

The background of the slide features a stylized American flag with stars and stripes. In the center, there is a dark silhouette of a city skyline. The text is overlaid on this background.

# How to Change the World:

Living as a Disciple  
in America

Pastor Mark Koschmann

Bible Study Fall 2016

Woodbury Lutheran Church

# How to Change the World: Living as a Disciple in America

Sep. 11: Living as a Disciple in America

Sep. 18: American Politics

Sep. 25: War & Peace

Oct. 2: Immigrants and Refugees

Oct. 9: Black Lives Matter

Oct. 16: The Messiness of Social Justice & the Beauty of the Gospel



# WLC Class Objectives:

The purpose of the study is to accomplish three objectives:

- 1) Apply our Christian faith to the most pressing of issues today.
- 2) Equip ourselves for mission and ministry, especially in urban, suburban, and multicultural settings.
- 3) Grow as disciples of Jesus by placing a greater trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior. By trusting Jesus with our whole lives, we will - by the Spirit's power - more radically love and serve others.



# Along the way, we will:

- Encourage each other
- Discuss important issues
- Pray, even for our enemies
- Confess our sins
- Grow in knowledge
- Entrust our lives, our Church, and our nation to Christ our Lord.

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

**- Philippians 1: 9-11**



# How have Christians interacted with politics, society, and culture?

## H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* paradigm:

- Christ against culture
- Christ of culture
- Christ and culture in paradox
- Christ transforming culture



# Christ against culture

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

- Colossians 3:1-4





# Christ of culture

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.”

- Galatians 5:13



# Christ and culture in paradox

“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.”

- John 17:15-19





# Christ transforming culture

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

- 2 Corinthians 5:17

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

- Micah 6:8













## **1 Corinthians 1:22-25 (NIV)**

“Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.**”



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## 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 (NIV)

“Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. **God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things**—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. **It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.**”



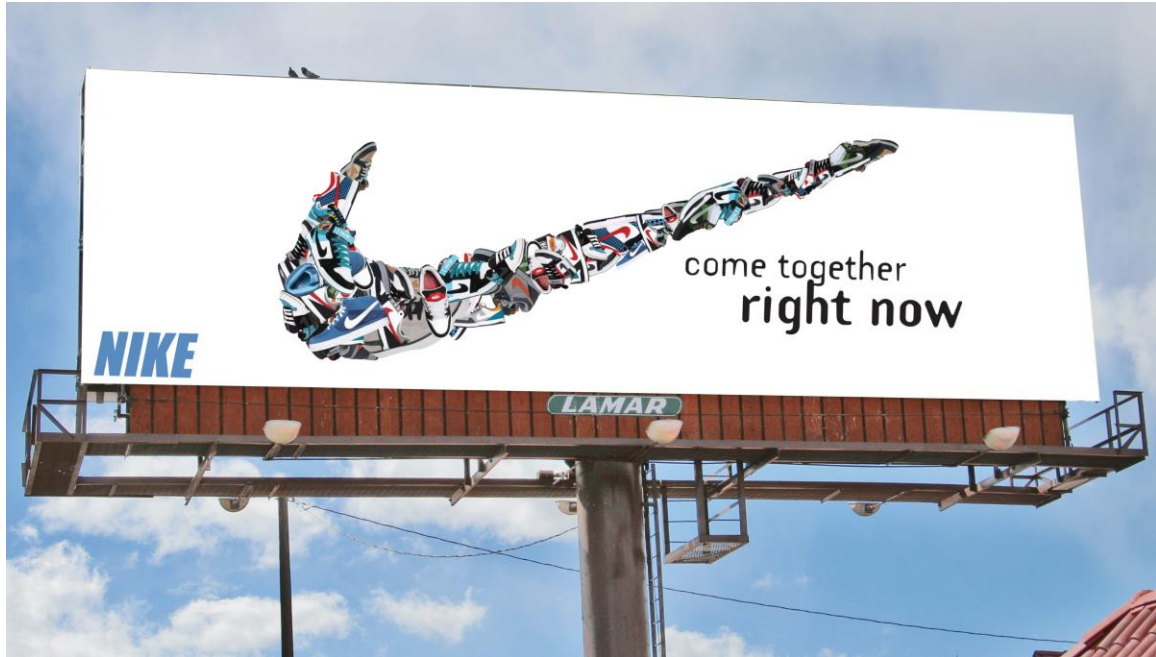
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# A Theology of Faithful Presence

“Against the present realities of our historical moment, it is impossible to say what can actually be accomplished. There are intractable uncertainties that cannot be avoided. **Certainly Christians, at their best, will neither create a perfect world nor one that is altogether new;** but by enacting **shalom** and seeking it on behalf of all others through the practice of **faithful presence**, it is possible, just possible, that they will help to make the world a little bit better.”

- James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity*, 286.









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# A Theology of Faithful Presence

- Live confident in God's work in the world (*Missio Dei*) through Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).
- Live as a community of praise and thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
- Live as a community of truth, which leads to repentance and faith (John 14:6).
- Show genuine concern, empathy, and love to all our neighbors across the globe (Luke 7, Acts 1).
- Walk worthy in the callings (vocation) we have each received from God (Ephesians 4:1, Colossians 1:9-11).
- Develop trust through mutual responsibility between Church & community (Colossians 3:23-24).
- Live as people of hope (Romans 5:1-5).



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