

Southern Evangelical Seminary Responds to New York Church, School's 'Inclusive Language Guide'

Recently, a private school in New York supplied its school community with an inclusive language guide, warning against using the terms “mom and dad”—stating that the language “makes assumptions about people.”

Grace Church School stated in its “inclusive language guide” that the school “can do more than ban hateful language; we can use language to create welcoming and inclusive spaces.” Instead of saying the words “mom and dad” to describe a child’s parents, the guide suggests using “grown-ups, folks or family.” The guide goes as far as warning against the use of the word “parents.”

“This private school is committing to the philosophical position that language creates reality in their new inclusive language guide,” said Dr. Bernard James Mauser, professor of philosophy at Southern Evangelical Seminary. “It is academic malfeasance and morally wrong to teach this theory. One example in the 12-page language guide is that it recommends there are a variety of words one can use to help make students most comfortable in choosing their gender. Of course this assumes the unscientific position that gender is not something that one has at birth. They use the phrase that a ‘person may not be comfortable with the gender assigned at birth.’

“Even the acknowledgement of this points to the reality that sex and gender have from time immemorial been tied together and are inseparable. In fact, our language is only accurate and humanizing insofar as it actually reflects reality. Think

of the consequences for the child who believes he is a bird, calls himself a bird and is affirmed as a bird by his peers at school. The reality is that this person isn't a bird, and those who persuade him otherwise better keep him from cliffs and high buildings."

Grace Church School has since provided its own statement on the school's inclusive language guide after receiving controversial feedback.

Grace Church's clarification reads in part: "We will continue to use and model polite, kind, and respectful language so that everyone feels they belong at Grace Church School. And in pursuing this goal, we will endeavor to be more inclusive in diversity of thought and better engage our community so that our efforts clearly communicate the values we all embrace."

Dr. Richard Land, president of Southern Evangelical Seminary, responded, saying, "When I read Grace Church's 'clarification' the quote that immediately came to my mind was in Dr. Martin Luther King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail,' in which he says the church's calling is to be 'not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.' If you truly love people, you witness to them biblical truth. Grace Church wouldn't know a 'prophetic witness' if they stumbled over it in the midday sun."

SES believes that one must minister to the present generation according to its needs, and to do so with truth and power, its students need training in the ethical, political and economic implications of the unchanging faith "once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). This combination of philosophy, politics and economics training and classical seminary education can be a potent one in combating the new heresies and false doctrines rooted in a secularist, progressivist worldview.

In May 2021, Mauser will be teaching a certificate in

philosophy, politics and economics at SES. The course is an introduction to the philosophical concepts behind modern government and economics. SES will be specifically examining the American experience, the debates between different schools of economic thought and the consequences. This course attempts to blend aspects of Thomistic natural law ethics with Austrian economics. The survey of different matters related to the founding of America and the explanation of how policy decisions make a difference in the real world will be unpacked in the time spent in this class.

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