

Normalizing the Abnormal

How long can the Religious Right do wrong before there is nothing right about it? Many Evangelicals see their power as a “voting block” for conservative causes and candidates. Political clout at the ballot box is believed to be the only way to win the Culture War.

Miss California (Carrie Prejean) is now enshrined as a “Christian celebrity” because of her positive comments about marriage consisting of a man and a woman. It is embarrassing to witness evangelical leaders fawning over, defending, and promoting this woman as a bulwark of morality. Is the leadership deficit so severe that a woman who is posted across the internet in semi-nude photos is now swept to the forefront as ammunition to preserve the institution of marriage? (By the way this is not an attack on Miss California—it is an indictment of a bankrupt evangelical leadership.)

Integrity is the foundational criteria for leadership. No one is perfect, but character does count. How can well-known evangelists and pastors experience publicized moral failures and be reinstated after a few weeks/months of counseling? Does the Word of God or the culture establish the qualifications for those in ministry? Our government believes some companies are too big to fail. Are some members in the body of Christ so valuable that the Kingdom would collapse apart from their oversight? Pragmatism and expedience may be the way to get along for the time being, but they erode the foundation in the long run.

The net result of normalizing the abnormal is spiritual paralyzation. It has gotten to the point that hardly anything will even raise an eyebrow. What could be so outrageous that it would offend the sensibilities of the typical, contemporary evangelical? We should not be surprised when the media sings the praises of the now deceased Michael Jackson. His bizarre behaviors, perverse statements, and outrageous crotch-grabbing performances are fine in the eyes of the world. But should God’s people relinquish respectability and decorum while alleging to stand for Truth?

There are two ways to destroy God’s moral mandates. The first is to make absolutes out of non-absolutes, and second, by making non-absolutes out of absolutes. Either extreme results in the distortion and destruction of the moral code. When popularity overrides principle and talent overtakes character, the power of God is no longer present. Don’t forget the Pharisees “held the line” on the Ten Commandments, but crucified the Son of God. Of course they would have been against same-sex marriage, but tax collectors and prostitutes made it to heaven before them!

I am glad for anyone who supports Biblical values, but the bottom line is everyone **MUST BE BORN AGAIN**. As Christians, our main mission is conversion, not coercion. Like moral midgets, many well-known religious leaders are flexing political muscle with precious little to back it up. The world scoffs at the duplicity and mixed signals which has become commonplace.

The Religious Right must *be* right in order to *do* right, or like the Pharisees and Sadducees, it can become the Religious Wrong. Our main influence as “salt” and “light”

is moral, not political. In the Kingdom of God, you cannot normalize the abnormal and win.

Harold Vaughan