

Christ in Prophecy

Religion 11: Mike Gendron on Pope Francis

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Opening

Tim Moore: Pope Francis has established himself as the most unorthodox pope of modern times. He is constantly making proclamations that are either unbiblical or contradict basic Catholic doctrine. For insights about this controversial pope stay tuned.

Part 1

Tim Moore: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I'm Tim Moore sitting in for Dr. Reagan today, and with me is my co-host, Nathan Jones, our Internet Evangelist. Also, in the studio with us today is one of the ministries dear friends, Mike Gendron. Mike has been our guest several times in the past and is also a frequent contributor to our magazine. Mike, welcome back to Christ in Prophecy.

Mike Gendron: Well, it is a privilege to be back. I've always admired Lamb & Lion Ministries, and Christ in Prophecy, because you're never fearful of addressing the most controversial issues that face Christians today. And we'll be talking about one of those in this program.

Tim Moore: Most certainly.

Nathan Jones: Excellent. Well, folks, Mike is the founder and director of a ministry in the Dallas, Texas area called, Proclaiming the Gospel. If you watch Christ in Prophecy, you know Mike is probably one of most frequent guest because he's an expert on a particular topic, Catholicism. Can you tell us Mike why are you an expert in that? And maybe share a little of your testimony.

Mike Gendron: Well, sure. I lived the Roman Catholic life for 35 years. I was a very devote Roman Catholic. My uncle was a Catholic priest. And for 35 years I did everything necessary to be saved according to the Catholic religion. And I even went to church every day during Lent because I had the understanding that God was going to grade on the curve; as long as your good deeds outweighed your bad deeds you had a good chance of going to Heaven. And so, for 35 years I lived that life. I studied Catholicism very in deftly. And then at the age of 34 I began reading the Bible for the first time.

Nathan Jones: The first time?

Mike Gendron: And I had a Catholic Bible, it was the big coffee table version that sat there just collecting dust. We were told never to read it because it was too difficult to understand. And so, when I began reading it, I had a crisis of faith, because what I was discovering was a plan of salvation that was diametrically opposed to what I was taught as a Catholic. And so, I had this crisis of faith, should I continue believing what the Catholic Church was teaching me, or should I

put my trust in Christ and His Word? And so, during that crisis God opened my eyes to see the truth, and He granted me repentance. I turned from trusting in the plan of salvation as a Roman Catholic and put my trust in the biblical plan of salvation. And I trusted Christ as my all sufficient Savior. That literally turned my life upside down because I recognized that if I was going to trust Christ and His Word I had to leave the church that deceived me about life's most critical issue.

Nathan Jones: And then you went and started a ministry ministering to Catholics?

Mike Gendron: Well, it wasn't right away.

Nathan Jones: Okay. Because you were in the business world for many years.

Mike Gendron: I was. I was in corporate management for 17 years. But shortly after the Lord saved me I was like a dry sponge in a desert.

Tim Moore: Soaking up the Word.

Mike Gendron: I wanted to soak up the Word. I was in a Bible study every morning of the week before I went to my job. And so, that led me to enroll at Dallas Theological Seminary. And primarily I wanted to purge myself of everything that was wrong, being indoctrinated as a Roman Catholic, and fill my heart and mind with the truth. Well, at the end of my seminary studies we began inviting Catholics over to our house. We had a great burden to reach Catholics. Within three months we saw 17 Catholics exchange their religion for a relationship with an all sufficient Savior.

Tim Moore: Praise the Lord. Well, I love the fact that you say that our Savior is all sufficient because He certainly is. And you made the point of the Catholic religion, and there are many religions in this world, but what we point to is faith in Jesus Christ, our all sufficient Savior. So, as we consider the pope right now, Pope Francis. And we are not here to tear him down, but we want to observe some of the things that he has said, and some of the doctrines that he's kind of muddied in recent years. And we will point out that Pope Francis is the first Jesuit who has served as a Catholic pope. Tell us what that means. Obviously, you have a great wealth of knowledge just through your own personal background. What does it mean to have a Jesuit serving as pope?

Mike Gendron: Well, it means a lot. It's got some very significant ramifications, not only within Catholicism but also within Christianity. The goal of the Jesuits, which were established at the Counter-Reformation in the 16th Century, their goal was to eliminate any opposition to the papacy, including the Protestants. You know the Protestant Reformation; people were leaving the Catholic Church. So, the Jesuits were established as the secret police of the papacy. And so, today now we have a Jesuit pope. And of course, his goal, as is the Jesuit goal, is to bring all people under the power and the influence of the papacy. So, that is why you see this ecumenical movement that is so powerful today. It is invading Evangelicalism. Many of our Evangelical leaders today are embracing Roman Catholicism as a valid expression of Christianity. And so, this is all the Jesuit agenda. And we know from biblical prophecy there will be a global religion, and the pope is now wanting to be the head of that global religion.

Tim Moore: Yes, so, the Jesuits were almost the enforcers of the Catholic doctrine or the Catholic, as you said, religion.

Mike Gendron: That's correct.

Nathan Jones: During the Counter-Reformation many, many Protestants were killed. Was that the Jesuits behind a lot of that persecution to try to force them back into the church?

Mike Gendron: That is a very colorful, and brutal history when you study the Jesuits. They literally went to war against any opposition to the Catholic Church.

Nathan Jones: Wow.

Mike Gendron: I think one of the most powerful examples was the Saint Bartholomew Day massacre, where the streets of Paris were ankle deep in the blood of the Saints. The Catholic Church was putting to death those who opposed the papacy. And in turn they gave those who put them to death plenary indulgences, which meant their sins were completely forgiven.

Nathan Jones: My wife's family comes from Huguenot background and those were the Protestants that were killed. It is interesting that such a militant branch of the Catholic Church, but Pope Francis before he was pope came out of something which we think is more loving, a Liberation Theology, or Social Gospel. Can you explain a little about what Pope Francis background is that makes him so endearing to Catholics?

Mike Gendron: Well, sure that is part of the globalist agenda to do the things that are appealing to the masses. And Liberation Theology is really a form of Marxism, and it's to help the oppressed, and help the poor. And so, before the pope became Pope Francis he was in Argentina helping the poor through this Liberation Theology. But it is all part of his global agenda to unite the world under the power and the influence of the papacy.

Tim Moore: And we can be clear, obviously, the Lord Himself, Jesus Christ advocates that we care for the poor and the needy. But the Marxist ideology is through a totally different means, whether it is Critical Theory. We've seen a whole lot of Critical Theory just in the last several years in this country. But the Marxist means of helping the poor does not lift them up, instead it's determined to tear everyone else down, and that is really what the pope has been a part of, in terms of his past with Liberation Theology, tearing down all the institutions.

One of the other things that Pope Francis really is demonstrating his unorthodoxy. And as an aside folks, orthodoxy is simply a determination to hold to traditional biblical values and doctrines. And so, what has been passed down by the saints of old is the orthodox teachings of the church. But this pope is so unorthodox because every time he opens his mouth, it seems like the Vatican itself has to hold a Press conference to backtrack what he has said. And most famously in recent years he's even seemed to endorse homosexuality. He said this, "Homosexuals have a right to be part of the family, they are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or made miserable because of it." He went on to say, "Who am I to judge." And things of that nature. And yet, the Vatican immediately had to say, "Whoa, whoa, we are not endorsing same-sex marriage."

And even most recently one of the congregations, the groups of hierarchy there in the Catholic Church came out with what they call a dubium, which is an official doctrinal statement that reaffirmed the church is not going to, the Catholic Church is not going to embrace homosexual marriage. And yet many bishops were upset because they thought this pope had been giving clear signals that he intended to move in that direction. So, what kind of a mess has he created in so many areas?

Mike Gendron: Well, you are right about the pope not being orthodox. In fact, that's the reason that he is so controversial. He not only stands opposed to historic Roman Catholicism but also to the Word of God. And so, you've got some conservative cardinals out now that are actually opposing him, and actually looking for him to resign. And so, there is a some what of a rift now in the Roman Catholic Church between the conservatives and the liberal Pope Francis.

Tim Moore: And some of the liberal bishops. I mean the German bishops for instance were very upset that the pope did not just embrace homosexual marriage because they were already preparing various sacramental vows and blessings for homosexual couples in Germany, the bishops. So, there has been a schism within the Church.

Nathan Jones: And the feminists too are up in arms. They seemed to think of Pope Benedict was the worst thing that ever happened to the Catholic church for woman because he was so strict to biblical adherence. And then you get to Pope Francis and the woman see it as a liberation. He's even going around saying that Atheist will make it into Heaven. So, it is good for Atheism too. So, the old joke was, is the pope Catholic? Well, yeah, because of course. But I don't think Pope Francis is actually Catholic, is he?

Mike Gendron: Well, he goes against historic Roman Catholicism. And so, that is where the problem lies with the conservative cardinals, they don't know what to do with him. But it is really interesting when we look at this because what he's doing is he is denying the exclusivity of the Gospel. He is basically saying that everyone, he's a Universalist, he believes that everyone will be in Heaven. He's denied that there is a Hell. And so, what he is saying is that everyone is a child of God. And this of course goes directly against the Bible because the Lord Jesus Himself, when He was confronting the apostate religious leaders of His day, He said, "You are children of the Devil, your father." And then of course in 1 John we see that they're children of the Devil who practice unrighteousness, and children of God who practice righteousness. So, clearly not everyone is a child of God. But this is the pope's global agenda to unite all people as children of God and to suggest that everyone will be in Heaven.

Nathan Jones: And he's very open about it. He came out with a video a few years ago and he was there with two or three other different religions, they all held their hands out with a particular symbol of their religion together. And he was making a proclamation that all the religions should get along. And basically, this ecumenical one world type.

Tim Moore: Very much. In early 2021 the pope traveled to the Middle East and met with some of the most radical imams and heads of various splinters of the Muslim faith to basically say, hey, we are on equal terms, and its just different paths. And that message has gone out very clearly to those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and realize that this is dangerously false in terms of leading people astray and not proclaiming to them the need to embrace the only way, truth, and life which is Jesus Christ.

Mike Gendron: Amen. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me." And I like to say He is the truth for those who are deceived. He's the way for those who were lost. And He's the life for those who were dead in their sin. We must come through Christ in order to have salvation. And I think what we are doing, we are talking a lot about the pope and how unorthodox he is. There is an exhortation in Romans 5:11 that we are to expose the evil deeds of darkness. And I think we would all agree that the most evil thing anyone could ever do would be to deceive people about life's most critical issue; and that is what must I do to be saved?

Nathan Jones: Yes.

Mike Gendron: So, for this pope to preach another Gospel he is under the condemnation of God, because in Galatians 1:6-9, If anyone preaches another Gospel they are to be condemned. And so, our desire is to encourage Roman Catholics to look into the Word. See what the Gospel is. Don't believe this false prophet. And he has become the most influential false prophet in the world today.

Tim Moore: And to be very clear it is not we who are the condemners, but it is the Word of God. And so, everything that we are advocating is tested against the Word of God, it's not our opinion, it's what Scripture has pointed out, and what the faithful have carried through in the faith of true Christianity all for the last 2,000 years.

Nathan Jones: Excellent. Well, folks, we are going to take a break for an announcement and when we come back we are going to ask Mike to respond to some more of the very controversial comments the pope has made.

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of Pope Francis with former Catholic, Mike Gendron.

Tim Moore: Well, Mike, I'd like to run through some of the controversial statements that Pope Francis has made, in sort of a lightening round and get your response, if that is ok.

Mike Gendron: Sure.

Tim Moore: Alright, so one of the things he said is, "Atheist who do good are redeemed, not just Catholics."

Mike Gendron: Well, we know from Scripture that you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, we must also recognize that the pope believes in a works righteousness salvation, so, doing good is the ultimate goal in order to get to Heaven. All the religions of the world believe that same thing. Which is why in the end times there will be a global religion, all believing in a works righteousness salvation.

Nathan Jones: Well, how about this one Mike, "If Martians were to land on earth today I would offer to baptize them."

Mike Gendron: Well, in Roman Catholicism baptism is the sacrament of regeneration and justification, so that's what puts you on the road to Heaven. And so, it is a very important sacrament, which is why the pope would want to do that in order for all people to be saved.

Tim Moore: Yeah but adding Martians to the list seems to strain the credibility. What about this? "The Big Bang Theory does not contradict the role of God as the Divine Creator."

Mike Gendron: Yeah, the pope is really into Evolution. He says it is necessary in order to believe in Creation. Which is puzzling to me because we say the Genesis account, which the pope denies that God created the world in six days, and then rested.

Nathan Jones: Wow, how about this one: “If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him.”

Mike Gendron: Well, the Bible has judge homosexuals, it is a sin, and homosexuals must repent and believe the Gospel. Trust in Jesus not only for the forgiveness of sins, but also for the power to become victorious over that sin.

Tim Moore: Yes, as with all other sins. I mean all of us fall short of the glory of God, which is why all of us are sinners, and all of must repent of that sinful behavior, that sinful nature, and come to the Lord God through Jesus Christ, His only Son. Well, on that note, the pope also said this, “God is not a divine being, or a magician.”

Mike Gendron: It’s really amazing for the pope to deny that Christ, or God is divine. And yet, that is what he does, again going against not only the Bible, but also historic Roman Catholicism. Catholicism has always taught that God is divine.

Tim Moore: Well, and clearly, Catholicism, and Catholics, I’ll even say this have been stalwarts at times of standing on certain principles. So, for instance in this country Catholics were sort of the lead voices pushing back against an agenda of abortion. So, they really started some of the pro-life movement, and we are very grateful for that. Some of the most faithful members of the Supreme Court have been Catholic. Very famously even in the last number of years, and we appreciate that truth. But when you start denying even the divinity of God you have left the reservation of the Christian faith, I would assert, obviously.

Nathan Jones: Well, obviously we discussed this a little earlier but his meetings with Muslims, ecumenicalism, there is a church, or it is a church/synagogue/mosque built in Germany that he went and endorsed. That just to me shocks.

Mike Gendron: Well, if you understand Roman Catholicism this is where the pope agrees with the catechism of the Catholic Church, because in paragraph 846 it says that the Muslims are part of God’s plan of salvation. And so, they have chosen this group of Muslims, 1.5 billion people, to be part of God’s plan of salvation. And I really believe that Mary will one day be the catalyst that will unite Islam and Roman Catholicism because Muslims esteem Mary as the most revered woman who has ever lived. She appears 37 times in the Quran. And so, Muslims now are going to apparition sites to get a message from Mary. And this is all part of the end time scenario. We know that in the end times Satan will appear as an angel of light to deceive the world. And so, we see this happening today.

Nathan Jones: Well, that brings up the question then, where is this going in the field of eschatology, or as the Bible says, where do you see the Catholic Church role before the Rapture and after the Rapture?

Mike Gendron: Well, a lot of people are unaware but Roman Catholicism does have an eschatology. And you can actually search this through the web. But they believe that there will be a Roman Catholic pope who will unite with a Roman Catholic monarch who together will establish a time of peace and prosperity on the earth. And so, we look at the papacy as being the false prophet. We see from the book of Revelation that there will be a false prophet.

Nathan Jones: Not the Antichrist because I think for what centuries people believed the Antichrist would be the pope, or do you think he’s more the false prophet?

Mike Gendron: Yes, the Reformers believed the pope was the Antichrist. But I, having studied Revelation, I see a false prophet. The pope is the most influential false prophet in the world today. Roman Catholics have been indoctrinated to believe that anybody who sits on the papal throne is holy, and when he sits on the chair of Peter he is infallible. So, here you have a false prophet said to be infallible when it comes to faith and morals. And so, he will be influential in uniting the world because people esteem him as a leader who cannot lie or deceive people.

Tim Moore: And let's be clear, when we use the word false prophet we don't throw that around casually. The Bible says that anyone who makes a prediction of what will happen as a revelation from God, and it does not occur is a false prophet. And anyone who steers the faithful away from the true doctrines that are revealed in Scripture is a false prophet. So, we are not just throwing around that charge haphazardly. And it's not us that is making that accusation, it is Scripture that points out who we should avoid, and the falsehoods that we should flee from, quite frankly. And that's what your ministry is all about. So, as opposed to that eschatology contrast that with what Scripture reveals as the true end times plan that God has put into place and has foretold.

Mike Gendron: Well, we look to be looking at the Rapture as the next event that will take place.

Tim Moore: Hallelujah, yes.

Mike Gendron: Yes, and when all the sanctified believers are taken to Heaven the only people left are professing Christians, Roman Catholics, and people of world religions. And they're all going to be religions that focus on a works righteousness salvation. That will be the glue that unites all the religions of the world. And when you have a pope that says all people are children of God, that there is no Hell, that even Atheist will make it to Heaven, this is what the world wants to hear. And so, this will be the agenda of either Pope Francis, or we don't know the Lord's timing, but whoever the pope maybe.

Nathan Jones: There is a third role in the Tribulation. We read about of course the Antichrist and the False Prophet, but there appears to be a Mystery Babylon religion, an ecumenical religion that takes hold at the first half of the Tribulation, and the ten kings, and the Antichrist hate it and end up killing it. Could the pope, as an alternative, not be the false prophet who leads basically Satan worship in the second half, but be the head of that ecumenical religion that will be destroyed mid-way through the Tribulation?

Mike Gendron: Well, we do know that the Catholic Church is worshipping a false Christ today. In fact, I brought with me a eucharist. The Catholic Church believes that the priest and all the clergy have the power to call the Lord Jesus Christ down from Heaven and through the miracle of transubstantiation change the inner substance into the physical body, and blood, soul, and divinity. The priest and the pope lifts this up and says, "This is the body of Christ." And all the Catholic faithful say, "Yes." So, they are worshipping a false Christ. And I am saying this by the authority of Scripture, because Jesus even said, if anyone says, here's the Christ do not believe them. We know that Jesus will remain in Heaven until all of His enemies have been made His footstool. We know that according to Hebrews 9:28 He will appear a second time and not in relation to sin. And so, this cannot be Christ by the authority of Scripture, because the Catholic Jesus returns every day to the earth. So, it is so easy to see how the world is going to worship a false Christ when you have 1.2 billion Catholics worshipping a false Christ today.

Tim Moore: And let me also state this, it's not just Catholics who put their reliance of salvation in their own works, in their own righteous deeds. If you weigh the good against the bad that I've done in my life I think I'll be okay. There are a lot of other people, and a lot of other Protestant denominations who really boil down their own reliance of salvation on that equation, well, I think I've been a pretty good person, or I've done a lot of good, or whatever. And they don't put their trust in Jesus Christ as the sufficient Savior that you spoke of when we began this conversation. So, it's not just Catholics who fall into that kind of false ideology, it's many others. And so, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but by Me." And all of our righteous deeds are filthy rags compared to the holiness of God. So, we can't put our trust in that, whether you are a Catholic, a Baptist, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or anything else, we have to put our faith in Jesus Christ.

Mike Gendron: Tim, I'm so glad you brought that up because this is not an issues between Catholics versus Protestants.

Tim Moore: No.

Nathan Jones: No.

Mike Gendron: This is an issue looking through the lens of Scripture to see what is true, and what is false. The Catholic Church is an apostate form of Christianity. And as you mentioned there are other denominations that have also drifted into apostasy, and they no longer preach the Gospel, they preach a works righteousness salvation. So, I want anyone that's listening to the program to recognize this, that we need to look at every teaching through the lens of Scripture. In Acts 17:11 the Apostle Paul is preaching in the synagogues. He's notices as he's preaching people are searching the Scriptures to test the veracity of this man's teaching who wrote over half the New Testament. And so, that should be the principle for all of us to follow. Test what we have said with the Word of God.

Tim Moore: Amen.

Mike Gendron: Test whatever your pastor, or the pope says through the lens of Scripture.

Tim Moore: Absolutely, because even as we converse here on this program we are sharing insights that we get from the Word of God, we quote Scripture, and it's not just our opinion. And so, it is not us that is denouncing, or we are not denouncing any particular individual, including the pope, or even a faith per se, we are calling out doctrines and statements, and beliefs that are unbiblical and therefore lead to false doctrines and a false Gospel.

Mike Gendron: Amen.

Closing

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. Mike, I want to thank you so much for coming and clearing up some issues. How can folks get in touch with your ministry?

Mike Gendron: Well, I am glad you asked. Our ministry website is proclaimingthegospel.org. And when you go there you'll find many resources that will help you in your witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ. I invite Catholics and Christians to view the articles, watch the videos. We have gospel tracts that we really believe are very effective in leading people to Christ. And that's

our goal, we want people to exchange their religion for a relationship with an all sufficient Savior.

Tim Moore: Exchanging religion for relationship. Well, Mike we're so glad, we have a relationship with you, and are glad you could join us today. So, folks, that is our program for today. I hope it's been a blessing to you. And I hope the Lord willing, you will be back with us next week. Until then, this is Tim Moore speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Godspeed."

End of Program