

Back to which church?

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The second-most-discussed item on my Facebook wall these days--after, of course, [the great spiritual-but-not religious kerfuffle of 2011](#)--is a video inviting people to church. It addresses several misconceptions about church with brief yet powerful testimonies. When I first watched the video, I immediately reposted it with a one-word comment: "Lovely." I even got teary when I watched it (though that might be related to the fact that I very recently gave birth). From the aesthetics to the message, the whole thing is just impeccably done:

But an hour later, a friend posted a comment. She'd done a little research on the National Back to Church Sunday website, and she'd uncovered [a bit of exclusivity](#) behind all that magnanimous inclusivity:

Churches are to be open to and accepting of all people, offering God's love and redemption to each person without prejudice or condemnation (John 3:16-18). However, in their efforts to reach out, churches must take care to uphold the Word of God, and not engage in moral compromise (Romans 12:2) or affirm any sin such as sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, stealing, greed, drunkenness, slander, swindling (1 Corinthians 6:9-10), murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip (Romans 1:21-32), witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, factions, or envy (Galatians 5:19-21).

Many of my friends who reposted the video are socially and theologically progressive. Some serve congregations that officially welcome gay and lesbian Christians. The organizers of Back to Church Sunday clearly prefer

that their video and companion materials not be used to invite folks to such communities. (I assume that homosexuality is a primary focus of the statement above; I'm not familiar with any churches that have voted to be open to and affirming of swindling.) Likewise, leaders of progressive congregations might be chastened to realize that the video they just shared links back to a statement contrary to the message they wish to communicate.

But I didn't remove the video from my personal Facebook page, or from my church's. (Yes, I was so jazzed about this thing that I posted it to my church's Facebook page while on maternity leave.) It's just too *good*. It's like the milk we buy at the local dairy. When we moved to the Chicago area, friends warned us that we wouldn't want to drink this milk once we'd experienced one of the owner's political campaigns.

But I've learned that if I wanted all the farmers who grow my food to share my political convictions, I'd be pretty hungry. So I say repost this lovely video until the cows come home.