

I Am Not A Gay Christian

By Daniel Mingo, Abba's Delight, Louisville, KY

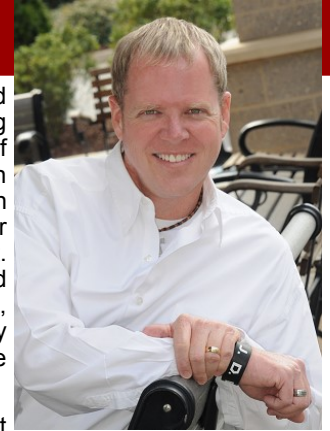


There is a new brand of Christians which has made its way to the forefront of the great gay debate in the past few years. They call themselves gay Christians who have their own network called the Gay Christian Network. Quoting from their website, www.gaychristian.net, "Founded in 2001, the Gay Christian Network (GCN) is a nonprofit Christian ministry dedicated to building bridges and offering support for those caught in the crossfire of one of today's most divisive culture wars. Our membership includes both those on Side A (supporting same-sex marriage and relationships) and on Side B (promoting celibacy for Christians with same-sex attractions)." Side A believes Father blesses same-sex marriages, while Side B believes celibacy is more in line with Father's will. Personally, and for the record, I would lean more towards Side B because of its stance on celibacy. But that's really not why I'm tackling this topic today, or why I

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Is the Culture War Over?

By McKrae Game



This past week our phones started ringing from local media, wanting comments on the 4th District Court of Appeals' ruling that struck down Virginia's ban on gay marriage. North Carolina and South Carolina have similar bans and are also in the 4th district. North Carolina's Attorney General said that he will no longer defend their ban, while South Carolina has stated that they will. No doubt, this will go to the Supreme Court.

I decided it would not be in our best interest to put our opinions into the political debate now that we are a national organization. Still, I do not believe the culture war is over.

Also, in an interview published last week, well-known former homosexual, Yvette Schneider, came out in favor of gay civil rights and tromped on the work of organizations like ours. In one interview she wrote of her work at a national conservative organization saying, "On several occasions, I heard conversations about how the culture would be better off if homosexuality were re-stigmatized on the playground. If boys would go back to calling other boys "f*ggot," the cultural tide would shift against the acceptance of homosexuality as a normal orientation." www.glaad.org/blog; July 29, 2014

By this attitude, it seems that the Christian church has missed the boat on converting people, including themselves, over

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Same-Sex Attraction and the World By Jeanette Howard, Bethany Ministries, Sussex, England



This week has not been easy. In the light of the drama, tragedies and horrors that dominate our screens and saturate the airwaves, I have found it difficult to see the subject of who's attracted to whom as little more than first world pettiness.

The passengers of one airline lie undetected on the bottom of the ocean whilst human remains from another flight are scattered over the war torn Ukrainian countryside. Syrian and Iraqi Christians are being slaughtered in their hundreds if not thousands while the Israelis and Hamas continue to bomb the life out of each other. Nigeria still hasn't found their 'lost' school children and they, along with the likes of Sierra Leone, are being torn apart by violent terrorists. I could continue with the increasing numbers of countries being confronted by the deadly Ebola crisis, but you get the picture.

Placed against the mountain of this awfulness I am left asking the question, Does what I do have any worth?

I weep, I pray, and I beseech the Lord to intervene in world events. I sign petitions urging those in power to 'do something' to help alleviate the suffering and trauma in various continents, but I still question my day job. Does what I do really have any bearing on the big picture?

He [Jesus] went on: "It's what comes out of a person that pollutes: obscenities, lusts, thefts, murders, adulteries, greed, depravity, deceptive dealings, carousing, mean looks, slander, arrogance, foolishness—all these are vomit from the heart. There is the source of your pollution." Matthew 7:20-23 (The Message)

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds [as

shown by] because of your evil behavior. Colossians 1:21 (NIV, footnote included)

The truth is that a world that is at enmity with itself is the only possible outcome for a people who refuse to acknowledge and submit to their Creator. We are designed to be dependent on God for all things, but insistence on living independently of Him can only result in more of what we are already witnessing around the globe.

I may not be shooting air planes out of the sky or butchering people who don't happen to think as I think, but the truth is that I am more than capable of thinking murderous and slanderous thoughts or indulging in lustful imaginings. And that is why I need to continue with my day job. I can't change world events but I can help change the world in which I live. If, through the power of God's Holy Spirit I can help men and women bring their sexuality in thought and expression under the increasing Lordship of Christ, then I am fulfilling my part, however small, in ensuring that God's Kingdom increasingly invades and destroys Satan's Kingdom here on earth. We can live as men and women of the light who choose to surrender and submit our ways to the One who calls us back to our true self, that of being image bearers. In all things, however global or local:

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, here (in our hearts and) on earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.

Photo: This is a variant on the Arabic letter 'N' you may have come across as some people's Facebook profile. This is to show solidarity with the many Christians who are currently being slaughtered in Iraq and Syria by the Islamic State. The letter is being scrawled on Christian homes and stands for Nasara (Nazarene).

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would choose not to affiliate myself or Abba's Delight with this network.

What would absolutely prohibit me from identifying with either group is the fact that they have found and majorly declared their identity to be in their sexual preference. I find the use of the adjective "gay" not to be Biblically sound—not because the word "gay" is not used in the Bible, but because there is no support in Biblical text for such a description of a Christ follower. Rather, Biblical text calls for Christians to separate ourselves in all ways from that which has kept us in sin. By our actions, as well as mentally, physically and verbally.

As a born-again believer, I learn to become more perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus, the Word of God made flesh. If I then identify myself as a gay Christian, I am branding myself with a name and identity that Father neither meant for me to have, nor that He has Biblically authorized. The fact is, there is not even one portion of Biblical text that approves homosexual acts. Those who support same gender sexual behavior, I believe, have taken passages out of context not considering the entirety of what Scripture has to say about living a life of holiness, in an attempt to conform the Bible to their feelings and attractions, rather than holding their feelings and attractions in obedience to the Scriptures.

Paul tells us, "Therefore from now on we recognize no man by what he is in the flesh...Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 2 Cor. 5:16a,17. If I am a new creature in Christ, why would I ever want to take on an identity for myself that is contrary to His life in me? That would be counter-productive to becoming more perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus. Therefore, I train myself to think in agreement with the Scriptures, speak things that are in agreement with the Scriptures, and act in ways that are only in agreement with the Scriptures. To me, this leaves no room for taking on a gay Christian identity. This brings up another interesting thought!

Have you ever heard any believers identify themselves as depressed Christians? Or slothful believers? Or fear-filled disciples? I'm sure there are many Christians who suffer depression, are slothful and live in fears of all kinds, but you don't see them identifying themselves in those ways or making declarations to justify/build their identities around those issues. There would seem to be a significant amount of deception in taking on identities that move us away from being more perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus, rather than closer to it.

Maybe in my walk I have been fortunate in my understanding of where my identity lies. I knew instinctively my same-sex attractions were not in line with Father's design for human sexuality as set forth in the Word. I never wanted to take on a gay identity. There was never a time when I thought hooking up with guys was an OK thing with God, whether for relationships or just for sex. So I learned early the importance of having my mind renewed; and the power words have that we speak; and that my true identity is in Christ and not in my sexuality, career, roles as husband or father, or anything else.

When it came time to come clean with my wife about my attractions and the behaviors I'd engaged in, she knew immediately this was not who I was. As she has described it, she had seen the man of God I was, how I pursued my relationship with Him. Paraphrasing her, this sin had leached itself onto me, and we just needed to figure out how we were going to get it off of me. That was 21 years ago when I began my healing journey.

I read an article last week called, "Love Wins: The Shifting Landscape on LGBT Issues in the Evangelical Church." (LGBT=Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) The article was written by Rod Snyder, who is the President Emeritus, Young Democrats of America, July 22nd www.huffingtonpost.com. Of himself he says, "I'm a gay Christian from a conservative family fighting for a progressive cause." I recommend the

article, although there is much to disagree with in it. There were some good and truthful points in it as well. What was glaring to me, though, was the beginning of the title "Love Wins..." As I read through the article in its entirety, I was looking for something specific in what he might say about love, since he declares himself to be a Christian. I was looking for any indication of how we express our love for God. As it turns out he means how we love one another—gay-to-gay and straight-to-gay.

In one of the article's section-titles called "Love wins," Snyder writes, "One of the recent rallying cries for the LGBT movement has been 'Love is love.' One of the most common phrases in Christianity is 'God is love.' Everyone is pushing the Love agenda but not enough of us are practicing it. Love means listening more and yelling less. Love means pausing long enough to consider another perspective. Love means making an effort to get to know someone from a dissimilar background. Love means taking risks and stepping outside of what's comfortable. Love means being willing to face criticism for ceding an inch to the other side."

And for me, this is where the biggest deception of all comes in. Everyone will forever talk about learning to love each other, and the different ways to go about doing that, but what about our love for God? "We love Him because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19) And Paul writes to the Corinthian believers that nothing will ever separate us from His love: nothing we can do or say, nor any identity we can attach to ourselves. Nothing. Our primary charge is to love Him in return. We express that love in our obedience to Him. Jesus fulfilled the Law and summed it up by saying for us to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul and mind; thus declaring love to be the greatest commandment. Jesus also said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Yet another time, Jesus spoke to the Pharisees saying, "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment, what to say and how to say it. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore, the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told me." John 12:49,50. Jesus instructs us to love the Father the same way He loved Him, by being obedient to His Word. Jesus did not reinvent or reinterpret Father's message, but that is exactly what is being done by those who justify their same-sex love relationships. The article omits obeying God as our primary charge from our Father in our days on earth conforming to the image of Jesus. Rather, Snyder goes right to the gay Christian's entitlement to love the way they want to love and hope Father will bless it. Reinventing and reinterpreting God's Word to fit our feelings is one way we "worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator," as Paul wrote to the Corinthian church.

So, how do I identify myself as a Christian as it relates to my same-gender attractions? I am an adopted son of the Most High God, a brother to and co-heir of King Jesus, saved by His grace for good works towards building His Kingdom. I am dying daily to my flesh, and the sins that so easily beset me (of which homosexual lust is one). And I am daily being more perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus. ✝

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to Christ's admonition to "love one another," not condemning, as He taught by His example with the woman at the well. Instead, we have fought a long culture war against homosexuals that now seems lost.

What has actually been lost, and what has been gained? What side do we stand on now? And, what do we say to those who are caught in the middle wanting to pursue Christ as Lord but struggling with same-sex attractions?

In light of these happenings, This newsletter features articles by two of our ministry leaders. ✝

Would you consider a special summer gift? Summer has always been a challenge, and this summer is no different. Whether you're already a financial partner or haven't yet joined us financially, please consider being a blessing to those who seek out help from this ministry network. Your financial partnership is what helps make this ministry possible. You are playing a vital role, and we are very grateful for your support.

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