

Hatred of Sin

William Cowper (1731–1800)

Holy Lord God! I love thy truth,
Nor dare thy least commandment slight;
Yet pierced by sin, the serpent's tooth,
I mourn the anguish of the bite.

But, though the poison lurks within,
Hope bids me still with patience wait;
Till death shall set me free from sin,
Free from the only thing I hate.

Had I a throne above the rest,
Where angels and archangels dwell,
One sin, unslain, within my breast,
Would make that heaven as dark as hell.

The prisoner, sent to breathe fresh air,
And bless'd with liberty again,
Would mourn, were he condemn'd to wear
One link of all his former chain.

But, oh! no foe invades the bliss,
When glory crowns the Christian's head;
One view of Jesus as he is
Will strike all sin for ever dead.

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ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ

In the Nick of Time

Correcting Falsehood

Kevin T. Bauder

In a sermon preached in 1855, Charles Haddon Spurgeon quoted what he referred to as an old proverb: "A lie will go round the world while truth is pulling its boots on." The substance of this proverb can be traced at least as far back as Jonathan Swift in 1710.

Besides, as the vilest writer has his readers, so the greatest liar has his believers; and it often happens, that if a lie be believed only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no farther occasion for it. Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it; for that when men come to be undeceived, it is too late, the jest is over, and the tale has had its effect...like a physician who has found out an infallible medicine, after the patient is dead. [*Examiner* 15, 9 Nov 1710, 2; I have modernized the spellings.]

The point of this proverb is that new falsehoods spread rapidly, while answers take time to prepare and to disseminate. Often, by the time a thorough answer has been given, people have already accepted the substance of the lie. It has become part of their mental and emotional furniture.

This is the exact situation in which biblically minded Christians minister at the quarter mark of the 21st century. The lies are being propagated through intellectual systems like post-colonialism and critical theory. They advance under labels like Social Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity. They have resulted in widespread public perception that the most sinister evils are structural rather than individual; that same-sex erotic activity must be affirmed and that the Bible's teaching on this subject is either irrelevant or misunderstood; that it is possible for two people of the same sex to marry each other; that sex and gender are merely social constructs that exist along a spectrum (or even a matrix) and can be altered; that both erotic desire and gender are fundamental aspects of personal identity; and that the foregoing are so vital to human rights that all people must be made to recognize them through force of law.

These lies seem new, but they are really combinations of older lies that have been patched together in new ways. They were told first by artists, then by philosophers, then by educators, and then by propagandists. Eventually



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they reached ordinary people. By the time they burst out into public, they seemed to have gained irresistible momentum. They have swept across the West and around the world like an anti-intellectual and anti-moral tsunami.

Meanwhile, the truth has been pulling its boots on. Of course, one can always simply restate the truth in the face of lies. Christian defenders of the truth, however, have discovered that restatement is more persuasive when it takes account of the particular ways in which the lies have been told. Consequently, for the past several years, defenders of biblical truths have had to expend more time than they wished studying writers like Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-François Lyotard. They have had to wrestle with ideas from third- and fourth-wave feminism, gender studies, and identity theory.

Meanwhile, the lies have become so popular that many evangelicals have accepted them and have even become invested in them. Pseudo-biblical defenses of these lies have multiplied. Consequently, biblical defenders of truth have also had to revisit biblical hermeneutics and theological anthropology. They are doing this work primarily in the academy through papers presented at learned societies, articles published in scholarly journals, and books that tackle difficult ideas.

In other words, the truth has just about got its boots on. The question is how to get it before the people of God, most of whom do not attend learned societies or read scholarly journals where these matters are being discussed. This 21st century question has a 1st century answer, and the answer is *pastors*. Christ has appointed shepherds within His flock, and these shepherds must bring the teachings of God's Word to bear upon the lies that are being told.

Central Seminary intends to play a role in preparing pastors to answer the most current set of lies. One way in which we are doing this is through our Doctor of Ministry program. The program offers two emphases: public ministry and biblical counseling. Both emphases share two core courses. One is on "Identity and Idolatry," and it is taught by Dr. Brett Williams. The other, taught by Dr. Kevin T. Bauder, is on "Creation, Sex, and Gender." Together, these courses get to the heart of the lies that are harassing God's people today.

Registration and pre-studies for the course in "Creation, Sex, and Gender" will open on Monday, July 24. The face-to-face class session will meet November 14–17 and can be attended virtually using the seminary's Zoom classrooms. Each student must also complete a final project by February 10. While students in this course do not study the Frankfurt school or the deconstructionists, they will examine fully the arguments in the current debates over same-sex erotic activity and contemporary gender confusion.

We are serious about trying to help pastors with this course. If you have been thinking about enrolling in a DMin but you have not to this point, then we are willing to absorb the cost of tuition for this course as your introduction to our program. If you are enrolled in somebody else's DMin program, we are willing to work with your institution toward transferring this course into your program. The point is that we want to expose as many qualified pastors as possible to the content of this course.

There are certain stipulations. To register for "Creation, Sex, and Gender," you must be orthodox in your theology—you must affirm the fundamentals. You must also affirm the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, the Danvers Statement (which summarizes biblical complementarianism), and the Nashville Statement on biblical sexuality. If you take the course for credit, you must enroll in Central Seminary's DMin program, or you must be enrolled in some other DMin program.

While we do not normally allow non-students in our DMin courses, we *may possibly* make some exceptions for "Creation, Sex, and Gender." Assuming that you can affirm the above statements, and that you are currently engaged in vocational ministry, you should contact me directly to express your interest. If you are accepted into the course, you will pay a reduced fee. Priority will be granted to those individuals who have greater ministry experience or who already hold advanced degrees. If non-students are admitted into the course, they will be expected to complete all reading and to participate in all discussion, but they will not be obligated to complete the final project.

The lies are still speeding around the world. If you are a truth-telling pastor, it's time to put your boots on.



This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.
