

## **Christ in Prophecy**

### **Religions 10: Gendron on Pope Francis**

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#### **Opening**

**Dr. Reagan:** Pope Francis has quickly established himself among the masses as a very popular religious leader. But at the same time, he has generated strong resistance from key Catholic leaders. Much of the controversy he has caused is due to his tendency to make off-the-wall comments that produce widespread confusion. Who is this Pope? Where did he come from? And what is he up to? Stay tuned for an interview with an expert on Catholicism.

#### **Part 1**

**Dr. Reagan:** Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I have as my special guest on this program a good friend and ministry colleague, Mike Gendron. Mike is the founder and director of a ministry in Dallas, Texas area called, "Proclaiming the Gospel." Welcome to Christ in Prophecy, Mike.

**Mike Gendron:** Well it is good to be here with you Dave.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well it is always good to be with you. I enjoy ministering with you all over the nation at various conferences over the years. And I would like for you to tell our folks about your background, and why are you considered to be an expert on Catholicism?

**Mike Gendron:** Well I always love to share a testimony of God's amazing grace because I grew up a very devout Catholic. I was a Catholic for 37 years and taught High School Catholic Christian doctrine. I was an altar boy for seven years. Later on I was responsible for bringing the very first Little Rock Scripture Study to a Catholic Church in the Dallas area. And so during this time the Lord was revealing Himself to me. But there was a conference I went to in 1981 that convinced me that the Bible was the supreme authority in all matters of faith. So, at the age of 34 I began reading the Bible for the first time.

**Dr. Reagan:** Was that a Catholic conference that you went to?

**Mike Gendron:** No, it was an Evangelical conference. I didn't even know who was giving the conference I had never heard of him. But it was in the "Dallas Morning News" and I thought, the title of the conference was "Evidence for the Christian Faith." And as a Catholic I had no evidence I was just told to believe whatever the priest told me. And so here was a man that was going to give evidence for the Christian faith. And so I attended this three day conference and I went home opening the Bible for the first time at age 34. And as I read the Bible I recognized very quickly that what I'd been taught as a Catholic was diametrically opposed to what the Bible was teaching me in regards to salvation. I read that we were saved by grace apart from merit, by faith apart from works. I read that Jesus was my all sufficient Savior, I needed to repent of all the things that I was doing to help Him save me. And wow, I mean it just--through this process

of reading the Bible and the Spirit of God illuminating the Scriptures to me I came to saving faith in the Lord Jesus.

**Dr. Reagan:** You know Mike over the years as I have encountered Catholics my approach to them has always been start reading your Bible.

**Mike Gendron:** Amen.

**Dr. Reagan:** And I find that they haven't done that. And when they start reading the Bible they start saying, "Hey, well the Bible says that, the church says this. The Bible says that, the church says this." And they begin to have their eyes opened.

**Mike Gendron:** It really is an eye-opener because ultimately there is nothing more important in this life than figuring out who should I trust for my eternal destiny. And the Bible told me it was Christ alone, that He is able to save me completely and forever.

**Dr. Reagan:** And when you say you were a devout Catholic you really were.

**Mike Gendron:** I really was.

**Dr. Reagan:** You even went to Italy didn't you?

**Mike Gendron:** I did. I actually concelebrated with Padre Pio who has the wounds of Christ. He is of course dead now. But during the time I was a young altar boy and he had the wounds of Christ in his hands. And I thought, "Wow, this is a validation that the Catholic Church is the one true Church." But then later on when the Lord saved me I began reading his autobiography and found out that he was thanking--he was sitting at his window as souls from purgatory were on their way to Heaven thanking Padre Pio for suffering on their behalf.

**Dr. Reagan:** Oh my.

**Mike Gendron:** And I thought this is not the Gospel.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well tell us a little bit about your secular background. While you are going to Mass every day and doing all this what are doing in the secular world?

**Mike Gendron:** Well I was very successful in the corporate world. In fact by the age of 31 I really accomplished everything anyone could ever achieve as far as the world's riches and the mansion in a prestigious neighborhood, the 380 SL sports car convertible, the gold Rolex. I mean I'd done everything.

**Dr. Reagan:** You were into the whole thing, huh?

**Mike Gendron:** Yet there was something missing. And I didn't know that it had anything to do with my spirituality because I was a devout Catholic.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yeah so you were a business executive right?

**Mike Gendron:** I was.

**Dr. Reagan:** In a Fortune 500 Company?

**Mike Gendron:** Right.

**Dr. Reagan:** And that must have been quite a decision to leave that world and commit your life to Christ in ministry. Did that shake up your wife? What happened? I mean?

**Mike Gendron:** Yes, I mean it really did she did not marry a seminary student or a missionary. So, it was definitely something that we that we had to deal with. But, she has just become the greatest helpmate now in this ministry. She is also a former Catholic. And so, you know when I sat down and realized that the only two things in this life that are eternal are the Word of God and the souls of men. And I wanted to start investing the rest of my life in the things that mattered; the things that would last for all of eternity. So, in my case it was very easy I wanted to go to seminary and de-indoctrinalize myself from all the error that I had been taught as a Catholic and fill it with truth.

**Dr. Reagan:** And so where did you go to Seminary?

**Mike Gendron:** I went to Dallas Theological Seminary.

**Dr. Reagan:** That's a good one.

**Mike Gendron:** It is. And during that last semester I was introduced to a video of former priests and nuns that were sharing how to be saved. And as I watched that video I felt compelled to share it with every Roman Catholic I knew. And so my wife and I invited Roman Catholics over to our home. And within three months we saw 17 Roman Catholics exchange their religion for a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Dr. Reagan:** And then in what year did you decide to form the ministry that you have now?

**Mike Gendron:** Well I never did set out to form a ministry. In 1991 is when we began inviting Catholics over. And what do you do with 17 new babes in Christ? Well you invite them back over on Wednesday night to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. So, that was the genesis of the ministry the Lord began. And we just stand in awe because He has taken us throughout the world primarily in countries that are dominated by Roman Catholicism. And it is our joy to equip and encourage the Saints to reach out to this huge mission field.

**Dr. Reagan:** And how many years have you been at this now?

**Mike Gendron:** Twenty-four years now.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well congratulations.

**Mike Gendron:** Well it is all the grace of God. We just stand in awe of Him.

## Part 2

**Dr. Reagan:** Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and my interview with Mike Gendron. Mike, I would like to talk specifically with you now about Pope Francis. As I said in the introduction to this particular program Pope Francis has quickly established himself as a very popular figure among the Catholic masses. And I think that there are several reasons for that: one is his dismissal of the majestic trappings of the papacy, at least some of them. And another I think was his condemnation of corruption in the Catholic Curia. Another would be his promotion of Socialism. And another would be his questioning of some of the Church's most questionable or at least most unpopular doctrines. Now on the negative side he appears to be a loose cannon.

And thus, every time he speaks out on an issue the Vatican calls a press conference very quickly and says, "He didn't mean what he said." And they begin to explain away what he said. What in the world is this man up to? Where did he come from? What is his background? Can you give us any kind of insights about him?

**Mike Gendron:** Well yes, Dave, he is a very fascinating man. He came out of Argentina. He is a Jesuit and many people have studied the Jesuits.

**Dr. Reagan:** First one ever as Pope.

**Mike Gendron:** First one, yes. And a lot of people don't know the background of the Jesuits. But at the Reformation in the 16th Century the Council of Trent was the Counter Reformation. And they recognized that a lot of Catholics were leaving after studying the Bible. The truth was setting them free. And so the Catholic Church established a Counter Reformation; part of it was Ignatius Loyola who founded the Jesuits. And so, the purpose of the Jesuits at that time was to do anything to thwart the Protestant Reformation. And so if you look at Church history they took some pretty drastic measures including part of the Inquisition.

**Dr. Reagan:** So they became the defenders of the Church.

**Mike Gendron:** They really did. And so they tried to thwart the exodus of Roman Catholics that were leaving because they found the truth in the Bible. And so as a result of that the Jesuits their agenda is to unite the whole world under the power and the influence of the papacy. And so you see this new Jesuit Pope the first one ever he is accelerating the ecumenical movement like never before. You know it started in 1965 with Vatican Council II. But Pope Francis made a statement just recently that I want to read to you. He said, "There are many people who share our faith in Christ but belong to other faith confessions or traditions. Throughout history this has been a cause of conflict and suffering. But now it is possible to work toward reconciliation and full communion." The Pope said, "We ought to accentuate that which unites us, Jesus, and the richness of His love."

**Dr. Reagan:** So, ecumenism is one of his major items on his agenda.

**Mike Gendron:** It's the major thrust. And his goal is to unite not only all separated brethren which would be you and I, but also all the religions of the world he is building bridges. But we need to make sure that people understand we are not united in the love of Christ, we are united in faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** There can be no unity outside of the Gospel.

**Dr. Reagan:** And yet there seem to be many evangelicals even who think that there can be.

**Mike Gendron:** Well there are. In fact if you look at the recent months the Pope is looking for soft spots in the Evangelical world. In order to build bridges and to the Evangelical Church. And so this pope has accelerated the ecumenical movement. But we need to recognize that he is teaching a false and fatal Gospel.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** He is not interested in doctrine, he is interested in people who love Jesus. But a lot of evangelicals don't know that Catholics worship and trust a different Jesus; different from the one that is revealed in the Bible.

**Dr. Reagan:** What do you mean by that when you say a different Jesus?

**Mike Gendron:** Well the Roman Catholic Jesus is called down from Heaven every day to be offered again as a sin offering by the priest on an altar, it is to appease the wrath of God. Divine justice is served every day on a Catholic altar. This is not the Jesus of Scripture. He entered Heaven having obtained eternal redemption. He died once for all sin for all time, there are no more offerings for sin. And so we need to point this out to Roman Catholics and point them to the Christ of the Bible. He is sufficient to save them completely and forever.

**Dr. Reagan:** It seems that many in the evangelical world have actually overlooked the differences that brought about the split in the first place as if there were of no consequence. And that all these people who died being burned at the stake or whatever that it was just a ridiculous loss of life because there wasn't that much difference in the first place. But that's not true at all is it?

**Mike Gendron:** Dave, it is really heart breaking to see evangelicals forget what the Reformers died for.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** They were brutally tortured and burned at the stake because they stood on the sound rock of the Bible; that was their authority for faith. They would not bow their knee to the pope. And now we see evangelicals going to Pope Francis and they are forgetting what the Reformation was all about: that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone, all for the glory of God alone. But this Pope is teaching a gospel of works. A gospel that encourages people to receive sacraments in order to obtain eternal life. Catholics do not have the assurance of eternal life because their work of redemption is carried out every day on a Catholic altar.

**Dr. Reagan:** Right. Well what I would like to do now is to read you some quotes from Pope Francis and have you respond to them. And we'll do that in just a moment.

### Part 3

**Dr. Reagan:** Welcome back to my discussion with Mike Gendron about Pope Francis. Mike I mentioned earlier that Pope Francis has demonstrated an incredible capacity for off-the-wall quotes which just drives the Vatican crazy. And they are always calling press conferences to clear up the mess after he has made these statements. Here is an example, in May of 2014 he said, "That if Martians were to land on earth tomorrow he would be happy to baptize them." The Vatican hurriedly called a press conference and explained that the Pope was simply trying to say that the Catholic Church is committed to inclusion of all peoples.

**Mike Gendron:** We'll you're right this Pope really does say somethings that are out of left field. In fact often times what he says goes against historic Roman Catholic theology as well as the Bible. It has been noted that this pope has really been good for our ministry because every time he says something bizarre radio stations call me up and ask me, "What did the Pope really

mean by that?" But it is really interesting Dave because Catholics look at this man as infallible; which means he cannot error in matters of faith and morals. And as you said the Vatican is constantly having to correct what he said. You mentioned about the Martians he is a very inclusive pope. It goes back to the agenda that all people are in the mercy of God. That was another one of his quotes which again goes against the book of Hebrews that says, "God gives mercy to those He wills and hardens those He will." And so this pope is unbiblical and he is un-Roman Catholic. And it is really fascinating to see.

**Dr. Reagan:** One of the interesting things to me, I don't have it here in front of me, but I have a whole list of quotes from key Catholic leaders in which they have--bishops we're talking about have strongly criticized this pope for some of the things he said.

**Mike Gendron:** It is really interesting but I hope that Roman Catholics will begin to realize that they cannot trust their bishops, or their pope, but they can find assurance in knowing that the Word of God is the supreme authority.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** And we look through every man's teaching through the lens of Scripture. Your teaching and mine, the pope's. And so I would--

**Dr. Reagan:** We all need to be Bereans.

**Mike Gendron:** Well we do. Acts 17:11, "Test every man's teaching."

**Dr. Reagan:** Right. And who were they testing? Paul.

**Mike Gendron:** That's right.

**Dr. Reagan:** If they are going to test Paul they should test me, you, the pope and everybody else.

**Mike Gendron:** But another one of his crazy statements he said that, "Atheists can follow their conscious into Heaven."

**Dr. Reagan:** Yeah Atheists who do good are redeemed, not just Catholics that is his exact words.

**Mike Gendron:** Again there is his inclusive gospel again. This goes against historical Roman Catholic theology. The Bible calls Atheist fools. Why? Because they suppress the truth of God and unrighteousness. God has revealed Himself, so these are fools. But the pope says, "They'll go to Heaven."

**Dr. Reagan:** If Atheist can be saved by simply doing good, why should we even bother to preach the Gospel?

**Mike Gendron:** Well that is a good point. But you see Roman Catholicism is no different from any other religion of works righteousness. Biblical Christianity says Christ did it all, you are saved by grace through faith. But every other religion says you must do things to appease God including the Pope's Roman Catholicism.

**Dr. Reagan:** Here is another recent quote. "The Big Bang Theory does not contradict the role of God as divine Creator."

**Mike Gendron:** That is amazing that he would make a statement like that. At least he got half of it right. Right?

**Dr. Reagan:** Right.

**Mike Gendron:** But you look at the Genesis account God the creator spoke everything into existence in six days. That directly is opposed to a Big Bang Theory.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well he's pretty well indicated that he believes fully in evolution. Several of his statements have indicated this.

**Mike Gendron:** Yes.

**Dr. Reagan:** He says, "If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will then who am I to judge him?"

**Mike Gendron:** Well here again the pope declares himself to be God's representative on earth. Why doesn't he say that God has already judged homosexuality not only as a sin, but according to Leviticus 18 it is an abomination to God. And so the only hope for a homosexual whose in this kind of a sin is to repent and believe the Gospel, therein he will find the power to overcome the homosexuality.

**Dr. Reagan:** Right.

**Mike Gendron:** But this pope unless he identifies them as sinners, then they will continually believe the pope that this sin is not so serious enough to disqualify them for Heaven.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes, when Paul talks about homosexuality for example in the Corinthian letters one of the things that I think is very encouraging is that he points out that some of those in the Corinthian Church had been homosexuals. But they had been washed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ through their faith in Jesus, and they weren't continuing to practice homosexuality.

**Mike Gendron:** That is 1 Corinthians 6:9.

**Dr. Reagan:** That's right.

**Mike Gendron:** He says, "This is what some of you were but now you've been sanctified, you've been justified, you've been cleansed with the precious blood of Jesus."

**Dr. Reagan:** That's right, yeah. What about this one? This is to me the most off-the-wall statement I have ever read by him, "God is not a divine being or a magician."

**Mike Gendron:** Well again--

**Dr. Reagan:** He's not a divine being? Come on, Mike.

**Mike Gendron:** I mean really, where is the outrage? Why aren't Roman Catholics saying, "Ok, this is enough he's gone too far?"

**Dr. Reagan:** Come on.

**Mike Gendron:** But yeah, clearly God is a divine being. That is our only hope that God is a supreme divine being who not only created us but sent us His Savior to save us from our sins. And the only mediator between God and man is the man Christ Jesus. And so it is outrageous

what he is saying. But yet, they because of his humility, a false humility I might say because he wears the titles of God.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** He wears the title Holy Father, Head of the Church. He never died for the Church but he stole that title from Christ. He says he is the Vicar of Christ. He also is loved by the world because of his ministry to the poor. Why doesn't he sell the riches of the Vatican and give to the poor if he is really concerned about the poor?

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes.

**Mike Gendron:** And so there is a facade here that I think he is deceiving the world.

**Dr. Reagan:** One thing that encouraged me about this pope was the fact that he took on the curia, which is the central government of the Vatican. And the previous pope, all the rumors that I ever heard indicate that's one of the reasons he resigned was because of the incredible corruption and immorality that exists there and he just felt overwhelmed by, incapable of dealing with it and resigned. Now this pope called them together and read them the riot act about their immorality, about their corruption. And I wrote you about that and I said, "Wow, this is really something to have a pope do this." And you wrote me back a very insightful comment. So tell me what your reaction to this was.

**Mike Gendron:** Well it is true that he has not only exposed but also fired certain cardinals and bishops that have been part of the corruption within the Vatican. And so this is a good thing that he has done. He is cleaning house. His predecessor Pope Benedict was a doctrinal guru he wasn't pastoral. Pope Francis is pastoral and so he is trying to clean house.

**Dr. Reagan:** Right.

**Mike Gendron:** And so he has done a good job of that. He is pro-life. But bottom line Dave he is preaching a false and fatal gospel that sends people to Hell rather than to Heaven. And so as the Bible tells us the religious leader in the Lord's day they were shutting the gates of Heaven to those who wanted to enter. And this pope needs to know the true Gospel because he is responsible for 1.2 billion souls that need to know the truth.

**Dr. Reagan:** And one of the things you said in your response to me that day that really got me was you said, "Well the bottom line is that the members of the Vatican Curia not only need to repent, they need to get saved."

**Mike Gendron:** They do.

**Dr. Reagan:** "They need to get born again because it is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that they are going to be able to clean up the mess."

**Mike Gendron:** That's right and only God knows their hearts. But when people proclaim that they believe a false gospel we test what they say with the Word of God. And clearly they are unregenerate and they need to know the Savior.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well when you--I know you do a lot of evangelism among Catholics. In fact I remember one time where a particular group ran a full-page ad in papers all over the nations. What was that group? Do you remember?



**Mike Gendron:** Yes, it was the Mary Queen of Peace Center.

**Dr. Reagan:** Yes, and you actually called the head of that organization, didn't you actually go to New York and talk with that person?

**Mike Gendron:** Actually she came to me.

**Dr. Reagan:** Alright, tell us about that story.

**Mike Gendron:** Well, yeah, I called because they were giving daily messages from Mary, the apparitions of Mary appearing all over the world. And so I called and the director came to visit me with the goal of getting me to recognize Mary as a sinless mediator.

**Dr. Reagan:** Is that right?

**Mike Gendron:** And to--

**Dr. Reagan:** She didn't realize she was walking into the lion's den?

**Mike Gendron:** She did not.

**Dr. Reagan:** So what happened?

**Mike Gendron:** She came with a stack of books and that was her goal. And so we sat down and we began sharing that video that we shared with many people who had left the Catholic Church. And about five minutes into it I realized I hadn't even prayed yet. And so I paused for a moment and I said, "Can I ask the Lord to guide us in truth?" And so within a few minutes after the prayer she recognized that she was the one that was being deceived. You know what she did? She went back and she gave me the list of everybody whose name had been on the Mary Queen of Peace Center mailing list. We sent out her testimony to everybody that had been following Mary rather than Christ. And it really was a work of God.

**Dr. Reagan:** So through the power of the Holy Spirit you were able to convert the very leader of this organization?

**Mike Gendron:** Well the Lord converted her. I was just the messenger.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well when you talk to just the average Catholic what is the most important thing you focus on?

**Mike Gendron:** Well definitely the authority of Scripture. That must be the leading principle when you witness because Catholics have three authorities: they have the Word of God, their sacred tradition and then the teaching authority of the Church, infallible teaching authority. We need to eliminate the two and have them focus on Scripture alone. Second most important principle you've got to present Christ and all of His sufficiency; He did everything necessary to save sinners completely and forever.

**Dr. Reagan:** Well that is a wonderful approach and I just praise God for the anointing He's giving you to talk to people, because I know you can do it.

**Mike Gendron:** Amen.

#### Part 4

**Dr. Reagan:** Welcome back to our interview of Mike Gendron. Mike you have written a book called, "Preparing for Eternity: Should we trust God's Word or Religious Traditions?" Why did you write this book and what's it all about.

**Mike Gendron:** Well I wrote it because of my great compassion for Roman Catholics who are where I was for most of my life, believing I belonged to the one true Church, and believing I was on my way to Heaven. But yet I found out after reading the Bible I was destined for Hell. And so it is my desire to see Roman Catholics come to know the true Savior and believe the true Gospel. And so this book forces Roman Catholics to make a decision: Am I going to trust Christ and His Word which is the supreme authority for knowing truth? Or am I going to trust religious traditions? And so what I do in this book is I compare Roman Catholic tradition right out of the catechism of the Catholic Church with Scripture from their Bible. They can see that they cannot believe both, they are forced to make a decision: Christ and His Word or the teachings and traditions of my church.

**Dr. Reagan:** One thing I've noticed in my study of world religions that all false religions, all without exception teach work salvation.

**Mike Gendron:** They do.

**Dr. Reagan:** You can earn it on your own. It doesn't matter whether it is Hinduism, or Islam, or Mormonism, or whatever, it is you can earn your own salvation.

**Mike Gendron:** You're so right without exception every religion teaches that. So when I am witnessing to a Catholic this is what I share with them. You have got to come to the cross of Christ with nothing but your sins. You have to leave everything else behind, everything else you've been trusting in: your own works, your meriting grace, your sacraments, purgatory, indulgences, good works. Leave it all behind, come to Christ with nothing but your sin. He promises to give you His righteousness when you trust Him alone.

**Dr. Reagan:** And one thing I've noticed about Catholics that I've worked with and who have then come to the Lord is that they often find it very difficult to leave the Catholic Church. And what they want to do is they want to go back and share what they have discovered with their priest, with their people. And then after about two or three years they decided, "You know if I'm ever going to grow in the Lord I've got to get some place else."

**Mike Gendron:** Well that is the mark of true conversion when you want to share the truth with those who are still lost.

**Dr. Reagan:** Oh, yes, absolutely.

**Mike Gendron:** Because you get so excited.

**Dr. Reagan:** You do. I often said the two most excited people on planet earth is a Messianic Jew who has found his Messiah, and a Catholic who has discovered grace.

**Mike Gendron:** That's right.

**Dr. Reagan:** Tell people how they can get in touch with you and your ministry.

**Mike Gendron:** Well our ministries' website is [proclaimingthegospel.org](http://proclaimingthegospel.org). And you can go there and find a wealth of information, 24 years of research into the Roman Catholic religion always looking through the lens of Scripture. We've written six different tracts that can reach Roman Catholics. We also have DVD's that they can view, you can share with them. But our primary resource is the book, "Preparing for Eternity." You can call us at 972-495-0485.

**Dr. Reagan:** Thank you Mike, I appreciate you being on the program. Folks that is our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you, and I hope you'll be back with us next week. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our redemption is drawing near."

**End of Program**