

“How Do I Show Concern for My Lesbian Co-Worker Without Approving of Her Lifestyle?”

Hi Sue! I read your questions and answers concerning the topic of homosexuality, but I still have a question.

I work in a public school district. My school district does not recognize same sex marriages, but a lesbian teacher and her partner have recently adopted a baby this summer. This teacher has asked staff members to sign a petition in favor of giving her partner insurance benefits. Her partner has chosen to stay home with the baby and has no insurance (the baby is covered).

A few teachers in my school have chosen not to sign the petition (different reasons: religious, cultural). I did not sign the petition because I do not agree with the lifestyle of homosexuality because of what the Bible says. If something ever happened to this teacher's partner and she needed insurance benefits I would feel terrible.

How do I articulate not agreeing with their lifestyle but caring for the person—and not sounding like a hypocrite? This teacher is starting to confront those who have not signed the petition.

Thank you in advance,

Dear _____,

I don't think it's hypocritical to honestly care about people without supporting them in lifestyle choices you disagree with. This teacher, by confronting those who haven't signed the petition, is not only demanding acceptance but APPROVAL of her lifestyle choice.

Look at it this way; if the teacher were a man with a live-in honey (as Dr. Laura puts it), how would you feel if he demanded that his girlfriend be covered by his insurance?

The thing about lesbian and homosexual relationships is that they cannot produce children naturally; that's one reason they don't qualify as families, and why they shouldn't have the privileges of protection that society gives to families, like insurance coverage. The teacher and her lover have created an unnatural, immoral "family" and now demand that society treat them like a natural family.

So it's not hypocritical for you to remain steadfast in your beliefs. They are in a relationship and a dependency situation that they created. It's nobody's fault if the girlfriend gets sick and needs insurance.

Caring for someone doesn't mean you give in to their demands. It'll be hard and VERY uncomfortable, I know, but you might say something like, "I'm sorry to disappoint you, but what you're asking for is running right up against what I believe about right and wrong. I can't support your decision, though I support your right to make it. I'm sorry."

I hate it that you're put in this situation. Arrrggghhhhhh!!!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"God Made Me Gay"

So...in all that I see in your site, is homosexuality wrong?

Why do you care?

Do you not have lives?

I know that Jesus Christ the Lord loves me for being gay,

because he made me that way and each one of us in his image!

So...in all that I see in your site, is homosexuality wrong?

Homosexual behavior is sin, because it is unholy and not God's intent. Having homosexual feelings is not wrong because nobody has any choice over that.

Why do you care?

Because God cares.

Because the world is telling us a lie, that this destructive behavior is normal and good and desirable, but people are dying from it in both body and soul.

Because there is hope for change and healing, but lots of people don't know that.

Because this is an area where there is SO MUCH pain, both in the lives of those dealing with same gender attraction and in the lives of the people who love them.

Do you not have lives?

Yes, we have lives. But we are committed to what God has called us to, which is proclaiming the truth of His word and its perspective on our culture. Part of that is providing a biblical perspective on homosexuality. Particularly because there is a definite agenda of people whose purpose is to change the culture's view of homosexuality to one that is diametrically opposed to what God says. We can't oppose God without destructive results, so at Probe we are offering the truth to combat the lie that's out there about this issue.

I know that Jesus Christ the Lord loves me for being gay, because he made me that way and each one of us in his image!

You've got two out of three right!! <smile> He sure does love you. He not only loves you, but He LIKES you, and proved it by

dying for you. He DID make each of us in His own image, which makes us all infinitely valuable and precious, an absolute masterpiece.

But He doesn't love you for being gay, He loves you for being His creation. He didn't make you gay. He wouldn't condemn it if He had! You may have always felt different, and you may have been told that you've always been gay, but that doesn't make it true. For example, have you always been an English speaker? You are now; have you always been? Well, no, when you were born you were programmed for being a LANGUAGE speaker, but not necessarily an ENGLISH speaker. If you had been born and raised under different circumstances, you might have been an Indian speaker or a French speaker or a Swahili speaker.

In the same way, if different circumstances had happened to you, you could well have been different—sensitive? emotional? not real physical?—but identified yourself as creative and emotionally gifted but not gay. Like King David in the Old Testament.

A lot of research has examined the contributing factors of homosexual orientation. It seems to be primarily relational.

Which is why thousands of people have discovered that an intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus is bringing healing to those relational wounds that made them think they were gay in the first place, and they are changing from the inside out. If you're ever interested—if you get to the point where life isn't working for you and being gay just isn't making you happy, like you hope it will—I can give you more information.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Bridging to Common Ground: Communicating Christ Across the Cultural Divide

Have you ever felt like an alien in your own culture? What was your reaction to the people in that other group? The other day, mine was negative, then a bit hopeful. It all left me very humbled, but ready once more to build bridges and sow spiritual seed over shared common ground.

Always Ready?

There I was, in a vegetarian restaurant, talking to the Chinese owner about my motivations for patronizing this rare refuge for vegans, vegetarians and other people far removed from my day-to-day world. I just like to eat healthier sometimes, I weakly offered. After all, when I recently found it closed, I had sauntered to the Texas-style barbeque joint in the same shopping center feeling little irony.

Not so for most of the old man's clientele. They just seemed to fit the veggie-eaters mold. I felt conspicuously out of place as I mingled in the buffet line with pony-tailed guys, gals with their hair in doo-rags, Indian and Chinese immigrants. Yet there I stood, representing white middle-America in my Tommy Bahama knock-off shirt and dress slacks.

I spied a rack of religious booklets promoting an off-beat Asian religious group. Hey, I thought to myself, if you want authentic tofu-based cuisine, you have to mix with the diversity. No problem.

But I wasn't prepared for the group of youths who walked in

next, sporting dreadlocks, torn Goth stockings, studded leather boots and T-shirts that would offend the most tough-minded. The “F” word assaulted me in a slogan scrawled across the back of several wearing the official T-shirt for the punk band P*ssChrist.

I have to admit, I wavered between repulsion and compassion, amusement and offense. Then I began to fantasize about striding right up the large table of vegan-gothic-anti-social kids and introducing myself. I imagined chatting, asking about the band their shirts represent, then moving on to the fact that not all Christ-followers are hypocritical haters—see, I’m talking to you!

My two-fold goal in my little daydream, admittedly: to challenge their perception of an establishment-looking right-wing Christian guy like me and to test their own assumed sensibilities regarding acceptance, tolerance and diversity. After all, I judged, can they themselves show tolerance for a fellow who represents a polar opposite worldview and set of values? Or will they be found out as just another brand of bigot? All of this I dreamed up perhaps without even finding out their names! I never went over to their table.

Bad Thinking Means No Bridging or Burned Bridges

Upon reflection, I saw how off-guard I was spiritually and how deeply my gut reactions represent some questionable thinking, even unbiblical attitudes. I would probably have come off as, well, a hypocritical hater, despite the better intentions I mixed in with my prejudices. That drove me to prayer and back to a book that is still worth reading: *Finding Common Ground: How to Communicate with Those Outside the Christian Community—While We Still Can* by Tim Downs.

My response revealed several unhelpful presuppositions about people on the other side of the cultural divide and how to

deal with them that still have roots in my soul, although I should know better. My private syllogism went like this:

They're obviously not for us (biblical believers), but against us, so

The best way to deal with such people would be to confront them or ignore them (and I don't prefer the latter).

Although confronting them outright would be wrong, it wouldn't take long for the tolerant approach to necessarily give way to an uncomfortable, confrontational proclamation of truth, so bring it on!

Somebody's got to reach these folks, and it's apparent that sooner is better. These are the last days, after all.[{1}](#)

But building bridges with the eventual goal of sharing the gospel fruitfully—something I've worked at full-time for two decades—requires much more. More thought, compassion, understanding, wisdom and patience. The kind, writes Downs, modeled not by grain harvesters, but rather by fruit growers. This is biblical, but often ignored by Bible-believers.[{2}](#)

As a member of an out-of-balance evangelical Christian subculture, I have unconsciously bought into a worldview that overvalues the spiritual harvest at the expense of spiritual sowing. In so doing, I am implicated in a scorched-earth mentality that neither tends the spiritually unready nor makes allowance for future crops.[{3}](#) I repent, and not for the first time.

This way of thinking assumes a vast conspiracy of God-haters. Although the caustic, outspoken atheism of Sam Harris and [Richard Dawkins](#) has risen to prominence recently, it is not the norm. Rather a muddled middle of persuadable unbelievers and confused born-again is still a large part of the American scene.[{4}](#) The us vs. them approach tends to be self-

fulfilling, writes Downs. If approached as an enemy, defensiveness is understandably generated in those who don't fit cleanly into our community. Even for announced enemies, like the T-shirt-wearing punk rockers, turning the other cheek while engaging with love can be a powerful witness.

Another evangelical myth, according to Downs, is the *certainty* that we're experiencing the final harvest.^{5} Indeed, the coarsening of the culture is a mainstay and we are promised that, in the End Times, things will go from bad to worse. That's sure how it looks, increasingly. Also, we conservative Christians, who shared the heady age of the Moral Majority, are now being blended with every other social group into a stew of diversity where no group is a majority—and we sound like jilted lovers, says Downs. We need to ask, How much of the spiritual fruitlessness in America might we be contributing to by our own perceptions and resultant attitudes?

To act out of such worldview-level angst and fail to prepare to reach future generations is dereliction. Picking low-hanging fruit, if you will, and plowing under the remaining vines is neither loving nor wise. It's certainly not God's way, thankfully.

If I'd waltzed up to that table of vegetarian punkers the other day, I'd have likely displayed the attitude Downs critiques and confesses having owned: I'll proclaim the truth. What they do with it is their business. In other words, 'I'd walk away self-justified, ineffective—and likely having done harm rather than God's purposes. My commitment to justice would have overridden my practice of love.^{6}

To make any genuine impact for Christ among a crowd so foreign to me as these youths would require more than mere personal chutzpah and a bag of evangelistic and apologetic "tricks." I'd need to wade humbly into their world, eyes wide open and skin toughened, expecting no respect (initially at least),

hoping realistically only for long-term results. I could not be effective in my current state—from dress to time commitments to my mindset. To be missional about it long-term, I'd need to be surely called of God and make a monumental life-change, like a missionary I met here in town.

Becoming All Things to All People

I first heard of Dale{7} when he spoke to parents at our kids' Christian school. I marvelled that he and his wife—both in their 40s—along with their three girls would pack up their middle-class home, leave a thriving youth pastorate in a Baptist church and take up residence in the grungiest, hippest part of Dallas, Texas. When I met with Dale down in Deep Ellum, I could feel the gaping divide between my suburban existence and the urban alternative, Bohemian art-music district scene he'd adopted.

When a couple of 20-something chicks interrupted our meal, I was annoyed that he left me hanging for some time. But Dale's apology stopped me short in my own self-absorption. He and his wife had befriended one of the gals, a bartender, and were seeking to slowly, carefully build a relationship with her without scaring her off. And it was working. She had noticed the non-confrontational yet uncompromising difference in this loving Christian couple and asked about it. Now, when she introduces these Christian friends, she openly initiates conversations about spiritual things with rank unbelievers. There's no threat felt, but plenty of curiosity.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some." {8} To use the hackneyed phrase, "Walk a mile in their shoes"—even if the shoes are foul (some punkers don't do hygiene) or not your style.

When I researched the band with the sacriligious name on the T-shirts, I was introduced to a subculture that not only was foreign to me, but one that actively alienates itself from the

larger culture. Part of a movement called *anarcho-crust punk*, this particular band is known for blasphemous rants. Counter-cultural lifestyle, vile language, themes of death, filth and anti-religious, anti-conservative and anti-capitalist identity politics all mark this underworld of dark lostness.

To bridge across cultural canyons—even such a radical one—to begin on common ground with those outside the Christian community, we need to:

adopt a bridging mentality—think of outreach as a process and pass your perspective on

avoid fueling intolerant stereotypes and show genuine, biblical tolerance

don't burn bridges—avoid unnecessary confrontation but rather persuade by modeling uncompromising love and concern along with truth

remember from where you fell and recall who the Enemy really is—our struggle is not against flesh and blood^{[{9}](#)}

cultivate, sow, harvest and begin again. Patiently use art and subtle, effective communications^{[{10}](#)}

relate genuinely: share your own foibles, ask sincerely about their anger and pain

wait on God's timing, but don't fail to offer the gospel and help them grasp faith

For those called to go native to bridge across cultural divides, one couple reaching out in the London music-arts district serves as a model. In a four-hour conversation with a Londoner deep into the local scene—a definite unbeliever who knew of the couple's Christian commitments—the husband was asked:

What do you think of homosexuality?

After thoughtfully pausing, he deferred, Well, I'd prefer to not share that with you.

Why not?

Because I believe my view on that will offend you and I don't want to do that; you're my friend.[*{11}*](#)

Compromise? Wimpiness? No. Curiosity caused the non-Christian to ask again some time later, to which the believer responded gently, "As I said, I don't want to offend you, but since you asked again. . ." His reply led to Jesus Christ Himself. His biblical response evoked a thoughtful, "Oh—now I'm glad you warned me. That is very different from my opinion." The message was heard and respected. The relationship, still intact, grew in breadth and depth and led to a fuller witness.

Our London-based missionary took care, as a vinedresser, not to bruise the unripe fruit. His eventual impact with the life-changing good news of Christ was made possible by the patience and love he balanced with the hard truth. He and his wife, an accomplished musician, now have high-level contacts in this London subculture.

I'm taking mental notes and rereading Down's important book for some really useful and specific strategies for bridging to common ground with those alien to me.

Notes

1. *Finding Common Ground: How to Communicate with Those Outside the Christian Community...While We Still Can*, Tim Downs, (Moody Press: Chicago, 1999), Chapter 3, "Calling Down Fire," pages 33ff.
2. Ibid, 46.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, 44.

5. Ibid, 47. See also: [End Time Anxieties](#).
6. Ibid, 38.
7. Not his real name.
8. I Corinthians 9:22 (NASB).
9. Ephesians 6:12 (NASB).
10. Downs, T., op. cit., 66-71.
11. Based on second-hand account without attempt to check details of the conversation. The meaning was clear: by waiting and building credibility, the door to sharing more opened where none likely would have otherwise.

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Politically Correct Education

Don Closson considers the impact that affirmative action, multiculturalism, and speech codes have had on education. He also argues that the heart of the issue is the rejection of both the Judeo-Christian worldview and Western Civilization.

The Power of Political Correctness

The media has recently taken notice of a trend in education that has actually been around for some time. This trend has been obvious to anyone well-acquainted with the goings-on in our citadels of higher learning or even on selected high school campuses. The term *Political Correctness*, or *politically correct speech*, covers most of the issues involved. Multiculturalism is often given as the driving ethic that prompts one to be politically correct.

At the foundation of this movement is the belief that all education is political. Nowhere in the curriculum can one find a hiding place from race, class, or gender issues. Added to

this assumption is the law of moral and ethical relativism: All systems of thought, all cultures, are equal in value. To assume otherwise is politically incorrect by definition.

Just how important this type of thinking is to those who influence our nation's students is reflected by some of their comments. According to Glenn Maloney, assistant dean of students at the University of Texas at Austin, "Multiculturalism will be the key word for education. I believe that will be the mission of the university in the 90's." (1) Donna Shalala, chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, adds that this movement amounts to "a basic transformation of American higher education in the name of multiculturalism and diversity." (2)

A recent study of the New York school system found that "African Americans, Asian Americans, Puerto Rican/Latinos, and Native Americans have all been the victims of an intellectual and educational oppression that has characterized the culture and institutions of the United States and the European American worlds for centuries." (3)

The report goes on to state, "Unfortunately, stereotyping and misinformation have become part of the dominant culture enveloping everyone. . . . Because of the depth of the problem and the tenacity of its hold on the mind, only the most stringent measures can have significant impact." (4)

And stringent measures are what have occurred. Curricula, admissions policies, the hiring and promotion of faculty, and the freedom to debate issues have all been modified by those who currently define political correctness. There is a growing body of evidence that quota systems are now in place in many admissions offices across the country. Textbooks are being written and courses changed to promote multiculturalism at the expense of teaching about Western Civilization. Professors are unable to teach their courses or participate in the academic enterprise because their views fail to conform to the new

guardians of culture.

What is most appalling is the attempt to remove the freedom of speech from students who fail to conform to the correct position on a broad spectrum of topics. What is ironic is that many of those now attempting to limit the freedom of speech of students in the name of multiculturalism are the very same individuals that began the free speech movement in the sixties, arguing for academic freedom and student input into the curriculum. It seems that the issue was more a matter of gaining power to control the curriculum and inject it with their views rather than truly to promote freedom of academic endeavors.

Ethnic Studies

Let's look at a few places where political correctness has had a major impact. In 1988 the Stanford faculty voted to change the Western Culture course, one of the most popular on campus, to "Cultures, Ideas and Values." The fifteen-book requirement was dropped and replaced with the admonition to give substantial attention to issues of race(5) and gender. The reading list now had to include a quota of works by women and minorities. Out goes Shakespeare, in comes Burgos-Debray.

Shakespeare is deemed to be racist, sexist, and classist, a product of the ultimate evil—Western Civilization. French writer Elisabeth Burgos-Debray is, on the other hand, politically correct. One of her works, now part of the Stanford curriculum, describes a Guatemalan woman's struggle against capitalist oppression. She rejects marriage and motherhood and becomes a feminist, a socialist, and finally a Marxist, arguing politics with fellow revolutionaries in Paris. According to the author, this simple Guatemalan woman speaks for all the Indians of the American continent.(6)

Berkeley, Mount Holyoke, and the University of Wisconsin are just a few of the schools where students must take a course in

ethnic studies but are not required to take a single course in Western Civilization. At Berkeley, the ethnic studies course is the only required course on campus, and Wisconsin students can graduate without taking any American history. Ohio State has gone even further, revamping its entire curriculum to reflect issues of gender, race, and ethnicity. The chairman of the English department at Pennsylvania State University has remarked, "I would bet that Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is taught in more English departments today than all of Shakespeare's plays combined." (7)

An ironic twist to this revolution is that when writings of third-world authors are included in the curriculum, they rarely are the classics from that culture. Instead, they tend to be recent, Marxist, and politically correct works.

Unfortunately, curriculum revisions are not confined to the college campus. The state of New York recently commissioned a committee to review its statewide secondary-school curriculum. The results were a bit startling, to say the least.

According to the report, no topic is culture-free. The Eurocentric, white, American culture currently dominating the curriculum must give way to one which represents all cultures equally. Even math and science were cited as culturally biased because they failed to give credit to contributions from other cultures. (8)

In the social sciences, even more radical demands have been made. One Black Studies professor charges that the current curriculum in New York's high schools reflects "deep-seated pathologies of racial hatred." He argues that time spent studying the U.S. Constitution, which is seriously flawed in his opinion, is grounds for miseducation. He adds that studying the Constitution is egocentric and blatant White Nationalism. (9)

Instruments of Exclusion

In chapter 2 of his book *Illiberal Education*, Dinesh D'Souza takes up the case of high school senior Yat-pang Au. To make a fairly long story short, Yat-pang received a rejection letter from the University of California at Berkeley in 1987 although he had graduated first in his high school class, scored 1340 on the SAT, earned letters in track and cross-country, served on the student council, and won seven scholarships from groups such as the National Society of Professional Engineers. What went wrong?

It wasn't his credentials. In fact, Yat-pang was considerably above the Berkeley average in his qualifications. His only real problem was his race, and what chancellor Ira Michael Hayman called "a little social engineering." Under Hayman the university began to devalue the importance of merit and achievement in admissions in order to achieve a racially balanced student body, one that reflects the population at large.

As a result, this family of immigrants from Hong Kong found that their son could not go to Berkeley although ten other students from his high school had been accepted with lower qualifications. The policy of racial balance which seemed so fair to Hayman was anything but fair to the Au family.

If Yat-pang had been Hispanic or Black he would have had no problem attending Berkeley. Asians, many of them immigrants, are now being excluded from Berkeley because they happen to be a too-successful minority that values the family and education.

Unfortunately, Berkeley is not the only place one can find this type of discrimination. Harvard, UCLA, Stanford, Brown, and others have been charged with discrimination towards Asians. As D'Souza writes, "Quotas which were intended as instruments of inclusion now seemed to function as instruments

of exclusion.”(10)

Even if we set aside Yat-pang’s individual rights, does this policy make sense for the minorities it is trying to help? Often it does not. D’Souza notes that Blacks and Hispanics admitted under reduced academic requirements do not fare well at Berkeley. In one study, only 18 percent of the Black and 22 percent of the Hispanic affirmative-action students graduated within five years. Almost 30 percent of Black and Hispanic students drop out at the end of their freshman year.(11) Because we have set aside academic preparation as the criterion for admission to our top schools, many students who cannot compete are being admitted. They simply drop out, more frustrated and angry than before.

Another issue that goes hand-in-hand with admissions is the issue of testing itself. Many argue that since some groups do better than others on the SAT, the test is biased. A New York federal judge has ruled that, since women do not do as well as men on the SAT, using the test as a criterion for awarding its Regents and Empire State scholarships violates state law.(12)

What is remarkable about this trend is that testing was installed in the 1920s to fight arbitrary bias in admissions. When one removes testing, which even the critics must agree is still the best way to predict academic success, all other criteria except race and gender are subjective.

In light of this fact, College Board president Donald Stewart, who is black, has argued that the test covers words and ideas necessary for success in college, regardless of cultural background.(13)

Freedom of Speech

Those who consider themselves politically correct have inflicted grave damage on the concept of free speech. It is interesting to note that Christians have endured free-speech

restrictions for years, but only recently have others who hold to politically incorrect positions experienced this form of discrimination.

Restrictions on speech come in three different forms on campus. The most widespread form is the conduct code. Another is the refusal to allow conservative speakers to address groups on campus. And last is the censure of faculty members who step outside the sphere of politically correct thought.

The University of Michigan has been a leader in restricting First Amendment rights. Responding to a student radio disc jockey who invited other students to call in their favorite racial jokes, the university began a long crusade to stamp out racism, sexism, and a multitude of other "isms." Instead of just punishing the offender, all students were now under suspicion, and all speech would be monitored carefully.

A new policy on discrimination and discriminatory harassment was approved. It defined as punishable "any behavior, verbal or physical, that stigmatizes or victimizes an individual on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status." (14)

Debate on these topics was to be restricted in fear that someone might be stigmatized by the discussion. The so-called marketplace of ideas that colleges are supposed to represent had been shrunk down to convenience-store size.

Since one cannot be certain that even the most balanced discussion of a topic such as gay rights or religious cults might not stigmatize a fellow student, one must refrain from entering into that territory. The result of this type of policy is to guarantee a monopoly to the radical Marxist and feminist ideas now being promoted by the faculty and administration on many of our campuses.

Fortunately, this policy was successfully challenged by an

unnamed psychology professor who realized that most of the subject matter he dealt with in class might stigmatize someone. In a strange twist, the ACLU was on the right side of this issue and represented the professor. Eventually a U.S. District Court struck down even a modified version of the code. But there are still codes in effect at Emory, Middlebury, Brown, Penn State, Tufts, and the Universities of California, Connecticut, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and others. Many more schools are considering implementing codes.(15)

Some groups on campus have used more blatant tactics to keep conservatives from speaking. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, U.N. ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan have all been victims of censorship in the form of gay and pro-abortion groups shouting them down. In one case, black students with clubs disrupted a meeting for the National Association of Scholars, a conservative group of professors, charging that they were actually supported by the Ku Klux Klan.(16)

Another form of censorship is the silencing of faculty. Alan Gribben, a professor at the University of Texas, made the mistake of voting against the politicization of a writing course in the English Department. As a result he was ostracized by the department and decided to leave after seventeen years on the faculty.(17)

The "Ism" Proliferation

The goal of the political correctness revolutionaries on campus is the removal of any remnant of racism, sexism, class elitism, and even lookism, the practice of treating people differently because of their looks. There are also specific positions on ecology, foreign and domestic policy, homosexuality, and animal rights that are politically correct.

The hope behind all of this is the creation of a society where

each culture and social group is appreciated for its contributions. But the fallout has been to encourage people to find some reason to declare oppression, for it seems that only those who are oppressed are in a position to determine what is politically correct. White, middle-class males are the great Satan incarnate—even the most repentant among them must be watched closely.

Politically correct people argue that they are calling for a philosophy of inclusion. They are not thought police, they say; they are only concerned with correcting centuries of unfairness. In reality the effect of this movement has been to silence or remove from campus those who differ from the politically correct position. If a professor opposes racially based admissions policies, he is racist. If a student holds to religious convictions concerning homosexuality, she is homophobic. The issue really goes beyond mere tolerance; the goal of this movement is to remove opposition to the plans of the radical left.

Since those who are politically correct agree that Western Civilization is the cause of all evil in the world, one might ask what should replace it. Not surprisingly, the writers and heroes of this movement tend to be Marxist, feminist, and gay. It is interesting that Marx, a white male European, is still considered politically correct, although he held quite incorrect views on racial issues (in fact, he spoke positively concerning slavery in America).(18)

If true multiculturalism were the issue, these folks would be calling for the study and implementation of traditional cultures from around the world, which, by the way, are just as racist and far more male-dominated than our own. Whether one looks at Islam or the teachings of oriental traditions, one finds that a dim view is taken of both modern feminist thought and homosexuality.

The tradition of Western thought has been to deal with ideas

that transcend race, and it has been anything but homogeneous in its conclusions. The irony of the accusations leveled at Western thought by the politically correct is that the ideas they favor have been most fully developed in America and Europe. Even with all of its faults, Western Civilization has been the most open and tolerant of all societies. It has been eager to find and incorporate ideas that are beneficial from other cultures.

All the important issues considered on our campuses have religious elements. Whether one is considering the uses of technology or the relationships between the sexes, everyone is informed by his or her religious presuppositions. Placing a prior restraint on someone's freedom to speak because he is coming from a different position not only violates our historic view of freedom of speech but also can be used to further remove Christian thought from our schools.

What those in authority on our campuses really hope to accomplish is the unquestioned implementation of a worldview that releases man from his moral obligation to a creator God, a God who sees all men and women, regardless of their color, as in need of redemption. As Christian parents and alumni, we need to make certain that colleges remain places where students can seek and find the truth.

Notes

1. "Multiculturalism Seen As Education Key," *Dallas Morning News*, 9 December 1990, sec. A, p. 56.
2. Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 13.
3. Helle Bering-Jensen, "Teaching All Things to All People," *Insight*, 2 April 1990, 49.
4. Ibid.
5. Allan C. Brownfeld, "'Cultural Imperialism' Is Destroying American Education," *Human Events*, 29 June 1991, 523.
6. D'Souza, *Illiberal Education*, 71.

7. Brownfeld, "Cultural Imperialism," 523.
8. Bering-Jensen, "Teaching All Things," 50.
9. Ibid.
10. D'Souza, ILLIBERAL EDUCATION, 29.
11. Ibid., 39.
12. Ibid., 44.
13. Ibid., 45.
14. Ibid., 142.
15. Ibid., 146.
16. "Race Riot: Minority Students Disrupt NAS Lecture," *Campus Report from Accuracy in Academia*, May 1991, 1.
17. "P.C. or Not P.C., That Is the Question," *The Dallas Morning News*, 21 April 1991, sec. J, p. 1.
18. Brownfeld, "Cultural Imperialism," 11.

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Do We Need a "Hate Crimes" Law?

April 4, 2007

Congress is once again weighing the possibility of passing a hate crimes bill that would give special federal protection based upon race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX) introduced the David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (HR 254) in January. Many believe that if the bill is passed, it could open the door to prohibit any opposition to homosexuality whether in the church or the society at large.

It is quite possible that hate crimes legislation might even be used to define biblical language as hate speech. For

example, city officials have already had a billboard removed in Long Island, NY, because it was classified as hate speech. The billboard read: If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. (Leviticus 20:13)

Consider how hate crimes legislation in Philadelphia was used against Christians. In 2004, six men and five women were arrested in Philadelphia while preaching and speaking during a public homosexual celebration known as OutFest. These Christians (later known as the Philadelphia Eleven) walked into the gathering singing hymns and carrying signs encouraging homosexuals to repent. They were immediately confronted by a militant group of gay activists known as the Pink Angels. These activists blew loud whistles and carried large pink signs in front of the Christians in order to block their message and access to the event. Many of the gay activists screamed obscenities at the Christians.

Those arrested ranged in age from a 17-year-old girl to a 72-year-old grandmother. After spending twenty-one hours in jail, the Philadelphia District Attorneys office charged five of them with various felonies and misdemeanors stemming from Pennsylvanias hate crimes law. If the Philadelphia Eleven were convicted of these charges, they would have faced forty-seven years in prison and \$90,000 in fines each.

Even though a video clearly showed that no criminal activity took place, the prosecution refused to withdraw the charges, and characterized the groups views in court as hate speech. The judge for the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas Judge finally dismissed the charges, saying that she found no basis whatsoever for any of them.[\[1\]](#)

But even apart from the concerns about how a hate crimes law could be used to promote the homosexual agenda are deeper concerns about hate crimes legislation in general. For example, there is a major question whether hate crimes are

really the problem the popular press makes them out to be. The FBI annually publishes Hate Crime Statistics. The most recent report shows that hate crimes reached an eight-year low in the last reporting period. A study by the Family Research Council found that there are significant discrepancies between hate crimes reported by law enforcement and the media.[\[2\]](#)

Hate crimes laws also rest on the flawed assumption that enhanced penalties deter crimes. First, there is no evidence of this. Most of these crimes are crimes of passion and are not likely to be influenced by greater criminal penalties. Second, the argument for greater deterrence usually comes from those who argue that the death penalty has no deterrent effect. Do they really believe that a hate crime law deters a criminal simply because he or she might spend a few extra months in jail?

A final objection to these laws is that they criminalize thought rather than conduct. Hate crimes laws essentially punish thought crimes. They punish people because of their point of view. Criminal prosecutions delve into more than the defendant's intent; they inquire into the opinions about his or her victim. And trying to distinguish between opinions and prejudice is often difficult.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "If there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other it is the principle of free thought—not free thought for those who agree with us but freedom for the thought that we hate."[\[3\]](#)

We may not like what some people think, but we should not have laws on the books to punish thought crimes. We already have laws on the books to punish what a person does. Those laws are sufficient to punish those who commit crimes of hate.

Notes

1. "Judge drops all charges against Philly Christians,"

WorldNetDaily, 17 February 2005,
www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=42905.

2. Leah Farish, "Hate Crimes: Beyond Virtual Reality," Family Research Council, www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS03K01.

3. Oliver Wendell Holmes, *United States v. Schwimmer* 279 U.S. 644 (1929).

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The Problem With Evangelicals

Do you consider yourself an Evangelical? Do you know what the term means? For some, Evangelical has come to represent all that is wrong with religion, especially its intersection with politics and power. For others, the word depicts the centuries-old tradition that holds in high esteem the best attributes of the Christian faith across a wide spectrum of denominations and movements. As a result, one never quite knows what response to expect when a conversation about evangelicals is started.

Darrell Bock, a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, recently wrote an editorial for the *Dallas Morning News* to try and help outsiders better understand what evangelicals believe and hope to accomplish. Drawing from the recently published document [An Evangelical Manifesto](#), Bock emphasized the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ, the desire for a civil public square that recognizes and protects religious freedom and tolerance, and a call for evangelicals to engage in serious self-examination and repentance. Evangelicals are united by their theology and the central role that the Bible plays in forming it. That doesn't mean that we agree on every aspect of doctrine, but we share the good news of salvation in Christ that the Bible teaches. In fact, the label *evangelical*

comes from a Greek word for the good news or *gospel* that is found in the New Testament.

The newspaper quickly printed a few responses to Dr. Bock's piece that show just how difficult it can be to change people's perceptions. One reader wrote that evangelicals are defined by total opposition to abortion and rejection of homosexuals and their agenda. And although Dr. Bock specifically mentioned that evangelicals do not want to create a government ruled by God or by religious leaders, she added that evangelicals would be happy with a theocracy. It seems odd when a person says, "Here is what I believe," and someone else replies, "No you don't; you really believe *this*."

Another reader wrote that when evangelicals accept another's faith as equally valid as their own, progress will have been made.[\[1\]](#) This criticism reflects America's difficulty with the highly valued virtue of tolerance. The assumption is that if one resides in a pluralistic society, then all views must carry equal weight in the culture and that none can claim to have a privileged perspective on truth. It is assumed that in a tolerant society everyone would agree on all ethical issues and would accept all religions as equally valid. The first comment seems to be saying that if you are like Christ, you will condemn nothing. The second portrays the idea that tolerance requires the acceptance of all religious ideas, even if they contradict one another.

How does a Christian who values the virtue of tolerance respond to these accusations? As *An Evangelical Manifesto* describes, we are not arguing for a *sacred public square*, a society in which only one set of religious ideas or solutions are considered. But neither do we believe that a *secular public square* is in our nation's best interests. Our hope is to have a **civil public square**, one in which true tolerance is practiced. When understood correctly, tolerance allows for a civil dialogue between competing and even contradictory positions on important topics in order that the best solution

eventually finds favor.

Traditionally, tolerance has meant that one puts up with an act or idea that he or she disagrees with for the sake of a greater good. In fact, it quickly becomes obvious that unless there is a disagreement, tolerance cannot even occur. We can only tolerate, or bear with something, when we first disagree with it. In a tolerant society people will bear with those they disagree with hoping to make a case for their view that will influence future policies and actions. Abortion and homosexuality are issues that divide our nation deeply. However, a tolerant response to the conflict is not to force everyone to agree with one viewpoint but rather to put up, or bear with, the opposition while making a case for your view. The greater good is a civil public square and the opportunity to change hearts and minds concerning what is healthiest for America's future, and what we consider to be a morally superior view based on God's Word.

Christians need to practice tolerance towards one another as well for the greater good of unity and showing the world an example of Christian love. *An Evangelical Manifesto* has been criticized by some within the church because it has been favorably commented on by people of other faiths. The assumption is that if a Hindu finds something good about this document, those who wrote it must not be Christian enough. This guilt by association fails to deal with the ideas in the document fairly. It also ignores the times in scripture that we are told to bear with one another (Romans 15:1, Colossians 3:13).

An Evangelical Manifesto may not be a perfect document, but it is a helpful step in explaining to the watching world what we Christians are about. It brings the focus back to the Gospel of Christ and an emphasis on living a Christlike life. It reminds us that we have a message of grace and forgiveness to share, not one of law and legalism.

Notes

1. Dallas Morning News, May 13, 2008

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Christian Worldview and Social Issues

Biblical Principles

How can we apply a Christian worldview to social and political issues? I would like to set forth some key biblical principles that we can apply to these issues.

A key biblical principle that applies to the area of bioethics is the sanctity of human life. Such verses as Psalm 139:13-16 show that God's care and concern extends to the womb. Other verses such as Jeremiah 1:5, Judges 13:7-8, Psalm 51:5 and Exodus 21:22-25 give additional perspective and framework to this principle. These principles can be applied to issues ranging from [abortion](#) to [stem cell research](#) to [infanticide](#).

A related biblical principle involves the equality of human beings. The Bible teaches that God has made "of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:26). The Bible also teaches that it is wrong for a Christian to have feelings of superiority (Phil. 2). Believers are told not to make class distinctions between various people (James 2). Paul teaches the spiritual

equality of all people in Christ (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). These principles apply to [racial relations](#) and [our view of government](#).

A third principle is a biblical perspective on marriage. Marriage is God's plan and provides intimate companionship for life (Gen. 2:18). Marriage provides a context for the procreation and nurture of children (Eph. 6:1-2). And finally, marriage provides a godly outlet for sexual desire (1 Cor. 7:2). These principles can be applied to such diverse issues as artificial reproduction (which often introduces a third party into the pregnancy) and [cohabitation](#) (living together).

Another biblical principle involves sexual ethics. The Bible teaches that sex is to be within the bounds of marriage, as a man and the woman become one flesh (Eph. 5:31). Paul teaches that we should "avoid sexual immorality" and learn to control our own body in a way that is "holy and honorable" (1 Thess. 4:3-5). He admonishes us to flee sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:18). These principles apply to such issues as [premarital sex](#), [adultery](#), and [homosexuality](#).

A final principle concerns government and our obedience to civil authority. Government is ordained by God (Rom.13:1-7). We are to render service and obedience to the government (Matt. 22:21) and submit to civil authority (1 Pet. 2:13-17). Even though we are to obey government, there may be certain times when we might be forced to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). These principles apply to issues such as [war](#), [civil disobedience](#), [politics](#), and [government](#).

Communicating in a Secular Culture

How can we communicate biblical morality effectively to a secular culture? Here are a few principles.

First, we must interpret Scripture properly. Too often, Christians have passed off their sociological preferences (on

issues like abortion or homosexual behavior) instead of doing proper biblical exegesis. The result has often been *a priori* conclusions buttressed with improper proof-texting.

In areas where the Bible clearly speaks, we should exercise our prophetic voice as we seek to be salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16). In other areas, concessions should be allowed.

The apostle Paul recognized that the first priority of Christians is to preach the gospel. He refused to allow various distinctions to hamper his effectiveness, and he tried to "become all things to all men" that he might save some (1 Cor. 9:22). Christians must stand firm for biblical truth, yet also recognize the greater need for the unsaved person to hear a loving presentation of the gospel.

Second, Christians should carefully develop biblical principles which can be applied to contemporary social and medical issues. Christians often jump immediately from biblical passages into political and social programs. They wrongly neglect the important intermediate step of applying biblical principles within a particular social and cultural situation.

Third, Christians should articulate the moral teachings of Scripture in ways that are meaningful in a pluralistic society. Philosophical principles like the "right to life" or "the dangers of promiscuity" can be appealed to as part of common grace. Scientific, social, legal, and ethical considerations can be useful in arguing for biblical principles in a secular culture.

Christians can argue in a public arena against abortion on the basis of scientific and legal evidence. Medical advances in embryology and fetology show that human life exists in the womb. A legal analysis of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision shows the justices violated a standard principle of jurisprudence. The burden of proof is placed on the life-taker

and the benefit of the doubt is given to the life-saver.

This does not mean we should sublimate the biblical message. But our effectiveness in the public arena will be improved if we elaborate the scientific, social, legal, and ethical aspects of a particular issue instead of trying to articulate our case on Scripture alone.

Christians should develop effective ways to communicate biblical morality to our secular culture. Law and public policy should be based upon biblical morality which results from an accurate interpretation of Scripture and a careful application to society.

Christian Principles in Social Action

How should Christians be involved in the social and political arena? Here are a few key principles.

First, Christians must remember that they have a dual citizenship. On the one hand, their citizenship is in heaven and not on earth (Phil. 3:17–21). Christians must remind themselves that God is sovereign over human affairs even when circumstances look dark and discouraging. On the other hand, the Bible also teaches that Christians are citizens of this earth (Matt. 22:15–22). They are to obey government (Rom. 13:1–7) and work within the social and political circumstances to affect change. Christians are to pray for those in authority (1 Tim. 2:1–4) and to obey those in authority.

Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to leaven hidden in three pecks of meal (Matt. 13:33). The meal represents the world, and the leaven represents the Christian presence in it. We are to exercise our influence within society, seeking to bring about change that way. Though the Christian presence may seem as insignificant as leaven in meal, nevertheless we are to bring about the same profound change.

Second, Christians must remember that God is sovereign. As the Sovereign over the nations, He bestows power on whom He wishes (Dan. 4:17), and He can turn the heart of a king wherever He wishes (Prov.21:1).

Third, Christians must use their specific gifts within the social and political arenas. Christians have different gifts and ministries (1 Cor. 12:4–6). Some may be called to a higher level of political participation than others (e.g., a candidate for school board or for Congress). All have a responsibility to be involved in society, but some are called to a higher level of social service, such as a social worker or crisis pregnancy center worker. Christians must recognize the diversity of gifts and encourage fellow believers to use their individual gifts for the greatest impact.

Fourth, Christians should channel their social and political activity through the church. Christians need to be accountable to each other, especially as they seek to make an impact on society. Wise leadership can prevent zealous evangelical Christians from repeating mistakes made in previous decades by other Christians.

The local church should also provide a context for compassionate social service. In the New Testament, the local church became a training ground for social action (Acts 2:45; 4:34). Meeting the needs of the poor, the infirm, the elderly, and widows is a responsibility of the church. Ministries to these groups can provide a foundation and a catalyst for further outreach and ministry to the community at large.

Christians are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13–16). In our needy society, we have abundant opportunities to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet significant social needs. By combining these two areas of preaching and ministry, Christians can make a strategic difference in society.

Fallacies and Tactics

Let's now focus on some [logical fallacies and tactics](#) used against Christians. We need to exercise discernment and be on alert for these attempts to sidetrack moral and biblical reflection on some of the key issues of our day.

The first tactic is *equivocation*. This is the use of vague terms. Someone can start off using language we think we understand and then veer off into a new meaning. If you have been listening to the Probe radio program for any time, you are well aware of the fact that religious cults are often guilty of this. A cult member might say that he believes in salvation by grace. But what he really means is that you have to join his cult and work your way toward salvation. Make people define the vague terms they use.

This tactic is used frequently in bioethics. Proponents of embryonic stem cell research often will not acknowledge the distinction between adult stem cells and embryonic stem cells. Those trying to legalize cloning will refer to it as "somatic cell nuclear transfer." Unless you have a scientific background, you will not know that it is essentially the same thing.

A second tactic is what is often called "*card stacking*." That is when an opponent has a selective use of evidence. Don't jump on the latest bandwagon and intellectual fad without checking the evidence. Many advocates are guilty of listing all the points in their favor while ignoring the serious points against it.

For example, the major biology textbooks used in high school and college never provide students with evidence against evolution. Jonathan Wells, in his book [Icons of Evolution](#), shows that the examples that are used in most textbooks are either wrong or misleading. Some of the examples are known frauds (such as the Haeckel embryos) and continue to show up

in textbooks decades after they were shown to be fraudulent.

A third tactic is "*appeal to authority*." That means a person is relying on authority to the exclusion of logic and evidence. Just because an expert says it doesn't necessarily make it true. We live in a culture that worships experts, but not all experts are right. Hiram's Law says, "If you consult enough experts, you can confirm any opinion."

Those who argue that global warming is caused solely by human activity often say that "the debate in the scientific community is over." But an Internet search of critics of the theories behind global warming will show that there are many scientists with credentials in climatology or meteorology who have questions about the theory. It is not accurate to say that the debate is over when the debate still seems to be taking place.

A fourth tactic often used against Christians is known as an *ad hominem* attack. This is Latin for "against the man." People using this tactic attack the person instead of dealing with the validity of their argument. Often the soundness of an argument is inversely proportional to the amount of *ad hominem* rhetoric. If there is evidence for the position, proponents usually argue the merits of the position. When evidence is lacking, they attack the critics.

Christians who want public libraries to filter pornography from minors are accused of censorship. Citizens who want to define marriage as between one man and one woman are called bigots. Scientists who criticize evolution are subjected to withering attacks on their character and scientific credentials. Scientists who question global warming are compared to holocaust deniers.

Another tactic is the *straw man argument*. This is done by making your opponent's argument seem so ridiculous that it is easy to attack and knock down. Liberal commentators say that

evangelical Christians want to implement a religious theocracy in America. That's not true. But the hyperbole works to marginalize Christian activists who believe they have a responsibility to speak to social and political issues within society.

A sixth tactic is *sidestepping*. This is done when someone dodges the issue by changing the subject. Ask a proponent of abortion whether the fetus is human and you are likely to see this technique in action. He or she might start talking about a woman's right to choose or the right of women to control their own bodies. Perhaps you will hear a discourse on the need to tolerate various viewpoints in a pluralistic society. But you probably won't get a straight answer to an important question.

A final tactic is the "*red herring*." That means to go off on a tangent (and is taken from the practice of luring hunting dogs off the trail with the scent of a herring). Proponents of embryonic stem cell research rarely will talk about the morality of destroying human embryos. Instead they will go off on a tangent and talk about the various diseases that could be treated and the thousands of people who could be helped with the research.

Be on the alert when someone in a debate changes the subject. They may want to argue their points on more familiar ground, or they may know they cannot win their argument on the relevant issue at hand.

A person with discernment will recognize these tactics and beware. We are called to develop discernment as we tear down false arguments raised up against the knowledge of God. By doing this we will learn to take every thought captive to the obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

“Why Don’t You Just Let Homosexuals Live and Let Live?”

I find that you are very passionate about your thoughts and personal beliefs. At the same time, I think that the Bible also shares a very clear message that we are not God, and therefore should do as we believe God wants us to do. God never once asked us to become Gods; therefore we should not pass judgments on to others regarding their life styles, or beliefs. We get it, being gay is a sin, but all sin is on the same level. Killing a child and saying a curse word falls into one group of sin, one no greater than the other.

If you want to start a movement, how about protecting those that can not protect themselves? Children are being abandoned by their parents left and right... and even worse neglected, raped and molested. Adults choosing to be homosexual is just that, a choice. Live and let live, go after the helpless and innocent, they need passionate leader to protect them and their rights.

Thank you for writing. I appreciate your compassion for the hurting and those who need a voice. Bless you!

The reason we address the subject of homosexuality is that God does. He knows it is not His intention for the people He made and dearly loves. He knows that homosexual activity is destructive and hurtful. Yes, choosing to act on one’s same-sex feelings is, indeed, a choice, but it is not a choice like deciding between chocolate or vanilla ice cream. It is more like a choice between drinking grape juice, or Kool-Aid laced with poison. But the message of our culture about

homosexuality is that there is no difference because there is no poison.

But God knows there is.

And the loving thing to do is to take a stand for truth, which we can know because of what God says.

I would respectfully disagree that all sin is equal. While all sin separates us from God, and all sin requires the death of His Son in our place, the *consequences* of our sin vary hugely. It is a sin for me to have an uncharitable thought about someone; it is a very different sin for me to pull out a gun and shoot them. If you really believe that no sin is greater than another, do you really not care whether someone thinks critically of your driving, or if they run you off the road into a ditch? Maybe that idea works better in concept than reality.

We aren't interested in starting a movement. We just want to speak the truth in love, as God calls us to. And sometimes that involves judging that some beliefs and lifestyles are dangerous and destructive and hurtful, and pointing that there is another way to live. (May I respectfully point out the irony that of the fact that in writing your email, you are judging our beliefs?)

One final comment. What I think and write about homosexuality is not mere opinion or philosophy. My passion for this issue is fueled by the pain experienced by people I love who "drank the Kool-Aid" and entered into various kinds of gay relationships, and are now experiencing the hurtful consequences in their hearts and, in some case, their bodies. It is fueled by compassion for the hurting family members of those currently living in a way contrary to God's intention for them. This is more than personal beliefs; this is taking a stand for what God says is right so that others can avoid needless pain, and standing in compassion and understanding

(and prayer) for those now in that pain.

I hope this helps you better understand where we're coming from.

Sue Bohlin

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“My Son Came Out As Gay”

My son has told me he is a homosexual, which I believe is not true. He went to a Gay Pride parade this past weekend. I'm asking for your prayers because I don't know how to deal with it. I've put up barriers between us, which I shouldn't because he's my son. I ask God to help me with this but I don't know where to even begin or how to talk to Him.

I am so glad you wrote! For the past 8 or so years, I have been working with a ministry (Living Hope Ministries in Arlington TX) that helps people deal with unwanted homosexuality and the family members of those who identify as gay. I do send this with a prayer that you will allow this trauma to drive you closer to God and closer to your son, who desperately needs your respect, your attention, your affection, and your affirmation. He needs to know his dad loves him and wants to be a part of his life. Putting up barriers is the exact opposite of what will help your son. Invite him places. . . invest in what is important to him. . . ask him about himself. . . spend time just being WITH him so he gets the all-important message “my dad cares about me. I'm important to him.”

There is a free, anonymous, confidential, online support group for strugglers and family members like yourself at

www.livehope.org. In the “Family and Friends” support group, the executive director of Living Hope and I collaborated on a welcoming post called “So Your Loved One Just Came Out to You.” I hope you find it helpful.

Sue Bohlin

Welcome to the Family and Friends forum. We are so glad you're here. . . and we're so sorry you have to be here at all. The Lord has been gracious in bringing you to this place of acceptance, warmth, understanding and prayer support. You are now a part of “The Fellowship of the Broken.” That's why we're all here.

So now you know your loved one experiences same sex attraction (SSA). It's usually a horrible shock. You may feel like Alice, having just arrived at the bottom of the White Rabbit's chute. . . but this isn't Wonderland, is it? You'd prefer to be anywhere but this new reality that's been forced on you.

Most people, arriving in this place, have two questions: How can I fix my loved one? And, how do I get my old life back, before the disclosure?

Second question first: “How do I get my old life back?” Well, welcome to your “new normal.” We are so sorry—but you can't go back to the place of not knowing. Praise God, though: He lavishes grace on us in times of transition, even (and perhaps especially) this adjustment to your new, post-disclosure world. We pray for you to experience “acceptance grace,” that you may receive His empowering to live in this new and unwelcome reality.

Back to the first question: “How can I fix my loved one?” (Or a variation of this question: “Where can I send my loved one to be fixed?”) You can't. Only God can. And He usually works on a timetable and with a methodology that is different from

ours. Your loved one is not a broken car that you send to the shop, and he or she will resent being viewed as a problem or a project.

The best thing you can do is entrust your loved one into God's hands and leave them there. What you CAN do is wear out your knees in intercessory prayer. The most effective prayers are scripture prayers. May we suggest reading through Paul's epistles and writing down his prayers for his beloved friends, which you then adjust on behalf of your loved one? For example, we have learned that grasping how much God loves us is a huge part of emotional healing, because God's love is the healing agent no matter what plagues us. Consider praying Ephesians 3:17-19 (NLT) on behalf of your loved one:

And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in his/her heart as s/he trusts in him. May his/her roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may s/he have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. May s/he experience the love of Christ, though it is so great s/he will never fully understand it. Then s/he will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

That's #1. But in our ministry, we have learned over the years that when family members come for support and assistance, the greatest need they have is to work on their own "stuff." Every one of us has garbage and scars from living in a fallen world. Every one of us grew up with imperfect parents in an imperfect family. Every one of us has been the recipient of countless "fiery darts" of the Enemy in spiritual warfare. And we all tend to hide our baggage and our scars, all the dark and hurting places of our souls. One wise counselor calls this "Christian denial," and defines it as "denying God access to those places He wants to heal for His glory, and our benefit."

God has brought you to this place in your life where you are

ripe for God to do some wonderful, amazing work in your heart. Your loved one's homosexuality is the method He used to invite you to this place, but it's not the issue He wants to deal with in you. He wants your heart; He wants your vulnerability; He wants YOU.

So what do you do next?

Give God permission to work. Open your heart to Him: "Lord, what do you want to do in ME? What do you want me to know about my own heart, my own stuff, that I have been avoiding?" It will be tempting to keep your focus on your loved one—it's much less threatening!—but you need to keep your focus on Jesus. Expect Him to show you things you've been in denial about, but also expect that He will lavish His grace on you to see what He wants to show you. He will never expose the dark and hurting places of your heart to you but that He's not holding those places in His own loving and safe hands.

Spend daily time in the Word, expecting God to meet you there and speak to You through His Word. You may find the Psalms especially meaningful because they are so comforting.

It will be helpful for you to journal this "adventure with God." Many people have reported that it is far more satisfying and helpful to use an actual book (or at least paper) journal instead of a computer. The multi-sensory experience of handling paper—seeing it, hearing it rustle, feeling it in your hands, smelling its fragrance—makes a stronger impression on your brain. Write what's happening and how you feel about what's happening. Write what God is showing you in your time with Him, both in His Word and in prayer. Many people find that they are better able to process what God is doing internally through journaling than any other method, because wrapping words around thoughts and feelings helps us to sort through our jumbled confusion.

Remember and practice Psalm 46:10—"Be still and know that I am

God.” God wants to soothe and comfort you, but you have to be quiet and still for Him to do that. You may find that listening to praise music may be helpful at times, but there is a time to turn off the music and the TV and the mp3 player and just be still before your God. Let Him love you in those moments.

We tell the SSA (same-sex attracted) strugglers who come to our ministry that the way God will bring healing and change to them is through intimacy with Christ. Many of them learn to also enjoy intimacy with their heavenly Father. That’s the goal of all discipleship, which is what God invites you to as well. We’re really a discipleship ministry, and whether people are here as overcomers, as strugglers, as family members of strugglers, or those with a passion for those in the struggle, God has the same goal for all of us: spiritual maturity. Abiding in Him is the way to grow more like Jesus, no matter which door into this place of growth and healing you came through—even a rabbit hole.

We are glad you’re here, and we pray that you will allow God to do such a deep work in you that at some point, you will be able to look back at this time and say, “It was horrible, it was incredibly painful. . . and it was the best thing that ever happened to me.”

With prayer for rich blessings in your journey,

Sue Bohlin (Living Hope Board Member)

From Ricky Chelette, Executive Director of Living Hope Ministries:

I AMEN to all that my wise sister has shared. I see so many parents, particularly of teens and young adults, that look at this struggle like a bad case of acne. They often think, “Well, this is a phase and after a bit of counseling, some

more Bible study and rededication to Jesus, maybe even a conference or two, my kid is going to be fine." I wish it were that easy but you have to remember that we are dealing with relational brokenness. This is not making a bad decision to stay out past curfew, this is thinking the wrong things about who you are and believing those wrong things as truth.

As a result, God has to do some major work in the heart and life of those who struggle. You are not God. Therefore YOU can't do anything but love and encourage your son/daughter to seek wise counsel, Godly advice, and more of Jesus. I really wish this didn't sound as "churchy" of an answer as it does, but the fact remains that we are broken and once broken, we forever carry the scars of that brokenness in our lives. Yes, Jesus does bring healing, that is His promise to us on Calvary, but the process of sanctification and total relational healing will likely not happen until He comes again to redeem and reclaim His creation at the end of time.

St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria in 297 wrote, "That which Jesus has not assumed (or taken upon himself), He cannot heal."

He assumes our sins as WE are willing to confess our sins and bring them to Him. We can not confess sins for others, only for ourselves. Your son/daughter has to get to that place and what it might take to get them there is only God's knowledge. You cannot create contrition. That is the work of God's Spirit.

Also please understand that the problem your child has is not homosexuality (though that is what we label it), it is sin. Sin is sin and it always deceives, kills and destroys. It does that in your life, my life and it does it in your child's life as well. They have to grasp the sin problem and the ONLY one who can convict us of sin is the Holy Spirit (notice mom, that I've said that twice! <smile>). Therefore, pray that God would use His Holy Spirit to convict and convince the heart and mind

of your son/daughter so that they might see the error of their way and return to living for the Lord.

Despite what I sometimes hear from evangelical Christians, homosexuality does NOT keep a person from heaven any more than cheating, stealing, or telling “white lies.” All those things are sin and all are bad and separate us from God, but they are also all covered by the blood of Christ on the cross. Granted, as humans, we tend to categorize sin and make some much worse than others. God doesn’t do that. He says that what keeps us out of the Kingdom of heaven is not trusting in Him with our whole heart as our Savior and Lord. A person who thinks he/she is gay can be a Christian. They won’t be a happy Christian, or truly intimately related to Christ, but they can be a Christian. I believe that God, in His incredible mercy and grace, will continue to reach out to them, woo them to Himself and draw them until that day when He calls them home. So never ever, ever give up! God will hear your prayers for He fights for the souls of those who have “wandered from the way” (Matt. 18:12-13). God loves them more than you do—so wow, that’s a lot!!

Keep in mind too that your task is not to “save your kid,” but to show Jesus to them in everything you do. That is such a hard order for everyone and especially if your child has a partner. Do you allow the partner to come to your house, participate in your family activities, hang out with the rest of the family? Of course this is a very personal choice and one that you need to make with lots of prayer and discussion with your spouse. That being said, the question remains: How do you show Jesus to your child and their partner? Is kicking them out of family gatherings the way to do that? Personally, I don’t think so, but maybe others here will feel differently. Remember, however, that your child loves this person and rejecting the partner will be akin to rejecting the child even though that is NOT what you are trying to communicate. I DO think it is perfectly reasonable to ask them NOT to show

public displays of affection, not to sleep in the same room/bed, etc. Those are things that you would ask your child to do if they were in a heterosexual relationship and you were trying to uphold Biblical standards in your home. If there are small children around, you might have to think about the implications of that as well and if/how you want to talk to the children about it. I use to think that it was not good to expose them to such things, but with the popularity of homosexuality in our culture and media (need I say, “Brokeback Mountain” or “Will and Grace”), I think it might be best for them to hear the TRUTH from you rather than an interpretation of truth they would get in the streets.

We all know that this journey can be overwhelming, confusing and at times, even debilitating. Do not allow the devil to steal from you the hope that is in Christ Jesus. Do not be worn down by the familiarity and insistence of your child that this is “normal” so that you redefine Truth. Come here and post your frustrations, concerns, joys and victories. We have seen many make it out, hundreds of thousands in fact, and we have seen God do amazing things in the lives of the struggler as well as their family members. If you will allow it, this can be the greatest thing that has happened in your family. I am convinced that God wants to use it for good if you will let Him.

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“Can You Suggest Graduation Gifts With Worldview In

Mind?"

We are desiring to give each of our graduates an age appropriate gift, i.e., 8th grade, High School, and College, for graduation. We want to give them something to help them think through the Christian worldview in light of the culture they are being raised in.

Great question! We are in the "business" of providing such resources for kids and adults especially useful for those headed to secular university or college so anything on our site is appropriate, as well as the books & sites below.

The [Reasons to Believe](#) section of Probe.org is a great place for starters.

Resources written for children up to about 8th grade:

Here are Amazon.com listings by journalist turned Christian apologetics author extraordinaire Lee Strobel (note emphasis on titles very similar but not the same):

[*The Case for a **Creator** for Kids*](#)

[*The Case for **Christ** for Kids*](#)

[*The Case for **Faith** for Kids*](#)

[*Off My Case for Kids: 12 Stories to Help You Defend Your Faith*](#)

[*The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points Toward God* \(more grown-up edition\)](#)

[*The Case for Faith—Student Edition*](#)

Also, see:

[My Heart Christ's Home: Retold for Children](#) (don't know grade level) by Robert Boyd Munger OR

[My Heart Christ's Home](#) (original)

Other suggestions for high school grads, possibly 8th graders:

[Ethix: Being Bold in a Whatever World](#), by Sean McDowell (son of Josh McDowell, good author, speaker, thinker in his own right; this book written somewhat to youth leaders, perhaps—I've only sampled it; great illustrations especially about absolute truth vs. relative truth and morality)

[How to Stay Christian in College](#), by J. Budziszewski—My wife and I give this one to high school grads for obvious reasons, given the title. J. Budziszewski is a one-of-a-kind critical thinker who matches his intellect with caring for kids. See his columns under Ask Theophilus at Boundless.org—excellent narratives of paraphrased professor-student conversations about deep, real life issues from a Christian worldview.

Note: I suggest the 1999 edition, although there's a newer one (Think books, a NavPress imprint). This older one contains many useful links, many from a site I used to edit:

[LeaderU.com](#). Massively useful for scholarly work like writing papers, essays, debates. Most or all of the links cited in the book should still work.

[Chris Chrisman Goes to College: and Faces the Challenges of Relativism, Individualism and Pluralism](#). From the master of worldview, James Sire, brought down off the proverbial shelf for laypeople, this fictional account of three new collegians creatively tackles the topics in the book's subtitle. Particularly interesting: Sire "identifies no fewer than six types of relativism," according to the cover.

For college or high school grads:

[Welcome To College: A Christ-Followers Guide for the Journey](#), by Jonathan Morrow. This sweeping, but accessible and succinct volume contains 42 chapters that ask: What do Christians really believe? Can I put that into words for unbelievers? What is the nature of truth and how do we know things? What about sex? Finances? How should a Christian worldview inform my entire life and experience? and much more. Packs a worldview wallop.

[Making Your Faith Your Own, A Guidebook for Believers With Questions](#), by Teresa Vining. See the top review of a pastor's wife.

The second review at Amazon.com of the above book is by my colleague, Sue Bohlin, whose responses on scores of questions from believers and unbelievers, posted here on Probe.org, are worth their weight in gold:

[Probe Answers Your Email](#). Look for Sue Bohlin's responses particularly, especially in the Marriage & Family, Sexuality, Homosexuality and Gender sections, but elsewhere as well. Michael Gleghorn is great on theology & philosophy. This set of 500-600 answers is good for high school, college, adult, sometimes younger, depending on topics.

[My Utmost for His Highest](#) (latest edition), Oswald Chambers

A subscription to our own [Probe-Alert](#) e-letter (always free, every two weeks, relevant new materials and more) might be a good "freebie"—they'll have to approve it via email. Or, to avoid that and make it a one-step operation, send a list of emails to me and I'll mass subscribe them manually.

I hope you find this helpful. God bless you and your graduates and may they thrive in their faith as they move to their next life-step.

Byron Barlowe

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