

Billy Graham

**A Report by
The British Council of
Protestant Christian Churches**



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A recent announcement has been made in the United States of America to the effect that representatives of the ecumenical churches and the so-called New Evangelicals have had a meeting with Dr. Billy Graham. The proposal put forward is that a new ecumenical council should be formed. The National Council of Churches, which is the official wing of the World Council of Churches in America, has had such an abominable record that an attempt is now being made which will make compromise and ecumenism acceptable. This is all part of what could be described as the modern Billy Graham image and has become synonymous with his type of evangelism.

This announcement is the latest step in a long trail of compromise which has left Graham devoid of any vestige of his original Fundamental stand. The last twenty years and more have produced a sad story of decline and downgrade. This article is intended to put on record some of the major points of that trail. Why? First of all because, due to the infrequent visits of Graham to this country, many are evidently oblivious to these developments. Also there are a far greater number who remain deliberately silent on the matter and would encourage the unsuspecting to fall in with their compromise. Finally there are those who, in the light of Graham's intended Crusade here next year, are wondering what should they do. For some there will be a wholehearted involvement since the aim is to win souls. For others there will be a temptation to infiltrate, especially the spheres of counselling and follow-up, to direct converts to Bible-believing, fundamentalist churches. A few will realise that the only true action is to obey the Divine command to separate and completely withdraw.

HIS EARLY MINISTRY

The early ministry of Billy Graham began in a small church in a suburb of Chicago. With the rise of the organisation Youth for Christ, he became increasingly well known as a youth speaker across the country. Still a young man, he became president of a small Christian college in Minneapolis-North-western Schools. W.B. Riley, noted fundamentalist warrior who founded the school, personally selected Graham to succeed him.

It is interesting to note some of Graham's own statements from around this time:

1948 - Billy Graham was editor-in-chief of the Pilot (North-western's magazine) which declared from Graham's own pen on its masthead that it took a "militant stand against modernism in every form."

1955 - Billy Graham said that he would "never have anyone taken a place of authority or responsibility in my meetings who was not right on the great fundamentals of the historic Christian faith".

1958 - Billy Graham declared "thus the Scriptures teach that we are to be separated from those who deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, I am to treat him as an anti-Christ and an enemy of the cross." (Separation, by Billy Graham, *Eternity Magazine*, November Edition).

However back in 1955 the subtlety of Graham's compromise had already begun. In a B. B.C. interview during his Scottish Crusade he said:

"I don't call myself a fundamentalist---the old terms, fundamentalism and liberalism are now passed---I am not a fundamentalist, I am not a modernist, I am a conservative-liberal-----I am a constructionist." The rot had therefore begun.

In 1954 Dr. Leslie Weatherhead sat on Graham's platform in London and according to Graham himself Weatherhead commended the sermon. Weatherhead, among other true-to-form modernistic ideas, alleged that

Jesus Christ was born of the union between Mary and Zechariah the priest. He was therefore illegitimate.

Soon other liberals, once denounced by Graham, became a familiar sight not only on the platform but numbered among the sponsoring and organising committees. Any attempt to cast doubt on the reality of Graham's turn-about on the matter of modernism is surely to fly in the face of an ever increasing mass of evidence.

CRISIS POINT

The greatest crisis point, however, as far as the effect of modernism on Graham's course is concerned, brought tremendous sadness to those who love the Gospel of truth. In response to a query regarding the content of Graham's preaching W.H. Martindale, Spiritual Counsellor at Graham's headquarters replied, "Mr. Graham believes that we are saved through the blood of Christ, however this aspect of Christian doctrine he does not emphasise in his messages. This is the duty and prerogative of the pastors". This statement goes unretracted and underlines the tragic weakness of the kind of message being preached. Any preaching which deliberately omits the atoning blood of Christ cannot be truly called evangelistic. The preaching of the blood lies at the very heart of truth of redemption. If no other evidence existed then this matter alone is sufficient to wipe out any possibility of association with Billy Graham Crusades.

However as we move on in the record of Billy Graham's declension and now enter the realm of the Rome ward trend, we find more evidence. Regarding Ecumenism and Romanism Billy Graham had this to say:

1948 - Asked by some Conservative Baptist Association leaders: "What do you expect the World Council of Churches to do this August when you visit Copenhagen?" he answered, "I believe they are going to nominate the Anti-Christ". Again and again Graham declared that he would not hold Crusades with the approval and co-operation of Church federations which represented the Ecumenical movement. In the same year Graham

said "The three gravest menaces faced by Orthodox Christianity are Communism, Roman Catholicism and Mohammedanism."

The departure from this position has evidence which could be classified as "legion".

1961 - Graham attended, as a friend, the World Council of Churches meeting in New Delhi.

1963 - Graham stated, "I admire Pope John tremendously. It is my hope that the cardinals elect a new Pope who will follow the same line as John." 1968 - Belmont Abbey, the Roman Catholic institution hi North Carolina, bestowed an honorary doctorate on Billy Graham and he was the main speaker at their Institute for Ecumenical Dialogues.

1969 - The U.S. Congress on Evangelism was sponsored by Graham. The event was complete with rock music and a morning devotional was given by a Romanist priest.

1971 - A Romanist priest participated in the Crusade in Oakland. 1973 - In Milwaukee Graham said: " This past week I preached in a great Catholic Cathedral, a funeral sermon for a close friend of mine who was a Catholic and they had several bishops and archbishops that had come from all over the country, to participate, and as I sat there going through the funeral mass, that was a very beautiful thing".

The procedure of sending "converts" back to liberal, ecumenical and Roman Catholic churches is now well established. Graham said in 1966, "I am a man with an evangelical message and an ecumenical heart" has proved the truth of that claim.

ROMANISM INFLUENCE

The depth of the influence of Romanism in Graham's evangelism manifested itself with particular clarity in the run-up to his New England Crusade (U.S.A.) in 1982. Several Roman Catholic priests were named as observers at all Executive Committee meetings from the beginning and were made fully aware of the long range intention and concrete plans.

Furthermore in January 1981 the Religious News Service reported "Pope John Paul II was closeted for almost two hours with Rev. Billy Graham, the world's best known Protestant evangelist". Some may suggest that Graham was there to evangelise the Pope! Let Graham speak for himself; his impression of the Pope, the anti-Christ, was that he believed him to be "God's instrument for revival in our generation". Following the New England Crusade thousands of those who came forward were integrated into the Roman Catholic Church. Meetings took place between the Graham Association and the Romanist clergy for the transfer of these people into the Roman Church. One such meeting took place at Pope John XXIII Seminary in Massachusetts on the evening of 9th June 1982 when the names of 2100 inquirers were given to priests and nuns. All this only serves to underline the apostasy of those who tread the pathway of compromise.

Now in preparation for the 1984 Crusade in England the Anglican Bishop David Shephard openly boasts that he attends the preparatory prayer meetings in the company of Romanist Archbishop Warlock. With such a confession we have real reason to believe that this Crusade will follow exactly the pattern now well-established of ecumenical evangelism as pioneered and encouraged by Graham.

"COME YE OUT AND BE YE SEPARATE"

Undoubtedly our critics will say that we should not publish such an article. To them it contravenes the principle of Christian love. Such popular ideas find no justification in Scripture whatever. In fact the converse is clearly taught in the Word of God. True love for both God and fellow man is always to be manifest in outright obedience to the commands of God (I John 5:2). The Bible is our sole authority on this matter. To insinuate that evangelists and evangelism are somehow or other outside the pale of the standards of the Word of God is both ludicrous and malicious. The end does not justify the means. Remember we are not referring to minor issues where differences of opinion may well exist. We are dealing with the great fundamentals of the Christian faith. Fundamentals which Billy Graham once owned and has now departed from. What should we do? The Word of God never either condones or commands

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co-operation as our policy in these matters. Separation, not infiltration, is God's revealed procedure; we dare do not other. There is neither precept nor precedent to the contrary to be found between the covers of God's infallible Word. The cry of "Come ye out and be ye separate" calls to us from every era of God's dealings with His people.

C. H. Spurgeon, the "Prince of Preachers" once said: "I have cut myself clear of those who err from the faith, and even those who associate with them." This is God's way — see it for yourself. Concerning those who reject the truth and those who identify with them:

Recognise them: I John 4:1; Romans 15:17

Resign from them: I Timothy 6:3-5

Reprove them: Ephesians 5:11

Receive them not: II John 10,11; Revelation 18:4,5

Reject them: Titus 3:10

Read also II Corinthians 6 and II Chronicles 19:2.

We pray earnestly for the return of Billy Graham to the fold of truth and until then cannot and will not identify with his crusades.



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