

Christ Controls History: Application: Client Nation in Crisis & Discord at GDC: Unchecked Result Is Illustrated by the Ruins of the Temple of Artemis

IX. Application.

The United States is presently a house divided and is primed to become Balkanized. The major division is between Traditionalists and Progressives. By dominating the academy and media for half a century, the Progressives have educated and propagandized over half the voting population of this country into believing or accepting as normal their collectivist worldview.

Within a month these two constituencies will have made a decision by popular vote as to which course this nation will follow for the remainder of this century. In all probability it will take a hard swing toward Progressivism which is a pseudonym for socialism.

The totalitarian tactics that will be incorporated into law will suppress the Traditionalist worldview and appeals to the Bill of Rights will be dismissed as the outmoded arguments of radicals.

Our nation is already involved in a financial crisis and it is on the verge of a political crisis. Our freedoms hang in the balance and the future of the client nation is in peril. Why is this? Hosea casts the clear light of divine wisdom on the answer in **Hosea 4:6**, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of God, I also will forget your descendants.”

The reason that our country has entered into the cycles of discipline is because those who have the knowledge have rejected it. There are churches all across this land that not only do not teach the Word but the theology to which they subscribe is heretical. Yet this is to be expected given the latitude of the free exercise clause.

The real issue in a client nation is whether those who are saved by grace will use their volition to not only grow in grace through Bible study but also apply its principles, mandates, and doctrines to their daily lives.

This is where Grace Doctrine Church finds herself guilty of contributing to the downtrends of our nation. All Grace Doctrine is not Grace Doctrine. There are divisions – metaphorical cracks in her bedrock foundation that are becoming fissures – gaping wounds seeping noxious toxins that spread the bitter disease of discord.

We are collectively on the brink of national upheaval and what do we find happening in Grace Doctrine Church? Discord! There are many of you who are contributing to the present crises we face: nationally, by failure to advance in your spiritual growth in support of the Lord’s daily inventory, and locally by sowing discord in this congregation.

We have a brand-new church. We have dedicated it to the Lord for the purpose of teaching His Word, not only to this generation but also the next, yet discord hangs over it like a dense fog from the auditorium to the rooms of Prep School.

This plague emerges from a number of gates in the cosmic system that makes some of you “enemies of the cross of Christ.” No one involved in discord is innocent. When a person functions in the arrogance complex he or she is self-centered, arrogant, and irrational and as a result cannot evaluate circumstances objectively.

There are two general ways that discord can emerge in a local church: (1) personal problems that spill over into the affairs of the church or (2) authority arrogance that bucks church policies.

Specific areas that feed discord are sins of the tongue: gossip, maligning, judging, criticizing, and fault finding.

There are cosmic motivations that emerge such as anger, implacability, hatred, malice, revenge, vindictiveness, vituperation, and vilification. These are not the virtues of believers who claim they are advancing. They are the signs of reversionism.

Problems like these need to be corrected from the pulpit through the teaching of the pertinent doctrines. But these kinds of issues have been addressed numerous times and you are fully apprised of the problem-solving devices. So ask yourselves: Why am I being dressed down like this? Answer: Because you are living a lie!

As you sit—stunned—you are wondering who I am talking about. Let me be clear about this: I am talking about you! All of us are capable, some have indulged and others are presently indulging. I don’t know who nor do I know the facts. But one would have to be a fool and a dimwit not to discern the presence of division.

Here is why I am on this diatribe: It is incongruous for us to consider ourselves as the invisible impact that holds this client nation together while being at war with each other. What sense does this make? None! What fellowship has light with darkness? None!

Those who worshipped at the temple of Artemis did so in darkness but some were won by Paul’s teachings of the gospel and doctrine. This church is no better or worse than the temple of Artemis if those who assemble here do it in darkness.

It is time to grow up. It is time to focus on Christ, not self. You have studied the problem-solving devices, so use them. If someone has allegedly wronged you, then forgive them. If you have wronged someone then confess it.

If there is a Mexican standoff about who is right and who is wrong then apply Ephesians 4:32: “Become kind, performing gracious acts toward each other, and compassionate, and keep forgiving each other just as God also by means of Christ has forgiven you.”

When it comes to the policies of this church be aware there are certain deacons who have been assigned responsibilities in certain areas. It might be helpful for you to know who is responsible for what so you can be helpful to them in the execution of their duties:

Benevolence: Casey Hunt
Finance Committee: Dan Hunt
Prep School: Weldon Schott
Properties: Lou Basso
Membership: Casey Hunt
Missionaries: Gary Watson
Nursery: Paul Davey
Ushers: Mark Vesser
Music: Mark Vesser

In Prep School:

Senior Prep School Curriculum: Gary Watson
Nursery and Junior Prep School Curricula and Training Aids:
Danna Schott. This includes music.

In the Latte Lounge: Harry Tague

I understand that we are not all going to be fast friends, this is not my point or my desire. What I do want is the absence of discord. If there are intractable issues between you and someone else then separate from them. But do not let your disagreements affect the disposition of others in this church. To discuss a conflict you have with another person causes those to whom you relate it to assume they have all the facts.

Talk to the alleged antagonist and you receive their view of the issue. Once done you have no authority to resolve the dispute but you do have the tendency to take sides with one or the other. To do so means you discuss the affair with others telling your side and this is how cliques are formed. This sows discord.

My business in this matter is not primarily the fact that you are involved in sinning. This is to be expected. My business is, first, to put the quietus on gossip, judging, and tale-telling that creates discord, and secondly, to emphasize the importance of order: submission to those in positions of duly appointed authority.

We can do better. We can do a lot better. Now is the time to start. If we do not, the wrath of men will praise God and the bedrock foundation of this church will be as exposed to the burning rays of a glaring sun as that of the temple of Artemis is today.

I challenge you today: Become a true patriot and a good soldier for Christ. Get out of the metaphorical temple of Artemis and get into the church of the living God.

In conclusion, I again quote Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer from his *Systematic Theology*:

The New Testament exhorts to unity, to unbroken fellowship, and to brotherly love; but these have been neglected and rejected. The obligation to remain in fellowship, even when controversy arises, has been forsaken and often over exceedingly small issues.¹

“Exceedingly small issues” present a danger to this congregation, one illustrated by the fall of the temple of Artemis.

In the passage of Acts 19:23-41 there is a confrontation between the reality of Christ and the fantasy of Artemis.

Paul’s two-year, three-month mission to Ephesus laid the groundwork for the ultimate demise of the Artemis cult and the rise of Christianity throughout Asia Minor. The following excerpt sums up Paul’s historical impact that reverberated out from Ephesus throughout the Roman Empire:

Though Paul was probably not the first to bring Christianity to Ephesus, for Jews had long lived there, he was the first to make progress against the worship of Diana [Artemis]. As the frame of his teachings was carried by the pilgrims to their distant homes, his influence extended to every part of Asia Minor. In time, the pilgrims, with decreasing faith in (Artemis), came in fewer numbers; the sales of the shrines of the goddess fell off; (Artemis) of the Ephesians was no longer great; a Christian church was founded there and flourished and one of the first leaders was the apostle John. Finally in 262 AD, when the temple of (Artemis) was again burned [by invading Goths], its influence had so far departed that it was never again rebuilt. (Artemis) was dead. Ephesus became a Christian city, and in 341 AD a council of the Christian church was held there.² The city itself soon lost its importance and decreased in population. The sculptured stones of its great buildings, which were no longer in use and were falling to ruins, were carried away to Italy, and especially to Constantinople for the great church of Saint Sophia. In 1308 the Turks took possession of the little that remained of the city, and deported or murdered its inhabitants. The Cayster \kā-is'-ter\ river, overflowing its banks, gradually covered with its muddy deposit the spot where the temple of (Artemis) had once stood, and at last its very site was forgotten.³

1. Thus the old city of Ephesus and all its glorious examples of classical architecture returned to the dust from which it came.
2. The resultant fall of the cult of Artemis is beautifully depicted by the deterioration of her famous temple as seen in this video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85tDhKPYicI>
3. One lone column is left, the rest scattered and strewn about the landscape as a testimony to the principle that Jesus Christ controls history.

¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), 4:147.

² This council condemned Nestorius and justified the cult of the Virgin as Theotokos, “mother of God.” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia* [Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979], 6:905.)

³ E. J. Banks, “Ephesus,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, James Orr, gen. ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 2:961-62.