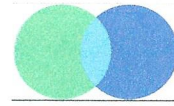


Bringing Sunday School to You From the Growing Christians Class

Abernethy UMC - November 11, 2020



On Sunday, November 8, the Growing Christians class continued study of The Sacred Overlap with Chapter Five titled “Resident Aliens – Too Christian, Too Pagan.” This Scripture is a good basis for the discussion:

1 Peter 2:11-17

Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul. Live such good lives among pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men; whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil, live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone; Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. (NIV)

Much of our discussion centered around Briggs’ material on how “Christians often respond to culture in one of three inaccurate ways: we *withdraw*, where we retreat to our protective cocoon of comfort and when that comfort is threatened, we *combat*, spending our time intensely engaged in the culture wars; or we *conform*, assuming a chameleon-type posture in order to fit seamlessly with the culture around us.” In Briggs’ experience, he quotes Dick Staub, who offered another option, stating,

“Most Christians are either too Christian or too pagan. The Christians who are too Christian are very comfortable within the Christian subculture and are ill at ease in the world. On the other hand, Christians who are too pagan are at ease with the world but fail to integrate their faith into their everyday life. Taking Jesus into our world requires fully engaging both our faith and the world, yet few of us have learned to live a fully integrated life of faith and the world. Paradoxically,those who wholeheartedly embark on this path will end up seeming both too Christian for their pagan friends and too pagan for their Christian friends.” (p.69)

Staub argues: “The Christian is too Christian doesn’t love the world enough to enter fully into it, and the Christian who is too pagan doesn’t love Jesus enough to make a difference while there” (in the world). (p. 70) Our scripture above seems to bear out how we are expected to live between the world’s culture and our Christianity. On Sunday we were challenged to look at our own lives as we look at the life of Jesus, who managed to live in both the culture of his time and embrace the needs some of those shunned by humanity, while maintaining his divinity.

Grace and Peace,

Teresa Black

Bill and Cyndi Blake

Wally and Mary Culbertson

Jan and Ann Davis

Richard and Sharon Erwin

Donna Frazier

Clara Harris

Myrna Harris

Roger and Shawn Penny

Judy Shook