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**HUFF POST** LOS ANGELES

## Old Fashioned Anti-Semitism in an LA Suburb

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Each Sunday the *Pasadena Sun*, the *Glendale News-Press*, and the *Burbank Leader* (all local inserts in the *Los Angeles Times*) invite a group of local clergy to comment on different issues. They even include an atheist or two in the group. Last week, the three papers asked them to comment on a recent State Department report documenting an increase in anti-semitism. Why, they were asked, is anti-semitism on the rise?

Rev. Bryan Griem of the Montrose Community Church -- located in Montrose, an LA suburb -- began his comments with this statement: "I can say with no anti-Semitic feelings that Scripture said such would be the case." Then he went on to explain that anti-semitism is not only understandable but justified because Jews rejected Jesus. He wrote the following:

God warns "if you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples" (1 Kings 9:6-8 NIV).

When the Messiah came, the Jewish majority rejected him. A Jewish minority received him and became God's elect. So when Jews rejected the Messiah (God incarnate) who they were to receive, they became guilty of an unforgivable sin. Only in Christ is anyone (Jew or Gentile) saved; there is no other and there's only one God. Today, the temple is destroyed from Israel and unbelieving Jews are apparently increasingly recipients of ridicule.

To insulate himself from charges of anti-semitism, Rev. Griem observed: "I dated a Jew, married a half-Jew, and produced two quarter-Jews." (In fact, his wife was raised Catholic and converted to Protestantism, according to an article in a local paper).

You can read Rev. Griem's full comment (in which he also insults Muslims), and those of the other clergy, [here](#).

I hope that Rev. Griem's quarter-Jewish children realize that their father is an old-fashioned bigot. If Rev. Griem wants to know why anti-semitism still exists in America, he should look in the mirror.

Using Biblical quotations to justify Jew hatred, and suggesting that Jews deserve it because they rejected Jesus as savior, puts Rev. Griem in the same company as other bigots. Those views are not simply hate speech. They have led to centuries of overt discrimination, persecution, and mass murder, including the Holocaust.

The official Catholic church and most Protestant denominations have rejected these views, but they obviously haven't completely disappeared. There are people, including clergy, in every part of the country who share Rev. Griem's intolerant views.

I am not confusing anti-Zionism with anti-semitism. Rev. Griem wasn't criticizing Israel. He was attacking all Jews for rejecting Jesus.

Rev. Griem is entitled to his ignorant opinions, but does the *Los Angeles Times* have to give him a weekly public platform to spew his hatred? I call on the *Times*, Rev. Griem's congregation, other clergy in the Pasadena area, and all people of conscience to condemn Rev. Griem's remarks. And in the spirit of healing and reconciliation, I call on Rev. Griem to deliver a sermon to his congregation apologizing for his outrageous comments.

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