

## Jesus' prayer for such a time as this ...

I am coming to Thee, Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as we are one. ... I have given them Thy Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not pray that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy Word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their Word, that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

John 17:11b & 14-21

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Let us reflect how near He is, and that none of the thoughts or reasonings in which we engage are hid from Him. It is right, therefore, that we should not leave the post which His will has assigned us. Let us rather offend those men who are foolish, and inconsiderate, and lifted up, and who glory in the pride of their speech, than God. Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose Blood was given for us; let us esteem those who have the rule over us; let us honour the aged among us; let us train up the young men in the fear of God; let us direct our wives to that which is good.

*The First Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians*, chapter XXI  
Anno Domini 97

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for "both our contemporaries and our posterity," especially

Samuel Rick McCoy  
born this day

## *for such a time as this* *in statu confessionis*

The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord,  
She is His new creation  
By water and the Word.  
From heav'n He came and sought her  
To be His holy Bride;  
With His own Blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died.

The Church shall never perish!  
Her dear Lord, to defend,  
To guide, sustain, and cherish,  
Is with her to the end.  
Tho' there be those that hate her,  
False sons within her pale,  
Against both foe and traitor  
She ever shall prevail.

Though with a scornful wonder  
Men see her sore oppressed,  
By schisms rent asunder,  
By heresies distressed,  
Yet saints their watch are keeping;  
Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall be the morn of song.

*And who knows whether you have not come  
to the Kingdom for such a time as this?*  
*Esther 4:14b*

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 1

### What does this mean?

*In statu confessionis* is a phrase meaning “in a state of confession or confessional protest.” This refers to a declaration that an individual or a congregation makes when the intrusion of false doctrine and/or false practice has taken place. This is a “protest.” Therefore, it consists of speaking for the truth of God’s Word while condemning the lie of man that is being tolerated and promoted.

### What is the Scriptural basis for such a state of confession?

There are many Biblical references. A few of them are ...

Romans 16:17 — I appeal to you, brethren, to take note of those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; avoid them.

Jude 3 — Beloved, being very eager to write to you of our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

1 Corinthians 5:11 — ... I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber — not even to eat with such a one.

Titus 3:10-11 — As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

“The Word of God is clear that you have chosen a course of separation that leads to spiritual destruction. Because we love you, we cannot let that go unanswered. If your hearts remain hardened to what the Bible clearly teaches, and your ears remain deaf to the cries of other Christians, genuine love demands that we do not pretend that everything is normal. As a result any delegation you send cannot be welcomed, received, or seated. Neither can we share fellowship or even receive desperately needed resources. If, however, you repent and return to the Lord, it would be an occasion of great joy.”

Note: You may download the entire letter from:

<http://www.scholia.net/pdf%20files/uganda.pdf>

- Compare the intentions of the Church of Uganda’s declaration and letter with the purposes of *a state of confession* written on insert # 4 of this series of inserts.
- Note the following with respect to this issue:

The Pious Lie	The lie to God, self and others, even in prayer. “Dear God, I thank You that You have given me the gift of homosexuality and that You accept me and approve of me in this lifestyle.”
The Edifying Lie	The lie promotes oneness apart from the truth. “God accepts and approves of all people regardless of what they believe or do.”
The Dogmatic Lie	The dogmatic lie can not refute false doctrine. “Given the realities, challenges, needs and opportunities that exist in our present culture, this may well be an irresolvable tension.”
The Institutional Lie	The lie becomes legislated, supported and defended. Behold the election of a clergyman who promotes, and who can’t continue in office without, ..... the lie.

Thus, because the religious group has rejected the Word and institutionalized and sanctioned the lie, the basis for Christian reformation no longer remains.

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 7

**Provide a practical example of the declaration of this state of confessional protest.**

Certainly.

Rev. Gene Robinson is an openly gay man and a clergyman in the Episcopal Church in the United States, which is part of the Anglican Communion throughout the world. Rev. Gene Robinson divorced his wife in 1986 and has been living with his homosexual partner since 1989. He was elected bishop by the New Hampshire diocese on June 7, 2003. In August of the same year Rev. Robinson was confirmed in this position by a vote of 62 in favor and 45 against. His election set the stage for his consecration as bishop. On November 2, 2003 this consecration took place at an ice hockey arena in Durham, New Hampshire.

Now the Scriptures are clear concerning the sinfulness of homosexual behavior. It is clearly a sin and is most certainly forbidden by God. Those who live in such a state of gross, manifest sin are outside the Kingdom of God and are not to be considered Christians.

This was recognized by the House of Bishops of the Church of Uganda in Africa. On Dec. 16, 2003 a letter was sent from the Church of Uganda to the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the USA. Portions of that letter read ...

“Recent comments by your staff suggesting that your proposed visit demonstrates that normal relations with the Church of Uganda continue, have made your message clear: ‘If we fall silent about what you have done promoting unbiblical sexual immorality and we overturn or ignore the decision to declare a severing of relationship with ECUSA, poor displaced persons will receive Aid.’ Here is our response: The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not for sale, even among the poorest of us who have no money. Eternal life, obedience to Jesus Christ, and conforming to His Word are more important.”

## **Is *in statu confessionis* in the *Lutheran Confessions*?**

Yes, it is described quite clearly in the *Formula of Concord* ...

“We believe, teach, and confess that at a *time of confession* (when a confession of the heavenly truth is required), as when the enemies of the Word of God desire to suppress the pure doctrine of the holy Gospel, the entire community of God, yes, every individual Christian, and especially the ministers of the Word as the leaders of the community of God, are obligated to confess openly, not only by words but also through their deeds and actions, the true doctrine and all that pertains to it, according to the Word of God. In such a case we should not yield to adversaries even in matters of indifference, nor should we tolerate the imposition of such ceremonies on us by adversaries in order to undermine the genuine worship of God and to introduce and confirm their idolatry by force or chicanery.”

*Solid Declaration, Article X. Church Usages, paragraph 10.*

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## **Prayer for such a time as this ...**

Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,  
For round us falls the eventide;  
Nor let Thy Word, that heav'nly light,  
For us be ever veiled in night.

In these last days of sore distress  
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness  
That pure we keep, till life is spent,  
Thy holy Word and Sacrament.

O God, how sin's dread works abound!  
Throughout the earth no rest is found,  
And falsehood's spirit wide has spread,  
And error boldly rears its head.

The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain  
Who o'er Thy Church with might would reign  
And always set forth something new,  
Devised to change Thy doctrine true. Amen.

*(The Lutheran Hymnal, # 292, stanzas 1, 2, 5 & 6)*

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 2

### Why is *in statu confessionis* a “protest”?

Protest means to “testify for” something. Christians testify to the pure truth of God’s Word for the sake of the Gospel — the Good News that salvation is by the grace of God through faith in the Incarnate Son of God Who died for the sins of the world and rose again from the dead. When a congregation or a Christian declares and carries out *in statu confessionis* such an action is a confession of the faith.

### Is there another part to this protest?

Yes. Part of speaking for and defending the truth of God is the rejecting of and condemning the lie of man. One who does not care about the pure teaching of the truth will hardly be concerned about the consequences of false doctrine. Or, stated another way, if one does not stand for the truth of God’s Word, he will fall for the devilish lie. When the intrusion of error, false teaching and/or false practice enters into one’s own church body, God requires that it, as well as those advocating the lie, be opposed, exposed and rejected.

Galatians 1:6-9 — I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him Who called you by the grace of Christ and turning to a different gospel — not that there is another gospel, but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so now I say again, If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

2 John 9-11 — Any one who goes ahead and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son. If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work.

The  
Pious  
Lie

The most fearful thing about the **pious lie** is that it will lie not only to people, but also to God in prayer, in confession, in the Holy Supper, in the sermon, and in theology. The **pious lie** has the direct propensity to become the “devotional” or **edifying lie**. ...

The  
Edifying  
Lie

This “edifying” lie also forces its way into the sphere of the church, which teaches the truths of revelation. After sufficient preparation it can obtain the status of “doctrinal maturity.” Thus it becomes the **dogmatic lie**.

The  
Dogmatic  
Lie

A church can fall into terrible dogmatic error, it can open door after door to heresy by tolerating it and doing nothing about it. ... It can then no longer fight against heresy, and a burning struggle against false doctrine in its midst would be an entirely illegal fight of one wing of this church against another.

The  
Institutional  
Lie

Alongside the pious and dogmatic lies, there stands an especially dangerous form of lie which can be called the **institutional lie**. By this we mean a lie which works itself out in the institutions of the church, in her government and her law. It is dangerous because it legalizes the other lies in the church and makes them impossible to remove.

*Union and Confession* (1936) by Hermann Sasse  
Essay in *The Lonely Way*, volume 1, CPH

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 6

**When does an individual and/or a congregation declare a state of confession?**

The likely time to enter *in statu confessionis* would be when the false doctrine and/or false practice is sanctioned by the religious body. In other words, it may happen when the false doctrine and/or practice is approved as being the official position of the religious body; that is, when the truth is denied and the lie is institutionalized. Rev. Hermann Sasse describes the decay ...

“The lie is the death of man, his temporal and his eternal death. The lie kills nations. The most powerful nations of the world have been laid waste because of their lies. History knows of no more unsettling sight than the judgment rendered upon the people of an advanced culture who have rejected the truth and are swallowed up in a sea of lies. Where this happens, as in the case of declining pagan antiquity; religion and law, poetry and philosophy, life in marriage and family, in the state and society — in short, one sphere of life after another falls sacrifice to the power and curse of the lie. Where man can no longer bear the truth, he cannot live without the lie. Where man denies that he and others are dying, the terrible dissolution [of his culture] is held up as a glorious ascent, and decline is viewed as an advance, the likes of which has never been experienced. If, according to the irrefutable testimony of history, this is the judgment of God on the lie, should God then not also punish the lie in his church? Truly he who is the Judge of all the world will do this!

For the power of the lie extends right into the church. Since the days of the apostles this has been as true in the church as in the rest of the world. For men in the church are and remain poor sinners until their death. Lies have been told in the church because of cowardice and weakness, vanity and avarice. But beyond all these there is in the church one particularly sweet piece of fruit on the broad canopy of the tree of lies. There is the *pious lie*. ...

**Are these two parts (standing for the truth and condemning the lie) part of the *Lutheran Confessions* ?**

Yes. The *Lutheran Confessions* state what is believed, taught and confessed. Often follows a section rejecting and condemning teachings and practices that are contrary to God’s Word. Those two parts are demonstrated in the following section from the *Formula of Concord* — a paragraph concerning our topic: *in statu confessionis*.

“We believe, teach, and confess that in *time of persecution*, when a clear-cut confession of faith is demanded of us, we dare not yield to the enemies in such indifferent things, as the apostle Paul writes, ‘For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery’ (Gal. 5:11). ‘Do not be mismatched with unbelievers, for what fellowship has light with darkness?’ (II Cor. 6:14). ‘To them we did not yield submission ever for a moment, that the truth of the Gospel might be preserved for you’ (Gal. 2:5). In such a case it is no longer a question of indifferent things, but a matter which has to do with the truth of the Gospel, Christian liberty, and the sanctioning of public idolatry, as well as preventing offense to the weak in faith. In all these things we have no concessions to make, but we should witness an unequivocal confession and suffer in consequence what God sends us and what he lets the enemies inflict on us.”

*Epitome, Article X. Church Usages, paragraph 6.*

**Prayer for such a time as this ...**

O Lord, look down from heav’n, behold  
And let Thy pity waken; How few are we within Thy fold,  
Thy saints by men forsaken!  
True faith seems quenched on ev’ry hand,  
Men suffer not Thy Word to stand; Dark times have us o’ertaken.  
Defend Thy truth, O God, and stay  
This evil generation; And from the error of its way  
Keep Thine own congregation.  
The wicked everywhere abound  
And would Thy little flock confound; But Thou art our Salvation.  
Amen.

*(The Lutheran Hymnal, # 260, stanzas 1 & 6)*



## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 3

### How is *statu confessionis* carried out?

This state of confessional protest is carried out ...

- by informing and teaching the congregation concerning what the state of confession is, why it is necessary, the Biblical and Confessional bases for the declaration, how and when it is carried out, what the intended results are and what the results might be.
- by denying altar and pulpit fellowship with those in one's own church body who have taught and do maintain false doctrine and/or practice.
- by not participating in the Holy Communion with those in one's own church body who have taught and do maintain false doctrine and/or practice.
- by suspending altar and pulpit fellowship with those pastors, teachers and church officials in one's own church body who promote false doctrine and/or practice whether actively or passively.
- by not engaging in activities with those who hold the false doctrine and/or practice wherein such activities would promote or support the same.
- by the pastor and/or the congregation making a public declaration of being in a state of confession.

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*“But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ... And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, ‘If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?’ We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ ...” (Galatians 2:11, 13-16)*

### How does doubt in God's Word lead to the promotion and supremacy of the false doctrines and false practices of man?

Truth

Error

Toleration of Error

When error is admitted into the Church, it will be found that the stages of its progress are always three. It begins by asking toleration. Its friends say to the majority: You need not be afraid of us; we are few, and weak; only let us alone; we shall not disturb the faith of the others. The Church has her standards of doctrine; of course we shall never interfere with them; we only ask for ourselves to be spared interference with our private opinions

Truth & Error

Equality of Error and Truth

Indulged in this for a time, error goes on to assert equal rights. Truth and error are two balancing forces. The Church shall do nothing which looks like deciding between them; that would be partiality. It is bigotry to assert any superior right for the truth. We are to agree to differ, and any favoring of the truth, because it is truth, is partisanship. What the friends of truth and error hold in common is fundamental. Anything on which they differ is ipso facto non-essential. Anybody who makes account of such a thing is a disturber of the peace of the church. Truth and error are two co-ordinate powers, and the great secret of church-statesmanship is to preserve the balance between them.

Error

Truth

Supremacy of Error

From this point error soon goes on to its natural end, which is to assert supremacy. Truth started with tolerating; it comes to be merely tolerated, and then only for a time. Error claims a preference for its judgments on all disputed points. It puts men into positions, not as at first in spite of their departure from the Church's faith, but in consequence of it. Their recommendation is that they repudiate the faith, and position is given them to teach others to repudiate it, and to make them skilful in combating it.

*The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (1872)  
Charles Porterfield Krauth (p. 195-196)

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 5

**How is it that the church gets into the situation wherein a state of confession is necessary?**

The list is a long one. Here are a few reasons why the Christian is called to live in a continuous state of repentance and why the Church must always abide in the state of reformation ...

- the heart of sinful man [Psalm 51:5 Mark 7:20-23]
- the corrupted reason of sinful man [Genesis 6:5]
- the corrupted feelings of man [Proverbs 14:10-14]
- the pride of fallen man [Psalm 10:2-11]
- the pride of fallen men [Genesis 11:1-4]
- the Old Adam seeks a theology of glory [Matt. 27:39-44]
- the offense of justification by grace through faith in Christ [Romans 3 - 4 - 5 1 Corinthians 1:22-29]
- the failure to properly distinguish Law and Gospel [Galatians 3]
- the desire from within man that leads to the exchanging of the truth of God for the lie of man and the approval of this lie for others to believe and practice [Romans 1:20-32]

Into such a fertile setting of discontent comes the words of Satan, first hissed in the Garden of Eden and murmured by false sons within the pale of the Church ...

***Did God say, ...?***

*Genesis 3:1*

**Is such a declaration for the truth and against the lie consistent with the *Lutheran Confessions* ?**

Yes. Making such a declaration in such a time of persecution is taking one's stand on the prophetic, apostolic and evangelical proclamation of the Word, just as the faithful have done from the beginning and particularly when they bore witness to the truth in Augsburg in the Year of our Lord 1530.

It must not be thought that anything has been said or introduced out of hatred or for the purpose of injuring anybody, but we have related only matters which we have considered it necessary to adduce and mention in order that it may be made very clear that we have introduced nothing, either in doctrine or in ceremonies, that is contrary to Holy Scripture or the universal Christian church. For it is manifest and evident (to speak without boasting) that we have diligently and with God's help prevented any new and godless teaching from creeping into our churches and gaining the upper hand in them.

In keeping with the summons, we have desired to present the above articles as a declaration of our confession and the teaching of our preachers. If anyone should consider that it is lacking in some respect, we are ready to present further information on the basis of the divine Holy Scripture."

*The Augsburg Confession, Conclusion, paragraphs 4-7.*

**Prayer for such a time as this ...**

Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word;  
Curb those who fain by craft and sword  
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy Son  
And set at naught all He hath done.

Lord Jesus Christ, Thy pow'r make known,  
For Thou art Lord of lords alone;  
Defend Thy Christendom that we  
May evermore sing praise to Thee. Amen

*(The Lutheran Hymnal, # 261, stanzas 1-2)*

## *in statu confessionis* (in a state of confession)

# 4

### What does a state of confession intend to do?

A Scriptural state of confession is a loving, churchly declaration that is entered with the intended purposes of ...

- excusing and keeping the conscience of the confessor from guilt.
- keeping the confessor (both the individual and the congregation) from partaking in the sins of others.
- providing the confessor (both the individual and congregation) the opportunity to make a public declaration.
- uniting and strengthening the confessors for the mutual preservation of the Christian faith and its practice while remaining within the erring religious body.
- maintaining and preserving the ties that bind those individuals and congregations in the unity of the faith.
- bearing witness to the truth for our posterity.
- calling the individual, erring members of both clergy and laity to repentance.
- calling the erring congregations to reformation.
- teaching the church about the necessity, not only of declaring the truth in the formula of “we believe, teach and confess,” but also in exposing the lie with the formula of “we reject and condemn.”

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*I write to you, not because you do not know the truth,  
but because you know it, and know that no lie is of the truth.*

*1 John 2:21*

### Has such a declaration for the truth and against the lie been the practice of the faithful in the past?

Yes. The faithful in the past have, during times of persecution when the confession of the truth and the rejection of the lie are called for, made such declarations. This was done for the peoples then, as well as for us now. We have the opportunity to make the same stand here and now, as well as for those who come after us. The last words of *The Lutheran Confessions* declare this very thing.

All these and similar articles, and whatever attaches to them or follows from them, we reject and condemn as false, erroneous, heretical, contrary to the Word of God, to the three Creeds, to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology, to the Smalcald Articles, to Luther’s Catechisms. All pious Christians will and should avoid these as dearly as they love their soul’s welfare and salvation.

Therefore, in the presence of God and of all Christendom among both our contemporaries and our posterity, we wish to have testified that the present explanation of all the foregoing controverted articles here explained, and none other, is our teaching, belief, and confession in which by God’s grace we shall appear with intrepid hearts before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and for which we shall give an account. Nor shall we speak or write anything, privately or publicly, contrary to this confession, but we intend through God’s grace to abide by it. In view of this we have advisedly, in the fear and invocation of God, subscribed our signatures with our own hand.

*Dr. James Andreae, subscribed*  
*Dr. Nicholas Selnecker, subscribed*  
*Dr. Andrew Musculus, subscribed*  
*Dr. Christopher Koerner, subscribed*  
*David Chytraeus*  
*Dr. Martin Chemnitz*

### Prayer for such a time as this ...

Thine honor save, O Christ our Lord!  
Hear Zion’s cries and help afford;  
Destroy the wiles of mighty foes  
Who now Thy Word and truth oppose. Amen.

*(The Lutheran Hymnal, # 265, stanza 1)*