

“*Watchman,
what of the night?*”

“*The hour has come, the hour is striking and striking at you,
the hour and the end!*” *Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)*

Doctrine of the Incarnation

Other Sources (1888 -1915)

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CCT in USA

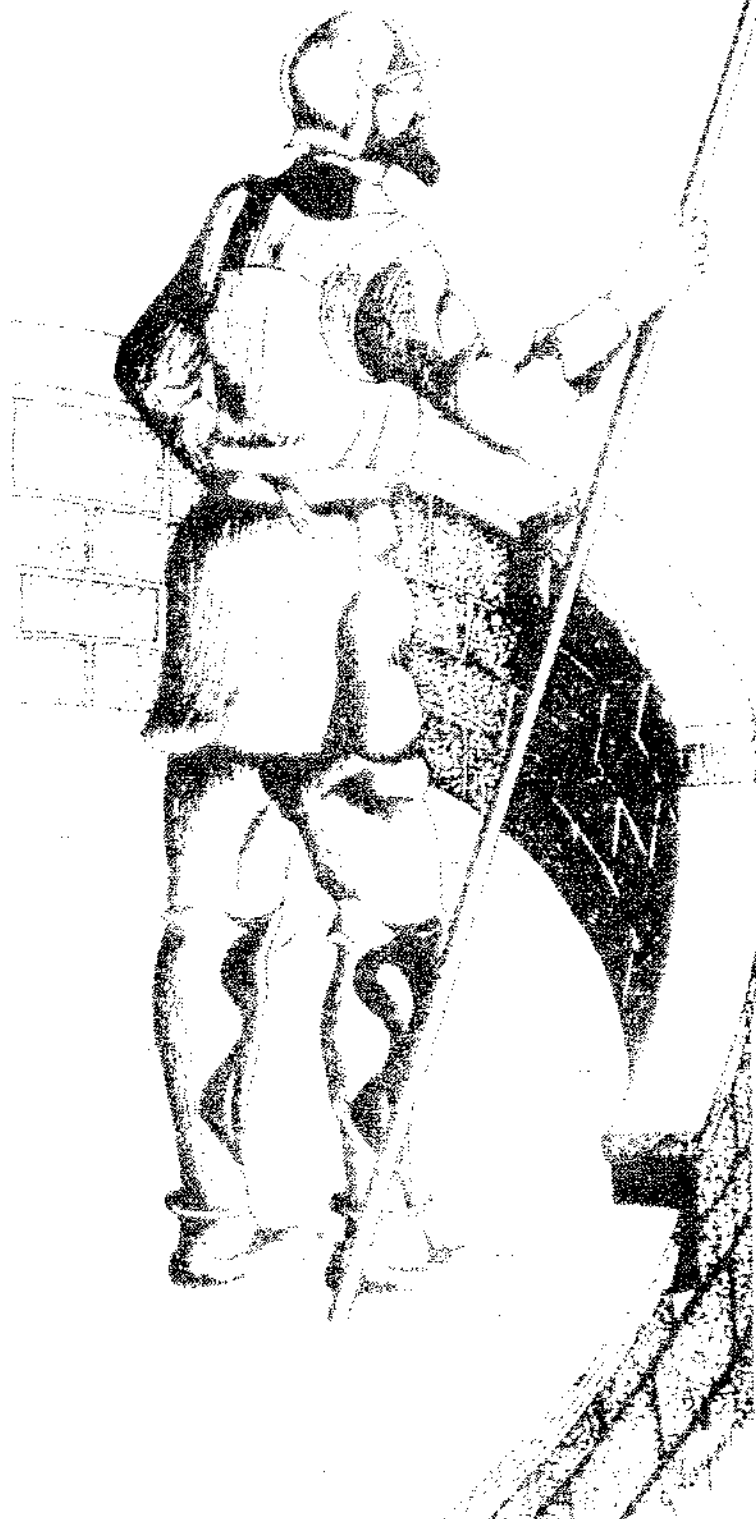
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Editor's Preface

Pages 2 through most of 6 are devoted to the reproduction and refinement of Chapter 5 of the manuscript — *An Interpretive History of the Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church*.

Just as we were nearing the completion of this issue of WWN, we received in the mail key pages from the 1st Quarter's Sabbath School Lesson Guide. As noted in the "Other Sources" the Sabbath School Lessons (now called "Study Guides") are key avenues to convey truth and to set forth just what the Church believes on a given doctrine. What was written in the two lessons of the Study Guide echoes the thinking of Rome. Observe carefully the article - "A Body You have prepared for Me." The editor of the Study Guide, Clifford Goldstein, needs to give an accounting of the introduction of Catholic thinking into lessons for the Church at Study. To my knowledge, he has never been enrolled or taken a single Bible course in one of the Church's institutions of higher learning. Yet he is placed in the sensitive position as an editor of the Sabbath School lesson quarterly. He is featured in the *Adventist Review* from time to time. (For an example see the November 25, 2004 issue, p. 27). A complete investigation needs to be conducted into Goldstein's background and why he was placed in this sensitive position and why his introduction of Catholic symbolism and nomenclature into the lessons for the Church at study.

The final article notes that the new ecumenical council being formed — Christian Churches Together in the USA — has as its objective, the visible unity of all Christian Churches into "the one apostolic faith." This translates into the Roman Catholic Church and Its Eucharist.



The Doctrine of the Incarnation as Taught in Adventism - 5

OTHER SOURCES 1888-1915

The first *Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* was published by the Pacific Press in 1889. This issue was preceded by three lesson pamphlets in 1888 and 1889, each of which contained lessons for six months (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, art. "Sabbath School Publications," p. 1127). Along with the Writings, these Sabbath School Lesson Quarterlies for the Senior Division represent an authoritative source as to what was believed and taught by the Church at any given period. During the period from 1888 through 1915, where the subject of the Incarnation was either the lesson topic or was discussed as a section of the lesson, the concepts presented harmonized with what had been taught by the Church prior to 1888. Also during this time, the statements concerning the nature of the humanity assumed by the Son of God in becoming the Son of man became increasingly more positive and definitive.

In a lesson for the 2nd Quarter of 1896 which discussed the subject of the Incarnation, this note was found:

Christ was not only born a man, but was born under the law, both to be judged by the law, and to be dealt with according to the law in His own person; and as man's representative, to satisfy the law for all of man's transgressions of it. ... In order to meet man where he was after the fall, Christ emptied Himself of all His glory and power, becoming just as dependent on the Father for life and daily strength as sinful man is dependent upon Him (*Senior Quarterly*, 2nd Qrt. 1896, p. 11).

A lesson during the 4th Quarter of the same year contained this observation:

Christ in His humanity lived a life of dependence upon the Father. This He did, not of necessity, but of choice, that He might be a perfect example to us. He did not exchange His divinity for humanity, but, clothing His divinity with humanity, He emptied Himself, and did not avail

Himself of His divine attributes in His contest with evil. ... He won for us in our human nature a life of victory over evil, and made it possible for us to live the life which He lived. ... Christ in His humanity, subject to all the conditions and limitations of humanity, obeyed perfectly that law which He in His divinity had proclaimed with His own voice from Sinai, and thus won for us a life of obedience, which, as our High Priest, He ministers to all who yield themselves to Him (*ibid.* 4th Qrt., 1896, pp. 11-12).

In 1902, a lesson was studied which associated the incarnation of Christ with the tabernacle constructed at Mount Sinai. After reviewing the gospel promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the author of the lesson stated that the chief provision of these promises was the commitment of "the Son of God in the flesh as the power of the promise to restore all things." Through these promises "the same lesson was being taught which was afterward given a more detailed form in the tabernacle and its services. The truth thus revealed was the incarnation of the Son of God and His mediatorship in the flesh ... The tabernacle and its services, afterward embodied in a more permanent form in the temple, constituted a parable, a concrete revelation of the gospel. This 'tent of meeting,' this 'tabernacle of witness,' was constantly testifying to God's purpose that humanity should be His temple, through the gift of His Son in the flesh, who would become 'the appointed meeting-place between God and humanity'" (*ibid.* 2nd Qrt. 1902, pp. 20-21).

The Sabbath School classes in 1909 studied a lesson based on John 1:1-18. The note which commented on verse 14 - "The Word became flesh" - stated:

Divinity tabernacled in the flesh of humanity. Not the flesh of sinless man, but such flesh as the children of earth possess. That was the glory of it. The divine Seed could manifest the glory of God in sinful flesh, even to absolute and perfect victory over every tendency of the flesh (*Ibid.*, 2nd Qrt., 1909, p. 8).

Six weeks later a note in the *Quarterly* contained the comment:

Jesus was God acting in sinful flesh on behalf of the sinner. He made Himself one with humanity. He took upon Himself the woes, the needs, and sins, of humanity, so that He felt the consciousness and keenness of it as no other soul ever felt it (*Ibid.*, p. 20).

Among the topics for the First Quarter of 1913 was a study on the relationship between the Incarnation and the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The first note read:

It is very important that we should have a clear understanding of the relation of the incarnation of Christ to His mediatorial work. He was made priest "after a power of endless life," in order that He might minister grace, mercy, and power to the weak and erring. This is accomplished by making such a close union with those needing help, that divinity and humanity are brought into personal relation, and the very Spirit and life of God dwell in the flesh of the believer. In order to establish this relation between God and sinful flesh, it was necessary for the Son of God to take sinful flesh; and thus was bridged the gulf which separated sinful man from God (*Ibid.*, 1st Qrt., 1913, p. 14).

Note No. 3 concluded the lesson study for the Sabbath. It stated:

By assuming sinful flesh, and voluntarily making Himself dependent upon His Father to keep Him from sin while He was in the world, Jesus not only set the example for all Christians, but also made it possible for Him to minister to sinful flesh the gift of His own Spirit and the power for obedience to the will of God (*Ibid.*, p. 15).

In this lesson not only were the positive aspects of the Incarnation in relationship to the mediatorial work of Christ presented, but also the false mediatorial system of the Roman Catholic church was discussed. The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception was declared to be a denial of Christ's true incarnation. It was observed that "this denial of the perfect union of Christ with sinful flesh opens the way for a series of substitutionary mediators whose duty it is to bring the sinner into saving touch with Christ" (*Ibid.*, 1st Qrt., 1913, p. 14).

The lessons for the 2nd Quarter of 1913 continued the general theme of the Sanctuary and Christ's mediation. It was pointed out that

God through the sanctuary service sought to teach the vital truth that He indeed would dwell with man. One lesson noted that the Babylonian teaching was that the God of the heavens would not dwell with flesh (Dan. 2:11). The 18th question asked - "What is the teaching of modern Babylon concerning the same fundamental doctrine?" The answer read:

By the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Rome teaches that the mother of Jesus was preserved from the stain of original sin, and that she had sinless flesh. Consequently she was separated from the rest of humanity. As a result of this separation of Jesus from sinful flesh, the Roman priesthood has been instituted in order that there may be some one to mediate between Christ and the sinner (Senior Lesson, 2nd Qrt., 1913, p. 25).

The student was referred to Note #5 which quoted a Roman source as saying that a belief which considered Christ as assuming sinful flesh was "revolting." The note concluded - "Thus by shutting Christ away from the same flesh and blood which we have ..., modern Babylon really denies the vital truth of Christianity, although pretending to teach it. Such is 'the mystery of iniquity'" (*ibid.*, p. 26).

During the last Quarter of 1913, the book of Romans was the subject of the Sabbath School lessons. In the first lesson, Note #5 commented upon the phrase that Christ was "of the seed according to the flesh." It read:

Christ was, therefore, of the royal line through His mother. But He was more than this; He was the same flesh as the seed of David, in and through which for generations had flowed the blood of sinful humanity, - Solomon, and Rehoboam, and Ahaz, and Manasseh, and Amon, and Jeconiah, and others. The Son of God took this same flesh in order that He might meet temptation for us, and overcome with divine power every trial we must meet. Christ is our Brother in the flesh, our Saviour from sin (*Ibid.*, 4th Qrt., p. 6).

The study of the book of Romans reached into the first quarter of 1914. In the lesson which included Romans 8:3-4, this note is found:

What the law in sinful man could not do, God did by sending His own Son. That Son took the flesh of sinful man, and overcame where man failed, overthrew sin in the flesh; and so He can come into the flesh of those who will open their hearts to receive Him, with the same power, and conquer sin there (*ibid.*, 1st Qrt., 1914, p. 16).

During this period, an editorial appeared in the *Review & Herald*, captioned, "Like Unto His Brethren" (Nov. 9, 1905). The editorial stressed the humanity of our Lord. Beginning with Genesis 3:15, a series of texts were introduced to show Christ's identity with humanity. Both the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the confirmation of His life in the New, were quoted in support of this position. Then this observation followed – "And it is further declared that the flesh which Jesus took and in which He was tempted, was the same as the flesh of the other members of the human family, sinful flesh." The results of this life were also spelled out for the reader: "Jesus is a perfect Saviour because, having lived in our sinful flesh without sin, [as] the Son of man, He has formed such a union between divinity and humanity that He is able to live the same life in us.

The editorial portrayed the risks that confronted Christ in His acceptance of fallen human nature. Even as a child, He would be subject to Satan's temptations, but in spite of the risks to His Godhead, "accepted the conditions which sin had imposed upon the human family." The *Desire of Ages* was quoted in support of this position:

Into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's perils in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss (p. 49).

Reaction was quick in coming from the readers. Within a month another editorial appeared answering questions which the first editorial engendered. One asked about the risk which Christ accepted in the light of the foreknowledge of God. To this question, the editor replied:

Our correspondent practically raises the old question of free will and foreordination. His position is that God knew before He sent His Son into the world that He would not fail, and therefore there was no risk of failure. In the same way Christ must have known the outcome of His mission to this earth. ...

In coming to these conclusions our correspondent looks at the question from the standpoint of the divinity of Christ, and does not give due weight to the considerations which arise from the humanity of Christ. God sent forth His Son into the world as a man, subject to the conditions and experiences of humanity. As a man Jesus sustained the same relation to the foreknowledge of God as is sustained by every man. The foreknowledge of God did not limit His freedom as a man. His freedom as a man did not interfere with the foreknowledge of God. As a man endowed with the freedom of choice, [with] the second Adam, there was the same possibility of failure as there was with the first Adam in his sinless state. Otherwise there would be neither force nor comfort in the statement that He was "in all points tempted as we are." Otherwise the agony and the bloody sweat, and the cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" would have been merely as acting of a part, and Christ's experience on this earth would have been the same sort of an example of trust in God as is the villain in the play who knows that the revolver is loaded with blank cartridges, and that he will be all right again as soon as the curtain falls. As a man Christ knew, through faith in God's word, that His Father was able to keep Him from falling, just as any man may know it who will believe God. In the fullness of this faith Christ committed Himself to His Father's keeping power, and was not disappointed. The same privilege is offered to every man (*Editorial, R & H, Dec. 7, 1905*).

A second editorial appeared in December because of continued reaction from the field (*ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1905). The editor began by stating – "A reader of the *Review* has written to the editor at some length concerning a statement in a recent editorial to the effect that the flesh which Jesus took was sinful flesh." The original editorial had supported this assertion by using Romans 8:3. The reader wrote:

I notice that this Scripture does not say that God sent His own Son 'in sinful flesh,' but 'in the

likeness of sinful flesh.' To me this seems a very different statement. How could one in sinful flesh be perfect, be holy, be unblemished (free from stain)?"

In replying to this question, the editor indicated there were two ways to answer it. One was to introduce "positive proof in support of our view." The other would be to reason from consequences which "would follow from the position taken by our correspondent." The editor decided to use both options. As "positive" proof Hebrews 2:14-17 was introduced with these conclusions:

The natural and legitimate conclusion from this declaration would be that the flesh and blood of Jesus were same as the children had. ...

The mission of Jesus was not to rescue fallen angels, but to save fallen man. He therefore identified Himself with man, and not with angels, and He became "in all things" like unto those whom He professed to help. The flesh of man is sinful. In order to be "in all things" like unto man, it was necessary that Jesus should take sinful flesh.

The next text cited was the text used in the original editorial – Romans 8:3. The editor compared the wording with Philippians 2:7 where Christ came in the likeness of men, and then asked – "Do we not rightly conclude that Jesus was really a man when we read that He was made 'in the likeness of men'? – Most certainly. The only way in which He could be 'in the likeness of men' was to become a man. ... Is it not equally clear that the only way in which God could send His Son 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' would be for that Son to have sinful flesh?"

Turning to the consequences of rejecting the fact that Christ accepted the fallen nature of man when He assumed humanity, the editor wrote:

If the Son of God did not dwell in sinful flesh when He was born into the world, then the ladder has not been let down from heaven to earth, and the gulf between a holy God and fallen humanity has not been bridged. It would then be necessary that some further means should be provided in

order to complete the connection between the Son of God and sinful flesh. And this is exactly what the Roman Catholic Church has done. ... First come the priests on earth, which are known to have sinful flesh; then come those who did dwell in sinful flesh, but are now canonized by the church as saints in heaven; next the angels; and lastly the mother of Jesus. Thus the door to heaven is not Jesus, but the church, and such a price is charged for opening the door as it is believed the sinner or his friends can pay. These are the consequences which naturally follow the doctrine that Jesus did not take sinful flesh, and we avoid these consequences by denying this doctrine, and holding to the plain teaching of the Scriptures.

In answering the second part of the reader's question – "How could one in sinful flesh be perfect, be holy"? - the editor well stated:

This question touches the very heart of our Christianity. The teaching of Jesus is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And through the apostle Peter comes the instruction, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." None will deny that we have sinful flesh, and we therefore ask how it will be possible to meet the requirements of Scripture if it is not possible for one to be perfect or holy in sinful flesh. The very hope of our attaining perfection and holiness is based upon the wonderful truth that the perfection and holiness of divinity were revealed in sinful flesh in the person of Jesus. We are not able to explain how this could be, but our salvation is found in believing the fact. ... It is the crowning glory of our religion that even flesh of sin may become a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

During this period – 1888-1915 – publications from two different publishing houses of the Church taught the same fundamental doctrine in regard to the Incarnation of Christ. Uriah Smith, while serving as associate editor of the *Review & Herald*, released a book – *Looking unto Jesus*. In this book the following comments are found noting the nature of the humanity which Christ assumed as the Son of man:

... He humbled Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, by consenting to take the fashion of puny, mortal, sinful man. In the likeness of sinful flesh, He reached down to the very depths of man's fallen condition, and

became obedient unto death, even the ignominious death of the cross (p. 23).

He came in the likeness of sinful flesh to demonstrate before all parties in the controversy that it is possible for men in the flesh to keep the law. He demonstrated this by keeping it Himself. On our plain of existence, and in our nature, He rendered such obedience to every principle and precept, that the eye of Omniscience itself could detect no flaw therein. His whole life was but a transcript of that law, in its spiritual nature, and in its holy, just, and good demands. Thus He condemned sin in the flesh, by living Himself in the flesh and doing no sin; showing that it was possible for man thus to live (p. 30).

In 1911, the Pacific Press published a book – *Questions Answered* - compiled by the editor, Milton C. Wilcox, gathered from the "Question Corner" of the *Signs of the Times*. One question asked was concerning the text in Hebrews 2:14-17. In answering this question, the editor noted the steps in Christ's sacrifice "to break the power of sin, unify God's broken creation, and save man." Commenting on the step, "in the likeness of men," he wrote:

In this step the eternal Logos "became flesh," the same as we; for He was "born of a woman, born under the law," under its condemnation, as a human, having the flesh with all the human tendencies; a partaker of the "flesh and blood" of humanity; "in all things" "made like unto His brethren," "suffered being tempted." And He met all the temptations even as you and I must meet them, by faith in the will and Word of God. There is not a tendency in the flesh of humanity but what dwelt in His. And He overcame them all (p. 31).

In 1915, a revised *Bible Reading for the Home Circle* was published by the Review & Herald Publishing Association. This work became the standard evangelistic publication of the Church for more than three decades. From this book many Seventh-day Adventists received their first knowledge of present truth. The chapter – "A Sinless Life" – is so completely representative of the teaching of the Church till about 1950 in regard to Christ's humanity, and the reproduction of that life in every believer that it is reproduced in full as Appendix B for comparison and study. The question and answer from that

chapter which concisely summarizes the position of the Church on the nature of the humanity which the Son of God assumed, not only for this period, but from 1844 to 1950, reads as follows: The question is asked – "How fully did Christ share our common humanity?" The answer read (p. 115):

"Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" [Heb. 2:17].

Note: In His humanity Christ partook of our sinful, fallen nature. If not, then He was not "made like unto His brethren," was not "in all points tempted like as we are," did not overcome as we have to overcome, and is not, therefore, the complete and perfect Saviour man needs and must have to be saved. The idea that Christ was born of an immaculate or sinless mother, inherited no tendencies to sin, and for this reason did not sin, removes Him from the realm of a fallen world, and from the very place where help is needed. On the human side, Christ inherited just what every child of Adam inherits, - a sinful nature. On the divine side, from His very conception He was begotten and born of the Spirit. And all this was done to place mankind on vantage-ground, and to demonstrate that *in the same way* every one who is "born of the Spirit" may gain like victories over sin in his own sinful flesh. Thus each one is to overcome *as Christ overcame*. Rev. 3:21. Without this birth there can be no victory over temptation, and no salvation from sin. John 3:3-7.

"A Body You Have Prepared for Me"



This title and representation of a Roman Catholic nun in habit prefaced Sabbath School Lesson #4 in the *Study Guide* for the 1st Quarter, 2005. The one sending me pages from both lessons #4

and #6 questioned, "A nun representing Mary?" This is a logical deduction inasmuch as Lesson #4 discussed the Incarnation. But it goes a step further. The title is a text from Hebrews 10:5, which was a key verse used by the "Holy Flesh" men of Indiana. This phase of the history of the doctrine of the Incarnation as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be discussed in the May issue of WWN.

Lesson #6 was captioned, "The Passion WEEK." The one sending me these pages commented with insight - "Catholic terminology" - and observed, "I find no Spirit of prophecy use of the word, 'passion' pertaining to Christ's sufferings and death." Then in the introductory paragraph to this lesson is to be found the assumption, "We adore the cross." Adoration is basic in Romanism. They "adore" the images of the Virgin Mary as well as the crucifix, and by the use of this terminology deny that they are worshipping these representations. But those following the Protestant ethic through song and voice proclaim, "We serve a risen Saviour." While we may "survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died," it remains only a symbol of "suffering and shame" not an object of adoration or worship as is the crucifix.

CCT in the USA

This title stands for "Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A." It represents a new ecumenical organization to which the Roman Catholic Church through its American Bishops has united. This group - Evangelical, Orthodox, Pentecostal, mainline Protestant as well as Roman Catholics - have written to "all Christians in the United States to share [their] longing for an expanded Christian conversation" in the United States. They declared themselves to be "Christians who long for greater unity." They indicated that this longing most clearly points us to "something new" as a possibility for the churches in the United States.

What does this "something new" involve? The Catholic News Service (CNS) for Nov. 18, 2004 in reporting the decision of the US Catholic Bishops to join this new national ecumenical

forum, noted the comments of Bishop Stephen Blaire of Stockton, California, who is chairman of the Committee on Ecumenical Affairs of the Bishop's Conference. He emphasized that "for the Catholic Church the ultimate goal of ecumenism is the full, visible unity of all Christian churches in the one apostolic faith."

Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz of Lincoln, Nebraska, asked "if the other churches in the CCT are aware of the perspective from which the Catholic Church approaches the organization. To this question Blaire responded that "not only are the other churches aware of the Catholic view, but many of them also believe that full visible unity is the ultimate goal and that organizations such as the CCT are only interim steps." The CCT will seek to offer a "common witness" several ways, the first one being "a common confession of faith in the Triune God."

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had with Karl Rove, President Bush's political guru. He asked Rove to tell the president that he had mastered the art of Catholic governance. To this Rove replied, "That's pretty good for a Methodist." The American Society of Tradition Family and Property indicates privately "that Bush is more Catholic" than any Catholic who could be elected as President in this country. That says something when the Democrats chose a Catholic for their candidate.

Weyrich continued to comment:

If you examine Bush's speech to the Republican delegates in Philadelphia, that speech had a deeply Catholic tone to it. And likewise Bush's inauguration speech, brief as it was, also had a Catholic overlay to it. This is far more than the work of a speechwriter. It obviously reflects some of Bush's strongly held views.

In an article in the *New Republic* April 3, 2001, Ryan Lizza tells of Bush's speech to commemorate the opening of the John Paul II Cultural Center at Catholic University. Then he commented: "Bush has courted the Catholic vote more doggedly than any modern president, explicitly - and often eloquently - placing "compassionate conservatism" within the context of the Catholic tradition of aiding the underprivileged and protecting the sanctity of life." The same article further stated that the "President makes a point of meeting with local bishops wherever he travels, but especially on visits to swing states. He has made Catholic leaders fixtures at White House events, and his political staff holds a weekly conference call with conservative Catholics."

Another pre-election report stated that "Bush was so eager for a meeting with Pope John Paul II that he flew overnight to Rome to cram in a visit before the Pontiff - who said that he couldn't rearrange his schedule - left Rome the next day." He had, according to the report, his knuckles rapped by the pope over the war in Iraq. The question was asked, "Why would Bush subject himself to this?" The answer: "Bush badly needed Catholic votes." There is no mistaking the surge of Catholic votes for Bush, along with those of the Evangelicals, which speaks volumes.

This Space - Page 8

Each issue of WWN is sent out in two mailings, one as "Bulkmail" to readers in the USA, and the other as a "Periodical" for readers overseas and Canada. The Bulkmail is folded and stapled thus leaving page 8 for mailing label and return address. The periodical mailing requires that the issue be placed in an envelope, and contain the information given in the above paragraph. Thus page 8 is left blank unless some additional data is placed on it. We try to place relevant material that would be of interest to our readers overseas and Canada who receive the periodical mailing. This becomes at times a difficult decision due to the volume of data received from the Webmaster, readers, and found in publications which the Library receives. Besides this, the Library has documentation from the past which is relevant to the present. This brief explanation will seek to illustrate the picture or problem, however, it may be perceived.

On January 6, 1895, Pope Leo XIII released an Encyclical Letter in which he stated:

It would be very erroneous to draw the conclusion that in America is to be sought the type of the most desirable status of the Church, or that it would be universally lawful or expedient for state and church to be, as in America, dissevered and divorced. ... She would bring forth more abundant fruits if, in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favour of the laws and patronage of the public authority (Quoted in Facts of Faith, p. 257).

Paul M. Weyrich of the Free Congress Foundation tells of a telephone conversation he