

295 Foistings and Phobias

Last week we reflected on the wonderful truth that it is in Christ that “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2.2-3). This is a very significant truth in view of the many non-Christ beliefs and practices being foisted upon us these days.

For we now live in a society where much “foisting” is going on! By that we mean the insistence, from politicians and the media, that various features newly-introduced into our society are now to be deemed normal and accepted without a murmur, and anyone who has a problem with such acceptance is likely to be brought before the courts. Two significant examples in Britain of this foisting concern the steady growth of Islam in our midst as being “just fine”, and the insistence that committed same-sex relationships now possess the status of marriage and are also therefore “just fine”. But anyone can see that neither of these examples is remotely “just fine” in the light of God’s Word.

And what is the most common charge levelled against any who query these two particular foistings? – “Islamophobia” or “homophobia”! These two labels are regarded as two unspeakably wicked hate-crimes which nice, normal people will of course have nothing to do with. It is telling that anyone being accused of either of these phobias tends to start their defence by saying, “Of course I’m not Islamophobic / homophobic myself at all, it’s just that ...”. Such instant accusations as these are commonly used in the foisting-process and play their part in the sinister stifling of free speech and mature debate on sensitive issues within society.

Now the word “phobia” actually means “fear”, but has been hijacked by well-organised foisters to mean “hate”. Thus anyone accused of being Islamophobic / homophobic / (or any other sort of “-phobic” that suits) – is branded as a hate-filled extremist who should now face enquiries, the police and the law, and at the very least should apologise and resign from any office held; Boris Johnson is the latest politician to face such a barrage. Not surprisingly, with the threat of such vitriolic accusations of hatred and extremism, “the silent majority” tends to remain more silent than ever, while the foisters steadily push on with their agendas.

How are Bible-upholding Christians to react in such a situation? The emphasis in the New Testament and in the wonderful Gospel it contains is of course strongly on love, not hate: for “God is love” (I John 5.8) and He loves, rather than hates, this world (John 3.16-17). For our part we are to love God and our neighbours (Mark 12.29-31); indeed, “if I have not love, I am nothing” (I Corinthians 13.2). So perhaps our Christian calling is to react to all this “foisting” with a benign acceptance, all in the name of “love”?

But within God’s love, graciously shown to us, and to be shown in turn by us to others, is a properly-understood hate. When we go down the entries in our Concordances regarding “hate” and its related words, it is quickly apparent that God, within His holy, righteous love, does hate some things. Examples include Proverbs 6.16-19 (a range of personal sins), Jeremiah 44.2-6 and Amos 5.21-27 (idolatry, the worship of false gods), and Revelation 2.6 (the Nicolaitans promoting Christian compromise with pagan sexual laxity). We can also think of the long list “Woes”

(Matthew 23.13-33): the word “hate” is not used here but there is no doubting the Lord’s hatred of such hypocrisy. Clearly all these examples of behaviour hated by the Lord are still to be found today.

We notice also from these entries that while the Lord hates sins and sinfulness, and judges sinners in His righteousness, there is scarcely a mention of His hating individuals or peoples (eg., Malachi 1.1-6) – a key point for us. So for our part we turn to the old saying that sums up the Lord’s wishes for us as we react to the anti-Biblical foisting of these days: following the Lord’s precedent we are to “hate the sin, and love the sinner” (eg., Psalm 97.10 / Proverbs 8.13), which of course can be easier said than done.

Having considered this time the blatant foisting of these days, including the foisting on us that “phobia” now means “hate” not “fear”, next week God willing we can come on to phobia’s true meaning of “fear”, and apply that to relevant examples within today’s society.

Meanwhile we do our best to “hate the sin”, in us or others, and to “love the sinner”, for we are all of one blood, we are all made in the image of God, we are all sinners, and we all need Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour (Acts 17.26 / Genesis 1.27 and 9.6 / Romans 3.23 / Romans 10.9-13).

These four great truths are found “hid in the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” in Christ, and as such - thanks be to God – these are truths which really are “just fine”!

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