

The BGCT and homosexuality

February 22, 2017

“Attitude of exclusion”

I’m 75 and have been a Baptist pastoral counselor over 45 years. I have listened to the hurts, fears, estrangement and rejection of many gay men and lesbian women and their families. I’m convinced a person’s sexual orientation is caused by both genetics and/or sexual abuse in childhood.

Every person voting at the Baptist General Convention of Texas should spend time listening and getting to know people with various sexual orientations and search for “good news” for them. As I read the Bible, the key principles of relationship—from Abraham to Jesus—were love and faithfulness, not sexual orientation.

I think the [BGCT’s attitude of exclusion](#) is as sinful as our Baptist forefathers’ defense of slavery. The fact there is such a small representation of Texas Baptist churches participating in both the annual meeting and its ministries verifies the BGCT, like Baptist associations, is becoming more and more irrelevant, out of touch with the gospel of inclusion, and thus meaningless to most members of Texas Baptist churches and to people who need to witness knowing a person who lives under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the dark-skinned homeless Jew.

Herman Green

Rockport

“Righteous ... decisions”

On personal piety and church discipline. What to do about grievous sin in

the church?

- Judge righteously, Matthew 7:1-5.

Let us attend to our own sin through repentance and humility. Only then can we clearly see how to deal with others' sin, to judge without self-righteousness.

- Redeem, restore brethren from "going astray," Matthew 18:12-14.

The shepherd seeks out the straying one bringing him back into the fold lest he perish. Galatians 6:1-2 echoes this. Confront the sinner privately with gentleness and humility, seeking restoration, love in action. Nowhere is "unity" the goal, but restoration through the sinner's repentance unto righteousness.

- The church must maintain discipline, Matthew 18:15-18.

"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother." "If he listens": Some will repent. Some, in self-will, will ignore the brotherly appeal.

If he ignores the brotherly appeal, dispatch private counsel from church leadership. "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed."

Now it becomes public. If he ignores private counsel, the church must rebuke and advise him to repent and conform.

"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church;"

The church must warn of consequences of refusing the church's rebuke and counsel.

Ignoring the Church, he chooses his own punishment—disfellowship.

“And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

The Baptist General Convention of Texas is [righteous in the recent decisions](#).

There is room for restoration if the congregations repent and conform to biblical piety.

Maurice Harding

Corpus Christi