



Reformation Series: Great Divide  
Mike Halpin ~ October 22, 2017

Intro: Genesis 14, Abram and his allies....

In what ways SHOULD evangelicals, the spiritual descendants of the Reformation, cooperate w/ Roman Catholics? And, in what ways should evangelicals NOT cooperate w/ Roman Catholics or others who hold a faith + works version of the gospel?

I. Rome's Response to the Reformed—  
Council of Trent, 1545–1563

- Church tradition was equal to scripture in its authority and the Magisterium was the official interpreter of Scripture.
- *If anyone denies that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted; or asserts that the nature of sin is not taken away; let him be anathema.*
- *If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing but confidence in divine mercy, let him be anathema.*
- *If anyone says that after the grace of justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out, that there remains no debt of temporal punishment to be discharged in this world or the next in Purgatory before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened to him, let him be anathema.*

II. Rapprochement Today—

1. Evangelicals & Catholics Together 1994. (Evangelical Chuck Colson and RC Richard John Neuhaus)

The statement called on all nominal Christians to unite w/ one voice on things like:

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|---|---|
| *Morality and justice in law and policies | *The sanctity of life in all stages       |
| *Religious liberty                        | *Parental freedom in children's education |

2. The Manhattan Declaration, 2009 (Robert George, RC; Timothy George, Baptist; Chuck Colson, Evangelical)

From The Manhattan Declaration:

In this declaration we affirm: 1) the profound, inherent, and equal dignity of every human being as a creature fashioned in the very image of God, possessing inherent rights of equal dignity and life; 2) marriage as a conjugal union of man and woman, ordained by God from the creation, and historically understood by believers and non-believers alike, to be the most basic institution in society and; 3) religious liberty, which is grounded in the character of God, the example of Christ, and the inherent freedom and dignity of human beings created in the divine image.

L&L taught a series on the issues brought up in this Declaration in 2010.

Sometimes Evangelical Christians join w/ RCs in things like Evangelicals & Catholics Together while other Evangelicals don't.

- We don't always share the same priorities.
- The way in which we support our priorities differs.
- We should err on the side of maintaining clarity in the gospel.

### III. Guiding Principles—

Primacy of the proclamation of the Gospel.

- ◇ Matthew 28:19-21
- ◇ Galatians 1:6–9
  - Galatians 2:16

If cooperation w/ another Christian group means the clarity of the gospel is lost it's not an alliance we should enter.

If the clarity of the gospel isn't at stake in cooperating w/ others, like Abram, we're free to make alliances w/ others for a common good.

- ◇ Luke 9:49-50
- ◇ Mark 9:38-39

There are issues we can work on w/ RCs and these areas of common good are places RCs have been historically leading the way:

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### IV. Roman Catholics Need the Gospel—

- Romans 10:1–4

Our friend, Karl.....

- Don't assume your Roman Catholic friend, family member or fellow student or employee has clearly heard and rejected the gospel.

Can I ask you a question?

If you died today would you go to heaven or hell, and why.

How do you understand:

- John 1:12, Romans 3:24, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8–9

Resources: *Roman Catholic Theology & Practice*, by Gregg Allison; *Are We Together?* by RC Sproul