

Complex Vision

Erstwhile ministers D. Wayne Bogue and David Weyrick claim their loyalty to “the authority of Scripture” and the “Lordship of Jesus Christ” compels them to disavow their ministerial credentials and turn their backs on the denomination that formed them (“Two area churches leave Presbyterians,” Beacon Journal, Nov. 14).

That is their prerogative. These two and their followers are free to worship however and whatever they choose, and I wholeheartedly support that.

Their professed fealty, however, is as questionable as anyone else’s. Bogue, in particular, said one of his objections was to the use of “sex-inclusive” language to refer to God. Yet, Jesus himself used sex-inclusive language in talking about God. In the 15th chapter of Luke, Jesus says God is “like a woman searching for a lost coin.”

And there is sex-inclusive language for God throughout Scripture. Isaiah 42:14, Isaiah 51:1, Isaiah 63:14 and Deuteronomy 32:18 all compare God to a mother giving birth.

The God that Jesus and Judeo-Christian tradition point to is both male and female and neither male or female. Admittedly, this is a more complex vision of God than that held by Bogue and Weyrick, but one that is nevertheless more faithful to scriptural witness.

These two apparently want to take us back to a time when the church regarded women as misbegotten males. They are not bearing witness to the God of Jesus Christ and Judeo-Christian tradition.

They are taking it upon themselves to declare that Jesus was wrong in using feminine imagery for God. They refuse to consider all of Scripture, but instead pick and choose text from which they construct a quasi-biblical religion of their own.

They put their own, entirely human prejudices and opinions ahead of any word from the Lord.

My concern is simply that readers understand that these religionists are not the last word on what Christianity is. There are truly progressive ways of understanding Christian life and faith that are just as faithful to our tradition as those of old-time religionists.

We need not revert to the Dark Ages in order to be faithful Christians.

Kenneth Moody-Arndt