

Should Practicing Homosexuals be Allowed to Become Leaders in the Church?

by Gary T. Panell

V. Gene Robinson, bishop of New Hampshire, was the first openly homosexual prelate in the Episcopal Church. When he was "consecrated," he received a standing ovation from a crowd of more than 3,000. When interviewed, he said, "It's not about me; it's about so many other people who find themselves at the margins"(TIME, 11/17/03). This raises a question: "Should he and others, as homosexuals, be allowed to become leaders in the church?" The Bible gives the qualifications for elders of the church in 1 Timothy 3:1-15, and Titus 1:5-9. The bishop (pastor or overseer) and deacon must be the husband of one wife, if married. You can say what you want, but this cannot be construed to mean homosexual men living together in immorality! Not only this, but the first requirement to be a leader in the church is to be "blameless"-- not living in sin, but in righteousness.

The Apostle Paul tells us, in 1 Corinthians 5:9-11, that we are not even to associate with people who claim to be Christians and are living in sin, let alone put them into positions of leadership! He says, "I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person." We are not even to eat with such people who call themselves Christian, how much more should we not make them our leaders in the church!

There are those who say, "Well, as long as they are living together or married, it should be all right to make them our leaders." The people who say these things do not believe the Bible is the infallible Word of God, or they would not say this. How could a "pastor" teach God's Word if he himself is living in a homosexual relationship, knowing that God's Word condemns homosexuality? 1 Corinthians 6: 9 warns, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites..."

We are seeing, I believe, the beginning of the fulfillment of prophecy about the things that would take place in the last days before Jesus returns. 2 Thessalonians 2:3b says, "Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first." This is talking about "The Great Apostasy" or falling away from the truth of the Word of God! What we are seeing is people who are choosing sides. Those who would have homosexual pastors are choosing Satan as their leader. Those who will have nothing to do with such churches are of God. Which side will you choose?

"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them,

and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

"For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)--

"But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.

"They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity; a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

"For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own vomit,' and 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'" (2 Peter 2:1-22).

Obviously, homosexual "pastors" know some of the Word of God, or else they would not have achieved their positions. They are deceivers, and we are not to be deceived by them! We are to come out of any church that would put a practicing homosexual into leadership, "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

Notice that I said we are to leave a church where a practicing homosexual is put into leadership. I say this because the Bible is clear that some Christians had participated in homosexual dalliances before being saved; but once saved, Christians will have nothing to do with that old way of life, and will warn others against it! "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God," according to 1 Corinthians 6:11. (All the verses in this article are quoted from the New King James Version of the Bible.) For more information about homosexuality, look at the article, "Homosexuality and the Bible."

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