



Christians and the Cultural Revolution

— by Pastor Glenn Huebel

Many Christians are wondering how the moral deterioration happened so quickly in our nation. The recent Supreme Court decision on homosexual marriage, though not particularly surprising at this point, is still disconcerting. Christian pastors and Church members all over the USA are wondering what this will mean for the church. Many, if not most people on the “winning side,” are wondering why Christians are so worried. They sincerely think that we are grossly over-reacting to a non-threatening decision. They don’t see the redefinition of marriage as presenting any threat to the institution of marriage itself. They certainly do not see a threat to religious freedom in this decision. Many say and believe that Christians will not be hindered in any way from confessing or practicing their religion just as before.

While we would like to believe this comforting assurance that Christians are not being threatened, most of us cannot simply ignore the realities of the mob mentality that produced these rapid changes. A brief review of Facebook these days reveals an alarming intensity of anger against Christians. Such mob mentality will continue to grow and find new ways to impose its “reforms.” This is truly a cultural revolution to overthrow the Judeo-Christian foundations of our society and revolutions are never

tame. Christians have no need to ever panic in this world, but we should not be naïve. Jesus doesn’t teach his disciples to trust their opponents. Rather, He says “Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles” (Matthew 10:17-18). Jesus also calls us to be “wise as serpents but harmless as doves.”

REASONS FOR CHRISTIAN CONCERN

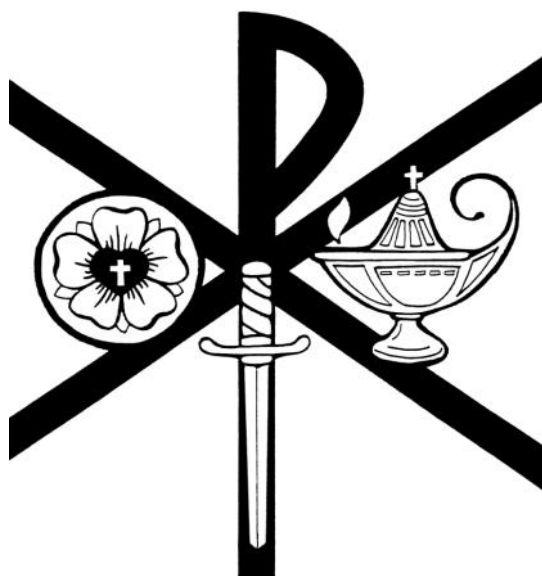
Christians are deeply concerned at this point for several reasons:

- 1. We know that error and truth are fundamentally incompatible and that only one can reign**

It is very rare and short-lived for truth and error to coexist peacefully. Historically, we see that one usually expels the other. President Lincoln recognized this principle in his great debates against Stephen Douglas prior to the American Civil War. He quoted Jesus’ words, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” A nation cannot forever stand on two contrary foundations of principle. Charles P. Krauth, a great American Lutheran leader in the late nineteenth century, observed the stages of error’s growth in the church. He wrote:

“When error is admitted into the Church, it will be found that the stages of its progress are always three. It begins by asking toleration. Its friends say to the majority: You need not be afraid of us; we are few, and weak; only let us alone; we shall not disturb the faith of others. The Church has her standards of doctrine; of course we shall never interfere with them; we only ask for ourselves to be spared interference with our private opinions. Indulged in this for a time, error goes on to assert equal rights. Truth

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That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

and error are two balancing forces. The Church shall do nothing which looks like deciding between them; that would be partiality. It is bigotry to assert any superior right for the truth. We are to agree to differ, and any favoring of the truth, because it is truth, is partisanship. What the friends of truth and error hold in common is fundamental. Anything only which they differ is ipso facto non-essential. Anybody who makes account of such a thing is a disturber of the peace of the church. Truth and error are two co-ordinate powers, and the great secret of church-statesmanship is to preserve the balance between them. From this point error soon goes on to its natural end, which is to assert supremacy. Truth started with tolerating; It comes to be merely tolerated, and that only for a time. Error claims a preference for its judgments on all disputed points. It puts men into positions, not as at first in spite of their departure from the Church's faith, but in consequence of it. Their recommendation is that they repudiate that faith, and position is given them to teach others to repudiate it, and to make them skilful in combating it." (Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, 1871)

Krauth's brilliant observation here applies equally to the corruption of the principles of truth upon which the State is founded. We have clearly seen these stages of "progress" (regress?) in the moral norms of our nation. We are now approaching the last stage. Truth MUST be expelled if error is to reign supreme. The "right" to free speech is already eroding on many fronts and religious liberty is under assault. It doesn't require special revelation from God to predict that the Church will not be able to speak freely on matters of sexual immorality for long.

2. We know the evil of the devil, the world, and the flesh and their natural hatred of Christ and His Word.

Like St. Paul, we are fully aware that spiritual forces are deeply involved in the present culture wars, and that Satan, the world, and the flesh will NEVER be satisfied with being merely tolerated (Ephesians 6:12). Like radical Muslims, they want absolute victory and will not stop until they obtain it. Jesus describes the devil and his minions as those who come only to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). Jesus knew very well who He was fighting, and who was fighting against Him. He knew it was a fight to the death, and His word tells us that the struggle will continue and even escalate until He comes again in glory for He came not to bring peace, but a sword.

3. We know that unrestrained subjectivity will create chaos and violence, not order, justice, or peace.

The basis of judgment for vast numbers of American citizens today is found inside the individual, not in an objective truth. The politically correct mantra of "tolerance" is, for all practical purposes, a condemnation of any claim to truth. There is, now, only "my truth" and "your truth," not the truth. The Bible's authority has long been rejected, but now we are seeing such a wanton corruption of language in our culture that it is impossible to set forth any objective truth in writing. Words can now be twisted and distorted to mean ANYTHING, but when a word means anything, it really means NOTHING. Truth is only what the authoritative interpreter (Judge) TELLS YOU IT IS. Without objective truth, capable of being stated in written words, there can be no justice. Without objective truth we are at the mercy of judges who find and impose their own opinions in whatever law they apply. The law says what they say in spite of even obvious mangling of common meanings of words, grammar, etc. This condition is described by God in the Book of Judges, when "everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

No one can trust such a system to maintain justice, especially not adherents of unpopular, politically incorrect confessions and opinions. At present, freedom of speech has been defended by our Courts. We pray that this will continue, but we should not be surprised if this right disappears in practice, if not in name.

4. We know that sin always destroys, never builds

Most people of our culture deny that there is such a thing as "sin" defined as violation of God's law because they do not believe there is such a thing as "God's Law." They believe that law is a human construction that can be changed at any time by the majority. Not recognizing the inherent wisdom of the Divine Law given at Sinai, they fall into self-destructive foolishness. Sin is real, and bad consequences are inevitable. Most of the consequences of sin are simply the natural results of the behavior. For example, the drunkard who continues in his way usually does not enjoy a prosperous and happy life. He messes up his job, his family, and his health. The consequences of national sin are set forth in Deuteronomy 28:15 ff. Many nations in history, including Israel, have proven these words true. St. Paul warns us that "the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." It does not matter a bit how a nation redefines the law. God's judgment is based upon His revealed law – and always will be. The Supreme Court decision puts us diametrically at odds with God's Word.

REASONS FOR CHRISTIAN CONFIDENCE

But let us also remember that Christians are always people of hope, even in the midst trial and living in a crooked and perverse

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generation. We take comfort in the Word and in these assurances:

1. Jesus reigns

The ascension and session of Jesus at the Right Hand of God was a great comfort to early Christians and should remain so for us today. Christians have always cried, "Our help is in the Name of the Lord who made heaven and earth." All power in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus alone. He has been given a name far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. "God has put all things under His and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church." Jesus reigns today and must reign until He puts all enemies under His feet. "He who dwells in the shelter of the most High shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1).

2. Jesus' Word will ultimately prevail

There are many times in history when the Word of God has been despised by vast numbers and trampled upon by the masses. Elijah thought he was the last believer left in the world, but the

Word can never be extinguished. From the remnant of Elijah and 7,000 other believers, God brought forth a new nation of believers. Later, both Church and State attempted to silence The Word by nailing him to the cross, but God raised Him up again and caused the Gospel to be proclaimed to all nations. Though there will always be ebbs and flows, the Word will survive and prove victorious over all contenders. "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My Word shall never pass away." The Word WILL prevail.

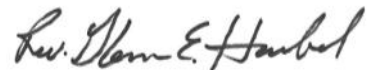
3. History ends at His Judgment Throne

Many voices today tell us that we Christians are not on "the right side of history." They counsel us to adapt to these radical changes as if Christianity was only another idolatrous religion of the world rather than the revelation of God in Christ who brings us doctrine from heaven. The true Church has always been "a still small voice" in the world of strong winds, fire, and earthquakes. Jesus tells us that the gate is wide and the path is broad that leads to destruction and MANY go that way, but the gate is straight and path narrow that lead to life, and FEW

find it. The fact that we are not in the mainstream of history or that we are the scorn of the world should be no surprise to Biblically literate Christians. We should rather be surprised when we DO find ourselves in the mainstream. BUT, being in the minority does not mean that we are on the wrong side of history. History is rule by Jesus and we know where it ends. It ends at His throne of Judgment and blessed are those who stand on the right side of the throne for they are invited to come and inherit the Kingdom of glory.

Dear friends in Christ, do not be deceived by the arrogant boasts of man. Our boast is only in the Lord who came down from heaven to live our life and die our death. On the third day He rose again for our justification so that we might live under Him and His Kingdom and serve Him in everlasting innocence righteousness and blessedness. Amen. Come Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

Blessings in Christ



Pastor Huebel

Sign up on the Copy Room door for a 4-issue subscription to GOOD NEWS magazine. The cost is \$10.00 for 4 issues, delivered to your church mailbox, starting this fall.



A Brief Latin Glossary for the Lutheran Armchair Theologian:

— by Pastor Tom Chryst

Lex semper accusat

Lex orandi, lex credendi

Simul justus et peccator

Ex nihilo

Sola scriptura

Sola gratia

Sola fide

Fides qua, fides quae

Ex opere operato

Quia and quatenus

Oratio, meditatio, tentatio

Soli deo gloria

This month I'd like to start a newsletter series highlighting some of the important and interesting Latin phrases we use from time to time in Lutheran theology. Each month we'll explore one of these terms to help you build a handy "vocab list".

Let's start with "**Lex semper accusat**", which means, "**The Law always accuses**".

Perhaps you remember the "three uses of the law" paradigm from Confirmation instruction. First, the Law of God functions like a curb, to keep gross outbreaks of sin in check. This is the function of the Law that is expressed in earthly government, which bears the sword for our good (cf. Romans 13).

Also, the Third Use of the law is compared to a "ruler" or "guide". This is the distinctly Christian use of the Law, that is, once we have been forgiven we might ask of God's law, "how then shall we live?" (2 Peter 3:11) The Law provides guidance and direction for how to live as we ought, how to do what is right as Christian, etc...

But the Second Use of the Law is sometimes called the "chief" use of the Law, and that's what we are talking about with "**Lex semper accusat**". **The Law as a mirror.** The Law of God which always, always shows us our sin. Whatever comparison we make between our own life of works and the perfect



Law of God, we will always find our own works lacking. Even if we haven't committed murder, we've wished harm on our neighbor or failed to help him in his bodily need (Matthew 5:21-22). Even if we've never bowed down to a statue of Zeus, we've placed other created things, or ourselves in the place of God in our lives. The Law says "do" and we can never do enough. We look in the mirror and it accuses us, shows us our sin, and never leaves any escape.

"Lex semper accusat" reminds us that even when the Law is functioning to curb sin in the world, or guide the Christian's life, it is still accusing us of sin! There is no time when we can encounter God's law that it doesn't probe us, reveal our failings, uncover the fig leaves we use to try and hide our sin. There's no law that should ever apply only to the "other guy" that doesn't also prove my own guilt. When we read, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) it's not simply a once-upon-a-time-long-ago we sinned. But it's an every-time-I-look-at-the-Law-I-see-my-sin. It's our constant struggle while still in the flesh. And the Law is always ready to shine the light on the dark parts within us.

"Lex semper accusat" is also a good reminder of this: Because the Law

is always going to accuse us, we will always need the Gospel! The Law cannot save us. The Letter (the Law) kills, but the Spirit (working through the Gospel) gives life! (2 Corinthians 3:6). Because sin is ever before us, because we cannot fulfill the law and its demands but constantly struggle with sin and temptations, we are even in need of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The Law always accuses, but the Gospel always forgives! The Law always takes and destroys and lays low the proud and self-assured sinner. But the Gospel raises up the humble, gives grace to those in the despair of sin, and brings new life to those dead in trespasses. Thanks be to God that he gives us the Law we need to see our sin, but the Gospel we need even more, to make us righteous and holy in Christ.

Christ has fulfilled the Law for you. Christ has defeated the Law's penalties for you. Christ has even overcome the greatest Accuser, the Serpent, crushing his head, for you. Thanks be to God, in Jesus Christ, that we live not by the Law which always accuses – but by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who always seeks and saves the lost (Luke 19:10).

In Christ,

Pastor Chryst



Sing a new song by Vicki L. Main, Kantor

Our new hymn of the month in August will be LSB 646 – *Church of God, Elect and Glorious*. It is in “The Church” section of our hymnal. **James Edward Seddon** (1915-83) wrote the text and **Cyril V. Taylor** (1907-1992) composed the music.

Although no biographical information was available for Mr. Seddon, we do know the text comes from the well-known passage in 1 Peter 2:9-12 where Peter calls the church “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession” (verse 9). If you have time, you may want to read the additional supporting scriptural references – Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:8-10, and Revelation 5:9-10. It was first published in *Hymns for Today’s Church* (1982). Since then, this text has been published in ten hymnals.

Cyril Vincent Taylor was born in Wigan, Lancaster, England, the son of a Church of England priest. Hymnary.org gives a very interesting account regarding how it came into being . . . Mr. Taylor “composed ABBOT’S LEIGH [hymn tune name] in May of 1941 when he was working for the Religious Broadcasting Department of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The BBC had received complaints about the use of AUSTRIA (tune for the Austrian national hymn) during this time of war, a tune then set to ‘Glorious Things of You Are Spoken’. Thus Taylor originally composed his tune for that text. First printed in a leaflet, ABBOT’S LEIGH was published in *Hymns Ancient and Modern Revised* (1950), *Congregational Praise* (1951), and the *BBC Hymn Book* (1951), of which Taylor was editor. No modern hymnal would want to omit this great twentieth-century tune! ABBOT’S LEIGH is named for a village near Bristol, England, where Taylor composed the tune (Bristol was wartime headquarters for the BBC).”

1 Church of God, elect and glorious,
Holy nation, chosen race;
Called as God’s own special people,
Royal priests and heirs of grace:
Know the purpose of your calling,
Show to all His mighty deeds;
Tell of love that knows no limits,
Grace that meets all human needs.

2 God has called you out of darkness
Into His most marv’lous light;
Brought His truth to life within you,
Turned your blindness into sight.
Let your light so shine around you
That God’s name is glorified
And all find fresh hope and purpose
In Christ Jesus crucified.

3 Once you were an alien people,
Strangers to God’s heart of love;
But He brought you home in mercy,
Citizens of heav’n above.
Let His love flow out to others,
Let them feel a Father’s care;
That they too may know His welcome
And His countless blessings share.

The hymn is meant to be sung in a bold stately manner. The Abbot Leigh tune has been published in 80 hymnals.

Even as our June Hymn of the Month [*Forth in the Peace of Christ*] gave us our “marching orders” to go forward in spreading and proclaiming Christ’s name, we are again told – even more strongly commanded – to carry on that mission to all!

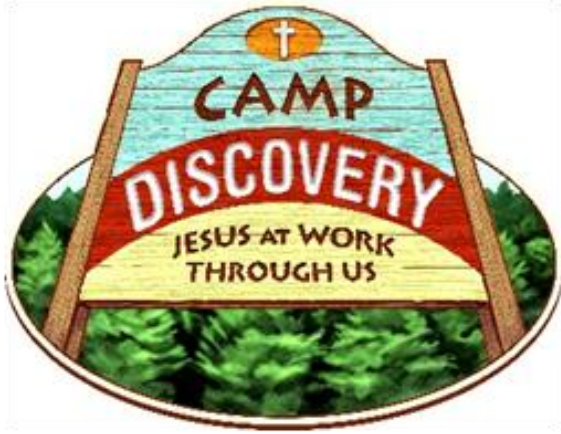
And finally stanza four states:

*Church of God, elect and holy,
Be the people He intends;
Strong in faith and swift to answer
Each command your Master sends:
Royal priests, fulfill your calling
Through your sacrifice and prayer;
Give your lives in joyful service
Sing His praise, His love declare.*

In Christ,
Vicki L. Main



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Our Vacation Bible School this year was a huge success. We had 158 students attend (123 non members and 35 members) with 52 volunteers to help. Without our volunteers VBS could never have happened. THANK YOU ALL so much!!

This year's theme was Camp Discover: Jesus at work through us. Each day the children discussed a different event in bible history where God worked through his people. Day one was the story of David and Goliath. God made David bold so he could face Goliath. The children learned that God gives us all courage to handle any adversity we face. Day two was the story of Deborah when she judged with God's wisdom. The children learned

how, through prayer, God will give us his wisdom. Day three was the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The children learned that God saves His people even when the situation seems impossible. Jesus saved us when he died on the cross for our sins. Day four was the story of Bartimaeus. The children learned how Jesus restored the sight of Bartimaeus. Jesus gives us faith to believe in the

impossible. Day five was the story of God sending Ananias to Saul. Since we did not have VBS on Friday, Pastor Cholak wrote up a family devotion and encouraged the families to read the story and answer the questions in the leaflet.

Each day the children learned a Take Home Point and a memory verse to help them remember the story they learned that day. This year we had six rotations: snacks, bible challenge, storytelling, crafts, games, and music. Our preschool children rotated into our music, craft and snack rotations. They also had their own version of bible challenge and storytelling with a squirrel puppet named Chester.

This year's mission project was The

Community Storehouse in Keller. Summer is a difficult time for The Community Storehouse. With school out, children do not get their free meals. The Community Storehouse supplies are depleted faster. We were able to donate over 800 items from 92 donors to The Community Storehouse! Thank you to Jinel Munoz for collecting, counting, and delivering the items to The Community Storehouse after VBS was over.

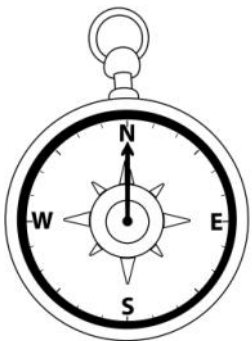
Thank you to Gray Wolf Promotions for printing our T-shirts. Thank you to Marcia Huebel for printing the school promotional materials that were sent home with all the children.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU to all of our wonderful volunteers who made it possible for VBS to happen. Thank you to all the congregation members who donated items, time or money to make VBS a success.

Finally, thank you to the women who served on the VBS committee: Kendra Weber, Elizabeth Johnson, Julie Rivera, Amber Heald, Meredith Sifford, Carli Allen, Stephanie Cholak and Laralynn Conaway. You helped make this VBS successful!

Tamarra Liddle
Director







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The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Associate Pastor

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

www.messiahkeller.org

Youth Retreat 2015

Our Youth traveled back to the JD Ranch in Wimberley, TX for a four day retreat. At various points, all three of Messiah's pastors were able to spend time with our teens. In between Bible studies, there was time for chess matches with Pastor Chryst, singing, tubing, dance lessons, and hanging out.

