

UNITED CHURCH NEWS letter to the editor, Willis Elliott, 13 Feb 86

Being a white theist Christian Protestant male, I prefer my own kind. Does that mean that I, respectively in reverse, am a sexist, antiCatholic, antisemitic, antinontheist racist? Is there no distinction between preference and the superiority claim?

Sin is anything extended far enough in a straight line. All God's creatures went into and came out of Noah's ark "after their own kind": preference for one's kind is natural. But when any preference is overextended into the superiority claim, the sin of hubris--roundly damned by the ancient Jews, Greeks, and Christians--has been committed.

Guilt is a weak goal to change, but church types don't seem to know it. From all sides I'm pressured to feel guilty about my preferences, in sappy expectation that that's going to do something more than irritate me into praying that the church, my UCC, will become more intelligent and fair on "social issues."

[INSTANCE: Your editor on p.3 of your February issue says "the UCC is a white church," then defines racism as "practices and/or policies based on assumptions of racial superiority," and throughout the page implies that the sin (which it certainly is) of claiming "racial superiority" explains why we are "a white church." Are Blacks who prefer to be in a Black church committing the sin of Black racism? Or are Blacks to be excused here on the ground that they are a minority and whites accused on the ground that they are the majority?

INSTANCE: Your reporter of Craigville Colloquy II complained that it was a white conference (with only a scattering of Blacks). Why wouldn't it be when your own editor says we are "a white church"? We tried hard to get more than a token of Black representation, but--as everybody who's run a UCC national meeting knows--it's tough. How about fairer reporting?]

No, I'm not in favor of letting sleeping dogs lie while birds of a feather flock together. I'm for the aggressive openness of majorities to minorities. But I'm against the false guilt of merely being in a majority and the bad faith on which the false guilt is based. The God of Love is not honored when we dishonor the God of Truth. [One God, one Lord Jesus Christ, one Church.]

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