

Christian, But Not Christ

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Abstract

Recently Christianity Today posted a story titled Walking a Fine Line: Pastors wrestle with transgender issues. According to the story, the pastor of the church where the former Spring Arbor University professor Julie Nenecek attended, said: “They were welcome to worship with us and listen to the Bible as it was proclaimed in preaching,” Cumings told [...]

Article

Recently Christianity Today posted a story titled Walking a Fine Line: Pastors wrestle with transgender issues. According to the story, the pastor of the church where the former Spring Arbor University professor Julie Nenecek attended, said:

“They were welcome to worship with us and listen to the Bible as it was proclaimed in preaching,” Cumings told Christianity Today. “Since we felt his course of conduct was contrary to our understanding of the Scriptures, we would not allow him to serve [in leadership positions].”

and said:

‘We tried very hard to walk a fine line between biblical authenticity--faithfulness to our understanding of the Bible--and compassionate concern,’ Cumings says. ‘We have no desire to attack him and we certainly do not see ourselves as his judge. But a transgender lifestyle is outside the boundaries of how God intends his children to live.’

While this is the position of Pastor Cumings, it isn’t a biblical position. Peterson Toscano made this point at his blog, saying:

Perhaps I read a different Bible, but once I put on some gender glasses and re-visited the scriptures with an eye to find those Bible folks who live outside of socially prescribed gender roles and presentations, I found a treasure trove of transgender Bible characters. The article doesn’t make a single reference to eunuchs, those gender others who play key roles in both the Hebrew and Christians scriptures. The whole story of Esther would fall apart if it were not for the surgically altered gender variant eunuchs. But beyond eunuchs, there are plenty of other individuals that good Biblical exegesis reveals as gender variant.

I try to keep in mind that Christians and followers of Christ aren’t the same thing. Some of the biggest backers of the Iraq War were Christian evangelicals and Christ was quite clear about violence:

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5)

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. (Matthew 5:9)

You have heard that it was said by them of old time: You shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment (Matthew 5:21-22).

You have heard that it had been said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that you resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also (Matthew 5:38)

You have heard that it had been said: You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you (Matthew 5:43-44)

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16).

In my Christian walk and days since, I have found few that followed Christ. That's something to keep in mind when dealing with these folks. They are simply using scripture to hide their own hate or self loathing. When confronted by these folks who aren't following Christ, always remember Isaiah 56:3-5:

Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely exclude me from his people." And let not any eunuch complain, "I am only a dry tree." For this is what the LORD says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant- to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off.

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