

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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Postmodern Thought In The Church

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Dou may have a concept of “Postmodernism” that there is no such thing as truth which leads to rejecting all moral values, reducing them to mere preferences. One Postmodern spokesman takes exception to this characterization of his belief.

Brian McLaren, who hosts a website dealing with postmodern Christianity, says that maybe some crazed graduate students have advocated the idea of no such thing as truth, but such is not the case from his postmodern view of truth. Since we never want to so generalize that we distort postmodern thought, we offer his view concerning truth with some observations.

He says that sometimes we speak of truth as REALITY. This is what is “really out there,” or what is “really, really, real.” He offers no comment of this view of truth or illustration that shows such truth actually exists. He says further that a second use of truth is human PERCEPTION of truth. For example he attests that only God could swear to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” as we are at times called to do in a court of

law. The best a human could do is “an honest and full accounting of what you perceived.” Since in his thinking, there is a gap between reality and our perception of truth, he offers a third category of KNOWLEDGE where he says we weave our “perceptions of truth” into coherent generalizations and call it knowledge. Then he says there are PROPOSITIONS of reality which takes the imperfect knowledge we have generalized and state them with imprecision and pass them on with new layers of imprecision.

It is therefore inaccurate to paint with the broad brush and say postmodernists do not believe there is truth. But after reading McLaren’s own words, it is accurate to say that while truth or reality exists in the mind of some so-called postmodern Christians, no one can really know it for sure. At best they can have their own perception of it, have imperfect knowledge of it and state it with imprecise propositions. In other words, Truth exists, but you can never be certain you have it.

Such thought is among us in the church today. Some claim there is “a Scriptural norm,” but practically speaking, we will

never find it. For if we do, then we have developed a “Sectarian Creed.” The best we can do then, is let each local church follow its own view of truth.

Paul delivered the same truth to “*all the churches*” and had confidence that Timothy would remind his readers in Corinth of the very same ways in Christ (*I Corinthians 4:7*). When it comes to the truth of the Gospel, Paul did not think that the very truth he taught could not be accurately and precisely communicated to others. To Timothy he writes, “*And the things which thou has heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*” (*2 Timothy 2:2*).

In our postmodern world of questioning any proposition of absolute truth, we need to be assured that God has delivered truth in the gospel of Christ (*Jn. 14:6, Eph. 1:13, Col. 1:5*). We can know it, and have the responsibility to understand it (*Eph. 3:3, 5:17*). Truth at best is relative in postmodern thought. May we not succumb to such thought in the church which paves the way for fellowshiping absolute error.