

# The Political Page<sup>1</sup>

## January/February 2011

### Is Protestantism in Germany in danger of splitting? The new Pastoral Duties' Law and its consequences

On November 10, 2010 – the namesday of their reformer, Martin Luther – the synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) unanimously voted upon the new Pastoral Duties Law (PfdG). It officially freed the way for gay and lesbian clergy, in the future, to live together in the parsonage.

For many, this brought forth a storm of outrage, culminating in words of contradiction by 8 retired regional bishops, which was published in "Christ & Welt", a supplement of the newspaper "DIE ZEIT". In a lead article, in the next issue of the "ZEIT", this was contradicted by 8 professors, as well as by a theologian.

These votums made it clear how generally accepted homosexuality in the church already has become and how, in 17 of the 22 national churches, homosexual partnerships in the parsonages are allowed and tolerated. At this point, through the new PfdG, the EKD is trying to achieve unification, however, each of the independent national churches are free to adopt this for themselves.

#### INFORMATION

##### Repent, Repent and you shall live

Grievances among God's people were the triggers for the emergence of the so-called "Prophets of the Word" in Israel. Their appearance was not motivated by the prospects of the success of their message, but solely on the godly urgency of their origin. The change in short-term political calculation or social trends was denied them, with the exception of Elijah on Mount Carmel (1. Kings 18) or Jona in Niniveh (Jona 3:5-10). Nevertheless, they did not hide "the Word of the Lord" in their hearts out of resignation ("it's all too late, anyway") or out of fear of the consequences.

Their surroundings were not heathen, but rather syncretic. Their audience was not the people, but God's *chosen* people. The problem was not the abolishment of the Jahveh-cult, but rather its intermingling with and its infiltration by the "spirit of the age", the ever-present Baal and Asherah cults, which the people found bearable but the prophets found unsufferable. They asked: "How long will you limp on both sides" (1. Kings 18:21). But the people remained silent.

This is what happened, again and again and this is how it happens today. The EKD churches still are holding worship services "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Bible verses still are being preached and the Apostles Creed still is being repeated. In 1996, in the EKD, all of this led to the recognition that homosexuality "does not fit into a positive relationship to the will of God – on the

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<sup>1</sup> The „Political Page“ is an independent part of the prayer letter „Wächterruf“ and, therefore, must be ordered separately through Dorothea Best, Wielandstr. 16, 74348 Lauffen; [dhbest@web.de](mailto:dhbest@web.de). The "Political Page" also appears on our Homepage <[www.beter-im-aufbruch.de](http://www.beter-im-aufbruch.de)>

contrary" (Mit Spannung leben, page 21). And why is this seen differently today? Did the Bible change? Hardly. Did the Gospel of God's love change? In 1996 God's love for homosexuals and lesbians was as valid as it is today. What, then, has changed in those past 15 years? Answer: social pressure.

### **Social Pressure and its Impact**

One national church after another folded up, the Lutheran Nordelbier, as well as the reformed Rheinländer, even the pious Württemberger, the one liberal, the others ultra-conservative, until 17 of the 22 member-churches no longer saw, in homosexuality, an impediment for employment and for assignment to pastoral services. The current EKD-Law simply is the conclusion of a subtle erosion.

However, even worse was a deep, underlying theologically important development, which never was recognized: while individual church leaderships initially reacted with more spiritual counselling for individual Coming-Outs of those concerned, the focus gradually shifted from counselling the homosexual towards "de-sinning" homosexuality, by the increase and normalization of homosexuality in society and the politically adept placement of anti-discrimination laws and the Civil Partnership Act in the Church, which was forced through the Federal Constitutional Court. A theological issue was made out of the choices offered to those concerned and long established relevant Biblical texts concerning the subject of homosexuality were put to question.

Out of justifiable pastoral theology came an exegetical somersault-theology. Without notice, the "shock-lyric" weakened the foundation of the Church, namely the WORD of the Bible as the standard for the Church, as it is laid down in every ministry obligation.

In the days of National Socialism, as the zeitgeist also invaded the Church and the majority of the Church met as "German Christians" under Reich Bishop Müller, a **Pastors' Emergency League** and a "**Confessing Church**" was founded, out of which Karl Barth, in May 1934, formulated the Barmer Theses, contra the zeitgeist. It begins with the words, which, again, are relevant today:

"In view of the errors of the "German Christians" of the present Reich Church government, which are devastating the Church and also therefore breaking up the unity of the German Evangelical Church, we confess the following evangelical truths: ... We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions." (taken from the 3. Thesis).

Is it really so difficult, mirrored by the words of this Declaration, to recognize our present threat? And to prevent it?

- Once again, the devastating errors towards the unity of the German Evangelical Church are under way.
- Once again, wordly ideological convictions are devastating the evangelical truths, meaning the truths of Scripture, as they are written.
- Once again, form and order in the Church are developing to their own pleasure, adapted to the current "political correctness", in order to better come across with the government and society.

As protesting Protestants, we have the courage to acknowledge, along with Barmen: "We reject the false doctrine away from the Word".

"Repent, repent and you shall live"!

Here, unfortunately, the current EKD-decision of the zeitgeist won. Naturally, though, it is the question of a "theological" explanation of this transition.

### **An Attempt at a Theological Explanation and its Failure**

As is common in such cases, the prevailing circumstances of the Biblical texts will be considered: the people back in those days never would have known faithful homosexuality, only open sex, otherwise they surely would not have been so keenly against it and possibly would have affirmed it as an alternative form of marriage, "as we do today." Theologically, this is known as "Eis-egesis", meaning endorsing current wishful thinking into Biblical texts. Exegetically it remains clear: for the Biblical authors, i.e. Paul, it means proving how the denial of the Creator heads straight to the perversion of the order of creation. The question - faithful or not - plays absolutely no part for Paul in his judgement of homosexuality in Romans 1.

And also the argument, which is led against Old Testament texts, is unsustainable. It says in Leviticus 18:22: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable." In contrast, to rebut this, it is asserted that this is a "cultic" text and, above all: today, as believing Christians of the New Covenant, we also would not keep other commandments of the Mosaic Law: polygamy like the patriarchs, slavery, which Paul did not override or the ban on speaking for women (according to the systematist Prof. Dr. Peter Dabrock, Erlangen).

*Answer (1):* Leviticus capital 18 is a collection of binding laws in the area of sexuality. It contains the forbiddance of incest (v. 6 ff), adultery (v. 20), sodomy (v. 23), child-prostitution (v. 21). Thus, should the questioning of the bindingness of verse 18 about homosexuality also put in question the remaining commandments concerning sexuality? Surely not, and it does not need to be discussed. So, again this is a random eisegesis. The question of fidelity plays no role here, since it is about the act itself, which is seen in a series of other perversions.

*Answer (2):* In the Old Testament, where do we find that polygamy, as well as homosexuality, is forbidden by God? *Nowhere!* How then, can we compare polygamy to the catalog of forbidden acts in Leviticus 18? Can we compare apples to pears?

In the Old and the New Testament, where did God clearly forbid slavery, as well as homosexuality? *Nowhere!* However, what we are given in both Testaments is God's Will for living amongst one another, culminating in the ideas of brotherhood through Christ (Philemon 12:16), in which, ultimately, slavery also was abolished. Therefore, how can we compare unforbidden slavery to the clear forbiddance of homosexuality in Leviticus 18?!

According to the series by Peter Dabrock, the only forbiddance is the ban on silence for women in the church in 1. Cor. 14:33-36. But this forbiddance is, for one, *singular* in the entire Gospel, as opposed to the repeated forbiddance of homosexuality in the Old and New Testament (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:27; 1. Cor. 6:9). On the other hand, these verses are contained in a chapter, which deals with a worship service between those speaking in tongues and prophets, that was in danger of turning into confusion. An insertion, which meant for Paul, that this was another reason for the chaotic worship service of the Corinthians. This ban on speaking clearly refers to Corinth – nowhere else is it conveyed to another church – and there it refers specifically to a chaotic worship service, which apparently was heavily stirred up by women. To my knowledge, out of this situation, a general ban is not derivable. And therefore, a parallelization to a general ban on homosexuality also is not correct.

## From the Exegesis to Pastoral Care

A false theological classification of homosexuality naturally results in the same kind of spiritual guidance towards the person.

For example, the Bavarian Regional Bishop Friedrich:

Which Bible, which theology, which ecclesiology (conception of the church) does Bishop Friedrich actually have, when he believes that homosexual ministers in his Bavarian national church should be able to freely, happily and peacefully live out their homosexuality. Through his questioning of the Apostle Paul (“no longer contemporary”), the only spiritual guidance concept that is growing is the “Coming-out” and falling-into the arms of the mother church. Had he understood Paul correctly and that which God wanted to give the church along the way, through this foundational Apostle, he would have deeply felt his minister-brother’s great tension between faith and sexual orientation and, together with him, he would have searched for a way to an identity in which freedom reigns. Doesn’t the church have more spiritual guidance to offer than every secular gay-group? The “Coming-Out”?

### *Interim Result*

The worst is not that, with approval of the church, gay couples eventually are allowed to live together in the parsonage;

The worst also is not that the church officially replaces the term “family” with “familiar cohabitation” and with this, of all things, the church opens the door for a change in article 6 of the constitution (“Marriage and Family”);

The worst is also not even the fact that the church gave way to social pressure and opened the doors and windows to the zeitgeist,

*The worst is, far more, that official teachers of the church (Bishops and Professors) claim that all of this corresponds to the Gospel and God’s will.*

**This is blasphemy towards the Living God!** This will have consequences for the church, as something like this always had consequences. God does not allow Himself to be mocked. What man sows, that will he reap.

If church leaders had said what they said back then concerning § 218: “Yes, it clearly is iniquity, but we will agree in order to prevent backyard abortion and trips abroad”, then reverence towards God’s Commandment would have been sensed.

But here the clear ban on homosexuality is high-handedly undermined with the eisegesical theory of faithfulness. What makes the thrashing of the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill” clearer than the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery”? Because homosexuality is, in itself, committing adultery since, according to the Bible, marriage is never understood in any other way than as heterosexual. Yes, in another place, this form of adultery is even more poignantly added, that “this is detestable to the Lord.” (Leviticus 18:22).

Do these theologians seriously mean to say that with the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment God only wanted to say “reliability and responsibility for one other”? No! But rather, the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment, as well as the other Commandments, takes an entire social environment into view: the family, the orderly conception of descendants and their orderly upbringing in an intact father-mother-relationship, etc. Where do the exegetes suddenly assume the right to abstract the lifestyle of fidelity in marriage from those who support it and carry it over to couples in other human relationships? And then, to declare this as an alternative form of “Marriage”, which then, of course, requires the same legal obligation as a marriage between a man and a woman. Whereby, the church imparts to the purely politically motivated will of the gay movement for equality

of civil partnerships with the marriage between a man and a woman, a “higher anointing” with a godly blessing.

In whose authority does the church actually bless when it blesses that which is a vexation to God. Or does the church stand above God, so that He is forced to bless what the church wants. This is not the God of the Bible, who created heaven and earth, but rather the God that servants of religion have created – a manipulable God, a religious cult-object, an idol.

Over and above, the church not only loosens its own foundation – the Bible as normative basis of the church – but at the same time, it also blesses the attack by the gay movement on Article 6 of the Constitution - protection of marriage and family by the government, a process, which ultimately undermines the continued existence of our society.

Along with the new interpretation of “family-like cohabitation” and with this the new interpretation of marriage and family, the Evangelical Churches in Germany are becoming enablers to certain political parties, who wish to bury Artikel 6 and its existing meaning. Katrin Göring-Eckhardt, Personnel-Union Politician of the Green Party and President of the EKD-Synod, verbalized this clearly when, at the beginning of the session, she calls out: “Let’s show the others”. “The others”, those are the political parties. In other words, church as vanguard for political grave-diggers of Article 6?

“Repent, repent and you shall live.”

### **Excursus on Legal Obligation**

In a community/an order, “at least two people living in a permanently sealed and binding fellowship, promise each other reliability and mutual responsibility.” Yet still, we do not say to this “marriage”, because this “family-like cohabitation” is not legally binding, but rather relies simply on a dependable “Yes”.

There are girlfriends who live a lifetime together in mutual responsibility until death parts them – where no one would consider them to be lesbian. Even in this case, dependability without being legally binding.

Why does the church require legal bindingness at the civil registry office? In requiring legal bindingness the church wishes to stabilize the relationship of both persons. That is welcoming. However, this forces those girlfriends into a “marriage”. And this always includes sexuality, whether from one’s own or from an external point of understanding.

If the church would waiver this requirement and only request the “3V”, it would give the couple the communitarian freedom of closeness and distance of friends. Besides this, the church would not have to twist the Gospel and wouldn’t make themselves guilty before God.

I am aware of the fact that the examples I have presented deal primarily with persons with a heterosexual orientation. However, I know that there are homosexually oriented persons who, because of their conviction of faith, have voluntarily decided upon a life of celibacy, which does not prevent them from maintaining close friendships with others of the same gender. Through a required legal bindingness, the celibate mindset of such a friendship – whether man or woman – would be contested to the highest extent. Summa: Required legal bindingness constricts the emotional scope of a relationship between two or more friends, whether hetero or homosexual.

### **The Word of the Eight Regional Bishops**

At this point, it would be worthwhile to introduce the message of the eight regional bishops to the synods of all the member churches; and, as well, the short statements from eight theology professors from various churches, published in DIE ZEIT,

No. 4,2011, page 54, and the detailed contrary article from the Munich theologian F.W. Graf in "Christ und Welt" 4,2011 as a supplement in the same issue of the ZEIT. And, of course, it would be appealing to formulate an answer to the answers in a type of virtual podium discussion.

But that would go beyond the scope of this work. And moreover, there also are professorate supporters of the bishop's message, who, in a more delegated manner than myself, would know how to respond.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **A Deeply Spiritual Battle**

Paul writes in 2. Cor. 10:3-5: "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

The entire controversy concerning the placement of homosexuality and the development of a dominance of opinion of a minority over the majority, which taboos, frightens and even heavily threatens, so that police protection for dissidents is necessary (see Marburg and Bremen), actually is only understandable through the interpretation of the Apostles: This is a matter of a spiritual battle, where powers clash against one another. They are recognizable in "thoughts", which are like fortresses that resist "obedience to Christ." Therefore, a spiritual arsenal must be applied against this fortress. These are prayer, fasting, alternate repentance, proclamation of the truth of God etc. (see PRAYER).

For some readers this spiritual classification might require a longer discourse on the modern worldview.

### **Understanding of Scripture**

Evangelical theology at universities is influenced by the very first introductory seminar course by the usage of the so-called "historically-critical method". This method looks at Biblical texts as historical documents and analyses them, as such. The religious aspect, "Word of God", in comparison to the "word of man" initially remains unregarded. The result is a historical assessment, whereas the meaning for today is assessed according to today's valid issues.

For example, if the positive worldview, in which miracles have no place and the physical resurrection of Jesus, as a "Myth", are valid, then the resurrection will be interpreted as a "resurrection by the faith of the disciples".

If National Socialism is currently "in", then the Old Testament, as Jewish, will be abolished. If Feminism is en vogue, then the Bible, a "patriarchal document" quickly can be re-written into a "Bible in a fairer language".

The willingness of Evangelical theologians to open and subordinate themselves to the wording of Scripture, as God's discourse to the church for all times is slight, because of their training and gradually grows again over the course of 40 years of service in the church. The willingness of Evangelical theologians to make current trends into interpretations of Biblical claims is of high affinity, for it promises the honorary title of "Progressivity". And since there is no lectureship, unlike in the Catholic Church, each professor at the university has the chance, 30 years long, to form an entire generation of clergymen with their "modern theology" and they, in turn, influence their congregations for the next 30 years.

The shaky and inconsistent Evangelical didactical foundation is the background of the helplessness of the Evangelical Churches against the attacks of any form of zeitgeist.

Again, here to be seen in the assessment of homosexuality.

Not being anchored to the Bibel, as the normative Word of God and the pathological inclination towards every type of progressivity, makes the Protestant Church appear, to society, in contrast to the often annoyingly transverse Catholic Church, as “conformed”, which makes her seem to the people, the media and to politics rather insignificant. According to Jesus’ Word, in this she has become like “dull salt”, which leaves the people unimpressed to move on to their daily order of business.

If, in the 90’s, the EKD publicly had put their foot down on the Gay-Lobby and the European Antidiscrimination Guidelines and the Civil Partnership Act, they would have been noticed, fought against and respected and would have their position in the debate today.

Instead, now the aged bishops are sneered at as “the old gents” and are accused of only “stringing Bible quotations together” (Manfred Kock). Those, who with great earnestness, want to hold on to the sole authority of the Evangelical Church as the “Church of the Word”, are being sneered upon by the “progressives” with an unbearable arrogance. One is reminded of the words of the ancient Apostle Paul to his young student Timothy (2. Tim. 4:3-5): “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”

Truly a word that is a light upon our paths.(Ps. 119:105).

### **The 3 Pillars of Early Christianity**

The early church of the first centuries recognized more and more that, in the struggle for the right teaching, there are three things – they called them “pillars” after the architecture of the time – on which the building of the church rests. They are:

1. The Canon of the Holy Scripture, which they composed under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The criterion was that the Scripture should be authored by an Apostle (or Apostel-apprentice). This Canon should be binding for the church.
2. The Creed, the confession of faith, which brings to the point, what Christians believe.
3. The Bishop, the Episcopus, the leader, who oversees and supervises the church.

Up until today, the Catholic Church has held relatively close to these 3 pillars. Through Luther, during the time of the Reformation, the Evangelical profile sharply emphasized number 1 (Wormser Reichstag!), related itself, along with the Catholic Church (2) further to the Apostles’ Creed and Nicaenum and only rejected teaching matter that was introduced since then, as far as it was not Biblically comprehensible. The “Bishop” in Rome questioned Luther. Later, generations replaced it, on the one hand, with Martin Luther and the confessional documents, inwardly with the teachings of the Evangelical Church and, on the other hand, outwardly with the organizational structure of the “ministers”, resp. the local ruler, as head of the regional church (“cuius regio, eius religio”), which has continued until today by holding onto self-contained national churches, each of whom can determine what is “Evangelical” , as they desire.

In the case of the controversy over homosexuality, it shows (lightning-fast) in an alarming way, where the Evangelical Church stands today, resp. does not stand, in relation to the 3 pillars:

- The Evangelical Church is “The Church of the Scripture” only in their own self-image, which, in actual fact, since the “Enlightenment”, she is no longer. Her understanding of Scripture is random and pierced with doubt.
- The Creed, which is recited at certain festive events, is no longer believed by most theologians, due to the lost of meaning of Scripture: “conceived by the Holy Spirit”? “Virgin Birth”? “crucified” for us? Does God need a victim? Human sacrifice? “Hell”? “on the third day arisen”? and that with an empty grave, i.e. corporeal? “Second Coming of Christ”? The Creed – an accumulation of question marks for many church officials.
- Structurally, in the Lutheran Church the bishop has little and, as President in the reformed church, nearly nothing to say. The ludicrousness to which the “aged gents” were exposed in the current discourse shows that the 3 pillars in the anti-authoritarian structure of German Protestantism actually only have a formal meaning.

### **Should one leave the church?**

Everyone who has read this article thus far, and is a member of an Evangelical Church, automatically will ask themselves this question. And that’s good.

Up until now, whoever went, had to decide. Today, even those who stay have to decide. Because over the past 20 years the spiritual reasons for turning our backs on the Evangelical Church have grown. Serious Christians are not weighing this step because the church tax has increased but rather because of the increase in falsities. Even if, initially, falsities only appear at the perimeter of the church, sometime they will become the “route of the church.” The assessment of homosexuality is, once again, an example of this from the time between 1996 and today.

The EKD surely did not expect a reaction of this proportion with their decision in November. But it always is a drop that makes the barrel overflow, especially when church officials, like bishops and presidents speak out about this in a provocative manner, as it has occurred. When a bishop says that he cannot understand what all the excitement is about and that, because of this, people want to leave the church – then they already must be very distant from the fellowship in their church, “those who seriously want to be Christians (Luther)”, by personally, and in their circles, holding on to the precise wording of Scripture and by being formed by it.

It is time that responsible Christians speak up, that they communicate their opinion to the church leaders, that they make clear that this church was their home and that they are deeply dissatisfied, and why. And also, that in the national church gay parsonages have long since been allowed!

Many are considering whether they should leave, others already have gone. And it is the most faithful, who painfully tear themselves away from this church – for the sake of the Word of God and His significance for the church.

But whereto?

The Evangelical Church is not the entire “Body of Christ”: fortunately, it is larger than the Evangelical Church. No one would argue this. In this respect, no one who leaves



the church, leaves the “fellowship of the saints”. One cannot leave the “Body of Christ”, one can only die-off. But one can leave the institution “Church”, since one can join. But where is the fellowship of the members of the Body of Christ when I leave the national church?

Everyone must answer this question for themselves. Though one thing is clear: there is no perfect church and even the Free Churches and the New Churches have their difficulties, that are recognized only after a while. And then? Do I move on and become a spiritual nomade?

Or do I switch to the Catholic Church, like, for example, Christa Meves?

And one more thing is certain: Eventually, it will take a long time until I grow into a new place. For a younger person a change is easier and eventually even stimulating. But the longer my story with “my” church, the more painful the withdrawal and the slower I will grow into something else. That feeling of homelessness and the pain remains a long time. For this reason it is important to know why I do this, when I do it and that I have the testimony of the Holy Spirit in me, that I am allowed to leave and should go, like Abraham “in a land that I will show you”.

As stated: Today, the one who remains must also decide, with God, to stay. And that is good. Because those who stay in this church must be ready to stand up for her, to fight for her, to become a co-worker for Jesus in the compound of this church. This begins with intercession at the throne of God, with repentance for others and with blessings. Those who remain are assigned a profound priestly ministry, possibly not alone.

Whoever comes in prayer does not do things for the sake of doing them, but he wants to do something for Jesus. That happens mostly in a local church; for me it was, on top of that, taking on responsibility for the church in a larger scope. Important is: We are *not* maintaining the current condition, we want change, improvement, we want to see *more from Jesus* in our area. My motto always was: “Everything in the New Testament that was promised to the church by God, I also want to see in my church. That’s why I stay and that’s why I struggle.”

The Evangelical Church is not a wellness-salon, the Evangelical National Church is a construction site. And as long as she allows, I’ll continue to build. And when adversaries one day say: “Then go, finally, you are not a part of this church” (Letter from the Badener Theologian/Gays), this was my friendly answer: “The chaff will be separated from the wheat only at the end of time – and I hope to be among the wheat, by the grace of God. Until then, you will have to put up with me in this pluralistic church. I also have to tolerate you. And, incidentally, Jesus loves us both.”

## PRAYER

- Praise the faithfulness of God to the Evangelical Church, up until now. Thanks for all the shepherds who faithfully deliver to the people the eternal Word of God. Thanks for the Evangelical Church that has become a homeland for many people. (Psalm 84).
- Lamentation and repentance for the treatment of theologians trained in the Word of God. Only through the Word of the Bible, as the believed Word of God, can faith (Credo) and trust in the shepherds (bishops) grow again.
- Lamentation over the shepherds (Ezekiel 34) who lead astray (Psalm 23; John 10, The Good Shepherd).

Thanks for the message of the 8 bishops. A plea of courage for the bishops in office to take a clear position.

- Plea of courage for those in the synod to take a clear position, to build majorities and to take their vows of office seriously.
- Courage for the church members to present their objection to homosexual couples in the parsonage reasonably and objectively to the respective church leadership.
- Intercession for homosexual and lesbian co-workers, that they will find their place of work in the church and, when they are in distress, that they will find helpful accompaniment.
- Spiritual and mental battle against the spirit of the world (“zeitgeist”), wherever and however it has invaded the church (Rom. 12:1-3).
- Should I remain in the Evangelical Church?
- Should an “Evangelical Church Profile Emergency League” in German Protestantism be consolidated?
- “God have mercy upon us in the Judgement”.

Ortwin Schweitzer

**Sources:**

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I would like to thank all contributors, who, again in the past year, donated for the “Political Page”. Most likely you already have received a receipt for your donations. Due to time pressure, I was unable to issue a year’s end edition, which usually was combined with a donation request. Now, whoever would like to donate something at the beginning of the new year is welcome to do so – provided he or she does it gladly.

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