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I Finally Agree With John Shelby Spong

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Don't get too excited, but I have found a basis for some agreement with John Shelby Spong, the liberal retired Episcopal bishop of Newark, New Jersey. It probably had to happen sooner or later.

Bishop Spong's doctrinal system is, to state the obvious, undiluted heresy. He has rejected and attacked virtually every Christian doctrine, from the virgin birth to monotheism.

Now, in *The Oregonian* [Portland, Oregon], Bishop Spong declares that the battle for the normalization of homosexuality is basically over:

No prejudice is ever debated that isn't already dying. The reason we debate a prejudice is because it isn't holding anymore. We saw black people as being less than human. But we began to see them as human beings. It took a while to work that out. We used to define women as dependent, weak, emotionally hysterical, incapable of bearing responsibilities. Women began to challenge that in the 20th century. The same thing is happening with gay people.

Further, when asked if the controversy would split the Anglican communion:

I've lived too long. We were told when we ordained blacks that it would split the church; when women were ordained, it would split the church; when women became bishops, it would split the church. The issue is what is right and what is wrong. I have never known a church to be helped by what is wrong. Unity is a virtue in the church, but not the supreme one. Truth is higher.

Now, look closely at those last two sentences. The rest of Bishop Spong's analysis quoted here is the typical argument offered by proponents of homosexual ordination, same-sex marriage, etc. — but those last two sentences are absolutely correct.

Unity is an important virtue in the church, but it cannot be supreme. Truth really is a higher virtue. On that point Bishop Spong and I are in perfect agreement. We just disagree profoundly over what the truth is.

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