

## **Crisis in the Anglican Communion: on the election of Gene Robinson**

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Much of the organized church, as hierarchical structure, has long been hijacked by the secular forces of godlessness. The same deconstructionism that reigns (especially) in the great universities of today has done its work in the denominational churches as well. This work of disintegration has long since brought us to the place where we've seen the crumbling of the major old-line churches and, in general, of denominationalism altogether. Multitudes of the faithful find themselves displaced and are searching for true churches, while other smaller groups are gathering and worshipping in whatever facility they can find. The paganization, not of the true church (the fellowship of the Holy Spirit) but of the hijacked structures that pose and speak through the media as the church, now widens and deepens by the day; those who give it voice are increasingly aggressive, brazen, and vociferous.

In the early 1970s I attended for the first and last time an Episcopal church conference such as the one conducted in Minneapolis that concluded with the election of an openly gay bishop, a priest who left a wife and children to live with a homosexual lover. Insanely enough, the conference that I attended 30 years ago was wholly taken up with this same push toward acceptance of homosexual behavior and the same endless dialogue. Ever since then, the news headlines from these conferences have been about little else. The remarkable thing about all this is that the bishops and other leaders of the Episcopal church, supposedly rational human beings, have returned time after time to enter this dark dialogue and always only to further the cause of darkness. Understanding the "method in their madness" and where it would lead, I did not return even when invited (as the author of *The Broken Image* and *Crisis in Masculinity*) to come and speak to the conference. I knew that the strong prophetic voice needed to confront and confound the deconstructionism inherent in the ongoing dialogue would not be supported even by those who would "vote right." They were too swayed by the atmosphere of compromise and the inability to recognize and confront the ersatz sociology and psychology as well as the rank sentimentality and political correctness. There is no better (or profounder) manual on what this confrontation entails, or how it is to be or *not* to be done, than J. Budziszewski's latest book *What We Can't Not Know*. (More under **Recommended Books**)

In the following excerpts taken from *Restoring the Christian Soul* and *The Healing Presence*, I write of the reasons why we do not dialogue with darkness; we do not give it a stage and a method. Instead, in the power of God and in the knowledge of His holy Word and will, we both judge and reprove it.

**Don't Allow Satan to Choose the Battleground** [From *Restoring the Christian Soul*, chapter 14, Baker Book House, 1995]

One of the strong temptations we must eschew is the enemy's attempt to get us to leave the positive work of the Kingdom. He works toward luring Christians from their creative, proper, and redemptive work, and down into battle on his own turf, one charged with his negatives: his accusations, rationale, deceptions, and lies. Nehemiah is a great role model for us here, and his story of intense spiritual warfare is one we should probably reread at times when we find our work withstood by our enemies (Nehemiah, chapters 1-6). Nehemiah's enemies were tireless in their efforts to stop the work God had entrusted to him--that of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. But Nehemiah simply refused to climb down from atop the walls where he was busy rebuilding and go down to fight with them. His enemies sent this message:

"Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono." But they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?" Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer. (Nehemiah 6:2b-4)

Note that Nehemiah repeats the same answer over and over again through his messengers. This is an important principle in communicating with persons who are determined to destroy us or the work. We let God give us the one word, that one objective word that is difficult for even an enemy to twist or misquote, and then we simply *keep on saying it*.

After that, Nehemiah's enemies began to slander him with all manner of malice and deceit. But God was with him, and the walls were rebuilt. He was obedient to God, wise as to his enemies' tactics, and he ended up doing the "impossible" task.

Often we do not have the eyes to see the modern versions of Nehemiah's story, the times in warfare when the enemy attempts in much more subtle ways to lure us down onto his plain. A principle to remember is that our archenemy seeks to bring us into endless dialogue with himself through those persons he has deceived. We learn not to entertain the diabolical presence in this way. Such a dialogue is always carried out on the plane of the mind alone--the unassisted intellect or imagination--and we simply do not speak this reduced, desupernaturalized language. It is a language devoid of transcendent meaning and wisdom.

Besides the fact, therefore, that it is foolish to carry on a dialogue with the devil, we cannot translate our language into his. Sadly, however, more people (even Christians) understand this reduced language than the one containing the symbols that mediate to us ultimate meaning, truth, and glory. This is another way of stating that we as Christians have lost the greater part of our souls, together with the language and imagery with which to express the truths of the transcendent and eternal.

I was asked to speak at a large general conference of a church denomination embroiled in spiritual warfare of the most flagrant kind. It was hoped that I would prevail over other speakers who were advocating the acceptance of sexual immorality within the clergy. I declined the invitation, not because I did not want to speak truth into the situation, but because I knew that many of the very Christians who wanted me to speak for orthodox Christianity would not--once the battle was joined--understand my language. And should God have been pleased to move in power, they also would not have understood or approved of the powerful move of the Holy Spirit that it would have taken to bring in the repentance and the healing necessary to really change things in that group.

I knew they would not be like Nehemiah's messengers, with one objective word to impart, but that they would get hopelessly ensnared into "loving dialogue" with the enemy as his intents and purposes worked through those under his deception. Our main difficulty in the church battles of today is often with the well-meaning who have learned a spurious kind of empathy, an ersatz way of trying to love their enemies. In other words, these good folk have lost the words and symbols of the Kingdom and speak only the enemy's reduced language.

Another example is the endless church committees on "human sexuality" that meet year after year, endlessly debating and never, of course, coming to any conclusions other than the rationalizing of sin. These committees are often merely a screen for devising an apologetic for perverted sexual behavior. Only the highly trained and very wise heads, those not intimidated by this worldly logic and terminology, who are skilled in disarming patently false logic wherever it arises, should attempt to be the "salt" on such committees. Even then, such persons will often know that they are wasting valuable time and that the job will simply have to be repeated again the very next year. The enemy tactic consists in constantly repeating the lie and in endlessly pounding away at the moral and spiritual real. The carnal aim is not to uncover and point up truth, but to dishearten those who stand for it. The aim is, through rationalization, to finally make a large entryway for sin into the leadership of the church, and for this the enemy has all the time in the world. After all, he is not engaged in the substantive, creative work of God's Kingdom--only in establishing himself as god.

Rather than go down on the enemy's turf then, we band together in prayer and receive our instructions from the Lord. We then may well speak a word of truth into a demonized situation and take authority in Christ's name over demons, commanding them to depart. We are not, however, to wear ourselves out, thereby allowing ourselves to become discouraged or even deceived through fruitless and interminable dialogue--dialogue that only too often ends in compromise. Compromise is said to be the art of politics and diplomacy, but wise governments forsake the art when they are facing a murderous tyrant. Compromise spells the death knell in spiritual battle as we face the archtyrant--*Diabolos* himself.

Over and over again, in trying to help Christians embroiled in spiritual warfare, I find myself saying to them, "You are not to dialogue with the old man in anyone! That is merely to bring you into dialogue with the world, the flesh, and ultimately the devil himself!" The carnal old self in those deceived by the enemy has become a mouthpiece for the enemy's lies, slanders, blasphemies, and accusations. Such persons are used to bring the satanic deception they are under upon others. We not only learn to speak, do, and be the truth, but to dialogue only with the truth in another--that is, with the real person and the situation as it really is. It usually takes a good bit of explaining for this to be understood, and I often have to resort to C. S. Lewis's remarkable sketch about the seedy old actor (*The Great Divorce*, chapter 12) to finally make my point. In this story, the actor's wife, Sarah Smith of Golder's Green, would not dialogue with the old, illusory self in her posturing, self-serving husband. She would only speak to the true self, even though it had become almost nonexistent. It finally disappeared entirely as he chose, time after time, illusion and inessentiality over the radiant and substantive reality of heaven that was being offered him. He simply would not leave off his self-pity and his propensity, always, for shifting blame onto his wife, Sarah, for his unhappiness. Satan is the accuser, and if he cannot distract us in any other way, he would love to usurp all our time and energies in trying to answer his charges. Sarah Smith of Golder's Green did not waste her time or words.