, “Thank you, Martin Luther. You did us a great favour. You reminded us of what we had forgotten. We condemned you, hurled anathemas at you, called you all kinds of names – but thank you for what you did.” It is easy to see through such lies from the pope’s mouth: he does not hate Luther any less than his predecessors did. It was all nothing but empty words, a brazen lie because (as the Jesuits say) *the end justifies the means* – and the end is the gathering of the Lutheran institution into the embrace of “Mother Rome”. For the Jesuits, any lie is worth that gain.

We have lived to see the day when a pope of Rome, the very Antichrist of Scripture, would praise Martin Luther the Reformer, publicly expressing gratitude for some aspects of his teaching (even though at heart he feels no such gratitude whatsoever). These are extraordinary times indeed. Times of great deception.

Will Luther’s Excommunication be Lifted? No, But...

There are those who have thought that the excommunication which the Papacy issued against Martin Luther when he was alive might be lifted in the present ecumenical climate. But Romish cardinal, Kurt Koch, squashed that idea when he said, “The Catholic Church cannot lift the excommunication because it’s just finished by the death of a person.”¹³ Ah, *but* (how often there is a “but” in Rome’s ecumenical language!):

“*But* on the other side,” this cunning cardinal went on, “is what we can say about Luther, and here we have many beautiful things that the popes have said”. There was a time when Rome would have said *nothing* good about Luther. But different times demand a different approach. And so, popes and prelates have trained the muscles of their faces to smile and their lips to utter a few “nice” things about Luther through their clenched teeth. It must almost kill them to do it, but the prize is worth the lie to them. And the prize is nothing less than the eventual absorption of world Lutheranism into the Papacy.

And so it was that Koch managed to squeeze the following out of his mouth, as his papal masters had done in recent times: “But on the other side is what we can say about Luther, and here we have many

beautiful things that the popes have said.... the words of John Paul II on his visit in Germany, in Mainz, he said that we can learn many things from Luther. Then we have the beautiful speech of Pope Benedict in Erfurt, where he said the greatest concern of Luther was the question of God, the centrality of the question of God and the Christocentrism are the key concerns in the life and work of Luther and Pope Benedict recognised this very well. This is, for me, more important – what we can say about Luther and what we can learn from the theology and concerns of Luther.”

He was lying through his teeth. No Roman Catholic official has any intention of learning anything from Luther. Not now. Not ever. For them, Luther was and remains a heretic, justly excommunicated by the pope at the time, a troublecauser, a one-man pestilence upon the Papacy, a “wild boar” that had “invaded the Lord’s vineyard” (as the pope said of him in a papal bull at the time), a man whom the Papacy tried to murder, a devil in human form. By triggering the Reformation in 1517, in the eyes of the Vatican he became responsible for the past five centuries during which the Papacy’s power was greatly weakened. No, to say that Roman Catholics would now seek to learn from Luther’s theology and concerns was a very big, very deliberate lie. Just as popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis I (quoted above) were spouting lies when they said certain “nice” things about Luther. There was only one reason for these statements: honey catches more flies than vinegar, as the proverb goes.

It is also called “buttering up”. And it works.

Francis’ Address at the Next Ecumenical Event

The Roman pope ended his homily in the Lutheran cathedral of Lund, Sweden, by again calling for “unity”. But that was not the end of the festivities. Off he breezed to an arena in Malmö, Sweden, where he gave an address at another ecumenical event. Let us look at what he said there, as well:

“Dear brothers and sisters, I thank God for this joint commemoration of the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation.”¹⁴ Well, of course he was thrilled: although the Reformation had been such a massive break with Rome, and such a weakening of Papal power, yet now the foolish heirs of the Reformation had invited him to a *joint* commemoration of that event! History is being revised and rewritten before our eyes, when a pope of Rome can “thank God” for such a thing! Clearly, the rift has healed. The divide has been spanned by a bridge that leads all the way back the Vatican.

“We remember this anniversary with a renewed spirit and in the recognition that Christian unity is a priority, because we realize that much more unites us than separates us.” That last statement speaks volumes! “*Much more unites us than separates us.*” If any *true* Christian church was told such a thing by the pope of Rome, its members would wonder what they had done wrong to cause him to say such a thing! “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14). But the Lutherans were not troubled by his statement at all. Instead, they gloried in it! The pope of Rome could say such a thing, and not a Lutheran voice was raised in protest at such a statement!

For they know it is true.

“Our dialogue has helped us to grow in mutual understanding; it has fostered reciprocal trust and confirmed our desire to advance towards full communion.” Yes, that is the end goal: *full communion*. But when and if such is ever achieved – and at the rate things are going, it could be just around the corner – it will all be in Rome’s favour. Lutheranism will be very much the junior player, if it is a player at all. Such communion will all be on Rome’s terms, and for Rome’s benefit. It will be all-powerful.

The Joint Declaration Issued on the Occasion

Let us turn our attention to the joint statement which was issued on the occasion of this Papist/Lutheran commemoration of the Reformation.¹⁵ It was issued in Lund, Sweden, on October 31.

“With this Joint Statement, we express joyful gratitude to God for this moment of common prayer in the Cathedral of Lund, as we begin the year commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of the

Reformation.” Even after all these decades of ecumenism, it still almost defies belief that we are actually witnessing the Roman Papacy *commemorating* the Reformation! And even though we know that from Rome’s part it is not an *honest* commemoration, but a subtle tactic to win over the Lutherans and other Protestants, yet the fact still remains that the Lutheran institution’s leaders have been so blinded by ecumenical deceit for so long that they have actually come to believe that the Roman Papacy wants to celebrate Luther, and the Lutheran Reformation, alongside them! Such blindness and ignorance is breathtaking, and a sign of the times in which we live: times of gross spiritual darkness engulfing the “Protestant” world.

“Fifty years of sustained and fruitful ecumenical dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans have helped us to overcome many differences, and have deepened our mutual understanding and trust.” There is no doubt about it. Half a century of devilish ecumenism, and Rome has managed to pull off one of its greatest con tricks yet – the hijacking of commemorations which should have been the sole preserve of those institutions which broke with Rome five centuries ago! Today, all those differences have been swept under the rug, and Rome can actually say to the “Protestant” world, “Look! We thank God for the Reformation too!” Lies. Lies on such a scale that the mind boggles.

“Through dialogue and shared witness we are no longer strangers. Rather, we have learned that what unites us is greater than what divides us.” There it is again, that phrase: *what unites us is greater than what divides us*. As pointed out above, this is indeed true of these two religious institutions today. The Lutheran movement was never a complete and total break with Rome. Luther and his associates still considered Papists to be Christians, and the Romish religion to be a church. A church in Babylonish captivity, to be sure – but still a church of Christ. And Luther and his associates believed in such heresies as baptismal regeneration and a modified view of the mass; they did not believe in the need for, nor seek to achieve, a regenerate church membership; they held to the deadly “State Church” concept, just like Rome. And as a result of these serious doctrinal and practical errors, Lutheranism had common ground with Romanism from the outset – and the modern ecumenical movement has simply given Lutheranism even more reasons to believe it is very close to Rome. The surrendering of Lutheranism to the Papacy is merely the return of the Lutheran chick to dwell under “Mother Rome’s” wings, like a naughty child who runs away from home for a time but eventually returns, ashamed and chastised. This is Lutheranism.

“While we are profoundly thankful for the spiritual and theological gifts received through the Reformation...” Lies heaped upon lies! As if Rome has *ever* been thankful for such things! From the moment the Reformation began, Rome did everything in its power to stamp it out. It used fire, sword, and other diabolical means. Ah, but it is easy for a victor in a battle to find nice things to say about his vanquished enemy. *Rome has vanquished Lutheranism*. This is the fact of it. So now it can afford to be “nice” to the defeated Lutherans.

“While we are profoundly thankful for the spiritual and theological gifts received through the Reformation, we also confess and lament before Christ that Lutherans and Catholics have wounded the visible unity of the Church.” Point No.1: the Roman Catholic institution was *never* the Church of God; never even *a* church of God. Point No. 2: the Lutheran institution was never a true church of God either. Point No. 3: a true Christian is not in unity with a false “christian”, nor a true church with a false “church”. Point No. 4: the *true* Church of God has a *spiritual* unity, not a material one.

“Theological differences were accompanied by prejudice and conflicts, and religion was instrumentalized for political ends.” True enough in the case of these two, mother and daughter.

“Our common faith in Jesus Christ and our baptism demand of us a daily conversion...” These two do have a common faith, but it is not true saving faith in Jesus Christ. And note: it speaks of “our baptism”, as being a common baptism – *which indeed it is and always has been!* This is what so many Protestants have either failed to see, or ignored, in Luther’s own teachings. “Luther attached great importance to his baptism. When the Devil assailed him, he would answer, ‘I am baptized.’”¹⁶ Apart from the terrible error of trusting to such an extent in his “baptism”, which would be shocking enough

even if it was biblical baptism, he was “baptized” as an infant by a Roman Catholic priest! This means *he accepted his Roman Catholic “baptism”, administered to him as a baby, as entirely valid!* He did not seek to be biblically baptized once he professed conversion. This just demonstrates, yet again, that from its very inception Lutheranism was nothing but modified (“reformed”) Romanism.

And indeed, this theme of a common “baptism” is one to which this document returns a little further on, when it states: “we commit ourselves to further growth and communion rooted in Baptism, as we seek to remove the remaining obstacles that hinder us from attaining full unity. Christ desires that we be one, so that the world may believe (cf. John 17:21).” Always, the reference to this Scripture in ecumenical relations – but how wrongly it is used (see above)! And both Papists and Lutherans appeal, in this sentence, *to their shared “baptism”* as the foundation of their further efforts towards “attaining full unity” eventually. This is always the final objective: full unity. But what kind of unity will this be? Nothing other than the *absorption* of Lutheranism into Roman Catholicism.

And again about baptism, further on: “As we recommit ourselves to move from conflict to communion, we do so as part of the one Body of Christ, into which we are incorporated through Baptism.” Again, this is what so many Protestants have failed to see about Lutheranism: just like Romanism, it teaches that one is incorporated into the Church through baptism; that one is, in fact, born again by baptism!¹⁷ This is why both practice the “baptism” of infants, and both then call those “baptized” infants “Christians”. Baptism is what regenerates, baptism is what saves, according to these religious bodies. Not Christ, but the rite of baptism. It is a devilish lie that has damned multitudes to hell.

“Many members of our communities yearn to receive the Eucharist at one table, as the concrete expression of full unity.... We long for this wound in the Body of Christ to be healed. This is the goal of our ecumenical endeavours, which we wish to advance, also by renewing our commitment to theological dialogue.” The differences between the Roman Catholic mass and the *proper* observance of the ordinance of the Lord’s supper are so great that there can never be a reconciliation between the two: it is as the Word of God says, “Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils” (1 Cor. 10:21). The Popish mass is a sacrifice to devils. Therefore, if Papists and Lutherans view the differences between the mass of Rome, and the Lutheran sacrament which goes by the name of the Lord’s supper, as nothing but a “wound” that needs to be healed, this is proof positive that the Lutheran sacrament is *not* the biblical ordinance!

According to Luther himself, in the sacrament, although the bread and wine are not magically changed into Christ’s body and blood as the Romanists teach, yet even so Christ gives His true body and true blood “in, with and under” the bread and wine, to the one partaking of these things (and this is called the *real presence*, just as in Romanism).¹⁸ This Lutheran “consubstantiation” is dangerously close to the Popish doctrine of “transubstantiation”, and is a very convenient meeting-ground between Rome and Lutheranism in ecumenical dialogue. Luther was absolutely adamant: the words, “This is my body”, were to be taken *literally*. Just as the Papists have always taught.

And Still One More Joint Declaration

Lastly, another document was signed at the same time in Lund, Sweden: called *Together in Hope*, it was signed between the Roman Catholic organisation, Caritas International, and the Lutheran World Federation.¹⁹ Caritas International is described as “the social and justice arm of the Catholic Church”, but this description does not reveal its true nature or purpose: it is a radical, Catholic-Communist organisation, committed to advancing the Socialist/Communist agenda worldwide. This becomes clear when one reads its own statement regarding its mission, stuffed with all the latest Socialist/Communist buzz words and phrases behind which they hide their radical agenda: “to promote a civilization of love, based on the social and other teachings of the Church and is developed around five central strategic orientations that are: Caritas at the heart of the Church; save lives and rebuild communities; promote

sustainable integral human development; build global solidarity; make the Caritas Confederation more effective.”

The document makes it clear that Caritas and the Lutheran World Federation will deepen and strengthen their ecumenical ties and their commitment to “unity”.

Conclusion

And so, five centuries after Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses to the castle door of Wittenberg, Germany, and sparked the political and religious earthquake which came to be known as the Protestant Reformation, the Lutheran movement he founded, with one of its central pillars being the doctrine that the Roman Papacy is the Antichrist of the Bible, is now holding hands with that selfsame Papacy and bemoaning the fact that the Reformation ever occurred.

And Rome’s plans to absorb world Lutheranism beneath its own wings are taking giant strides forward...

As Bible Protestants watch these unfolding dramas relating to the Mother Whore and her whorish daughters, let us remain completely separate from them, and boldly denounce them both as unbiblical, heretical, and abominable. The Lord Jesus Christ is not to be found in them. They do not bear the marks of genuine Christianity. They are false religious systems. And every true Christian must remain separate from them, as the Word of God declares (Rev. 18:4,5; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Heb. 13:13).

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ENDNOTES:

1. *The Book of Revelation: Chapter 10* (five sermons, in MP3 and CD format), by Shaun Willcock. Bible Based Ministries. Available from our website.
- 2.. See *Born Again Through Baptism? The Lutheran Teaching Compared with the Bible*, by Shaun Willcock (Gospel tract for Lutherans), Bible Based Ministries. Available from our website.
3. See Part One in this series of articles, entitled *The Reformation’s Accomplishments and Errors, and the End of Its Protest*, by Shaun Willcock. Bible Based Ministries, 2017. Available from our website.
- 4.. *Pope in Sweden: Our Separation Has Enabled Better Understanding of Some Aspects of Faith*, November 1, 2016. Zenit.org.
- 5.. *To Celebrate or Not to Celebrate: a Look at Pope Francis’ Multifaceted Trip to Sweden*, Rome Reports, October 26, 2016. www.romereports.com.
- 6.. *Cardinal Koch: Pope’s Visit to Sweden Emphasizes 3 Aspects*, October 28, 2016. Zenit.org.
- 7.. *Cardinal Koch: Pope’s Visit to Sweden Emphasizes 3 Aspects*.
- 8.. *To Celebrate or Not to Celebrate: a Look at Pope Francis’ Multifaceted Trip to Sweden*.
- 9.. *The Pope Has Already Arrived in Sweden*, Rome Reports, October 31, 2016. www.romereports.com.
- 10.. *Why Pope Francis Goes to Sweden for the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation*, Rome Reports, October 22, 2016. www.romereports.com.

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- 11.. *Why Pope Francis Goes to Sweden for the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.*
 - 12.. *Pope's Homily at Ecumenical Prayer Service in Lund*, November 1, 2016. Zenit.org.
 - 13.. *Cardinal Koch: Pope's Visit to Sweden Emphasizes 3 Aspects.*
 - 14.. *Pope's Address at Ecumenical Event at Malmö*, November 1, 2016. Zenit.org.
 - 15.. *Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation*, Rome Reports, October 31, 2016. www.romereports.com.
 - 16.. *Here I Stand: Martin Luther*, by Roland Bainton, pg. 367. Lion Publishing, Tring, Herts, England, 1987.
 - 17.. See Luther's *Small Catechism*, "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism."
 - 18.. See Luther's *Small Catechism*, "The Sacrament of the Altar."
 - 19.. *Caritas, Lutheran Federation Sign Common Declaration*, November 2, 2016. Zenit.org.

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