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## Chancellor's Update

### Did Discrimination Really End?

In the middle of the last century in the United States civil rights movements worked to end racial discrimination in housing, public education and transportation. In addition to laws making discrimination illegal, special programs, such as affirmative action, quotas, and equal opportunity, boosted the newly opened pathways to end discrimination of various types and level the playing field.

Similarly Great Britain worked to divest itself of colonialism by offering self-governance to its former colonies and economic benefits if these colonies were members of the British Commonwealth.

Not long after that the young generation embraced the concept of an age that fostered peace, sympathy, understanding, harmony, trust and love. Falsehoods and derisions would be gone.

As time passed, racism, discrimination, and prejudice seemed to be historic items of the past. Then slowly and then violently new morphed forms of racism, prejudice and bigotry raised their ugly heads under the issue of promoting equality. How did this happen?

The dictionary defines bigot as a person who is obstinately and unreasonably attached to a particular creed, doctrine, opinion, etc., and intolerant of all others. Bias is a one-sided tendency of the mind. A bully is a coward who tyrannizes the weak. Hatred encompasses passionate dislike and detestation. Prejudice involves judgment passed beforehand, preconceived opinion or feeling, which can be favorable or unfavorable. Pride is a high or inordinate opinion of one's dignity, importance, merit or superiority, cherished in the mind or displayed in bearing or conduct. Vanity is pride in one's own appearance, quality, gifts; excessive admiration for one's self; conceit. Discrimination is the power of making distinction, which could be for or against a person or thing

In the classic story, Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen wove a tapestry of characters to illustrate the social customs and culture of her day (the late 1700s). Pride exhibited itself in one character as self-important, authoritative, liking excessive admiration, and not having her judgment controverted. Another character appeared proud because of his forbidding and disagreeable countenance. A third character, who was able to raise his social status, exhibited pride, obsequiousness and self-importance. If pride referred to one's opinion of oneself, vanity referred to what people would have others think of them. Prejudice exhibited itself as refusing to forgive someone, willfully misunderstanding others, being blind to events, being against whatever the opponent might say, being partial, ignorant, at times absurd, and driving reason away.

Although social ranks have diminished in recent years, a new type of pride described as elitism has emerged. Today's elites exist in academia, in high economic circles, in Washington, D.C., in local school boards and in the media. Often the new faces that appear in politics or in the news media are children of politicians, government officials and news media personalities. Their responses to alternate analyses of current crises or alternate solutions to current problems

are statements like, *It's not that simple, it's more complicated; The opposition has not put forth any reasonable solution; or The public is too stupid to know what's best for them.* The most glaring example of elitism occurred just recently, when a certain young man made headlines around the world. The main complaint about him was not the issue of what he had done, but repeating *ad nauseam*, "He's a high school dropout!" There was no recognition of his competency at a specialized high paying job, just that he did not follow the elites' prescribed path to achievement

While pride looks inward, prejudice looks outward and is directed against someone or something. Returning to the middle of the last century, after the communist takeover in China, there were reports that as Chinese parents were sent to work long hours each day, their children as young as three years of age were sent to day care. There they were given small toys for play. The friendly animals were given names, such as communist and proletariat, while the dangerous and fierce animals were given names, such as capitalist, imperialist, and Westerner. Children would learn to associate friendly and good with communists and proletariats, while they would associate wariness and untrustworthiness with capitalists, imperialists, and Westerners. A contemporary example would be a campaign for public office by a minority party. The candidates bring to the public's attention several serious issues and expect the voters to react by electing them. After they lose the election, they decide that the public didn't understand the message. Two years later they run again with a simple and clear message on the serious issues of the day. After they lose again, they decide that the next time they must use the most efficient and affordable venues to spread the message to the voters. After they lose the third time it is obvious that the voters have rejected them or their message, or like the children in China described above the voters don't trust them.

Perhaps pride and prejudice can be described as Plexiglas cages that surround the proud and the enemies of the prejudiced people. So, for example, the wealthy banker, politician, college professor or journalist will only see the pro-lifer move his lips, but never hear the message about fetal pain or murder of the unborn child because the elitist's motivation is to reduce the world's population. If the prejudiced person recognizes a face or hears a key word, an image comes to his mind and the Plexiglas cage surrounds the speaker. The prejudiced person refuses to listen to a bigot or bully or racist or archaic dinosaur or male chauvinist. He ignores so-called extremists who defend God or the natural law or a natural institution like marriage.

Unfortunately the actions and ideas of the proud and the prejudiced people spawn covetousness, envy, anger, hatred, arrogance, contempt, lying and discrimination. Consequently, the world today is not the world that was eagerly awaited by the young generation in the last century.

Since discrimination, which means making a distinction, is once again in vogue, **discriminate in favor of Christ.** Choose truth over falsehood, love over hatred, honesty over fraud, moderation and prudence instead of idleness and unbridled license, and the way of the Gospel over the ways of the world.

**Since prejudice is once again in vogue, let us discriminate in favor of Christ and His Gospel.**

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