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May 16, 2008

Posted by revrandy - 2008/05/16 15:37

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Hi Folks:

Today I write with good news about the United Methodist General Conference and sad news about California. First the good news.

At the General Conference of the United Methodist Church the Conference (the only body able to speak on behalf of the whole UM Church) affirmed the current wording of the Discipline of the United Methodist Church that the practice of homosexuality is "incompatible with Christian teachings" and is a non-Biblical lifestyle. They further affirmed that the institution of marriage is between one man and one woman. Most of you are saying "Duh, those are no-brainers!"

The bad news is that the Supreme Court of the State of California violated the will of the people of California and the State Constitution by saying that gay couples are not to be excluded from the institution of marriage. Wow! Our prayers are needed.

So here is what we pray (at least for me). First, I'll claim the promise that the one who is in us (as Christians) is greater than he who is in the world. Second, I am praying for God to raise up people that will uphold the institutions that are the foundation of our society (this includes marriage). Finally, I am asking God for supernatural intervention in all of these issues, and that His Will (not ours) be done in our states, our local governments and the nation.

As we go into the week when we remember those who fought and died for freedom, let's all claim the promise of the truth of God which has the power to set all people free!

In Christ's Love, Randy

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Re:May 16, 2008

Posted by JD1172 - 2008/05/22 07:10

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is Homosexuality more of a sin than Gluttony, Murder, or looking at Pornography on the internet? I was just wondering b/c fat people, Murderers and behind closed doors sex addicts can get married. Also, does posting up something that looks like you might be against gays (whether you are or not is your business) really embody God's love for the WORLD, or does God only love those who think and act and believe like you.

idea for a Good forum topic: in detail write what your idea of the Gospel or the "Good News" is. (Without looking up new info or aid of the internet)

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Re:May 16, 2008

Posted by revrandy - 2008/05/22 20:40

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My thanks to the person who posted under the name "God is Love" for that is certainly true. Here, in this instance, we are talking about two different things.

First, the issue of defining marriage. That issue is clearly expressed in Scripture as being between a man and a woman. The issue of intimate relationships between people of the same sex is also clearly defined as "sin" in Scripture and thus (as would alcoholism, heterosexual affairs, murder lying, etc.) would not be consistent with the practice and principles of being a Christian. These are examples of God defining and deploring "sin."

The second issue regards our love and God's love for the person(s) the writer is speaking about. We are clearly called by God to love and invite all people to a redemptive and loving relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There aren't exceptions or limitations on this love that I can find in Scripture. Jesus said "love as I have loved" and that includes tax collectors, lepers, adulterers, and other sorts of sinners. Our calling and practice isn't to exclude people from the Church and from hearing God's Word (Gospel) preached, taught and lived. I would no more send a gay person packing than I would an alcoholic. Because when we begin to exclude sinners from the Church it would become empty pretty fast.

In saying that, I also believe that we don't adopt the sinful practices of the world as the standard of Christian behavior.

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Sin is to be avoided and though we don't always achieve this goal, it is the standard. So the sinner (myself included) who walks into Good News and desires to hear God's path to the fullness of life and be changed by God's goodness and grace is welcomed. And the sinner that enters Good News and desires to re-define what God has prohibited as proper and right is not welcome to teach that doctrine.

All of this relates to the idea that God IS love by the Biblical definition of love. Jesus loved the woman caught in adultery and told her "Go and sin no more." Jesus loved the rich young ruler and told him to "sell all you have and give it to the poor." Jesus loved those who crucified him and said "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do." God's love meets us where we are but does not leave us in our sin and sinfulness. So He desires that we don't continue in our sin.

Thanks for your dialogue and your opinion!

In Christ's Love, Randy

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