

The New ELCA Gospel

The new ELCA gospel boils down to a natural man's religion replacing fundamental Bible truth with politics. A vague ethic of love is preached for the betterment of society. Sin is seen as ignorance. Jesus is not savior but only an example of sacrificial living. Universal salvation is proclaimed for all. Gone are missionaries, the urgency for lost souls, honest awareness of sin and the need for conversion. Gone are theological and moral absolutes. Present is the undermining of scripture, protests, endless social statements and lobbying platforms.

This enterprise is capped off with the desire to unite all mainline liberal denominations into one generic fellowship. Toward such end the ELCA has persecuted orthodox believers all the while retaining anyone else so long as they don't defy church authorities. There is an ever increasing tide of resentment and persecution against simple Bible-believing Christians that's developed into a full scale purge.

Those pushing this agenda claim to be tolerant and loving. They are indeed tolerant of every view except orthodoxy. Ultimately they position themselves above the scriptures. They employ interpretive gymnastics to avoid the plain and simple meaning of a so called "primitive" Bible. This is nothing more than dishonest elitism. Elitist as they claim to be more enlightened than the inspired Word and dishonest as they refuse to withdraw from the very Church they undermine. The honest humanist wonders aloud for this pretense.

The strategy has not involved the direct frontal assault until lately. We can at least thank the ELCA for drawing lines with the sexuality social statement. There we see the issue is not homosexuality. The real issue is the authority of scripture. To come out and admit such would prove disastrous, however. Most proponents of the new theology are content to slowly chip away at the foundations with subtle changes as opposition is steadily whittled away. The local congregation is the last stand as the rest of the structures have largely fallen. Seminaries churn out undernourished and defeated clergy. Bishops have steadily consolidated their power and hold over pastors and congregational property.

As with any abusive relationship, power or pity is used for desired ends. Church politicians generally start with the pity card saying, "We are the church that raised you" and "You will diminish our mission." With unchecked power Bishops proclaim, "We define the terms of your constitution" or "You will be disciplined!" Honest discussion about the issues is generally forbidden. In the end, an orthodox creed is merely a paper confession in the ELCA. What is promoted and taught in its schools, publications and pulpits is quite different.

The storm we find ourselves in has been permitted by the hand of God. It is serving his good purpose as he winnows a wayward denomination. We must pray to work his will through the storm. We too need to be sifted accordingly as none are blameless before our Father. All decisions and actions are to be made on our knees. Our response should be one with Saint Peter

who said, “Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” We must remember the Lord is coming soon and millions are perishing. To remain in the ELCA would require heroic efforts of time and energy just to combat false teaching and influences. Shall we continue with endless debates and bickering or fully devote ourselves to the Great Commission?

At least once to everyone comes a critical moment to decide for or against Christ. We belong to Jesus, not an institution. There is no true unity apart from his Word. Ours is not a religion of conscience but a faith in Christ alone. The only valid reason for leaving is if Christ leads the way. The fullness of the Gospel is in danger such that silence is impossible. Let us do away with double standards, mixed messages, and an uneasy conscience. We are our brother’s keeper and he deserves a clear witness. We dare not leave fellow sinners to themselves. Ironically, those who brought the Church to schism by introducing new teachings—not based on clear scripture but arguing against it—arrogantly call those who have remained steadfast the schismatics!

The scriptures warn us not to have “itching ears” to “beware of false prophets” and “test the spirits.” There is no other Gospel than the one already given. As with the spiritual battles of the past God always raises a remnant. Will we be a part of his glorious future? At first it will appear small like the mustard seed. Following the scriptures we should strive to do all things “in the light of day,” “speaking the truth in love,” as we “contend for the faith” knowing we will of necessity face persecution and hatred. Standing with Christ costs everything or its costs nothing.

Such are questions we must honestly face:

- How will I answer Christ?
- What about the children? (Luke 17:2)
- What will the next pastor teach?
- Can you evangelize for the ELCA?
- Do you trust them with your family?
- Should this be a matter of convenience?
- What makes the clearest witness?
- Whom shall I serve?
- Am I limping between two opinions?

It has been said the best thing to do is the right thing. The second best thing to do is the wrong thing. And the worst thing to do is nothing. Let us keep the main thing the main thing by doing the right thing. As with the heroes and reformers of old let us teach and preach our way out of this mess finally remembering at our own death the voice that matters most will be the last.

May Jesus Christ be praised!
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