**Ekklesia: A People Called Out**

*Session Two: The American Story vs. The Biblical Story*

1. **Church and Society**
2. As long as it has been church *in* a secular society the church has most of the time been persecuted.
3. When the church has *ruled* a secular society, in some lose form  of theocratic rule, the gospel and the world needing to here it has suffered.
4. Christians believe Jesus is Lord, therefore, they do not have to be in control.
5. It is the task of the church in whatever society she finds herself in to seek the flourishing of that society, while putting language on the distinctions between that society and the kingdom of God. To constantly remind those in power that God is determining history and not them.
6. **Liberalism**

Defined: 1. the quality or state of being liberal, as in behavior or attitude. 2. a political and social philosophy advocating individual freedom, representational forms of government, progress and reform, and protection of civil liberties.

1. The genius of Liberalism was it offered a solution to the philosophical question: How do you govern a diverse group of people who do not share the same history, tradition, and narrative.
2. How do you prevent tyranny, on one hand and a totalitarian majority on the other.
3. Liberalism is built on the institutionalization of self-interest.
4. “Rights” of the individual is the insurance of liberty to the degree a society acknowledges them.
5. We lend some of the these rights to a representative form of government for the protection and promotion of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.
6. The privatization of all other major ethical and moral issues.
7. A person is free to live faithful to their history, tradition, and narrative as long as they do not unjustly limit the freedom of others to do the same.
8. **Social Ethics**
9. The highest shared ethic in America is “the right to pursue self-interest.”
10. Regardless of a persons history, narrative, and tradition the ethic that transcends individual or sub-cultural ethics is the right to self interest.
11. A societies shared ethic is central to the development of self respect.
12. Vietnam, Civil rights, market
13. Shared ethics effect our personal ethics more than we have realized.
14. **The American Story**
15. Celebration of the individual
16. A negative view of history and traditions.
17. That morality should be derived from rationalism and not tradition or narrative.
18. Made an anomaly of the family.
19. Self interest has become the pursuit of self-fulfillment
20. No story except the story you choose.
21. freedom to choose one’s work, spouse, where to live, has turned into choosing one’s belief, sexuality, gender, race, class, even obligations.
22. The story goes each person has the liberty to determine their destiny, as long as, they do not unfairly limit someone else’s freedom.
23. What you do is answered by who you think you are to be.  Who are we to be in America? Free.  What then are we to do? Whatever will make us happy.
24. How do you know what will be fulfilling?  Why is it relationships you did not choose have a stronger obligation than the ones you do choose?
25. What does the “Creator” who gave us each “rights” desire from us? Do your rights work against the “Creator” who gave them to us?
26. **The Effect**
27. Man is placed at the center and is thought of as self determining.
28. the basis to the moral reasoning of liberalism started with “rights from the Creator” and has devolved into the “freedom of man.”
29. we must constantly sooth our conscious with the lie that we are more in control of our lives than we think we are.
30. Domestication of religious beliefs.
31. Beliefs are restricted as personal and not public.
32. One can have their religious beliefs, as long as, they stay personal and are submitted to the larger social order.
33. This is falsely mistaken as ‘peace’
34. For liberalism to survive it has had to create a people who think there is nothing worth dying for, except, of course, for freedom.
35. Can turn faith into sentiment
36. What is worth dying for?
37. Martyrdom is what the state fears the most.
38. God” and “religion” are options for personal emotional enrichment on the road to self-fulfillment.
39. Moral Therapeutic Deism: God is nice, wants people to be happy and good.
40. Individualization of church participation
41. Success and Mission of the church is measured in individualistic terms.
42. **The Response of the Church**
43. A Prophetic People
44. People from the ‘age-to-come’ living in the present, bearing witness to the new creation that has begun in Jesus Christ.
45. Our shared history, tradition, and narrative gives us a strong, clear, prophetic understanding of the culmination of human history.  Thus our narrative concerns all people.

1. A Distinct people
2. Our duty/obligation as Christ followers is to live faithfully to our shared history, tradition, an narrative in a way that distinguishes us from the culture in which we find ourselves.
3. Not withdrawing from the world = condemning the world.  Not assimilating into the culture and thus abandoning the mission of God = condemning the world.
4. We serve the world on our own terms.
5. Approach public dialogue from our unique perspective.  May not change anyone’s mind, but the conversation will continue with the world knowing its the world and the church knowing its the church. First task of bearing witness.
6. We must *re-group* and *re-think* how we, the people of God, live together distinct from the world while lovingly serving the world becomes the fundamental question.
7. Must look back to history, traditions, and narrative to find the answers to questions that have been misinformed or misapplied.
8. Community practices
9. Need stronger community practices that help us to better understand why Christians have traditionally practiced the things they did.
10. Review the meaning of baptism, communion, binding and loosing. etc. Why?
11. Embrace Jesus’ way of life.  Focus on discipleship not principle.
12. Engage in New Testament practices of the church in which the church claims the individual and vice-versa.

 A. A Holy Nation

1. Israel and “Behold the Lamb”
2. It took a “nation” to bring Christ into the world in a way that was conceptually intelligible.
3. It still takes a “nation.” 1 Peter 2:4-12