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“Clueless”

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On Sunday, March 2, at Hocking College in Nelsonville, Ohio, Sen. Barack Obama promoted the legalization of homosexual civil unions in answer to a question posed by a pastor. Then, he threw out this challenge: *“If people find that controversial then I would just refer them to the Sermon on the Mount, which I think is, in my mind, for my faith, more central than an obscure passage in Romans.”*

We wonder what portion of the Sermon on the Mount Obama was referring to when he inferred that the legalization of homosexual unions is not a controversial issue.

We also wonder how Barack Obama – who claims to be a born-again Christian believer – would characterize a key passage in the first chapter of the Book of Romans as “an obscure passage.”

There was virtually no major news coverage about this blatant challenge to several thousand years of teaching in Judeo/Christian faiths. One news organization, CNSNews.com, carried a comprehensive story, which was picked up by World Magazine and the Baptist Press. Other than that, a couple of papers made brief mention of Obama’s claim that he is a Christian, not a Muslim.

The Senator used an unspecified passage in the Sermon on the Mount as a sort of blanket waiver to condone conduct that has been acknowledged for thousands of years by scholars, teachers, and adherents of the Judeo/Christian faiths to be immoral and destructive. His dismissal of a key passage in the first chapter of the Book of Romans as “obscure” will no doubt strike many Christians as arrogant or ignorant – or both.

Obama was correct in reminding us that Jesus calls us to love one another as He has loved us – unconditionally and without measure. But that quality of love should include discouraging people from engaging in behaviors with known moral, social, and health risks – not using government power to facilitate it.

The Bible is quite specific in several places, beginning with Genesis, about what God has ordained to be the appropriate place for sex; and that is, marriage between one man and one woman. Even the patriarchs paid a price for the indulgence of having more than one wife.

A widely known passage in Genesis tells of a homosexual mob that gathered outside Lot’s house in Sodom and demanded that two guests of Lot (who appeared to the mob to be mere mortal men) be brought out so that the lustful mob could “know them” (the Biblical expression for having sexual relations). The subsequent destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was a shocking (Would Mr. Obama call it controversial?) judgment by God Himself on the practice of homosexuality.

Robert Knight, Director of the Culture and Media Institute, is one of the few who saw this as an important new story. Writing for TownHall.com (“Clueless in Obama Nation,” March 3, 2008) Knight commented: “Lest reporters buy the current ‘gay theology’ fad of attributing Sodom’s sin to mere ‘inhospitality,’ here’s an obscure passage from the Book of Jude:

“Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh [sexual perversion], are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” (Jude 7)

Knight says this is “about a lot more than the homosexual issue, as serious as that is. If Sen. Obama is right, it means that Moses, plus all Christian leaders over the last 20 centuries until very recently, have all been wrong, as are all the world’s other major religions. Now, that’s news!”

A Convenient Tool?

It appears to this writer [Editor] that Barack Obama finds the Bible to be a convenient tool for making a political point. The problem is, he misuses it.

On the very first page of his book, *Dreams From My Father*, he uses a verse from the book of Chronicles in the Old Testament:

“For we are strangers before them and sojourners, as were all our fathers.” (I Chronicles 29:15)

When I read it, I noticed the verse is inaccurately quoted – whether intentionally, or out of ignorance, I can’t say.

In Scripture, the verse reads, “we are strangers before *Thee*...” It does not read before them, as we see printed on the first page of Obama’s book. My guess is, many readers will conclude that the idea Obama is conveying through the [mis]use of the verse is that members of minority races have been “strangers” and “sojourners” in this nation – in other words, never fully American.

However, those who are familiar with the verse will understand that the context is the consecration of the plans and the great stores of treasure – both from the royal treasury and from the gifts of King David’s subjects – for the building of the ancient temple of Solomon. King David acknowledges the gifts and the spirit of joy in which they were given. Then, in order to put the grandeur of the moment in its proper context, King David prays, “*Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou are exalted as head above all...For all things come from thee, and of thy own have we given thee. For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as all our fathers were...*”

Holy Scripture as a political tool – especially when it is misused – should be deeply offensive to Judeo/Christian believers. Time will tell whether Obama will convince the electorate that he is a sincere, committed Christian – not a Muslim (as he frequently points out).

For one who aspires to lead a great nation with a major constituency of Jewish and Christian believers, ignorance of the bedrock principles of those faiths – even when overlaid with the elitist trappings of a Harvard law degree – is still ignorance.