

One World Religion

A One World Religion. Sounds exciting and promising, doesn't it? After all, in our world today, there are some estimates of over 30,000 Protestant denominations worldwide, so this promise of a global faith means that we will all get along...right?

Well maybe not, but more on that in a bit. While that number of 30,000+ Protestant denominations has been hotly contested, with some stating there are only 9,000 Protestant denominations worldwide, that is still a huge number of churches with varying interpretations of the Bible and, sometimes, vastly different methods and traditions on how to worship God. So how could anyone pull all of us together to worship in one accord, who could perform that miracle, and has it already begun?

We'll talk more about the "who" in a bit, but let's take a look at the "how" first and see if it has already begun in our churches today. The first thing we have to understand is that the One World Church does not worship the God of Holy Scriptures, who sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross and rise again, as payment for our sins and who will be sending His Son again soon – very soon. In fact, the False Prophet directs all to bow down and worship the AntiChrist.

Paul writes in his first letter to Timothy, *"⁴ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ² Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"* (I Timothy 4:1-2, KJV) Are we seeing this in the churches today?

1. *"Some shall depart from the faith"*

There are so many examples of this today, it is a challenge to know where to start. An article I read recently states that, according to a poll by Probe Ministries, "70% of Christians believe other religions can lead to heaven, too.", thus denying the foundation of true Christianity, that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and the only way to salvation.

This pluralism, the belief that there are many roads to salvation and not just through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, is pervasive, has infected many of our churches today, and it is one of the steps leading to this false religion of the Tribulation. Satan has to first convince the church that Jesus is only "one of many" ways to salvation and thereby perverting the truth of Holy Scripture.

Of course, this pluralism isn't anything new. It has, in fact, been going on for some time. But it is only in the last few decades that it has become so pervasive and so blatant. Reverend William Swing, the Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco, hosted a meeting at Stanford University in 1997. Delegates, numbering in the hundreds, from churches and religious organizations all over the world, attended to begin drafting a charter for an "international interfaith institution to be called The Organization of United Religions."

Also in 1997, many of those same people gathered in Melbourne, Australia for a conference on religion and cultural diversity. At the end of the conference, it was agreed that the one cardinal sin was "absolutism", or the belief that there is only one way to salvation. One of the most popular workshops at this conference was led by an ordained Christian minister, Dr John Bodycomb OAM, at that time, a full-time chaplain at the University of Melbourne. The workshop, titled "Religious

Fundamentalism”, was an all-out attack on those of us who believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, calling “Christians who believe in the Bible and embrace creationism as “mean-spirited.” He also called them “authoritarian and dictatorial,” “violent,” “aggressive,” “pathological,” and “dangerous.” He characterized them as people who are incapable of independent thinking and who “brandish their floppy Bibles like weapons.”

There is much more that could be written about this organization and this evil that is penetrating even the deepest wells of religion across our globe today, but let’s move to the current time, when the most blatant example of this pluralism is being built.

The headline on the Vatican News reads, “Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi to open in 2022” and the opening sentence proclaims this as, “The cultural landmark in the UAE capital, which includes a synagogue, a church and a mosque, is meant to be a beacon of understanding and peaceful coexistence, inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity.”

This “beacon of understanding and peaceful coexistence” has been brought about largely through the joint efforts of Pope Francis and a Sunni Muslim, Grand Imam Ahmed el-Tayeb of al-Azhar, who also co-authored the “Document on Human Fraternity” on February 4, 2019. Reading through this document is enlightening and I highly recommend it. It can be found here: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco_20190204_documento-fratellanza-umana.html

While God is mentioned several times in this document, co-authored by the head of the Catholic church, there is not one mention of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. It should also be noted that the church that is a part of this three-pronged complex on the island in Abu Dhabi cannot display the cross, as it is illegal to display any Christian symbols in the UAE.

While all this “peace and understanding” sounds nice, remember Paul’s words to the church at Ephesus, “⁶ Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. ⁷ Be not ye therefore partakers with them. ⁸ For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: ⁹ (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) ¹⁰ Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” (Ephesians 5:6-11, KJV)

2. “Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” in church history.

Throughout church history, there have been periods of time when the church was influenced, indeed changed, by worldly constructs, concepts, and beliefs. A few examples of those times are listed below.

- a. Arianism – Arius, a prominent leader of the Church of Alexandria, in Egypt, denied the dual nature of Christ, as both man and God. Arius was a talented man, and a gifted promoter of his pronouncements, who used songs and easily remembered sayings to convince many that Christ was not God. It wasn’t until 325 AD, when Emperor Constantine summoned all Christian bishops to Rome that Arianism, which had by that time spread

world-wide, was overcome. It was at this Council of Nicaea that the Divinity of Christ became a foundational tenet of the church.

- b. The Crusades – While many have been taught that the Crusades were about bringing others, mainly Muslims, to Christ, history shows us that wasn't the primary focus. By the 11th century, the Islamic empire had spread and had captured the Holy Land. The beginning of the Crusades was to take back the Holy Land, not to win souls to Christ. It could be argued that there were many benefits to the Crusades – it sparked an interest in education across the Middle East, which may have led to the Renaissance, it improved trade routes, and it expanded the power and reach of the Roman Catholic Church.
- c. The "Holy Inquisition" – led by the Roman Catholic Church, the period of the Inquisitions were characterized by mass murders, horrors in enslavement and torture during the Middle Ages.
- d. Apartheid – Primarily led by the Dutch Reformed church, apartheid enforced segregation against non-whites in South Africa in the mid-20th century. Although the non-whites were the majority of the population, they were forced to live in separate areas, use separate public facilities, and worship separately from whites. It wasn't until President F.W. de Klerk's administration in the 1990s that those racial laws were repealed and their constitution rewritten. Nelson Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk were both later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work in overcoming apartheid.
- e. Prohibition – The 18th Amendment of the United States, ratified on January 16, 1919 and put in effect one year later, prohibited the sale and import of alcoholic beverages from 1920 to 1933. This movement was largely invoked by mainly Protestant social leagues, such as The American Temperance Society, founded in 1826, which led to other powerful social influences, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, founded in 1873.

While the goal may have been admirable – to remove the negative results of drunkenness – the methodology and the purpose itself, was carnal and led to a false belief that alcoholic beverages are banned, or called a sin, in the Bible. That's just simply not so. Remember, Jesus himself turned water into wine at the wedding, causing the host of the wedding to remark to the bridegroom, *"¹⁰ And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."* (John 2:10, KJV)

This belief, that drinking any alcoholic beverages is a sin, is one that has lingered even to this day, especially among my own denomination, the Southern Baptists. Growing up, I remember hearing the old saying, that "any lips that touch (wine, whiskey, beer – just fill in the blank) will never touch mine."

While we are admonished in the Bible not to give into drunkenness, there are many verses in the Bible that show how wine is actually a blessing to us. *"¹⁴ He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;¹⁵ And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."* (Psalm 104:14-15, KJV)

In fact, I would daresay that wine will be served at that wedding feast in Heaven, when the Church is raptured. ⁶ *And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.*" (Isaiah 26:6, KJV)

- f. Slavery and segregation in the south – While slavery and segregation were not introduced by the church, religious leaders of the time actually justified slavery and the slave trade, by stating that these slave owners and traders were performing a noble Christian act by converting and enslaving Africans. Nearly a century after slavery was abolished, "less than two dozen of the South's 100,000 white churches were known to have any Black members." In 1957, Dr. John Buchanan, a prominent pastor and Man of the Year in Birmingham, Alabama, defended racial division and told the Birmingham News, "[T]he good Lord set up the customs and practices of segregation."

While the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was not founded by a church, but by Confederate veterans of the Civil War in Pulaski, TN in 1865, it was Protestant activists around Atlanta, that saw its resurgence in 1915.

Were each of these periods of history the result of "seducing spirits?" That's hard to say, since most of the leaders of these various organizations are long gone and it is difficult now to fully determine what their motivations and/or inspirational sources were. What each of these do have in common, however, is a reliance on government, or human authority, rather than God to solve the ills of society and that is a trend that continues to this day. You cannot legislate morality, or force anyone to follow God. It is, and has to be, a personal choice.

3. *"Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"* in the church today.

Studying church history is always interesting and can bring current issues within the church into clearer focus, but it doesn't give the whole picture of where we are today. Are there "seducing spirits" in the church today?

- a. "My body – my rights"

In popular culture today, there seems to be this concept of individual freedom without accountability that pervades our society. It denies individual responsibility or accountability, yet at the same time claims any, and all, "individual rights." A good example of this is the current attitude towards abortion.

The first birth control clinic, opened at a time when birth control by any means was illegal in the United States, was opened in Brooklyn, NY in 1916 by the Planned Parenthood Association, founded by Margaret Sanger. It was only open 9 days before police shut it down, but Margaret Sanger didn't stop there and today, the Planned Parenthood Association claims they, and their affiliates, operate more than 600 health clinics nationwide.

While the word "abortion" is not mentioned in the Bible, there are many verses about the sacredness of life and when, in God's view, life begins. God tells the prophet Jeremiah, ⁵ *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the*

womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:5, KJV) So God knew Jeremiah before he was even formed in his mother’s womb, which would seem to indicate that his, Jeremiah’s, life began even prior to conception.

David, in one of his Psalms, proclaims that God knew him before he was even born, ¹³ *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁶ Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”* (Psalm 139:13,16, KJV)

There are many more Scriptures that could be quoted, giving evidence to 1) what God sees as the beginning of life and 2) the sacredness of life to God, but this document is not intended as a treatise on the pros and cons of abortion. The question here is, are churches today being influenced by “seducing spirits”?

The United Methodist Church, in their Book of Discipline, supports abortion in limited circumstances, “We recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers.” In that same paragraph, they also state “We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection or eugenics (see Resolution 3184).”

In a “Report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies”, copyrighted in 1992, the Presbyterian Church of the USA concluded, among other statements, “e. The considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only or required, decision. Possible justifying circumstances would include medical indications of severe physical or mental deformity, conception as a result of rape or incest, or conditions under which the physical or mental health of either woman or child would be gravely threatened.”

It should be noted that it is recognized within the medical community, that few, if any, abortions are necessary to save the life of the mother. Alan Guttmacher, a former President of the Planned Parenthood Association, has been quoted, “Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal disease such as cancer or leukemia, and if so, abortion would be unlikely to prolong, much less save the life of the mother.”

C. Everett Koop, M.D., former U.S. Surgeon General, stated “Protection of the life of the mother as an excuse for an abortion is a smoke screen. In my 36 years in pediatric surgery I have never known of one instance where the child had to be aborted to save the mother’s life.”

While these two churches accept abortion as a solution under limited circumstances, at least 2 other religious organizations accept it, with minimal or no restrictions. The United Church of Christ states, “After the Supreme Court decision in 1972, *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in the U.S., the UCC has joined with other faith groups to protect women’s equal and fair access to abortion and family planning which have been under

attack consistently.”, clearly stating their support for “woman’s choice” as to when to have children, how many to have, and the means of controlling those choices.

The Unitarian Universalist Association has also clearly stated its support for “woman’s choice” in its 1987 General Resolution: “THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1987 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association reaffirms its historic position, supporting the right to choose contraception and abortion as legitimate aspects of the right to privacy;”

The sanctity of life and when life begins are very clearly put forth in the scriptures. Whenever common culture goes against the Bible, it is up to us, as His children, to proclaim His Word and not be followers of this world.

b. His and Hers

The World Health Organization has redefined gender in today’s world. Divorcing “gender” from anatomical sexual characteristics, they have stated “Gender identity exists on a spectrum” and “Sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity.” They further state that our perception of gender “typically align with the socially constructed binary of masculine and feminine forms of expression” implying that gender is a social concept defined by man and not a spiritual concept defined by God.

This has pervaded our culture to the point where it is now frowned upon to look at gender as a binary – either male or female – construct. In a recent headline, a freshman football player was suspended from one game after stating that he believes in only two genders. The statement was apparently made on the school bus and, again, in a private text communication with another student, off school grounds.

This belief in a non-binary gender identity is even impacting how public facilities are labeled and used. In an article published on the website for the National Center for Biotechnology Information, it is argued that His and Hers restrooms have “sparked controversy to the extent that transgender people face embarrassment and even expulsion from these spaces. The lack of access of the transgender population to public restrooms has a negative impact on the physical and mental health of this population.”

Regardless of how the world defines it, we as Christians need to look at it from the biblical definition. Did God define gender? Verses in Genesis would seem to indicate so, ²⁶ *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.* ²⁷ *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.* (Genesis 1:26-27, KJV)

Jesus responded to the Pharisees, when they tried to tempt him on the coasts of Judaea with the question, *“Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?”* (Matthew 19:3, KJV). Jesus responded, ⁴ *And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,* ⁵ *And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain*

*shall be one flesh?*⁶ *Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*" (Matthew 19:4-6, KJV, emphasis added)

While this concept of multiple genders has pervaded our culture, and it is clearly countered in the scriptures, the question here is: has this concept pervaded our churches? The answer is yes, it has.

In a recent announcement, the Reformed Church in America, a nearly 400 year old denomination, has announced that it will be reorganized due to differences over LGBTQ ordination and same-sex marriages.

The Alliance of Baptists, formerly a part of the Southern Baptist Convention, adopted a "Statement on Same-sex Marriages" at their annual convention in 2004, held in Dayton, Ohio. This statement had the following bullet points:

- "Supported equality in marriage for both opposite-sex and same-sex couples throughout the U.S.
- Opposed the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment which would restrict marriage to opposite-sex couples."

Earlier this year, in March '21, the conservatives within the United Methodist church announced their plans to break away from the United Methodist church over disagreement with the current ordination of LGBTQ ministers and recognition of same-sex marriages.

There are more examples that could be cited, but we'll leave it here. There can be no question that this concept of multiple genders, which is contrary to biblical teaching, has invaded and is significantly impacting the church today.

c. Social Justice

We all want justice, right? We know our God is a just God and we all strive to be more like Him, so why would we not strive to achieve social justice?

Well, as Voddie Baucham says, "I don't think it means what we think it means." In fact, Voddie Baucham does such an excellent job of explaining what it means that I highly recommend this video ("Biblical justice vs Social justice", Voddie Baucham, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i60eQZPG5XM>, February 18, 2021).

Social justice means a justice that is equitably (though not necessarily equally) distributed; where those with more – opportunity, wealth, and/or privileges – have those things taken away and given to those with less, usually by a state or governing authority.

I am a Christian, born-again, and have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, so I have no issue with sharing whatever I have with those in need. In fact, the Bible tells us that pleases God, "¹⁶ *But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*" (Hebrews 13:16, KJV)

We are also told that, in giving, we receive as much and more than we give, ³⁸ *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*” (Luke 6:38, KJV)

So giving and sharing is a basic tenet of Christianity. But that giving and sharing is from one to another, as needs arise. It is giving and sharing freely, not imposed by government or men’s authority. Taking from one and giving it to another by government is stealing, to put it bluntly. The real danger is that those in authority will be inclined, given human nature, to take from their enemies and give to their friends, regardless of needs or equality. In fact, that is exactly what has happened in those countries where socialism has taken over – the balance of power, privileges, and wealth were taken from one group and given to another group, but not always fairly and almost never equally. Instead of removing the oppressors and raising up the oppressed, what socialism has accomplished is actually just swapping those roles – making the oppressed the new oppressors and the old oppressors the new oppressed.

The question here is whether this has permeated our churches and the answer has to be an unequivocal “yes”.

Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the National United Methodist Church’s home page, where they proclaim, “At National UMC, we are...Passionate about Social Justice” (<https://nationalchurch.org/>) over an image of clear blue skies with the LGBTQ flag waving in the background. Again, to quote Voddie Baucham, “I don’t think this means what we think it means.”

Social justice, while sounding like a good and positive thing, is not biblical justice. Social justice is built on the concepts of critical race theory and intersectionality: neither of which are biblical concepts. Social justice attempts to define us by what group we are in, but God deals with each of us individually. He knows us and has known us since before we were even formed in our mother’s womb. Social justice looks at our outward appearance: God ignores the outward appearance and looks at our heart.

Don’t be deceived by nice-sounding phrases, as many of our churches are today. Go first to God’s Word and let His voice guide you.

The One World Church, during the time of the Tribulation, is led by the False Prophet, as described in Revelation:

¹¹ *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*¹² *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.* ¹³ *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,”* (Revelation 13:11-13, KJV)

This second beast is given powers just like the beast that precedes him – the AntiChrist – and his primary purpose is to lead all to worship that first beast. He is able to perform great wonders, even causing the idol, or image of the first beast that will be created, to speak: ¹⁵ *And he had power to give life unto the*

image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” (Revelation 13:15, KJV)

It is he, the False Prophet, who brings about, and forces upon all mankind, the infamous “mark of the beast”: ¹⁶ *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:* ¹⁷ *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* ¹⁸ *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” (Revelation 13:16-18, KJV)*

We do not know, as of this writing, who the False Prophet will be, just as we do not yet know the identity of the Anti-Christ, and we won't know until the signing of that seven year peace treaty with Israel, signaling the beginning of the Tribulation.

If you are reading this today and you have not yet given your life to Christ, then I beg you, Please do it now. It doesn't matter what sins you have committed in the past. It doesn't matter what lifestyle you have lived. It doesn't matter how unworthy you may think you are.

God meets us where we are. He called me back, after 25 years of living in sin, doing whatever my heart desired, and ignoring the truth I would find in His words. He knew where I had been, but He also knew where I could go with His guidance. He knows where you have been, too, and He knows what you can accomplish for His glory, with His love, mercy, and forgiveness overflowing and surrounding you.

Susan Mouw, Author
The Road to the Cross
Go Set A Watchman
(coming soon) As In the Days of Noah
Website: roadtothecross.org