

February 24, 2010

Dr. John MacArthur
13248 Roscoe Boulevard
Sun Valley, CA 91352

Dear Dr. MacArthur,

I feel compelled to write a response to the letter you sent which was dated February 11 but which I just received this week. I appreciate that you took the time to read the letter I had previously sent to you in which I very briefly aired my concerns about Dr. Mohler speaking and teaching at your church's Shepherds' Conference. I am sorry that circumstances dictate a longer letter this time, knowing how busy you are.

I must candidly admit that I was appalled by how you justified Dr. Mohler speaking at your conference. Your argument seems to be, summed up, that since he has done so much good in the past, Dr. Mohler should be given a pass for joining with apostates in publicly promoting a false gospel, a false Christ, and a false church. Would you use the same line of reasoning if Dr. Mohler had committed physical fornication rather than spiritual fornication? And your very endorsement of Dr. Mohler as a past champion of the word of God and the faith of the gospel declares him to be all the more accountable for signing the Manhattan Declaration, not less! Surely he is much more accountable than those members of the body of Christ who have done so in ignorance, thanks to the example of one with such a reputation and track record as Albert Mohler. If, as you put it, Dr. Mohler is a "noble slave of Christ," he is a slave who has treated his Master's most precious property with utter contempt, abusing it and teaching others to hold it in contempt.

It has been called to my attention that in a recent message you took Rev. Billy Graham to task for embracing popery and rightly pointed out that such a lack of discernment is destroying the church. But how are you teaching Christians discernment when you bring Dr. Mohler in to teach them at your conference? "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:1-2). Surely, at best, Dr. Mohler's sinful yoking with apostates to sign the Manhattan Declaration was the result of a grievous lapse in discernment on his part, a lapse which will soothe the consciences of other compromised evangelicals and advance the antichrist cause of Romanism. A minister especially has a duty to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Instead of separating from and reproofing, Dr. Mohler has endorsed the unfruitful works of popery! In doing so, he has shown utter contempt for such commands of God as found in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. Instead of reproofing what Dr. Mohler has done and having no fellowship with him until he repents, you are setting him forth at your conference to teach the Lord's people!

You say in your letter to me that you will be addressing separation during your opening message at the conference. Whether you will be mentioning the Manhattan Declaration or not, I do not know. But either way, how will you avoid playing the hypocrite and at best confusing your listeners if one of the next conference speakers is a Manhattan Declaration signer? "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8). "For God is not the author of confusion, but of

peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33). If you are "soft" and more general on the issue, you will make it of little importance, especially with Dr. Mohler one of your guest speakers. If you are strong and specific on the issue, including denouncing the Manhattan Declaration, then you will utterly confuse many and cause them to wonder if truth is not subjective and negotiable after all. Dr. MacArthur has "his truth," and Dr. Mohler has "his truth"; but in the end, it is all just truth differently stated and defined—which, of course, is a philosophy and methodology which suits the purposes of Rome very nicely and has been used to good effect to advance the ecumenical movement.

It seems ironic that you are preaching on separation at your conference, yet you refuse to separate from a man who has yoked with Romanists and their cousins the Orthodox to proclaim a gospel unity. All protestations and sophistries aside, the plain text of the Manhattan Declaration provides just such a proclamation. If what Dr. Mohler has done does not qualify as walking disorderly, then what does? "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6). And if, in yoking with apostates in the name of Christ, he has not acted contrary to the plain teachings of Scripture (Rom. 16:17), then I am again at a loss to know when a man is guilty of doing so! "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

The Apostle Paul also writes in 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." I am sure you agree that what Paul states about that particular epistle holds true for the entire word of God. I assume that you abstained from signing the Manhattan Declaration because you could not do so without disobeying the word of God, and in a very major way. What I do not understand is, in light of the Scriptures I have been quoting, why you are having a signer of that document teach and preach the word of God at your conference? Do you sincerely believe that in this you are faithfully striving for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27), standing fast in the faith (1 Cor. 16:13), and earnestly contending for the faith (Jude 1:3)? And do you think that having Dr. Mohler speak at your conference will allow you to say with Paul, "I am pure from the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26-27), let alone, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7)?

As I said in my last letter, I am sure you are very familiar with all the various Scripture passages which define the Christian's duty to separate from false brethren and doctrinal error, especially obvious heresy such as the doctrines of Rome. But your actions certainly cause one to wonder if you do not realize that we must also separate from those Christians who are in open sin. Certainly that would include those who yoke, as Dr. Mohler did, in a spiritual, religious unity with false brethren and stubbornly refuse to confess their sin and repent when confronted with it. This would be of the utmost importance when one is a minister of the church which Christ "hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). There are many more Scripture passages which could be presented in that regard in addition to those I have already put forth, but in closing, please suffer me to briefly address just one more.

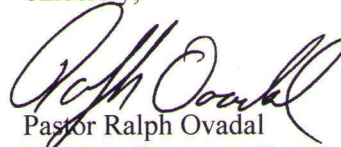
I am sure that you would agree with me that, regardless of the specific error John was warning of in his second epistle, what he wrote certainly applies to all perversions of "the doctrine of Christ." And did he not, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, warn Christians that they are not to render any assistance to any false teacher who "transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ"? That is, Christians are not to render any assistance which would, in any way, aid in the spread of perversions of the doctrine of Christ. I am sure you would agree that what I have said is not an overstatement since John's ban is quite comprehensive, ranging from providing hospitality for a false teacher in one's home to even bidding him God speed! Of course, to bid such a one God speed would not only imply approval but certainly also raise the possibility of desensitizing weaker brethren to the grievous nature of the false teacher's error.

The apostle John warns that those who assist such false teachers in their error, in any way, then share in their sin. "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." It is the plain truth that Dr. Albert Mohler has done far more than wish his co-belligerent Roman Catholic and Orthodox cosigners—including priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and metropolitans—"God speed." In this, Dr. Mohler shares in the gospel-perverting, Christ-mocking, soul-damning sin of the Roman Catholic and

Orthodox ministers with whom he joined in league before the whole world. No faithful minister of Christ should allow Dr. Mohler to speak in his church or at his conference. Rather, until he repents and makes his wrong right, faithful ministers are duty-bound to "earnestly contend" against him "for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

I know you are a very busy man, but if you believe I am wrong on this, I would be interested in having you refute me from the word of God. If I am right, then Dr. Mohler is in rebellion to the Lord in this particular matter and ought not to be put forth as a Bible teacher at your conference. It seems to me you are at a very important crossroads. Will you play the man for God and be a blessing to His church? Or will you play the hypocrite and betray with your actions the truth you defend with your lips? Time will truly tell, but you can rest assured, many of us will be praying that you will do the right and faithful thing.

Sincerely,



Pastor Ralph Ovadal
Pilgrims Covenant Church