

Jesus, Tiger and Brit, Oh My

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By Eric Metaxas

MANHATTAN, N.Y.—Last weekend [January 2010] Fox News analyst Brit Hume said something so beyond the pale that the outrage has been deafening.

Did he say Janet Napolitano was the love child of Susan Sontag and Elmer Fudd?

Did he label the POTUS a “long-legged Mack Daddy”?

Did he say that Adam Lambert was making him reconsider his position on Sharia Law?

Those things would have been offensive—but he didn’t say any of them!

Then what did he say? Well, what he said was pretty bad, so if you are reading this aloud with kids around, you might want to tell them to go play with their Wii for a few minutes. Okay, are they out of the room? Great.

What Brit Hume said was that—um—to find redemption and forgiveness, Tiger Woods might think about turning from Buddhism to Christianity.

Blecchhh!! Just repeating that makes me feel so dirty. Can you imagine he said that? What was he thinking?

But seriously, folks, why should saying that cause such a firestorm?

Simple. Brit Hume stepped on the Third Rail of American culture: He implied that all religions are not equal. In America today, you just can’t say that sort of thing. But Brit said it. And people lost their minds.

But how did America get to this point?

It happened at some point in the 20th century, when we realized that we were an increasingly diverse nation. We were no longer a Protestant Christian nation, nor even a Christian nation. There was more and more pluribus in our unum.

So to help everyone get along we decided to back off on the big, divisive questions about God and Truth. We would pretend that we all pretty much believed the same things, even though we didn’t.

President Eisenhower summed it up. He said that America was “founded on a deeply felt religious faith—and I don’t care what it is.” Silly as that sounds, he meant it. Ike was no theologian.

Ever since then we’ve lived with this devil’s bargain of pretending that to talk about these things was just out of bounds.

So to say something like what Brit Hume said is to be seen as a nut and a troublemaker!

We’re supposed to pretend that Truth is an outdated concept. Everyone has his or her own “truth.” To talk about Truth as though it was a real thing is to be plum loco—and probably armed and dangerous. It’s to be like the terrorists who want to kill us for not believing what they believe. That’s where Truth will get you!

But, if you claim to be a Christian, there are three major problems with this approach.

■ Problem No. 1—Jesus said He was the Truth.

And He wasn’t just saying that to impress His friends. He actually meant it and, yes, that implies that not all faiths are equal. Can you believe Jesus said something so outrageous? At least He didn’t say it on a political talk show! And He said the Truth would set us free. He actually meant that too. What was He thinking?

■ Problem No. 2—The Bible says that we must use our minds to actually determine what is true and what isn’t!

It may surprise you, but the Bible doesn’t tell us to blindly accept what it says “on faith.” It tells us to reason our way to what is actually true. This means that we have to ask ourselves: Did Jesus actually rise from the dead or is that just an old wives’ tale? Where do the facts lead?

The apostle Paul himself said that if Jesus Christ did not actually rise from the dead, then Christians are to be more pitied than anyone! Whether it’s really true matters.

Do you dare look into these things, or would you rather just leave it alone and pretend the truth of it doesn’t really matter, that no one can really ever know? Some folks would rather not look too closely. It’s easier to just pretend there’s no such thing as truth and browbeat anyone who dares talk about truth. But, if you claim to be a Christian, you don’t have that option. Bummer!

■ Problem No. 3—If someone is hurting and you know how to help them, you are obliged to do so.

If someone is driving toward a cliff, do you tell him that all roads are really the same and let him drive to his death?

Or do you risk hurting his feelings and tell him the truth, that he’s on a head toward disaster and death?

Jesus said: “Do unto others as you would have other do unto you.

If you know the answer to someone's problem and you don't tell them, what kind of a Christian are you?

So let's face it: Brit Hume was trying to help Tiger Woods. He knew that Tiger might get his endorsements and golf game back, but he is losing what's really important, his wife and his children.

Right now, Tiger Woods is in a hole so deep that even he cannot get out of it. He needs something more than an amazing chip shot to get back on the green. Tiger needs outside help, badly. And Brit knew where he could get some. But how did Brit know?

Twelve years ago Brit's son committed suicide. That tragedy and agony put Brit Hume in a hole out of which he could not climb. It put him in a spot beyond his own efforts and abilities.

At that point he turned to God—to Jesus—in a new way, and Jesus pulled him out of the hole. Jesus gave Brit Hume his life back. He had experienced that. And he thought he should mention it, to help Tiger Woods.

In what Brit said, he implied that Buddhism does not offer the sort of grace and forgiveness that Christianity does. This happens to be true.

Doctrinally speaking, only Christianity has this concept of grace. Go ask any Buddhist.

Only Christianity says that God will pay your debt. He will pull you out of the hole and dust you off and put his arms around you and say, "I love you." That's the whole point of Christianity, that we all need God's help, and God actually wants to help us—not to condemn us, but help us.

That's all that Brit Hume was saying to Tiger Woods. And here's good news: It's actually true. If you don't believe me, look into it yourself and see where the facts lead you. God's not afraid of the truth, and we shouldn't be either.

So, under the circumstances, I think Brit Hume said the only thing a Christian really could say. But please let's keep that between you and me. We wouldn't want to offend anyone.