

Resurgence of Papacy

Sermon #0906

Study given by W. D. Frazee—January 12, 1962

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" Revelation 13:8.

Everybody in the world is going to worship the one this text is speaking of except those whose names are written in the book of life. You can see that everybody in this room will be in one group or the other, can't you? They will either be worshiping this one or they will be worshiping the One in heaven, and have their names in His book. The conflict is over worship. Everybody is going to worship something, and everybody is going to worship someone.

Who is everybody in the world going to worship, except those whose names are written in the book of life? The beast. Some other translations call it the animal. The beast or the animal. It is a symbol of something, and I suppose everyone in this room knows what it represents. I hope so. If you don't, or are not real sure of it, I hope you will let some of us study it with you until it is just as clear as the noonday sun, because your soul is at stake on this question of worship.

In Revelation 14:9 the third angel said that if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same will drink of the wine of the wrath of God. In Revelation 13 the first verse opens with a picture of this beast. It is like a leopard rising out of the sea. It has seven heads, ten horns, crowns on his horns, and on his head is the name of blasphemy. One of its heads is wounded to death. But marvel of marvels, his deadly wound is healed. Then all the world wondered after the beast, and they worship it. Worship follows wonder.

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:4.

In the last war someone at one of the counsel tables said something about the Pope. I think it was Roosevelt. Stalin asked how many divisions the Pope had. Roosevelt didn't know. And nobody but the Devil and the Lord, who knows all things, can answer that question. My point is, we are rapidly coming to the place when all the world will say, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

It could be that someone has tried it and gotten his fingers burnt or his head smashed. It may be that great nations have learned by sad experience what it means to tangle with the papal power. So the cry goes up from a world filled with

wonder and amazement concerning this power that seemed to be defeated, and then rides in triumphant.

You remember the rest of the chapter. The mouth speaking great things and blasphemy. He opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven (verse 6). He makes war with the saints (verse 7). Power was given him over all kindred, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth worship him whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (verse 8).

Then the prophecy goes on to show one of the great actors in this scene. The power that brings all the world once again to acknowledge the rule and rein of the papacy is the lamb-like beast we see in verse 11. It has two horns like a lamb. It speaks as a dragon. It comes out of the earth instead of the sea, but it goes right over the path that the first beast blazed.

"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" Revelation 13:12.

All the world is commanded to worship that image. Like Nebuchadnezzar's golden image on the plains of Dura there are going to be a few people who won't bow down.

That is a wonderful prophecy, and it is amazing how much God has packed in those few verses. I am led to study this with you tonight because of an article that in the providence of God came to my attention just a few days ago. It is in the *Saturday Evening Post* of December 30, 1961. The title of the article is *Can Christians Unite?*

The author is Dr. John A. O'Brian, a Catholic author of note, a Jesuit priest, research professor of theology at Notre Dame in Indiana. He is co-chairman in the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The title of the article caught my eye, of course. But the more I read the more I was impressed that right before our eyes Revelation 13 is being fulfilled. I am going to read you a few things from this article. As I read, remember the author and remember the audience. Millions of people have already read this article coming from one of the greatest Jesuits in this conference. I want you to notice the subtleness of the approach, the reasoning of it, the logic, and the emotional appeal.

His opening sentence is remarkable:

"With communism striving to complete its conquest of the world by pulling the remaining free nations behind its iron curtain, the need for Christians to unite is imperative. The divided character of Christianity is so evident even to the primitive peoples of New Guinea that they recently requested its competing emissaries to stay out."

Then he quotes leading Protestant preachers, theologians, bishops, and others. He quotes a British Congregational clergyman who says:

"The ex-cannibals of the world are teaching us a lesson. Can we not cease to be cannibals among ourselves? Instead of eating at a common table we intend to eat one another in a kind of blasphemous competition."

He gives two big reasons for uniting. One is that the bear is at the door. We had better unite to meet it. The other is the great heathen regions of the world need a united approach rather than a divided approach to reach them. Then after giving some figures, he comes to the Scriptures. Listen as this Jesuit theologian quotes the Bible:

"This endless proliferation of sex is generally recognized as the scandal of Christendom. It is the direct opposite to that direct unity which Christ says was to forever unite His church. There is to be one fold and one shepherd."

Is that in the Bible? Yes. John 10:16.

"Shortly before His death on Calvary, the Saviour prayed that all who believe in Him may be one as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee."

Is that in the Bible? Yes. The 17th chapter of John. Then he goes on and quotes St. Paul.

"There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Is that in the Bible? Yes. That's Ephesians the third chapter. He has his text there.

"Christians squirm as they see an increasing multitude of conflicting sex tearing the seamless garment of Christ's body into shreds and tatters. Their concern has given birth to the Ecumenical movement which seeks to achieve the unity of all Christians. This is the most significant and ambitious and far-reaching adventure which Christian leaders have undertaken in the past fifty years."

I hope every one of you are reading the wonderful articles by W. L. Emmerson reporting the World Counsel's meeting over in New Deli, India. Pick up the last few issues of the *Review* and refresh your memory on that.

O'Brian spends several paragraphs sketching the history of this Ecumenical movement, as it is called, which is simply a movement to unite all the churches into one. He tells of the leading Protestants, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and others that are leading out in this. Then he says,

"The most recent and dramatic expression of Catholic concern was the announcement by Pope John XXIII that he plans to invoke an ecumenical counsel, one of whose purposes will be to explore the ways and means of advancing Christian unity."

He quotes from leaders in various churches expressing their pleasure in what the Pope has done in calling this counsel. He refers to the history making visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the leading Archbishop of the Church of England who visited Pope John XXIII in December 20, 1960. It was the first meeting of a Roman Pontiff and an Archbishop of Canterbury since the 14th century. This visit was followed by one from the Queen of England who is the head of the Church of England. Since then a number of leading Protestants from this country, including even Baptist leaders, have called on the Pope. They are wearing a path there.

Then O'Brian speaks of movements in Europe among Protestant denominations drawing toward Rome. He speaks of how over in Germany the trend is so strong toward the restitution of the pre-reformation liturgy and sacramental practice that almost every German city now has churches where Lutherans can go to confession. Notice this sly introduction:

"On the other hand there is a growing movement among Catholics in virtually all countries for an increased use of the vernacular in the mass and for more congregational participation therein."

In other words, among Catholics there are some changes that will make it easier for Protestants to unite. Service in the national language instead of Latin. That would be a wonderful concession wouldn't it?

Notice what the Pope said in calling this Ecumenical counsel. This is the Pope I am quoting:

"It will be a manifestation which I hope will be received by those who are separated from this Apostolic See as a gentle invitation to seek and find that unity for which Jesus Christ prayed so ardently to His heavenly Father."

Is that the voice of a dragon? Is that the voice of a beast? It doesn't sound like it. All the earth is going to be taken by this, and it is not going to be in the days of our grandchildren either. Oh, that God may stir our hearts to see what is going on right before us.

Now comes the part that amazed me perhaps more than anything in the article. O'Brian tells about the fact that the Catholic church set aside eight days,

beginning with the eighteenth of January to the twenty-fifth of January, to pray for the unity of all Christians. Five hundred million Catholics pray for the unity of all Christians. Watch it. These prayers are characterized by humility and contrition.

"Catholics realize that all too often they have hindered the union by their wordiness and lack of charity, by their pride and general failure to put Christ's law of love into daily practice. Acknowledgment of their guilt is mirrored in the following lines in the litany recited daily during the octave, and frequently throughout the year."

This is the prayer they are going to be praying for eight days in the Catholic church all over the world:

"For controversies marked by irony, suspicion and exhortation, for lack of understanding, for unfeeling judgment concerning our non-Catholic brethren, forgive us oh Lord. For the acts of violence and the injustices we have tolerated in the course of history against our Protestant brethren forgive us oh Lord."

If you were in one of the ordinary Protestant churches and didn't know what Revelation means, what would you say?

Having presented this, O'Brian comes now to analyze and evaluate the great surge of interest among Protestants for unity among themselves. And interestingly, he doesn't deplore it. He thinks it is wonderful. He tells about how very recently the Unitarians and Universalist have combined into a single church. Three Lutheran bodies have combined in one American Lutheran church. The Congregational Christian church and the Evangelical and Reformed church, each of them the result of mergers, have merged together into the United Church of Christ. Two branches of the Presbyterian church have merged together.

Then he calls attention to the most ambitious plan so far that has been proposed by Dr. Blake, the chief executive officer of the Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian and the Protestant Episcopal and the Methodist and the United Church of Christ, all four of them unite together to form one great church. Dr. Blake says:

"I don't believe it is God's will to have so many churches in the United States."

The proposal was welcomed by Protestant Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike who said:

"The Holy Ghost is on our side whenever we break through the barriers between Christian bodies."

This is from the old staid conservative Episcopal church, the American counterpart of the Church of England:

"At the general convention of the Protestant Episcopal church in Detroit in September of 1961, the house of Bishops considered the proposal to accept the invitation of the United Presbyterian assembly. A whole day had been reserved for debate on the issue, and a huge crowd jammed the side isles in the room to witness the fireworks. Within thirty seconds or so the motion was passed unanimously."

There was nobody even to debate it among all the bishops of the Episcopal church in America. They called the question and voted unanimously these mergers. And from that house of bishops came the challenge urging the faithful Christian:

"Work and pray without ceasing until by God's grace and in His time the divisions by which we dishonor our one Lord are done away."

Now O'Brian comes to this interesting statement:

"What concessions might the Holy See be expected to make to promote reunion? In general it can be said that the Roman Catholic church has the authority to modify any of its own legislation, but not to altar doctrines it considers revealed by Christ. This whole question is one, however, which only the Vatican can answer."

Then he reviews and sums up again the two great reasons for Christian unity. The first is the menace of aggressive Communism, and the second is the numerous divisions within Christianity that interfere with the Christian religion in other countries. Watch this significant statement:

"Christianity must present the united front of her mighty membership of nearly nine hundred million to a common foe. Even before complete cradle unity can be effected, means must be devised to secure the active collaboration of all Christians in promoting the social and political reforms that are obviously necessary to stem the spread of Communism."

Could you guess what one of those social and political reforms might be? Oh yes. There is no question about it.

"The spirit of Catholic ecumenism has generated new sympathy toward Protestant efforts to achieve unity even within its own ranks. Instead of looking upon the world counsel of churches as a potential rival, the Vatican called it the 'fruit of the inspiration of grace.' The positive points of agreement must be emphasized."

Listen now to the closing paragraph. Listen how beautiful it is friends. Don't think all beauty comes from the garden of Eden.

"What is impossible for me however is simple and easy for God. The foolishness of God is wiser than our wisdom, and His weakness is stronger than our strength. Only God can bridge chasms so deep and so ancient. Through humble and persistent prayer, Christians believe God will be moved to make up for our deficiencies, our awkwardness and ineptness, and thus fulfill the prayer of Christ that all may be one."

When I read that article I picked up *Great Controversy* and started reading the chapter titled, *The Aims of the Papacy*. Have you read it lately?

"Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years" *Great Controversy*, page 563.

"Prophecy foretells a restoration of her power" *Ibid.* page 579.

Then is quoted the verse from Revelation concerning the deadly wound, the wound being healed, and the whole world wondering after the beast.

"And the revelator declares, also referring to the papacy: 'All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life.'" *Ibid.*

Now listen to the next sentence:

"In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman Church" *Ibid.*

The whole world in one way or another is going to acknowledge this authority. You and I might speculate how Russia is going to fit into that picture. I will tell you, it is going to fit one way or another. It is a part of the people, kindred, tongues and nations. When the time comes there will be a part. Don't ask me how, because I don't know.

It is foolish to speculate concerning what isn't revealed. A slight of hand man who is working some slight of hand trick which he calls magic will often divert his audience with movement of his hand doing this and that. As they are watching him, he quietly does something with the other hand that they don't see.

The Devil is the master magician of all times. May God help His people. While the Devil is fixing the attention of the so called Christian world upon the menace of Communism, he is using that very thing to get ready his master plan. The anti-Christ will appear, and all who dwell upon the earth will worship him whose

names are not written in the book of life. I want to ask you something friends. Will you worship?

I come to the most important part of our study. You will worship unless. It is the unless I want to study with you. I found a very significant statement. Speaking of the papacy:

"It is prepared for two classes of mankind, embracing nearly the whole world—those who would be saved by their merits, and those who would be saved in their sins. Here is the secret of its power" *Ibid*, page 572.

Almost all the world is in one of these two classes. Does the Catholic church have a program for those who would be saved by their merits? Does the Catholic church have a program for those who would be saved in their sins? Oh, yes. It embraces nearly all the world, and this is the secret of its power.

The great thing that Luther stood up against is the doctrine of justification by works. It was being used to load all kinds of burdens and bondage upon earnest conscientious souls that were trying to be saved by their works. It was also being used as a great source of revenue to the church as people wanted to be saved and still kept on sinning. It paid off.

Do you think there is any danger that any of us might be caught in that? I wonder if there is anyone here that is in danger of trying to be saved by their works. It would be a good sensible thing to acknowledge that every one of us is in that danger.

That is the spirit of the Pharisee. That is the spirit of Laodicea. I am rich and increases with goods and have need of nothing. You and I know that inspiration has applied the message to the Laodiceans to us, so we are in danger. Unless we get cured of that, we are not going to stay in Laodicea. We will eventually link up with this great world movement.

All that dwell upon the earth who want to be saved by their own works will worship him, because they have the real salvation-by-works program. Anything you and I have ever been exposed to is just a front porch that finally will lead into that. So if we don't want to worship the beast we had better seek the Lord for an experience of depending upon the merits of Jesus for salvation instead of our own works.

We ought to be very practical about this. Health reform, dress reform, Sabbath reform, and all other reforms were never intended by the dear Lord to give to us a list of things we could recite as attainments we had reached and therefore be entitled to certain blessings.

The Pharisee in the temple said, I do this and I do that and I do the other thing. But Jesus says that he didn't go down justified. He came in unsaved and he went back unsaved, but he was quite satisfied with himself.

I pray that God will help us to keep His commandments because we love Him. Never with the thought that by doing this or that we gain merit and earn our way to heaven. I repeat, that is the prelude to Romanism.

Let's look at the other class. The other class are those who want to be saved in their sins. Do you think any of us might be in danger of that? It too is one of the great dangers of Laodicea. If I kneel down and pray that God will help me to get ready for heaven, and get up from my knees and see how I can be like the world about me, can God answer my prayers? No.

Please watch this point: Suppose I believe I can never be perfect in this world, that people are going on sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, and that all we must do is trust in Jesus for salvation. And if we can't come up to the standard, we don't need to worry too much about that. We ought to try, but not worry, because the blood of Jesus is going to cover all that. Do you suppose such a belief could be perilously near the condition that is spoken about of being saved in our sins?

The people in Laodicea who cherish those thoughts will not stay in Laodicea. They are going to end up in the great world movement where the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet lead the world to Armageddon.

As I think of what the Catholic church is doing in regaining its power the lesson comes to my own heart. Are you and I cherishing any thought of trying to be saved by our merits or thinking we can go on living like the world and still be saved? What is going to happen? It is going to lead us eventually into this great world movement. We will be taken in the snare, and don't think we won't.

I was much impressed with what the Catholic church has for these two great classes. It has a wonderful ceremony of religious worship:

"The religious service of the Roman Catholic church is a most impressive ceremonial. Its gorgeous display and solemn rites fascinate the senses of the people and silence the voice of reason and conscience. The eye is charmed. Magnificent churches, imposing processions, golden altars, jeweled shrines, choice paintings, and exquisite sculpture appeal to the love of beauty. The ear also is captivated. The music is unsurpassed. The rich notes of the deep-toned organ, blending with the melody of many voices as it swells through the lofty domes and pillared aisles of their grand cathedrals, cannot fail to impress the mind with awe and reverence.

"This outward splendor, pomp, and ceremony, that only mocks the longings of the sin-sick soul, is an evidence of inward corruption. The religion of Christ needs not such attractions to recommend it. In the light shining from the cross, true Christianity appears so pure and lovely that no

external decorations can enhance its true worth" *The Great Controversy*, page 566.

Do I need to apologize for that? No. But I would drop this word lest we be misunderstood. The Lord likes simple beauty both in the appointments of His house and in the order of worship. He has pointed us to nature as an example of that beautiful simplicity and that simple beauty which pleases Him. And when we go to the Apostolic church we find a simplicity we would do well to imitate.

Before Jesus returns there will be a revival of primitive Godliness such as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. It would be well to reflect upon this that everything about our worship should breathe that spirit of simplicity and primitive Godliness.

"A religion of externals is attractive to the unrenewed heart. The pomp and ceremony of the Catholic worship has a seductive, bewitching power, by which many are deceived" *Ibid*.

Now this next sentence hangs out the danger signal. You may think you will never be taken in by all that beauty of architecture, that beauty of worship, that beauty of music, that beauty of all these externals. Listen:

"None but those who have planted their feet firmly upon the foundation of truth, and whose hearts are renewed by the Spirit of God, are proof against her influence" *Ibid*.

Dear young people, and older ones, our only safety is in getting an experience in our hearts that we will be able to worship in tents or caves or in the desert and feel close to God, because that is where we are headed for. Our closing seasons of worship on this planet won't be held amid such surroundings as this is talking about. We are going where the Waldensees went. We are going where the Huguenots went. We are going where faithful believers in some places of persecution today must go. Oh, let us prepare for it. What do you say?

In *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 81 I find a statement that tells us which members of the remnant church are going to be taken in these delusions, and will finally join the Protestant world in enforcing the mark of the beast.

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have

admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness.
Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even
from places where we see only floors of rich wheat."

God spare us in that time of shaking and sifting. Oh, how it is rushing in upon us. The mark of the beast is not only going to be urged upon us, it is going to be pressed upon us. By what? By law. By persecution. By boycott. It will be the iron hand. It may have a glove on it now as it is extended in loving welcome, but we are told that the Protestant world will find out too late who they have been worshiping.

If you and I have become accustomed to either using force or allowing force to have any influence with us, we will yield to those pressures when they come.

My closing appeal to you is will force make you yield? Can you stand up like a man, like a Christian, like Martin Luther, and say, Here I stand. God help me, I can't do anything else. Can you stand up like the three Hebrews on the plain of Dura when all the world bows down? Or must you be accepted by your group in order to be happy? Does to be a nonconformist chill you so that you must go with the crowd?

There is only one thing that is greater than force my friends, and that is love. But it takes a great deal of it. "If you love Me," Jesus says, you will do what? "Keep My commandments." That is what nerved fifty million martyrs in the Dark Ages as they stood up against the Pope of Rome. That is what is going to thrill the hearts of the remnant church as they go forth to battle.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" Revelation 12:17.

A battle? A war? Yes. A war between the dragon, the beast, the false prophet, the kings of the earth, and a Lamb and a woman and her children. It looks like a rather unequal contest.

Who is going to win?

"These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" Revelation 17:1,14.

I want to be with Him. Don't you? I know there is only one thing that can hold me, and that is love. So tonight I choose to yield only to love. I choose to use in dealing with others only love. I would like to renounce every response to force and every appeal to force. I remember the word of my Leader who says, "Serve no man through fear of what that man can do to you." I have read His words warning us against following in the track of Romanism.

There are other ways to compel men besides burning them at the stake, and putting them on the rack and stretching them. The mind can be torn as well as the body. The soul can be stretched as well as the muscles and tendons and bones and joints. But oh, it is a wonderful thing to have so much love for Christ that application of force rolls like water off a duck's back. That takes a miracle. It can be done. I want that miracle in its fullness. Don't you?

But we will never have the experience of being immune to force applied until we forever renounce and repudiate the use of force through us. If we are willing to take the slightest advantage of any position or any authority to make someone go our way, accept our ideas, live our lives, we are candidates to worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark.

At the cross love and selfishness stood face to face. There the beast spirit was manifest in driving those nails through the hands and feet of Jesus. It will be done again in the person of His people. But love blazed out in a glory that filled the universe, and love will do it again in the remnant. God will have a people who love Him so much they will never use force themselves, and they will not let it change their love for God and their keeping of His commandments.

Precious Lord, write in our hearts Thy law of love that we may not worship the beast or his image, or receive his mark in our forehead or in our hands. May we bear in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus, that we may have in our foreheads the seal of the living God. That shining from our countenances may be seen the love of Christ. That coming from our lips is forgiveness for our enemies. That thus equipped we may share with Thee in that final demonstration which confounds Satan and vindicates Thy character before the universe. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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