

Whose Platform?



As convincing as such arguments may sound they are not in harmony with the scriptures. However, one can see how even the 'very elect' may possibly be deceived, as the scriptures have warned. But what of the 'unity' that is being extolled? Currently there is diversity among Christian denominations which nonetheless continue to claim/believe that they are all serving the same God. What would it mean to eliminate the 'division' between them which is labeled above as 'diabolic'? Is it that the entire Christian world should be united on one platform, pushing aside fundamental irreconcilable differences? Then whose platform would that be? From the above, the answer to that should be clear and any persons/group that refuses to join in would be in trouble.

We are indeed witnessing the amazing fulfillment of many end-time prophecies found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. These prophecies were given by God so that we may be prepared and not caught unaware, thereby to be swept away to our destruction. Our security lies in standing on the foundation provided by the pioneers of our church and in giving loving obedience to God through faith

in Jesus Christ and by rightly dividing the word of truth which is mercifully provided for us "upon whom the ends of the world are come".

The videos by Pope Francis and Bishop Palmer may be viewed on Youtube

FLEXIBLE WORK WEEK - UPDATE

On March 25, 2014, the Government of Jamaica tabled the legislation in the Parliament that will bring into effect a Flexible Work Week. However, the church community has expressed concerns that the issue of "worship" is not addressed lucidly in the legislation, hence they are fearful that the rights of ordinary workers can be abused by employers.

Since the Constitution is the supreme legislative instrument of the land, no law can supersede it, and through the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (2012), it makes clear provisions for the "freedom of worship" and "freedom to exercise one's conscience." Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, the church should continue to argue for the inclusion of a clause to buttress the rights of citizens when it comes to freedom of worship. The employer should not be allowed to be the sole or final arbiter in determining the "rest day" of the worker. This is the matter that must be clearly articulated in the new legislation.

By Sen. Hon. Floyd Morris



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This is the second year of the Quarterly Newsletter of the Religious Liberty Department. Through this vehicle, the Department seeks to educate the Church about matters affecting freedom to live and worship according to the dictates of one's conscience.

In this edition we briefly look at two topics: Unity in Christendom as advocated by Pope Francis, and the current status of Flexi Work Week arrangements.

The Miracle of Unity Has Begun?!



A historical call for unity between Catholics and Protestants has been launched by Pope Francis with strong support from an Anglican Bishop, Tony Palmer. The call was made in February 2014, via video clip of Pope Francis shown at a meeting of leaders of Evangelical Churches. The meeting was held in Texas, U.S.A. organized by the Kenneth Copeland Ministries. The video was introduced by Bishop Palmer who told the gathering that the protest

against Catholicism was over. Palmer explained that in 1999 the Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches signed an agreement which reconciled doctrinal differences and thereby there was no more reason for protest! He also stated that the Methodists later signed the same agreement. However, to date no other church had yet signed.

Following are the main points of the message conveyed by the Pope:

Christians are members of one family who have been separated from each other because of sin. There has been a long history of misunderstandings between us and all must share the blame. I now yearn to put an end to the separation so that we may have communion. We must be reconciled like Joseph and his brothers. They went to Egypt for food but also found brotherhood which is far more important. We all have rich cultures, religions and diverse traditions, but we have to encounter one another as

brothers. We must embrace and weep like Joseph and his brothers. Pray for me because I need your prayers. I will also pray for you. Let us ask the Lord to unite us, to complete the work He has begun. The miracle of unity has begun and He will complete it.

In response, renowned televangelist Kenneth Copeland led the gathering in fully embracing the Pope's overture. He reciprocated by 'praying in the spirit' (i.e. in tongues) for the Pope and pointed out that those present were in full agreement with him and that they were church leaders, representing tens of thousands of persons. He quoted from Ephesians 4 as illustrating their desire for unity. A video was then made for the Pope, showing the group thanking and blessing him.

This momentous occasion is recognised by many as the partial fulfillment of the following prophecy by Sis E. G. White.

"The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." {GC 588.1}

Sis White's prophecy clearly indicates that union between Protestantism and Catholicism will be followed by the use of force to obtain obedience from people against the conviction of their own conscience. Here she is speaking of

the persecution that Sabbath-keepers will face when Sunday worship is enforced by such a union, immediately before the Lord's return.

Challenging the Churches



Anglican Bishop Tony Palmer

Shortly after the evangelical meeting, Palmer, a Bishop in the Anglican Episcopal Communion, posted a separate video online in which he further explains the thrust for unity, making several startling statements about it. Extracts from the text of this video are reproduced below.

"This video is not about my story but it's about his story, it's about God's story. There is something historic happening among us and we need to be aware of what's going on and that is the reason for this video.

Right now in our generation we are witnessing something that Jesus prayed for - that God the Father by His Spirit is bringing into manifestation right now, and that is the Unity of Christians. I see this happening all over the world while I'm on my travels. In various denominations people are desiring for the first time in many generations to be one, to stand together so that the world

may believe that the Father sent us. We are witnessing the unity of Christians by this spirit of God and not by the doctrines and traditions of men. This is a spiritual movement some even call this spiritual ecumenism."

"Pope Francis and I had covenant together, made covenant, to work together for the visible unity of Christians. He asked me and consecrated me to be a bridge for the promotion of Christian unity. We emphasize the word visible, the visible unity because it's already a theological fact that we are one in Christ. No denominational doctrine or any church expression can destroy this theological fact that we are one in Christ."

"We may be living officially in a post-protestant era but many Christians today continue to suffer from spiritual racism. This is **the** sin; this is the sin against the cross. The cross unites but spiritual racism divides. It aims to divide that which Christ in His own torn body united, **and if we elevate anything if we allow anything to cause division among the body or to stop us from having unity as a body, whatever that thing is, whether it be a doctrine or an expression, or some form of service then we elevate that thing that causes us to be divided higher than the cross itself.** There is nothing higher than the torn body of Christ on the cross and that's what makes us one - not our doctrines not our traditions. The body of Christ was torn, separated that we may be made one. **When we prohibit the unity**

of Christians we are rejecting the work of the cross."

"Hearing is not enough we must act. We must keep up with the Spirit of God and ride this wave of the tsunami. Firstly it's both historic and healing to hear a Roman pontiff refer to us as brothers and sisters. Pope Francis is the head of 1.2 billion Christians and **he embraced us into his family as brothers and his sisters** and calls us to put an end to our separation. Pope Francis is calling us into an authentic communion based on the fact that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, not communion through our common traditions. This is a new way forward and for many of us this is the way we have been waiting for. We must seize this moment.

Therefore I'd like to challenge leaders of all non-Roman Catholic Church denominations, speaking to all of us, all reformed all non-Roman Catholic Church leaders that have not yet signed the joint declaration on the doctrine of justification which brought an official end to the protest back in 1999 - 15 years ago. How can we continue to live as Protestants in a post-protestant era? We are out of sync with reality. Let's wake up and unite so that the world may believe that God sent His Son into the world and loves them as much as he loves His very own Son. Our unity is the basis for our credibility. In our separation, our division is the basis for them not believing. Diversity is divine, it is division that's diabolic."