



Can't We All Get Along?...Biblical Reconciliation Part 1 **Pastor Charles Morgan**

If I had the gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them, and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and earth but didn't love others, I would only be making noise...Even if I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, I would still be worth nothing at all without love I would only be making noise. **First Corinthians 13:2 (LAB)** Rodney King uttered the words in our title as a plea for sanity as Los Angeles experienced a racial holocaust over a Grand Jury verdict exonerating Simi Valley police officers in 1991. Over this last month, as a Pastor in the Church of God In Christ, I have done much reflection on the exchanges between Evangelist Dr. Earl Carter and Presiding Bishop regarding the message on Saturday night of our 2014 Convocation. Other voices have joined in the conversation. To our dismay the wrong message went viral across social media and many of us are bearing the brunt of embarrassment and mockery in the public square.

First of all I unequivocally love the Church of God in Christ! There is no other Church in the world in which I would rather serve and I am Godly proud of its leadership. Whatever I state is in no way intended to be disrespectful to the leadership of the great legacy of Charles Harrison Mason. We are all capable of making errors of judgment. Paul lets us know in **Gal. 2:11-21** that he openly confronted the leadership of the first century Church when they were clearly at fault. He writes in **v. 11 "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."** And further, Luke makes us aware of a conflict between Paul and Barnabas that he describes in Acts 15:39-41, saying "**the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other:** and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus...**v.40** And Paul chose Silas, and departed, ...**v.41** And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches."(**KJV**) They "*literally*" traveled in opposite directions.

The Problem Respectful expressions of disagreement with our leaders on public issues should not be in a negative context. Good minds more often than stated will *respectfully* disagree. That said, it is my honest prayerful opinion that perhaps both of these high profile servants of the Church should seek to meet halfway as an act of love and example for all of us. The Presiding Bishop in his apology used a number of adjectives to describe aspects of Evangelist Carter's Proclamation as: **abusive, crude, disrespectful, harsh, hateful, inappropriate, offensive, uncompassionate, vulgar. He even questions why he "...seems to hate men..."** But Bishop Blake never referred to Evangelist Carter as a liar. If he is not a liar, then in his video Bishop Blake appears to have apologized to the wrong person when he apologized to Andrew Caldwell. In fact, his apology to Andrew Caldwell was puzzling. Evangelist Carter used didactic strident language under the anointing of the Holy Spirit breaking all the rules of political correctness that evoked a response from Andrew Caldwell who rushed to the altar declaring "*I want to be delivered ...more.*" I thought General Board Member Bishop Porter's benevolent, compassionate generosity to Andrew Caldwell *more* than made up for Evangelist Carter's political incorrectness.

The following quote is noteworthy; "On Monday while waiting to board my plane I called Bishop Blake to tell him that I enjoyed his message on Sunday and to thank him personally for the opportunity to preach on Saturday night. His response was, "I heard that the Lord really moved on Saturday night and the saints are going home blessed!" I thanked him again and said goodbye. After arriving back home my phone began to ring off the hook; expressing that the Saturday night service had gone viral. By Tuesday evening I realized

exactly what had transpired with the testimony of Andrew Coldwell. I had a missed call from Bishop Blake and I returned his call. Finally, we talked as he was getting off the plane in L.A. he stated that he would call me back in about 40 minutes. He indeed called me back in about 30 minutes. He stated that we had a 'situation' and I interjected with, *"what can I do to help the situation and make it more palatable or acceptable? I'm willing to write a statement because I don't want you to lose any sleep and placate your emotions because I love you and I love the church; whatever I can do to help."* Then Bishop said, *"Thank you man for your spirit! Listen, don't write anything yet-I'll have my "PR" people to call you and help you with your statement to be sure we are all on the same page and so we don't open anything up any further".* He thanked me for my kind spirit again and hung up. I never heard from Bishop Blake or his "PR" people. The point where Evangelist Carter said **"I never heard from Bishop Blake or his "PR" people"** was a critical juncture in had Bishop Blake called Evangelist Carter back, the sequence of events that followed would have undoubtedly been avoided. There is clear evidence that he was clearly inclined to be a part of the *solution*, and not to perpetuate the problem. There are just so *many reasons* why Bishop Blake or his staff persons should have returned the call to Carter. It would have been far better to incorporate Evangelist Carter's efforts to *resolve* the issue than to leave him out of the "solution" equation. A quote from Bishop Blake's "A Message to the Saints Of the Church Of God In Christ From Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.," (subsequently, for brevity, referred to as "**Message**") reads *"preaching and teaching must be done in love,"* and he quotes **Ephesians 4:15-16**. Bishop Blake quoted **Ephesians 4:15-16**. However, in the immediately preceding epistle, in **Gal 6:1-2** Paul also writes words that I think apply to leadership just as accurately as **Eph. 4:15-16** apply to Evangelist Carter. Paul writes in **Gal 6:1-2** *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted to bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."*

As an eye-witness, present in the worship that most memorable night, I should say that in Evangelist Carter's address of the insidious evil of people of the same sex who engage in sexual intercourse together as a lifestyle that is clearly identified as an **(*1) abomination** in the scripture. Barring the reference to "bleeding____" the message was tough love. Even though I feel constrained to note that Commentators tell us that *reference is similar to, if not exactly,* what GOD did to the Philistines in Ashdod in **1 Samuel 5**. Commentators tell us that the word rendered "emerods" in the KJV, and **"tumors"** in other Versions, **(*2)** probably means the disease called the bleeding piles, which appears to have been accompanied with dysentery, bloody flux, and ulcerated anus." Nevertheless, genuine objectivity demands admission that *some* of his expressions did not rise to Paul's expressed standard of "speaking the truth in love." The ole folk use to say *"It's not so much what you say; it's how you say it.* More often than not, the most effective rebuke is the gentle loving rebuke.

But let's reflect, for a moment, at Evangelist Carter's proclamation that night. First of all, the part that went viral focused on only *one* of the numerous evils that he addressed in his proclamation. If one listens to the tape of the sermon, one will see that he devoted almost, if not *equal* time to a large conglomerate of evils: He addressed: adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, lying, and whoremongering. He addressed behavior that is disrespectful, mean, lacking in discipline, unforgiving, and unkind. He addressed the behavior of believers who take one another to court; unmarried, but living together ("shacking") as married; preachers that he characterized as *"limping preachers", cheap preachers, dogs that won't bark, playboys, pimp-daddies, and "candy men who make the world taste good."* And when he addressed **homosexuality**, he clearly states that he was addressing those who *"practice"* sin. Evangelist Carter's challenge to the Church to be *less* tolerant of the blatant, flagrant, flamboyant displays of the abomination of homosexuality in our Churches most conspicuously, he points out, in our music departments is both needed, valuable and timely.

If the truth be told, most who heard him that night were *constrained* to literally stand up and scream “Amen” from those on the podium/platform to those of us who crowded in front of the podium on the main floor. Now! Make no mistake about it, most who heard Evangelist Carter that night also knew, ever so well, that Prophets, like Messiahs, are inevitably severely persecuted and even crucified. We all know that Evangelist Carter was proclaiming Gospel truth that *needed* to be proclaimed, but too few have courage or personal character & integrity to proclaim. Many of us who heard Evangelist Carter that night don’t even want to risk losing, or even jeopardizing, hard earned positions/status to which we have spent a lifetime pursuing and acquiring, and would never dare to offend those whose vote might be needed in an upcoming election, or whose recommendation we may need on the road to upward mobility in the ecclesiastical machinery. We knew it was the Truth! We delighted in hearing that Truth! We knew that most of us would never preach it in fear of possible repercussions, such as Evangelist Carter is incurring right now. But we knew it was a proclamation worthy of being both proclaimed and heard. I humbly submit this brief response as one who is seriously *“contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.”*

Chief Editor: The Agora- Dr. Leonard Lovett

Before this controversy began Pastor Charles Edward Morgan had requested to write an article for The Agora blog. We look forward to his **final response next week** to several responses that have emerged since the Presiding Bishop’s response. I have admonished those who write so that you do not cross lines of authority. A Private does not lecture a General about battle strategy. It is imperative that we respectfully stay in our lanes. It is obvious that Pastor Morgan’s response is one of a pastoral theologian as he seeks to find middle ground in the path toward ***Biblical Reconciliation***. He is an ardent member of the **Manual Review Committee** of the **General Assembly** where he serves as **Chairman of the Polity and Governing Sub-Committee**.

Pastor Charles Edward Morgan is the Senior Pastor of the **Our Father’s House, Inc. Church of God in Christ** 1118A Old Charles Road St. Ann, Mo. 63074-2113

Follow us at www.theagora.net