

## ***I. Where Are We?***

### **A. Babylon, not Jerusalem** (neither the Old nor the New)

USA Today's headline in response (8/30/17) to The Nashville Statement: "Religious Groups Sign Anti-Gay Sexuality Manifesto" <https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement/>

Democratic National Committee Platform: "we support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate."

"Chairman Martin R. Castro Statement," in *Peaceful Coexistence: Reconciling Nondiscrimination Principles with Civil Liberties* (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; September, 2016), 29:

The phrases "religious liberty" and "religious freedom" will stand for nothing except hypocrisy so long as they remain code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, Christian supremacy or any form of intolerance. Religious liberty was never intended to give one religion dominion over other religions, or a veto power over the civil rights and civil liberties of others. However, today, as in the past, religion is being used as both a weapon and a shield by those seeking to deny others equality. In our nation's past religion has been used to justify slavery and later, Jim Crow laws.

David Gushee, <http://religionnews.com/2016/08/22/on-lgbt-equality-middle-ground-is-disappearing/>

It turns out that you are either for full and unequivocal social and legal equality for LGBT people, or you are against it, and your answer will at some point be revealed. This is true both for individuals and for institutions. Neutrality is not an option. Neither is polite half-acceptance. Nor is avoiding the subject. Hide as you might, the issue will come and find you. Openly discriminatory religious schools and parachurch organizations will feel the pinch first. Any entity that requires government accreditation or touches government dollars will be in the immediate line of fire. Some organizations will face the choice either to abandon discriminatory policies or risk potential closure. Others will simply face increasing social marginalization.

Campus Pride published its Shame List of 100 evangelical colleges that are not LGBTQ friendly. <https://www.campuspride.org/ShameList/>

Shane Windmeyer, <http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/opinion-business-case-equality-extends-anti-lgbtq-colleges-n640146>

So the question must be asked: What relationships do corporations want to have with a college that has applied or received a legal exemption so they can deny access to a LGBTQ young person? Do corporations want to donate to colleges that openly discriminate? Do these businesses want to hire and recruit students from a campus that has a policy restricting LGBTQ students on campus?

Corporations also have a choice to exercise their values. Don't donate to these campuses. Don't recruit or hire at these colleges. Simply choose not to do business with those who choose discrimination over inclusion and diversity.

American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014), C5: "Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law."

## B. Exciting Opportunity

1. We have always been in exile.
2. Normal is enough.
3. Hope from Revelation
  - a. Jesus reigns (1:5)
  - b. Church is headquarters of his kingdom (2-3)
  - c. We win (1:7; 6:15-17)

## II. How Did We Get Here?

<b>A. Peak Modernity</b>	+	<b>Postmodernity</b>	+	<b>Gnosticism</b>
Autonomy (whatever I want is right)	+	Inclusivism (you do you)	+	Body doesn't matter

B. Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992): Justice Kennedy wrote, "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."

C. Cf. Kennedy's majority opinion in Obergefell v. Hodges (2015), which grounded gay marriage on the desires and human dignity of the adults who wanted to marry.

D. Slippery Slope of Sexual Autonomy: promiscuity → no fault divorce → gay marriage → polygamy → anything goes? (**marriage**: self, robots, computers; **gender**: sports, bathrooms)

### III. What Is Coming?

- A. Tribalism: Racial, socio-economic, political, and religious divides
- B. Individualism: Loneliness; lack of community, allegiance to common values
- C. Secularism/Pluralism: no God so any god will do. Rise of the “Nones.”

#### **Moralistic Therapeutic Deism**

Christian Smith with Melinda Ludquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford University Press, 2005). The authors interviewed approximately 3,000 American teenagers and found that most held to the following tenets. These teens are now in their twenties (millennials).

1. A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

D. Relativism: normalizing homosexual practice among Christians.

E. Judgmentalism: the religion of unfettered freedom conducts its Inquisition. Moral anxiety fuels moral absolutism. The intolerance of tolerance. The West has become a culture of shame.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/15/opinion/the-shame-culture.html>;

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2015/march/andy-crouch-gospel-in-age-of-public-shame.html>

1. Guilt Culture: internal conscience judges whether we are good or bad.
2. Shame Culture: external community judges whether we are good or bad.

#### Traditional Shame (East)

Honor/Shame

Judged by character

From people you mostly know

#### Postmodern Shame (West)

Fame/Shame

Judged by celebrity

From everyone, mostly strangers

**Shifting morality of mob, evil is exclusion**

#### ***IV. What Should We Do?***

##### **A. Postures vs. Gestures**

##### **B. Our **Posture**: We are **for** the world.**

1. Jeremiah 29:4-7; Daniel loved his kings, and they loved him (4:19, 27; 6:14-28)
2. Abraham Kuyper: **Common Grace**. We're all in this together.
3. Tertullian, *The Apology* (written in AD 197)

Chapter 42: "So we sojourn with you in the world, abjuring neither forum, nor shambles, nor bath, nor booth, nor workshop, nor inn, nor weekly market, nor any other places of commerce. We sail with you, and fight with you, and till the ground with you; and in like manner we unite with you in your traffickings—even in the various arts we make public property of our works for your benefit."

Chapter 30: "Without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest, whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish. These things I cannot ask from any but the God from whom I know I shall obtain them.... With our hands thus stretched out and up to God, rend us with your iron claws, hang us up on crosses, wrap us in flames, take our heads from us with the sword, let loose the wild beasts on us.... Let this, good rulers, be your work: wring from us the soul, beseeching God on the emperor's behalf."

##### **C. Our frequent **gesture**: We are **against** the world, **for the sake** of the world.**

1. "Come out from them and be separate" (2 Cor. 6:14-17; Isa. 52:11; Rev. 18:5). Cf. Rom. 1:32.
2. Tertullian, *The Prescription of Heretics*, chap. 7: "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What has the Academy to do with the Church? What have heretics to do with Christians?"
3. Abraham Kuyper: **Antithesis**. "Two kinds of men doing two kinds of science."

##### **D. Phases of Church Engagement (H. Richard Niebuhr)**

##### **E. Why did Daniel refuse "to defile himself with the royal food and wine"? (Dan. 1:8)**

1. Drew a line somewhere (public stand). *Where is your line?*
2. Remembered the source of his power (private reminder). *Who or what is your hope?*