

Question: 10 October 2017

Mr Tom Mayne asked the following question –

2.

- (a) Why, during the pre-Synod briefing, did Archdeacon Kara Hartley representing the Domestic Violence Task Force, decline to mention ‘female submission’ when asked by the Diocesan Secretary to comment on complementarianism? Is belief in female submission no longer a pre-requisite for dealing with Domestic Violence?
- (b) Is belief in female submission a pre-requisite of the diocese for addressing Domestic Violence as stated in clause (b) of the original Canon Grant motion passed by Synod in 2013?

To which the President replied –

- 2. On Wednesday of last week I answered the question of Mr Tom Mayne regarding domestic abuse that was listed at Item 3.2 of the Business Paper for that day and reproduced on today’s business paper at Item 3.1. The answer I gave was as follows –
 - (a) Part (a) of the question is out of order under business rules 6.3(4)(a) and (d) as it makes assertions and inferences. The questioner may wish to speak to Archdeacon Hartley about the matter.
 - (b) No.

Upon hearing my answer, Canon Grant sought leave and was granted leave to make a personal statement.

Upon reflection, I considered that both parts of Mr Mayne’s questions were out of order, under our Business Rules, because both parts contained an assertion and made inferences or imputations.

With respect to my answer to part (b) of Mr Mayne’s question, I therefore think it is necessary to reissue an answer, which I have discussed with Mr Mayne and Canon Grant. Mr Mayne assures me that his use of the phrase was in good faith, though he mistakenly referred to clause (b) instead of paragraph 2, which uses the term ‘submission’ but not ‘female submission’ as he asserted.

Hence my revised answer to part (b) of the question is as follows –

- (b) While the answer is No, this part of the question is also out of order under business rule 6.3(4)(a) and (d) because it contains an assertion and makes an imputation, which on the evidence is plainly false, since resolution 33/13, moved by Canon Grant and passed by the Synod, made no reference to ‘female submission’. On the contrary, the relevant part of the resolution reads:

...consideration ought to be given to ensuring that upholding the Bible’s good teaching on submission and sacrificial love – both in preaching and teaching, and in marriage education or counselling – is not easily twisted as a cover for abuse.