

## Outline for Seminar II

### *“How the PCUSA Came to a Position of Affirming the Ordination of GLBT”*

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Prefatory Comments

I Corinthians 6:12-20

#### **How Did We Arrive at a Place Where We Would Affirm Such Ordinations?**

##### **I. The Enlightenment from 18<sup>th</sup> Century has influenced the PCUSA to make such a decision.**

- a. Man is a self determining creature who needs no external authority.
- b. Man’s desire to pursue “life, liberty, and happiness,” apart from all external authority, becomes the guiding force in our culture.

##### **II. Theological liberalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> C. has influenced the PCUSA to make such a decision**

- a. Theological liberalism’s pervasive effect in mainline churches
- b. In theological liberalism the Bible is not considered to be the infallible, and most definitely not the inerrant (without error) Word of God.
- c. Since theological liberalism believes the Bible contains errors the scriptures cannot be trusted to be our final authority in all matters of the faith human reason, personal experience, and inner feelings become our guide in making decisions.
- e. The eruption of the Fundamentalist/Modernist controversy erupted in the 1920’s. The modernist theologians *denied* the following five truths as being fundamental, necessary and essential doctrines for Presbyterians to believe in: (1) the Bible is the Infallible/Inerrant Word of God (2) the virgin Birth of Jesus as historical fact (3) the substitutionary Atonement of Jesus- Jesus bears God’s wrath on our sins. He is our substitute (4) the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus as historical fact (5) the historicity of the miracles in the Bible.
- f. Because the church rejected these five things as being necessary and essential, the Presbyterian Church made a decision to *not* have essential tenets.

### III. The Last 40 Years in the PCUSA and the Final Nails in Her Coffin

- a. Because the Presbyterian Church was unwilling to affirm the five fundamentals it ultimately ended up allowing for any and everything in terms of its belief and practice. This created a condition in the church where people held diametrically opposed ethics, ideas, and beliefs. This created a lot of conflict and ultimately it led to several splits from the Presbyterian Church. OPC-1936, PCA-1973, EPC-1981, NWA-2006
- b. The exodus of traditionalists/conservatives would eventually tip the scales in favor of theological liberals and this ultimately led to the PCUSA changing her ordination standards.
- c. Though the traditionalists are weary of the fighting, they have to either (1) continue fighting since the authority of the Bible is at stake, or (2) they have to leave for another Presbyterian denomination or realign themselves within the PCUSA. The one thing they can't do is keep their mouths shut and do nothing!
- d. This new climate is going to lead to a significant spilt/or realignment in the PCUSA.
- e. The seeds of gay ordination began to kick in high gear with the advent of the sexual revolution from the 1960's
- f. "The debate" hit the Presbyterian Church in the 1970's
- g. A Definitive Guidance opposing homosexual ordination came into place in 1978. It failed to stop gay ordination.
- h. So the fidelity and chastity clause (*which requires candidates to either be single and sexually abstinate, or married and monogamous*) was put into the constitution in 1996 to prohibit gay ordination.
- i. Liberals/progressives tried to overturn it three times and failed.
- j. PUP report was passed in 2006 and it allowed for exceptions to the ordination requirements. This action, even though it did not remove the ordination standards, allowed for homosexual ordination.
- k. But even PUP wasn't good enough. The push to get rid of G-6.0106b (*the ordination standards*) marched on and the progressive/liberals were finally successful. The old standard was removed and replaced with new language that now permits gay ordination.