

Thursday, July 10, 2014

Clarity in Conflict
Cultural Change: The Church in the Crosshairs

**The foundations of law and order have collapsed.
What can the righteous do?”**
—Psalm 11:3 NLT

I. Welcome to Clear Word

Brief overview of Clear Word Conference

-Scripture

-Mission

[TITLE]

Tonight I want to present the keynote presentation to give focus to the intent and topic of this conference. “Clarity in Cultural Conflict: Rising to the challenge of Cultural changes” Particularly, I would like to address “Cultural Change: The Church in the Crosshairs”

II. Presentation Introduction

[PPT] Culture is continually in flux. We may long for consistency and stability, but as one songwriter said, “*If there's one thing you can count on, Things are gonna change*” (Brian Duncan).

But a “culture shift” is greater than the flux of change. We are experiencing an earthquake event. A seismic shift of the foundations. Something has been altered in the bedrock of society. That is happening again in our day.

I believe we are witnessing another great social and cultural upheaval that has the potential to produce the greatest disruption in the social order ... BUT it will also produce the potential for the greatest spiritual revival the church has ever experienced.

[PPT] It will be stressful. Maybe even frightening. But if the church will awaken to the possibilities there will be tremendous tidal wave of conversions as people seek the security and reality of something unchanging, immovable, and eternal!

The Church is the focal point of Cultural Conflict. Believers in Christ and advocates of the Bible are seen as oppositional to current trends in society.

[PPT] THE CHURCH IS IN THE CROSSHAIRS!

Psalm 11:2 The wicked are stringing their bows
and fitting their arrows on the bowstrings.

*Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.
Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching*
Pastor Terry R. Baughman

They shoot from the shadows
at those whose hearts are right.

**3 The foundations of law and order have collapsed.
What can the righteous do?"**

III. History can teach us a lot about the present.

-Historical precedence

[PPT] We will look at Political, Social, and Spiritual events of three eras about 30 years apart. We will also observe the implications for the Church during these times of Cultural Shift.

A. *Before my time*, but WWII

[PPT] POLITICAL CHAOS

-On one front Nazi Germany was making an effort to take over the world in Europe. While Japan was spreading their influence and power through Asia.

-The USA had come through the Great depression and wasn't interested in fighting anyone else's wars ... until the attack on Pearl Harbor.

-Able bodied men were enlisted to serve on both fronts of the war and women left home to work in factories to keep the war machine moving. At that time most women worked at home and raised families. Divorce was infrequent and tradition was firmly in place.

[PPT] SOCIAL CHANGE - Women enter the workplace to never return home.

The family structure was changed forever.

[PPT] SPIRITUAL RESPONSE - Women whose men were at war sought comfort and strength in the local church. There was a building up of traditional worship centers. In times of trouble people need God.

CHURCHES were built, established, and expanded. There was tremendous progress in building up the church structure, organization and facilities. (It was the BUILDERS generation).

[PPT] chart

B. Vietnam era

[PPT] POLITICAL CHAOS

-Political conflict - unpopular international involvement in war (Vietnam)

[PPT] -On the home front the Civil Rights movement came into full swing following the forced desegregation laws of the 50's. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. became the face and voice for a growing and changing segment of society.

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[PPT] SOCIAL CHANGE

-Social disruption - Protests, anti-establishment, Drug abuse, Sexual Revolution and challenges to cultural mores. The propriety and decorum of the victorian age was cast aside to never be the same...

[PPT] end Vietnam war and social crisis pic

[PPT] make love, not war - communes, living together, casting off all social restraints

SPIRITUAL RESPONSE -

[PPT] -Spiritual - In the 60's it was the influx of Eastern Religions and the proliferation of spiritual alternatives (new age, spiritism, charismatic (Glossolalia)

The Jesus Revolution!

Some CHURCHES began to reach out to these lost souls and saw tremendous results.

C. Turn of the Millennium [PPT] chart

POLITICAL CHAOS

[PPT] -In the last decade or more there is widespread rebellion and political unrest. In 2001 we were thrust into the conflict after the attack on the World Trade Center in NYC. As a result we have become embroiled in long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[PPT] The "Arab Spring" began in 2010 in Tunisia and spread to Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, and others where dictators were toppled and new governments set up. The chaos resulted in civil war in Syria, which has now spread into Iraq as warring factions of Sunni and Shiites battle for control.

SOCIAL CHANGE

[PPT] -Homosexual agenda has persistently chipped away at laws and waged war in the Public opinion poll. It has now become politically incorrect to speak negatively against the homosexual lifestyle. Businesses and NFL team owners have experienced the economic backlash from being too vocal about the issue.

-Through the 1990's and early 2000's states passed laws defining marriage as being between one man and one woman ... only to have them overturned repeatedly by judges in various state and federal court cases.

In "The Atlantic" the following article by EMMA GREEN, MAY 16 2014:

[PPT] Judges Are Ready for Gay Marriage—Are the People?

As more courts start legalizing same-sex marriage in Southern and Midwestern states, will cultural mores catch up with the law?

...

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“The ... rapid expansion of gay marriage is being led almost exclusively by judges. ... Since [the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Windsor*,] which struck down the federal ban on gay marriage under the Defense of Marriage Act, there have been **nine rulings** expanding the definition of marriage. Almost every state where same-sex unions remain illegal now faces a court challenge.

...

“In 2004, 75 percent of Arkansans voted for a constitutional amendment that stated that "marriage consists only of the union of one man and one woman." A decade later, clerks in counties across the state are issuing marriage licenses to gay women and men.”

[PPT] [insert] Arkansas became the first state in the “Bible belt” where a judge overturned the law prohibiting SSM. [<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/gay-couples-arkansas-line-outside-courthouse>]

[back]

[PPT] [states] states with initiatives or laws against SSM / active cases to overturn

“In the coming months, similar rulings may make same-sex marriage legal in many of other states that passed constitutional bans with strong majorities. More than three-quarters of **Oklahomans** voted for an amendment to outlaw gay unions in 2004; a ruling against that law is awaiting appeal. The same is true of **Texas**, where 76 percent of its residents voted for a similar amendment in 2005. Next month, oral arguments will be heard in a challenge to **Louisiana's** ban, which nearly 80 percent of residents voted for in 2004; many other case developments are expected in throughout the summer and early fall. [<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/05/judges-are-ready-for-gay-marriage-but-are-the-people/371005/>]

Legal battle is being waged.

[PPT] The war for public opinion is also being lost as a majority now “favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry.”

[PPT] The “right to marry” will continue the trend of the dissolution of marriage! The rate of decline is already unprecedented.

PEW Research said: 1960 59% of young adults (18-29) were married ... in 2010 only 20%

[PPT] Decline of Marriage

[PPT] SPIRITUAL RESPONSE -

-TBD - The church must respond correctly in this time of overt immorality.

HOW SHOULD THE CHURCH RESPOND TO THE LGBT COMMUNITY?

—HATRED [PPT] - That's the perception of much of the LGBT community.

—ACCEPTANCE [PPT] - abandoning or redefining biblical foundations

CHANGES AHEAD

[PPT] Some of our greatest challenges and opportunities are ahead...

HOW will we respond when they begin to come ... bringing their adopted children to our Sunday School ... seeking spiritual help?

[PPT-A]— Will we seize the moment and become the catalyst for a new spiritual revolution, or will we become ineffective and marginalized by our inability to respond to the seismic shift in social culture?

[PPT] We come back to the question ...

Conclusion

Psalm 11:3 The foundations of law and order have collapsed.
What can the righteous do?"

[PPT] 4 But the Lord is in his holy Temple;
the Lord still rules from heaven.

He watches everyone closely,
examining every person on earth.

...

**7 For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.**