

Dear Friend,

Recently, a mainline Christian denomination made a correct, and courageous, decision. At their annual, worldwide convention, they voted to stay true to biblical doctrine and not allow homosexuals to be ordained as ministers in their churches. They made the correct decision, but the vote was too close for comfort. The vote was 53% to 47% in favor of the scriptural position. Had it not been for the large contingent of African members who had come to the conference in order to vote, the decision would most likely have gone the unscriptural way. Thank God that this mainline denomination is staying true to God's word on this subject, at least for now.

That evening as I was watching the news on television, one of the local reporters here in my city interviewed the pastor of one of the largest churches in the area of that same denomination. It is a historical church, with outstanding nationally recognized architecture. It has stood in this city for nearly one hundred years. As I listened to the pastor's response to the reporter's questions, it horrified me to hear that not one sentence that came from his lips was scriptural. He totally disagreed with the scriptural vote the world-wide denomination had made and he assured the reporter that as long as he was pastor, he would not function in compliance with the way they had voted.

Only the Lord can judge our hearts. I am certainly not able to do that. But Jesus told us to examine the fruit we see in those who call themselves Christians ... and especially those who call themselves Christian leaders ... and by their fruit we will know if they are good trees or bad trees. I am only going to discuss the fruit that came from this pastor's own lips.

First of all he stated the standard humanistic position when he said, "*We are all the children of God.*" No, that is not the truth. That is not what the bible says. We are all created by God, but the bible is very clear how you become a child of God:

Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

To say that all people are automatically the children of God is to contradict the very words of Jesus Himself when he said to the Pharisees:

John 8:42-44 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (43) Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. (44) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

The pastor continued, "*We accept everybody in this church without question.*" In the context of the reporter's questions, the pastor was saying, "*You can be homosexual or anything at all and we will accept you here as a Christian in good standing.*" But Jesus taught "repentance" was part of becoming a Christian. Jesus taught "repent and believe the gospel."

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Peter also taught repentance in connection with believing the gospel:

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Then last but not least, the pastor implied that at any church where he is in charge, nobody would be excluded from being promoted to leadership because of their sexual preference. Yet Paul gave very precise instruction regarding those who were to be leaders in the church. Violation of any one of these standards disqualifies a person from leadership in the church:

1 Timothy 3:1-5 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. (2) A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; (3) Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; (4) One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (5) (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Again, none of us can look on another person's heart. Only the Lord can do that. But if we are to make judgements based on the fruit we see, it is very unlikely that the pastor of that church is even born again. Every single sentence out of his mouth disagreed with the truth of the bible. Based on the fruit of his lips alone, he is a wolf in sheep's clothing. He is not in agreement with Christ, who is the Word. He may be a "well-intended" wolf, but he is a wolf regardless of his good intentions.

We are living in a time when many pulpits in churches under the Christian banner are being filled with people who are not even born again. The only reason their congregations remain and listen is because ... they simply do not read the bible for themselves. They do not know what the Word of God says so it makes them easy prey for doctrines of devils to be taught from "Christian" pulpits all over the land.

We MUST have revival in this land. Pray like your life depends on it. Read the Word like your life depends on it. Obey the Lord like your life depends on it ... because it truly does!

Your friend and co-laborer,

GARY