

# **Ecumenism/Ecumenical**

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## **1. What is "ecumenism?"**

- A. The word "ecumenism" comes from the Greek "oikoumene" meaning "inhabited world."
- B. The Greek word "oikoumene," as the "inhabited world," is used in the New Testament: the gospel is preached in the "oikoumene" (Mat. 24:14); the "oikoumene" is to be judged by Jesus Christ, (Acts 17:31; Luke 21:26); the kingdoms of the "oikoumene" are shown to Jesus by Satan, (Luke 4:5).
- C. In the non-biblical circles of Greece, "oikoumene" was used to distinguish the "tutored and refined" verses the "barbarian."
- D. Modern ecumenism stresses "unity and universality."

## **2. WHERE AND HOW DID MODERN ECUMENISM START?**

- A. The Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic Church, have used "ecumenical" councils and synods all through church history.
- B. Evangelical churches through history have used "ecumenical creeds."
- C. Modern "ecumenism" started after World War II.
- D. Mainline denominations wanted to come back together after the disruptions of the war.
- E. "The big dream within Christianity that captivated the minds and hearts of many liberal theologians was ecumenical unity."
- F. "Responding to our culture" through the "tailoring of our message to the contemporary mind set," "playing down doctrine and the message of repentance," "throwing out the trappings of the old-time religion," "catering to entertaining worship services and a feel good message," has been the evangelical open door to "ecumenism."
- G. The Council of Churches emerged to help further these endeavors.
- H. Dialogue with other religions took place and in many cases they were looking for similarities and did not want to celebrate differences.

I. Unity took place at all costs, even the sacrifice of doctrine, truth and Scripture.

### **3. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH ECUMENISM?**

A. Cooperation for a common cause helped unite various church groups.

B. "Doctrinal differences could be swept to one side in a euphoric drive to come together."

C. Doctrines of Jesus' deity, redemption, justification, sanctification, reality of hell, reality of sin, and the nature of the church, were all questioned and redefined.

D. Ignore philosophies and questions that really matter

E. Too often ecumenism appears to rest on a doctrine of cheap grace."

F. Refusing to address the real issues

G. Create an artificial unity through unity at any price

H. Get involved in irresponsible projects

### **4. WHERE IS THIS ECUMENISM LEADING?**

A. "The first part of the Tribulation days, organized, ecumenical religion will have its heyday."

B. Ecumenism will culminate in the apostate religious system described under the label "Mystery Babylon," (Rev. 17).

C. "It will be world wide, (Rev. 17:15).

D. It will be totally unfaithful to the Truth and to the Lord, (Rev. 17:1,5,15-16 "harlot").

E. The outward appearance of it will be as a "whited sepulcher" inwardly corrupt but outwardly glorious and splendid, (Rev. 17:4).

F. It will be involved in persecuting the Tribulation saints, (Rev. 17:6).

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