The Phyllis Schlafly Report

Liberal Takeover of Methodists Despite Losing Vote

By John and Andy Schlafly

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At their annual conference last February, conservative Methodists won the vote to keep the 3rd largest Christian denomination in America traditional on the subjects of marriage and the clergy. They decided that, like the Catholic Church and many other denominations, the United Methodist Church would continue with a one-man, one-woman approach to matrimony, and not have openly LGBTQ clergy.

As the largest Christian denomination in the United States other than the Catholic Church and the Southern Baptists, both of which prohibit same-sex marriage, the United Methodist Church has roots going back to the fiery Anglican preacher John Wesley. The American Revolution made it no longer practical for colonists to remain members of the Anglican Church run by the King of England.

Methodist Presidents of the United States have included George W. Bush, William McKinley, Rutherford Hayes, General Ulysses S. Grant, and James K. Polk. Today there are nearly 7 million Americans who are members of the United Methodist Church, and more than 5 million mostly conservative foreign members, with an estimated 32,000 congregations worldwide.

A marriage by a Catholic in a Methodist Church is typically recognized by the Catholic Church if approval is sought beforehand. About a hundred American colleges and a small number of secondary schools have Methodist roots.

The university elites demanded that doctrine be changed to authorize same-sex marriage ceremonies in Methodist churches. But after a full debate of the issue, Methodists rejected changing their doctrine by a healthy 53-47% margin in at their conference held in St. Louis last February.

The conservative voters even prevailed in strengthening the traditional doctrine on marriage. So why are they losing anyway, despite winning the vote?

Two days after New Year's, a group of Methodists announced a brokered settlement by which the United Methodist Church would adopt same-sex marriage and ordain openly LGBTQ clergy. If approved at its upcoming international conference in May, conservatives would have to accept this doctrinal change or get out.

A supermajority vote would be required before a conservative congregation could split off and continue with the traditional doctrine. The settlement offers them $25 million in church

funds to leave, which is a clever way for the liberal side to try to buy off just enough opponents to take control of the entire church for themselves.

By why aren't the liberals who lost the election by 6 percentage points the ones who are leaving instead? Rather, in a deceptive takeover strategy, they are using church funds to buy themselves a majority.

History buffs might notice that in the Russian Revolution of 1917 the victorious minority called themselves Bolsheviks (which means majority) and unfairly labeled their opponents as Mensheviks (which means minority). When Leftists are in a minority, then they look for other ways to win.

The settlement includes a $39 million payment (from church funds) on the issue of race, which is irrelevant to the marriage dispute. Perhaps it is an attempt to win over African congregations which oppose same-sex marriage.

Another portion of the settlement allows the clergy of conservative congregations to hold onto their pensions which they have earned. But they have a legal right to their pensions without the settlement.

Christianity Today, the same liberal newspaper which called for President Trump to resign, quickly blessed the settlement. It declares that the deal to allow the liberal faction to take over the United Methodist Church is somehow "an answer to prayer," even for conservatives.

The leadership of the single largest Methodist congregation, the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in the Kansas City area, immediately announced its support for the settlement. But it had already been pushing to change the Methodist doctrine about marriage.

It is ironic that a similar approach by Democrats is taken about President Trump. They lost the 2016 election, but instead of accepting the election outcome they maneuver to try to nullify it.

As with the impeachment of Trump, the relentless attempt to take control of the Methodist church is coming from university elites. They are akin to the wealthy financial and media supporters who have made Pete Buttigieg a contender in the Democratic presidential race for its nomination, despite being merely a former mayor who lost in a landslide in his attempt to be elected to statewide office.

A total of 93 college and university presidents demanded that the Methodist church change its centuries-old doctrine about marriage. But as in the recent defeat of the British Labour Party, working class Americans reject the ivory tower agenda.

The proposed settlement is not really a “split” or a “schism” as it is being promoted. Rather, it is an attempt to pay conservatives to abandon and leave their own church in which they have a majority, in order to allow the liberal minority to take it over.

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