

The Pope Is Wrong; Jesus Is Right—Again

Editor's Note: This is part two of a three-part series by Dr. Jim Garlow. Check out part one [here](#). He compares biblical principles with societal "norms" and announcements by Pope Francis. Watch for the final installment coming soon to Charisma News.

As an evangelical Protestant, I have far more in common with a traditional Catholic than I do a liberal Protestant. I have virtually nothing theologically in common with a liberal Protestant.

But something has occurred within Protestantism, and even evangelicalism. In the first half of the 1900s, there was a split between liberals and Bible-believing conservatives. In the last 20 years, it has split evangelicalism also.

Evangelicals are now experiencing the fissure as some capitulate on the homosexual issue, unable or unwilling to defend traditional marriage, or at least, finding some way to subtly affirm homosexual practice, with the new phrase "Gay Christianity."

We need to clarify that these so-called "evangelicals" don't simply say they don't believe in biblical marriage anymore. They are more subtle. They still claim to believe in traditional marriage, but they find ways to "dance around" the topic of homosexuality. Christian college presidents—numbers of them—including some within the "holiness" ranks—Nazarene, Wesleyan, Free Methodist—are saying in effect, "We need to have a 'conversation' with our LGBTQ-plus communities."

What Should Be Said

Rather than saying, "We love all people regardless of their

sinfulness and Jesus died for our sins," we should be talking about repenting of sin—all of us—repent of sin and learn through the power of the Holy Spirit to walk in victory over sin."

Instead, people now play a theological version of "identity politics" or what we might call "identity theologies," or even "identity sins," in which they coddle those who are involved in homosexual practices.

Why?

Why are they capitulating? The short answer is, they are weak leaders.

And they are afraid—afraid of being called "intolerant," "homophobic," "transphobic" or some other "phobic." They are afraid of being perceived as not being "loving," or of committing the worst of all sins in contemporary snow-flakey culture: "judging."

For some people, the only two words they know from the Bible are "judge not." But they fail to understand the context, which states that you should not judge unless you are willing to be judged by the same standard.

In addition, those leaders are terrified of lawsuits, from both radical homosexual groups and from the government. So they bend like pretzels—desperately trying to find some way to be considered at least somewhat biblically sound. They use phrases like, "We conform to the NAE (National Association of Evangelicals) statement regarding sexuality," or "We have kept the CCCU (Council for Christian Colleges and Universities) statement on biblical sexuality," or "We conform to the Nazarene manual on sexuality," or "We still believe in the Wesleyan discipline's statements on sexuality," while finding every way possible to accommodate and pacify demanding homosexual "communities."

‘Communities’

These denominational leaders and Christian college presidents even speak of “our LGBTQ-plus communities” on their Christian campuses.

I recently wrote to a Christian college president and asked if their campus also had “adulterous communities,” “pedophilia communities,” “gossip communities,” “gluttonous communities,” “murderous communities” and “theft communities.”

Of course, they do not. But they do have a “LGBT community.”

Why do contemporary Christian leaders surrender to this one “sin cluster,” which demands that Christian standards be lowered and “conversations” lead to this particular transgression group being pampered? I was told last week about one Christian college that hired a “practicing homosexual” to lead these “conversations.”

Loving homosexuals (and all others) is mandated by Christ. On that we can agree. But capitulating is not.

Under the guise of being “nice,” these evangelical leaders capitulate and allow homosexuals to believe that they can continue practicing homosexuality, while calling themselves Jesus-followers. It is heresy. And painfully—and this is the worst part—it is sending people to hell.

This is the sobering part. Heaven and hell are for real. Life is short, but eternity is long.

Every true follower of Christ should want all people to experience the power of forgiveness through Christ Jesus and to repent—key word: repent—meaning to turn 180 degrees from old sinful practices and to experience freedom from the “old self” by the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Repentance, or turning from sin, is critical. Why is that foundational teaching disappearing from present-day

evangelicalism?

There is no way to sugarcoat this. And there is no way to nicely state what is happening in historic evangelical and holiness Christianity.

Now, Back to the Pope

Pope Francis is only a microcosm of a macro problem hitting every single denomination. My gut feeling (nonscientific) is that 80-85% of the laity are orthodox (right belief) and orthopraxic (right practice, including a right view of homosexuality). I suspect the same might be true of pastors in many evangelical denominations.

However, the noisy 20% know how to bully and intimidate.

As two examples, many of Wesleyan clergy no longer post on the “Wesleyan Pastors” Facebook page, and some Nazarene pastors have gone silent on “NazNet” Facebook conversations because, as biblical conservatives, they are tired of being bullied and intimidated by the new pseudo “evangelical” leftists who have infiltrated their denominations.

They have gathered in new Facebook sites, such as “Conservative/Biblical Nazarenes and Wesleyans,” glad to be away from the haranguing. And those are only two examples. This type of thing is occurring in other denominations as well.

Black Lives Matter and Critical Race Theory

After George Floyd’s horrific death, many white pastors—obviously unaware of the proper way to respond—started hashtagging “BLM,” even after it became apparent that Black Lives Matter was a pro-Marxist, anti-Semitic, pro-homosexual, pro-transgender, anti-nuclear family, violent organization.

Adding to that, these naïve pastors bought into critical race theory, in complete violation of Scripture. They called on all

whites to apologize for being white and laid condemnation on them in contradiction to Romans 8:1.

There was a moment after George Floyd's death on May 25 when America could have effectively addressed bona fide racism. We had a moment. But it is now gone.

Rioting antifa and BLMers, along with uninformed calls to imbibe white fragility, drove the pains of racism even deeper.

Social Justice

Social justice is the chic drum to beat among leftist "evangelicals." But social justice is not the same as biblical justice, or God's justice. Social justice is a Marxist commitment to coercively take from "haves" to give to "have-nots" to supposedly create equal outcomes.

Biblical justice is instead built on all people having equal standing before God and the idea that all of us share an equal place at the foot of the cross. In short, social justice is anti-biblical.

Although social justice warriors appeal to Acts 2:32 and 44, the coercive ways of top-down, forced, "social justice" runs counter to the Spirit-led pooling of resources to meet a highly specific need in the early church. Social justice wants to bring down those who have wealth. Biblical justice wants to lift up those who are in poverty. {eoa}

In his final segment, Dr. Garlow will address how to best stand boldly in love to use the power of God to help lost and hurting people.

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