

26. Social Matters

26.1 POINT OF DESCRIPTION REGIONAL SYNOD PRETORIA : BLASPHEMING GOD'S NAME (Art 152)

- A. Rev SD Snyman tables the Point of Description.
- B. The Point of Description will be concluded during the Synod session.

C. POINT OF DESCRIPTION

1. Resolution

- 1.1 That the General Synod come out strongly against the continuing blaspheming of the holy Name of the triune God of heavens and earth in some Television Programmes.
- 1.2 That the GKSA decide addressing representations to „The South African Broadcasting Complaints Commission“ (PO Box 412365, Craighall, 2024) via the Deputies for Correspondence with the Central- and Regional Governments in which the GKSA seriously objects to the continuing blaspheming of the holy Name of the triune God of heavens and earth in some Television Programmes – a Name which is world-wide honoured by Christians – with an appeal to the respect for everyone's religious convictions, respect which are in principle dictated by the Government of this country. The elucidator of the point of description will provide the deputies with concrete cases against which the charge can be directed.
- 1.3 That this resolution, if accepted by the Regional Synod Pretoria November 2014, will be submitted to the General Synod Jan 2015. The witness of the churches about this conscience-stinging matter should be as wide and unanimous as possible. In this way the respect for and honour of the Name of God – at least in this regard – may be promoted.
- 1.4 A document of witness is drafted by the Deputies in English to send to producers where blasphemy occurs.

2. Motivation

- 2.1 The command and warning of the Lord (Exodus 20:7 and Deuteronomy 5:11): „Jy mag die Naam van die HERE jou God nie ydellik gebruik nie, want die HERE sal die een wat sy Naam ydellik gebruik, nie ongestraf laat bly nie.“¹ En „Jy mag die Naam van die Here jou God nie misbruik nie, want die Here sal dié een wat sy Naam misbruik, nie ongestraf laat bly nie.“²
- 2.2 The Heidelberg Catechism, Sunday 36: „*Onderwysing in die Christelike Leer*“, ask in question 99: „Wat eis die derde gebod?“ and then the answer: „Ons mag die Naam van God nie laster of misbruik deur te vloek (a), deur 'n valse eed (b) of deur onnodig te sweer nie (c). Verder mag ons nie deur stil te bly of dit toe te laat ons aan sulke verskriklike sondes skuldig maak nie (d). Kortom, ons mag die heilige Naam van God nie anders as met vrees en eerbied gebruik nie (e), sodat Hy deur ons reg bely (f), aangeroop (g) en in al ons woorde en werke geprys word (h).“ Furthermore question 100: „Is dit dan so 'n groot sonde om die Naam van God te laster deur te sweer en te vloek dat God Hom ook oor elkeen vertoorn wat hierdie sonde nie so ver moontlik teëgaan en verbied nie?“ and the answer: „Ja seker (a), want geen sonde is groter en vertoorn God meer as die lastering van sy Naam nie. Daarom het Hy ook beveel om dit met die dood te straf (b).“

¹AV 1933/53

²AV 1983/91

- 2.3 Church Order, article 28 – the duty of the churches to witness before governments determines inter alia as follows: „Dit is ook die plig van die kerklike vergaderings om in voorkomende gevalle as kerk van Christus voor die owerheid te getuig.“ This is a case where we as churches need to continue testifying.

3. Conclusion

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will use our representations in such a way that all parties will come under the impression of the necessity to heed our call, with earnest regard for a peaceful society and for the respecting of Christians' beliefs.

Decision: The Point of Description is given effect to (amendments already added – Deputies Acta).