Church and Public Policy:

Making Sense of a Chaotic Culture

Michigan District Pastoral Conference
May 2022

Rev. Fredric Hinz

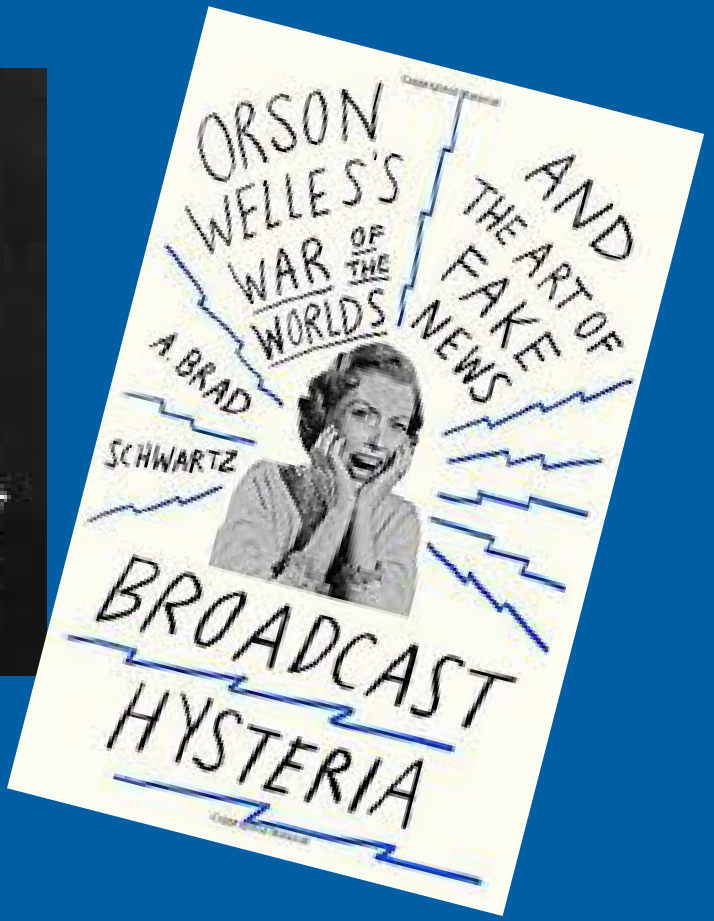
LCMS Public Policy Advocate

Minnesota Districts

fred.hinz@mnsdistrict.org

Racism

A sensitive topic which has been and remains a serious societal issue.



The Boston Daily Globe

RADIO PLAY TERRIFIES NATION

Mars Invasion Thought Real

Many Fear World Coming to End

The Capital Parade

PATROL WAGON, AUTO CRASH

POLICE BRIEF

Police, Youth Groups Plan Safer and Saner Hallowe'en

NEW YORK, MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1938.

Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact

Many Flee Homes to Escape 'Gas Raid From Mars'—Phone Calls Swamp Police at Broadcast of Wells Fantasy

VANITY FAIR
"Call me Caitlyn"

Feminist Majority Foundation
KEEP ABORTION SAFE AND LEGAL
I'M A WOMAN NOT
STUDENTSFORLIFE.ORG
I AM THE PRO-LIFE GENERATION
I AM A... PRO-CHOICER AND I REJECT

I am not trapped in my own body. You're trapped in your Outdated views of Gender.
MY GENDER is not a DISORDER

FREEDOM OF RELIGION
DOES NOT MEAN FREEDOM TO
DISCRIMINATE
REJECT

Speaking a Counter-Factual Reality Into Being

Desired result: Social Chaos!

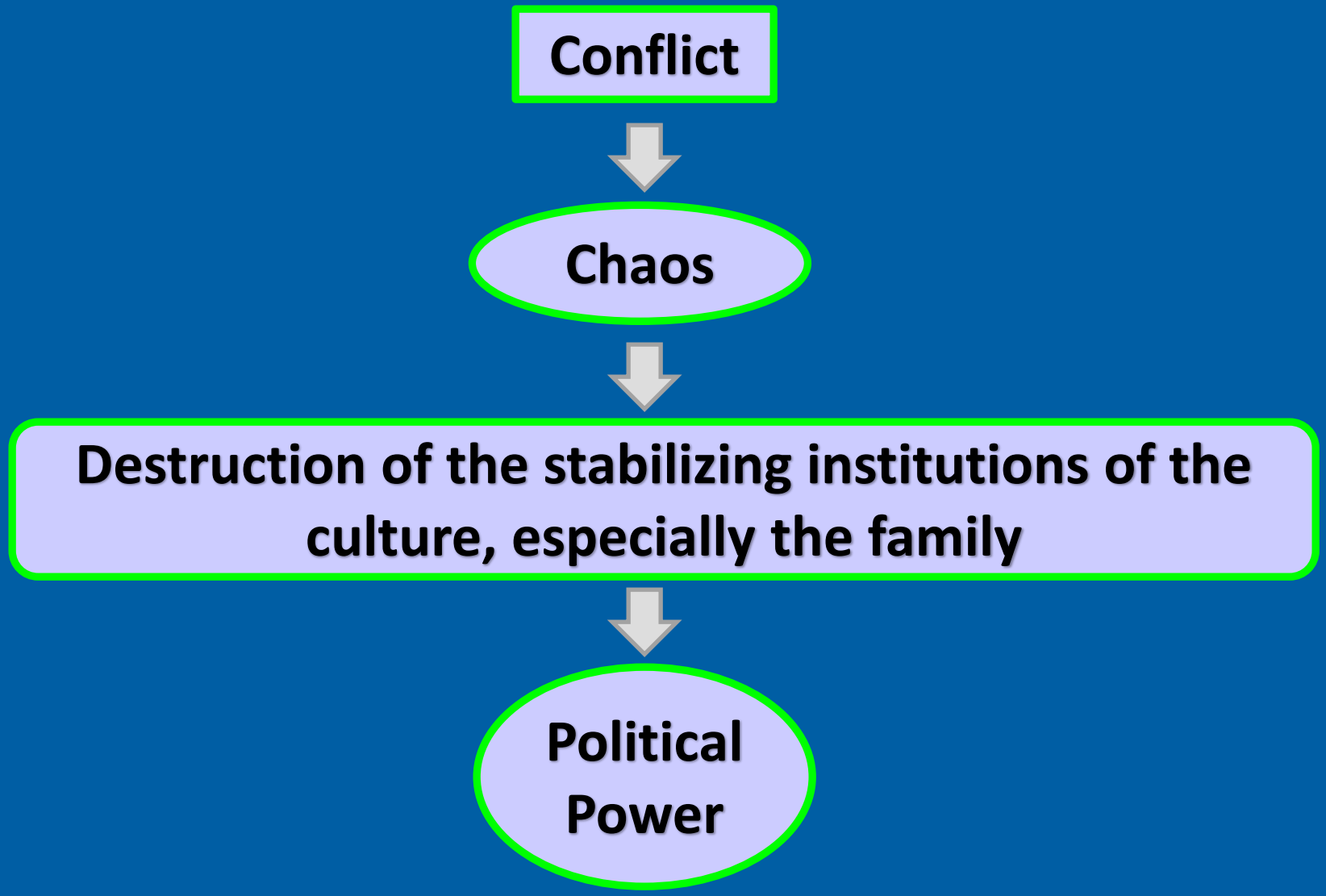
1) Overthrow of <u>Fundamental Values/Truths</u>

- Sacred, Ordered Nature to the World
- Truth Corresponding with Reality
- Presumption of Innocence
- Freedom of Speech/Religion = unqualified goods

2) Destruction of <u>Basic Institutions</u>

- The Nuclear Family
- The Church

To what end? / By what means?



With what TOOL?

Resources:

"Fault Lines" **by Voddie Baucham, Jr.**

"Strange New World" **by Carl Truman**

"Christianity and Wokeness" **by Owen Strachan**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) …
a Definition:

A system of thought and language which asserts that hidden racism is pervasive in society.

Corollaries:

1) **All Whites are racists.**
2) **Black people (POC) are not, because they lack power.**
3) **CRT rejects everything White people have developed:**
   a) **Legal reasoning / Legal systems**
   b) **Rational thought / Rules of logic**

(Corollaries continued …)

4) CRT is deeply Gnostic in quality; only POC possess special ability to detect racism.
5) Personal experience trumps other forms of knowledge (ie, scientific, religious) … only minorities may speak.
6) Racism is and always has been deeply engrained in American history / American society.
7) Power structures are intentionally designed to promote/ preserve White privilege and White supremacy.

Source: *"What is Critical Race Theory?"*
UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs

CRT – A Distinct Language System

Redefinition and distortion of standard language:
a standard Marxist/Progressive technique

Two Categories:

1) Old Terms are distorted
2) New Terms are invented … unique to CRT/Intersectionality/Woke-ism (CIW)

Old Terms - Repurposed

- **Color-blindness:**
  - **Formerly:** end goal of racial reconciliation
  - **CIW:** an impossible goal espoused by Whites
- **Racism:**
  - **Formerly:** hostile attitude towards individuals based on skin color.
  - **CIW:** a system of unequal institutional power; not an attitude, act, or event.

- **Social Justice:**
  - **Formerly:** a broad attempt to fight against unfair inequalities
  - **CIW:** the destruction and redistribution of White power

- **Systemic Racism:**
  - **Formerly:** explicit policies intended to segregate by race
  - **CIW:** race-based injustices secretly imbedded by Whites in law, policies, values, histories, language, and thought

New Terms - Introduced

- **Antiracism:** dedication to addressing hidden race-based injustices through political activism
- **Ethnic Gnosticism:** secret insider knowledge possessed only by POC
- **Intersectionality:** cumulative categories of oppression
- **White Fragility:** defensive reaction of Whites to Wokeism
- **White Guilt:** feeling of shame over past racism

(New Terms – continued)

- **White Privilege:** unearned advantage due to race
- **Whiteness:** mindset of people who consciously or subconsciously believe themselves to be racially superior
- **Wokeness:** being conscious of hidden race-based injustices in society
- **Whiteness Theory:** "If a White person was involved, racism is certain to be involved, because Whites are by definition racist."

Increased Ethnic Tension: Why now?

Racism is a very real issue, but …

Although civil rights are more protected than ever, suddenly we hear …

“Things have never been worse!”

“Everything is about race!”

What’s going on?

Something *spontaneous*?

… or something *calculated*?

Where did CRT come from?

The history is in the name.

Critical	-	Race	-	Theory
(2)		(3)		(1)

(1) "Theory" = **Marxist Theory (1848)**
(or Conflict Theory)

Marxism is …

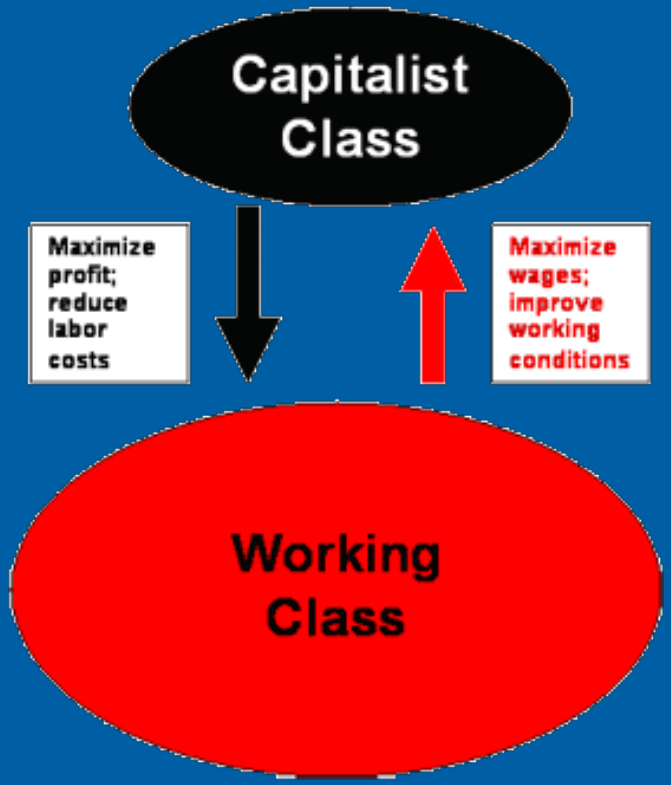
- **Utopian … seeks "heaven on earth"**
- **Materialist**
- **Totalitarian / Religious**
- **Divisive … pits group against group (the individual and the universal disappear)**
- **Destabilizing of existing society**

Marxist Recipe for a Destabilized Society

Pit groups against each other!

Oppressor

Oppressed



(2) "Critical"

1920s and following …
Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School

Q: Why is Marxist Conflict Theory not being accepted in the West?

A: Life is too good! There's too much contentment!

The Marxist Solution to Contentment

Problematizing:

- ❑ Find Imperfections in life; create if necessary.
- ❑ Make constant noise ⟶ discontent/chaos.
- ❑ "Criticize everything!"
- ❑ Avoid suggesting solutions.

Now called: "Critical Theory" or "Cultural Marxism"

(3) “Race”

1970s and following …
Race is selected as “problem of choice”

… leveraging White guilt.

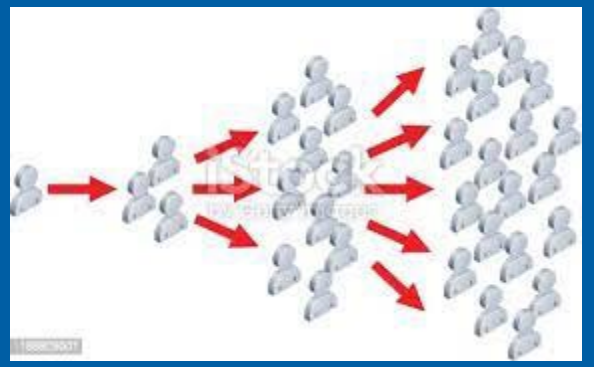
Now Called: “Critical Race Theory”

Intersectionality

The application of Critical Theory to non-racial minorities, especially sexual minorities

- **"Victimhood Status"** is made cumulative
  i.e., female + black + lesbian + disabled person
  = highest intersectionality ranking
- **"Wokeness"** = Acceptance of both CRT and Intersectionality

The Spread of CRT

1970s – 2010s	2010s to Present
Covert incubation …	CRT escapes the “Lab” …
	
… confined to the “Lab” of Academia	… out in the open: a Social Pandemic

Rebranding: “Social Justice”

We are “at war”!

The “Woke” vs The “Sleeping”

(Anti-racists vs Non-Racists)

Until recently,

… only one side knew it was at war.

How to Win a War?

Ancient Advice
from *"The Art of War"*

"If you know ***yourself***, you will have a 50% chance of winning the battle. If you know ***your enemy***, you will have a 50% chance to win. If you know ***both yourself and your enemy***, you have a 100% chance of winning."

– Sun Tzu, 550-500 BC

Where to find the truth about …?

… “ourselves”	… “the enemy”
Holy Scripture	Holy Scripture
… God’s Word of Truth	… God’s Word of Truth

The Biblical Truth about "the Enemy"

Cynical use of CRT to obtain power = Satanic

Satan's goal: to usurp God's power

Satan's strategy:

Use lies to …

- ❑ Sow seeds of conflict ⟶ chaos.
- ❑ Incite rebellion against God's good order.
- ❑ Destroy trust (God-man / man-man).

The Biblical Truth about "the Self"

- Each person is a unity of Body / Mind / Spirit.
- ALL are created in God's Image.
- ALL are fallen and held captive to sin.
- Christ died and rose to redeem ALL.
- Forgiveness and freedom (from guilt) are available for ALL.

Loved, forgiven, and set free, we are empowered to love and forgive others.

The Theology of Christianity vs the Theology of Critical Race Theory

Biblical Truth

- We are created beings.
- As image-bearers, we have God-given worth / dignity.
- All have “agency” (free will); all have capability and culpability.

Critical Race Theory

- We are evolved – we are just another animal (materialism).
- Worth / Dignity is conferred or withheld by others.
- All are permanent victims / oppressors; no capability to change, only culpability.

Biblical Truth

- Sinful human nature keeps us from loving our neighbor as we ought. One effect is racism.
- All have sinned in every dimension of life.
- The body, mind, spirit are equally good and essential.

Critical Race Theory

- There is no “human nature”. “Whiteness” is responsible for our failure to love our neighbor.
- In matters of race, some have sinned while others are pure.
- The body is meaningless / bad: The Gnostic Heresy.

Biblical Truth

- In Christ, forgiveness is available to all.
- Forgiveness unifies us with God and with each other.
- Our ultimate home is in heaven with Christ; therefore, we are patient and accept suffering as meaningful.

Critical Race Theory

- Forgiveness is not a legitimate concept – cannot be asked for nor given.
- No unity is desired, nor is unity possible.
- There is no life beyond this one; therefore, all must be accomplished here and now.

Countering the CIW Complex

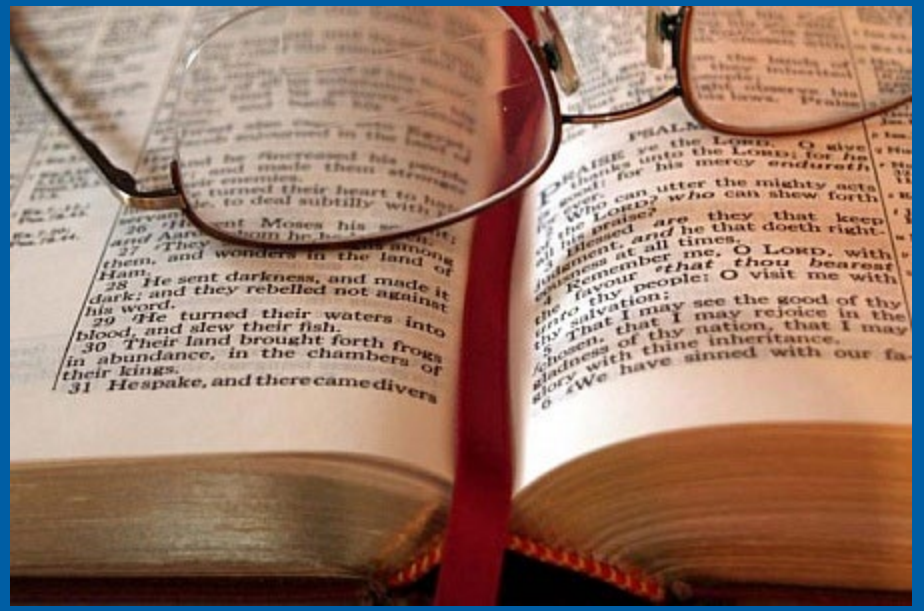
Internally

More specifically …

- Teach CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE clearly, with application to cultural circumstances. Celebrate the reality of God's created order – physical and social - casting a beautiful, unifying vision!
- Challenge EVOLUTION THEORY directly …
  - "Follow the science" … distinguish micro- from macro-evolution.
  - Allow nature its full witness to God's ordered world.
  - Do not separate creation from redemption.
  - Celebrate our uniqueness as individual creatures versus the dull stereotypes of Marxist collectivism.

- **Emphasize the PHYSICALITY and RATIONALITY of the faith.**
  - **Stress the importance and goodness of the physical world, especially our bodies (incarnation, physical death, physical resurrection and ascension).**
  - **Expose the toxicity of special / secret knowledge versus knowledge available to all rational persons.**
- **Emphasize the SACRAMENTS – physically and spiritually unifying … "Comm-union"; Anti-Gnostic; stress forgiveness.**

- **<u>Insist</u> on a deep grounding in THE WORD:**
  - **Put a renewed stress on catechesis in general and Lutheran schools in particular.**
  - **Encourage a renewed appreciation for adult Bible/Topical Studies.**



Countering the CIW Complex
Externally

- Speak lovingly yet plainly about moral matters.
- Develop a more mature understanding of the Two Kingdoms Doctrine … it's more than "Separation of Church and State"!
  - Guiding Church and State into a right relationship
  - Guiding individual Christians in choosing the right course of action, i.e. Law / Coercion versus Forgiveness / Sacrifice

- ❑ Promote civic involvement / Social interaction.
- ❑ Be prepared to minister to Gnostic-confused minds – challenge “born in the wrong body”.
- ❑ Celebrate the reality and complementarity of male and female.
- ❑ Learn to recognize the “code” language of CRT.
- ❑ Promote parental empowerment / school choice.
- ❑ Be engaged politically – it is OUR BAPTISMAL CALLING!

The Church and Racial Injustice

Is the Church disinterested or in collusion?

Not likely.

The Church sees the existence of the same problem (partiality / injustice) but understands it as stemming from a different cause and requiring a different solution …

- **The cause:** Sinful human nature
- **The solution:** Divine redemption / forgiveness

"The church is realistic about the nature of the fallen world. Though opposed to racism and ethnocentrism, we must think carefully before we conclude that we live in a "systematically unjust society". It could be. But it also could be that we are experiencing the normal effects of the sinful human condition."

- Owen Strachan

"Christianity and Wokeness"

In Conclusion:

Against the "tide of social chaos" … there's hope!

The Tonlé Sap has one utterly unique feature:
It flows in an unnatural direction …

FOR A SEASON!

In Our Current Cultural “Season”,

the tidal waters of conflict and chaos appear to carry us unstoppably in unnatural directions, BUT …

in Christ … and in due season … God’s good order will be restored!

Little children, you are from God
and have overcome them,
for he who is in you
is greater than he who is in the world.
1 John. 4:4

RESOURCES

- *"Christians in a Woke World", a Bible Study*
  – Rev. Paul Dare (available on Amazon)
- *"Fault Lines"*
  – Voddie Baucham, Jr.
- *"Gender Ideology: What Christians Need to Know"*
  – Sharon James
- *"Strange New World"*
  – Carl Trueman
- *"Christianity and Wokeness"*
  – Owen Strachan

Public Policy and the Church

Applying the Two Kingdoms to Our Chaotic Culture

Michigan District Pastoral Conference

May 2022

Rev. Fredric Hinz
LCMS Public Policy Advocate
Minnesota Districts
fred.hinz@mnsdistrict.org

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
and
Public Policy

Historically, the LCMS has ...

- **strongly encouraged individual members to exercise their citizenship**
- **but has avoided institutional involvement in "matters of public policy".**

"LCMS Public Policy Advocate"
= an oxymoron ??

The Two Kingdoms Doctrine
(TKD)

Lays the foundation:

- **for the proper relationship of Church and State**
- **for individual Christians to know when to actively resist coercive actions of the State vs. "patient endurance"**

What is the TKD?

A set of Biblical teachings which collectively affirm that …

- **God created the universe and us.**
- **God continues to rule (is King) over us.**
- **God uses two agents to do so:**

  - **Earthly Authorities / Governments (to maintain public order)**
  - **Spiritual Authorities / The Church (to maintain private/spiritual order)**

God's use of earthly authorities:

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." *(vv 1-2)* *Romans 13:1-7*

God's use of the Church:

"[Jesus] breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'" ***John 20:22-23***

But which rules where?

While the *Two Kingdoms* are clearly divided,

***we* are not!**

We live in <u>both</u> Kingdoms and are subject to <u>both</u>.

THE RESULT? … TENSION!

"And He said to them, 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.'"

Matthew 22:21

This is a *"manageable tension"* because both kingdoms are <u>good and God-pleasing</u>

SO LONG AS …

- **Each respects the other.**
- **Each stays within its proper boundaries.**
- **Each remembers it is accountable to God.**

How has the TKD “played out”?

Historically … pretty well:

- *“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights …”*
- *“In God We Trust”*
- *“One nation under God”*

Both Church and State subscribed to the TKD.

In recent years, however …

- ***"At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."***

  – *Justice Kennedy in Planned Parenthood versus Casey, 1992*

… in effect, the State has crafted its own religion.

What does this mean?

Even though historically:

The Church has been very hesitant *as an institution* to actively engage in political life.

Now:

It recognizes that there are *selected times* and *selected topics* in civic and political life which require the church to speak!

When must the Church speak?

WHEN …

- **there is clear infringement of Church or State on the “turf” of the other;**
- **there is a clear, unambiguous Word of Scripture to follow;**
- **it is required to defend the Gospel and our right to proclaim it publicly.**

To whom do we direct our speech?

To our members

To our elected leaders

To our society in general

What are these “selected areas” to which the Church speaks?

I. Life Issues

II. Marriage, Family, and Sexuality Issues

III. Religious Liberty Issues

IV. Parental Choice in Education

I. The Life Issues
We speak as witnesses
to the Sanctity of Human Life

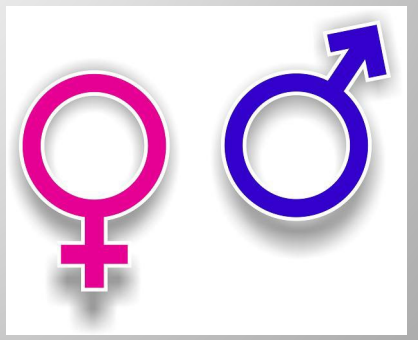
Abortion

Physician-prescribed suicide/euthanasia

II. Marriage, Family, Sexuality

We speak as witnesses to the design God has incorporated into His creation

- **Marriage: definition, support**
- **Reproductive issues (technologies, commercial surrogacy, etc.)**
- **Transgender issues**



III. Religious Liberty

We speak as witnesses to the free will God has given all people.

- **The free will to follow our conscience** Medical / Professional conscience rights, Artistic discretion
- **The free will to live out our faith** (Freedom of Religion vs Freedom of Worship)
- **The freedom to speak in the public square** (COVID lockdown restrictions, social media content management, Cancel Culture, outright censorship)

IV. Parental Choice in Education

We speak to preserve this particular form of Religious Liberty

- **Empowering parents** to freely choose either a secular or religiously informed education for their children
- **Removing the current bias** of the State against a religious view of the world
- **Giving parents access** to their share of State-collected dollars. (All contribute; all should have equal access.)

“Shekels Without Shackles”

New models
which simultaneously
<u>remove State bias</u>
<u>without inviting State intrusion</u>

- **State tax credits directly to parents**
- **State tax credits to donors who contribute to Scholarship-Granting Organizations (SGOs)**
- **Education Savings Accounts (ESAs): funding students, not institutions; parents are the purchasers of educational services**
- **Key: Dollars NEVER flow directly from the State to religious schools!!**

The Basics of ESAs

- ESAs signal all in society that parents are the primary authority in the lives of their children.
- ESAs establish clear lines of accountability.
- ESAs are a unifying force in a fractured society.
  - 75% agree: “Parents should be in charge of decisions regarding their children’s education.”

    includes: 86% (R); 65% (D); 74% (I)
  - 77% agree: Support ESAs

    includes: 75% (D); 85% (Hispanic); 84% (Black)
- ESAs incentivize good stewardship: unspent K-12 dollars accumulate year-to-year, available for post-secondary education

What has this meant in Minnesota?

Two districts working as one.

Minnesota South

MN SOUTH

Minnesota North

New Emphasis on timely communication!

- Director of Communication
- Public Policy Newsletter
- Public Policy Advisory Committee
- District Convention Resolutions

1) Encouraging Pastors
2) Parental Choice
3) Religious Freedom

Forming Coalitions with Like-Minded Groups

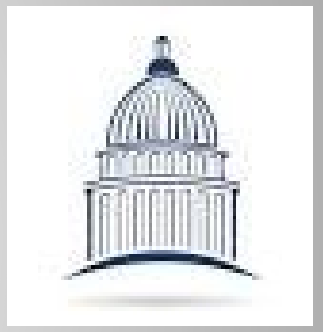
- **LPN**: **Lutheran Policy Network**
  (all confessional Lutheran church bodies in MN)
- **OAK**: **Opportunity for All Kids**
  (parental choice in education advocacy)
- **Sanctity of Life Working Group** to defund and investigate Planned Parenthood
- **Minnesotans Opposed for Ethical Healthcare** Coalition- pro-palliative care; anti doctor assisted suicide

Establishing working relationships with:

- MCCL: MN Citizens Concerned for Life
- ADF: Alliance Defending Freedom
- MFC: Minnesota Family Council
- LFL: Lutherans for Life
- OAK: Opportunity for All Kids
- MCC: Minnesota Catholic Conference
- And others

Working with the LCMS

- **LCRL: Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty, LCMS office in Washington, D.C.**



- **Synod Life & Health Ministries**

1) to develop anti-PAS strategies

2) to develop model coalitions for use in other Districts (OAK)

Why do we do all this?

“‘Which is the greatest commandment?’ Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart … soul … and mind … and your neighbor as yourself.’”

We engage in Public Policy in response to Jesus’ command <u>to show love for our neighbor</u> and to give <u>the Gospel “free course”!</u> S.D.G.