

D. Don't Be Afraid to Get Close to Them and to Love Them

Too often our responses have been driven by fear rather than love.

I John 4:17-19 ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us."

"As a gay man, I've found it's easier for me to get sex on the streets than to get a hug in church."

E. Do Keep Calling it a Sin But Speak Even Louder about the Hope of the Gospel

I Corinthians 6:9-11 ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

"I introduced four of my brothers in Christ, who shared their stories of how Jesus impacted their lives and began the process of changing their sexual orientation.

At the end of our evening I invited questions from the audience. One woman raised her hand and asked me, 'What do these "homos" call themselves after they become Christians?' A little taken a back by her question, I asked her what she called herself when she became a Christian. Did she introduce herself to new friends as an adulterous or slandering Christian?

I understood what she was asking, but in her mind they were still homosexuals. In some churches, it seems like almost everyone is entitled to a new identity in Christ, regardless of their past, except for the 'homos.'" Lenny Carluzzi in *Loving Homosexuals as Jesus Would*, Chad W. Thompson, pgs. 77 & 78

Hebrews 7:25 "He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him..."

I've Got Questions How Should We Respond to Homosexuality?

Grace Fellowship Church, May 2, 2010, Pastor Brad Bigney

I. The Bible Clearly Describes Homosexuality as a Perversion of God's Original and Beautiful Gift of Sexuality

The Bible nowhere presents homosexuality as an acceptable option.

Romans 1:18-32

The Bible does affirm the sexual pleasures that are enjoyed within the context of God's original design of heterosexual marriage between a man and a woman.

Genesis 2:25 "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" No shame! But this "No Shame" has a context – the marriage of a man and woman!

Hebrews 13:5 "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed (*euphemism for sex*) undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge"

Romans 1:22-28 Descriptions of homosexuality:

V. 24 they dishonor their bodies (rather than *honor*)

V. 26 what is against nature ~ *unnatural* "exchanged the natural use for what is against nature"

V. 27 Leaving the natural use... committing what is shameful

V. 28 to do things, which are not fitting

How should we as Christians respond to those who are caught in this sin?

II. Christians and the Church Today Need to Repent and Reach Out to Homosexuals the Way Jesus Would

The following suggestions are adapted from When Homosexuality Hits Home by Joe Dallas

A. Don't Attack the Character of a Homosexual

Remember – attacking a person’s character rather than sticking to the real issue is always a sign of a weak argument.

The issue is not whether or not homosexuals can be good citizens and neighbors... the issue is whether or not homosexuality is – in and of itself – a normal and moral choice for a man or woman.

Ephesians 4:15 “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ.”

Colossians 4:5-6 “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

The Message “Make the most of every opportunity. Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not put them down, not cut them out.”

“People dressed in Sunday-best clothes held signs saying. TURN OR BURN, FLIP OR FRY, QUEERS GO HOME and ALL GAYS GO TO HELL.” Then he goes on to talk about how this affected his view of God and His willingness to consider serving God. He writes, “Why would anyone want to follow a God like theirs?”

While most Christians don’t go to such extremes I hope you get the point because the gay political movement is fueled by the rhetoric of Christians who are uneducated or insensitive. Gay media types are just waiting for us to say something that could be construed as hateful.” From John Paulk’s book, *Not Afraid to Change*. quoted in *Loving Homosexuals as Jesus Would*, Chad W. Thompson, pgs. 85 & 86

Stick with the issue. Attack the problem not the person.

B. Do Admit How We as the Church and Christians Have Too often Sinned Against Homosexuals by the Way We’ve Responded

Too often we’ve judged them as worse sinners than everyone else.

Luke 13:1-5 “There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?’³ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem?’⁵ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

Matthew 7:1-5 “ Judge not, that you be not judged.² For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.³ And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye?’⁵ Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

- Did you know that the Bible has 6 admonitions to homosexuals... but there are well over 300 directed towards heterosexuals?

“Let’s be honest: We straight believers have a vast, toxic superfund cleanup in our own backyards as well.” *When Bad Christians Happen To Good People*, David Burchett, pg. 117

Homosexuality is just one expression of false worship that does not satisfy.

“*Sin is what we do when we’re not satisfied in God.*” **John Piper**

C. Don’t be Discouraged If You Don’t See Fruit Right Away

It’s our job as Christians to speak the truth plainly and lovingly... laying down our lives for others. We’re not responsible for whether or not they respond to the truth.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,²⁶ and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”

“I know dozens of men and women who have successfully changed their sexual orientation, regardless of their initial fear that it couldn’t be done... Those who change have one thing in common: perseverance. This process of change takes time because it rides on the sanctification process, which is a lifelong process. And Jesus, being the facilitator of our sanctification (or “spiritual cleansing”), is ultimately in charge of the results. Proverbs 24:16 says, ‘For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again.’ So it is with those who are working to overcome unwanted homosexual attractions. But a genuine desire to change, coupled with a spirit of prayer and a strong support system, can overcome all obstacles.” *Loving Homosexuals as Jesus Would*, Chad W. Thompson, pgs. 160 & 161