

Why Is ABC 'Blurring Out' Bachelor Ben's Faith?

The Bachelor Ben Higgins' faith is so "obvious" to anyone who researches the 26-year-old beyond the reality show that even *Slate* inquires as to why the editing crew leaves it on the cutting floor.

"But I had to trust in God and that He would guide me in the right direction through this all," Higgins wrote of the night he first met the contestants.

He told CBN: "I think God has continued to remind me from day one that I am not the biggest thing out there, no matter what people say or what I read."

Indeed, former *The Bachelor* contestant Sean Lowe, aka "The Virgin Bachelor" even said Higgins "has a heart for Jesus. Now he's going to have a big stage to share that love for the Lord with the world."

But much of that heart isn't making it to your screen, *Slate's* Ruth Graham writes.

"On the show itself, spirituality gets only the most fleeting, veiled references and dog whistles," Graham writes.

However, for Christians, a life of faith involves abstinence, which appears at odds with the show's push for Fantasy Suites, or the time in which the final three get an evening alone with the bachelor or bachelorette.

But like Lowe before him, Higgins intends to honor God during this time typically reserved for sex.

"I based [the boundaries] on my Christian faith and also the fact that a lot of people are going to be watching this show and seeing a representation of dating, relationships and how a

man treats a woman. I want them to get a good picture of what a healthy relationship can be," Higgins wrote.

But as Graham writes, faith on reality TV comes down to more than carnal relationships. Despite ABC's editors, Graham says fans deserve more.

"It deserves better than the cutting-room floor because it intersects with values, culture, and intellectual and social interests—all things a person might hope to share with a spouse," Graham writes. "Presumably Ben and his final three women have talked about this stuff by now. What could be more 'authentic' than letting viewers in on the conversation?"