

“WORLDWIDE BIBLE TRANSLATION AND ORIGINAL LANGUAGE TEXTS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE 1968 AND 1987 UBS AND SPCU
‘GUIDELINES FOR INTERCONFESSIONAL COOPERATION IN TRANSLATING THE BIBLE’”

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The 1968 text of the United Bible Society (UBS)-Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU) “Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible” included some interesting statements. For example:

C. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

For the most adequate development of a translation program, there is need for three groups: 1. a Working Committee, 2. a Review Committee, and 3. a Consultative Group.

1. *Working Committee*

Consisting of 4 to 6 persons equally divided between Protestant and Roman Catholic constituencies and possessing four essential characteristics:

- a. equal standing,
- b. complementary abilities,
- c. mutual respect, and
- d. capacity to work together.¹

Therefore according to this 1968 document, all the translation teams controlled or influenced by the United Bible Society were required to include a 50-50 ratio of Roman Catholic and Protestant translators. The same portion, as a part of the 1987 revision from Rome, read as follows:

2.3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

For the most adequate development of a translation program, there is need for three groups: 1. a translation team, 2. a review panel, and 3. a consultative group.

2.3.1. *Translation team*

Consisting of not more than six persons of high competence from the Roman Catholic and other Christian constituencies and possessing four essential characteristics:

- a) comparable qualifications,
- b) complementary abilities,
- c) mutual respect, and
- d) capacity to work together.²

¹“Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible” [Pentecost, 1968], from Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P., and John B. Sheerin, C.S.B., eds. *Doing the Truth in Charity: Statements of Pope Paul VI, Popes John Paul I, John Paul II, and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity 1964-1980*. (New York: Paulist, 1982), 166.

²“Guidelines for interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible the New Revised Edition Rome 1987”; From: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/general-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19871116_guidelines-bible_en.html; accessed: 8 Sept 2007; Internet.

The word “Protestant” was removed from this portion (17 of 19 uses of “Protestant” were removed), and in this case the term was replaced with “other Christian constituencies.” The term “Christian constituencies” is reminiscent of the *Dominus Iesus*, the Declaration of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, published three days after the conclusion of Amsterdam 2000 (6 Aug 2000).³ Likewise, in the 1987 agreement, the 50-50 ratio was changed, and the Protestant composition of the translation team was completely removed, and the weight of authority was deeded over to the Church of Rome.

What are these documents? To whom are they binding? What do they mean in a discussion of canon and text today? Do the decisions contained in these documents have any ongoing ramifications in the preparation of original texts or in the work of worldwide Bible translation? It is the goal of this paper to introduce answers and provide suggestions related to these questions.

As already noted, the 1968 document called for a 50-50 division of coequal and complimentary Roman Catholics and Protestants to participate in the tasks of the “Working Committee” for all worldwide translations overseen by the UBS. Then according to their organizational scheme, the American Bible Society (ABS) and other Bible Societies are involved in fund raising, marketing, and Bible distribution. The 1968 and 1987 documents beg the question: who was involved in the Bible translation of the United Bible Society prior to 1968? Which question brings us to consider a brief historical sketch of the United Bible Society.

³17§2. “On the other hand, the ecclesial communities which have not preserved the valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery, are not Churches in the proper sense; however, those who are baptized in these communities are, by Baptism, incorporated in Christ and thus are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the Church. Baptism in fact tends per se toward the full development of life in Christ, through the integral profession of faith, the Eucharist, and full communion in the Church” (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Dominus Iesus* (6 Aug 2000), §17 (online); accessed 21 Mar 2001; available at http://search.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html; Internet).

Excluding the Bible work of the Waldenses and Reformation Geneva, the first modern Bible Society was formed in 1710 as a part of the German Pietist movement:

The organization of this period that most closely resembled the later Bible Societies was a direct outgrowth of the Pietistic movement, the von Canstein Bible Institute of Halle, organized in 1710 to supply inexpensive Scriptures to the poor in Germany. Although the von Canstein group confined its efforts to Germany and eastern Europe, by the end of the 18th century it had achieved the remarkable record of circulating over 3 million low-cost Bibles and New Testaments.⁴

Later, in the early 1800s, other Bible Societies formed to assist in the distribution of the Bible both in home missions and in foreign missions. Some were founded to assist the work of missionaries like the Baptist William Carey, who translated Bible portions into numerous Indian dialects. In the case of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), founded in 1804, it could state in its Sixteenth Report (1820), “The Auxiliaries of the Society itself amount to 265, and the Branch Societies to 364; forming together a total as of last year, of 629.”⁵ Therefore, not long after the “Second Great Awakening” in the United States, numerous Bible societies were formed all across the world to propagate the Bible through the work of societies, their agents, and their Bible colporteurs.

The Bible societies multiplied and divided according to their distinctives. For example, in France in 1864 there existed four Bible societies. They struggled in three areas: working with Catholics, inclusion of the apocryphal books, and versions of the Bible. This struggle was recounted by Daniel Lortsch, agent for the BFBS in 1910:

There was then at that time (the beginning of 1864) four Bible Societies [in France]: the Protestant Bible Society of Paris, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the French and Foreign Bible Society, and the French Bible Society. But these four were soon reduced to three. Between the last two there was no difference either in matters of faith, nor in the matter of practice. The union of the two responded to the wishes of all as well as to the reality of the situation. On the 24th of April the French and Foreign Bible Society held its thirty-second and final session (after having distributed

⁴Laton Holmgren, “Bible Societies,” in *Oxford Companion to the Bible* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 80; cited in Edwin H. Robertson, “Author’s Preface,” in *Taking the Word to the World: 50 Years of the United Bible Societies* (Nashville: Nelson, 1996), x.

⁵“British and Foreign Bible Society, Abstract of Sixteenth Report,” *Christian Watchman and Baptist Register*, 27 January 1821, 1.

750,000 volumes and dispensed 2,400,000 Francs), and announced its fusion with the French Bible Society.⁶

Again, according to Lortsch, the three issues that dominated the discussions were: versions of the Bible, inclusion of apocryphal books, and working with the Church of Rome. In the case of the French Bible societies, the ones who dropped their Protestant distinctives were the ones that lost their funding and disappeared from the scene. As far as cooperation, the 19th Century Bible Societies appear to have acted fairly independently (prior to 1900), later working together through a complex web of guarded and cautious comity agreements (1900-1932).

In 1910 a standing committee of six persons, three from the BFBS and three from the ABS met “as opportunity may admit either in London or New York.”⁷ This standing committee worked out comity agreements for not overlapping work in various countries and territories, nor in translating the Bible into the same languages.

The first prospect of united work came from the ABS, as it recommended a “World Federation of National Bible Societies” in 1919. However, the BFBS considered itself a world-wide society, and preferred the proposal of the Netherlands Bible Society (NBS) of “occasional meetings,” purely advisory, for mutual communication and consultation. Openness to a more unified work came through the long appointment of two men in 1929, the Methodist Episcopal Eric North of the ABS and Arthur Wilkinson of the BFBS, and in 1931 John Temple of the BFBS. By 1932, the Bible Societies entered into a period of “orderly structured communication,”

⁶“Il y eut donc en France, un moment (au commencement de 1864), quatre Sociétés bibliques : La *Société biblique protestante de Paris*, la *Société biblique britannique et étrangère*, la *Société biblique française et étrangère*, la *Société biblique de France*. Mais ces quatre Sociétés furent bientôt réduites à trois. Entre les deux dernières, il n’y avait de différence ni quant à la foi, ni quant à la ligne de conduite. L’union répondait aux vœux de tous comme à la réalité de la situation. Aussi fut-elle bientôt un fait accompli. Le 24 avril 1864, la *Société biblique française et étrangère* tint sa trente-deuxième et dernière séance (après avoir distribué 750.000 volumes et dépensé 2.400.000 francs), et annonça sa fusion avec la *Société biblique de France*. «On peut affirmer, dit M. Lambert, que jamais fusion ne fut plus complète, plus heureuse, plus bénie, et que jamais les différences d’origine des membres du comité biblique ne laissèrent la moindre trace» (Samuel Lortsch, *Histoire de la Bible en France* [Paris: Société Biblique Britannique et Étrangère, 1910] (online); available at: http://www.bibliquest.org/Lortsch/Lortsch-Histoire_Bible_France-1.htm; accessed: 4 Mar 2005; Internet; translation mine).

⁷Robertson, 3.

as members of the BFBS, the ABS, and the National Bible Society of Scotland (NBSS) met for two days. In 1939, six Bible societies attended the 125th Anniversary of the NBS: North and John R. Mott of the ABS, Temple and W. J. Platt of the BFBS, H. C. Rutgers and Hendrick Kraemer of the NBS, L. Koren of the Norwegian Bible Society, and two persons representing Bible work in France. This meeting led to the formation of a “Council of Bible Societies.”⁸

It was the end of World War II that provided the gathered initiative which led to the founding of the UBS, gathering the disparate and sometimes competitive strength of the individual Bible Societies under one administration. One unified administration, then allowed them to cooperate with the Roman Catholic agencies formed for this purpose, the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity—SPCU (1964) and the Catholic Bible Federation (1969).⁹ However, three things had to happen for the United Bible Societies to be formed and then cooperate with the Church of Rome: (1) an incipient problem necessitating the solution of unification, (2) a turnover of leadership from the conservative founders to more moderate administrators, and (3) the semblance of change in the Church of Rome, giving it a mandate to seek unity with the second generation leadership of the UBS.

World War II and the economic nightmare of post-war Europe provided the financial need necessitating help from the United States. In October of 1945, Temple of the BFBS in London cabled North of the ABS in New York, proposing a unified Bible Society conference in London. They met in May of 1946 at Elfinward. The devastation of Europe and the war stories of attendees gave a sense of urgency and excitement. Olivier Béguin of the Bible Department of the still-to-be-formed World Council of Churches was introduced to the meeting, along with his work with the newly formed organization. Eugene Nida, ABS Executive Secretary of

⁸Ibid., 4-11.

⁹Catholic Biblical Federation, “Origin” (online); accessed: 13 Nov 2008; available at: http://www.c-b-f.org/start.php?CONTID=01_02_00&LANG=en; Internet.

Translations, was also in attendance at Elfinward. All that was needed was an acceptable organizational structure and approval for the UBS to form. In the next month, the UBS did form with the following participating organizations: BFBS, ABS, NBSS, NBS, and two other Bible Societies.

It took some administrative prowess to gather the 32 different German Bible Societies working in Germany. However, a 1948 conference joined fourteen of them into the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany. That same year, the German Verband, as it was called, was added to the UBS, as was the Federation of Swiss Bible Societies. It was the same year as the formation of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. Two men also died that year, Temple and Coleman of the BFBS. And two men came into leadership in that era. Béguin was given the mantle of General Secretary of the UBS in 1948, a post he retained for 22 years. In fact, by 1958 Béguin had already begun to publish articles on the importance of the involvement of the United Bible Society with the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁰ Eugene Nida, ordained in the Northern Baptist Convention, after a short time with Wycliffe's Summer Institute of Linguistics and then as ABS Associate Secretary of Versions, was given the ABS post of Executive Secretary of Translations in 1946, a post he retained over 35 years. The UBS had become a reality, and second generation leadership was already in control.

Now that a world office coordinated the work of some of the disparate Bible Societies, several changes needed to take place to prepare the Church of Rome to begin their work with the UBS. First, they had to make it appear that they had changed their view on the Bible. Second, they needed to work with the right leaders to develop "guidelines" to gain control of the movement. Third, they had to regionalize their episcopate, to dovetail with the regionalization of the work of the UBS.

¹⁰Robertson, 110.

Why did they need to change their image? The early existence of the Bible Societies did not escape the Vatican's attention. The Vatican published a flurry of writings against the Bible Societies. Pius VII wrote regarding "The Translation of the Bible" to the Archbishop of Mogilev, Belarus in 1816:

"This is why the heretics with their biased and abominable machinations had the custom, in editing Bibles in vulgare tongue (of which the astonishing diversity and contradictions results that they accuse and tear each one the other), to seek to insidiously impose their respective errors by wrapping them of the magnificence of the most holy divine Word."¹¹

In 1844, Gregory XVI's encyclical "Inter Praecipuas Machinationes" specifically decried the translation work of Bible Societies:

"You do not ignore finally what diligent and what wisdom are necessary to faithfully translate into our languages the words of the Lord, because nothing also is so easily produced as the very serious errors introduced into the multiplied translations of the Bible societies, and which stem from the stupidity and deception of so many translators; and these errors, the great number even and the diversity of the translations are concealed for a long time to the detriment of many. These societies themselves bring little or not at all so that by reading these Bibles translated into the vulgare languages men fall into such errors rather than others, given that they accustom themselves little by little to turn for themselves to liberty of thought concerning the meaning of the Scriptures, and to despise the divine traditions guarded in the Church on the foundation of the doctrine of the Fathers, and to reject the hierarchy of the Church herself."¹²

Pius IX wrote the 1846 encyclical "Qui Pluribus", which also condemned the Bible Societies with their free Bible distribution programs:

"This is what the very cunning Bible societies who, renewing the old trickery of the heretics, translate the books of the divine writings into all of the vulgar languages, against the regulations of the very holy Church, interpret them with the help of explanations that are often perverse, and do not cease to distribute them freely, to give them to all sorts of people, even to those who are less cultivated, with the result that rejecting the divine tradition, the doctrine of the Fathers, and the authority of the Catholic Church, all interpret according to their private judgment, turning aside its

¹¹Pius VII, Letter "Magno et Acerbo" (1816) to the Archbishop of Mogilev [Belarus] (online); from Heinrich Denzinger, Peter Hünermann, and Joseph Hoffmann, *Symbolae et definitiones de la foi catholique*, 38th ed. (Paris: Cerf, 1996), §2710-2712 (aka. *Denzinger*, or DS); accessed 8 Nov 2008; available at: <http://www.catho.org/9.php?d=bw1#ekg>; Internet. My translation from the French. In this letter, Pius VII cited the letter of Innocent III to the Bishop of Metz, as well as writings of Pius V, Clement VIII, and Benedict XIV, also mentioning Clement XI's condemnation of the Jansenist teaching that: "79. It is useful and necessary at all times, in all places, and for every kind of person, to study and to know the spirit, the piety, and the mysteries of Sacred Scripture" (Clement XI, *Unigenitus* [1713], §79; accessed 30 June 2003; available from From: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Clem11/c11unige.htm> [online]; Internet).

¹²Gregory XVI, "Inter praecipuas machinationes" (8 mai 1844) (online); from *Denzinger*, §2771; accessed: 8 Nov 2008; available at: <http://www.catho.org/9.php?d=bw2>; Internet; my translation from the French.

meaning, and in this way fall into far greater errors. These societies... Gregory XVI... reprov'd, and We wish likewise that they be condemn'd."¹³

Later, Pius IX wrote in his 1864 Syllabus of Errors:

“IV. Socialism, Communism, Secret Societies, Biblical Societies, Clerico-liberal Societies. Pests of this kind are frequently reprobated in the severest terms in the Encyclical ‘Qui pluribus,’ Nov. 9, 1846, Allocution ‘Quibus quantisque,’ April 20, 1849, Encyclical ‘Noscitis et nobiscum,’ Dec. 8, 1849, Allocution ‘Singulari quadam,’ Dec. 9, 1854, Encyclical ‘Quanto conficiamur,’ Aug. 10, 1863.”¹⁴

In this syllabus, Pius IX enumerated four of his own writings which I have not cited above.

Indeed, Rome’s antagonism to the Bible Society movement is well documented in their own writings.

The main reasons the Church of Rome was vehemently against the Bible Societies seemed to be: translation of the Bible into vernacular languages, the distribution of Bibles to unlearned individuals, and the encouraging of individual interpretation of the Bible. All of these went against the teachings and the still-infallible Traditions of the Church of Rome going back to Innocent III’s 1199 Letter, “Cum ex iniuncto” in which he decried the “simple and uncultivated people” of Metz [Lorraine, France], where “lay people and women,” who (1) “made for themselves translations into the vernacular” gathered in secret conventicles “to belch forth to each other and to mutually preach.”¹⁵ In 1761, Clement XIII reminded his Bishops that the

¹³Pius IX, “Qui Pluribus” (online); from *Denzinger*, §2784; accessed: 8 Sept 2008; available at: <http://www.catho.org/9.php?d=bw2#elo>; Internet. My translation from the French.

¹⁴Pius IX, “Syllabus of Errors” (online); available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>; accessed 8 Sept 2004; Internet.

¹⁵“[DS 770] Our venerable brother, the Bishop of Metz [Lorraine, France], We have come to know from his letter that in his diocese as well as in the town of Metz a rather important number of lay people and of women, drawn in some way by a desire for the Scriptures, made for themselves translations into the French language of the Gospels, the epistles of Paul, the Psalter, the Moralia of Job, and many other books; ... (with the result being) that in the secret gatherings lay people and woman dare to belch forth to each other and to mutually preach, and they equally despise the company of those who are not mixed up in such things ... Some of them also despise the simplicity of their priests, and when a word of salvation is proposed to these latter, they whisper in secret that they have better in their writings and that they are capable of express them more judiciously.

“Even if a desire to understand the divine Scriptures and the care to exhort in conformity with them is not to blame but quite the opposite recommended, these people deserve nevertheless to be blamed that they hold secret conventicles, and that they usurp the office of preaching, that they scoff the simplicity of the priests and that they disdain the company of those that do not attach themselves to such practices. God in fact ... hates to this point the

“simple and uncultivated ... should obey the apostolic advice not to know more than is necessary, but to know in moderation”.¹⁶ This reality leads to another question: did Rome actually change any of its positions on these points in the Second Vatican Council?

The Vatican II document most commonly considered as regards ecumenism is *Lumen Gentium* (21 Nov 1964), whereas the document in focus as regards the Bible and interpretation is *Dei Verbum* (18 Nov 1965). *Dei Verbum* is sufficiently nuanced to retain all of the teachings that the Church of Rome has long believed about the Bible. It taught the need for Tradition to rightly interpret the Scriptures,¹⁷ as well as the fact that both the Scriptures and Tradition were given to the Church.¹⁸ It emphasized the primacy of the Gospels over the epistles of Paul:

works of darkness that he commanded and said (to the apostles): “What I tell you in the dark, say it in the daylight; that which you hear in the deep of your ear proclaim it from the rooftops” (Matt 10:27); by this it is clearly manifest that the preaching of the Gospel ought to be proposed not in secret conventicles, as is done by the heretics, but publicly in the Church, in conformity with Catholic custom. ...

“[DS 771] But the hidden mysteries of the faith ought not to be exhibited everywhere by all, because they cannot be understood by all, but only unto them that are seized by a believing intelligence; this is why the apostle said of the simple: “As unto little children in Christ, it is milk that I made you drink, not solid food” (1 Cor 3:2) ...

“Such is the depth of the holy Scriptures that not only simple and uncultivated people, but even those who are wise and learned are not able to scrutinize the meaning. This is why the Scripture says: “For many of those who sought failed in their search” (Psa 64:7). Also was it correct that it was established in the divine Law that if an animal touches the Mountain (of Sinai) he should be stoned (cf. Heb 12:20; Ex 19:12ff), in order that in fact no simple or uncultivated man should have the presumption to touch upon the sublimities of the holy Scripture or to preach it to others. It is written in fact: “Do not seek that which is too high for you” (Sir 3:22). This is why the apostle said: “Do not seek more than what is necessary to seek, but seek with sobriety” (Rom 12:3).

“Similarly just as the body numbers many members, but not all the members have the same activity, likewise, the Church counts many levels, but not all have the same duty, for according to the Apostle “The Lord has given some as apostles, others as prophets, but others as doctors, etc.” (Eph 4:11). Therefore the doctor is in some ways the principal in the church and this is why no one ought to usurp without deference the office of preacher” (Innocent III, “*Cum ex iniuncto*: On the Necessity for the Magisterium of the Church for the [proper] Interpretation Scripture” [12 July 1199] (online); from *Denzinger*, §770-771; accessed: 8 Nov 2008; available at: <http://www.catho.org/9.php?d=bwh>; Internet; my translation from the French).

¹⁶“3. The faithful—especially those who are simple or uncultivated—should be kept away from dangerous and narrow paths upon which they can hardly set foot without faltering. The sheep should not be led to pasture through trackless places. Nor should peculiar ideas—even those of Catholic scholars—be proposed to them. Rather, only those ideas should be communicated which are definitely marked as Catholic truth by their universality, ambiguity, and harmony. Besides, since the crowd cannot go up to the mountain upon which the glory of the Lord came down, and if whoever crosses the boundaries to see will die, the teachers of the people should establish boundaries around them so that no word strays beyond that which is necessary or useful for salvation. The faithful should obey the apostolic advice not to know more than is necessary, but to know in moderation” (Clement XIII, *In Dominico Agro*: On Instruction in the Faith (online), §3; available at: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/ENCYC/C13INDOM.HTM>; accessed: 8 Sept 2004; Internet).

¹⁷“The words of the holy Fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Through the same tradition the Church’s full canon of

“§125 The *Gospels* [Matthew, Mark, Luke, (and John)] are at the heart of all Scriptures ‘because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Saviour.’

“§126 We can distinguish three stages in the formation of the Gospels:

“1. *The life and teaching of Jesus.* ...

“2. *The oral tradition.* ...

“3. *The written Gospels.* [notice how a “Pauline Gospel” is framed out of the question]

“§127 The fourfold Gospel [a reference to the four books] holds a unique place in the Church, as is evident both in the veneration which liturgy accords it and in the surpassing attraction it has exercised on the saints at all times.”¹⁹

Dei Verbum even affirmed “inerrancy,”²⁰ as did Leo XIII’s 1896 encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* three times, along with the inerrancy of Church Tradition (neither forget that the 1545-1564 Council of Trent taught the dictation theory of biblical inspiration). Quite likely guided by the wise insight of the Jesuit Cardinal Bea, rector of the Rome’s Pontifical Biblical Institute, and participant in the development of the 1968 “Guiding Principles,” *Dei Verbum*, however, did not mention specifically the apocrypha or deuterocanonical books. The 1968 Guiding Principles, however, clearly stated:

“It is recognized that on the one hand an edition of the complete Bible bearing the imprimatur of Roman Catholic authorities will contain the deuterocanonical texts....”²¹

Likewise, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, included seven apocryphal books as “sacred books” and as part of the “canon of Scripture” in the 1993 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, blending them in with the other Old Testament books.²²

the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto all truth those who believe and makes the Word of Christ dwell abundantly in them (see Col. 3:16)” (Paul [VI], “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation [*Dei Verbum*], §8 [online]; accessed: 10 Sept 2008; available at: <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/v.5.html>; Internet).

¹⁸“10. Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God, committed to the Church” (ibid., §10).

¹⁹*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Latin text © 1993, Libreria Editrice Vaticana; English translation for United Kingdom, © 1994, Geoffrey Chapman; Translation subject to revision in light of the *edition typica*; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994), §125-127; quoting *Dei Verbum*, §18-19.

²⁰“Therefore since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writings [5] for the sake of our salvation” (ibid.)

²¹1968 “Guiding Principles.” The 1987 text changed the “will contain” to “must contain.”

Whatever the case, the Vatican II document, *Dei Verbum*, was used as a template to prove that the Church of Rome had changed its view on the Scriptures, and was now ready to cooperate with Protestants in propagating the Bible. Two items bear consideration here. First, *Dei Verbum* was published on 18 November 1965, one year to the month after the first draft of the UBS-SPCU “Guiding Principles” were drafted November 1964 in Crêt Bérard.²³ Second, it would be good to be reminded of the words of John Paul II that Vatican II *did not* change the essence of the Church:

The Second Vatican Council wished to be, above all, a council on the Church. Take in your hands the documents of the Council, especially “Lumen Gentium”, study them with loving attention, with the spirit of prayer, to discover what the Spirit wished to say about the Church. In this way you will be able to realize that there is not—as some people claim—a “new church”, different or opposed to the “old church”, but that the Council wished to reveal more clearly the one Church of Jesus Christ, with new aspects, but still the same in its essence.²⁴

Nevertheless, Béguin, Nida, and the other UBS leaders at the time naively forecasted that there would be a new Catholic church, “different or opposed to the ‘old church.’” Their feelings were and are not unique. Many others felt and still feel that the Church of Rome has drastically changed.²⁵

²²“It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count *Jeremiah* and *Lamentations* as one) and 27 for the New.

“The Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi.

“The New Testament: the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of St. Paul to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, the Letter to the Hebrews, the Letters of James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude, and Revelation (the Apocalypse)” (*Catechism*, §120).

²³Robertson, 111-12.

²⁴John Paul II, “Mexico Ever Faithful,” *Osservatore Romano* (5 Feb 1979), 1. The “old” and “new” language has been regularly used by the Roman church to equivocate on the role of Vatican II (e.g. John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adviente* [14 November 1994], §18).

²⁵See my paper: “Billy Graham and John Paul II: On the Assimilation of U.S. Evangelicalism into the Church of Rome” (ETS, 2008).

One is reminded of Thomas Aquinas' conditional answer to his question, "Whether the rites of unbelievers ought to be tolerated?"

On the other hand, the rites of other unbelievers, which are neither truthful nor profitable are by no means to be tolerated, except perchance in order to avoid an evil, e.g. the scandal or disturbance that might ensue, or some hindrance to the salvation of those who if they were unmolested might gradually be converted to the faith. For this reason the Church, at times, has tolerated the rites even of heretics and pagans, when unbelievers were very numerous.²⁶

As unbelievers, heretics, pagans, or Protestants, have been numerous in the U.S., it has benefited the Church of Rome to tolerate Evangelical rites for the time being.

The United Bible Society, however, as we have seen, was founded in 1946 with the expectation of assisting war-ravaged Europe and with saving money in the distribution of Bibles through cooperative effort. In the formative stage of the UBS, the major groups were the BFBS, ABS, NBSS, NBS, as well as delegates from Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland. On the Internet, it is stated that "as of January 2006, the UBS has 141 member societies." Some of these are said to include: *Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft* [German Bible Society], *Alliance Biblique Universelle*, *Sociedades Biblicas Unidas*, and Colombian, Ukrainian, Russian, Japanese, and Hungarian Bible Societies, as well as the Bible Society In New Zealand and the Bible Society NSW. Non-UBS Bible Societies are the International Bible Society, Trinitarian Bible Society,²⁷ and Geneva Bible Society.

However, after Vatican II, tensions in the group mounted. For example, as far as finances, the slogan after Vatican II became, "The work is one, let the money be one."²⁸

²⁶Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[10], A[11], "Whether the rites of unbelievers ought to be tolerated?" (online); available at: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html>; accessed: 10 June 2008; Internet).

²⁷"Bible Society" (online); accessed: 16 Nov 2008; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible_society; Internet.

²⁸Robertson, v.

Ironically, especially after the 1987 “Guidelines”, Protestant money was now funding Roman Catholic worldwide Bible translation.²⁹ Robertson explained some of the financial tensions:

The story of Roman Catholic cooperation with the Bible Societies has already been told. It is a success story, but there will be continuing need to keep the lines open and friendships fresh. The future will also see efforts to persuade the Roman Catholics to subscribe amounts of money commensurate with their demands.³⁰

At issue was quite likely the funding for the inclusion of the Apocryphal Books in versions of the Bible published by the UBS, according to a 1969 decision:

c. That the full additional costs of providing this separate section [the Apocrypha] should be carried by the requesting church or in some separate way, so that in any case there is no subsidy for the Apocrypha from the general UBS funds.³¹

The Apocrypha, an area of long contention in the Bible Society movement, continued to be a source of contention. Therefore, the UBS kept its 1969 decision about the Apocrypha quiet:

No mention was made of the decisions about including the Apocrypha. It was still a very contentious issue.³²

It is obvious that the ABS would have lost a majority of its gift income in the U.S. if those who were giving sacrificially for the spreading of the Gospel through the written Word of God would have found out about these compromises. Robertson also explained the difficulties he encountered in writing his 50 year history of the UBS:

A Protestant advised me on a chapter about the Roman Catholic advent; a Cardinal kindly corrected me; the Protestant said, “Edwin, the Cardinal has seduced you!” Back to the drawing board.³³

The Cardinal was encouraging burying the subject. Yet, even with these presumably ongoing tensions, the Church of Rome was successful in brokering not only the 1968 “Guiding Principles,” but the 1987 “Guidelines” with the UBS.

²⁹“A basically Protestant movement has been embraced by the Roman Catholic church” (ibid., vi).

³⁰Ibid., 311.

³¹Ibid., 121.

³²Ibid., 120.

³³Ibid., vi.

Among the new leaders in play, some have ascribed to Eugene Nida the administrative prowess and position to pull off the 1968 UBS-SPCU “Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible”:

In 1968, the United Bible Societies (UBS) and the Vatican entered into a joint agreement to undertake hundreds of new interconfessional Bible translation projects around the world, using functional equivalent principles. Again, Nida was one of the principals on this collaborative work.³⁴

Robertson noted that the first draft of 1964 Guidelines was “largely from the pen of Nida.”³⁵

Clearly, Béguin and Nida were the men who guided the UBS toward cooperation with Rome. It must be noted that the purpose in this paper is not to place blame, but rather to introduce the setting, and then to look at the resulting documents, discuss their impact, and extend some suggestions for consideration. The Catholic Church, however, had completed its first two steps: it had positioned itself as having changed its view on Scripture, and it had identified the right people with whom to partner for a quiet takeover of the UBS’ translation work. It now needed to regionalize its episcopate in order to mirror the regionalized organization of the UBS, to provide its episcopate leverage for authoritative oversight of UBS translations and publications in all parts of the world. This third step was accomplished and communicated in the SPCU’s 1975 “Ecumenical Collaboration at Regional, National, and Local Levels.”³⁶

Some comments about the impact of the 1968 and 1987 Documents: Noted in the introduction of this paper was the interposition of a 50-50 equilibrium on the Editorial Committee. While not achieving that goal in every circumstance, one immediate result of the 1968 “Guiding Principles” was the addition of Cardinal Carlo M. Martini, S.J., to the editorial committee of the German Bible Society’s *Novum Testamentum Graece*. It may be helpful to note

³⁴“Brief Biography of Eugene Nida” (online); available from: <http://nidainstitute.org>; accessed 2 Mar 2007; Internet.

³⁵Robertson, 114.

³⁶Jeffrey Gros, FSC, Eamon McManus, and Ann Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism* (New York: Paulist, 1998), 42.

one of the “Rules for Thinking in the Church” from Ignatius Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*, when considering the Jesuit Martini’s long tenure on this important committee:

13. If we wish to be sure that we are right in all things, we should always be ready to accept this principle: I will believe that the white that I see is black if the hierarchical Church so defines it. For, I believe that between the Bridegroom, Christ our Lord, and the Bride, His Church, there is but one spirit, which governs and directs us for the salvation of our souls, for the same Spirit and Lord, who gave us the Ten Commandments, guides and governs our Holy Mother Church.³⁷

It is important to note that most of Rome’s early collaborators with the UBS were Jesuits: Father Walter M. Abbott, Agostino Cardinal Bea, Carlo Cardinal Martini, and Johannes Cardinal Willebrands.

As far as impact on Evangelical groups in various cultures of the world, it seems that the greatest impact of the 50-50 decision would be felt in languages and cultures where there is a shallow level of theological education, for example on the many mission fields of the world where Protestant and Evangelical missionaries have been working for 200 years, translating the Bible, evangelizing, and planting churches. Notice the discussion of “psychological climate” and “distinctive traditions”:

Procedures will differ radically, depending upon the nature of the project (a new translation or revision), upon the level of training and education of the constituency, upon whether the psychological climate is conducive to cooperation, and upon the adherence of one or another constituency to its distinctive traditions.³⁸

The quoted paragraph is identical in the 1968 and 1987 editions. It shows that when there are language groups (e.g. English) where because Evangelicals and Evangelical seminaries are significant, procedures have to vary. When the Evangelical population is slight, such as in France (0.5%) or Poland (0.35%),³⁹ in those places the UBS and the SPCU can be much more directive.

³⁷St. Ignatius Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, translated by Anthony Mottola, S.J., imprimatur, Cardinal Spellman (Garden City, NY: Image Books, Doubleday and Company, 1964), 140-41.

³⁸“Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible,” 165.

³⁹Patrick J. Johnstone, *Operation World* (Bromley, Kent, England: STL, 1978), 63, 97.

Furthermore, the 1987 “Guidelines” removed the role of the UBS in some instances, and replaced it with a centralized leadership under one person. The following are quotes from the 1987 “Guidelines”:

Often a project coordinator is needed to receive and circulate drafts, arrange for the meetings of the translation team and the review panel, and to coordinate the work in general. ...

Translators are normally employed by their churches and not directly by the Bible Societies. This is necessary because after the completion of the translation project the translators will generally return to the work they had done previously. All conditions of service should, however, be established in consultation with the national Bible Society and the translation consultant involved, as the supervision of the overall program requires that a balance be maintained between members of the translation team, who come from different churches. In most cases also the translation consultant will be the person most directly involved in training translators and proposing the approval of the final text of the translation for publication. ...

The translation consultant should assist the translation team in designing a set of principles that are applicable to the particular translation being considered. ...

The translation consultant should take the responsibility for editorial supervision.⁴⁰

Please notice the use of the singular terms “project coordinator” and “translation consultant” (4 times). The 1987 document has centralized the translation program under one figure. If this centralization is combined with the changes in the “Personnel” noted in the introduction of this paper, then the one “project coordinator” is to be a person of “high competence from the Roman Catholic and other Christian constituencies.” It is pretty clear that the Roman Catholic Church is favored for the position of “project coordinator” by the 1987 “Guidelines.”

Also of concern is the proposed method of choosing the proper “Personnel.” The “Guidelines” recommend “informal decision making structures”:

“To find the most qualified persons to constitute the Working and Review Committees, it is necessary to use informal decision-making procedures. That is to say, an extensive investigation is made by some qualified individuals so as to assess the technical capacities of such persons and the probabilities of such persons being able to work together effectively in a committee. After determination, in consultation with church leaders, of the availability of such individuals in consultation with church leaders, they may be formally nominated by their respective churches and

⁴⁰“Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible the New Revised Edition Rome 1987.”

appointed by the Bible Societies. Without careful preliminary investigation unsuitable appointments have sometimes been made to the detriment of the whole project.”⁴¹

Just like Robertson described in his authoring of *Taking the Word to the World*, one can feel the tension when an Evangelical with convictions is made to sit at the feet of a Jesuit in retranslating the Bible of a former Evangelical missionary in some language of the world. If not already disqualified because of a lack of “high competence,” “mutual respect,” or the “capacity to work together,” and if he asks too many questions or raises too many issues, he would become an “unsuitable appointment,” “to the detriment of the whole project.”

By 1987 this apparently all-too-common “problem” of “unsuitable appointments” was handled by inserting a training of personnel prior to appointment. This section was completely new in the 1987 document:

It has often proved extremely valuable to arrange for an initial training program for prospective translators and members of the review panel as part of the extensive investigation leading to appointment. Such a training program should be conducted by translation consultants, who are then able to observe the work of each person while actively engaged in translation. The consultants’ recommendations regarding members of the translation team review panel can then be made more objectively.⁴²

Complete leverage was then given to pre-chosen “translation consultants” to “observe the work of each person while actively engaged in translation.” Following this initial “training”, dependent on their style of translation, the “translation consultants” could then make a more objective recommendation.

The end results of the ecumenical cooperation described in the 1968 “Guiding Principles” and the 1987 “Guidelines” allowed Robertson to write in 1996 that there were “quite a few new translations produced in ecumenical cooperation.”⁴³ Two of these “new translations” will be

⁴¹“1968 Guiding Principles,” 165.

⁴²“1987 Guidelines.”

⁴³*Taking the Word to the Word*, 323.

evaluated next, as the UBS appears bent on using its funds to produce more of these types of “ecumenical translations.”

As examples of post-1987 UBS translation work, the following texts compare two translations made under the 1987 “Guidelines”: the French *Le Semeur* (UBS, 1992, 1999) and the *Contemporary English Version* (ABS, 1991), which received the 1991 Imprimatur of the Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, President, National Conference of Catholic Bishops [U.S.]:

Matt 3:2:

Le Semeur: “He said: — Change, for the rule of the heavens is near.”⁴⁴

Contemporary English Version: “He said, ‘Turn back to God! The kingdom of heaven will soon be here.’”⁴⁵

Mark 1:14-15:

Le Semeur: “As soon as John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee. He preached there the Good News that comes from God. He said: ---The time is accomplished. The rule of God is near. Change and believe the Good News.”⁴⁶

Contemporary English Version: “After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee and told the good news that comes from God. He said, ‘The time has come! God’s kingdom will soon be here. Turn back to God and believe the good news!’”

Rom 1:16-17:

Le Semeur: “I am proud of the Gospel: it is the power of God by which he saves all those who believe, the Jews beforehand and also the non-Jews. In effect, this Gospel reveals to us in what consists the righteousness with which God agrees: she is received by faith and nothing but by faith as is said in the Scripture: *The righteous will live by faith.*”⁴⁷

Contemporary English version: “I am proud of the good news! It is God’s powerful way of saving all people who have faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles. The good news tells how God accepts everyone who has faith, but only those who have faith. It is just as the Scriptures say, “The people God accepts because of their faith will live.”

⁴⁴Original French: “Il disait: ---*Changez, car le règne des cieux est proche.” (International Bible Society, Bible Gateway, “Le Semeur” [online]; available at: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%201%20;&version=32>; accessed: 25 Aug 2006; Internet; translation mine).

⁴⁵*Contemporary English Version*, imprimatur: the Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, President, National Conference of Catholic Bishops (New York: American Bible Society, 1991).

⁴⁶Original French: “Lorsque Jean eut été arrêté, Jésus se rendit en Galilée. Il y prêcha la Bonne Nouvelle qui vient de Dieu. Il disait: ---Le temps est accompli. Le règne de Dieu est proche. Changez et croyez à la Bonne Nouvelle” (*Le Semeur*, translation mine).

⁴⁷Original French: “Car je suis fier de l’Evangile: c’est la puissance de Dieu par laquelle il *sauve tous ceux qui croient, les *Juifs d’abord et aussi les non-Juifs. En effet, cet Evangile nous révèle en quoi consiste la justice que Dieu accorde: elle est reçue par la foi et rien que par la foi, comme il est dit dans l’Ecriture: *Le juste vivra par la foi.*” (ibid., translation mine).

Rom 3:19-20:

Le Semeur: “Now, we know it, that whatever the Scripture says in the *Law, she addresses it to those who live under its regiment of the Law. It is done this way so that no one may have any reply and that the whole world may be recognized as guilty before God. For no one will be declared righteous before him because he would have fulfilled the works demanded by the Law. In fact, the Law gives only the knowledge of sin.”⁴⁸

Contemporary English Version: “We know that everything in the Law was written for those who are under its power. The Law says these things to stop anyone from making excuses and to let God show that the whole world is guilty. God doesn't accept people simply because they obey the Law. No, indeed! All the Law does is to point out our sin.”

Rom 3:23:

Le Semeur: “All have sinned, in fact, and are deprived of the glorious presence of God.”⁴⁹

Contemporary English Version: “All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.”

Rom 10:3-4:

Le Semeur: “Not aware of the manner in which God declares men righteous and in seeking to be declared righteous in their own way, they did not submit to God in accepting the way in which he declares us righteous. For the Christ put an end to the regiment of the Law so that all those who believe be declared righteous.”⁵⁰

Contemporary English Version: “what makes people acceptable to him. So they refuse to trust God, and they try to be acceptable by obeying the Law. 4 But Christ makes the Law no longer necessary for those who become acceptable to God by faith.”

1 Cor 9:22-23:

Le Semeur: “In my relations with Christians who are poorly established in the faith, I live like one of them, in order to win them. It is in this way that I make myself all to all, in order to direct at least several unto salvation by all means. Thus, all this, I do it for the cause of the Good News to have a part, with them, in the blessings that are brought by the Good News.”⁵¹

Contemporary English Version: “When I am with people whose faith is weak, I live as they do to win them. I do everything I can to win everyone I possibly can. I do all this for the good news, because I want to share in its blessings.”

1 Cor 15:10:

Le Semeur: “and this grace that was testified to me was not inefficient. Far from there, I have pained at the task more than all the other apostles”⁵²

⁴⁸“Or, nous le savons, ce que l'Écriture dit dans la *Loi, elle l'adresse à ceux qui vivent sous le régime de la Loi. Il en est ainsi pour que personne n'ait rien à répliquer et que le monde entier soit reconnu coupable devant Dieu. Car personne ne sera déclaré juste devant lui parce qu'il aura accompli les oeuvres demandées par la Loi. En effet, la Loi donne seulement la connaissance du péché” (ibid., translation mine).

⁴⁹“Tous ont péché, en effet, et sont privés de la glorieuse présence de Dieu” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵⁰“En méconnaissant la manière dont Dieu déclare les hommes justes et en cherchant à être déclarés justes par leurs propres moyens, ils ne se sont pas soumis à Dieu en acceptant le moyen par lequel il nous déclare justes. 4 Car le Christ a mis fin au régime de la *Loi pour que tous ceux qui croient soient déclarés justes” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵¹“Dans mes relations avec les chrétiens mal affermis dans la foi, je vis comme l'un d'entre eux, afin de les gagner. C'est ainsi que je me fais tout à tous, afin d'en conduire au moins quelques-uns au salut par tous les moyens. Or, tout cela, je le fais pour la cause de la Bonne Nouvelle pour avoir part, avec eux, aux bénédictions qu'apporte la Bonne Nouvelle.” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵²“Et cette grâce qu'il m'a témoignée n'a pas été inefficace. Loin de là, j'ai peiné à la tâche plus que tous les autres apôtres” (ibid., translation mine).

Contemporary English Version: “But God was kind! He made me what I am, and his wonderful kindness wasn't wasted. I worked much harder than any of the other apostles, although it was really God's kindness at work and not me.”

2 Cor 6:1:

Le Semeur: “Also, we who work together at this task, we invite you not to leave without effect the grace that you have received from God.”⁵³

Contemporary English Version: “We work together with God, and we beg you to make good use of God's kindness to you.”

Gal 2:16:

Le Semeur: “However, we have understood that we are declared righteous before God, not because we accomplish the works that are commanded in the Law, but uniquely by the faith in Jesus Christ. It is why we have, we also, placed our confidence in Jesus Christ to be declared righteous by the faith and not because we had accomplished what the Law decrees. For, as it is said in the Scriptures: *No one will be declared righteous before God* because he would have accomplished that which is ordained by the Law.”⁵⁴

Contemporary English Version: “But we know that God accepts only those who have faith in Jesus Christ. No one can please God by simply obeying the Law. So we put our faith in Christ Jesus, and God accepted us because of our faith.”

Gal 3:2:

Le Semeur: “I will ask you only one question: by what qualification did you receive the Holy Spirit? Is it because you accomplished the Law, or because you welcomed with faith the Good News that you heard?”⁵⁵

Contemporary English Version: “I want to know only one thing. How were you given God's Spirit? Was it by obeying the Law of Moses or by hearing about Christ and having faith in him?”

Col 1:14:

Le Semeur:

“Being joined with him,
We are delivered,
For we have received
The forgiveness of sins.”⁵⁶

Contemporary English Version: “who forgives us our sins and sets us free.”

⁵³“Aussi, nous qui travaillons ensemble à cette tâche, nous vous invitons à ne pas laisser sans effet la grâce que vous avez reçue de Dieu.” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵⁴“Cependant, nous avons compris que l'on est déclaré juste devant Dieu, non parce que l'on accomplit les oeuvres que commande la *Loi, mais uniquement par la foi en Jésus-Christ. C'est pourquoi nous avons, nous aussi, placé notre *confiance en Jésus-Christ pour être déclarés justes par la foi et non parce que nous aurions accompli ce qu'ordonne la Loi. Car, comme le dit l'Écriture: *Personne ne sera déclaré juste devant Dieu* parce qu'il aura accompli ce qu'ordonne la Loi” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵⁵“Je ne vous poserai qu'une seule question: A quel titre avez-vous reçu le Saint-Esprit? Est-ce parce que vous avez accompli la Loi, ou parce que vous avez accueilli avec foi la Bonne Nouvelle que vous avez entendue?” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵⁶“Étant unis à lui, nous sommes délivrés, car nous avons reçu le pardon des péchés.” (ibid., translation mine).

2 Tim 3:8:

Le Semeur: “Just as at one time Jannes and Jambres opposed themselves to Moses, likewise these same men oppose themselves to the truth. Their intelligence is distorted and are disqualified as it concerns the faith.”⁵⁷

Contemporary English Version: “Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, these people are enemies of the truth. Their minds are sick, and their faith isn’t real.”

1 Pet 2:9-10:

Le Semeur: “But you, you are a chosen race, a community of king-priests, a holy nation, a people that God has liberated so that you may very highly celebrate the marvelous works of him who called you to pass from the darkness to his wonderful light. For you who were hitherto not his people, you are now the people of God. You who were not benefiting from the grace of God, you are now the object of his grace.”⁵⁸

Contemporary English Version: “But you are God’s chosen and special people. You are a group of royal priests and a holy nation. God has brought you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now you must tell all the wonderful things that he has done. The Scriptures say,
‘Once you were nobody.
Now you are God’s people.
At one time no one had pity on you.
Now God has treated you with kindness.’”

Among other issues, the declarative righteousness inserted into some of the above texts, under the guise of a dynamic equivalence translation philosophy, is a Win-Win for the Church of Rome: (1) It affirms the “Sacrament of Penance” in which absolution of sins is declared to faithful Catholics in confessionals all across the world, and (2) it reduces the weight of “Justification by faith” from the text of Scripture. Therefore, Protestants are funding translations in which they no longer see their distinctive “justification by faith” affirmed in those Scriptures.

In addition, the Apocryphal books, called deuterocanonical by Rome, contain further theological peccadilloes. The following are quotes from the ABS’ 1992 *Good News Translation*, which contains 15 Apocryphal books located in a separate section between the Old and New

⁵⁷“De même qu’autrefois Jannès et Jambres s’opposèrent à *Moïse, de même ces hommes-là s’opposent à la vérité. Ils ont l’intelligence faussée et sont disqualifiés en ce qui concerne la foi.” (ibid., translation mine).

⁵⁸“Mais vous, vous êtes une *race élue*, une *communauté de rois-prêtres*, une *nation sainte*, un *peuple que Dieu a libéré pour que vous célébriez bien haut les œuvres merveilleuses* de celui qui vous a appelés à passer des ténèbres à son admirable lumière. Car vous qui autrefois *n’étiez pas son peuple*, vous êtes maintenant *le peuple de Dieu*. Vous qui *n’étiez pas au bénéfice de la grâce de Dieu*, vous êtes à présent *l’objet de sa grâce*” (ibid., translation mine).

Testaments.⁵⁹ They add 19.2 percent to the size of the Bible, being almost the width of the New Testament (NT, 290 pages; Apoc, 218 pages). This version received the imprimatur from the Most Reverend William H. Keeler, D.D., President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops [U.S.]:

Tobit 4:10-11, "Taking care of the poor [NJB: almsgiving]⁶⁰ is the kind of offering that pleases God in heaven. Do this [NJB: almsgiving], and you will be kept safe from the dark world of the dead."
Tobit 12:8-9, "It is better to pray sincerely and to please God by helping the poor than to be rich and dishonest. It is better to give to the poor [NJB: almsgiving] than to be rich and dishonest. Such generosity [NJB: almsgiving] will save you from death and will wash away all your sins. Those who give to the poor will live full lives."

⁵⁹The official Sept 1969 unpublished position of the UBS on the Apocryphal books was:

"1. When the Authorized Version of the English Bible was published in 1611, all copies contained the Apocrypha. The same is true of most of the early translations such as Luther and Valera. Subsequently, however, editions with the Apocrypha appeared from time to time. From its formation in 1804 down to about 1826, The British and Foreign Bible Society's circulation of Scriptures included editions with the Apocrypha: but in view of the controversy at that time, regulations were adopted excluding such circulation. Most, but by no means all, Bible Societies have since operated under a similar limitation until recent years.

"2. In June 1964, a world conference of Church leaders and Bible society representatives, meeting at Driebergen in Holland, urged that the Bible Societies should undertake their task of worldwide circulation of Scriptures with renewed vigor, and recommended that 'where the churches desire and specifically request it the Bible Societies should consider the translation and publication of the books commonly called the Apocrypha.'

"3. It should be noted that the churches desiring to have the Apocrypha are not only (as sometimes supposed) the Orthodox and Roman Catholic; but also (for example) Angelicans [sic] and Lutherans, who value the Apocrypha as supplementary to the Old and New Testaments, though they do not regard its books as part of the canon.

"4. It needs to be stressed that each member Society remains an autonomous body within the UBS family. Subject, therefore, to the basic aims and conditions of the partnership, each Bible Society makes its own decisions as to the texts which it will or will not publish or distribute. This freedom applies, of course, in relation to editions with the Apocrypha.

"5. It continues to be the normal policy and practice of the Bible Societies as a whole to publish the Holy Scriptures without the Apocrypha. When editions with the Apocrypha are published, this is often subject to the following arrangements:

"a. That there should be a specific request from the responsible body of the church community desiring such an edition.

"b. That the deuterocanonical books should be included as a separate section, between the Old and New Testaments.

"c. That the full additional cost of providing this separate section should be carried by the requesting church or in some separate way, so that in any case there is no subsidy for the Apocrypha from the general UBS funds.

"6. The Committee feels it desirable that when Bible Society editions of the Bible include the Apocrypha, it should be preceded by a clear explanatory note which indicates the difference of value attributed to these books by the different churches.

"7. A categorical assurance can be given that no group which has *not* requested an Apocrypha edition will receive one, and that no one will be involved in translation or distribution of the Apocrypha against his wish or conscience" (Robertson, 121-22; from the Minutes of the UBS General Committee, Appendix V, September 1969, 81-83).

⁶⁰NJB stands for New Jerusalem Bible (New York: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985).

Tobit 13:1-2, “Then Tobit prayed: ‘Praise the eternal God, praise the one who rules. He punishes us; then he shows mercy. He sends us down to the world of the dead, then he brings us up from the grave. No one can escape his power.’”

2 Maccabees 12:45, “In his firm and devout conviction that all of God’s faithful people would receive a wonderful reward, Judas made provision for a sin offering to set free from their sin those who had died.”

Wisdom 2:24, “It was the Devil’s jealousy that brought death into the world, and those who belong to the Devil are the ones who will die.”

Wisdom 10:5, “Once when the nations were frustrated in their wicked plans, Wisdom recognized a righteous man and kept him innocent in God’s sight. She gave him strength to obey God’s command in spite of his love for his son.”

Wisdom 11:23, “You are powerful enough to do anything, but you are merciful to everyone; you overlook our sins and give us time to repent.”

Wisdom 16:6-7, “This trouble lasted for only a little while, as a warning. Then you gave them a healing symbol, the bronze snake, to remind them of what your Law requires. If a person looked at that symbol, he was cured of the snakebite—not by what he saw, but by you, the savior of all mankind.”

Sirach 3:3-4, “If you respect your father you can make up for your sins,⁶¹ and if you honor your mother, you are earning great wealth.”

Sirach 3:30, “Giving to the poor [NJB: almsgiving] can make up for sin, just as water can put out a blazing fire.”

Sirach 29:12-13, “Count among your treasures the fact that you give to the poor [NJB: almsgiving]. It will save you from all kinds of trouble and will be a better defense against your enemies than the strongest shield or stoutest spear.”

Sirach 40:17, “Acts of kindness and charity [NJB: almsgiving] are as lasting as eternity.”

Sirach 50:20-21, “Then Simon came down from the altar, raised his hands over the whole assembly of Israel and reverently pronounced the blessing from the Lord, while the people bowed a second time in worship to receive that blessing from the Most High.”

These examples show the potential impact of the Apocryphal books on the doctrine of almsgiving for justification (rather than justification by faith alone), purgatory, images, and indulgences for the dead. The words of Paul may be helpful here: “A little bit of leaven leavens the whole lump of dough” (Gal 5:9).

It must be noted that Catholic translations have systematically undermined one doctrine after another held dear by conservative Protestants, including but not limited to:

- Total depravity, Rom 3:23; Eph 2:1-3; 4:19 (cf. John 2:25; 2 Tim 3:8)
- Justification by faith, Rom 3:20, 24; 4:2, 5; 9:32-10:4
- Imputed righteousness, Rom 4:3, 5; Heb 11:4, 7,
- Scriptures alone, Acts 20:32; 1 Thess 2:13
- Faith alone, Luke 18:42

⁶¹The 1985 New Jerusalem Bible used “expiates sins” in the places where the GNT translated “make up for sins.”

- Changing “grace” to “gift”, Rom 6:23
- Removal of word “work” or “works”, John 6:28; 1 Cor 15:10; Gal 3:2; Eph 2:8-9
- Hearing and believing, John 5:24; Acts 15:7-11
- The hearing of faith, Gal 3:2, 5; Heb 4:2
- Predestination, Rom 8:29-30; Eph 1:5
- “Manichean” dichotomy of flesh and spirit, Rom 7:25
- “Manichean” concept of faith dwelling within, 2 Tim 1:5, or being “in Christ,” 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:17
- A Puritan-type of sexual righteousness, Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; 1 Cor 7:36.

Simultaneously other doctrines or emphases may be translated into the text, such as:⁶²

- Removing the word “statue” from Exod 20:4 (cf. Deut 16:22) and removing the word “worship” from Exod 20:5
- Getting “penance” into the message of John the Baptist, Matt 3:2 (following the Vulgate’s “paenitentiam agite”);⁶³ Mark 1:4, et al.
- Jesus blessing the bread, instead of giving thanks, Matt 26:26
- Rearranging the translation to favor Mary, Mark 3:35, John 2:4
- Change “unworthy” to “simple,” Luke 17:10
- Rework Luke 22:20 for use in saying Mass
- Reworking Acts 1:14, since it mentions that Jesus had brothers, which does not correspond with Mary being “ever virgin”
- Removing the word “repent,” Acts 3:19
- Rephrasing Acts 10:25-26 to allow for bowing before priests and other prelates
- Getting Mass into the translation, Acts 13:2
- Appointing “priests” rather than “elders,” Acts 14:23
- Changing Acts 15:9 to read like the “Sacrament of Penance”
- A sacramental salvation, Acts 16:31
- Changing the verb “believe” into the noun “conversion,” Acts 16:34
- Rearrange Acts 20:28 to allow for the blood in Mass
- Affirming Philip’s non-ownership of property, Acts 21:8-9 (related to the Benedictine “Vow of Poverty”)
- Favoring the worship of angels, Acts 27:23
- Removing the word “saints” to describe all believers, Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2, etc.
- Blurring “from faith to faith,” Rom 1:17
- Affirming the salvific quality of man’s conscience, Rom 2:15
- Translating “law” as referring only to the disappearing or obsolete OT Law, even adding the words “of Moses” to force that interpretation (Gal 3:2), therefore minimizing its application to Rome’s many ecclesiastical canons, cf. Rom 3:19-20; Heb 10:1

⁶²Based on the comparison of numerous French and English texts. Two French writings include similar listings: an article by M. Douen in *La Revue de Theologie et de Philosophie*, 3rd series (1868), vol 6, no 1; and Samuel Lortsch, *Histoire de la Bible en France* (online); available at: http://www.bibliquest.org/Lortsch/Lortsch-Histoire_Bible_France-7.htm#TM6; accessed: 15 Jan 2009; Internet. In a separate section in the appendixes titled, “Catholic inaccuracies in the Translation of the New Testament,” Lortsch cited the French Catholic translations of de Leuse (1548), de Bay (1572, Deville (1613), and Frizon (1620) for his comparisons. He noted approximately 27 particular NT passages in his comments. The next section in Lortsch then cited “Protestant inaccuracies in the translation of the New Testament.”

⁶³The word “penance” is found 67 times in the Douay-Rheims Bible [a very literal (at times) translation of the Latin Vulgate into English in 1899], and the phrase “do penance” is found 29 times.

- Changing “us” to “you” to keep a separation between the Holy Orders and the laity, Rom 15:7
- Removal “nothing” or “anything,” 1 Cor 3:7
- Removing the marriage of the apostles, 1 Cor 9:5 (in accord with the Benedictine “Vow of Abstinence”)
- Changing “commandments” to “traditions,” 1 Cor 11:2
- Charity as an act, rather than love as a propelling emotion, 1 Cor 13:4
- Clouding the power of proclamation of the Gospel, 1 Cor 15:1-2; Gal 1:8-9
- An aversion to the use of the word “vain,” 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 6:1
- Reworking 2 Cor 2:10 to sound like confession in the “Sacrament of Penance”
- Removal of the word “conscience,” 2 Cor 4:2
- “The love of Christ overwhelms us,” 2 Cor 5:14 (NJB)
- Removal of the complete change of nature in conversion, 2 Cor 5:17
- Changing “Cephas” to “Peter,” Gal 1:18
- Adding the word “message” to Gal 2:16, to force an interpretation on Gal 1:8-9
- Removal of the word “prophet,” Eph 4:11 (1992 *Le Semeur*)
- Removal of the word “righteousness,” Eph 4:24, and “righteous,” 1 John 2:1
- Removal of the completed action of “redemption,” Col 1:15
- Confusing the reading of Col 2:18, which speaks of the worship of angels
- Confusing the reading of Col 2:20, which speaks of works as the “elementary principles of the world”
- Removal of the word “sanctification,” 1 Thess 4:3, and aversion to the verb “sanctify,” 1 Tim 4:4, Heb 2:10
- Removal of the term “wife” from 1 Tim 3:2, due to the Benedictine “Vow of Celibacy”
- Removal of the word “mediator,” affirming the unique role of Jesus as only mediator, 1 Tim 2:5
- Removal of the word “evangelist,” 2 Tim 4:5
- On the ministry of a high priest (Lat. Pontifex), Heb 5:1ff.
- Jacob bowing down before the staff of Joseph, as a precedent for bowing before an object, Heb 11:21
- Removal of the word “souls,” Heb 13:17
- Removing “kingdom of priests” as applying to all believers, 1 Pet 2:9
- Difficulty with Peter being a “fellow-elder,” 1 Pet 5:1
- Difficulty with “common salvation,” Jude 3
- Christ as only ruler, goes against Benedictine Vow of Obedience, Jude 4

The *Contemporary English Version* (imprimatur 1991) includes some interesting footnotes:

- Relating the “work” of Paul and Barnabas to fasting: the footnote of Acts 14:23 reads “went without eating: See note for Acts 13:2”; and the note for Acts 14:26 reads, “*the work they had completed*: See 13.1-3.” Then Acts 13:1-3 footnotes that the work which the apostles did was that of “going without eating”!
- Change “fornication” in Acts 15:20 to “not commit terrible sexual sins,” adding in the footnote: “*not commit terrible sexual sins*: This probably refers to the laws about the wrong kind of marriages that are forbidden in Leviticus 18:6-18 or to some serious sexual sin.”
- Changing “resurrection” to having Paul speak about a goddess named “Rising from Dead” in Acts 15:18. The footnote reads: “*people rising from death*: Or ‘a goddess named “Rising from Death.””
- Change “elders” in James 5:14 to “church leaders,” and include in the footnote: “*church leaders*: Or “elders” or “presbyters” or “priests.” This then can be cross-referenced to Paul and Barnabas appointing “leaders” in Acts 14:23

As can be seen, the issues in Bible translation and propagation are varied and numerous.

However, the “Guidelines” explain that these differences ought not be brought up, in order to facilitate non-confrontational ecumenical translations:

Some committees have considered the possibility of explaining different Roman Catholic and Protestant beliefs by noting that one interpretation is held by Roman Catholics and another by Protestants. Such a procedure does not seem wise, for it tends to accentuate differences; nor is it necessary, since most diversities of interpretation can be covered more objectively by marginal annotations on alternative renderings, if the issue in question is important. Where the matter is not of great consequence, it is better simply to omit reference in the interest of joint undertakings.⁶⁴

If these exegetical and theological differences in translation history were to be minimalized, then the Catholic “project coordinator” would have less problems with his non-Catholic translators, who may otherwise balk at obvious non-literal theologically-motivated translations. However, the Catholic “project coordinator” may need their assistance and expertise in a minor language, and their name is most certainly needed to market the translation to their respective constituency.

Which topic leads to a discussion of the three levels of translators mentioned in the introduction (using the 1987 terminology): translation team, review panel, and consultative group. The definition of the role of the “Consultative Group” is almost laughable:

Consisting of up to fifty persons, depending upon the language and circumstances, selected for their position as church leaders and for being representative of different constituencies, ecclesiastical, political, and geographical. The members provide their assistance entirely through correspondence.⁶⁵

It is highly likely, that the names of those in the “Consultative Group” are found in the flyleaf of most Bibles, providing credibility to the translation because they are representatives of “different constituencies, ecclesiastical, political, and geographical.” However, the decisions on the important subjects related to translation have, previous to their input, been hashed over in the “Formulation of Principles” by the “Training Consultant.” The input of the Consultative Group is likely extremely minimal at best.

⁶⁴1968 “Guiding Principles,” 162.

⁶⁵1987 “Guidelines.”

In dealing with U.S. Evangelicals, the Church of Rome has been rewarded for heeding the advice of Aquinas “when unbelievers were very numerous.”⁶⁶ And especially through the 1987 “Guidelines”, Rome has gained unusual leverage over the combined work and 200 years of endowment to the BFBS, ABS, UBS, German Bible Society, etc. Not only has this leverage impacted worldwide Bible translations as exemplified above, possibly undermining 200 years of Protestant missionary labors, but it has and will also influence decisions on:

- The development of original language texts, their apparatus, and their promotion
- The development of lexicons, language helps, translation helps, and computer software
- Choices for funding Bible translations in various languages, as well as funding the retranslation of the work of prior missionaries who were not nuanced enough in their translation practices
- Choices of and funding of personnel to oversee and to assist in Bible translations
- Choices as to which Bibles to print and which ones not to print
- Choices as to which Bibles to develop into study Bibles, in which commentary and/or notes are solicited from parties from many denominations for marketing purposes
- Choices as to which Bibles to promote, market, and distribute.

For example, the February 2008 ABS marketing brochure consisted of 24 pages, four-color glossy, on 8.5 in. by 11 in. paper. The cover read, “Reach Them! Contemporary English Version and Good News Translation Scripture resources that are readable, reliable and relevant.” From cover to cover, the only English versions of the Bible promoted in this ABS brochure were the two versions cited above, both having the imprimatur of the Church of Rome. Available publications of these Bibles included children’s Bibles and bilingual Bibles. Truly, there has been a change in the ABS. The source of this change seems to point to the formation of the UBS and the subsequent 1968 and 1987 agreements with the Church of Rome.

But that’s not all. The amount of control and leverage gained by the 1968 and 1987 Guidelines has now moved to a strategy of increasing cooperation among other non-involved

⁶⁶Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[10], A[11], “Whether the rites of unbelievers ought to be tolerated?” (online).

groups. Richard Worthing-Davies of the BFBS explained his third goal for the future of the UBS:

Deliberately foster a variety of temporary and semi-permanent working alliances and partnerships with other agencies and churches. I am not sure that the “Forum” itself will be terribly significant—because of the range of organizations involved. But I am convinced that the various working alliances of different members in the Forum plus other organizations will be increasingly significant in the future.⁶⁷

Such a “Forum” did take place in 1992, as described by Robertson:

After the two major areas of cooperation had been thoroughly discussed at the distribution and translation meetings, a joint and all-embracing meeting was held at the global offices of the UBS, April 27-30, 1992. Then the UBS met with seventeen major Bible agencies. The list was impressive, including agencies engaged in Bible translation and some with their own peculiar means of distribution: Bibles International, Bibles to All, Evangel Bible Translators, Every Home for Christ, Institute for Bible Translation, International Bible Society, Lutheran Bible Translators, Open Doors, Pioneer Bible Translators, Scripture Gifts Mission, Scripture Union, The Bible League, Vida, Life Publishers International, WEC International, World Gospel Crusades, and Wycliffe Bible Translators.⁶⁸

Robertson continued explaining the feeling in the room:

Dr. Lars Dunberg of the International Bible Society, which had recently merged with Living Bibles International, voiced the opinion of them all, “History is being made here today. This meeting couldn’t have happened five years ago when some of our organizations were not talking to each other. Now we have become friends.”⁶⁹

It would benefit all of these organizations to study the UBS-SPCU guidelines, which I am sure they have done, and to reexamine the future ramifications of their participation in these Forums.

The www.biblesociety.org.uk website announced that it has global partnerships with over a dozen other Bible translation and distribution organizations:

We operate within the Forum of Bible Agencies—which includes over a dozen other Bible translation and distribution organizations such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, Scripture Union, Scripture Gift Mission, and Open Doors—in order to cooperate and share information about vital Scripture work being done right across the world.⁷⁰

Then this same website shared about the role of the Bible Societies’ regional consultant:

⁶⁷Robertson, 302.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰“Global Partnerships” (online); accessed: 16 Nov 2008; available at: <http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/13.php?id=340>; Internet.

We also work with organizations in the field. For example, a translator for Wycliffe Bible Translators may not only benefit from a Bible Societies' regional translation consultant, and accompanying resources, but the local Bible Society may then undertake the cost of printing that Scripture.⁷¹

Additionally, this same website stated that the Bible Societies partner with other organizations:

Translation is just one area we share with other organizations. Bible Societies are also key partners with SAT-7, a satellite television ministry in the Middle East, Hosanna, who bring God's Word on audio cassette throughout the world, Campus Crusade for Christ, a ministry committed to taking the Gospel to all nations especially using the *Jesus* video and Operation Mobilization, using Scriptures in evangelism around the globe.

The UBS' web of partnerships and comity agreements are indeed far reaching. In its 62 years of history, the UBS has not lacked strategic aggressiveness to effectuate partnerships. The role of the 1968 and 1987 Guidelines in facilitating these partnerships, the impact of the Church of Rome's prominence in these Guidelines, and the resulting leverage of Rome in all these partnerships appears disconcerting and problematic, especially since Rome's theology has not changed.⁷²

These findings lead me to make several recommendations:

- Be very guarded in the use of any UBS sponsored translation since 1968.
- Reconsider any meaningful support of any organizations affiliated with the UBS.
- Very carefully consider the Project Coordinator and Translation Team prior to allowing use of your name as a member of a Consultative Group, or to write a commentary on a book of the Bible in an existing UBS translation.
- Found new Bible societies, perhaps with another name, such as Bible Trust, that can replace the vacuum in the production and distribution of accurately translated Bibles.
- Reconsider the theological motives behind the research that goes into the existing critical edition original language texts produced by the German Bible Society, published by the UBS, and distributed by the ABS in the United States of America.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Notice the Medieval orientation of Benedict XVI's two uses of the Fourth Lateran Council: "SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree *Ad gentes*, 2. The famous formula *extra Ecclesiam nullus omnino salvatur* is to be interpreted in this sense (cf. FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL, Cap. 1. *De fide catholica*: DS 802). Cf. also the *Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston*: DS 3866-3872" (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect, Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B., Archbishop Emeritus of Vercelli, Secretary, Declaration '*Dominus Iesus*' on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church [Rome: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 6 Aug 2000], note 82); and "The truth of negative theology was highlighted by the Fourth Lateran Council, which explicitly stated that however great the similarity that may be established between Creator and creature, the dissimilarity between them is always greater" (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* [30 Nov 2007], §43 [online]; from: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/encyc/B16spesalvi.htm>; accessed: 7 Dec 2007).

- Found a new Bible Trust (e.g. “Baptist Bible Trust”) organized for the purpose of advancing the preparation, promotion, and distribution of non-biased original language texts.

Perhaps the best conclusion to this paper on the Bible translation comes to us from the mouth of Paul, off the pen of Luke, and inspired by the Holy Spirit:

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified (Acts 20:28-32, NASB).