



The President's Perspective



What's the Motivation?

Several years ago, the city council of our town, engaged in debate on whether to allow an adult entertainment establishment entrance into the community. During the debate, numerous Christians stated their objections to that establishment's entry on the grounds of morality and the Bible. It seemed as if the council members turned a deaf ear to all the "Bible-based" arguments that were advanced. Finally, a local Christian businessman rose to address the assembly. His entire argument against allowing the establishment entry was based on the fact that he owned property adjacent to another such establishment and that over 10 years his property had gone down in value. With that, the council ended debate and rejected the adult establishment's request. All of us rejoiced and praised God for a significant victory over the forces of evil. While I am certainly thankful that the request of an immoral business was rejected, I am troubled over the basis of the rejection. From all observations, the rejection was made on the basis of MONEY not MORALITY.

This past week, equally lively debate has raged over the comments of a CBS radio disc jockey and his "insensitive and racially charged" description of the National Champion Rutgers Ladies basketball team. No one would argue that his comments were inappropriate, disgusting, and totally out of line, and that he deserved to be removed from the airwaves (not just for this incident, but for a host of similarly reprehensible statements). What is troubling is the HYPOCRISY of CBS, MSNBC and many of the talking heads who have rehearsed this story innumerable times, expressing their disgust that one human being could make such comments about other human beings.

My firm conviction is that the firing of the disc jockey was based purely and entirely on financial considerations (numerous show sponsors pulled out and distanced themselves from the DJ and threatened to do so from the network) and had nothing to do with genuine repulsion over the comments themselves. Consider the fact that even more disturbing lyrics and content are found throughout the rap music industry. The lyrics are accompanied by demeaning and sexually explicit images of women who are objectified in the worst kind of way. Where is the outcry from CBS executives or any of the other media personalities who have condemned this week's comments? Where are the demands for removal of these disgusting artists and their "music" from the public marketplace? Will this week's firing be followed by the much needed firings of artists who make a living from racial slurs and sexual innuendo? I think not!!

One additional comment is in order. While that which is hurtful should never be tolerated or encouraged, I am deeply concerned over the disconnect between SPEECH

and CONDUCT. It seems that the most "sinful" thing a person can do today is SPEAK in an "insensitive" or "intolerant" way. All it takes is some positive statements about the life and career of a retiring senator (a senator who many years earlier was associated with segregationist policies), and a politician is forced out of leadership. All it takes is a presidential candidate SPEAKING positively of a Christian university (a university with an interracial dating policy), and that candidate becomes the target of untold human rights groups. This is, in no way, a defense of errant policies or associations. I am merely asking, "Whatever happened to emphasis on CONDUCT?" It seems as if you can murder, steal, lie and cheat in society today, and you get a pass. Just don't SAY anything that is politically incorrect, insensitive or intolerant.

While this "speech" thing may seem insignificant, I assure you it is not!! Already Christians, generally, and preachers, specifically, are being maligned and attacked for SPEECH that is out of the "mainstream." It will not be long until it will be a crime to merely state what the Bible says about a topic, if what the Bible says is considered either politically incorrect or intolerant. The laws of a free people are designed to address CONDUCT. "For rulers are not a terror to good WORKS (CONDUCT), but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? DO (CONDUCT yourself by) that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same."

(Romans 13: 3). May we not forget that freedom of expression (SPEECH), albeit not morally degenerate speech, is guaranteed and protected by our Constitution and Bill of Rights. If there is anything that history teaches, it is that we dare not start down an avenue of policing speech. If we do, it will not be long till the THOUGHT police will follow.

All of this to say that I question the MOTIVATION behind this week's events. I wish it were morality that drove the decision for dismissal. I fear, however, that it was something much less noble.

Dave Kistler
President,

H.O.P.E Ministries International
www.hopeministriesonline.com

Email comments to:
davekistler@hopeministriesonline.com

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