

"Reality Changes Things..."

Why Christianity should reconsider it's hardline position on homosexuality and the Bible

By: Rev. Charles C. Morrow, Jr.

In past centuries it has been common for the universal Christian church to label people with signs painted with very "broad" brushes. "Drunkards," addicts, "possessed," and divorcee's were afforded little compassion or support, because they were nothing more than people who refused to "behave right." After all, they were not afflicted, but rather the victim of their own outright choices to live an ungodly life.

The church has commonly witnessed gradual changes in it's perceptions of such things as alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, divorce, and remarriage after divorce, as well as it's reactions to them. These changes came as further light made itself available such through simple means as personal observation and experience, or in more complex issues the findings of scientists doing medical research.

Biblical writers frequently conveyed harsh and judgmental attitudes toward individuals living with issues such as these, and the church generally chose to echo an equally harsh stance from it's pulpits, publications, and presbytery. As these issues have become far more clearly understood, the Christian church suddenly swung around one hundred eighty degrees in the way it interpreted Scripture related to these issues and has reinterpreted many passages to now support their new-found understanding. (I Cor. 7:8-9, 10-15, 27-28)

The average person on the street today recognizes that alcoholism is an addiction. He has learned that it's difficult to overcome and is often brought on by some physiological or psychological stimulus. It's commonly known that babies born to mothers with chemical dependencies often enter the world with a physiological dependency on these same substances. And, it's further widely known that children of individuals with substance abuse problems are frequently predisposed to similar addictions later in life. If the physiological traces don't trap them, the psychological reliance may likely develop through every day observation of the behavior of parents or other esteemed adults.

Divorce, once one of the most taboo of behaviors, is now claiming nearly half of all marriages in this country alone. Divorced individuals were once all but banned from heaven simply because they failed "to honor their marriage vows" and keep themselves pure in marital fidelity. Saints, who once looked upon the divorcee as one who failed to keep a commitment made before God and His church, now realistically recognize that many marriages have needed to end because of terrible spousal abuse, basic practical or emotional neglect, or flagrant infidelities. The church has even gone so far as to nearly rewrite the Bible, allowing just about every divorced individual to suddenly find heavenly permission to remarry after divorce despite numerous Scriptural admonishments clearly to the contrary. (See Matt. 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12, Deut. 24:1-4, I Cor. 7:27)

Reality affects the church's perception of Scripture. A clearer understanding of the human condition causes us to change the way in which we read and interpret the Bible. Perhaps this is why God has declared, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding." (Isa.40:28) As well as "...for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7) And finally, "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14)

Perhaps it has always been God's intention that in trying to better understand and serve Him we become better acquainted with ourselves by becoming students of humanity. Can it be that Scripture was meant to be read and studied in this fashion? Not as the answer to a yet unasked question, but rather as a response to the needs of man as they appear to be obstacles to us in our journey toward fellowship with Him.

Interestingly enough, the church today yet holds tight to its anti-homosexual stance. It still chooses to define the complex issues of an individual's sexuality, its expressions and attractions, as being nothing more than a conscious choice to chose evil over good, right instead of wrong, Satan in place of God. No other explanation is acceptable. None other is needed. After all, did not the apostle Paul clearly define homosexuality as being nothing short of unbridled lust and fierce, wanton, godless sexual appetite? (Romans 1:24-27)

I, for one, hold no grudge against Paul for his position. That "brand" or manifestation of homosexual conduct which he was privy to witness and heard emanating from the filthy palaces of pagan Rome would nauseate even the most liberal of Gay or Lesbian Biblical scholars. But to label all people of one race or ethnicity "savages" because you grew up in a place where only the most backward, secluded, and uncivilized of their bloodlines' tribes lived is to do a great injustice to an otherwise proud, constructive, productive, and commendable people.

While there are some (like the pagans of the to whom Rome Paul was writing) within both the straight and Gay-Lesbian communities who genuinely embrace a godless lifestyle, devoid of rules and knowing no boundaries, particularly sexually; it is foolish to lump all of any group or segment of our society into the same mix. The most absurd phrase ever employed within the English vernacular is "Gay lifestyle." This fictitious phrase falsely suggests that all Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender people walk beneath the same banner, march to the same drummer, and live out their daily existence in the same identical manner one as the other. To even suggest that all homosexual people behave identically is to ignore the vast array of talent, skill, accomplishment, diversity, and versatility found within its ranks.

No one would be so foolish as to use the phrase "straight lifestyle." Everybody knows that such a term is far too broad to even be usable, yet the similar phrase, "Gay lifestyle" is tossed about by opponents of homosexuality as though it were valid simply because it's being applied to someone other than themselves...a people, I might add, whom they obviously know precious little about in truth. Again, they've read the definitions supplied in Scripture and applied them across the board without ever trying to look honestly and openly at the human condition of homosexuality as it realistically appears in our world today. Why are so many Gay, Lesbian,

and Transgender people fighting their way into the churches? Because they are indeed these godless sorts of whom Paul writes? I think not!

Sadly, reality is often overlooked by those who must live within its confines. As mentioned above, when reality has finally been realized in times past by the church it has changed the churches' perception on such complex issues as alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, divorce, and remarriage after divorce. With God's help, one day the reality of homosexuality as a natural, innate, biological state of existence for some people will emerge in sufficient evidence to speak to the hearts and minds of even the harshest homophobic, Bible thumping critics. In that day the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender soul will no longer have to silently sit week after week in the pews of most churches while the preacher unburdens himself of that same heavy load of misguided and abusive condemnation that their alcoholic, recovering drug addict, mentally ill, divorced, and remarried neighbor once, too, had to endure. Only then will the wonderful truth of God's grace, manifest in the person and provision of the man Jesus Christ, be fully understood and much more fully realized and celebrated.

The day will come when reality prevails. In that day we shall all sing together; straight, gay, lesbian, old, young, wealthy, poor, black, white, Asian, Latino and so on...

**"No, I'm not perfect, Just forgiven.
Hadn't yet arrived, But I'm on my way.
Since Jesus found me and forgave me,
Can't say I'm perfect,
But I can say I'm saved!"**

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." - I JOHN 3:2

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