

Does the New Starbucks Christmas Cup Feature a Lesbian Couple?

Starbucks has unveiled its new holiday campaign. It features what appears to be an affectionate lesbian couple in its promotional video. Some believe that the design of the new cup includes a same-sex couple as well.

The British LGBT Awards tweeted, "We're loving @Starbucks' new festive ad with a lesbian couple." Other LGBT advocates are cheering the Holiday Cup design that seems to incorporate the couple. Predictably, those who oppose such "inclusiveness" are being labeled as "closed-minded" and ridiculed.

As unbiblical morality becomes increasingly popular, it's worth asking: Why should Christians stand up against cultural trends?

The Popularity of Popularity

I often write about our culture's postmodern belief that truth is what we believe it to be. Here's a corollary consequence: Popularity has become our definition of success.

Possessions are measured by popularity. Why do we want to drive and wear what is fashionable? Why do we care what other people think of our cars and clothes so long as they do their job?

Social media is driven by popularity measured in "likes," "click-throughs" and "follows." The larger your audience, the more valuable your message. Or so we think.

Morality is driven by popularity as well. Since 61 percent of Australians voting in a recent election supported same-sex marriage, lawmakers will now change the centuries-old

definition of marriage to accommodate the popular vote. Whether gay marriage is actually harmful to gay people and society at large is not a factor in the conversation.

Euthanasia is becoming more available than ever before, not because health care professionals believe it to be best for patients (actually, a large majority do not), but because a successful public relations campaign is persuading a largely uninformed public.

An illuminating article in the *Columbia Political Review* notes that public opinion plays a very significant role in shifting the attitudes and positions of Supreme Court justices. The Court also considers public opinion as it seeks to protect its position of authority in American society.

To be sure, Christians should want the gospel to be accepted by as many people as possible. Jesus commissioned us to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). Paul’s “heart’s desire and prayer to God” for his fellow Jews was that they “may be saved” (Rom. 10:1). He was willing to be “accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers” (Rom. 9:3).

But seeking to win as many people as possible is not the same as seeking to please as many people as possible.

The peril of popularity

First Kings 22 finds wicked King Ahab choosing whether to go to war with Syria. His false prophets all assure him that victory will be his.

Then he sends for a prophet named “Micaiah the son of Imlah.” Micaiah is warned by the king’s messenger that he should agree with the favorable prophets. But Micaiah replies, “As the Lord lives, I will speak whatever the Lord says to me” (1 Kings 22:14).

At the risk of his life, he declares God’s warning that battle

with Syria will lead to catastrophic defeat (v. 17). The prophet is willing to face prison and death (v. 27) rather than compromise his unpopular message to the most powerful man in his nation.

Why should we follow Micaiah's example? What is so perilous about measuring success by popularity?

One: It violates biblical truth.

God's Word is clear: "Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God" (James 4:4). Jesus assured us: "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you ... If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:18, 20b). Paul testified: "If I were still trying to please men, I would not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10b).

Two: It is fleeting.

Jesus warned us: "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers spoke of the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). Wise king Solomon added: "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the Lord will be safe" (Prov. 29:25).

Never forget that the crowd who shouted "Hosanna!" on Sunday shouted "Crucify!" on Friday.

Three: It's illogical.

It's conventional wisdom today that "perception is reality." Actually, it's not.

Neither support for the Starbucks campaign nor the vote in Australia will change the harmful consequences of homosexual marriage. Embracing euthanasia will not lessen its danger to the elderly, the infirm, and society at large.

The man who denies the sunrise doesn't affect the sun.

Conclusion

“Micaiah the son of Imlah” is far from a household name, but I hope his example will encourage you to speak the truth and do what is right today, regardless of popular opinion. Martin Luther King Jr.: “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference” (Robert Frost).