

PASTORPEDIA™

Cutting Edge Conversations for Pastors and Church Leaders

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Cultural tensions within the church

Describe your church!

“It’s a beautiful red brick building that is at the corner of...”

“Our church is pretty much very conservative Republicans with red hats and ...”

“We like to argue about whether to wear masks to worship services or whether our governor can make us get vaccinated...”

“We understand love, and everyone knows that. We have care and identification with all people, and do not judge...”

“Well, our church is one that takes a stand and even marches for the ethical standards Jesus would agree with. People know where we stand for sure...”

How would you wish to describe or define your local body of Christ? May we try to bring up some prominent issues about what the church emphasizes?

Ready or not, here we go!
Knute, with Jeff and Jim

Worldview: How can we feature the gospel as our main treasure and the Scriptures as our main guidebook?

Jeff Bogue

- Teach on the gospel. Do a series on Jesus and the vision and the mission of the church.

Jim Brown

- Live the gospel out in your own life.
- Daily share the gospel with the lost world.
- In your preaching share how the gospel impacted the passage and the application to our own lives.
- Keep Jesus and His work central to everything in your ministries!
- Share how the gospel has changed your life.

Knute Larson

- Preach the gospel and expose the Bible. No amount of words saying Scripture is your guidebook will mean much if you do not teach straight from God's Word rather than from books by people. We must do more than salute God's truth as revealed. His view of the world He created is constantly clarified in the pages He inspired.
- Some of us think we should say the actual good news about the cross regularly rather than assume people really know what it means to live in combination with Christ, indwelt by His Spirit. That combination life has a lot to do with our worldview.
- We can explain events and practices of the people of both Testaments in the context of the prevalent worldview of their day, a clear contrast to the view and lifestyle that God was asking of them. We should not be surprised by the similarities to today.
- Is Scripture your main source book for sermons? It's a no if all we do is touch it and then bounce to a self-help talk or smile through some nice bromides. Most of us have in our doctrinal statement that we elevate the Bible as God's Word, so that would say how we should look at the world.

Religious nationalism: How do we make sure God's gospel is more important than our flag and all it symbolizes, or interests of our country?

Jeff Bogue

- We need to confront people with this false teaching and help them to grow in their understanding that they have a King, and He is very squarely on His throne. If we resent where we are, we miss the reasons why God has us there.

Jim Brown

- Preach about King Jesus and our citizenship in heaven.
- Help them see that the world is much bigger than the USA, and while it's great to be born here, there are other countries and people that Jesus died for!
- Give honor where honor is due but never about the honor we give our Lord.

Knute Larson

- This is a hard one for many. Even strong well-meaning followers of our Lord easily make a political party the standard of the church. To say the church deals with higher issues than political positions is indeed accurate, but people still need to know what they should think about abortion, crime, war, immigrants, and more.

Can we make room for variations in some areas at least? Can we trust people to embrace conclusions that vary somewhat from ours, in some cases?

- There have been skirmishes in some churches over whether to have the American flag and the Christian flag standing on the same platform. Staff and members can divide over whether or not to recognize armed forces people on July 4 or Memorial Day! Surely it is the call of pastors and other leaders to guide these decisions carefully and not allow the congregation to even make it a business item or focus. And surely the guests from other countries will see the gospel and connection with our Lord as the clear emphasis, way ahead of any other.

We do live with community and national connections and must recognize tragedies, deaths, swings in our country's morals, selfish practices of leaders who seem to disregard the Bible. We cannot be oblivious to certain events. Can we learn from the way the prophets and writers of both Testaments address cultural trends and national sins?

Moral idealism: In what sense should we all be committed to the morals of Jesus more than anything else? How do you define them?

Jeff Bogue

- We define them through Scripture. Moral idealism is based on the concept that I define what is moral and immoral and then determine if you are moral or immoral based on my definition.
- So we must root ourselves in the truths of Scripture and gently but unapologetically allow those to reign in our lives.

Jim Brown

- There are lots of voices screaming in our world vying for attention—keep God's Word as the standard for truth.

- Show how truth is not in the eye of the beholder but in the Word of God.

Knute Larson

- Surely we believe all should follow the teachings of Jesus. We want that and can pray that way. That would be best for all of us. But our theology from the Bible would say the highest goal is not first to get everyone to change his morals, but to come to the Savior for a changed heart of belief.

So, it would seem best not to spend our time and money trying to change the practices and morals of unsaved people, but to emphasize and witness to the need for the new birth.

- The followers or disciples of Jesus – picture the 12 for instance – included various classes or levels in society, political differences, and probably tastes in music! 😊

But our Lord’s emphasis on love and serving others and our need to take care of our own hearts with God’s grace should be our model. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God” is very explicit and can apply to our desire to change society rather than see individuals be brought to Christ.

- Some of us remember so clearly the Moral Majority emphasis on influencing the crowds to adopt a better lifestyle, a more biblical opinion of life and death, and purpose. But society is not born again, to use the term of Jesus; individuals are one at a time.

Pastorpedia is a resource provided to you by Momentum Ministry Partners. Please contact us at info@buildmomentum.org or 574.267.6622 if we may be of any help to you or your ministry!

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