



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL COMMISSION**

Tuesday, 29 April 2003

Your Eminence,

Dear Members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission,

1. I greet you with great joy at this meeting that is taking place on the occasion of your annual working session in Rome, at which you methodically develop the research that each one of you has done. I thank Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger who has interpreted your common sentiments.

Two things make this meeting particularly special: the centenary of your Commission and the theme on which you have been working in recent years.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission serves the cause of the Word of God in accordance with the objectives established for it by my Predecessors, Leo XIII and Paul VI. It has kept pace with the times, sharing the hardships and anxieties, concerned with identifying in the message of Revelation the response that God provides to the serious problems that trouble humanity down the ages.

2. One of these problems is the subject of your current research. You have summed it up in the title *"The Bible and morality"*. A somewhat paradoxical situation is plain for all to see: contemporary people, disappointed by so many unsatisfactory answers to the fundamental questions of life, seem to be opening themselves to the voice that comes from Transcendence and is expressed in the biblical message. However, at the same time, they are growing more and more intolerant of requests for behaviour that corresponds with the values the Church has always presented as based on the Gospel. So we are faced with the most varied attempts to separate biblical Revelation from the more binding proposals of life.

In this situation, listening carefully to the Word of God can provide answers that are fully expressed in Christ's teaching.

Dear professors and scholars, I want to encourage you in your work which, I assure you, is particularly beneficial to the Church. I assure you of my prayers that your work may yield abundant fruit, and I accompany you with an Apostolic Blessing.

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