



Proclaiming

The Gospel

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." - *Romans 1:16*

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Editor - [Evangelist Mike Gendron](#)

"What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?"
(James 2:14)

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Does The Christian Church Need To Be Evangelized?

The visible Christian church is no longer a sanctuary for the people of God. Instead, it has become a huge mission field that needs to be evangelized. Churches are now filled with professing Christians who say they have faith but have never been born of God. This should not surprise us because of the parable Jesus gave describing the last days in [Matthew 13:25-43](#). He spoke of a landowner who sowed good seed [sons of the kingdom] in his field, but while his men were sleeping, the enemy came and sowed tares [sons of the devil]. Jesus said the landowner is the Son of Man and the enemy is the devil.

Today we have many tares in our churches because church leaders are not protecting the fields. Many have been growing their churches man's way instead of God's way. This self-serving strategy has produced some tragic consequences - the most serious of which is the false hope it gives to the unconverted tares. Some of the tares are victims of unbiblical methods of evangelism; others are victims of counterfeit gospels. These victims cannot tell you the essential elements of the Gospel or what God requires for entrance into heaven. Some know their eternal sin debt must be forgiven, but very few know they also need the righteousness of Jesus and to be born again of the Spirit.

The Necessity of the New Birth

Jesus told Nicodemus "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Only the triune God can bring forth life. Jesus said: "just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes" ([John 5:21](#)). "It is the Spirit that gives

life" ([John 6:63](#)). God calls the spiritually dead to life through His Word. "In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth" ([James 1:18](#)). God's children are "born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God" ([1 Pet. 1:23](#)).

Saving faith comes from hearing the word of Christ. From it we learn the essential doctrines of salvation: the attributes of God, the Gospel of grace and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. When people hear the Word of God, enabled by the Spirit of God, to trust the Son of God, they become a child of God, all for the glory of God.

Just as man could not initiate his physical birth, he is unable to cause his spiritual birth. Before any of us were born, we could not have pleaded with our parents to conceive us. We did not exist! The same is true in the spiritual realm ([John 1:12-13](#)). Children of God are not born of blood (*spiritual life is not inherited genetically*), nor of the will of the flesh (*physical life cannot produce spiritual life; flesh can only produce flesh*), nor of the will of man (*spiritual life cannot be initiated by the desires of men*).

So, how do we help the unconverted tares see they have been misled or deceived? As believers, we should encourage everyone to test their faith for their own good as well as for the glory of Christ. Paul wrote: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test" ([2 Cor 13:5](#)). Peter exhorted us: "Be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure" ([2 Pet. 1:10](#)).

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([Christian](#) from page 1)

I always love to hear testimonies of how our Sovereign Lord calls lost sinners to Himself. So, whenever I meet Christians, I often ask them to describe the events surrounding their conversion. A red flag goes up if they say they became a Christian at the moment they were: baptized, came forward in an altar call, repeated a prayer, signed a commitment card, joined a local church, or were born to Christian parents. Speaking the truth in love, I explain to them that no one can become a Christian without repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ([Acts 20:21](#)).

Many Believe A Counterfeit Gospel

What about those who say they have faith in Jesus but show no evidence of a changed life. All of them may believe in the historical Jesus who lived 2000 years ago, but few believe what He taught, what He promises, what He commands, what He accomplished and what He is doing now. They may be victims of a counterfeit gospel, a watered down version that is offered by a generic god of love. This gospel offers "fire insurance" with no call to repentance ([Luke 24:47](#)). It is a gospel of cheap grace which fails to instruct people to say "no" to ungodliness and worldly passions ([Titus 2:12](#)).

The other counterfeit gospel which deceives people is the grace-killing gospel of works. First introduced by the Judaizers, this gospel nullifies God's grace by adding requirements for salvation such as circumcision, baptism, sacraments, good works, law keeping, penance or indulgences ([Gal. 1:6-9](#)).

If we do not lovingly confront victims of unbiblical evangelism and counterfeit gospels, they may one day hear the most terrifying words anyone could ever hear when Jesus says: "I never knew you; depart from Me." These horrifying words will be heard by many professing Christians on the last day ([Mat. 7:22-23](#)).

Two Ways To Test Faith

Those who want to test their faith now, before it is too late, can do it two ways - objectively and subjectively. The objective test is this: Have you believed the objective truths of God's word? Paul wrote: "after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit" ([Eph. 1:13](#)). The word of God is our supreme authority

for knowing objective truth. We must believe the eternal Gospel as it is revealed in Scripture. It is the same Gospel today as it was 6000 years ago.

The subjective test asks the question: Is there evidence of saving faith? Genuine faith results in good works but a faith without works is dead ([Eph. 2:10](#); [James 2:17](#)). This second test is subjective because there are different levels of maturity and growth as believers walk with Christ. New babes in Christ may not show as much evidence as those who have walked with Him for many years. When we are first born into God's family we look nothing like His Son. But as we grow in the grace and knowledge of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are conformed into the image of Christ. We see this in the physical realm also. When a baby is born, he may look nothing like his parents. But as he grows, he begins to take on the physical characteristics of his parents.

The Apostle [John](#) gives us a portrait of what God's children look like in his first epistle. They who are born of God are adopted into His eternal family to walk in the light ([1:6-7](#)); keep His commandments ([2:3-5](#)); love not the world system ([2:15](#)); yearn for the return of Christ so they can be like Him ([3:2-3](#)); live to please Him and avoid sin ([3:7-8](#)); love His other children ([3:14](#)) and use apostolic doctrine for discernment ([4:6](#)). Each of us must determine if this is a picture of how we look.

Two Kinds of Faith

The test of one's faith is vital because the Bible speaks of two kinds of faith - a "God-given, supernatural, saving faith" and a "dead" faith that is found in the unconverted natural man. Paul wrote of people who believed in vain because they did not hold to apostolic teaching ([1 Cor. 15:2](#)). Jesus spoke of others who believed for the wrong reasons ([John 2:23](#)).

Dead faith is limited to what the natural man can comprehend without divine help because he has been blinded by Satan and cannot see the light of the Gospel ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)). That is why Paul wrote: "your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" ([1 Cor. 2:5](#)).

God-given faith is initiated in the will of God and is a gift granted from the Father above ([Phil. 1:29](#); [James 1:17](#)). It will be perfected by the Son of God as the recipient conforms

([See Christian on page 8](#))

The Ministry of Proclaiming the Gospel

OUR PURPOSE

The ministry was established in 1991 and is incorporated in the State of Texas as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation for the purposes of: 1) glorifying, honoring and serving the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming His Gospel of man's redemption with clarity, conviction and consistency; 2) providing evangelistic training and resources with an emphasis on biblical integrity; 3) exposing any doctrines that oppose or nullify the Gospel of grace so that people can discern truth from error, avoid deception and come to the knowledge of truth; 4) contending earnestly for the faith against the agents of compromise who suppress doctrinal truth for the sake of ecumenical unity and 5) encouraging and supporting former Catholics who may be feeling a sense of guilt, ostracism or persecution from their family or friends for leaving the Catholic religion and culture.

OUR METHOD

In a spirit of love and humility, we teach evangelistic seminars, conferences and workshops to train and encourage Christians to be effective witnesses to Roman Catholics and others who may be lost in their religion. We also offer resources designed to teach, equip and encourage others to labor in this huge mission field.

OUR NEWSLETTER

Proclaiming the Gospel's bi-monthly newsletter is designed to extend the purposes of the ministry throughout the world. The editor is Evangelist [Mike Gendron](#), a graduate of [Dallas Theological Seminary](#) and a former Roman Catholic of over 34 years.

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, satisfied the righteous justice of God by paying the complete penalty for sin when He died as man's substitute on Calvary's cross. Any person who repents and receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior by grace through faith in His life, death and resurrection, ceasing to trust in anything else for salvation, becomes a child of God and receives the gift of eternal life, which can never be revoked.

OUR PROVISION

Everything we do is made possible through the prayers and financial support of those who share our burden for the lost. We recognize the sacrifices God's people make to sustain our work and pledge to use these resources effectively and efficiently. Donations (except for products) are tax deductible.

To Repent or Not to Repent?

Our Lord Jesus Christ began and ended His earthly ministry with a call to repentance. His first words recorded in the Gospel of Mark included the command: "Repent and believe the Gospel" ([Mark 1:15](#)). At the end of his ministry he commissioned believers with these words: "repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in My name to all the nations" ([Luke 24:47](#)). Why then do so many Christians dismiss the words of our Savior? Many say it is a work that cannot be included in a Gospel of grace. Yet, from Scripture, we see repentance is granted by God ([2 Tim. 2:25](#)) leading to salvation when we experience godly sorrow for sin ([2 Cor. 7:10](#)). Let us take a close look at this vital doctrine that is so often omitted when Christians evangelize the lost.

Repentance Granted By God...

Reflects on personal sin ([Luke 18:13](#))

The tax-gatherer, reflecting on his sin, was unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven. Instead he beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' This repentant sinner went home justified.

Replaces idols & turns to God ([1 Thes. 1:9](#))

Evidence of repentance and faith together.

Resists Satan & submits to God ([Jas. 4:7](#))

Repentance is manifested when we stand against the devil, resisting his temptations.

Recognizes divine wrath ([2 Thes. 1:8-9](#))

A repentant sinner is one who sees God's just punishment for sin and turns to Jesus Christ to be saved from the power and punishment of sin.

Rejects religious rituals ([Phil. 3:3-9](#))

Paul is our example of one who once trusted his religious works as a means of salvation. Found blameless to the Law, he repented and counted all his religious rituals as rubbish for the sake of Christ.

Renounces religious heritage ([Luke 3:8](#))

Jesus rebuked the descendants of Abraham for trusting their religious heritage for their salvation.

Reveals fruit of the spirit ([Gal. 5:22](#))

Evidence of spiritual transformation is manifested by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Relies on Spirit's power to turn from sin ([Rom. 8:13](#))

Repentance is putting to death the deeds of the flesh by the Holy Spirit's power.

Quick Quotes

"What John Paul left us will not be received through an uncritical admiration that strips him of his humanity. But, like Jesus, he has gone away and we are left with his spirit. That spirit, now given more purely than ever before, contains powerful nutrients that can both nourish and stretch our souls."

Catholic Priest Ron Rolheiser, President Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, Texas.

"The moment you stood up today, God washed you of your sins."

Pastor Joel Osteen, Lakewood Church (San Antonio Express News, 7/31/05)

"Make it your priority to pray for the important spiritual issues of life because they are of the greatest concern to God. His ultimate purpose is to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. The little tests and trials in life are important only insofar as they reveal your greater spiritual need."

Pastor [John MacArthur](#), *Alone With God*

"The emerging church leaders dare to say that absolutes are obsolete."

Anonymous

Where Mike Is Speaking

Nov. 8 & 10 [The Master's Seminary](#)
Sun Valley, CA (800) 225-5867

Nov. 10 [Grace Bible Church](#)
Escondido, CA (760) 747-9252

Nov. 13 [First Baptist Church](#)
Fillmore, CA (805) 524-2594

Dec. 8 [Dallas Theological Seminary](#)
Dallas, TX (214) 841-3511

Jan. 6-7 [Remember the Reformation](#)
[Believers Chapel](#)
Dallas, TX (214) 239-5371

Jan. 19-20 Various Churches
Sydney, Australia

Jan. 21-26 Various Churches
Melbourne, Australia

Jan. 27-30 Various Churches
Brisbane, Australia

Feb. 18 [Stealing the Mind Bible Conf.](#)
Costa Mesa, CA (800) 977-2177

To schedule Mike Gendron to speak at your church or event, contact him at:

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e-mail: ptg@pro-gospel.org

Reformation Conference Scheduled for Dallas

Many modern Evangelicals and Roman Catholic theologians, pastors and parachurch leaders have openly questioned the validity of maintaining the doctrinal divide that separated the 16th century Protestant Reformers from the Roman Catholic religion. Some have sought to minimize the important doctrinal differences for the sake of [ecumenical unity](#). Still others have decided the issues simply do not matter any more. It is for these reasons we must remind the Church of the important doctrinal truths for which the Reformers suffered and died.

The **Remember the Reformation Conference** will explore the roots of biblical Christianity, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the titanic struggle between Roman Catholics and the Reformers. Speakers [Rob Zins](#) and [Mike Gendron](#), both graduates of [Dallas Theological Seminary](#), will deliver 6 messages explaining why the battle for the Gospel still continues 5 centuries after [Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the Wittenburg door](#).

This will be the 5th **Remember the Reformation** Conference Zins and Gendron have presented in churches around the country. Other sites have been Manassas, Virginia; Seaside Heights, New Jersey; Ft. Worth, Texas and West Liberty, Ohio. Pastors, who are interested in hosting a conference at their church in 2006, should contact either ministry for information and scheduling.

Mark your calendars for the Dallas conference which will be held at [Believers Chapel](#), 6420 Churchill Way, January 6 and 7th. The schedule is posted on the [PTG website: www.pro-gospel.org](#). There is no charge for the conference!

Parts of Bible Are Not True

The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has published a teaching document instructing the faithful that some parts of the Bible are not actually true. The Catholic bishops of England, Wales and Scotland are warning their five million worshippers, as well as any others drawn to the study of Scripture, that they should not expect "total accuracy" from the Bible. Catholic bishops insist the accounts in Genesis cannot be "historical." At most, they may contain "historical traces". ([The Times, 10/5/05](#))

Seeking His Truth

Letters to the Editor



Mr. Gendron a "Good Christian" wouldn't throw names all over a web page to make someone look bad. My uncle is Msgr. Don Zimmerman [who you exposed as a false teacher when he was invited to Park Cities Baptist Church to open their Men's Bible study on the Book of Romans]. He was invited as a GUEST, he didn't push his opinions on you. How dare you point the finger at him when you aren't perfect yourself. Just like many Christians, you automatically think that because his beliefs are not exactly in line with yours that his are wrong - the only thing wrong Mr. Gendron is YOU. I have had many talks about religion with him over the years. I have been a Roman Catholic and Southern Baptist and find there are not many differences when you get down to things that matter most. It's easy to throw around Bible verses and put your own spin on them to glorify yourself, which you have clearly done. I am disgusted that a fellow Christian would walk away from a Bible Study having picked apart the speaker and not listened to the message. If you truly have concerns, maybe you should pray about it instead of publicizing your feelings to better yourself. May God forgive my Uncle for his sins whatever they may be and forgive you for glorifying the devil in your cruel and brutal misjudgment of my uncle, Msgr. Zimmerman.

Karen, Internet

I have just left the Catholic church with much pain and disillusionment. Since leaving, I have emailed your articles to lots of my friends who are anchored in this cultic religion. Now I am accused of catholic bashing, which I have explained is not my intent. My intent is for them to read Scripture and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to them. There were two very difficult beliefs for me to surrender. First, was the Eucharist which I really believed was Jesus Christ. The 2nd was the Marian apparitions. I even went to Medjugorje two years ago and brought back some cheap medallions. Now that I have repented, I am really getting rebuked from my Catholic friends. They believe this demonic spirit is the Mother of God, so I pray to Jesus to enlighten them. My immediate family thinks I am crazy and that I have

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been talking to the wrong people. I don't even want to enter their house anymore because of all the rosary beads and statues of the virgin Mary. Even when I point out Scripture that refutes them, they can't accept it. I pray for them and need some counseling to draw them to Jesus, the only truth.

Millicent W., Internet

Your article on the Pope was quite offensive. You seem to take some deep personal grievance with the Catholic faith. Your article showed more of a masochistic pleasure of souls burning in hell rather than a thoughtful persuasion of faith. I am not Catholic, but I refuse to take my Protestant liberty as liberally as you. Instead of praying for our Catholic brothers and sisters you take great pleasure in attacking them. The Pope never deceived anyone. Can you tell me, without attacking Catholics, what you, so desperately, disagree with theologically? I believe in absolute truth, and that is the Bible. The problem with you fundamentalists is that the truth you so readily profess has blinded you from the need to love.

Mateo, Internet

I consider it a privilege to share my theological differences with the Roman Catholic religion. My God-given faith embraces the Lord Jesus Christ - His word, His promises, His grace and His finished work of redemption. He is sufficient to save me completely and forever. I have repented of the fallacious doctrines of purgatory, indulgences, law keeping, sacraments and good works for my justification. I have also forsaken the blasphemous practice of Catholic priests making offerings for my sin. The High priest who made one offering for all my sins now lives as my Advocate in Heaven. When I was held captive by the legalistic bondage of the Catholic religion, I had a different authority, worshipped and trusted a different Jesus, believed another gospel and was destined for a different place in eternity. I hope you see that I have not attacked Catholics but have exposed the false religion which has blinded them from the Gospel truth. It puzzles me that you question my "need to love" and my refusal to

pray for Catholics. Please know that without prayer my missionary work would be fruitless and without love my witness would lack zeal and motivation. I have experienced much joy as an adopted child of God, but the greatest joy is when I see those who were once dead in sin, come alive in Christ. May God grant you this life changing faith!

Praise the Lord for your ministry. I am a saved former Catholic and have lovingly tried to share the Gospel with my family only to be called a self-righteous Catholic basher. When I heard Mike's message I cried because my passion is to share the Gospel with the Catholic people also. I haven't had the tools but now I do and I thank God for your ministry. May He abundantly bless you.

J.B., Lakeside, CA

Why is it that when you become an exCatholic, it becomes your mission to minister to Catholics? I find that most of them do so to justify their new found conversion rather than their desire to see Catholics saved. I have asked exCatholic people specific questions and they either send me canned paragraphs that dispute the Catholic Church or refuse to answer my questions. Unless I subscribe to everything these people say, I just get ignored. Maybe they just think my soul is lost and they would rather tend to those who are easy pickings! Anyway this behavior tends to lead me to question whether this is a ministry or a quest for self justification?

Shane, Internet

The reason we minister to Catholics, and everyone else lost in religious deception, is twofold. We are compelled to do so because of our love for Christ and our deep compassion for those who have been deceived as we once were. Our mission is to deliver the message of salvation as it is clearly revealed in the Bible. We point the lost to Jesus Christ as the only all-sufficient Savior. The only way God saves sinners is by grace, working through man's faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. What you do with the message is between you and God. Conversions are His work alone. So, it's not about who is "easy pickings." No one can come to Jesus unless His Father draws them ([John 6:44](#)).

Praise the Lord for PTG. Those who are bold for truth and speak against error are few in today's church. To the people who accuse

you of being judgmental; have they not read what Charles Spurgeon said about the Roman Church? Have they forgotten Luther? Have they forgotten Wycliffe who was killed for his opposition to Rome? Furthermore, have they not read Paul's letters? Would Paul embrace the Roman Church who preaches a [different gospel](#). And lastly don't they remember Jesus who rebuked the Pharisees and scribes for putting their tradition over God's Word?

S.T., Niagara Falls, NY

I wanted you to know that I still appreciate your ministry so much! We met a few years ago at one of your seminars and I direct people to your website all the time. My mother became a believer last October, right before her 87th birthday! She was an opposer of Christianity all her life, and was a very depressed, stubborn woman who was transformed right before our eyes. God is so good. It's amazing to see Him work in those we think are impossible. She went to be with the Lord on 1/24/05, and had so much peace. It was undeniable to anyone who knew her that the Spirit indwelt her.

L.M., Simi Valley, CA

Thank you for your wonderful ministry that is so valuable to a protestant married to a Catholic! Please be praying for my husband. Since we have been married, we have not attended the Catholic Church, but at times my husband misses it. I have been strongly convicted that it is wrong to bring our children up in the Catholic church, so we attend a CMA church, and my husband plays the drums for worship! His family cornered him last night about how deceived we are! On the way home, I prayed and decided not to bring it up. Once we got home my husband brought it up, and for the first time, he was open to the idea that *they* were wrong! He was willing to listen, as long as I continued speaking gently and not like a know-it-all! Something is stirring in him for the first time, and I think that we are going to come under attack from my in-laws again! God bless you! I love you and your wife so much for this very needed ministry!

C. R., Poulsbo, WA

I've recently read your book [Preparing Catholics For Eternity](#) and found it passionate and informative. My parents became entrenched with Catholicism over the past several months so I shared the truth with them. Although I've always been very close with them, they kicked me out and told me

never to return. My father has a lot of head knowledge about Scripture so I'm amazed he can't see the evil in Catholicism. I pray that God will open their eyes to the truth.

C.H. Liberty, Kentucky

I think your [Greatest News](#) tracts are great because they are totally Scripture and God promises that His word won't come back void! I use them quite a bit in sharing the Gospel with girls who come into our pregnancy center. I'm a volunteer peer counselor plus a nurse. I also enjoy the newsletter.

D. B., Pinellas Park, FL

Your ignorance astounds me sir. Have you even read a single thing that Pope John Paul II wrote? You obviously know almost nothing about history or of early Christianity. Have you even read any of the works of the early Christians? And where do you think that the Bible came from? Do you think it came pre-printed from the sky? No, absolutely not! The Scriptures are a product of a Council of the Catholic Church you seem to despise so much. Wake up man and do some reading. All you're doing here is making a fool of yourself by persecuting the Church founded by Christ. Please, for the sake of your soul and anyone without the sense enough to realize that you are being a nitwit, stop this nonsense and learn to read.

John Paul, Internet

I have spent the last 15 years reading and studying the religion that I once embraced. I have read the councils, the early church fathers, the papal encyclicals and numerous catechisms. While there is much truth to be found in each, they also contain deadly doctrinal error that opposes and nullifies the only divine remedy for sin. You obviously submit to several different fallible authorities for truth. I choose to rest my faith on the infallible Word of God.

It is most encouraging to see your comments about the disappearing doctrine in the evangelical church. I thank you for speaking out and for your objectivity and fairness. Thanks for reporting what Joel Osteen said in the Larry King Live interview. We have a saying in Alabama, "whatever is in the well comes up in the bucket." Thanks also for your holy boldness in proclaiming the truth and trying to divert people from the wide road to the narrow road.

D.P., Birmingham, AL

Thank you for the wonderful information

you taught everyone this past weekend at the Evangelism Conference with [John MacArthur](#). As a missionary to Italy, it was a tremendous help and blessing to me. Also, thank you so much for the gift of your book. That was too kind. I look forward to enjoying your website.

C. W., Internet

This is a bunch of crock against a religion that does no harm to you. Why you devote a site to refute Catholicism is beyond me. This is a diabolical site. Christianity is about loving all people regardless of denominations. Your hatred for Catholicism is very evident. I am Catholic and will die one. We are allowed salvation also. Pope John Paul was a very spiritual person, a lover of all faiths, a lover of people. You do harm when you reject him as a good moral leader who tried to fulfill the will of God.

Anonymous

As an ex-Catholic I especially appreciate your uncompromising directness and consistent use of Scripture. Before I came to Christ, while attending college, I had some serious debates with a friend who shared what the Bible said about salvation. I was arguing out of my Catechism, and I vehemently rejected what she said. But I couldn't forget that she talked about something that I didn't have - God's Word. I looked up the definition of words she used that pertain to salvation, such as redeem, propitiation, atone, justify, impute and remission. I was amazed at what I found and how many times God's Word clearly states that salvation is free; it's [a gift, and not of works](#). After I trusted Christ as my Savior, I wondered if I should stay in Catholicism to try to win others to Christ, but there was an immediate realization that I had to leave. I don't feel it was a choice I made, but the Holy Spirit's inner witness. Now I thank God that my friend didn't compromise the Gospel; that she wasn't tolerant; and I praise God for His unchanging Word and the power of the Holy Spirit to reach lost Catholics.

S.S. Carroll, IA

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Organizers say this WYD may have the highest number of non-Roman Catholic participants ever. "We all believe in the same God," Ross said, wearing an *I Love Jesus* T-shirt. A Pakistani evangelical named Kenny said, "I wanted to come because I really admire Pope Benedict and I wanted to meet him." The ecumenical aspects of WYD were evident by the number of Protestant families which hosted thousands of Catholic pilgrims. Several Protestant churches and institutions were also used for lodging and activities. Ecumenism has been an important theme of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Germany. In his opening address to the pilgrims, he greeted those who belong to different Christian denominations and non-Christians. His meeting with Christian leaders demonstrated his commitment to unity. ([CNA, 8/20/05](#))

We Have a Mother in Heaven

Pope Benedict XVI's Homily on Feast of the Assumption included the following comments: Mary is taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven and she is Queen of heaven and earth. While she lived on this earth she could only be close to a few people. Being in God, who is within all of us, Mary knows our hearts, can hear our prayers, can help us with her motherly kindness. She has been given to us, always listens to us, and is always close to us. Being Mother of the Son, she participates in the power of the Son and in his goodness. We can always entrust the whole of our lives to this Mother. On this feast day, let us thank the Lord for the gift of the Mother, and let us pray to Mary to help us find the right path every day. ([Zenit, 8/25/05](#))

Pope Seeks Immunity

Lawyers for Pope Benedict XVI have asked US President George W. Bush to declare the pontiff immune from liability in a lawsuit that accuses him of conspiring to cover up the molestation of three boys by a seminarian in Texas. The Vatican's embassy in Washington sent a diplomatic memo to the State Department requesting the US government grant the pope immunity because he is a head of state. Joseph Ratzinger, now Benedict XVI, is accused of conspiring with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to cover up the abuse during the mid-1990s. The suit is seeking unspecified monetary damages. Lawyers for abuse victims say the case is significant because previous attempts to implicate the Vatican, the pope or other high-ranking church officials in US sex abuse proceedings have failed - primarily because of immunity claims. Ratzinger's involvement arises out of a letter, which demonstrates the clear intent to conceal the crimes involved. It was written in Latin to bishops around the

world, explaining that "grave" crimes such as the sexual abuse of minors would be handled by special church tribunals which were subject to "pontifical secret." (Sydney Herald, 8/17/05)

Non-Catholics Agree: Future Unity Hinges on Eucharist

Addresses at the Synod of Bishops indicate that the path toward full Christian unity depends on the relationship with the Eucharist. Nine delegates represented Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches. The Anglican and Lutheran delegates protested about their lack of partaking in the Eucharist with Catholics. "If we really believe the presence of Christ to be linked with the wonder of holy communion, how can our altars remain divided, and not hear the harsh question of the Apostle as directed to us: 'Has Christ been divided?'" ([Zenit.org, 10/13/05](#))

Over 100,000 Flock to Icon in Romania

More than 100,000 people converged on an ancient monastery in the hills of northwest Romania to kiss an icon that many believe has miraculous healing powers. Believers, many of whom walked to the monastery, slept in the open, while more than a dozen Orthodox priests and monks held services around the clock at the monastery northwest of Bucharest. According to legend, the icon of the Weeping Virgin, painted in 1691, wept for 26 days in 1699. The first recorded miracle occurred in 1701 when it is said to have cured an army officer's wife who was going blind. (AP, 8/16/05)

World Youth Day Unites Protestants and Catholics

Christina Ross, a young Lutheran, says she fits right in at the pope's World Youth Day.

Pope Seeks Christian Unity

Benedict XVI met with representatives of some 30 Christian confessions, encouraging more positive progress in the ecumenical journey during World Youth Day. "It is the Lord's command, but also the imperative of the present hour, to carry on dialogue, with conviction, at all levels of the Church's life," the Pope stated. "There can be no dialogue at the expense of truth; the dialogue must advance in charity and in truth." ([Zenit.org, 8/19/05](#))

Fundamentalism Addressed By Ecumenical Council

The leader of the nation's largest Lutheran denomination has called for a global Christian council to address how churches interpret and understand the Bible. Bishop Mark Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America called for Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches to come together to combat a "fundamentalist-apocalyptic reading of Scripture." Mainline churches are uneasy with literal readings of Scripture, particularly in fundamentalist churches, regarding the end of the world and political unrest in the Middle East. In addition, mainline churches have been divided over what the Bible says about hot-button issues such as homosexuality and women's ordination. Hanson also urged the Vatican to work with the Lutheran World Federation to develop a joint statement on the Eucharist to mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017. The two sides issued a landmark statement on justification in 1999. ([Religion News Service, 8/11/05](#))

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*"...they who live
should no longer
live for themselves,
but for Him who
died and rose again
on their behalf."
([2 Cor. 5:15](#))*

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it to the Word of God. Jesus is the Author and Perfecter of this faith which is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen ([Heb. 11:1; 12:2](#)).

Those with God-given faith enter the narrow gate bringing nothing but their sins to the cross ([Mat. 7:13](#)). Those with dead faith enter through the wide gate bringing their filthy rags of righteousness ([Mat. 7:14](#)).

Those with God-given faith prove it by bearing much fruit to the glory of God ([John 15:8](#)). Those with dead faith prove it by bearing bad fruit for the glory of self ([Mat. 7:15-17](#)).

Those with God-given faith desire to test and prove their faith with Scripture alone ([2 Cor. 13:5](#)). Those with dead faith prove their faith by denominational teachings and man's traditions ([John 12:42-43; Acts 15:5-10](#)).

Those with God-given faith will not habitually hear or follow a false teacher ([John 10:5,8](#)). Those with dead faith will not habitually follow a true teacher ([John 10:19](#)).

Those with God-given faith trust God's

power to protect and keep them ([1 Peter 1:5](#)). Those with dead faith trust their own power to keep them from falling away.

Dead faith touches only the intellect. God-given faith involves the whole person. The mind understands, the heart desires and the will acts upon the Word of God.

In closing, there are several probing questions we can ask those who desire to test their faith. Have you renounced every false way that opposes the Gospel of grace? Do you live in thanksgiving and praise for being chosen and adopted into God's eternal family? Do you prove to be Christ's disciple by abiding in His word? Do you discipline yourself for godliness? Do your friends, neighbors and co-workers know that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior? Do you have a desire to share Jesus Christ with others or are you ashamed of His Gospel?

God's children will know they belong to Him because "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" ([Rom. 8:16](#)). The Spirit does this through the Scriptures that He inspired. All of God's children take Him at his Word!