



Is the Bible Still Relevant? by Pastor Glenn Huebel

How many flyers do we get in the mail or on our doors from local churches that advertize their relevance in one way or another? Even when the word "relevance" is not used, the appeal is couched in such a way or with such pictures that you cannot miss the fact that this is a "cool church," or at least it wants to be cool. Was it Emerson who wrote, "The louder he talked of his honor, the faster we counted our spoons"? I don't know – dead poets are irrelevant anyway, aren't they? It just seems that the more the church speaks about, boasts of, and tries desperately to be "relevant" the less she teaches the Bible. I'm sure that this is not the case with every cool church, but I often hear from frustrated church shoppers the complaint that could be stated in the words of the old Wendy's advertisement, "Where's the beef?" What happened to old fashioned preaching and teaching straight from the BIBLE? What happened to the old, old story of Jesus and His love? Why have gimmicks, slogans, and pop-culture references completely consumed the message of the church?

Another complaint I hear and read about is that American pastors are terrified to speak plainly on controversial issues like abortion, homosexuality, casual sex, living together before marriage, pornography, or other common forms of immorality. Ironically, in their earnest attempt to remain relevant, churches and pastors are becoming outrageously irrelevant because they are not being what everyone (even non-churched people) knows they should be. Relevance is not a measure of what people *think* is important. Nor is it identical with popular opinion. God and His truth are relevant even if the majority – even if every person – denies His existence. His truth is the defining standard of relevance. The fact that God's truth is hated, persecuted, despised, or ignored in the world should not be confused with irrelevance. The reality is that those who live as if God's Word did not exist are living irrelevant lives!

The Bible, as the Word of the living God, is the most relevant Book ever penned, and it will never become irrelevant because the basic issues it addresses will never go away. Jesus says that the heavens and the earth will

pass away, but the Word will never pass away. No other sacred book of any religious tradition will lead anyone past the grave into the new heavens and new earth, because no other sacred book leads the sinner to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. No other sacred book creates a saving faith in Jesus or leads to an eternal inheritance. I wish a majority of Christians understood that the Bible is the most important book in their life, but they don't. The Bible is infinitely more important than any other book they can read or study because the eternal is infinitely more valuable than the temporal. Why do I think Christians do not understand this? Because there would be a great deal more effort to search the Scriptures and to impress its truth upon their children if they did. Most of us are more acquainted with other books, or at least other stories, than the Bible. Most of us have invested far more time, effort, and money educating ourselves and our children in other kinds of wisdom and knowledge than the Bible. Most Christian parents are more likely to freak out if their children decide not to go to college than they would if they discover their children don't even have the rudimentary basics of the Bible's teachings. I would venture to guess that many, if not most, Christian parents today don't even KNOW what their children know

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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

about the Bible or about Christian doctrine because they haven't investigated that concern. How could we conclude anything other than that the Bible is a very low priority for our education?

With all that is happening in the world around us today, is it not time to "consider our ways" (Haggai 1:7)? Is it not time to get back to the basics? Not the three R's, but the B-I-B-L-E basics? If you have children at home, please bring them

to Sunday School where they can hear God's Word directly from the pages of the Bible week by week. Please also consider sending your children to our excellent academy, where they will not only be well prepared for public or university education after they leave, but will receive all their knowledge in the proper context of the "wisdom of God." And even if you don't have children at home, we have Bible studies for all adults as well. Please look in this Newsletter for a listing of

the various special Bible studies we are offering in the Fall during the week and on Sunday mornings. There's a group for YOU. Find it, and grow in grace and knowledge of the truth in Christ Jesus. We're not trying to be the cool church, but we would LOVE to be known as a teaching church.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Huebel

What Does a Child Truly Need?

It's a prosperous time to be a child in America. Parents work hard, often putting in more hours than they wish, and assuage their misgivings by spending money on their kids. Three out of five American teen bedrooms now have their own television. Studies show that these kids watch five and a half *more* hours of television per week than if they had to use the set in the family room. Food to munch along the way is available in abundance, of course, which part of the reason we have an explosion of youth obesity in the United States.

When it comes to direct spending by young people, 70 percent get allowances. According to one survey, the average weekly amount for a five year old is \$3.15; for a ten year old, \$7.18; and for a fifteen year old, \$15.75. No wonder kids are obsessed with going to the mall, and no wonder the American landscape has twice as many shopping malls as high schools.

Of course, the stuff on sale in all those shops isn't quite so thrilling a

month or two later, and rooms get filled up. Eventually Mom come along and declares a clean-out crusade, filling bags with things to give away or throw away. It is a bit outrageous to learn that Americans spend more for garbage bags each year than 90 of the world's 210 countries spend for *everything*.

Such statistics might lead us to pause a minute and ask, "What does a child truly need? How much stuff is enough? What makes for a healthy, well-balanced, contented person? What, in fact, works in the opposite direction? We ask ourselves these questions a lot where I work since our calling is to nurture the poor children of the world. After all, we can throw money at problems and, if we're not careful, end up creating more trouble than solutions.

I've always appreciated this definition of failure: "to succeed at something that doesn't really matter." If you exert all your might to climb a ladder but it's leaning against the wrong wall, you have failed.

How many of us have lavished toys and clothes and entertainment on our kids to the point of extreme, only to produce selfish, bored, demanding, irritable teenagers? This can happen in any country of the world.

By contrast, God is the one who loves us when no one else seems to care. He is the one who gave us inherent dignity. He has plans for each life that are greater than we would dare to dream. As long as we seek these things on our own, without him, we are sure to get off track.

Read the histories of civilizations. You can tell a society is nearing its ultimate collapse when it is consumed with comfort, pleasure, and entertainment, when it no longer feels it needs anything from God, the Creator. For the Greeks, Romans, Incas, Aztecs, and soon perhaps Western civilization, the path has been the same.

—From *To Small to Ignore*, by Dr. Wess Stafford, President and CEO, Compassion International

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:14-17)

MLCA Security Procedures Updates

If you are like me, there are probably times when you look at the society in which we live and especially in which we raise our children, and you long for those days gone by when children played carefree in swimming holes, when the nightly news wasn't filled with reports of escalated violence, when our media airways weren't increasingly vulgar and profane...a time when it was just "simpler."

At Messiah Lutheran Church, we have been truly blessed by God with a mission in our own backyard that "molds and shapes the minds and spirits" of children, that proclaims to them daily in chapel that they are redeemed children of God, and that helps them to grow in wisdom and to become "what God has created them in Christ to be." This is both a tremendous honor that we have as a church with a school and also a tremendous responsibility. Parents count on us each day to partner with them to help raise their children in the ways that they should go. They trust us with their precious sons and daughters, and they have faith in us that we will be faithful substitutes in their stead.

Because of this, the MLCA School Board and I have been working hard to clarify and apply consistently our security procedures. Because we as church and school share facilities, we must, during school hours, treat the entire campus as any other school in this area does in order to assure each parent at MLCA that their children are safe and secure while they are in our care.

Pastor Huebel, the Board of Trustees, the School Board, and I are all in full support of these procedures. We are asking you, as the members of Messiah Lutheran Church, to give

us your full support and understanding as well as we implement them. Imagine what a positive message our church can send to all the families whom we serve at MLCA by saying, "Yes! Your children are a priority to us! We will love and protect them while they are here as if they were our own children." Your adherence to these procedures each time you come to Messiah when school is in session will help us send this positive message to all our school families!

The complete procedures can be requested from the school office at any time, but to summarize:

- Any visitors (which includes church members, parents, prospective families, etc.) at Messiah between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on school days will be asked to sign-in, sign-out, and wear a name badge.
- Any hired subcontractors and all regular volunteers for either church or school at Messiah between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on school days will be asked to complete a routine background check and to have a valid

government-issued ID on file in the HR office. They will also be asked to sign-in, sign-out, and wear a name badge.

- The sanctuary and entry area in front of the church office is excluded from these procedures as are special exceptions such as funerals.

We know that truly it is only God who keeps us safe and provides us all the security we need in this world. However, He also expects us to make wise choices as we serve Him in our vocations. Please join us in sending that positive message to our MLCA families that we will do all that we can to keep their children safe and secure while here.

If you have any questions about these security procedures, please know that I am available via email, phone, or a face-to-face meeting.

Thank you, members of Messiah! It is truly so wonderful to be serving all of you through the operation of **your** classical Lutheran day school.

Sincerely in Christ,

Erika Mildred
Headmaster



MLCA First Day of School



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K—8): (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

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

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mrs. Shirleen Simek, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org

Bible Studies at Messiah

Take a look through the list of Bible Study times and see which one(s) you would like to attend:

On Sunday Mornings:

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Meets: Sunday School hour

Place: Fellowship Hall

Topic: To be decided

Leader Coordinators:

Pastor Huebel

Description: This class studies a book of the Bible or a specific doctrine.

Timeless principles are applied to life today. This

class is a larger group, and members can participate in the animated discussions, or sit back and just listen.

SUNDAY LIFE-LIGHT CLASS

Meets: Sunday School hour

Place: Reception Room

Topic: The End Times

Leader Coordinators: Ray Main and Robert Harris

Description: This Bible Study is for students who are willing to study a bit during the week and prefer a small group. LifeLight divides up readings and questions for daily study and contemplation. The group meetings discuss what the members learned in the study.

WOMEN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Meets: Sunday School hour

Place: MLCA Lunch Room

Topic: Women in the Bible

Leader/Coordinators: Alison Smith and Betsy Kirk

Description: This class is offered especially for women who feel detached and desire to be more closely connected to their church and fellow Christians at Messiah in a smaller setting.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL (9th – 12th grades)

Meets: Sunday School hour

Place: Youth Room, Activity Center

Topic: Varies

Leader/Coordinator: Pastor Cholak

During the Week:

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

(High School Grads and above, single or married)

Meets: Monday Evenings, 7:00 pm

Place: To be determined

Topic: To be determined

Leader/Coordinator: Pastor Cholak

Description: Pastor Cholak will be leading this group of young adults who wish to gather regularly to talk about living the Christian life and remaining faithful to the truth in this theologically confused world.

WOMEN'S EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Meets: Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (Sept 24 – Nov 19)

Starts again in January for a study of the Psalms

Place: Messiah Reception Room (parlor)

Topic: LifeLight Bible Study series: "David"

Leader/Coordinator: Joan Burk, 817-797-3215

Email: Burkrj@att.net

Description: This Bible Study is for students who are willing to study a bit during the week. LifeLight divides up readings and questions for daily study and contemplation. The group meetings discuss what the members learned in the study. Each session lasts nine weeks.

JUST OLDER YOUTH (JOY)

Meets: Thursdays, 9:00 am (Began on Sept 4)

Place: Messiah Activity Center (On Highway 377)

Topic: *The Conscience*

Leader/Coordinator: Marvin Wilken

Description: This Bible Study group consists mostly of retired members of the congregation who love to get together for study and fellowship. On the second Thursday of the month they participate in a Braille workshop and go out to eat together. Younger people are also more than welcome to attend.

MEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Meets: At a time to be determined (Probably morning, perhaps on Saturday)

Place: To be determined (Perhaps offsite)

Topic: The Book of Proverbs

Leader/Coordinator: Jimmy Baker

Description: The Book of Proverbs is an instruction manual for fathers to teach their children, especially to prepare young men for the leadership responsibilities of manhood. The practical wisdom Solomon teaches here is timeless.

PASTOR'S CLASS

Meets: Thursday evening (7:00 pm) and Sunday (9:00-10:30 am)

Place: Room A101

Topic: Basic Christian Doctrines (Catechism)

Leader/Coordinators: Pastor Huebel/Stephen Inglehart

Description: This is a 16 session course that meets twice per week. It is a thorough introduction to Lutheran doctrine. It is a requirement for membership, but all inquirers are welcome to attend. Please note that the Sunday session of this class starts before the normal Sunday School hour.