

各位弟兄姐妹平安。

湖东教会家书一封，愿我们在神的话语中，确信祂的掌权，明确自身使命。

最近这几周我们所生活的国家和社区发生了很多事情。George Floyd 死于警察的暴力执法，使我们不禁怀疑执法的警察为何如此不尊重生命。原本最能体现民主自由的游行，也被一些人借机进行打砸抢。发生这一切的地方离我们咫尺之遥，西雅图市区和 Bellevue Square 都受到洗劫。我们不禁疑惑是什么让人此般失去道德底线？由于疫情，一些华人被视为病毒传播者而受到歧视，在街上被人吐吐沫，或袭击。甚至还发生湾区的一些华人家庭遭到抢劫。再加上中美关系不断恶化，这些事都在威胁着我们生活的基本安全，会让我们感到不安。我们会问今后世界还有太平吗？我们会问美国一个号称民主制度的国家为何变得如此混乱，给我们带来如此多的失望，不安，沮丧、困惑、急迫和焦虑。

于是我们就热切地希望通过投票、签字、活动、宣传等多样政治的方式来尽自己的一份力，调和这个社会。只是我们现在居住的这个国家的民主制度产生出来的多样法案是建立在“人”的道德标准，而非神的真理之上。人的标准是相对的，不稳定的，持续改变的，并且是不完善的。人们之所以不断地在不同的党派观念中徘徊，正是因为一直找不到绝对的正确、正义与真理。另外，也几乎没有人能否认，现代民主政治的游戏规则与利益之间的瓜葛。

曾经为尼克松总统拟定竞选策略，顺利将他送入白宫的幕僚寇尔森在“水门事件”以后成了基督徒。他写了几本很有影响的基督教著作。他写道“许多信徒以为我们只要多多选举信徒担任要职，便可迅速收回改革之效。表面上这个方法似乎是挽救道德狂澜的最佳捷径，但实则是过度简化的危险论调。这种企图以政治手段解决道德问题的作法显然对政治、对属灵之事都有误解，对人的能力寄以太大希望，对神之统管万有太过缺乏信心。”所以如果我们真的希望改变社会，相对于借用政

治，我们更是要顺服神的教导，履行我们福音的使命。因为只有神藉着祂的真理，真正的从根本上改变人的心，才有稳固的道德标准，才能有公义的社会法案。

实际上，遇到今天这样的局面的我们无需惊讶，因为主耶稣早已告诉我们：“民要攻打民，国要攻打国。那时，必有许多人跌倒，也要彼此陷害、彼此恨恶。只因不法的事增多，许多人的爱心才渐渐冷淡了。”（太 24：7-12）主耶稣告诉我们在这种时候，唯有忍耐到底的，必然得救。这天国的福音要传遍天下，对万民作见证（太 24：13-14）。主给我们的教导很清楚是要我们竭力的传福音，作见证。并且，当我们遵行时，定会遭到迫害（太 24：9），所以我们要忍耐这些逼迫，坚定我们的信仰，直到基督再来的日子。

可能有弟兄姐妹会问光传福音有用吗？保罗在他的信中劝勉我们，罗 1：16 “我不以福音为耻，这福音本是神的大能，要救一切相信的”。我们相信福音这样的能力吗？我们会觉得一些人组织的运动会比福音的能力更大吗？当我们信靠一些人组织的活动而不积极传福音的时候，我们是以福音为耻吗？

美国的历史已经向我们展现了上帝福音的力量。美国历史上有几次信仰大觉醒运动。第一次是在 1730-1740 年代。后来推动了美国独立和立宪。后来一次是在 1850-1900 年代。推动了美国解放黑奴运动和内战。这是福音改变社会的能力。

有些弟兄姐妹会问，神让我们做光做盐，我们不出声，怎么能做光做盐？我们要出声，我们出声的内容与其是评论某些事情的对与错，更要着重在神大能的福音。而且我们要通过我们的好行为见证基督，让我们出声的时候有效果。彼前 3：13 “你们若是热心行善，有谁害你们呢？ 14 你们就是为义受苦，也是有福的。不要怕人的威吓，也不要惊慌， 15 只要心里尊主基督为圣。有人问你们心中盼望的缘由，就要常做准备，以温柔、敬畏的心回答各人， 16 存着无亏的良心，叫你们在何事上被毁谤，就在何事上可以叫那诬赖你们在基督里有好品行的人自觉羞愧”。有一位基督徒在一个医院里做清洁工。工资最低。其他人欺负他，让他干两三个人的活。但他一句话也不说。干不完就不下班，也不要加班工资。结果叫科长发

现了，就找他谈话，说：“我看你里面有真东西，你的活这么重、这么苦，也不要求给你加工资，如果你里面没有真东西的话，能到这个地步吗？不可能的，就是我也办不到。”于是他就将他的信仰分享给科长。后来科长信了主，到处为主传道作见证。

或有弟兄姐妹可能会觉得传福音的速度太慢，影响力太低。好像是远水解不了近渴。其实如果我们每年能带领一位朋友信主，让主的话语得着他，让他也同样可以带领其他人信主。这样一年后变两个，两年后变四个。20年后就是一百万人。耶稣升天的时候当时门徒只有 120 人。后来福音传到各地，现在有 20 亿基督徒。我们教会现在差不多有 120 人。我们若在主里有心志把福音传开，几年后我们的社区会是一幅怎样的景象？

在家书的最后，邀请大家一个挑战，我们每次给朋友转发一个社会政治评论帖子的时候，也请同时发一个福音的帖子。让我们的朋友们认识到只有耶稣基督的福音可以改变人心，只有福音可以救我们，救这个世界。愿主耶稣基督的恩惠常与弟兄姐妹们同在。

06/25/2020

湖东教会执会

Peace brothers and sisters,

This is a letter to our LECC family. May we have faith that God is in control and we can understand our mission through God's Words.

A lot has happened in the country and community we live in over the last few weeks. George Floyd died of police brutality. It made us think why a police officer who is supposed to carry out justice would not respect a person's life. The protests which is supposed to be a peaceful democratic process in a free country were hijacked by some people to loot shopping malls. And this happened in our community in both downtown Seattle and Bellevue. We wonder how these people would do this with a clear conscience. Due to COVID-19, some Chinese were regarded as virus carriers. They were spat at on the street. Some Chinese families were robbed in the Bay area. America and China's relationship is getting worse. These things are impacting our feel of personal security and made us nervous. We ask where the peace in this world is. How a democratic country like America became so unstable? We are disappointed, anxious, sad, and confused.

Some of us tried to make some impact through voting, collecting signatures, and other political activities. We need to remember the laws in this country are based on the society's moral standard, not the standard from God. Man's standard is relative, ever changing, and imperfect. Many people struggled to pick a party to support because they could not find the absolute truth and justice. And no one denies that the modern-day politics is heavily influenced by interest groups.

Chuck Colson was a special counsel for President Nixon. He became a Christian after the Watergate scandal. He wrote several impactful Christian books. He wrote "Many Christians thought that if we could vote more believers into important government positions, then we could quickly transform the society. This seemed to be a shortcut to solve many issues, but it is an oversimplified and dangerous strategy. This approach to solve the society's moral issue with political process demonstrated that we neither really understand politics nor spiritual matters. We put too much hope into people's ability and are lack of faith for God's control." If we want to profoundly change the society, instead of spending most of the time on political activities, we need to focus on obeying God's teaching and carrying out our mission. Only God can change people's heart through His Words. Only with changing hearts, the society can have a stable moral standard, and righteous laws.

In fact, we do not need to be surprised by today's situation because Jesus told us already that "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold." (Matt 24:7-12) Jesus also said during such moment "the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations." (Matt 24:13-14) Our Lord clearly asked us to preach the gospel and be a testimony. We were also told that when we do this, we will be persecuted (Matt 24:9). That is why we need to stand firm to the end until Jesus comes again.

Some brothers and sisters might ask whether it is going to have enough impact by just preaching the gospel. Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the

power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.” Do we genuinely believe such power of gospel? Do we feel the political activities could be more powerful than gospel? Are we ashamed of the gospel when we rely on political activities instead of gospel?

American history already showed us the power of gospel. There were several Great Awakening periods. The first one was from 1730-1740 which preceded American independence and the creation of American Constitution. Another one happened during 1850-1900. This helped to abolish slavery. This is the power of the gospel.

Some brothers and sisters might ask God wanted us to be light and salt. If we do not speak up, how can we be light and salt? We do need to speak up. The content of our voice should focus on gospel instead of judging what is right or wrong. We also need to a testimony through our behavior so that we could generate impact when we speak. 1 Peter 3:13-16 “Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ...But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” There was a Christian who was a janitor in a hospital. He only made the minimum wage. Other people bullied him and gave him the workload of 2-3 people. He did not complain, worked hard to finish all assignments, and did not ask for extra pay. His manager noticed him and said to him “You must have something in you. Your work is hard and heavy. You did not ask for extra pay. If you do not have something in you, you will not be able to do this. I cannot do this.” He took the opportunity and shared his faith with his manager. His manager later believed in Jesus and shared gospel with many others.

Some brothers and sisters might feel sharing gospel is too slow and the impact is too small. It cannot solve the urgent need we have. If we can bring one friend to Jesus each year and make sure he can share gospel to others, we will grow to 2 people in a year, 4 in two years, and 1000000 in 20 years. When Jesus ascended to heaven, he only had 120 disciples. Today there are 2 billion Christians. Our church has about 120 people today. If we have the same drive to share the gospel, what our community would look like in a few years?

Before we end, we have a challenge to everyone: when we share an article about a social political event, we will share a gospel article so that our friends can learn only Jesus Christ can transform people’s hearts. Only gospel can save us and save this world. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

LECC Elder Deacon Board

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