



**"Drowning in the Tiber (Part 3)"**  
**Responding to Francis Beckwith's *Return to Rome:***  
***Confessions of an Evangelical Catholic*"**

*tiber040509(3)*

Selected Scriptures



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Introduction: Two "E's" of Experientialism and Ecumenicism . . .

I. Experientialism (Mysticism)

A. What do I mean by "Experientialism" or "Mysticism?"

"It is a belief and a practice. A belief that personal experience confirms truth (rather than truth confirming experience) and a practice by which a person attempts to draw closer to God by doing certain things that promote those experiences."

B. This is something that has historically been associated with Roman Catholicism:  
experiences, mysticism, miracles

1. Relics for veneration

Luther commented that the amount of bits of wood from the cross that were sold was enough to rebuild Noah's Ark! He that there were enough servings of milk from Holy Mary to sail it on!

2. John Jetzer and the Dominican conspiracy against the Franciscans

3. Lourdes

4. Fatima

"In Catholic orthodoxy prevenient grace is necessary to begin the salvific process, but the whole of the Christianity life is seen as a mystical ascent or return of the soul to union with God. Salvation is not God's declaration of undeserved righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ but the outcome of a long process of purification and illumination in which the soul prepares itself for final union with God." [Donald G. Bloesch, *Is Spirituality Enough?* in *Roman Catholicism*, John Armstrong, Gen. Ed., 149]

5. In day to day life

C. Should things like this change anything for us? Cf. Galatians 1:6-9

D. As it relates to Francis Beckwith:

"Although it may be difficult to detect from much of what I have written in this book, my return to the Catholic Church had as much to do with a yearning for a deeper spiritual life as it did with theological reasoning." [page 129]

1. Experience: the good, the bad, and the ugly

E. The influence of the Catholic Charismatic Movement (brings the two E's of "Experience" and "Ecumenicism" together)

1. David du Plessis:

F. Vatican II

G. More experiences.....

Conclusion: 1 John 4:1; Jude 1:3; Galatians 1:6-9