



Confessing the Faith

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

Note: I wrote the following newsletter article over a decade ago, and it seems to be more relevant today than it was then. As the devil's lies take hold of the masses, the truth will shine more brightly. May God give us the courage to speak it boldly. Pastor Huebel

The assumptions of post-modern thinking have penetrated almost every aspect of our culture today, even the Christian Church. Too often Christians adapt to the surrounding culture without even realizing that they have a compromising spirit. It is only as we continue in the Word that we are able to clearly see the difference between man's fallible reason and God's revealed truth. Our society today has drifted into relativism, and the church has drifted with it. The church, for the most part, has not drifted as far as the world, but has moved a long way downstream from the courageous confessing church of our spiritual

forefathers. The belief that each person defines his or her own "truth" and that all perceptions of the "truth" are equally valid (pluralism) is a core value of the culture of post-modernism. This error enters into the church in the form of doctrinal indifference. Doctrinal indifference is not necessarily measured by asking a person what he believes, but by asking him what the truth is. "The" truth is problematic for many in the church today. The article, "the," implies that there is only one truth. We are definitely not comfortable with that idea. We want to grant everyone the right to have and hold his own personal truth. We are

challenge someone else's truth. What is happening here? We have just substituted "truth" for opinion. For most people today, there is no substantial difference between truth and opinion. We have thereby destroyed the concept of truth by simply changing its definition.

The Bible does not let us play this game. The Bible sets before us the Truth, who is Jesus (John 14:6). He is not "a" truth. He is "the" Truth. He is not just Truth for the believer. He is the Truth, period. Those who reject Him and His Word do not believe another "truth." They, indeed, reject the truth and believe a lie. They may sincerely believe their lie to be the truth, but their sincerity or their faith does not make a lie into truth. Even if every man in the world rejects the Truth, it is still the Truth. "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Rom 3:4). It is very important that Christians understand this and do not yield to the nonsense of the world, for the Christian Church is called to be, and is, "the ground and pillar of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15). We

more comfortable saying things like, "this is the truth as I perceive it," or "this is my truth," etc. This makes truth a very private and subjective matter. No one may therefore challenge "my" truth, and I must not

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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

Confessing, cont.

know the truth because we continue in the Word of Him who is the Truth (John 8:31). Jesus commands us to confess this truth which He has given us. He does not command us to be assertive in stating our opinions. Who cares about our opinions? He commands us to confess the truth. Let's not flatter ourselves on this point. It is not the truth because we believe it or confess it. It is the truth because it comes from Him who is the Truth, and we believe and confess it because it is the truth.

Pluralists cannot tolerate the confessional spirit that Jesus commands. Those who most humbly yield to the authority of Jesus and follow His command to confess will be accused by the pluralist of being arrogant because we make "our" truth higher than the truth claims of everyone else. They would have us Christians to acknowledge the lie as equal to the truth. If we cannot do that then we must at least retreat from confession and simply hold to "our" truth as a

private matter. In other words, the pluralist hates confession and cannot tolerate it.

This leaves us in a bind of sorts, for Jesus will tolerate no less than confession. If we confess Him before men, He will confess us before the Father, but if we deny Him before men, He will deny us before the Father. Do we wish to face the scorn of men, or the rejection of God? Confession is not an option for the Christian or for the Church. We **MUST** confess. It is the Lord's command.

Unfortunately, many in the church today seem to believe that the church will accomplish its mission more effectively if it waters down its confession, and wins the world's approval. Can we really win the world to Christ by denying Him before men? Only the devil would have us believe that.

The Lutheran Church has always been a confessing church, and we at Messiah have every intention of

continuing in that heritage that our posterity may also hear the good news of Jesus without corruption of human opinion. May the Spirit enable us to be faithful in administering the good gift that we have received.

"Faith makes men Christians; but Confession alone marks them as Christians. The Rule of Faith is God's voice to us; faith is the hearing of that voice, and the Confession, our reply of assent to it. By our faith, we are known to the Lord as his; by our Confession, we are known to each other as His children. Confession of faith, in some form, is imperative. To confess Christ, is to confess what is our faith in him." (The Conservative Reformation and it's Theology by Charles Porterfield Krauth, p. 166)

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Huebel



You can find an LCMS congregation wherever you are on the Synod's website: www.lcms.org (Click on "Find a church..." in the upper, right hand corner.)

To find a Lutheran congregation that uses the traditional liturgy, go to www.lutheranliturgy.org.

Since we at Messiah Lutheran Church have as part of the ministry of our congregation a Christian School, the Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy," it may of benefit to consider just what that means. What is "Christian education"? Is there a specifically "Christian mathematics," in which problems are solved in a different way than in "secular math"? Is there a specifically Christian grammar and syntax for speaking the English language? Does the biological method by which a cell processes oxygen (Krebs Cycle) involve a different sequence among Christians than it does for non-Christians? Does a Christian view of history have a different sequence of events than other histories?

Well, to the best of my knowledge, Christians add 2 plus 2 and come up with a sum of 4 just like anyone else. We use the same grammar and syntax as any other speaker of (American) English. We recognize that William the Conqueror invaded England and conquered the Saxons at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 A.D., just like any other observer of western history (pardon me for maintaining the use of A.D., for Anno Domini, rather than submitting to the current convention of using C.E., for Common Era). We don't say, in contradiction of secular historians, "Oh, no! Hannibal really didn't cross the Alps with an army of which elephants were part!" When we dissect a cat in biology lab, we find all the same parts in all the same places. When we look through the same telescopes as everyone else at the same stars that everyone else sees, we see the same North Star in the same place in the sky, and note right along with everyone else that that's the one that doesn't appear to move. So, what's the difference?

I would not want to presume that Lutheran/Christian instruction is merely a subset of a broader whole that we think of as education. It is not simply a small, disjointed and unconnected slice an otherwise largely secular pie. It isn't just a matter of throwing some prayer and Bible stories to memorize into the mix and calling the whole thing Christian. There are some underlying ideas that permeate Christian education and make it distinct from secular education. First, Christians recognize that all truth is God's truth. Indeed, Jesus Christ, God the Son and Second Person of the Holy Trinity, said of Himself that He is truth personified. "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He did not say that He merely spoke the Truth, and represented the Truth, but that He IS the Truth. The quotation is one of several from the Gospel according to St. John which are commonly called the "I AM" statements. If you will recall, when Abraham was sent by the Lord to go back to Egypt and effect the release of the Israelites from slavery, the Name which God used of Himself was "I AM." "Tell them, I AM sent you," Moses was instructed. When Jesus said things like, "Before Abraham was, I AM," He was claiming to be God, of the same essence as the Father, and who participated in the Creation of all things, who is the Author and Source of all that is true

The second idea that permeates Christian education, which flows from the first, is that all things, not just Truth, are God's. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Jesus Christ *is* the Truth, and all truth is His, as all things are His. A Christian education recognizes that in all things God is moving. "In Him, we live, and move, and have

our being" (Acts 17:28). Art, Science, Mathematics, History....all are observations of what God has done, and what He is doing. That is what differentiates Christian education from secular education, which in our time has come to recognize God's hand in precisely nothing. Christian education finds God's order and structure in all things. Observation of God's Creation provides us with information about Him. Science and Mathematics observe and seek to understand how God has ordered His creation. St. Paul tells us in Romans 1 that much can be known about God from observation of the created world.

History is really the story God's movement in time. We know from Scripture that God does indeed move in history and His unseen hand is the cause behind events in which whole nations are moved to act according to His will, without even being aware of what's really going on. When the Assyrians conquered Israel and the Babylonians conquered Judah, they thought they were acting for their own purposes. But each was being used by God to bring judgment on Israel and Judah, to bring them to repentance. What they did was foretold by the Prophets. It was known ahead of time that the Assyrians and Babylonians would do what they would do. Scripture is clear that Jesus Christ came at that time in history which God had fore-ordained, at the *right* time, the time which suited His purposes. And lo and behold, the time was right when the Greeks had provided a common language and the Romans a common road system and safe maritime environment in which the Gospel would be spread far abroad from

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tiny little Judea. Time itself is God's, and what happens in time - history - is in God's control. History really is "*His* story."

Christian education is the way in which we carry out the Lord's admonition to raise our children entirely "In the nurture and admonition of the Lord." It seeks to follow the great "Shemah" of Deuteronomy 6, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These

commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." God would have us live out our lives in Him, and in His Word. He has left testimony of Himself in Creation, as Paul says in Romans 1, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His

eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." It can be said of nature that God communicates something of Himself through it. Secular science as it is taught in secular education remains willfully blind. Christian education does not.

In short, Christian education is precisely that: Christian. It sees and understands Creation through Christ, and glorifies Him because of it.

Sing a New Song to the Lord

by Vicki Main, Kantor

Thy Works, Not Mine, O Christ [LSB 565] will be the next hymn we'll be learning during the month of June. The text writer, Horatius Bonar, will seem like an old friend to many of us as we have five other familiar hymns in our *Lutheran Service Book* also written by him: *Glory Be to Go the Father* [LSB 506], *Not What These Hands Have Done* [LSB 567], *I Lay My Sins on Jesus* [LSB 606], *Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face* [LSB 631], and *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* [LSB 699].

Horatius Bonar, born in December 19, 1808, was a Scottish Presbyterian minister and hymn writer who came from a long line of Presbyterian ministers. He was born and educated in Edinburgh, Scotland. He penned over 600 hymns although in his church (the Free Church of Scotland), hymns were never sung in the worship service! Probably his best-known hymn was *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* which is included in

almost all hymnals. He also had many best-selling books [*God's Way of Peace*, *God's Way of Holiness*, and *The Night of Weeping*.] He married Jane Catherine Lundie, also a hymn writer, in 1843. Their life had much sorrow as five of their nine children died in succession in their early years. Jane died in 1884 and Bonar died at the age of 80 in 1889 after a long 15 month illness.

This particular hymn will take on a deeper meaning if you're able to take the time to look up the referenced scripture verses – Titus 3:3-7; John 14:6, Phil. 3:7-9; Acts 4:12. The tune was taken from a choral book called *The Parish Choir* published in London in 1850 and then put into *The Lutheran Hymnal* [TLH 380] in 1941 for its publication.

1 Thy works, not mine, O Christ,
Speak gladness to this heart;
They tell me all is done,
They bid my fear depart.
Refrain

Refrain: To whom save Thee,
Who canst alone
For sin atone,
Lord, shall I flee?

2 Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ,
Can heal my bruised soul;
Thy stripes, not mine, contain
The balm that makes me
whole. Refrain

3 Thy cross, not mine, O Christ,
Has borne the crushing load
Of sins that none could bear
But the incarnate God. Refrain

4 Thy death, not mine, O Christ,
Has paid the ransom due;
Ten thousand deaths like mine
Would have been all too few.
Refrain

5 Thy righteousness, O Christ,
Alone can cover me;
No righteousness avails
Save that which is of Thee.
Refrain



We're on an Amazing Desert Journey this summer in VBS! Each day the children will learn about God's love and how He provides for their lives now and in eternity through Jesus, His Son, our Savior!

VBS is from June 18th to June 22nd, 8:45am—

12:00pm. Kids meet friends, explore Bible stories, do activities, sing songs, make crafts, play games, and eat snacks. **The**

Registration deadline is

June 3. To register, fill out a form in the baskets in the narthex, email barbbrewer@gmail.com or mernuse@aol.com, or register online using the link on the front page of our church website. **Our VBS preschool classes, 1st grade, and 2nd grade classes are filled to maximum occupancy.**

We need you! Through the dedication of our members and friends who volunteer at VBS, we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to 150 children each year. If you aren't part of VBS yet, why not call today? If you can help full or part time we have many levels of involvement to suit your schedule and interests.

Our immediate needs:

We need 4 more adult or college-aged volunteers to fill one of the following roles:

Music Leader: Help with leading music on Tuesday and Thursday and assist with the Closing Program. The materials make it easy!!!

(2) Preschool Leaders: Our preschool aged children (3's and 4's) need two leaders; we already have some great youth volunteers that love to work with the children. The hard work of organizing has already been done. If you have a talent for orchestrating a group, this job is for you! We can guarantee that these little ones will touch your heart!!

Bible Challenge: You will challenge students through different activities and help them learn their Bible verse for the day. The materials make it easy!!!

Fundraiser

Breakfast: Come join us for breakfast on Sunday, June 10th! We will begin serving at 9:00 a.m. to accommodate the children and adults that need to be in Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. The free-will offering will help to offset VBS expenses. We will have a short overview and introduction to the VBS program and our mission projects.

Donation supply tags will be available on the VBS table in the narthex. Donations can be placed in the green box at the VBS table; we will be checking it daily. It would be so nice to turn Merissa's vision into a reality, but she needs help achieving it. Please join us **June 16th** for decorating. No talent needed! . If you can donate one or more of the following items please call or email us.

We need the following for decorations:

- Wicker / rattan baskets for Egyptian-style marketplace.
- Fake fruit and vegetables
- 3-4 small outdoor umbrellas with stands
- Earth tone table cloths, sheets, fabric, drapes (for draping an Egyptian-style tent)
- Burlap bags and fabric
- Coat rack for displaying scarves
- Rustic pottery (you can't love it—we'll be very careful, but breakage is always possible)
- Large throw pillows, also Mid-eastern looking
- 2 Large rolls of brown paper (from Lowe's) used to catch paint.
- 5 flimsy plastic table covers (like party supplies) - the bigger the better.
- Potted palm trees—real or fake
- 100 feet of cotton or straw rope (will not return in 1 piece).

We appreciate your prayers

for *Amazing Desert Journey*, our Vacation Bible School being held on June 18th-22nd. Ask God to bring children to our program so they can know and grow in Jesus, our Savior! And ask God to provide leaders and helpers for this important mission.

Questions? Please contact us!

Barbara Brewer
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Merissa Nuse
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From POBLO

Women Of the Book Lutheran Outreach exists to reach out especially to Muslim women from all nations with the Saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Due to the restrictions of the Sharia Law in Islam, outreach to Muslim women isn't something male missionaries can effectively do. Therefore WOBLO-TX answers the call in many different ways by reaching, and living with these ethnic women in a Christ centered friendship and teaching them life skills such as sewing. *Sewing Seeds of Faith One*

Stitch at a Time is a new program lead by trained mission minded women and consists of teaching sewing skills to other ethnic women, making friends with them and their children and raising up leaders from among them to become new missionaries in order to bring the Gospel to 25,000+ refugees in the immediate vicinity of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (the home base of POBLO-TX in Dallas).

Donate your unused or leftover craft and sewing supplies!



"She seeks wool and flax & works willingly with her hands." Prov.31:13

Do you have a sewing closet that is overflowing with too much fabric, sewing, and craft items, unfinished projects? WOBLO-TX could use donations of supplies! **Working sewing machines**, sewing scissors, cotton fabrics, fiber fill, pillow forms, sewing notions of all kinds, cutting mats, glue guns, craft supplies (ribbon, yarn, sequins, anything used for decorating fabric) scrap book paper and scrap/card making supplies...etc. Donations can be left at the POBLO-TX office. If you need a donation receipt, just let us know! If you have any questions or would like more information or to volunteer, please give us a call at 214-368-1371 ext 241.

Thank you in advance for helping us to Sew the Seeds of Faith!



Got new neighbors? Help spread the word!

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2 YRS. - PRE-K: 817-431-6139
GRADES K-8: 817-431-5486

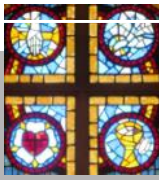


Are YOU connected???

Our church calendar, sermons, minutes, and more can be found online on MemberConnect. You get to it through our church website, www.messiahkeller.org. Click on the “Members” tab.

Anyone can see our calendar and listen to the Sunday sermons—you can even share them with your friends.

Other information, though, like the church directory, member photos, minutes and reports, can only be seen by Messiah members. To access that information, contact Tess in the church office. Call or email Tess.Funke@messiahkeller.org. She will send you a user name and password to start with. She’ll even walk you through it if you are having difficulty. **But, it’s not that hard. Really. Get connected!**



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. Dennis Kitzmann, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Natalie Anderson, Principal, Classical Academy

Mrs. Alison Smith, Principal, Early Childhood Center

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mr. Joseph Sustrik, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org



Youth News by Sanghwa Park

Last Edition for
2011-2012



To all graduating seniors at Messiah Lutheran

Church, congratulations and wish you the best of luck. To have been your first youth group news reporter, I will admit that I was not perfect. I have skipped a few months, and I have not attended all the events. However I did my best, and I do want to say that our group is a very nice young group of individuals each with talents of their own and who will make a difference in their own ways in the name of Christ. I wish the best to each and every one of my fellow youth group members. Hope to keep in touch in the future and am glad to have seen



our group get bigger and stronger each year that I was a member. Now that I am graduating, I hope to pass on this post to a future member. Thank you again for helping me become a member of this church, for educating me in the doctrine, and for giving me a foundation to rely on as I go off into the future.

Sincerely,
Sanghwa Park

Bible verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you...plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Coming Up:

Youth Summer Retreat, June 4-7

VBS June 18-22

Editors note: *Many thanks to Sanghwa for her dedication in fulfilling this reporting task. We wish her God's blessings on her future plans!*

Dedication of New Piano and Table Coverings by Vicki Main, Kantor

Music is a fair and glorious gift from God. – Martin Luther



Hopefully by now your ears and heart have been blessed by the sound of our new

Roland HP307 Digital Piano. It was delivered March 19 and quickly put into service. We have already been blessed to have some of our students and children play on it for services and concerts. An interesting aside, traditional piano keys are made from the best materials – ivory (for white keys) and ebony (for black keys). The Ivory Feel keyboard of the Roland piano uses the latest in

technology to reproduce the touch and feel of these materials. As with real ivory, this distinctive texture of the keys feels better the more you play them. The keys also feature a subtle gloss and understated coloring, enhancing the look and elegance. The white keys are finished with a slight yellowish tinge for the look of real ivory. Feel for yourself the next time you are walking by, although it would probably be best to wait until after the service is over! ☺

On Music Sunday, May 20, our handbell tables were newly adorned in beige pinwale corduroy coverings. Malmark, the manufacturer of our bells, chimes, tables and pads, custom-made our coverings for us as well. On the backside of each is a long segmented pocket for holding mallets,

gloves, music, etc.

Both of these new additions were dedicated at the early service on May 20.

Thank you to all who made these purchases possible. Your generosity will ensure that God's gift of music will continue to be a significant part of Messiah's ministry and bless our worship services through the proclamation of His Word with voices, bells, and instruments!

