

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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A Spiritual Advancement?

Caleb Westbrook

Aside from the historical occasion of inaugurating the first African-American president, Obama's inauguration is surrounded with many other “firsts.” His inauguration will host the first openly gay Anglican bishop, Gene Robinson, who has been commissioned to lead the inauguration's opening prayer. Also following the inauguration, Sharon Watkins, the general minister and president of the Disciples of Christ, will be the first woman “pastor” to preside over the traditional National Prayer Service.

While “progressives” across our nation hail these choices as advancements in the religious community, it should cause us to question if God agrees that these are truly spiritual advancements.

Men like Gene Robinson wish to make homosexuality acceptable in the religious world by claiming “I believe in my heart that the church got in wrong about homosexuality...God never gets it wrong. The church often takes a long time to get it right.” We must examine Mr. Robinson's claim about God's acceptance of homosexuality. No where in the Bible

does God accept or support those who practice homosexuality. 1 Cor. 6:9-10 explicitly states that those who engage in homosexuality will not inherit the kingdom of God. In Romans 1:27-28, Paul states that homosexuals did not “retain God in their knowledge,” therefore, “God gave them over to a debased mind...” It is not an advancement to claim that God accepts homosexuality, rather it is contrary to what He has revealed about His will.

In a statement to CNN, Sharon Watkins said regarding her speech at the upcoming National Prayer Service, “I hope that my message will call us to believe in something bigger than ourselves...” As we examine this situation in relationship to what the Lord desires, it should be noted that God has deemed men to fill the responsibility of spiritual leadership within His Church. This is made abundantly clear in 1 Cor. 14:34-35, and in 1 Timothy 2:11-12, which states “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission, and I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.” It should also be noted that, God calls us to believe in Him and that Christ is the only

Way to the Father (Heb. 11:6, John 14:6), not merely to believe in “something bigger than ourselves.” Sharon Watkins' message and position are not advancements in the religious world rather deviant views from the standard of God's will.

Whenever man sacrifices God's will for how He is to be served in exchange for what man deems best, this is never an advancement, but it is always sin. This brings to our remembrance the story of Uzzah and the Ark. When God killed Uzzah in 2 Sam. 6, Uzzah was doing what he thought was best. Yet, as Uzzah and David found out, righteousness was never about what man thought, rather it is always what God wills.

While we can see the error of these practices we must make it our goal to pray that these people and our nation will repent. Perhaps through these examples we can show people the difference between God's will versus man's, and in so doing hope to teach them the gospel. May we make spiritual advancements by returning to, and relying solely on God's will!