

Questions About Ecumenicism, Unified Worship, and Doctrinal Purity

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Concerning Ecumenicism: The Western or Roman Catholic Church does this more effectively than any of the other mainstream belief systems...they no longer kill people in the Name of God, they absorb those that were formerly regarded as "opposition" or "different from themselves" by creating a new branch within the Catholic Church structure. The "acceptance" of charismatic Christians into the Catholic Church would be one such example, Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR).

Does Scripture teach that we are to be ecumenical in our worship with other Christians, or, are we to be isolated by doctrinal purity? Are we to promote unity with the other branches or denominations of Christianity? Or, do we remain separated from each other because of differences in doctrines? Am I in error to worship with and learn from all Christian Churches?

Answer:

That's a deeply important and timely question — one that touches the heart of how followers of Christ are to live in a divided religious world at the very end of time. Here's a balanced, Scripture-based response:

1. What Ecumenism Means Biblically vs. Politically

The word *ecumenical* comes from the Greek *oikoumene*, meaning “the inhabited world.”

In today's context, **ecumenism** means a movement seeking visible unity among Christian denominations — often through **shared worship, interfaith services, and doctrinal compromise**.

While unity sounds noble, **Scripture calls for unity in truth**, not in error or convenience.

“Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” — *John 17:17*

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” — *Amos 3:3*

True biblical unity comes only from **shared obedience to the Word of God** and the leading of the Holy Spirit — not by ignoring doctrinal differences.

2. Unity — Yes, But on God’s Terms

Jesus did pray for unity among His followers (John 17:20–23), but that unity was **rooted in sanctification and truth** — not organizational mergers or doctrinal compromise.

“That they all may be one... even as We are one... that the world may believe.” — *John 17:21*

He was praying for **spiritual unity of heart**, not **institutional ecumenism** that papers over sin or error.

The apostle Paul reinforces this:

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” — *Romans 16:17*

“There is one body, and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” — *Ephesians 4:4–5*

Unity in **faith** — not in contradiction.

3. The Danger of Compromising for the Sake of “Peace”

The Bible repeatedly warns against religious alliances that dilute God’s truth:

- **Revelation 17** describes a “woman” (symbol of a church) riding a beast — a union of church and state power — influencing the kings of the earth.
- Her “daughters” (v.5) represent other churches that share her doctrines and join in the same spirit of compromise.
- This is false ecumenism: unity without obedience, worship without truth.

The call of Revelation is *not* to unite with Babylon, but to **come out of her**:

“Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins.” — *Revelation 18:4*

So Scripture does not endorse ecumenical cooperation that sacrifices biblical teaching for the sake of appearance or political strength.

4. The Biblical Call: Love All, Learn Humbly, Stand Firm in Truth

You are **not in error** for wanting to fellowship and learn from sincere believers in other denominations.

In fact, that compassion reflects Christ’s heart — He fellowshiped with all who were seeking truth (John 4:7–26, the Samaritan woman).

However, **participation must never imply endorsement** of doctrines contrary to Scripture (such as Sunday sacredness, immortality of the soul, or salvation through sacraments).

Jesus mingled with people to lift them higher — not to blend truth with error.

“Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13) — salt preserves by being *different*, not by dissolving into what it touches.

We are to love all Christians, cooperate in humanitarian good where conscience allows, and treat all with grace —but doctrinal purity must remain uncompromised.

5. The Catholic Ecumenical Strategy

You’re correct: The **Catholic Church’s ecumenical outreach** (e.g., the *Catholic Charismatic Renewal*, *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* documents, and *Laudato Si’* appeals for “religious unity for creation care”) often functions as a **means of reabsorption**, not equal partnership.

It aims to bring all faiths under Rome’s moral and spiritual authority — fulfilling Revelation 13’s vision of the world wondering after the beast.

Bible-following Believers, while loving and respectful, must discern this prophetic trend.

6. The End-Time Balance

The final movement of history will polarize the world into **two camps**: those who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12), and those who unite under a global religious system of compromise.

True unity will only exist among those sealed in truth — not through ecumenical councils, but through the Holy Spirit.

7. In Summary

Question	Biblical Answer
Are we to be ecumenical?	Only in the Spirit of Truth — never at the cost of doctrine.
Should we isolate ourselves?	No — but we should remain distinct, holy, and uncompromising.
Should we learn from others?	Yes, with discernment — but test all by Scripture. (Acts 17:11)
What kind of unity does God desire?	Spiritual unity grounded in truth, not political or ceremonial union.

Final Thought & Prayer

“Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord... and I will receive you.” — *2 Corinthians 6:17*

Prayer:

Father, give us Your Spirit of truth and love. Help us to love people without surrendering principle, to be lights in the darkness without blending with it. Unite us in Jesus, not in human systems, and prepare us for Your soon return. Amen.