

## CHANGE THROUGH TIME?

It is widely accepted that at the time of the U.S. Civil War, three-fourths of the children of day-school age attended religious schools, mostly church schools. *Fast forward.*

It is widely accepted that U.S. Supreme Court decision in the 1960s to eliminate Bible reading and prayer was both an overt indicator of the changes in culture and a major spark that propelled the modern Christian school movement. *Fast forward.*

It is widely accepted that the 1960s and 70s marked the high water mark for beginning Christian schools, including across Pennsylvania. The culture was changing. The government schools were changing. There was an increasingly apparent disparity between what was taught in Bible-embracing pulpits and homes compared to the now openly secularized schools. By the way, it is widely accepted that the mid- to late-1980s was the high water mark for both the number of Christian schools and the enrollment in Christian schools.

It is factual that in 1974 the KCEA was birthed by pastors and principals of Christian schools from across Pennsylvania. The original impetus was the threat posed from civil government. Serious discussions were being conducted at Harrisburg to expand the broad authority that had previously brought local government schools under the state. They would expand this authority to include the religious schools. The brethren considered this to be a threat to the very nature of a truly religious school. KCEA's mission was birthed, to **protect** Christian schools – coordination, information sharing, legislative presence, consultation and problem solving in the broad area of legal responsibilities. While brethren in many states paid for lawsuits, we won without them.

It is factual that by 1975 the pastors and principals of Christian schools saw another need. KCEA's mission had to include **promoting** Christian education – being a voice for the movement, articulating a proper philosophy, coordinating activities for the leaders and faculty to sharpen their focus and skills, coordinating activities for the students to enhance the internal programs of the school and to enhance the opportunities for the students to excel. KCEA brethren developed a mindset of mutual aid and helps.

It is factual that the pastors and principals birthing KCEA did not seek to birth an organization available to everyone. They adopted a pointed doctrinal statement that would only be true of orthodox thinkers. They amplified this affirmation by making clear that affiliation was not available to those whose practicing ministry reflected the World/National Councils of Churches, the modern ecumenical movement, and the modern Charismatic movement. *Fast forward.*

What has been happening over the past 35 or so years? Have we witnessed a spiritual revival? Has the culture done an about-face so that it is now more aligned with Scripture? Have the government schools developed a means of allowing the Bible to have a real presence like a century ago when the government schools were such hot beds for Christian evangelism that the Roman Catholics started their own schools to save their children from indoctrination? Have the churches that were moving “leftward” in their theology reversed course? Sadly, it appears that (a) our culture has been winning more converts than have the biblical Christians; (b) by 2005, “[moralistic therapeutic deism](#)” is the prevailing *real* religion of religious U.S. teens; (c) there is a diminished commitment among churches, schools, and families to “[fear the Lord and obey His commandments](#)” (Eccl. 12:13), seemingly substituting a generic religion based upon John 3:16, Bible stories, and sermons on preferred themes; and (d) [cultural \[c\]hristianity](#) is the common variety of Christian, even with many congregations and church goers, rather than one based upon biblical doctrine as doctrine is increasingly condemned as too divisive. (Over Christmas I saw an article with this title and subtitle: “[Christmas comes with good cheer. The tragedy is the religious baggage. As a cultural Christian, I share the goodwill. As a humanist I am glad to see archaic beliefs and damaging traditions losing their grip.](#)”)

The brethren who birthed KCEA set out a direction based upon the needs they saw, needs due to culture, needs due to involvement in Christian education. The needs have not diminished. They also had aims, goals, objectives. Fast forward. The need to have Christian schools that actually embrace orthodox Christianity instead of ecumenical or cultural [c]hristianity has not decreased.

At KCEA, we are not radical or extreme or too conservative, it is just that some things do not change.