

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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BOUNDARIES OF INCLUSIVENESS

By: Jerry Fite

God’s plan to save man includes all men. God “*would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*” (I Timothy 2:4). Jesus “*gave Himself a ransom for all*” (I Timothy 2:6). So, no one should argue against God having an “inclusive” spirit in his desire to save man.

However, we must also understand that God’s inclusiveness has boundaries. For example, the gospel of Christ is God’s power unto salvation “*to every one that believeth*” (Romans 1:16). Salvation to “every one” is conditioned upon one “believing”. Do we charge God of not being “inclusive” when He says “*he that disbelieveth shall be condemned*” (Mark 16:16)? If not, then we recognize the truth that God places parameters conditioning his “inclusive” plan to save all men.

The agenda of being “inclusive” is alive and well in the religious world today. A recent letter to the editor in the August 13, 2003 Times-Picayune, a New Orleans’s newspaper, by the “Rev. William Barnwell of New Or-

leans” shows how dominate being inclusive is in connection with the homosexual issue and the Episcopal Church. He writes, “*I could argue that the overwhelming emphasis on the inclusion in the New Testament trumps the two or three passages from St. Paul that may condemn homosexuality, just as his sublime passages on freedom trump his support on slavery. I could argue further that every time the church has moved in the direction of inclusion it has been strengthened in spite of tremendous controversy early on...The acceptance of the new bishop of New Hampshire will help our church along its way into yet another kind of inclusion.*”

According to this Episcopal “Reverend” “inclusion” takes precedence over inspired passages clearly condemning homosexuality. Like many false teachers, he makes false parallels. Paul does not support the system of slavery, but reveals how Christians “*even if thou canst become free*” can “*use it rather*” (I Corinthians 7:21). Surely we can see that freedom has its boundaries of “serving others,” (cf. Galatians 5:13), even when it was manifested in a forced system of slavery (Titus 2:9-10).

Nowhere does God blur his condemnation of homosexuality with “inclusion” and acceptance of the practicing homosexual. “Inclusion”, with no boundaries, is an “overwhelming emphasis” only in the mind of this misguided Episcopalian. The church in Corinth had those who “were”, past tense, in the soul damning sins of being “effeminate” and being “abusers of themselves with men”. But, they had turned from these sins in becoming Christians, and were now washed, sanctified, and justified in the Lord (I Corinthians 6:9-11). God wants the homosexual to be saved “from” his sins, not saved by “*continuing in*” his rebellion of God’s word.

Churches have been practicing “inclusion” by having fellowship with the unscripturally divorced and remarried for years. So why should we be surprised with the acceptance of what the Episcopalian “Reverend” says is “*another kind of inclusion*”? “Inclusive” agendas, ignoring the boundaries of Scriptural teaching, will always lead to corruption, not strength.