



Genesis 9

THE RAINBOW LETTERS

**IMMORALITY: THE CHURCH’S ACHILLES HEEL**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was due to the Spirit’s nudging that I became not only aware of a growing attention within society to the issue of immorality, but also of the danger that eventually the Church might be affected by it. That awareness grew into the study and writing of what is indicated as the First part of this book. I am deeply thankful for the Spirit’s power, inspiration and constant encouragement to start and complete this book after more than 11/2 years. It has been a rather difficult and emotional time, realizing how this issue of immorality has taken hold in the lives of too many Christians, churches, and Christian schools.

Once again, I wish to express my great thankfulness for the time, patience and love my loving wife Louisa has given me to spend much time and energy in preparing this book. It has been no fun to spend so much attention and emotion on this adventure, as this issue will also affect the church we are members of. This is even more so as the possibility of a church split seems to be most likely, as we both have experiences such unraveling of so many local churches in the Netherlands, even throughout Western Europe.

My deep appreciation for Herb Krager (herb@dialogos-studies.com) who has helped me in using the means to pass on various observations and conclusions made in my study to 3500 pastors in the combined Reformed and Presbyterian denominations in Canada and the USA. That publicity could be helpful in light of the impact of immorality already demonstrated on both denominations.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

  Peter Hendriks Okello

For twenty years, working as a Mechanical Design Engineer and Industrial Engineer (Management Operation) in the Netherlands and later on in Canada following emigration in 1973. In 1979, 1 year college making transitioning from industry to ministry: 3 years of Seminary education (M.Div.). Then twenty-two years, serving churches in Alberta and British Columbia, while

receiving a Th.M. in Domestic Missiology (1998), a D. Min. in Ecclesiology, and a Certified Short Term Counselor (2001). As pastor emeritus, teaching at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Uganda during 2007-2008, during summer time, then during 2009-2015 teaching at All Saints University, Lango (ASUL), Lira, Northern Uganda, as well as preaching in various churches and making field trips to villages on behalf of several churches in Calgary concerning economic development projects that have received financial support.

Following my involvement with ASUL, writing two books as described below, and presently preparing this book, THE RAINBOW LETTERS in response to a growing interest in and concern about immoral lifestyles also affecting the Church and higher education in North America.

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**From this Author**

BOOK ONE: “*THE REAL DEAL: Making the Case for the One True God*,” 2018. (Explaining the rise and destructive force of radical Islam and how to respond as Church); Amazon.

 This book explains differences between the contents of the Bible and the Qur’an, between the God of the Bible and Allah of the Quran. Such comparison leads to the real identity of Allah with his hate for especially Jews and Christians. Many examples of explicit Muslim’s inhuman behavior substantiate the global radical-Muslim threat to completely destroy Jewish and Christian communities throughout the world. This book helps readers understand that there is a significant and most strenuous spiritual battle going on. This spiritual battle is reflected in the hearts and minds of men and women today. This book also suggests how Christians need to be united in a biblical response to the growing threat of militant Islam to bring the entire world under the rule of Sharia law and worship of Islam’s Allah.

BOOK TWO: “*THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society*,” 2020. (Explaining the rise and destructive force of radical Liberalism and how to respond as State and Church); Amazon.

 **T**his book explains the alarming and developing influence from radical-liberal ideology on political, social and spiritual matters in the US and Canada. In Canada, various political parties oppose long-existing Judeo-Christian values, norms and principles. In the US, the Far Left shows similar disrespect for the same long-held values, norms and principles. The history of

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radical liberalism reveals the immense human suffering it has already caused in the world. We may expect that today’s radical liberals, in Canada and the US, are leading our long-enjoyed freedoms and democracy along a slippery slope towards a new socio-political situation, in which there are no moral absolutes. This book seeks ways to protect and to show respect for all human beings. This book hopes to reach more and more Christians who need to “wake up” to the reality of today’s anti-Christ revolution.

April 2022.

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FOREWORD

**Introduction**

While preparing for writing my third book as part of my intention to complete a trilogy on the Church (see above my introductions of my first two books) I became increasingly alarmed about the growing influence of the radical Left that had all the signs of undermining the well-being of the Church. See the above introduction of my second book, THE RIGHT DEAL.

That particular influence of radical Liberalism was especially demonstrated in pushing societies to accept immoral lifestyles, as expressed in LGBTQI communities. That also meant that the Church was going to feel that pressure already made in my second book as follows:

 Following the spiritual preparation for opposition against

 radical liberalism, in efforts to restore a more respectful society,

 the persecuted church needs to roll up her sleeves to effectively

 oppose the growing threat for these evil forces... the Church

 needs to have great spiritual discernment, courage and [power

 This will require the support of much prayer and cooperation

 between Christians from the many denominations.” p.145.

In short: The reader of the book will discern that the series of contents follow a particular timeline as during the writing new developments came to light. The book starts with a general approach to the issue of immorality, before switching attention to a developing story about a Christian university appreciating

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students from the LGBTQI community. That particular

development was then followed by another development in which an entire Classis is embracing those belonging to LGBTQ1 communities’

A more detailed introduction to fore-mentioned events:

At the time of writing these words, I was not aware that soon I would feel the need to write about the growing pressures and general acceptance among people endangering the Church. Being led to address this undermining danger, undoubtedly faced by the Church, I began to study the phenomenon of homosexuality in what I call Pastoral Letters. PART ONE the first two Pastoral letters.

The First Pastoral Letter (PL1) was written in response to the general development of homosexuality in Canada and the US, as well as the growing support it began to receive within society at large and in some churches. It was only after the writing of PL1 that it became clear how serious this issue had already influenced the Church in North America at large, including the Christian Reformed Church I am a member of.

The writing of the Second Pastoral Letter (PL2) came in response to the fact that a well-known Christian university (CU) in Michigan, had endorsed the LGBTQI community by allowing members of this community to study at its university. The PL2 only saw the day of light after realizing that my own local CRC church had endorsed the CU’s opposition to the Christian Reformed Church Synod’s report firmly opposing homosexuality and thus immorality at large on the basis of God’s Word.

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PART TWO includes Pastoral Letters Three to Six. The Third Pastoral letter (PL3) was written as a response to an article in the May issue of the CHRISTIAN COURIER, a Reformed Monthly, written by the same person who had written earlier an endorsement of the CU’s receptive stand regarding LGBTQI people. This endorsement was officially supported by four of the seven local seven CRC churches in the Calgary area.

The Fourth Pastoral Letter (PL4) was written in response to the CU’s specific four reasons they rejected Synod’s Report concluding that neither Scripture, nor the Reformed Confession endorse immoral lifestyles.

The Fifth Pastoral letter (PL5) has been written to record some results of scientific findings on the issue of homosexual orientation as it is also used to make the homosexual lifestyle acceptable. The Sixth Pastoral Letter (PL6) is the result of giving Jesus Christ the last word on the entire issue of immorality.

PART THREE includes a response to a particular Classis in the Reformed Church of America (RCA) that had approved and embraced this part of the LGBTQI communities. It is alarming that within the Reformed denominations, including CRCNA and RCA, we have local churches and at least one well-known Christian university very publically embraced immorality, thereby ignoring, opposing, or rejecting what has been clearly condemned in the Bible.

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This book, *THE RAINBOW LETTERS: Immorality: The Church’s Achilles Heel*, thoroughly examines how those, who are welcoming LGBTQI people in their midst, are mistaken on clear, biblical ground.

The reader of the book will discern that the series of contents follow a particular timeline as during the writing new developments came to light. As the book starts with a general approach to the issue immorality, and then began to switch attention to a just developing story about a Christian university appreciating students from the LGBTQI community. That serious development was followed by another development in which we hear about an entire Classis embracing such students.

Let me end this introduction with the following reminder of and encouragement from the apostle Paul,

 *“He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over*

 *all creation. For by him all things were created: things in*

 *heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or*

 *powers or* rulers or authorities*; all things were created by him*

 *and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold*

 *together.”* Col. 1:15-17.

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**PART ONE**

 

 THE RAINBOW LETTERS

FIRST PASTORAL LETTER

(PL1)

**THE NORTH-AMERICAN CHURCH**

**AT A CROSSROADS**

The Spiritual Battle over Homosexuality (Immorality)

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FIRST DISCOURSE

**Introductory Comments on Homosexuality**

**Introduction**

Persecution has been a reality for Jews and Christians, together God’s covenant people, since the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The Bible informs us that Satan could not dethrone Christ when he tempted him following Jesus’ forty-day stay in the dessert (Matt. 4), and neither could he defeat Christ during his horrible crucifixion (Matt. 28, Mk. 16, Luke 24, Jn. 20). Satan was then left with trying to destroy the Church of Jesus following Jesus’ Ascension (Mk. 19-29, Lk. 24: 50-52, Ac. 1:1-11)).

For trying to attack and destroy the Church, Satan controls, empowers and instructs his legions of evil spirits (fallen angels) to influence people who are part of brutal, God-denying ideologies and make the lives of Jews and Christians very difficult. Difficult, in the sense of persecuting them in the hope that some Christians will no longer stand up for Christ, falling away from the Church, and by even killing those who stand up for Jesus, no matter what.

In these times, Christians will experience persecution one way or another when they stand up for Jesus Christ. Read John 15:20b: “*If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also*.” On our North-American continent we experience persecution under radical liberalism, and so far not much from radical Islam yet. The way the issue of the homosexual lifestyle has grown throughout society, sometimes even in threatening ways, has created pressure on the Church in Canada and the United States. This has led to preparing this First Pastoral Letter (PL1).

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**Personal Experience in the Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, my wife and I have witnessed the decline of long-held Judeo-Christian values, and increasing interest in immoral lifestyles, including the homosexual lifestyle. As a result, thousands of church doors have been closed during the 1960s and following decades, as in other West-European countries. Eventually, similar changes in morality and churches affected by those changes, had reached the shores of the North-American continent at least several decades ago. These social changes and their influence on churches has given me reason and pastoral responsibility to address the issue of immoral lifestyles, including the homosexual lifestyle.

It has become clear that Satan, following his destructive work in Europe, is now also succeeding in driving Christians in North America away from their local churches, as a consequence of drifting away from Christ, the Head of the Church. Satan, driving the growing anti-Christ influences in societies, finding many church doors ajar, is pushing them, slowly but surely, wide open and will, over time, succeed in the final closure of those same doors.

Such closures happened throughout Europe and may happen soon in Canada and the US. My wife and I have been witnessing, first hand, this process in the Netherlands and Belgium. The local church in which I was baptized, made profession of my faith, in which I have received the opportunity to preach several times during the 1990s, had eventually no other option than to finally close the doors and to sell the building.[[1]](#footnote-1)

We have witnessed the drama of thousands of Christians, lured by the influence of liberalism, walking away from their church and faith. Without any doubt, the increasing country-wide influence of growing radical liberalism here in Canada, as well as in the US, will force Christian families to face and deal with an unavoidable spiritual battle that will continue for some time to come. In that battle, we will also notice the ingenuity of well-educated people trying, consciously or unconsciously, to shift God-established boundary lines regarding matters of immorality.

From personal experiences and discussions, I learned during the 1990s that even conservative theological seminaries, like the one in Kampen, the Netherlands, are receptive to radical-liberal influences. That could happen in Canada and the US as well. As a matter of fact, it is already happening.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In the dispute on homosexuality, developed throughout following discourses, and actually throughout this book, has not taken into account the influence of intellectualism on long-held biblical norms and values, resulting in church decline and final closing of church doors in Europe. More than 40 years ago, shortly after the ending of WWII in 1945, intellectualism among leaders in local churches and denominations, as it happened in the Netherlands, had a significant influence on church decline in Reformed churches, as well as in other denominations.[[3]](#footnote-3)

In those years, more issues, besides those primarily related to the homosexual lifestyle, were put on the table. The present influence of intellectualism in North America on the issue of homosexuality will not only play a role in accepting such lifestyle, but will also lead to the inclusion of additional issues, well or not related to the issue of homosexuality.

Ongoing growing pressures on the Church, due to Satan’s influence on radical liberals along the lines of Marxism and Communism, could lead to raising more questions about God’s presence and interest in people’s daily life filled with uncertainties. Questions on and the reality of many uncertainties could easily develop into a slowly drifting away from God, away from a living, meaningful relationship with Jesus and from a much needed submission to and guidance of the Holy Spirit in North America.

**Shifting Biblical Boundary Lines**

We are living in a widely acclaimed Post-truth world i.e. a world of unashamed use of policies promoted by radical liberalism already prevalent during the 1980s.[[4]](#footnote-4) Influenced by a fast-changing world with rapid means of communication, more and more Christians are beginning to wonder and eventually accept what is contrary to God's guidelines for life.

During the Old-Testament period, many of God’s covenant people, the Jews, were drawn into glamorous though sinful, immoral lifestyles demonstrated by God-denying Gentiles living around the country of Israel. We thereby also read how they were punished by God, following many divine warnings and action we never should forget in present times. These days we are watching a similar drama played out that could eventually end with similar divine punitive actions.

What we are witnessing in our time is the ingenuity of well-educated Christian leaders finding ways to move and shift God-determined boundary lines regarding matters of immorality. They don’t seem to have any intention to stop their desire to interpret biblical texts to accommodate their growing desire to lift biblical restrictions concerning the homosexual lifestyle. This particular lifestyle is included in the word *immorality* used in God’s Word.

We find in the first chapter of Paul’s letter to the Church in Rome (Rom. 1:7) a clear explanation of the meaning of homosexual behavior in Rom. 1,

*“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.”*

Rom. 1:26-27.

The above two verses are part of Paul’s explanation of what it means to live lives that ‘suppress the truth,’ Rom. 1:18. Not only that, God’s wrath is on those who live their lives as described in the above described verses in Romans 1. This is a very serious and time-less warning!

It is asserted by some Christians in Grand Rapids, MI, that Paul lived in a different world compared to today’s world. However, we should not forget that Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit, as all biblical writers have been, and wrote his words about truths

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that would count for all times. It is hard, if not impossible, to

measure any level of inspiration of the Holy Spirit of those Christians, referred to above, to the definate inspiration of the Holy Spirit Paul lived by and wrote his letters?

If one person had a thorough understanding of the Old Testament with its frequent references to immorality, including homosexuality, it was Paul. Thus, he wrote to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse,

 “*Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things…Put to*

 *death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature:*

 *sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which*

 *is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming…since*

 *you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put*

 *on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the*

 *image of its Creator,”* Col. 3:2, 5-6, 9b-10.

Who of today’s revisionists allege to have the same spiritual insights, maturity and competence as Paul had, and to critique him who had such a deep, personal encounter with Christ, followed by three years under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and His enduring spiritual empowerment during all the hardships experienced during his three missionary journeys (A.D. 46-57). Read Cor. 6:3-10; 2 Cor. 11:21a-28.

If anyone can speak with spiritual authority concerning matters of immorality it is Paul. Nevertheless, revisionists maintain that, on the basis of significant differences in the religious and cultural contexts between Paul’s days and present days, warrants a serious re-evaluation of the long-held inappropriateness of any kind of me-sex relationship.[[5]](#footnote-5) However, on what and whose authority do they utter such pronouncements?

God’s Word has been consistently speaking of sin in the context of immoral lifestyles, including homosexual lifestyles, during thousands of years. During all those years, people have been living within a variety of different religious and cultural contexts without any change in the in-appropriateness of living same-sex lifestyles and same-sex marriages. Since the postmodern era began in the mid-1960s, Judeo-Christian norms and values have been challenged, slowly but surely, by liberal influences that still continue.

**Influences in the Work Place**

A possible reason for allowing and even promoting the homosexual lifestyle could have come from those who don’t want to run the risk to be shamed at work by colleagues, or even in churches by opposing such a lifestyle. There are very strong pressures within many work places, or environments, to accept the kind of lifestyle so strongly disapproved by Paul.

Already in the early 1990s we read Charles Colson’s conclusion that “if you are a Christian and believe homosexuality is morally wrong, you’re going to have a hard time rising through the ranks.”[[6]](#footnote-6) That was about 30 years ago! Erwin Lutzer’s book, “*We Will Not Be Silenced*”[[7]](#footnote-7) firmly agrees with that conclusion.

**Decision making at a Crossroads**

Christians on the American continent, like many years ago on the European continent, have arrived at a crossroads and need to make a choice: being for or against God-given, Spirit-inspired norms and values around the critical issues of homosexuality and living together without being officially married and making covenant vows publically before God and His people. Time has come for Christians to decide either to hold on to, or to let go of clear biblical guidelines concerning these two opposing moral issues. The proper, biblically-based decision can only be made when the guidance of the Holy Spirit has been perceived, understood, accepted, and applied.

Discussions on fore-named two moral issues should be considered as a flirtation with important ideas about general human relationships generated by the ideology of radical liberalism. Such discussions require serious preparation by reading materials prepared by biblically-founded, well-informed Christian sources such as indicated below. May Christ’s Spirit be present in many discussions on especially the two earlier-mentioned issues, and supported by prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

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SECOND DISCOURSE

**Reasons for Discussions on LGBTQI and the Church**

**Introduction**

Before preparing this overview of reasons why we presently discuss this particular issue of LGBTQI, I wish to share with you some of my observations regarding the present social and political unrest in the US (as well as in Canada) that have not been caused by President Trump, despite his often disrespectful, immature ways of expressing himself on a rather consistent level.

The real reason for the present social and political unrest lies with the Far Left pushing their God-opposing ideology in efforts to undo Judeo-Christian norms and values. In their efforts, they have been receiving strong resistance from the White House and conservatives who have the courage to put a ‘spoke in the wheel’ of the many Far-Left initiatives. As suggested earlier, a similar push is happening in Canada under the liberal Trudeau government with the support of other sympathetic liberal political parties.

**Statements regarding the Far Right and the Far Left**

According to Rev. Dr. Brad Long[[8]](#footnote-8): David Horowitz has mastered historical, philosophical, ideological aspects of this Far-Left movement that Satan has formed into… a demonic stronghold that is destroying Western culture from within. In an official statement we read,

 The David Horowitz Freedom Center combats the efforts of

the radical Left and its Islamist allies to destroy American values and disarm the USA, as it attempts to defend itself in a time of terror. The leftist offensive is most obvious on our nation’s campuses, where the Freedom Center protects students from indoctrination and intimidation, and works to give conservative students a place in the marketplace of ideas from which they are otherwise excluded.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Dennis Prager, author and radio host, once wrote,

In a nutshell, Americanism’s values are what I call the American Trinity: ‘In God we trust,’ ‘Liberty’ and ‘E Pluribus Unum (Out of many, one).’ The Left has successfully made war on all three—substituting secularism for God and religion in as much of American life as possible; substituting equality (of result) for liberty; and multiculturalism is the opposite of ‘E Pluribus Unum.’

Prager pointed out that multiculturalism emphasizes not the unity of Americans, but the divisions that exists between them in terms of race, gender and class.[[10]](#footnote-10)

We need to be mindful of the fact that, according to Horowitz, contemporary “liberalism” is leftism in disguise. The latter has as its proponents like Michael Moore, George Soros, Noam Chomsky, Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, Jane Fonda, meanwhile opposing classical liberalism that has defined America and the West for two centuries.[[11]](#footnote-11)

**Ravi Zacharias on the Subject “Is Truth Dead?”**

In a YouTube presentation, Zacharias, in the early part of his presentation, recalls the event that ‘Physicist Andre Sakarov, who gave the Soviets the atomic bomb, had said in his closing days of his life, “I always thought that the most powerful weapon in the world was the bomb, I have changed my mind, the most powerful weapon in the world is not the bomb, but the truth.”’ Then Zacharias continues,

The truth is the most valuable thing, the most powerful thing, and yet the postmodern mindset says that there is no such thing as the absolute truth anymore. This is so ironic, in all that we are seeing with the moral confusion of our time and the so-called ‘Me Too’ movement and all of that…what you see happening is the quintessential expression of the contradiction of what we live.

All of our university students are taught that the truth is not absolute, morality is not absolute, they are trained to be relativistic in their thinking, trained to be relativists, and so when they go out in their professions and live relativistic live styles, all of a sudden they are smacked with an absolute, namely that I am told is that it is ultimately relative to myself!... or when the absolutes were gone we have to park them somewhere, and of all places we park it in the institutions that we trust the least, we call it politically correct, the one institution that we doubt and that where we now park our absolutes.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**Persecution by Mouth and Action**

What form does persecution hold today? “CitizenGo”[[13]](#footnote-13) sent out an email on January 16, 2018, in which a Canadian campaign manager wrote about the cultural and spiritual revolution in Canada during our present postmodern times. He explained this revolution by listing new postmodern values and principles, including: same-sex marriages, euthanasia, unrestricted abortion, transgender rights, speech-restricted bubble zones, and graphic sex education for children. He also added anti-Christian demonstrations and discrimination against pro-life employees.

Hank Hanegraaff writes,

Canada, it is now considered ‘discriminatory’ for state entities (like public schools) to argue for male/female marriage or parenting. In the province of Alberta, the (former, addition mine) NDP government had issued guidelines instructing teachers and school administrators not to use the terms ‘mother’ and ‘father’ when talking to students. Instead, they must use only non-gendered terms such as ‘parents/guardians’ or ‘partners’ or ‘caregivers.’[[14]](#footnote-14)

In the same email, he quotes from Nancy Pearcey’s new blockbuster book, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality,*

In 2015, British columnist Katie Hopkins began the call for euthanasia vans. ‘We just have far too many old people,’ Hopkins said in an interview. ‘It’s ridiculous to be living in a country where we can put dogs to sleep but not people.’ Her proposed solution? ‘Easy. Euthanasia vans—just like ice-cream vans—that would come to your home. They might even have a nice little tune they’d play. I mean this genuinely. I’m super-keen on euthanasia vans.’

In a special letter Hanegraaff writes, “Well, if by chance the very human instinct for denial has kicked in and you’re thinking, ‘Yes, but that could never happen here,’ think again. While we were sleeping, the toxic tentacles of transgenderism reached dangerously into even our laws:

* In 2011, the Obama administration’s state department announced that it was replacing ‘mother’ and ‘father’ on passport applications with ‘Parent One’ and ‘Parent Two.’
* In 2016, the New York City Human Rights Commission released a list of thirty-one terms of gender expression—androgynous, genderqueer, non-binary, pangender, gender-fluid, third-sex, two-spirit, and so on—that employers must use or face exorbitant fines of up to $250,000.
* What’s more, trans-activists have even protested “the use of terms like *man* and *woman*, because some males identify as women, and vice versa. Believe it or not, the Midwives Alliance of North America changed their literature to delete the word ‘mother’ and substitute ‘pregnant individuals’ and ‘birthing persons.’ It is now deemed transphobic to say ‘breastfeeding.’ You must say ‘chest-feeding,’ to be inclusive of trans-men.

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**Franklin Graham Fires Back At 2020 Dem Pete Buttigieg”**[[15]](#footnote-15)

There is truly no end to the depths we will reach when we abandon the truth of God’s Word in every aspect of life to which it speaks. While some topics may have murky input from Scripture, if any at all, some things in life are unequivocally commanded or forbidden by God, and their resultant blessings or curses are equally clear.

As stalwart saints have long contended, homosexuality is a topic on which [God’s stance is unmistakable](https://www.gotquestions.blog/homosexuality-sin.html). Anyone who vests in Scripture the power and authority it deserves—also known as having a “high view” of the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture as God’s word—must therefore consider homosexuality to be a grievous sin against God and His biological design for his creation.

Yet, as that convicting and culturally unpalatable truth is ignored or contradicted Sunday after Sunday in pulpits worldwide, it is becoming increasingly unacceptable, even in the Christian community, to contend that homosexuality is sinful. Mainstream Christianity has been infected with the cancer of theological liberalism (which results in social liberalism) for far too long, and now that corruption is beginning to manifest itself in the political arena.

In April, self-described “gay Christian” Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg [claimed](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pro-abortion-2020-dem-claims-homosexual-marriage-brought-him-closer-to-god) that his same-sex “marriage” has deepened his faith and lobbed the following remark at Vice President Mike Pence: “If you’ve got a problem with who I am, your problem is not with me. Your quarrel, sir, is with my creator…” This isn’t the first time Buttigieg has played the religion card to push his progressive agenda. In a previous interview, he argued that conservative values are used to “[harm other people](https://www.cnn.com/2019/04/14/politics/pete-buttigieg-presidential-campaign/index.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=fbCNN&utm_content=2019-04-16T12:13:56&fbclid=IwAR3qIgtpwxb4HGyA1JSEm4HUBngxT5yAksNxiivqWckSkdFtHaWjZgHLJAc)” and, in a recent CNN town hall, declared that “God doesn’t have a political party.”

Presidential candidate & South Bend Mayor [Pete Buttigieg](https://twitter.com/PeteButtigieg) is right—God doesn’t have a political party. But God does have commandments, laws & standards He gives us to live by. God doesn’t change. His Word is the same yesterday, today & forever. That’s where folks like Franklin Graham drew the line. Mincing no words, the globally-acclaimed evangelist and humanitarian proceeded to set Buttigieg straight on exactly where God stands when it comes to this issue,

Mayor Buttigieg says he’s a gay Christian. As a Christian I believe the Bible defines homosexuality as sin, something to be repentant of, not something to be flaunted, praised or politicized. The Bible says marriage is between a man & a woman—not two men, not two women…The core of the Christian faith is believing and following Jesus Christ, who God sent to be the Savior of the world—to save us from sin, to save us from hell, to save us from eternal damnation.[[16]](#footnote-16)

YouTube: “Former Gay Reveals Truth of LGBTQI Agenda Flooding the Culture.”

George Carneal’s book, “*From Queer to Christ: My Journey Into the Light.*”

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THIRD DISCOURSE

**Christian Assault on the Doctrine concerning Homosexuality**

**Questioning Scripture**

The following article by Joe Dallas[[17]](#footnote-17) first appeared in the CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL, volume 38, number 04 (2015). For more information on, or to subscribe to the CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL: <http://www.equip.org/christian-research-journal/>,

NOTE: “First one starts questioning, based on what the world around us is saying, then one looks at Scripture, then theology, then scientific study—until finally what the Scriptures teach is completely subjected to whatever view is currently accepted by the world.”

Francis Schaeffer,

Eve was approached by the serpent with a simple inquiry: *Did God really say what you think He did?* (Gen. 3:1). Her first mistake was engagement (Gen. 3:2), when she began a dialogue with someone who not only questioned the obvious, but also went on to cast aspersions on God’s intentions, then minimized the seriousness of disobeying Him (Gen. 3:4–5). There’s no overstating the catastrophe that followed. Eve was deceived, Adam sinned, and in Adam all die (1 Tim. 2:14; Rom. 5:12; 2 Cor. 15:11).

Old stories get remakes; remakes get updated. So, to this day, we face again the phenomenon of God’s clear instructions being subjected to challenge, minimizing, and revision. And nowhere is the story being played out with such gusto as it is within churches that are reconsidering their position on homosexuality.

**Churches Changing Mind on Homosexuality**

In January, *Time* magazine noted and reported on this subject in a feature story entitled “A Change of Heart.”1 Citing a number of cases in which prominent evangelical churches and leaders have adopted a pro-gay interpretation of the Bible (accompanied by a strong commitment to promote pro-gay causes openly), the article concluded that “change is coming to one of the last redoubts of opposition to gay marriage in America.”2

Note: Above and next footnotes, 1-15, on pp. 46-47.

This is, in a growing number of cases, quite true. The article offers striking examples, including the shift of Seattle’s Eastlake megachurch to become a gay-affirming congregation, hosting and performing same-sex weddings.3 New Heart Community Baptist Church of Southern California went a similar direction when Pastor Danny Cortez, after fifteen years of ruminating over the subject and following his own son’s admission of homosexuality, decided to make his church “gay affirming.”4

Other recent examples, not mentioned in the *Time* article, would include Grace-Pointe Church of Franklin, Tennessee, another

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megachurch also identified as evangelical, which announced in

January its policy change from rejection of gay marriage to support.5 Citing a “nudge from Jesus,” Vineyard Christian Fellowship Pastor Ken Wilson now endorses and performs same-sex weddings in his Ann Arbor, Michigan, church.6

All of which must be music to the ears of the Reformation Project, a Wichita, Kansas, a group spearheaded by openly gay and evangelical-identifying Matthew Vines, author of *God and the Gay Christian*.7 The organization’s goal is to raise pro-gay voices “in every evangelical church in the country”8 by training “reformers” at regional leadership workshops who will then return to their own churches and “serve as advocates.” Their ambition is to have representatives in all fifty states by the year 2018.9

The question is not whether change is happening, because the growing tide is undeniable, showing clear promise of becoming a tidal wave. The real question becomes whether the wave should be praised or lamented. Is modern evangelicalism on the cusp of embracing a God-ordained civil rights movement, or a grotesque error masquerading as reformation?

**Doctrine and Delivery**

When discerning the validity of a trend, we begin by asking, as Paul did, “What does the Scripture say?” (Rom. 4:3). If movements harmonize with both sound doctrine and the Church’s mission as outlined in the Bible, then they warrant our full support. If not, then open resistance and criticism are called for instead. By this criterion, any move toward dismantling sound

*doctrine* cannot be validated, while a move toward more effective

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*delivery* deserves an enthusiastic ‘amen.’ In this light, we can’t help but see this “change of heart” as a disheartening change that does, in fact, chip away at doctrinal essentials.

First, it attempts to revise essential prohibitions against homosexuality in both Testaments, while chipping away at a general, critical standard reiterated by Jesus Himself.“In many evangelical communities the Bible itself is on trial,” the *Time* article observed,10 but this is a case the judge has already ruled on. Erotic acts between those of the same sex are openly condemned in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13; Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; and 1 Timothy 1:10. And in Matthew 19:4–6, Jesus referred to created intent for the marital union when He defined it as permanent, monogamous, and heterosexual.

Redefining these verses, or the intentions of their writers, requires something akin to mental gymnastics and blurs essential sexual boundaries that are meant to stay intact. (The effort to revise our understanding of the Bible and homosexuality has been refuted in prior issues of the Christian Research Journal11 and in the book *The Gay* *Gospel? How Pro-Gay Advocates Misread the Bible* [Harvest House, 2007].)12

Second, it hampers our ability to fulfill the Great Commission by preaching the gospel (Matt. 28:18–20). Since conviction of sin is necessary for anyone to recognize their need for salvation (Ac. 2:40; Rom. 3:23), if we tell people that what God calls sin is in fact something less, then we’re interfering with their ability to understand their own need. The physician who tells his patient that his cancer is merely indigestion is no physician at all; a church that tells a transgressor that his transgression is merely an inborn preference can hardly be called salt and light.

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Third, it cripples our ability to make disciples. A disciple is not just a believer, but also a learner; an eager pupil who follows his instructor’s teachings and imitates the teacher Himself.13 The Church is called to nurture disciples to maturity (Gal. 4:19; Eph. 4:12), encouraging them to lay aside whatever hampers their spiritual health (Heb. 12:1), and insisting that certain behaviors, including sexual uncleanness, have no place in their lives (Eph. 5:3).

Rather than *discipline* and, as needed, *disciplining* believers who engage themselves as immoral proponents of this new move are *dismissing* the seriousness of sexual sin altogether, citing love and inclusion as their motive. Pastor Meeks of Eastlake Church (referred to earlier), for example, said his change of heart came when one of his staff members admitted she was dating another woman but had been afraid to tell him so.

His response is telling: “I refuse to go to a church where my friends who are gay are excluded from Communion, from a marriage covenant, or from the beauty of Christian community. The message of Jesus was a message of wide inclusivity.”14 Well, yes and no. Christ’s invitation was certainly inclusive: “*Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy laden*” (Matt. 11:28); “*Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out*” (Jn. 6:37); and “*Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*”

(Rev. 22:17).

Those terms, however, both for salvation and discipleship, were in fact quite exclusive. Christ established Himself as the only Way to the Father (Jn. 14:6), a very non-inclusive concept indeed. He described the way to life as being narrow and found only by the minority (Matt. 7:14). And He gave no amnesty to those who

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rejected truth, because it was inconvenient to them (Jn. 3:19).

Indeed, even among His own, most of the churches He addressed in Revelation received words of rebuke and correction (Rev. 2–3). Clearly, His welcome and His approval are two very different things.

So yes, the invitation to salvation is broad, but its requirements are not. Likewise, and contrary to Pastor Meeks’ assertions about Christian community, the standards for communion (incl. Lord’s Supper celebration) within the local church are clear and fixed, requiring conformity to exclusive truths, both in doctrine and lifestyle. So Paul, far from inclusive on such matters, ordered the Corinthian church to dis-fellowship a member who was in unrepentant sexual sin (1 Cor. 5:1–8) and further instructed believers to withdraw from other believers whose lives were deliberately being lived outside God-given parameters (1 Cor. 5:9–12).

Regarding sexual behavior itself, Scripture does not only condemns anything falling short of created intent, but also uses language that carries a certain urgency. When addressing the Corinthians’ casual attitude toward sex, Paul adopts a tone of indignant shock when he asks,

 *“What! Don’t you know that your bodies are temples of the*

 *Holy Spirit?” (1 Cor. 6:19). He further cites immorality in its*

 *own category of severity, describing it as a sin against the body*

 *itself (1 Cor. 6:18) and considers the will of God for the believer*

 *to include abstinence from all forms of sexual sin.”*

 (1 Thess. 4:3–4).

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In short, sexual conduct outside God’s will is biblically underscored as a serious offense, excluding people from fellowship with both God and the church, and forbidden to go unchecked within any congregation. Thereby, any movement that sanctions the forbidden is one that’s inherently deceptive, because true disciples aren’t made by compromised affirmations, no matter how well intended.

The message of Jesus to all potential followers—*If any man come after Me let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me* (Matt. 16:24)—is inclusive in its scope and exclusive in its requirements. “He that does not take up his cross is not worthy of Me” (Matt. 10:38) is, after all, an awfully clear either/or proposition: live for self and die, or die to self and live. There is no curtain number three.

That said, let’s be careful not to believe our own bad press. Those promoting a biblically based view on sexuality are often called “haters,” categorized alongside racists, and written off as ignorant, no matter how intelligently and lovingly they present themselves. In response, too many Christians are pulling back from speaking the truth, because they’re afraid of the name-calling and accusations that inevitably will come, and they likewise fear—wrongfully, though sincerely—that if they call something a sin, they are thereby injuring the person practicing the sin.

The video played before services at Eastlake Church is telling when it announces: “Gay or Straight Here, There’s no Hate Here.”15 The implication is that the traditional view on homosexuality is a hateful one. But truth is not hate. Properly delivered, it’s still the Great Liberator (John 8:32). Still, we can do better. 46

**Expository Teaching, Explicit Instruction, Encouraging Ministry**

First, we can pay closer attention to *expository* teaching in our churches, making sure what’s delivered from our pulpits is doctrinally sound. We are especially in need today of renewed instruction in Pauline theology regarding the old versus new nature Paul outlined in Romans 5- 7, and how to best manage the struggle between flesh and spirit referred to in Gal. 5:17.

Second, we can be more *explicit* in our instructions, both to adults and minors, regarding the biblical view on human sexuality, the challenge of stewarding our bodies properly, and the best means of communicating biblical truths to a growing cynical culture. In these times when hostility to the biblical view is epidemic, those holding to *sola scriptura* need more than ever to be equipped with the tools needed to make a compelling defense of the faith they hold dear.

And we can (and must) develop more in-house *encouraging* ministries to help those wrestling with their own sexual conflicts and to support their families and loved ones. These three areas of effort are, to my thinking, demanding an immediate response, a response that is also, to my thinking, nonnegotiable.

1. Ibid. 45.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. 46.
4. Jill Cowan, “GracePointe Church in Franklin Will Now Support Gay Marriage,” *The Tennessean*, January 30, 2015, http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/religion/2015/01/30/ gracepointe-church-franklin-will-support-gay-marriage/22588889/.
5. Niraj Warikoo, “’Nudge from Jesus’ Changes Minister’s Gay Marriage Views,” *USA Today*, April 7, 2014, http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/04/07/evangelical-minister-supports-gay-marriage/7420513/.
6. Matthew Vines, *God and the Gay Christian* (New York: Convergent Books, 2014).
7. “A Change of Heart,” 46.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. See “What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?” http://www.equip.org/perspectives/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality/; C. Wayne Mayhall, “Is Arsenokoitai Really That Mysterious?” *Christian Research Journal* 30, 6 (2007); http://www.equip.org/article/isarsenokoitai-really-that-mysterious/; and Hank Hanegraaff, “President Bartlet’s Fallacious Diatribe,” *Christian Research Journal* 23, 3 (2001); www.equip.org/article/presidentbartlets-fallacious-diatribe/.
11. Joe Dallas, *The Gay Gospel? How Pro-Gay Advocates Misread the Bible* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2007); available through the CRI bookstore at http://www.equip.org/bookstore/the-gay-gospel-how-pro-gay-advocates-misread-the-bible/.
12. *Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, s.v. “disciple,” http:// www.blueletterbible.org/search/Dictionary/viewTopic.cfm?topic=VT0000751.
13. “A Change of Heart,” 45.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid. 48.

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FOURTH DISCOURSE

**LGBTQI and the Church**

After some years of pushing of a God-denying ideology by the Far Left, a growing number of churches are finally feeling the need to deal with the issue of the homosexual lifestyle, and are more or less expected to approve of it. The pressure is on churches to discuss this issue, which is the right thing to do. This letter serves as a contribution to and preparation for such discussion to be done in light of all of God’s Word.

First, we will take note of what we can learn from God’s Word of what God thinks about the practice of living the homosexual lifestyle. After that, we will proceed with looking at ways the (local) church needs to guide people who are living such a lifestyle, or are considering practicing the homosexual lifestyle.

**God’s Word on the LGBTQI Issue: A Moral/Social Problem**

There is no better way to have a profound, biblical answer to this important question than the one explained in Robert A. J. Gagnon’s book, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics*. As a widely, appreciatively and enthusiastically endorsed book by many prominent theologians, Christians do well to read and take the results of Gagnon’s deep and serious study on this particular subject very seriously. Without hesitation, this book is a ‘must’ read prior to any biblically-based and helpful thoughts and discussions on the subject of homosexual behavior to form a solid (local) church response to such behavior.

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Gagnon’s motivation for writing this book is described at the beginning of the book as part of the Introduction, 31-32,

 The homosexuality debate is generally not pleasant for those

 who speak out publically against homosexual behavior—at

 least it has never been for me. Not only does it leave one

 vulnerable to the host of stereotypes…and position one squarely

 against the cultural norms prevailing in most media, academy,

 and secular establishment, but also forces one to uphold

 standards of righteousness when keenly aware of one’s own

 imperfections and need for grace.

 I deplore attempts to demean the humanity of homosexuals,

 whatever one thinks about the immorality of homosexual

 behavior, or about the obnoxiousness of elements within the

 homosexual lobby, homosexual impulses share with all other

 sinful impulses the feature of being an attack on the “I” or inner

 self experiencing the impulses (Rom 7:14-25). The person

 beset with homosexual temptations should evoke our concern,

 sympathy, help, and understanding, not our scorn or enmity.

 For homosexuals a denunciation of homosexuality may feel like

 an indictment of homosexuals. Regrettably, some of this pain

 may be unavoidable in the hope of doing away with the greater

 pain of living outside of God’s redemptive plan. There can be

 no healthy transformation so long as homosexuals live in a

 world of unreality, including the unreality of false notions about

 Scripture’s view of homosexuality. When a homosexual holds

 out hope that something in the teachings of Jesus, or in the Bible

 generally, speaks positively about same-sex erotic unions,

 naturally there is going to be disappointment and sadness upon

 the discovery that nothing of the sort exists.

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One is reminded of Paul’s sober retrospect on his “tearful letter” to the Corinthian believers,

 “*For though I grieved you in the letter, I do not continue to have*

 *regrets—though I used to have regrets, for I see that letter*

 *though only for a short time) grieved you. Now I rejoice, not*

 *because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into*

 *repenting. For you were grieved in a godly manner (lit., in*

 *accordance with God), in order that you would in no way be*

 *caused loss or damaged by us. For a godly grief (lit., a grief*

 *according with God) produces a repentance which leads to a*

 *salvation free of all regret; but the grief of the world produces*

 *death.” (*2 Cor. 7:8-10)

In one of three different cases Gagnon described the following incidence,

 I became friends with a man who had stopped pursuing sexual

 relations with other men and had married a Christian woman.

 As a child, he had experienced his father to be a cold and distant

 personality. He had difficulty feeling like “one of the boys” and

 shied away from typical male forms of socialization. Now, with

 the help of counseling, he had found contentment in a

 committed heterosexual relationship. In times of high stress, his

 same-sex desires would re-emerge, yet he remained faithful to

 his wife, much like any heterosexual person who, in marriage,

 is committed to keeping his/her vows but remains susceptible

 to temptations through unsolicited sexual desires. To me he is

 an example of sober hope for hose struggling with their

 homosexuality.

Gagnon’s aim of this book,

 This book has been aimed at showing that affirming same-sex

 intercourse is *not* an act of love, however well-meaning the

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 intent. That road leads to death: physically, morally, and

spiritually. Promoting the homosexual “rights” agenda is an awful and harmful waste of the church’s energies and resources. What does constitute an act of love is befriending the homosexual, while withholding approval of homosexual behavior, working in the true interests of the homosexual despite one’s personal “repugnance for same-sex intercourse, pursuing in love the homosexual practice while bearing the abuse that will inevitably come with opposing

 homosexual practice.

 It is the harder road to travel. It is too hard for many people to

 live within that holy tension. Yet it is the road that leads to life

 and true reconciliation; it is the calling of the Church in the

 world. The real difficulty for the church lies not in assessing

 whether the Bible’s stance toward same-sex intercourse is

 unremittingly negative, nor even (as is increasingly being

 suggested) in assessing whether the hermeneutical

appropriation of the Bible’s stance for our contemporary context sustains that witness. No, the real difficulty for the local church lies in the pastoral dimension: the “nuts-and-bolts,” day-to-day compassionate response to people whose sexual actions are recognized to be sinful and harmful to themselves, to the

 church, and to society at large, 493.

 In the Christian Reformed Church’ Agenda for Synod 2019 we

 read, Ezekiel’s description...follows Leviticus in identifying

 Jerusalem’s “detestable practices” with the typical practices of

 the nations around her, including the Canaanites and Sodomites.

 For the prophets, as in the law and (as we shall see) in the New

 Testament, sexual immorality and idolatry were the chief

 characteristics of the nations that did not know God. Yet when

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God redeemed his people according to his covenant, he would

 purify them from all of their sexual immorality and idolatry.[[18]](#footnote-18)

In his booklet, *The Complete Bible Answer Man*, 414-415, Hank Hanegraaff writes,

 The Bible condemns homosexuality…but not in an arbitrary

 and capricious fashion. Rather, He carefully defines the borders

 of human sexuality so that our joy may be complete…the

 human body is not designed for homosexual relationships.

 Spurious slogans and sound bites do not change the scientific

 reality that homosexual relationships are devastating, not only

 from a psychological but also from a physiological perspective.

**Pastoral Approaches to Homosexual Lifestyle**

In case those who live a homosexual lifestyle attend church services, church leaders need to realize that they are, first of all, responsible for the spiritual health and wellbeing of church members, a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. Church leaders and members alike need to be able to explain the biblical basis on which the homosexual life style is unacceptable. On such mutual agreement, active homosexual persons are allowed and welcomed to take part in church services. However, it should be made clear that those homosexual persons are not allowed to participate in the celebration of Lord’s Supper, as that is only allowed for members of the church.

It could well be that, on the basis of such understanding, discussions may develop on what basis an in-active homosexual

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person can be(come) a member of the church. In order to be

prepared for such development, church members need to discuss and agree on the prerequisites for becoming a member of the church.

Based on the Word of God we may conclude that the intention of Jesus is that each local church needs to be an environment in which His healing power can be demonstrated, i.e. bringing about spiritual, physical and mental healing in people’s life. It seems that in the discussion between church and homosexual persons the onus is not so much on the homosexual person, as it is on the church herself.

The critical *question* for the Church is how to live up to her Christian call and responsibilities to meet the need of homosexual persons. The critical *issue* hereby is how the church can be an instrument in Christ’s hands to allow his healing power touch the homosexual person to set him/her free from his/her homosexual lifestyle, and continue to support that person through struggles facing them afterwards. Such pastoral attention will aim at bringing about spiritual, physical, emotional and mental healing for the homosexual person.

**Sources for Healing and Overcoming Homosexual lifestyle**

There are sources that are helpful in equipping Christians who are interested in knowing how to guide and help those living a homosexual lifestyle, either overcoming that lifestyle, or to being able to live with such an attraction in a lesser intense degree. Some may have the spiritual gift to become instrumental in passing on healing power given by the Holy Spirit. Some indication of what it takes to help those engaged in a homosexual

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lifestyle can be learned from information posted on Google. Let me give three examples:

1. Joe Kort, Ph.D., LMSW: Article called “Can Someone Be Homosexual and Not Gay?” Dr. Kort, author of books including “Is My Husband Gay, Straight or Bi,” is on the teaching faculty at University of Michigan Sexual Health Certificate Program. See his post. April 01, 2016.

Excerpts: I have treated many men who are Mormon, Orthodox Jews, Catholic and other religions who think of homosexuality as pathology. I have helped some to come out, and some have had to leave their religious affiliations, either because they were kicked out, or the pressure to go back into the closet. Therapy, then, becomes about helping them to grieve the loss, and starting to build a new life... Being homosexual, gay, or having same-sex attraction is not sex addiction, and should never be treated as such. This puts the client at odds with their sexual orientation and only makes things worse.

**Hetero-Emotional and Homosexual:** The truth is that many men with “same-sex attractions” are successfully walking the narrow path between internal cultural and religious identification, and have good marriages. I think of them as being hetero-emotional homosexuals. Though they know they are sexually attracted to men, they are emotionally drawn to women. They fall in love with their wives, and because of that, the expression of love through [intimacy](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/relationships) allows them to have great sex and intimacy with their spouse.

1. Barrington H. Brennen’s article called “Overcoming The Homosexual Lifestyle,” 2004. Brennen is an ordained

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1. minister and a counseling psychologist, family therapist.

Excerpts: You can overcome your homosexuality, with the power of Jesus in you. I am answering you honestly from one Christian to another. Although I do believe you can change, it is important that you understand that not all homosexuals have found it possible to change, even sincere Christians. I do believe that sexual involvement can cease, but sexual desires might linger long, or never go away.

Strictly speaking, one cannot be born a homosexual, because it is a *learned* behavior, as are anger, fear, lust, prostitution, and even love. Certainly, however, one can be born with the predisposition toward homosexuality…Is this really true? Since I first wrote this article, I was not convinced about what I am about to say. Although I still hold to my view that one can be born with the leaning toward homosexuality, now I do believe further that there might be a possibility that some (not every homosexual) are born with a genetic disposition toward homosexuality that is reinforced with the environment (nature)… It is important to understand that it is possible that one may have a biological tendency toward homosexuality and still have a well-balanced happy family background.

If we are dictated to by our genetic structure, hormonal flow, and impulses, we are no better than the animals. Many of us, heterosexuals and homosexuals, do act like them. Humans were made with a special gift called the power and freedom of choice. This freedom to choose, controlled by the Holy Spirit, should help us conquer the natural, sinful inclinations of our body cells and nerves. The brain cells are designed to

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function independently of all cells in the body. We ultimately decide who we are, what we want to be, and our destiny in life…

Our great challenge, then, is how we as Christians relate to homosexuals and lesbians. Often, we expect them to practice heterosexuality instantly, forgetting that any behavioral change takes time. One can stop the habit instantly, but the desires and impulses may still remain.

It is not the Christian teaching that’s causing the problem. Rather, it is a misconception of what freedom from sin really means, and knowing what Grace and Mercy are all about. Yes, we have the freedom to be homosexual, but being free to choose does not remove the consequences of the abuse of that freedom. When God gives victory over sinful acts, sinful desires are not necessarily removed immediately.

1. Robert Bly, Poet, author and activist, Unleashed ‘Iron John’ and Started the Drum-Thumping Men’s Movement of the ’90s. Article “Healing Homosexuality: Four Stages of Recovery” Posted June 18, 2001 on Google, ©Columnist Richard Cohen, M.A., January 1999. 1.

**Transitioning** (**Behavioral** therapy)
\* Cutting off from sexual behavior
\* Developing a support network (small group, addition mine)
\* Building self-worth and experiencing value in relationship with God

**Grounding** (**Cognitive** therapy)
\* Continuing with the support network

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\* Continuing to build self-worth and experience value in relationship with God
\* Building skills: assertiveness training, communication skills, problem-solving techniques
\* Beginning inner-child healing: identifying thoughts, feelings, and needs

**Healing the Homo-Emotional Wounds** (Psychodynamic therapy: Healing same-sex wounds therapy)
\* Continuing all tasks of Stage Two
\* Discovering the root causes of homo/hetero-emotional wounds
\* Process of grieving, forgiving, and taking responsibility

\* Continuing the process of grieving, forgiving, and taking responsibility
\* Developing healthy, healing opposite-sex relationships and learning about the opposite sex.

**Regarding the involvement of Small groups**

In certain instances, I have noticed that those who are willing to seek the help from specialized/professional therapists in overcoming their homosexual lifestyle would benefit from a support group. When I became aware of the need of a support group, I immediately thought of one or more small groups in a church that could function as a support group coming alongside a person who wants to leave his/her homosexual lifestyle.

A church, in conjunction with a small group, willing to be such a support group, could initiate contacts with Christian therapists or psychologists to seek ways how they could cooperate with both the therapists and active homosexuals who desire to overcome their homosexual lifestyle. But before doing so, church members, and certainly members of a support group, need to inform

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themselves about possibilities and ways to help active homosexuals, how spiritual and physical healing can be realized, and how to support such people. They could start by taking note of the above three sources of healing through mediation of professional therapists.

See APPENDIX C: What Small Groups *Are* and *Do*, 241.

**Notice**

A course on the ‘Power of Prayer’ provided and led by Dunamis Fellowship International (DFI), or Dunamis Fellowship Canada (DFC), could be a good start. DFI receives financial support from Calvin Theological Seminar in Grand Rapids, MI, as also its professors get more enthusiastic about the work of DFI, which part of Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International (PRMI) in NC, USA. A highly recommended reading:

Brad Long & Cindy Strickler, *LET JESUS HEAL YOUR HIDDEN WOUNDS: Cooperating with the Holy Spirit in Healing Ministry*, 2001.

**Moral Decay and Conversion Therapy (Bill C-8)**

Twenty-first century persecution in the U.S. and Canada is multi-faceted and largely ideological. Its manifestations are seen in the advancement of moral decay, the dissemination of secularism, the deconstructionism of Christianity’s role in American history, and the demonizing of Christian values. Consequently, if you morally object to homosexuality, society will very soon label you as a “homophobe” and a “bigot.”

In his booklet, *The Complete Bible Answer Man*, Hank Hanegraaff writes, “When the Scripture’s condemnation of homosexuality (immorality, addition mine) is referenced, it is not

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uncommon to see expressions of polite exasperation etched on the faces of the masses.”

(See also next Fifth Discourse)

Of late, ‘The Epoch Times’ published an article by Brian Giesbrecht in which he reminds us of a proposed ban on ‘Conversion Therapy’ concerning younger generations. As a matter of fact, as an ordained minister myself, I (Peter) am officially not allowed in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, to discuss with a homosexual person about the possibility, even necessity, to turn away from that lifestyle on the basis of God’s Word.

In the same article, Giesbrecht points out that the federal Liberals in Canada had introduced Bill C-8 regarding new criminal offenses related to conversion therapy. He then also reminds his readers of a similar bill, S-202, being considered by the Senate. Both bills aim to ban certain types of counselling for children who are struggling with their sexuality or gender. He reminds us that gender identity and sexual orientation are very different issues, but are nevertheless lumped together. In case both bills, Bill C-8 and A-202, are upheld it would be illegal to obtain any secular counseling that might persuade the child to retain his or her birthright gender. Any counseling that is not deemed to be “affirmed” will become illegal.[[19]](#footnote-19)

See also APPENDIX A, p. 239

FIFTH DISCOURSE

**Homosexuality and the Bible**

Q. Does Homosexuality demonstrate that the Bible is Antiquated and Irrelevant?

 Hank Hanegraaff answers his own, above written question, as follows (verbatim),[[20]](#footnote-20)

We would do well to recognize that the God of the Bible does not condemn homosexuality in an arbitrary and capricious fashion. Rather, He carefully defines the borders of human sexuality so that our joy may be complete. It does not require an advanced degree in physiology to appreciate the fact that the human body is not designed for homosexual relationships.

Spurious slogans and sound bites do not change the scientific reality that homosexual relationships are devastating, not only from a psychological but also from a physiological perspective.

Finally, far from being irrelevant and antiquated, the Bible’s warnings regarding homosexuality are eerily and up to date. The book of Romans aptly describes both the perversion and the penalty:

 “Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural

 relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one

 another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and

 *received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion*”

Ro. 1:26-27, NIV; (emphasis added).

It would be difficult to miss the relationship between Paul’s words and the current health-care holocaust. More people already have died worldwide from AIDS than the United States of America has lost in all its wars combined. This shows but the tip of an insidious iceberg. The homosexual lifestyle causes a host of complications including hemorrhoids, prostate damage, and infectious fissures. And even that merely scratches the surface. Non-viral infections transmitted through homosexual activity include gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis. Viral infections involve condylomata, herpes, and hepatitis A and B.

While there are attendant moral amend medical problems with sexual promiscuity in general, it would be homophobic in the extreme to obscure the scientific realities concerning homosexuality. It is a hate crime of unparalleled proportions to attempt to keep a whole segment of the populations in the dark concerning such issues. Thus, far from demonstrating that the Bible is out of step with the times, its warnings regarding homosexuality demonstrate that it is as relevant today as it was in the beginning.

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SIXTH DISCOURSE

**Biblical Approach to Homosexuality**

**Introduction**

Sometime ago, I had a discussion on how to understand the homosexual lifestyle in the context of God’s Word. In that discussion the idea of using a so called ‘circular approach’ to this particular moral subject came up. In that discussion, it was not very clear to me what such an approach would entail. It was only very recently that I began to understand the meaning of and reason for using such an approach on the above mentioned subject. Let me explain.

In light of Scripture, we cannot approach and speak of God’s Word in terms of a circular approach, as the entire Bible story is a straight forward story from beginning to end: Creation, Fall, Redemption. We need to understand that God’s Word reveals a straight line forwards from Genesis to Revelation. It is the story of God’s original vision and ongoing mission expressed in Exodus 19: 5b-6a.

God’s **Vision** is and remains the final formation of a ‘priesthood of all believers’ also described in Revelation 21:2 as ‘a bride beautifully dressed for her husband’ (Jesus Christ, addition mine). God’s **Mission** to realize His vision, described in Exodus 19:5a, indicates that the completion of that priesthood (1 Peter 2:5, 9) will be realized when the priests are and remain obedient to God by keeping the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). At the center

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of God’s mission stands the cross on which Jesus Christ offered his life unto our redemption and salvation.

**Circular Approach to Solve a Serious Problem**

There is a biblical example to a problem in which we could speak of using a circular approach. That one example took place in the story about the Fall of Jericho (Joshua 5:13-20). In that story we read about the wall around Jericho that could be described as a ‘wall of resistance.’ That particular ‘wall of resistance’ needed to be taken down to bring about victory for Joshua’s army.

In that unexpected though successful divine mission we could speak of a circular approach by the LORD’s army (walking seven times around that city) that eventually led to the overtaking of Jericho. That divinely-instructed way of circulating the wall of Jericho (‘wall of resistance’) led to the taking down of that serious barrier of resistance towards victory. The final result of that circular approach was that those within the walls were squeezed and taken out.

In our days we see, however, a reversal of roles in the spiritual battle between those who are holding on to and defending long-held Judeo-Christion position on homosexual lifestyles and those who are questioning, attacking, or try to undermine them. The growing influence of radical liberalism, experienced in Canada and the US, as earlier on in Western Europe, is affecting many spheres of society, including the sphere of the Church.

That influence is very powerful in its strong desire to encounter, overrule, dismiss and even eradicate the many long-held biblically-based Judea-Christian norms and values. That

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influence affects Christians who then begin to ask questions about, for example, Paul’s explanation what he means by homosexuality and calls it for what it is: wrong. That means against God’s will.

One would hope and even expect that Christians would form a spiritual ‘wall of resistance’ against the growing, successful and sometimes insidious attacks from those radical-liberal forces. However, the present, somber reality is that the spiritual ‘wall of resistance’ has already shown its weaknesses. However, there are now Christians who seem to be sensitive to the ideas and influence carried and pushed by radical liberals upon our societies.

There are Christian leaders who could have, and in fact already have, been influenced by aggressive liberal ideology that seriously permeates today’s societies. As a result, many Christians are being swayed to accept homosexual lifestyles. We are actual witnessing how Christians and many of their leaders are putting pressure on other Christians and churches. They are, as it were, circulating those who resist that pressure as they hold on their faith and reject immoral behavior.

The question hereby arises whether that pressure will eventually lead not to a complete ‘destruction’ of those resisting that pressure but that such a pressure will lead to a breaking down of community and possible break. Circular approach will eventually lead to brokenness due to the destructive nature of those involved in the circular approach.

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Wendy’s book, “Generous Spaciousness…” could be considered an example of a circular approach concerning the homosexual lifestyles bringing about serious friction within church.[[21]](#footnote-21) She identifies herself with the position of those participating in the homosexual lifestyle, while holding on to Jesus as their Lord. She acknowledges the hurt, tension, as well as relieve and joy among active homosexuals.

Her rhetoric seems to develop around love, respect, and acceptance that Christian communities need to learn to appreciate and to support without resistance. In the same book, Wendy only spent a bit more than one page on a much needed exegesis of God’s Word to do justice to such an important subject of homosexual lifestyle.

Her very limited exposition of the Bible on such an important subject ends with some pros and cons. That short, limited exegesis makes her entire discussion on homosexual lifestyle unsustainable and ambivalent. This conclusion finds support from Gagnon’s study of forenamed subject in his 500-page book, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Before listening to Gagnon’s approach to the homosexual lifestyle we need to realize that God, with His design of Redemptive history, lays out before us a linear approach to His Word. Remember the constant forward movement of the entire course of biblical events, most of them prophesied: Creation, Fall, and Redemption. All three subjects are inter-related containing the promise of a coming Messiah, His birth, ministry, suffering prior to and during His crucifixion, resurrection, and final ascension. Thereby is also included His Church and her mission, the end times and the return of the Messiah in glory with His Bride, the Church.

Any aspect, event, prophesy, explanation revealed or spoken about Him within the context of God’s Word is embedded in the Truth. All these historic realities provide a linear approach in understanding God’s Word. Such an approach is therefore applied concerning discussions on issues such as immorality, and then specifically homosexuality.

Thus the following discussion on that one, particular moral issue based on and flowing from the truth. In the context of God’s Word, the product of spiritually inspired persons, understood and accepted only by those divinely inspired through unwavering faith in Jesus Christ.

**Linear Approach to the Homosexual Lifestyle**

In his thorough analysis of the homosexual lifestyle from a biblical perspective, Gagnon comes to a number of conclusions, 487-493, among them the following:

1. Scripture rejects homosexual behavior because it is a violation of the Gendered existence of male and female ordained by God at creation. Homosexual intercourse… distorts the sexuality intended by God for the health and vitality of the human race.

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1. Societal endorsement of homosexual behavior will only accelerate the many negative social effects arising from such behavior…some of those negative effects are:
* An increase in serious health problems, among them HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, rectal cancer, substance abuse, mental illness…
* A significant erosion in ecclesiastical and societal expectations of long-term monogamous relationships… The public, political, educational, professional, and legal marginalization of any (both organizations and individuals) who make known their opposition to homosexual behavior, as the societal equivalent of racists.
1. The practicing homosexual’s own relationship with the Creator will be affected. If we are to believe Scripture, the failure of the church to help the homosexual person make the transition out of the homosexual practice and into sexual wholeness will make the church an accomplice to the very form of behavior that God finds detestable. The church will become an enabler of the practicing homosexual’s loss of spiritual transformation and, possibly, salvation.
2. The homosexual and lesbian are not the church’s enemies but people in need of the church’s support for restoring to wholeness their broken sexuality through compassion, prayer, humility, and groaning together for the redemption of our bodies…to denounce same-sex intercourse and then stop short of actively and sacrificially reaching out in love and concern to homosexuals is to have as truncated a gospel as those who avoid talk of the gospel’s transformative power.

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1. Regarding matters of church membership and leadership the

following advice,

There should be no impediment to church office for someone with homosexual orientation or preference who remains celibate, does not endorse homosexual behavior, and gives every evidence of wanting to remain committed to the Bible’s and church’s teaching on homosexuality. In order to join as a member, or continue in good standing, the lesser standards of abstaining from homosexual intercourse or, in cases of occasional lapses, a willingness to repent should be adequate. In addition, even to those who cannot meet these minimal standards for membership, the church could show hospitality in other ways (for example, welcoming them as visitors to church meetings and reaching out to them in their homes).

 **Church Unity Challenged**

Discussions on homosexual lifestyles is spearheading a movement within local churches that may eventually cause serious damage to the unity within and among churches and denominations. This is then also true for denominations like the Christian Reformed Church (CRCNA) and the Reformed Church of America (RCA), both known for their strongly held and defended biblical norms and values. Church bells should become alarm bells, while discussions on homosexual lifestyles take place.

As we, as churches, have our discussions on homosexual lifestyles, we should take into consideration that this particular

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subject is part of wider discussions on morality. That one

particular issue is among many other moral and social norms and values, as it is intertwined with the growing political, social and even economic turmoil in both countries.

As Christians, we need to be aware of the rude reality that the promotion of the homosexual lifestyle is only one aspect of growing, remorseless liberalism (some speak of Marxism and Communism) that is controlled by Satan-driven and guided demonic strongholds. Those Satan-driven and controlled forces are not yet sufficiently understood, let alone accepted, by mainline denominations and individual Christians.

Present discussions on the homosexual lifestyle within our churches and denominations are actually part of a vastly bigger and serious issues. That reality can be clarify with the following quotation of an article in The Epoch Times.[[23]](#footnote-23) This quotation is part of an article with the heading: *Erasing Historical Statues: A Monumental Mistake*:

Marxist Tactic

Destroying national heritage is a fundamental communist tactic used to indoctrinate societies with Marxist ideology as a prelude to revolution. One of Marxism’s primary aims is to sever a population’s link to the past. The longer and richer the history, the more resistant a nation is to the influence of foreign ideologies.

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**Living in an increasingly Radical-Liberal Country**

Many leaders in churches and denominations, due to pressures from an overwhelming liberal movement in Canada and the US, are beginning to influence, thereby undermining, long-held Judeo-Christian norms and values. They go about their influence by means of extenuating circumstances.

This kind of influence by Christian leaders brings us back to a discussion in the First Discourse of this letter, in which some examples of extenuating circumstances were provided, as well as possible reasons why Christians, and especially church leaders, feel compelled to minimize the seriousness of homosexuality due to pressures and possible ridicule from colleagues at work. Even their position could be at stake! That’s not something to be taken lightly…it means pressure and sleepless nights. Making a stand for Jesus in such cases needs lots of prayer support from Christian friends, and as a church community as well. Yes, persecution is upon the church!

There are very strong pressures within the many work environments, including church communities, to accept the kind of lifestyle so strongly disapproved by Paul. In the early 1990s we could have read Charles Colson’s conclusion that “if you are a Christian and believe homosexuality is morally wrong, you’re going to have a hard time rising through the ranks.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

Fifteen years earlier, Dr. Don Williams wrote a book in which he gives a solid, biblical overview and analysis with helpful insights regarding homosexuality and its danger of splitting the Church. In the introduction to his book, we read that Williams wrote his book after serving for eleven years on the staff of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church, which brought him into contact with many homosexual persons. Over the years, his contacts through ministry to homosexual people escalated. In his book he answers the many questions he had to face like, “Who were these people? How could we help them? What did Christ have to say to them and do with them?”[[25]](#footnote-25)

In our deviant culture, the church, according to Williams, has failed to minister effectively to homosexuals, which stands as a judgment upon us. Then he goes on by saying that our failure (as many churches, addition mine) has also brought gay Christians into openly demanding full endorsement for their homosexual lifestyles. They want the church to say, “*Gay is Good*.”[[26]](#footnote-26)

It seems that in light of this particular phrase of Williams VanderWal-Gritter could have written her book, *Generous Spaciousness: Responding to Gay Christians in the Church*. In it, she and many others don’t take Genesis 1-3 as the foundation of their rhetoric on homosexuality.

In his conclusion Williams writes,

 For the church… to surrender to gay advocacy and gay theology

 and thus to give up her biblical faith would bring not only

 disaster upon herself, it would bring more havoc to the world as

 well. If the church simply blesses homosexuality, the hope for

 change in Christ will be destroyed. Millions of potential

 converts will have the only lasting hope for wholeness cut off

 from them.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

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**A Brief Examination of Genesis 1-3**

Williams’ book takes Genesis 1-3 as the biblical foundation for writing his book in which he explains what Paul wrote in Romans 1, including verses 26-27, on that same basis. Let’s look at this foundational Bible text that deals with the creation of the first man and woman. We will thereby zero in on some important information concerning Adam and Eve, as they also relate to the issue of homosexual lifestyle.

1. **The creation of Man (man and woman) in a Nutshell (Gen. 1-2)**

In the biblical account of the creation of Man (i.e. man and woman) we read first of all that near the end of God’s creative work, Gen. 1:1-25, God had still one, last creative action to complete all His previous creative activities. Thus He said,

 *“Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them*

 *(man and woman, addition mine) rule over the fish of the sea*

 *and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth,*

 *and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”*

 (Gen. 1:26)

 “*Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our*

 *likeness…So God created man in his own image…male and*

 *female he created them.”* Gen. 1:26a, 27a, c.

 *“God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase*

 *in number; fill the earth and subdue it*…‘ Gen. 1: 28a.

In the biblical account of the heavens and earth we read in more detail about the creation of man, i.e. male and female,

*“…the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being”* Gen. 2:7

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*“Now the Lord had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.”* Gen. 2:8.

 *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’”* Gen. 2:15-17

*“The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I*

 *will make a helper suitable for Him.’”* Gen. 2:18

*“Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air…But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.”* Gen. 2:19, 20b-22

“*…a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh*. *The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.”* Gen. 2:24-25.

1. **The Fall of Man (man and woman) in a Nutshell (Gen. 3)**

“N**o***w the serpent (Satan) was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden”? the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat from the tree in the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”* Gen. 3:1-2

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*You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For*

 *God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened,*

 *and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”* Gen. 3:4

At this point, one may notice how Satan intentionally and shrewdly draws the woman away from God by zeroing in on her still sinless nature by appealing to her human curiosity and raising some doubt about God’s seriousness about dying by not obeying God based on what we read so far. At that point, the woman was willing to further listen to what the serpent had to say. That became her first mistake.

What follows would lead to her second mistake shared with her husband,

 *“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for*

 *food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining*

 *wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her*

 *husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both*

 *of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so*

 *they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for*

 *themselves.”* Gen. 3:6-7.

At that moment, Man’s innocence resulted in sinfulness. Their original sinfulness then entered the world of mankind and all of creation. All that God had created would suffer the consequences of Man’s disobedience to God after He had warned them. Later on in this same Chapter 3 we read that the man would carry the name Adam (Gen. 3:17) and that Adam would name his wife Eve (Gen. 3:20).

Satan had succeeded in tricking God’s highest creation, namely the first man and woman, into sin with catastrophic results for all

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of mankind and creation. A definite part of catastrophic results for mankind has been, and still remains, the godlessness and wickedness expressed by Paul in the following five verses in his letter to all those in Rome.

**God’s Wrath Against Mankind (Romans 1:18-32)**

This passage, written by Paul, reflects on those catastrophic results for sinful mankind. Those results are described by Paul as follows,

 *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the*

 *godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by*

 *their wickedness, since what may be known about God is*

 *plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s*

 *invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have*

 *been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made,*

 *so that men are without excuse.”* Rom. 1:18-20.

Then, shortly after those words Paul wrote in Rom.1:26-27,

“*Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools…Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another…God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lusts for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.”*

There is no question about the fact that Satan’s shrewdness in drawing men and women throughout the world doing exactly what God abhors. It is in the midst of so much worldwide godless speech and behavior that God calls out people, messianic Jews and Gentiles, to compose the final, everlasting kingdom of priests,

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God’s holy nation, Christ’s Bride,

 *“…you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”*

 Ex. 19:6.

**The Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11)**

Satan had been aware of the pivotal role Jesus had in realizing the kingdom of priests Peter speaks of in his first letter, 1 Peter 2:5,9 and John in Revelation 1:6. Having successfully deceived Eve and Adam, thus preventing that all of mankind would remain sinless and obedient to God. Satan then had set his mind on trying to be successful in deceiving Jesus. That moment came at a time that Jesus was physically exhausted and thirsty after staying forty days and nights in the desert (Mat. 4:1-2). We read,

 “*The tempter came to him and said. ‘If you are the Son of God,*

 *tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is*

 *written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word*

 *that comes from the mouth of God.’”* Mat. 4:3-4.

 *“Then the devil took him to the holy city (Jerusalem, addition*

 *mine) and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If*

 *you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down. For it*

 *is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and*

 *they will lift you up in their hands.’’ Jesus answered him, ‘It is*

 *also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

Matt. 4:5-7.

 *“Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed*

 *him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this*

 *is I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship*

 *me.’” Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written,*

 *‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”*

 Matt. 4: 8-10.

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*“Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.”*

 Matt. 4: 11.

That exchange between the devil (Satan) and Jesus Christ touches on a most important issue concerning the homosexual lifestyle. In that exchange we need to notice how Jesus responded to the challenge from Satan who had one thing in mind, namely to dethrone Jesus from his positon as the Son of God. Please read Colossians 1:13-23, as it speaks to the supremacy of Christ. Then, notice how Jesus responded to and refuted Satan’s repeated challenges in efforts to undermine his Lordship on the basis of the Word of God.

In Matt. 4:11, Jesus sets before Christians the example how to respond to and refute present-day challenges coming from Christians who are sensitive to opinions and pressures to forfeit God’s Word. Paul, also, did exactly what Jesus did in referring to Rom. 2:26-27, namely refuting those challenges by pointing to and thus on the basis of God’s Word. Thus, Christians need to hold on to the liberating truth of God’s Word in opposing anti-God pressures in our so-called Post-truth societies on, for example, the homosexual lifestyle.

Especially in the temptation of Eve and Adam we get some insights how Satan works, namely focussing on the ignorance, weakness and deep desires of men and women. As shrewd as he is, Satan knows exactly how to manipulate people into doing something that is against God’s will. It is a proven fact that Satan is extremely clever, convincing and successful in his manipulating efforts.

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Peter, therefore, warns Christians when he said,

 “*Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls*

 *around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist*

 *him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your*

 *brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of*

 *suffering”* 1 Peter 5:8-9.

Once Satan gets hold of a Christian, he or she may in turn, even unknowingly and unintentionally, mislead other brothers and sisters in the Lord into believing that the homosexual lifestyle is acceptable and liberating. As a matter of fact, Satan has become very successful in developing that kind of process. Throughout the many ages, Satan has been quite successful in manipulating Christians and non-Christians in doing what he wanted them to do and still continues to be successful. May Peter’s warning not be in vain!

**SOFT ON SATAN (SOS)**

In his first letter Peter wrote,

 *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls*

 *around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist*

 *him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your*

 *brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of*

 *sufferings”* 1 Pet. 5:8-9.

When Peter speaks here of a ‘roaring lion’ he has in mind that Satan, the *roaring* lion, is still roaming and roaring around the world to spring into action, ready to pounce on its prey. Satan is mainly interested in and focused on those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

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To him, there is nothing more important than drawing Christians away from Christ, and so away from everlasting life on a renewed earth of which he, Satan, never will be part of. Satan’s singular goal is the destruction of Jesus’ Church composed of messianic Jews and Gentiles. All other religions are of no real concern to Satan, as they are disconnected from Christ and thus from eternal life. [[28]](#footnote-28)

May Peter’s warning not be in vain! However, we may wonder in how far Peter’s warning is taken seriously by Christians these days. How many Christians are aware how Satan is preying on Christians, keen on making them his next victims. As he succeeded in Europe, so he is certain to be successful in the US and Canada. He succeeds by creating social and moral pressures on politicians and societies alike through pushing radical liberalism in very smart and convincing ways.[[29]](#footnote-29) As a result, we hear of churches that change their minds on homosexual lifestyles, see one paragraph in the Third Discourse (p. 20f)

We all notice the chaotic social and moral changes and struggles in the US and Canada. Meanwhile, the Church in general, is still not rigorously addressing the radical-liberal influences behind all that turmoil. This being the case, Christians, without realizing, are participants in the continuation of social and moral changes.

All in all, it seems that the Church in general is still ‘**Soft on Satan**’ (SOS) and certainly slow in admitting that Satan is playing an undeniable role in the growing unrest in the US and Canada. More than once we hear why churches are not addressing the many harmful developments and even pointing out how Satan is behind all the turmoil. Such admittance by churches becomes rather difficult when we realize how different Christians think about forenamed developments. Our liberal-influenced and controlled media, both in the US and Canada, play a significant if not a decisive role in manipulating the citizenship in both countries.

However, being reminded of the existence of Satan and what he is doing to mislead leaders of political parties, media and churches as well, makes many Christians very uneasy. Satan is not someone to be reminded of, let alone to face and deal with. But was it not the very purpose of Peter to remind all of us of this reality that is not going away? Was Paul not giving us a sure warning when he speaks in his Ephesian letter about the devil’s schemes in his letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 6:11? One may read the entire passage with the heading: ‘The Armor of God,’ Eph. 6:10-18.

It is good to have a healthy fear for Satan, but it should not rise to the point of being very upset and paralysed about it. Sincere faith, trust and peace in Jesus Christ should be enough to handle

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any simmering fear for Satan. This is not an academic observation, but the pure reality in the lives of millions of Christians who still are being relentlessly persecuted throughout Asia, North and East Africa, Colombia (South America) and Mexico (North America).[[30]](#footnote-30)

Peter and Paul, as well as all other apostles of Jesus Christ, were well aware of the reality of Satan’s influence in their ministry work on behalf of Christ. That reality did not disappear with their personal death, as Satan’s influence continued to grow since then. Neither Jesus Christ nor his disciples were certainly not ‘Soft on Satan,’ and nor should we, while watching the developments of moral and social chaos and decline in the US and Canada. I have personal experience how Satan’s influence on radical liberalism at work in Canada.

The Church does not seem to notice the disappearance of Judeo-Christian norms and values in Western civilization without realizing that Satan and his demonic forces are behind all these developments. Those same forces have been at work through radical elements and other destructive Marxist forces such as BLM. Instead of playing the role of spineless onlooker, the Church needs to speak up determinately and respectfully.

Again, Paul speaks clearly about the identity of our real enemies who are spiritual beings belonging to the unseen world and identified as the “*rulers…the authorities…the powers of this dark world, as well as the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”* Eph. 6: 10-12.

Paul tells us here who the real enemies of the Church are, and Christians need to understand that those spiritual realities are highly influential radical elements in today’s liberal parties, both in the US and Canada. They are the forces who want to get rid of the many Judeo-Christian norms and values, and to replace them with ideas coming straight from Marxism and Communism.

Throughout history, these two political ideologies, Marxism and Communism, have been responsible for taking away the precious freedom of citizens in various countries, the killing of millions of human beings and the complete destruction of economies.[[31]](#footnote-31) Both political movements are absolutely determined to continue, right now, with the same horrible destructive methods in North America. Stunningly, the Church, in general, seems to turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to that reality. It happened before during the 1930s in Nazi Germany.

Those same politically motivated and destructive realities have been and still continue to be at work in the US and Canada. We know the identity of one main center, Planned Parenthood, being responsible of killing millions of unborn and even partly-born babies. They are equally responsible for collecting and trading parts of those murdered babies. Can you imagen such complete acts of insanity! It is also telling that the Liberal Party in the US

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supports such organizations, especially Planned Parenthood, for many years!

Then another very destructive movement is the so called Black Lives Matter (BLM). This organization is not only responsible for serious destructions of buildings, statutes and other infra structures, but also likes to speak curses à la Karl Marx.[[32]](#footnote-32) We may remember from history that Marx himself has been responsible for the killing millions of people.[[33]](#footnote-33) Both movements, the radical liberalists and BLM have been more destructive than instructive in spite of much support from citizens, politicians, organizations and soccer clubs.

Most recently, Edmee Chavannes, a black woman, tells BLM in CHAZ territory that Planned Parenthood is the #1 killer of black community. Included are some excerpts from that information that are hereby enclosed,

[In their manifesto,](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/did-you-know-black-lives-matter-supports-abortion-homosexuality-anti-family-agenda) the leaders of Black Lives Matter state that they seek to “disrupt” the “Western-prescribed family”, that they have freed themselves from “heteronormative thinking,” and that they demand “reproductive justice.”

Notably, a pro-life black woman told attendees at a [Black Lives Matters](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/watch-black-woman-tells-blm-in-chaz-territory-that-planned-parenthood-is-1-black-killer) rally that Planned Parenthood is the “number one killer of the black population” and asked: “Why don’t I see my brothers and my sisters outside Planned Parenthood?”

Chavannes’ pro-life message didn’t sit well with some the BLM demonstrators in Seattle. After one young female demonstrator tried to drown out a black pastor by shouting “Police brutality, that’s why we’re here” through a megaphone, another female demonstrator called Chavannes a “coon.” A racial slur with roots in the 19th century, the word “coon” is now used by some African Americans to denote black people they perceive as defending white racism.

In her exhortations, Chavannes stressed the hypocrisy of the Black Lives Matter movement. She pointed out that even if the demonstrators succeeded in abolishing police, the black community “would still kill [their] babies.” She also suggested that the disproportionate rate of abortion in the black community and of black-on-black violence had a common source.[[34]](#footnote-34)

“Black women used to respect black men,” she explained. “Black women have lost their way.” Black men also have lost their way, she added, saying that although they used to fight for their families, they now “just impregnate women and take them to the Planned Parenthood clinic.”… “You get rid of the police, and we’ll still kill one another,” she said. Why? Because we, as a black community, don’t have the fathers we need. We don’t have the fear of the Lord!”

Karen Seltzer, the chair of the New York affiliate’s board, spoke of “Planned Parenthood’s contributions to historical reproductive harm within communities of color.” So they’re going to distance themselves considerably from Sanger, who founded Planned Parenthood.

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 This same organization laid the ideological framework to

justify the murder of millions of unborn babies, but continue to practice contemporary reproductive harm within communities of color?!... “We need you all there. Number one killer of the black population is Planned Parenthood,” Chavannes said.

The reason for bringing above paragraphs to your attention is that leaders in churches and denominations have been rather quick in their response to and in support of the movement of Black Lives Matter (BLM). Even coaches and other members of soccer clubs within the MLS Soccer federation in North America are wearing black shirts with the words Black Lives Matter. It seems that they all have jumped the bandwagon of public opinion without first investigate what BLM as organization really is and stands for.

Allan Parr, himself black, speaks of Black Lives Matter as an organization that wants:

1. A total defunding of the police in the US;

2. Being in support of the LGBTQI community;

3. Want the disruption of the family.[[35]](#footnote-35)

In addition, we hear a report that Marxist Black Lives Matter burns Bibles in Portland (USA). This information came by email that also included the fact that the “Democratic Platform fully embraces Planned Parenthood and abortion.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

How come that leaders in all areas of life have been rather quickly intimidated, if not to some extent, being indoctrinated by what liberal media such as CNN (US) and CBC (CAN) want their listeners to know. The influence of liberal thinking within

churches is very concerning, disheartening and disconcerting, as it leads to present discussions on well or not supporting homosexuality.

Especially leaders in churches, and other Christian organizations, need to do more research on the issue at hand before arranging discussions among church members. Serious research needs to be done first to avoid or handle well any controversial sayings being brought to the fore.[[37]](#footnote-37) We all need to make sure that what we communicate is true and biblically responsible.

**Some additional points of view**

Since the Postmodern era started around 1965, we have watched the slow, but serious decline in moral and social behavior already during the eighties. That decline has been clearly described in the book, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines[[38]](#footnote-38)* (a must read!). Since that book has been published in 1993, moral, as well as social conditions have even more worsened under the constant influences from the Far Left.

While living in these worsening conditions, the Church seems to have gotten used to the worsening moral behavior around her. Only recently, some churches seem to slowly warming up to the legitimacy of homosexuality as one of the expressions of the LGBTQI communities. In doing so, those churches don’t seem to realize that Satan has used and will continue to use the world’s increasing acceptance of immoral behavior. Satan hopes that, sooner or later, churches will be sufficiently indoctrinated by the world around them. This has been the pattern in Western Europe and is now being repeated on the North-American continent.

Right now, at least some denominations are honestly and seriously wrestling with this particular immoral behavior within their local churches. With the issue of homosexuality, Satan is presenting his ‘business card’ to the Church. He is well on his way to bring significant friction among members of local churches, causing un-avoidable tension within churches and their denominations. The way the Church (denominations, local churches) need to take on this great challenge is by acting as Jesus did when he was challenged by Satan.

Each time Jesus was challenged by Satan He immediately replied with the Word of God (Matt. 4: 1-11). Churches do well to take Jesus’ example to heart. God’s Word is very clear on the matter of homosexuality, as we read what Paul says in Romans 1: 1-27, especially verses 26-27. He cannot be clearer! Christians need to stick together and embrace the liberating truth of God’s Word in opposing anti-Christ pressures by our so-called Post-truth societies. Solzhenitsyn once wrote,

Man’s sense of responsibility to God and society has grown dimmer and dimmer…Humanism which has lost its Christian heritage cannot prevail…we have placed too much hope in politics and social reforms, only to find out that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life (206)…The religious believer must bring his religious commitment to bear on the whole range of human affairs…Christians must also relate their beliefs to the real world in which they live. (212).[[39]](#footnote-39)

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Charles Colson reminds us of Francis Schaeffer’s words when he said,

 Christians need to stop seeing issues in bits and pieces and start

 seeing the big picture. The big picture behind the family values

 debate is simple: Are morals absolute, or are they relative?

 Are they God-given, or do we make them up as we go along?[[40]](#footnote-40)

The above quoted words introduce us to the reality of the spiritual battle between the truth and the lie, between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world influenced by Satan, between those within the sphere of Christ and those still captured within the sphere of the anti-Christ. The spiritual battle that is presently enfolding around the issue of homosexual lifestyle, outside and within the Church, is actually a sign of persecution by those who have been influenced by the spirit of Satan. This kind of persecution falls in the category ‘Persecution by Word’, as the other kind of persecution is called ‘Persecution by Sword.’[[41]](#footnote-41)

Both kind of persecutions could easily lead to despair and even to final capitulation. As mentioned earlier, Christians, especially those in leadership positions, who work in various businesses and organizations, can feel the pressure, even rejection, from co-workers and staff members by admitting that they are against homosexual lifestyles. Such situations can even exist in churches. In “The Voice of the Martyrs, Canada” Floyd writes that in such trials and resulting reactions: Persecuted Christians cry out to the Lord with the psalmist as they pray,

“*Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love*

 *for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should*

 *go, for to You I lift up my soul,”* Ps. 143:8.[[42]](#footnote-42)

Then Floyd continues with this question, “What overwhelming circumstances threaten you today? In your moment of decision, where will you turn for relief? Can you trust God to use the trials in your life to reveal His glory through you?” That question finds an answer in Psalm 145:

 *“The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are*

 *bowed down. The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their*

 *food at the proper time, You open your hand and satisfy the*

 *desires of every living thing.”*(Ps. 145:14-16)

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SEVENTH DISCOURSE

**The Untold Story concerning Homosexuality**

**An Unexpected and Unnerving Experience**

During one of our frequent vacations in the Netherlands in the 1990s, my wife and I went to the only Christian Reformed Church left in my birthplace for the Sunday-morning service. As visitors we were not informed in advance of a baptism. That was of course in and by itself not a problem at all.

However, on that particular occasion we were not at all prepared to watch the baptism of a little child adopted by two women, not by a husband and wife. We were quite unnerved by that unexpected and unbiblical display of celebrating a precious and meaningful sacrament. That experience gave us a rude awakening to a new reality that, as we understood, has no place in the Bible. It made us both sad and unsettled. What has become of the church?

**The Church Unprepared to face New Realities**

A personal experience, as related above, brings to mind that the churches on the North-American continent are often not prepared to deal responsibly with matters pertaining to homosexual lifestyles and issues that are not mentioned in the Bible. We will look at some of those issues God’s Word is completely silent about. We need to do so without biblical directives on such a moral issue and thus are we on our own with the hopeful support and direction from Christ’s Spirit.

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What, however, is not realized is the fact that the issue of the homosexual lifestyle will rather quickly lead to other, related issues. We may think hereby, for example, of baptism of adopted infants presented by homosexual couples, as well as celebrating the Lord’s Supper with the participation of one or more persons living in a homosexual relationship.

Such additional issues should be included in present discussions on various immoral lifestyles. Church leaders need to think of the following examples related to the homosexual lifestyle and to be prepared to deal with them on a biblical basis before allowing the homosexual lifestyle:

1. Adopted children by homosexual couples have raised their voice that they have a right to have a father and a mother. Such realistic and emotion-laden opinions come up when those adopted children are confronted with other children at school who have a father and a mother. Such unexpected realities may well create unexpected tension within unnatural relationships.
2. Parents of homosexual couples are not necessarily blood-related grandparents to those adopted children. Such artificial relationships may create their own difficulties and tension. No human-made law can change such realities.
3. Teaching materials used by the church are inadequate when it comes to teaching unbiblical relationships, as God’s Word does not address those situations. The apostle Paul is very clear when he addresses children and their (natural) parents in his letter to the Ephesians. We read in Chapter 6:

“*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*

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*‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’ Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in training and instruction of the Lord.’”* Eph. 6:1-4.

We read in Chapter 3 of Paul’s letter to the Colossians:

 “*Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

 *Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.*

 *Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the*

 *Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will*

 *become discouraged.”* Col. 3:18-21.

In his book “*I Know Best,*” Roger L. Simon wrote how Moral Narcissism is destroying our Republic, thereby referring to the US. He explains that there is a tendency to think about morality in terms of how your actions make you feel about yourself rather in terms of their consequences for others. In clarifying what he just had said Simon further explains that the focus on one’s own identity seems more important than on the fate of the other person(s). In other words, “ethics of conviction” is more important than “ethics of responsibility,” or being “conscience-centered” rather than “consequence-centered.”

**The law of the Land**

Christians in Canada and the US are beginning to see how radical liberalism is beginning to dominate successfully in changing the law of the land during the last number of years. It could well be

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that, over time, citizens are told how to live and to accept e.g.

homosexual lifestyles as basic rights. Along the same line, the Church will be told to accept and keep the law of the land as citizens of the land, or else….

In a country like China we hear, more than we see, how the Church, in public opposition to the law of the land in terms of expressing their Christian faith, are driven underground. Believers in Christ are coming together in small groups. As a result, the Church in China has been growing fast and continues to grow, while often being persecuted ruthlessly. It is often said that churches do grow during times of persecution, as we more lately see in Iran as well.

What is happening for many years in China, and more recently in Iran as well, could also become a reality in Canada and the US. Persecution of Christians on this continent is in fact already a reality in the form of so called ‘mouth and action’ persecution (a persecution not yet in the form of a ‘sword and action’) due to radical-liberal pressures.

Satan is pressing on with putting pressure on Christians to get them either in line with the law of the land, or facing difficulties. Regarding the issue of homosexual lifestyle, God’s Word has drawn a ‘line in the sand.’ On this very issue, followers of Jesus Christ, based on the living Word of God our Savior, need to make a stand: either for Christ or against Christ, no matter the consequences.

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**Closing thoughts**

For Christians to take such strong position on the basis of God’s Word, e.g. in their workplace, or even in their local church, could become an uneasy if not a difficult thing to do, which is quite understandable, and certainly not to be taken lightly. I speak here from some personal experience. Any biblical position against changing norms, including the homosexual lifestyle, could result in being shamed, shunned, ridiculed and treated unpleasantly by colleagues and those in higher positions. Even worse, it could lead to missing a promotion and/or an expected increase in salary. That’s a tough position to be in!

For such reasons, we need to uphold those brothers and sisters through intercessory prayer, as they are at the receiving end of various types of persecution.

In light of the last sentence in the above paragraph, we could have people gathered in small ministry groups for intercessory prayers. This also count for those brothers and sisters who are facing similar predicaments. It is of interest to note what Brad Long[[43]](#footnote-43) says about intercessory prayers in our resistance against evil forces attacking brothers and sisters in the Lord who are holding on to Judeo-Christian values. Jesus’ apostles took pro-Christ positions in their anti-Christ environments. Consequently, they had to pay a high price, even losing their lives. Paul was one of them, as he took a biblical position against, for example, the homosexual lifestyle. He was eventually beheaded.

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Churches are encouraged to have at least one small *ministry* group, or so called Prayer Platoon,[[44]](#footnote-44) to concentrate specifically on intercessory prayers. Those prayer groups need to pray for those who struggle with their homosexual feelings, for those who seek help overcoming a homosexual lifestyle with or without expert help, as well as for those living in homosexual relationships.

Today, the same Paul, having suffered so much for his Lord Jesus Christ (read e.g. about Paul’s hardships in 2 Cor. 6:3-10), is no longer taken seriously by Christians due to opposition to legitimizing the homosexual lifestyle. However, there are also those who support Paul’s stand on that very subject. Among them is Dr. Albert Mohler, who wrote that homosexuality is “not a ‘valid alternative’” in his book, *THE GATHERING STORM: Secularism, Culture, and the Church.*[[45]](#footnote-45) He refers to the development of gay communities as “Third Way” congregations.

A great concern seems to be a lack of discussion on the wider implications of the homosexual lifestyle when the entire gay and lesbian agenda is accepted. We may think about homosexual men and lesbians adopting children considering them as their children, either sons or daughters. To my knowledge, there are no official church forms to make such adoptions valid and official, and there are no official church forms to implement and validate such adoptions.

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According to Mohler, congregations that want to be home to those living the homosexual lifestyle need to make a public declaration of their position on this issue. We may add that such a declaration needs to be based on biblical ground.

Going back more than 40 years, when discussions on homosexuality were at the heart of many discussions within Christian Reformed circles in the Netherlands, Ds. G. Rothuizen, openly acknowledged that anyone who agrees with those kind of practices are getting nowhere in trying to find any support at all from Scriptures.[[46]](#footnote-46) Several pages later, Rothuizen, referring to the decision of Synod 1980 that accepted with 37 to 33 the homosexual lifestyle within the Reformed churches, admitted whether such a high-level decision has been a real service to those practicing the homosexual lifestyle. His answer was a definite no![[47]](#footnote-47)

We may add to Rothuizen’s definite ‘no’ the option to help people who embrace the homosexual lifestyle by joining them, if so desired, in a counseling service towards healing as explained in Discourse Four. Such a direction is encouraged in light of God’s Word that reminds us that it is,

 “*…living and active…judging the thoughts and attitudes of the*

 *heart. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of*

 *him to whom we must give account…For we do not have a high*

 *priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we*

 *have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—*

 *yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace*

 *with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to*

 *help us in our time of* *need.*” Hebrews 4: 12-16.

We are living in a ‘time of need.’ More and more people need to understand that communities, societies, are built on families, i.e. fathers, mothers and children. We don’t have families based on two men, or two women, as also in both cases no children will be born from those types of couples. Turning to Scriptures once more, especially to the creation story, we hear about God creating first man, then a woman out of man. Together they were created to bear children, and in that process the earth would be filled with people, living in towns, cities, communities, countries.

There are two special occasions mentioned in the Bible that clearly indicates God’s purpose for creating men and women. The first time happened with the initial creation of Adam and Eve when God said to them,

 “*Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue*

 *it*…” Gen. 1:28.

Following that Bible story we hear in Genesis 3 how sin came into the world. In Genesis 6 we read about the growing wickedness among men to the point that God decided to,

 “*wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the*

 *earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the*

 *ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made*

 *them.’ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.”*

Gen. 6:7-8.

We also have the story of the Flood destroying all life except the lives of Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. They survived by means of the Ark, Gen. 7-8. Following that story we

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hear about the restoration of life. Gen. 9 begins as follows,

 “*Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, ‘Be*

 *fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth’”* Gen. 9:1.

One important lesson we take from these verses about the initial creation and restoring creation activities is that God speaks of a man (men) and woman (women) to bring about a family (families), i.e. to have children, and then their children will marry and have children, etc.

Thus we hear Paul saying in his letter to the Ephesians that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church (Eph. 5:22-33). In the next chapter, Paul speaks of the relationship between children and their parents (Eph. 6:1-4). We read in Peter’s first letter that Peter speaks of wives and husbands. Read 1 Peter 3: 1-7.

The essential part of God’s moral code includes the interconnection between marriage (between a man and a woman), sexuality, family, posterity. Sexual relationships outside the natural, God-given lifestyle, will too often lead to negative consequences for one’s mental and physical health. Frequent reports on harmful consequences of such lifestyle include, among other things, depression, substance abuse, higher risk of suicide, as well as a shorter lifespan.

Those living the homosexual lifestyle are part of what is identified as the LGBTQI community that has as its symbol a colourful flag. This 40-year old rainbow-flag expresses the most powerful symbol of pride for the gay community, thereby saying, “This is

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who I am!”[[48]](#footnote-48) The inspiration to design such rainbow-flag was the

4200-year old original rainbow designed by the original Designer, the almighty God the Creator, Gen. 9. Read the following Bible story about the original rainbow next.

THE ORIGINAL RAINBOW

We read in the Bible that Noah became acquainted with the original, God-ordained rainbow following the well-known story of the Flood. That event happened roughly 4200 years ago. Following that biblical account of the Flood in Genesis 6-8, we read Moses’ account of the covenant God made with him Genesis 9:1-17. In the report of that historic covenant we hear about the covenant sign of the rainbow. This has been first time in human history that we hear of a rainbow and its significance.

The following words from Genesis 9 are directly connected with that rainbow as a **covenant sign,**

*“I (God, addition mine) now establish my covenant with you (Noah, addition mine): Never again will all life be cut off by waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind”* (Genesis 9: 8-15a).

A very special expression of human pride is very much reflected in Jonathan Cahn’s latest book.[[49]](#footnote-49) In it Cahn touches on the meaning of that divine rainbow as he refers to an event described in the Book of Daniel, Chapter 5, concerning the event of the ‘handwriting on the wall.’ This Bible story follows directly after the use of the Temple vessels which were taken from the temple in Jerusalem and then used for drinking wine by the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines.

That event of drinking through the use of the Temple vessels is described in Cahn’s book as the ‘principle of de-sacralization.’ That principle is then explained as “taking something sacred (Temple vessels) and use it for non-sacred purposes.” The handwriting on the wall followed the act of desecration, a principle that happened in Israel as well.

When Israel “turned away from God, as they began performing acts of de-sacralization and desecration.” They took what had been consecrated to God and used it against His purposes. “They took the Temple vessels and used it to perform pagan rites to foreign gods and idols. And then judgement came.”

The question posed in Cahn’s book was what this event in the Book of Daniel, and events happening in OT Israel have to do with events happening in America. The connection is then describes as “America’s fall from God as performing the ancient act: Taking the sacred and using it for what is not.” This is then explained as follows: “Marriage was created and consecrated for the purposes of God, a sacred vessel. It has been the foundation stone of civilization since the beginning of recorded history.”

On June 26, 2015, America broke the sacred vessel…this is the issue that manifests in a fallen civilization. “It is the same issue, whether it applies to marriage, human life, or existence itself. To fall away from God is to fall away from purpose and, ultimately, from life itself. So the end of such things is destruction. What happened on that day in June concerned far more than marriage. It was civilization divorcing the sacred vessels from their ordained purposes.”

This book then explains what some of those ordained purposes are: the sacred vessels of man and woman…the divorce of man from manhood and woman from womanhood, the turning of each from the other. The ramifications of that act would not manifest all at once, but would begin pouring into every fabric of the nation’s culture. The breaking of the vessel on that day in June caused celebrations throughout the nation and around the world.

The celebrations were marked by a sign…a sign of many colors. “The rainbow.” ‘It appeared on flags and banners, on signs, on people… the sign of a movement.” The rainbow is a sacred

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vessel…it does not belong to man—the rainbow belongs to God.” “It is the sign that He Himself gave and consecrated. Like marriage and like existence, the rainbow is a sacred vessel. Man turned it into…” (you may fill in your own answer –addition mine).

 Speaking of human pride, we read in the Bible book Proverbs,

 “*When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility*

 *comes wisdom”* Prov. 11:2

 “*Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who*

 *take advice”* Prov. 13:10

 *“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before the fall”*

 Prov. 16:18.

 “*A man’s pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains*

 *honor”* Prov. 29:23.

The lesson we learn from these four Bible verses is that, while God’s rainbow speaks about preventing the destruction of human lives, the LGBTQI rainbow signifies the inevitable destruction of human lives. Completely disconnected from God, LGBTQI communities will have a destructive influence in our societies. Among that destructive influence is mentioned that their lifestyles prevent much needed new human life to guarantee much needed continuation of community life and economic growth.

In our post-modern, post-truth era, opposition to and rebellion against God’s Word is growing through God-denying pressures and forth-coming changes from radical-liberal forces.[[50]](#footnote-50) It becomes quite clear that Christians in Canada and the US are

increasingly ridiculed by forces that have little understanding of resulting economic devastation and the results of moral and ethical decline. Those kind of results are based on the history of Marxist culture and communist influences with their destruction of human lives.[[51]](#footnote-51) Who cares living in a country engulfed by Godless politics, ideologies, media and universities, but Christians do!

**Dr. Mohler, President of Southern Seminary reveals how secularism has infiltrated every aspect of society and how Christians, equipped with the gospel of Jesus Christ, can meet it head on with hope, confidence, and steadfast conviction. He writes,**

A storm is coming. Western civilization and the Christian church stand at a moment of great danger. The storm is a battle of ideas that will determine the future of Western civilization and the soul of the Christian church. The forces we must fight are ideologies, policies, and worldviews that are deeply established among intellectual elites, the political class, and our schools. More menacingly, these ideas have also invaded the Christian church.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Speaking of a storm. It was Abraham Kuyper who more than 100 hundred years ago spoke of the *storm* of Pantheism. He wrote,

 The influence of the Enlightenment had made Europe receptive

 to the new crisis formed by Pantheism. It had paved the way

 for this crisis to have a significantly negative impact on its

 societies… Pantheism, reflected in the New Age Movement, is

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 the doctrine that says that the whole universe is God, and that

 every part of the universe is a manifestation of God, where all

 is basically one.

 Kuyper regarded Pantheism as a destructive

 *storm* that was out to break down the important and meaningful

boundaries between the different spheres of life. He was

 convinced that Pantheism, like Darwin’s theories, was a serious

 attack on these boundaries which God had determined and

 installed for our well-being.[[53]](#footnote-53)

The storm Mohler refers to was going to determine the future of Western civilization and the soul of the Christian church. The nearly similar the storm Kuyper referred to had a similar impact on society when he understood that the destructive storm of Pantheism would, among other things, attack much needed boundaries between fundamental spheres providing a well-functioning society or country.

That storm of Pantheism of 100 years ago can be compared with the present storm of radical-liberal ideology, as it will eventually cause significant disruption in our present and the rather well-functioning societies of Canada and the US. It will harm, if not derail, the sovereignty of the different spheres as the State will force her will on society. Read next paragraphs.

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Returning briefly to the storm Mohler spoke of he further wrote,

A central fact of the storm now gathering in strength is moral liberalism, which cannot be explained without the de-Christianization of society. Moral liberalism has basically become the dominant moral commitment of the most influential sectors of American society from the universities to the entertainment industry and the artistic centers and the mass media and the titanic Silicon Valley. To be hyper modern is to be hyper liberal in moral worldview.[[54]](#footnote-54)

We may add at this point several insightful observations by Douglas S. Winnail in his contribution to Tomorrow’s World,

 The West—once seen by millions around the world as a beacon

 of civilization and prosperity—is now widely seen as a culture

 in decline and a society gotten rotten. Even millions of

 pampered Westerners are coming to despise and reject their

 own cultural heritage…Many scholars point to alarming

 parallels between the decline of ancient civilizations and what

 is occurring in our modern Western world….

Author and researcher Jim Nelson Black illustrates this

 sobering parallel by listing warning signs of a culture in crisis,

 including increasing lawlessness, loss of economic discipline,

 weakening of traditions and cultural foundations, rising

 immorality, decay of religious belief, decline in the quality of

 education, and the devaluing of human life.[[55]](#footnote-55)

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It is in the atmosphere described above that we presently discuss the issue of homosexuality and why churches, i.e. Christians, should love, respect and accept practicing homosexuals as full members of a local church. It seems that this pressure for full inclusion in the life of the church needs to be regarded in light of the kind of societies we live in, described briefly and correctly in the above paragraph.

The secular power of society in which churches have their home has proven very dominating and even attractive. History provides ample proof of that reality. But then, are we, Christians, not precisely called to stand up for the Truth of God’s Word in the face of society’s rebellion against God, the Truth reflected in all of His Word, the Bible? The way Abraham Kuyper did in his time more than 100 years ago!

In ending this final discourse we may remind ourselves of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ question which is the greatest commandment in the Law,

“*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest command. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* Matthew 22: 36-39

The first commandment is taken from Deuteronomy 6:5, and the second commandment taken from Leviticus 19:18.[[56]](#footnote-56) These two commandments together stand above all other commandments. It is clear from Jesus’ response that the first commandment is the most important one, as it gives life, meaning and direction to the

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second commandment. It is understood that a person’s

unequivocal love for God includes one’s unequivocal love for the Word of God, the Bible.[[57]](#footnote-57) Any effort to read, or understand God’s Word in a different, more acceptable though misleading way, could be interpreted as doing the very same things concerning one’s love for God.

The second commandment, taken from Leviticus 19:18 (Footnote 1), explains that one’s love and respect for and obedience to God and His ultimate command flows into one’s attitude, response and actions towards one’s neighbor. It is a love that is attractive and encouraging for the people we meet in our daily lives. It may even be helpful in dismantling any negative feeling the other person may have. Indeed, it could even lead to the healing of some one’s inner feeling of loneliness, confusion, simmering hostility, and even the healing of a sinful lifestyle.

Another way of such a great and unwavering love for God and His Word has been expressed by Jesus when He was tested by Satan right after His 40-day wilderness experience.[[58]](#footnote-58) In that most significant spiritual battle a lot was at stake, namely the future of Jesus Himself, the future of the world, and no less the future of all mankind, and most importantly any lasting future of the Church on the coming renewed earth. Notice how Jesus responded to the three temptations. In all three instances Jesus referred to the Word of God![[59]](#footnote-59)

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Directly after Jesus’ response to the third temptation, Satan left Jesus and angels looked after Him. That historic event happened just prior to Jesus’ ministry. Towards the very end of His ministry, Jesus was enduring excruciating suffering which ultimately led to His agonizing crucifixion. During that time, He was tempted[[60]](#footnote-60) and even forsaken by His Father momentarily,[[61]](#footnote-61) before He died on the cross for our sake, our redemption and our salvation unto eternal life.

One important message we may take away from these two commandments is that we are in peril when we are meddling with the Word of God. A person who is trying to alter the meaning of a verse, or circumstances under which these words have been written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, finds oneself on a very slippery slope. Words written by men such as Moses (OT) and the Paul (NT) should be taken seriously.

We also need to remind one another that God has set a number of boundaries, including those concerning moral behavior. Sincere love for God will surrender us to the Word of God. That means that love for God and His Word should keep us from altering the meaning and circumstances in which Moses or Paul wrote the words we read. We have to be very careful that we do not bend God’s Word to our own desires, hope and feelings. Eventually it will lead to unhappiness, lack of fulfillment and even personal harm.

The following words God spoke as His promise “to those exiles in Babylonian captivity” hundreds of years ago remain of great comfort to all of us,

 *“I know the plans I have for you…plans to prosper you and not*

 *to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* Jer. 29:11.

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EIGHTH DISCOURSE

**CONFESSIONS of FAITH**

Excerpts taken from

The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism and The Canons of Dort

on

Matters of Immorality (including Homosexuality)

1. **The Belgic Confession**

Article 5: *The Authority of Scripture.*

“We receive all these books (reference to Article 4) and these only as holy and canonical. And we believe without a doubt all things contained in them—not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but above all, because the Holy Spirit testifies in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they prove themselves to be from God. For even the blind are able to see that things predicted in them do happen.”

Article 7: *The Sufficiency of Scripture.* Second paragraph:

“Therefore we must not consider human writings—no matter how holy their authors may have—been—equal to the divine writings; nor may we put custom, nor the majority, nor age, nor the passage of time or persons, nor councils, decrees, or official decisions above the truth of God, for truth is above everything else. For all human beings are liars by nature and more vain than vanity itself. Therefore, we reject with all our hearts everything that does not agree with this

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infallible rule, as we are taught to do by the apostles when they say, “Test the spirits to see if they are of God,”1 and also, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house.”2

2. **The Heidelberg Catechism**

LORD’S DAY 7

Q. 21: *What is true faith?* First couple of sentences:

A. True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true;”3

Q. 119: *What is this prayer?*

A. “…And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one…"

Q. 124: “*What does the third request mean*?”

A. “*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven* means, Help us and all people to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk. Your will alone is good.”4

1 1 John 4:1; 2 2 John 10; 3 Matt. 28:18-20; 4 Matt. 7:21; 16: 24-26; Luke 22:42; Rom. 12:1-2; Tit. 2:11-12.

Q. 127: “*What does the sixth request mean*?”

A. “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one* means, By ourselves we are too weak to hold our own even for a moment.5 And our sworn enemies—the devil,6 the world,7 and our own flesh—8 never stop attacking us. And so, Lord, uphold us and make us strong with the strength of the Holy Spirit, so that we may not go down to defeat in this spiritual struggle,9 but may firmly resist our enemies until we finally win the complete victory.”10

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1. **The Canons of Dort**

THE THIRD and FOURTH MAIN POINTS of DOCTRINE – DIVINE ELECTION and REPROBATION

Article 15: “*Responses to God’s Grace*”

God does not owe this grace to anyone. For what could God owe to one who has nothing to give that can be paid back? Indeed, what could God owe to one who has nothing of his own of his own to give but sin and falsehood? Therefore the person who receives grace owes and gives eternal thanks to God alone; the person who does not receive it either does not care at all about these spiritual things and is satisfied with himself in his condition, or else in self-assurance foolishly boasts about having something which he lacks.

Article 16: “*Regeneration’s Effect*”

However, just as by the fall of man did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will, and just as sin, which has spread through the whole human race, did not abolish the nature of the human race but distorted and spiritually killed it, so also this divine grace of regeneration does not act in people as if they were blocks and stones; nor does it abolish the will and its properties or coerce a reluctant will by force, but spiritually revives, heals, reforms, and—in a manner at once pleasing and powerful—bends it back. As a result, a ready and sincere obedience of the Spirit now begins to prevail where before the rebellion and resistance of the flesh were completely dominant. It is in this that the true and spiritual restoration and freedom of our will consists.

THE FIFTH MAIN POINT of DOCTRINE -- THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Article 13: “*Assurance: Assurance No Inducement to Carelessness*”(including immorality)

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Neither does the renewed confidence of perseverance produce

immorality, or lack of concern for godliness in those put back on their feet after a fall, but it produces a much greater concern to observe carefully the ways of the Lord which he prepared in advance. They observe these ways in order that by walking in them they may maintain the assurance of their perseverance, lest, by their abuse of his fatherly goodness, the face of the gracious God…turn away from them again, with the result that they fall into greater anguish of spirit.

*5 Ps. 103:14-16; John 15:1-5*

6 2 Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:10-13; 1 Pet. 5:8

7 John 15: 18-21

8 Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17

9 Matt. 10:19-20; 26:41; Mark 13:33; Rom. 5:3-3

10 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

Article 15: “*Contrasting Reactions to the Teaching of Perseverance*”

This teaching about the perseverance of true believers and saints, and about their assurance of it—a teaching which God has very richly revealed in his Word for the glory of his name and for the comfort of the godly and which he impresses on the hearts of believers—is something which the flesh does not understand, Satan hates, the world ridicules, the ignorant and the hypocrites abuse, and the spirits of error attacks. The bride of Christ, on the other hand, has always loved this teaching very tenderly and defended it steadfastly as a priceless treasure; and God against whom no plan can avail and no strength can prevail, will ensure that she will continue to do this. To this God alone, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

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**PART TWO**



 THE RAINBOW LETTERS

SECOND PASTORAL LETTER

(PL2)

**BLOWING THE SHOFAR…TOO LATE?**

The Church Facing the Issue

of

Immoral Lifestyles

as

A Spiritual Battle Is Engulfing the Church

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 **Introduction**

It starts with a letter, dated Dec. 10, 2020, written on behalf of and signed by faculty members and staff to, among others, the President of a Christian University (CU) in Grand Rapids, MI. From this letter we learn that this Christian university had voiced strong disagreement with the Synodical Report that declared that “the church’s teaching on premarital sex, extra-marital sex, adultery, pornography, and therefore homosexual sex, has in fact Confessional status.” The CU’s letter, however, wants us to understand that “The Report insufficiently engages with a relevant scholarship from our disciplines, leading to a biased view of the theological, scriptural, and scientific basis for The Report.”

Furthermore, the CU’s letter wants us also to realize that the discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation lack the scientific and hermeneutic rigor and accuracy of prevailing peer-reviewed scholarship and thereby have the potential to compromise the CU’s academic reputation. In sum, the report and its potential adoption by Synod could undermine the academic freedom of faculty and our standing as a reputable academic institution in the Reformed tradition.”

The CU’s letter also states its two-fold concern for The Report’s conclusion that “prohibitions of “homosexual sex have confessional status, that homosexual sex “threaten[s] a person’s salvation,” and that the failure to call people in same-sex relationships “to repentance is…acting like a false church.” 148

In response to the CU’s concern, we need to remind ourselves that God’s Word is about the need for repentance and healing when that is called for. Scripture is full of references concerning such a call. Even more so in a time we experience right now. As a matter

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of fact, we don’t hear enough of repentance and healing in many churches. On what ground does the CU opposes the need for repentance when it is called for in case of same-sex relationships on the basis of God’s Word?

The above-mentioned refutation leads us to the question of why the CU does not base its viewpoint on Scripture, but specifically on the Confessional statements that are human reflections, or human interpretations of God’s Word. One explanation to ignore Scripture would likely be that one realizes that God’s Word does not support immoral behavior. Neither can it be defended on the basis of the Confessional statements. Read, e.g. The Belgic Confession, Article 7, see next page 118.

This Pastoral letter seeks a helpful answer to the CU’s position on homosexuality and other BGLTQI lifestyles. Let us search the so-called ‘Doctrinal Statements’ to find out if the CU is correct in stating that the official ‘Reformed Confession of Faith’ lacks any information that could undermine the CU’s position. We turn then now to this particular Reformed Confession, also referred to as ‘Doctrinal Standards,’ including The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and The Canons of Dort.[[62]](#footnote-62)

**Reflection on Doctrinal Standards**

We will briefly examine the truth of the CU’s refutation of The Report's support of the Reformed Confession in rejecting the homosexual lifestyle. Let’s check out The Belgic Confession and The Canons of Dort [to seek possible confirmation of The Report's conclusion and consequently rejecting the CUs conclusion on this matter.[[63]](#footnote-63)](#_ftn2)

The Belgic Confession, Article 7: *The Sufficiency of Scripture.* Second paragraph:

Therefore we must not consider human writings—no matter how holy their authors may have—been—equal to the divine writings; nor may we put a custom, nor the majority, nor age, nor the passage of time or persons, nor councils, decrees, or official decisions above the truth of God, for truth is above everything else**.** For all human beings are liars by nature and more vain than vanity itself. Therefore, we reject with all our hearts everything that does not agree with this infallible rule, as we are taught to do by the apostles when they say, “Test the spirits to see if they are of God,” and also, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house.”[[64]](#footnote-64)

An immediate response to the contents of this article makes the critical, Confessional statement that God’s Word, Scripture, has the final word on the issue of homosexual practice including all LBGTQI lifestyles. This conclusion is as truthful as it can be, and therefore does not allow for any other opinion. The Report is therefore correct in saying that the issue of the homosexual lifestyle has Confessional status based on Article 7 of the Belgic Confession.

**The Canons of Dort**

THE FIFTH MAIN POINT of DOCTRINE -- THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Article 13: “*Assurance No Inducement to Carelessness*” states,

Neither does the renewed confidence of perseverance produce immorality or lack of concern for godliness in those put back on their feet after a fall, but it produces a much greater concern to observe carefully the ways of the Lord which he prepared in advance…..[[65]](#footnote-65)

This particular article refers specifically to the issue of immorality and a lack of concern for godliness, thereby supporting the conclusion made upon Article 7 of The Belgic Confession.

**General conclusion regarding the Doctrinal Standards**

In response to the two above-stated explanations from the CU, we say that The Report’s conclusions are correct, as can be confirmed by observations and conclusions made in the official Reformed doctrinal standards of CONFESSION of FAITH as reflected on earlier.

This conclusion leads us to say that Christians are expected to uphold Scripture and continue to give brave, stouthearted evidence of their faith in Christ Jesus. This is especially true, even critical, in the time we are now living in when the anti-Christ spirit is, in many different ways, noticeably expressed throughout our societies.

We have, as a Church, arrived at a time that our personal and common faith in Christ and the standards of God’s Word, are being tested, even severely tested, as it has arrived at the moment when “the rubber meets the road.”! That ‘testing our faith when it matters’ also plays an important role in this present LGBTQI issue at the CU and also at other Christian institutions.

On this firm basis, we conclude that it is not the claim of The Report, but the claims made by the CU that need our attention and scrutiny on the basis of God’s Word. Therefore, it is actually the CU’s entire response to The Report that needs to be screened in light of the above-reported Articles and even more so in light of Scripture itself. Actually, the entire discussion on LGBTQI issues should be considered primarily in light of God’s Word, i.e. the final Word.

With the examination of several Doctrinal Standards, it is helpful to remind ourselves that the circumstances, which the disciples in the early Church faced, are comparable to today’s circumstances. Floods of evidence are written that testify how today’s Christians are experiencing growing pressure and fierce attacks from Christ-denying forces in the Western world, including Canada and the US. As a writer, I can personally testify to the kind of persecution referred to as ‘Persecution by Word’. The ultimate driving and determining force behind that persecution is from Satan.

As Christians, we need to be aware that we are facing ruthless and reckless behavior of radical-Liberalism, à la Socialism, with its sharp focus on disrupting people’s way of life in reaching their goal to eradicate Christianity. The entire LGBTQI movement is just one weapon used by Satan to undermine, and eventually destroy the Church in North America, as has been the case in Europe. Draw your own conclusion when you read and reflect on God’s Word.

The apostle Paul introduced himself with the following pre-Christian credentials,

   *"If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the*

 *flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people*

 *of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in*

 *regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the*

 *church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless."* Phil. 3:4-6.

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If one understood OT Scripture more than anyone else in today’s churches it was Paul who also connects Rom. 1:18-32, specifically 1:26-27, with Gen. 1-3. Throughout his letters, he reminds us of immorality, an issue often referred to in John's letters to the seven churches in the book Revelation. Similar references can be found in many of Paul’s letters and e.g. Jude, last letter/book before Revelation. No one can in good conscience say that he or she has a much better utility, greater spiritual fitness, insights, or understanding of the world around the church than Paul who wrote 13 letters in the NT, while encouraged and guided by the Holy Spirit.

It is helpful to reflect not only on letters written by Paul regarding the subject of sexual immorality but also on, e.g. the letter of Jude, one of the Lord’s half-brothers (1 Cor. 9:5; NIV) and an important leader in the early church. In Jude 1-3 we are made aware that the church had serious problems that were, according to verse 4, very much related to issues of immorality. Jude speaks of those involved in acts of immorality being “*men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit,*” verse 16. Jude speaks of those who are very manipulative.

How does such reality speak to the Church in our days? Is that specific, first-century problem now also a twenty-one-century problem in our churches today? Today, a growing number of Christians are saying, ‘Yes.”

Today’s Christians are beginning to fear and even to suffer from persecution by a growing communist influence within certain political parties. This God-denying and opposing influence is expressed through radical-liberal (radical Left) forces at work in and through present-day political parties in Canada and the US.

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The following brief reflection describes that reality in our North-American societies, making many Christians rather nervous to the point of seeking ways how to accommodate the impact of such pressure on their own lives.

**Reflection on The Report’s so-called ‘Insufficient report on personal testimonies’**

A general comment on the accusation that The Report has more or less failed to prepare a more extensive report on those who live in same-sex relationships is somewhat baffling. Is this kind of accusation raised to strengthen the position of the CU? From personal experience, I need to say that little is gained by interviewing those who live in unforced, self-chosen relationships for which there seems to be neither shame, nor regrets. On the contrary, a life style has been whole-heartedly chosen and embraced, at least outwardly.

Besides all this, how can the CU, on the basis of God’s Word, bring up forenamed accusations, while knowing that God opposes LBGTQI lifestyles, clearly belonging to the biblical use of the word *immorality*. How can they expect that this Synodical committee will change its mind on this entire subject of immorality after their inquests? How can anyone imagine that meeting with people living God-opposing lifestyles may change one’s pre-disposition to such lifestyles and even approve of them.

Many people living the afore-named lifestyles are kind people, as I personally find this to be true. But no one can on the basis of the Word of God, the Maker of all human beings, conclude that such lifestyles need to be appreciated, admired and declared to be OK. Where in God’s Word do we have just one simple indication that living an immoral life is and should be respected and accepted?

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Is it not true that the Bible speaks so often about the need for healing prayers rather than accepting those issues we have been speaking of so far? Where in all the rhetoric of the CU do we hear even a hint about healing and prayer instead of accepting and embracing forenamed life-styles? Did Jesus Christ not die for our sins precisely to bring about the need for confession, prayer and healing to the foreground? Do we not read in the letter of James,

   *“…the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well…If*

 *he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins*

 *to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.*

 *The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”*

 Jas. 5:15-16.

Christians often need to be reminded that the triune God impresses upon them the need to be an obedient church, instead of an accommodating church! However, it seems that quite a few people in the Church, and by extension at Christian Universities, adopt ways and behavior accepted in society. The CU seems to claim this to be true by explaining this in the following simple sentence,

  If we oppose that lifestyle (i.e. the lifestyle of the LGBTQI

 students) we will lose many students that will have serious

 financial ramifications for the university, which could lead

 to…”

First of all, a resulting need would be a decision for additional buildings. In that case, outside ‘forces,’ responsible for e.g. providing needed building permits, could demand acceptance of LGBTQI students by the CU. That could have played a significant role in CU’s decision to press on with a new building project as advertised. That possibility exists, when we understand that the

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State of Michigan is strongly influenced by radical-liberal elements, as proven during the last presidential election in the US.

Another reason the CU defends its position over and against that of the Synodical Study Committee’s Report (The Report) is reflected as follows,

  … The Report’s claims regarding confessional status would

 cause harm to our Reformed Community (of the university) by

 severely impairing staff and faculty’s ability to care for our

 LGBTQI students in the way that our conscience dictates and

 the scholarship supports.

See also the ‘Two Alarming Reasons’ in my Fourth Pastoral letter, p. 95.

As we will see later in this letter, the nature of the LGBTQI community, the willingness and length to which they are able and willing to go in disrupting society, makes us wary to think what that all could mean to the CU community in the coming years.

Present ministry activities to those students, whatever is meant by and involved in such ministry activities, could be stopped and denied the moment those students, as a group, have gained enough power to start making known their wishes flowing from their God-opposing minds. This may sound absurd at this time, but time will tell if this statement turns out to be bizarre or absolutely correct.

**Another look at the CUs present position**

Could it be that the CU and possible other Christian universities with a Reformed background, are slowly but surely drawn into a world that is strongly opposed to the Judeo-Christian worldview with its norms and values? This possibility surfaces when we may

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begin to wonder if, e.g. the CU is aware of the possibility that, over time, it could be drawn into and identified with the powerful, radical movement of the LGBTQI movement. Such a possibility could also happen with the other members of the CCCU.

Please check out such a possibility by reading the following paragraphs taken from an article in “[News](https://www.thebanner.org/news), [Church Worldwide](https://www.thebanner.org/department/church-worldwide) “[Religion News Service](https://www.thebanner.org/bio/religion-news-service)” written by *Yonat Shimron for Religion News Service.* See ‘APPENDIX A,’ p. 251, for more information on that subject.

Note: See CU’s actual reasons for attracting LGBTQI students on p.178, etc.

At the end of February, the Democratic-controlled U.S. House of Representatives passed a sweeping LGBTQI rights bill called the Equality Act ([H.R.5 - Equality Act](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5))… Republicans for the most part objected, with some of them advocating instead for a bill called [Fairness for All](https://stewart.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=704), reintroduced by Rep. Chris Stewart of Utah on Feb. 26 with 20 Republican co-sponsors…’Fairness for All’ would also carve out exemptions for faith-based organizations, which played a big role in drafting it.

‘Fairness for All’ has been championed by the [Council for Christian Colleges and Universities](https://www.cccu.org/), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the [National Association of Evangelicals](https://www.nae.net/), which hasn’t formally endorsed it, but was consulted in its drafting. The Christian Reformed Church in North America is a member of the NAE; Calvin, Redeemer, and Dort universities are all [member institutions](https://www.cccu.org/members_and_affiliates/) of CCCU.

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However, we do well to take note of what the CCCU president has also expressed namely that,

Our coalition has always had a problem-solving mindset...we believe LGBTQI people should be treated with equity and equality in the U.S. We have Supreme Court cases that have set that up. And weknow religious organizations play an important role in society and that nobody should coerce the other.

According to the above paragraphs, the CU, as a member institute of CCCU, should have been among other members of CCCU who have not yet officially endorsed ‘Fairness for All’ as per March 19, 2021, when this article was publicized. However, it appears that some time before the writing of this article, the CU had already made up its mind and acted upon. The danger of that CU decision to accept LGBTQI students, is that it is not sufficiently aware of the fact that members of the LGBTQI community operate on the basis of their very anti-God ideology and could well lead to dire consequences.

Read the following email information:

From: The Campaigns Director for Africa at CitizenGO

Email: petitions-en@citizengo.org; (received on March 23, 2021).

Some officials of the United Nations use humanitarian and developmental aid as a weapon to force African countries like mine, Kenya, to impose abortion and LGBTQI ideology!

You see, instead of focusing on basic needs, the United Nations is demanding that all nations agree to the following destructive items:

* Free access to abortion for all women and girls;
* Abortion as a fundamental “human right”;
* Sexual orientation and gender ideology propaganda; and
* Comprehensive sexuality education (that’s how they call it), even to toddlers.

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**A world of trouble for the Church, Christian institutions, and Christians in the workplace**

We will look briefly at some quite plausible reasons why we are witnessing a change away from the Word of God towards the way of the world. We will examine that reality by looking through the lens of the following observations presented by THE EPOCH TIMES in their publication of a book consisting of three volumes and recently published.[[66]](#footnote-66) They are published under the title, "*How The Specter of Communism* *Is Ruling our World*,***"*** This book brings a much-needed fresh ‘wind of truth’ flowing through a world filled with half-truths, if not complete lies.

Note: As reader you will notice that the above-mentioned book and the next following paragraphs taken from it, make frequently use of the word ‘communism.’ Many people are not used to hear about communism. Instead, the word socialism seems much easier understood and accepted.

After much reading, and my writings on the subject of radical-liberalism and socialism,[[67]](#footnote-67) I deeply understand the communist influence as a leading force behind socialism and radical-liberalism. That destructive, evil, influence, is already at work for a many years, if not decennia, on this North-American continent, doing so slowly, surely and determinately. That influence is not only gradually, but increasing, and also noticeable.

Let us listen to and take note of the following observations from Volume One that speaks directly to the times we are living in:

   Struggle and hatred lie at the core of communist politics.

 Turning people against each other by sowing hatred and

 division is the primary means by which communism corrupts

 society, overturns its morality, and usurps political power to

 establish its dictatorship. 205

Without bringing the Western world under its overt political

 control through war...the communist specter has co-opted the

 governance of Western Nations by feeding social unrest,

  undermining traditional morality, and pushing socialist policies.

 Its aim is to set the West on a demonic path, bringing about the

 destruction of mankind. 194

In today's society, repentance is not necessary. Adulterers can

 proudly enjoy life, holding their heads high. Chastity used to

 be a virtue in both Eastern and Western cultures; today, it is

 treated as an anachronistic joke. Passing judgment on

 homosexuality and sexual morality is forbidden under today's

 political correctness. The only acceptable stance is to respect

 others' "free choice.” 185

In recent decades, same-sex marriage and other lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender LGBTQI causes have been aggressively promoted throughout Western society. The LGBTQI movement has been closely associated with communism ever since the first utopians began touting the practice of homosexuality as a human right. Since the communist movement claims to emancipate people from the bondage of traditional morality, its ideology naturally calls for LGBTQI rights as part of its program of "sexual liberation. 180

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The *Communist Manifesto* calls for the destruction of the family, the church, and the nation-state. Eliminating and subverting religions is one of the important goals of the Communist Party…religion is the opium of the people…Communism begins from the outset with atheism… 136-137

In the very last sentence in the same Volume One we read that,

When the people are divided over questions of basic morality,

 the very survival of the country is at stake*.* 222

In light of some suggestions on how Christians need to deal with trends that reflect the way the Western world is going, we cannot emphasize enough the need to understand today’s world we live and work in. A correct understanding of the world we live in is ‘a must’ for pastors in their preaching and teaching to be effective in their ministry activities!

We may turn this time to Volume Two of the books published by THE EPOCH TIMES mentioned earlier. In Volume Two, the subject, entitled “*Communism in Western Universities*,” is explained. From that chapter we read many important observations about outside influences, among them the following ones,

Four years of intensive indoctrination leave today’s college graduates…more likely to accept atheism…without a second thought…who lack common sense and pursue hedonistic

lifestyles without taking responsibility for their actions…have a narrow worldview…and have become the main target for communist deception. 129

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A crisis is unfolding within…the erosion of elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education across the United States…the humanities and social sciences are the most affected…a large proportion of staff at American universities leans to the left. Scholars with different ideas have been either marginalized in their teaching positions or barred from voicing their views…studies after 2007 also confirm the leftist trend among professors at four-year universities in the United States. 130-131

Four years of intensive indoctrination leave today’s college graduates with a predisposition for liberalism and progressivism. They are more likely to accept atheism, the theory of evolution, and materialism without a second thought. Many become narrow-minded “snowflakes” who lack common sense and pursue hedonistic lifestyles without taking responsibility for their actions. They lack knowledge, have a narrow worldview, know very little or nothing about the history of America or the world, and have become the main target for communist deception. 129

The following paragraph explains the much lamented erosion in education,

A crisis is unfolding within…erosion of elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education across the United States…especially those who attended college after the 1960s, have been exposed to communist influences. The humanities and social sciences (130)…are the most affected… a large proportion of staff at American universities lean to the left. Scholars with different ideas have been either marginalized in their teaching positions or barred from voicing their views…Studies after 2007 also confirm the leftist trend among professors at four-year universities in the United States. 131

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The above-quoted observations are just a very small part of a deep and extensive study of what communism is about and determined to accomplish, namely the destruction of what has been a solid biblical norm indicated in God's Word, namely the family! The apostle Paul, for one, was a great defender of that central moral value which is presently under fierce attacked. Already many Christians consider this destructive trend as the "Way to go!" This is nothing else but an undermining and a rejection of God's Word on this issue.

Observations as presented above can be easily applied to the rhetoric of the CU in its disapproval of the Synodical Report (The Report). The CU’s own claims need to be considered in view of present realities of the way the Church in North America has come under the evil influence of socialism, at work in and through political parties. This same reality is also reflected in the behavior of radical liberalism in some political parties in Canada. However, it seems that the Church in general, including the CU in this case, seems oblivious to the growing reality and influence of these and other God-denying developments. Such negligence becomes alarming.

There is still a serious lack of sufficient understanding of the reality concerning a growing anti-Christ spirit around us. Therefore, the Church has become very vulnerable to the impact of such growing influence. That reality will eventually undermine the spiritual vitality of the Church and Christian universities. As a result, both spheres, Church and Christian Education, could find themselves going down a slippery slope towards division(s) and lingering disintegration. Such development has been a reality in Europe for many years, including in the Netherlands. Right now, we may well witness the enfolding of a similar drama in North America! 132

One of the reasons that the CU allows LGBTQI students to be an integral part of its student body is the fact that, admittedly, the university will lose monetary support. However, what is apparently not taken into account yet is the fact that many Christians may withdraw their financial support for the CU. The CU’s decision, as stated earlier, indicates that the matter of money plays an important role in matters on moral issues. Could this mean that we have reason to believe in the possibility that the livelihood of the CU has become a serious issue?

It could well be that the above analysis has been one possible reason why the CU has accepted LGBTQI students in their student body. This possibility needs to be raised, as painfully as it is, realizing that the CU has rejected God’s Word on immoral lifestyles. As we have established the fact that the Reformed Confession disapproves of those lifestyles we raise the question on what ground(s) and for what reason(s) has the CU given its consent to have LGBTQI students fully included in the student body. It is only the Board members of the CU that can give us the real reason(s) to have accepted such students.

In case Christian institutions, such as Christian colleges and universities, decide to accept LGBTQI lifestyles, many Christians might withdraw their financial support for those institutions. On the other hand, however, when e.g. a Christian educational institute refuses to accept LGBTQI lifestyles it may also face financial ramifications. We need to understand that the State, in which a Christian institute is located, may begin to withdraw financial support, and lawyers will get involved, charging such Christian institutions in operating against the law. Such developments could easily lead to expensive court cases.

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Whatever decision is taken, for or against the homosexual lifestyle, many Christian institutions could, very likely, lose monetary support, leading to the dismissal of professors. Another consequence is the loss of a leading position in the sector of higher education. Consequences of such nature will very likely result in future court cases and decisions.

Chaplains at liberal universities, as well as Christians who make a living in various organizations and work environments, are either already or are going to experience significant pressure due to anti-Christ changes in morality within today’s societies, and will continue to experience these pressures. Such observations lead us to listen and to take note of the following Bible verses from Paul’s letter to the Roman Church in which he wrote,

   “*Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds*

 *set on what that nature desires, but those who live in accordance*

 *with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*

 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the*

 *Spirit is life and peace: the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does*

 *not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by*

 *the sinful nature cannot please God.”* Ro. 8:5-8.

“*I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will…Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”* Ro. 12:1-3.

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Another, very significant reason for a determined show of general reluctance among leaders and general members of local churches and in various Christian organizations and institutes, to stand up for the truth flowing from Scripture on the entire issue of immorality. We may remember the story of David and Goliath found in 1 Samuel 17. In that very important and remarkable story we hear about Goliath’s repeated ridicule of the Israelites who hesitated to charge Goliath and his Philistines intimidated as they were. Then, finally, it was young David, who “*in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel*” managed to kill Goliath, 1Samuel 17: 45.

In his response to that particular biblical story of public confrontation between that God-fearing young man and that God-opposing, God-ridiculing Philistinian champion, Floyd Brobbel saw in that historical confrontation a very important message for us, Christians, today. First of all he remarked that that there is an important, if not vital lesson to learn from David’s godly reaction to Goliath’s ridicule of the fearful Israelites. The lesson for today’s Christians is that, today, “many followers of Jesus living in the West have allowed ridicule to stifle their Christian witness and activity.”[[68]](#footnote-68)

Brobbel’s following comments are important for us, Christians, to contemplate,

Western Christians tend to desire harmony with the world, to be friends with fellow members of their communities and live at peace… The cultural mandate for all Christians is to be “salt” and “light”…Christians in the West have struggled with how to accomplish this without being looked upon as strange, out of touch with reality, holding to an outdated faith…de decline of

the Western church can be attributed, in large part, to the fact that so few are willing to suffer for the cause of Christ…they hope to engage in works of mercy without calling people to repentance and leading lost and hurting people to the cross—the only place where restorative justice can be found…A decisive moment for followers of Jesus comes in their response to the opposition that results from their allegiance to Christ.[[69]](#footnote-69)

**Christians are drawn into a Spiritual Battle with a Satan-driven, God-opposing World**

In an email (Feb. 25, 2021) from the US we read that pro-family and religious freedom activists have long been sounding the alarm that, if passed and signed into law, the Equality Act has the potential to:

* Eliminate biological female-only spaces like bathrooms, locker rooms, and shelters.
* Force biologically female athletes to compete against biological males.
* Eliminate religious freedom for small business owners, charities, and medical providers.
* Force healthcare professionals to perform abortions.
* Expand unsafe treatments for transgender treatments.

This Equality Act is a monumental attempt to codify into law a radical moral agenda that has rapidly become mainstream in just the last decade alone. Q. What are the consequences for the Church and Christian institutions, though not (yet) officially named in this proposed Equality Act?, The answer to this question is that they can easily be counted as targets, resulting in losing their religious freedom. Much is at stake for those standing up for God and the Truth.

That loss of religious freedom is manifested in Andrew Bennett’s observation that there is a “narrowing” of religious freedom…in areas such as conscience rights, where legislative changes being made don’t include provisions to allow the faithful to adhere to their deeply held beliefs. …religious views, religious language, is absent from our media. …It’s absent from our political discourse, it’s absent from our universities.”[[70]](#footnote-70)

**What Christian institutions need to consider**

First of all, read, study and accept unequivocally God's Word as written. When this golden rule is dismissed, one can easily and hastily undermine God’s Word, which could only lead to unproven, unbiblical statements. The latter includes various circular strategies, thus circumventing the real issue(s), in efforts to misrepresent unwavering biblical directives concerning immoral issues that have plagued the Church during her entire existence.

It would also be helpful to analyze some of the reasons for and the driving force behind attempts that have led to convincing Christians to change their minds in favor of LGBTQI lifestyles. However, the conclusion is that such lifestyles cannot be supported by either Scripture or the Reformed Confession. Christians in North America should therefore not follow the path taken by the Church in Western Europe, leading to the closure of thousands of churches during the last thirty to forty years, including churches in the Netherlands.[[71]](#footnote-71) Even the year, 2020, has still seen the closure of about 100 churches in the Netherlands.

We live in societies plagued by strong, even ruthless radical-liberal forces pushing their anti-God agenda. Those human forces are inspired by evil forces, which are directly described by Paul in that important passage of Eph. 6: 12 as part of the longer description, Eph. 6:10-18, entitled, *The Armor of God*. These forces are creating social unrest, in order to unravel and eventually destroy the way societies have functioned and flourished socially and economically.

At the present time, Christians in the many different workplaces and positions feel growing pressure to accept the homosexual lifestyle (LGBTQI lifestyles in general) as normal, even as a human right. If such a position is not accepted by a Christian person, he or she will eventually begin to feel the consequences of such refusal at work. Those consequences could come in the form of financial repercussions, stagnation in ‘climbing the ladder,’ or even losing one’s job.

These and similar developments in today’s world are affecting local churches and Christian schools, especially colleges and universities. These undisputable realities bring us to several suggestions to be discussed during the year prior to Synod 2022. See below. But first the following questions:

1. What is (are) the real reason(s) for accepting LGBTQI students in local churches and Christian colleges and universities? Are those reasons similar to those presented and pushed by a growing anti-God sentiment within our societies?
2. Why would LGBTQI students enter a Christian university, while positively rejecting Christian norms and values? What is (are) the real reason(s) to accept these students?
3. How are present application forms designed to allow LGBTQI students?
4. In how far are chaplains equipped to minister to LGBTQI students within the parameters of God’s Word? What does ministering to these students actually mean and entail?
5. Does the CU realize that students, not belonging to the LGBTQI student community, can be easily and negatively influenced by those forenamed students? A great responsibility for the institution, isn’t it?
6. Does CU realize that a growing body of LGBTQI students could eventually have the willingness and power to disrupt the entire student life and community at the university, or even take over the university after being encouraged, motivated, and empowered by radical liberals? Those students are part of radical surges within societies with a focus on destroying Christian norms and values.
7. Be aware: Satan is attacking churches and Christian institutions all over the North-American continent. This is a proven, spiritual reality, not a sloppy idea in the minds of a steadily-growing number of Christians! Satan is extremely experienced and powerful!
8. Allowing LGBTQI students to enter the CU campus is like welcoming a TROJAN HORSE.

**Suggestions for Discussion**

Following are suggestions how the Church needs to reach out to and support several groups of Christians:

1. Those among us who are facing possible, serious consequences at work by not being in support of the homosexual lifestyle, and thus all LGBTQI lifestyles.

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1. Those among us who are attracted to someone of the same sex, but do not want, or try to resist, and don’t want to live in a same-sex relationship.
2. Pastors and chaplains who have been trained and equipped to minister to students who live in a same-sex relationship, but desire to break away from such a relationship.

Without going into much detail at this point in time, churches, colleges, and universities do well to think about and discuss above-mentioned suggestions during the approx. one year we have before Synod 2022 will deal with the issue of LGBTQI lifestyles.

Preparation for meaningful discussions within the CRC, preferably in well-led small group settings, could be broadly described as follows:

1. Reading books and/or trustworthy information. Suggested are the following books to better understand how societies have developed in the broader context:
* Charles Colson, *A DANCE with DECEPTION*: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines, Word Publishing, 1993.
* Erwin W. Lutzer, *We Will Not Be Silenced*, Harvest House Publishers, 2020.

These two books cover a period of at least the last thirty-forty years. Their contents provide a good, much needed understanding of the growth of the entire immoral spectrum in North America. These books together establish a perfect background to the next 3-volume book published by The Epoch Times, entitled:

* *How THE SPECTOR of COMMUNISM Is Ruling Our World*, 2020.

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Then in addition the following book:

* Robert A. J. Gagnon, *THE BIBLE and HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE: Texts and Hermeneutics*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2001

Note: Christian literature, such as the ones described above, will no longer be accepted by e.g. Amazon. My second book, *THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society,* was not accepted by my publisher, as it did not agree with the new ‘Hate Speech’ formulation as understood and interpreted by the present radical-liberal Government! This was for me the first time experiencing the ‘strong hand’ of radical-liberal powers. One may refer to such anti-God attitude as ‘Persecution by Word,’ as distinct from ‘Persecution by Sword.’

1. There are already many Christians who deal with pressures and anxieties about their position in the workplace. They realize that any resistance to accepting LGBTQI lifestyles as normal may have serious consequences. That has already been manifested in a number of cases. Local churches need to become aware of such realities, and therefore, out of concern and love for these fellow Christians, need to seek ways to support them. This support needs to be understood in terms of love and prayer, social and financial support, as well as finding new employment.

Many Christians begin to feel growing animosity at work about the conflict arising from changes in morality in our societies. As a result, Christians at work, who have shared their feelings and oppositions to such changes, run the risk that even their position could be at stake and even lose it.

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Such a situation can have negative consequences to the point of even losing their job.

As a church, we need to give our support for the bold stand they take, and assure those Christian brothers and sisters that, in case they may lose their job, they can count on financial support from deacons, and when needed from the Classis they live in, and even from the CRC at large. Note also that there are Christians who are ridiculed for their faith, as well as those who like to avoid being ridiculed and decide to support LGBTQI lifestyles.

1. There are undoubtedly those among us in local churches who wrestle with their feelings and attraction to those of the same sex. Heterosexual people, in general, may have difficulty to

imagine such thoughts and attraction, but need to realize that this is a reality for a number of brothers and sisters even in their own church. We need to know these people, and come alongside them for loving support and prayer, encouragement and possible healing. Such support is often most adequately given in small groups. Note: More on small groups see p. .

1. There are those who realize their need and inner desire to break out of a same-sex relationship. This desire could be the result of a growing feeling of unhappiness, or the realization that this is not a relationship supported by God’s word and will. They need to experience the support of fellow-Christians, and also of experts in Bible-based and Spirit-led counseling to work towards needed release. Again, that support is made most effectively in small groups.

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1. A resource for that kind of involvement can be found by Christians who are part of PRMI (See Final information, p. 75. More on such support see below under ‘Final Thoughts.’ Another source for healing and restoring a homosexual person is entitled, “Healing Homosexuality: Four Stages of Recovery,” by Robert Bly, Poet, author and activist, Unleashed ‘Iron John’ and Started the Drum-Thumping Men’s Movement of the ’90s. Information is Posted June 18, 2001 on Google, ©Columnist Richard Cohen, M.A., January, 1999.
2. In how far are adults and parents aware of the goal of Leftist radicalism to eradicate all Judeo-Christian norms and values? If this is realized, how can the church community intervene in this process? What about sermons on Christian norms and values, possibly combined with the biblical realities of anti-God, anti-Christ attitudes in the world?
3. As already been demonstrated in the RCA by means of suggestions how to split the denomination, the CRC may well arrive at making similar suggestions. If this is going to be a reality, we may start thinking about the Q: What is going to happen with the church buildings and properties, the salary of the pastor(s), etc.?
4. Particular love for each other should not only be demonstrated towards those who accept immoral lifestyles, but also to those who disagree with those lifestyles. How much love, respect and acceptance is demonstrated by those pushing the homosexual lifestyle to those refusing that kind of acceptance based on their love, respect and acceptance of the truth of God’s word?

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Remember also that many of those refusing to accept the LGBTQI lifestyles may have helped to establish the church building, having put in the energy, dedication, and even have given much financial support to have a place of worship for many years. How much love, respect and acceptance is demonstrated towards many members of the same church who are hurt, while at the same time feel very uncomfortable staying much longer with the church?

**Cardinal issue and Crucial question**

Cardinal Issue: In light of present discussions on well or not accepting LGBTQI persons as members of local churches, could unavoidably lead to a split in numerous churches. The perplexing attitude of those church members who push churches to such a reality seems to be an accepted reality! How biblical is such a push? Should churches, instead, not come even more together in light of anti-God forces trying to get the Church on her knees, like that has happened in e.g. Western Europe? Living, working and ministering in Jesus’ name should always take place to strengthen the Church not to cause divisions and members leaving the Church altogether.

In the above point 2, we hear how a Church needs to strive, in obedience to the directives of the Holy Spirit and so in harmony with God’s Word, to stand and stay together in faith to face the evil, demonic powers under the leadership and direction of Satan. (Eph. 6:10-18).

Let us be aware of the spiritual fight we are in. In order to stay strong in faith and spirit, we can and will claim victory in Jesus’ name As a result, the Church not only will stay together, but

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continues to grow. This is only possible when we have Church

leadership devoted to God’s Word and being receptive to the leadership, encouragement and direction of God’s Spirit without reservation.

Crucial Question: Where are those leaders in many of today’s churches who lead church members in making a stand against those who force their anti-God norms and values into our societies in the present sex-saturated age?

**Final information**

The following information comes from the Christian organization: “Presbyterian-Reformed Ministries International” (PRMI), Located at Black Mountain, NC, USA. (Note: This charismatic organization also receives financial support from the CRC):

The local church is under assault. What congregation does not deal with conflict to some degree or another?  In some cases, this conflict has reached the level where the church is being split. For some, church leadership is in crisis due to personal and family breakdowns.

“We live in an increasingly post-Christian culture that is hostile to Biblical faith and to our Judeo-Christian values and morality. Congregations that are seeking to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ, holding true to the Bible as the Word of God, and moving in the power of the Holy Spirit, are under an assault that is both cultural and demonic.”

“All of this is due to the very deep reality of human sin which taints every dimension of human life, and every human

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institution, including the church of Jesus Christ…But what is often neglected is the spiritual and demonic dimension behind the human sinfulness and human organizational dynamics. This is the dimension that St. Paul spoke of when he said:

*“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.”* Eph. 6:12; NET

**When God has the last word**

In ending this Second Pastoral Letter we may remind ourselves of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ question which is the greatest commandment in the Law,

“*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest command. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* Matt. 22: 36-39.

The first commandment is taken from Deuteronomy 6:5, and the second commandment taken from Leviticus 19:18.[[72]](#footnote-72) These two commandments together stand above all other commandments. Notice that it is clear from what Jesus wants us to realize, namely that the first commandment is the most important one, as it gives life, meaning and direction to the second commandment.

The first commandment, as the primary source of genuine love, leads to healing and wholeness, as that love is directed towards the triune God.

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The second commandment speaks of love directed to human beings. When this love is expressed without first honoring and forwarding God’s primary love, human love not only misses the healing power of God, but could actually lead to harm, destruction and brokenness.

Reflecting on these two commandments, we may see a connection with the words declared by God in Isaiah 55:8, “*My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways*.” Thinking about the significance of this one verse, we are led to raise a most important question regarding living in a homosexual relationship that needs an undeniable ‘yes’ as answer is this:

 Where in God’s Word do we read, even understand, that at a

 certain level of mutual love, commitments, friendliness,

 compassion, understanding of the Bible combined with faith

 that God will accept that homosexual relationship, or any

 relationship as part of the LGBTQI lifestyles?

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**PART TWO**



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

THIRD PASTORAL LETTER

(PL3)

**CRITICAL ISSUES OMITTED**

**IN**

**DISCUSSIONS ON HOMOSEXUALITY**

***et* all**

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**Introduction**

CHRISTIANCOURIER, a Canadian Publication, carried two articles in its May 10, 2021 issue on the prominent discussion of human sexuality: the first one under the heading ‘Theology and Sexuality’ (p. 6), and the second one under the heading ‘Five Major Concerns.’ Both articles have been written in a response to the CRC’s 2021 Synodical Report on Human Sexuality, also referred to as the Human Sexuality Report (HSR) (pp.7-8)

One article showed a modest favorability concerning the Synodical Report, while other comments on that same Report were quite critical, if not firmly opposed to it. Thus my response with this Third Pastoral Letter (PL3) to especially the critical comments that also includes the hope that, in mutual trust and faith in God’s leading, we can in mutual respect find a pathway forward, thereby preventing a splitting up of the church.

However, given the fact that this issue is far more serious than the issue of ‘Women in Office’ in the 1990s, a splitting up of the church on the issue of Homosexuality (LGBTQI) is nearly unavoidable, as that is the case in the RCA where the main issue is how to split.

Prior to a particular article in this issue of CHRISTIAN COURIER, its writer had written an overture to Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan in support of the CU’s opposition to the HSR Report. In that effort, he received the support of 4 churches of the 7 churches within the Calgary area. My own church had decided to support that particular overture, apparently to allow more discussions within the CRC on the LGBTQI issue.

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However, finding a middle ground position on the this present issue seems nothing more than a wishful thinking, as both sides seem firmly settled in their opinion. As a possible, if not likely many church members could well be leaving the church altogether. There will be no winners.

In present discussions on forenamed issue, there is important information that, so far, has been left out in those discussions. We will try to look at several important issues that need to be taken into account in any further discussion on this important issue of immorality. Dismissing any discussion on subjects like those indicated below will hinder helpful, pronounced discussions on the issue at hand.

**Foreword**

Some of the information gained from readings on the subjects mentioned above have been briefly discussed in the following two, earlier published Pastoral Letters: First Pastoral Letter (PL1) entitled “*THE NORTH-AMERICAN CHURCH AT A CROSSROADS: The Spiritual Battle over Homosexuality*.” Published in February 2021, ~100 pages (A5 book format),

The Second Pastoral Letter (PL2) entitled, “*BLOWING THE SHOFAR… TOO LATE?”* Published in April 2021, ~ 19 pages. This Third Pastoral Letter (PL3), *“CRITICAL ISSUES OMITTED IN DISCUSSIONS ON HOMOSEXUALITY, et* all,*” 9* pages, is being published in June, 2021.

FYI: PL1 was not accepted by my Canadian publisher, as lawyers declared it as ‘Hate Speech.’ So much for speaking the truth about

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shocking changes, also including shameful changes in school curricula in Alberta, Canada. There is in Canada no freedom of speech anymore. All Three Pastoral Letters are being made available via email: cheap, fast and easily forwarded to family and friends who would be interested in this kind of information.

**The Influence of the World on the Church**

The influence of the world on the Church has been since she came into being through Jesus Christ (Col. 1:15-18) who, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, spurred the initial mission work of the first messianic Jews to the Gentiles. That mission effort was led by the apostle Paul, all the while the apostle Peter reached out to the Jews (Israelites).

Thus we hear in many letters, especially the ones from Paul, and also from the letter of Jude, a half-brother of Jesus, about serious warnings about worldly influences on new, developing churches already in those early days. Since then, the influence of the world has played a significant role on the life and mission of the church that continues today, and predicted in God’s word.

The issue we presently have on homosexuality, and thus on the related LGBTQI issue as well, has much to do with the growing pressure from our surrounding world that wants to get rid of all the influence that Christianity has on societies. This Judeo-Christian influence on societies is now also rapidly disappearing on the North-American continent due to fast, strongly-growing anti-Christ influences.

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This opinion receives growing support among Christians in the many denominations, though it seems, so far, less apparent within the CRC. This lack of knowing and acknowledging the fact that the Church in general is under serious attack from those anti-Christ forces on local churches may count for a seemingly lack of understanding the seriousness of the disagreement with the Synodical Report on the part of those who oppose the Synodical Report’s (HSR) conclusions on immorality, including the homosexual lifestyle.

One may read a particular contribution to the CHRISTIANCOURIER, May 2021 issue, showing support for the one Christian University’s rejection of the Synodical Report. However, that particular contribution lacks any immediate reference to the issue of immorality at hand.

In the two above-mentioned Pastoral Letters, I have spoken to that strong, worldly influence on the Church to some extent. From the three-volume book, published by THE EPOCH TIMES, referred to in PL2, we have a significant and elaborate report on the destructive ideology of that worldly influence presently pushed by many politicians who have been captivated by the ideology of radical-liberalism and socialism à la Marxism. That ideology is evil, destructive, anti-Christ and very influential. It has been already at work for many years on this continent, slowly, surely and determinately, if not unstoppable.

That present, dangerous reality should no-longer be ignored within the CRC, as it undoubtedly plays a role in our present

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discussions on homosexuality and the LGBTQI community in general. Please understand that this negative, undermining influence is due to efforts by forenamed radical-liberal forces to turn people against each other, thereby leading to hatred and divisions within societies. It is overturning Judeo-Christian values and morality, feeding social unrest, and pushing socialist policies. The latter forbid passing judgment on homosexuality and sexual morality, as it falls under political correctness, i.e. showing respect for others' "free choice." The exception hereby is that there is no longer freedom for Christians to speak and writing about those issues.

More truthful information on the state of North America helps Christians understand that the Church is engulfed by all these anti-Christ social changes our young people are growing up in, and often are educated in liberal colleges and universities for many years, if not decades. As a result of all these social-political developments in society, including colleges and universities, we are now dealing with students from the LGBTQI community. The Far-Left influence, with its anti-God ideology, on those students should not be ignored, but being discussed, acknowledged and responded to in a biblical way.

Presently, many of us are wrestling with the fact why so many leaders in our churches, colleges and universities are so impressed by the many new social developments, as they come to the defense of those who apparently are overcome by same-sex lifestyles. Many continue to wonder about that support for and in defense of such lifestyles.

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Why such an important omission of reality? Do we have to live by such a God-denying ideology that has only one thing in mind: overthrowing all Judeo-Christian norms and values, and consequently the Church. Are we not talking about the influence of Satan and his demonic powers we read about in e.g. Ephesians 6?

In his book, “TROUBLE on THE WAY: Persecution in the Christian Life,” Brobbel writes,

Western Christians are increasingly challenged to deal with a growing negative reputation for Christianity in their own countries. Media outlets regularly associate Christian values with narrow-mindedness, bigotry, and regressive social attitudes, quite out of step with mainstream opinion. In Canada, for example, some politicians have intimated that evangelical Christians are not real Canadians because they do not embrace Canadian values of acceptance and tolerance. Conservative Christian beliefs hold to biblical understanding of marriage and the sanctity of life, as such, increasingly find less space in contemporary Canadian culture or public debate.[[73]](#footnote-73)

**Persecution of the Church**

Persecution of the church in our days, as already briefly referred to above, takes place in at least two ways: directly and indirectly. Directly by disrupting the church by means of discussions, as we presently have on Homosexuality, and years earlier on the ‘Women in Office’ issue about 25 years ago.

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Indirectly by growing aggressive politics of the Far Left in both Canada and the USA, see above paragraph. As it has been the case throughout the centuries, persecution of the church has been ultimately driven by Satan. Yes, by Satan who stimulates and leads his demonic powers in his attacks on the church, which is his real, overriding goal!

Since Satan was defeated by Jesus during that one historic confrontation we read about in Matthew 4, he has been turning all his energy on what was left for him to do, namely, destroying Jesus’ church. For some time, Satan’s full attention has been on destroying the church in North America after he was quite successful in disrupting the church in Western Europe. We have ample evidence of his destructive activities in that part of the world.

With his successful experience in Europe, Satan had learned many lessons how to continue with his devilish work. He is now applying his successful methods here on this North-American continent, as we are confronted with the LBGTQI issue and his focus especially on churches, Christian colleges and universities. Satan is quite crafty and successful in splitting local churches and denominations. Therefore: be aware! Satan, the master-mind behind all persecutions of the church, is still roaring.

Satan’s so called ‘Persecution by Word,’ such as ridicule, harassment, discrimination and defamation,[[74]](#footnote-74) has shown to be

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very successful in drawing church people, especially intellectual-minded ones, among them theologians, away from strict, clear directives of God’s Word by means of raising various issues, presently especially those directly connected to the present issue of immorality.

In this light, it is the so-called *circular approach* that is applied in discussions on homosexuality. This kind of approach is a method used to draw attention away from the real, essential issue by creating, what we may call a ‘smoke screen,’ to circumvent discussions directly related to the truth of God’s Word in light of the ongoing, never-ending, sometimes overpowering threat of the anti-Bible, anti-Christ rhetoric.

 The question that hereby needs to be raised is what the real motive(s) is (are), to use that *circular approach* concerning homosexual lifestyles? From Scripture we may pose a similar question as stated in Proverbs 16:2,

 *“All a man’s ways seem innocent to him, but motives are*

 *weighed by the Lord.”* (NIV)

 *“People may be pure in their own eyes, but the Lord examines*

 *their motives.”* (NLT)

The critical question of what the real motive(s) is (are) in our discussions needs to be raised and answered. Some suggestions regarding that important question have been made in my Second Pastoral Letter (PL2): “*Blowing the Shofar…Too Late*?” For now, it could be considered that those involved in that circular approach have as their goal the suffocation of those in the middle.

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**Repentance, Healing and Restoration**

A serious omission in present discussions and writings on the issue of homosexuality, and thus on the entire LGBTQI community, is the biblical information on repentance, physical and spiritual healing, and restoration. Why has, so far, any such discussion been avoided in many churches?

Such a neglect is very serious and needs our concern, as it raises the question, why such neglect? This very important question needs to be raised and answered. In my First and Second Pastoral Letters (PL1 and PL2, see above Foreword) I addressed the matter of healing. This particular matter of healing is not yet addressed by those who are foremost focused on the formula: ‘love, respect and acceptance.’

It is suggested that before any serious discussion on the practice of the homosexual lifestyle takes place is the book by Robert A. J. Gagnon, “*The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics*,” Abington Press, Nashville, 2001. (409 pages). It is a must read, as it is highly educational, as his findings are derived from ardent use of both the O.T. Hebrew language and the N.T. Greek language.

I take the freedom of quoting some of the following conclusions Gagnon’s book to be found on pages 487 to 493 at the end of his argument:

Scripture rejects homosexual behavior because it is a violation of the gendered existence of male and female ordained by God at creation. Homosexual intercourse…distorts the sexuality

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intended by God for the health and vitality of the human race, 487… Same-sex intercourse represents a suppression of the visible evidence in nature regarding male-female anatomical and procreative complementarity…Societal endorsement of homosexual behavior will only accelerate the many negative social effects arising from such behavior…488.

If we are to believe Scripture, the failure of the church to help the homosexual person make the transition out of homosexual practice and into sexual wholeness will make the church an accomplice to the very form of behavior that God finds detestable. The church will become an enabler for the practicing homosexual’s loss of spiritual transformation. Possibly, salvation, 489.

At the same time, there should be no impediment to church office for someone with a homosexual orientation or preference who remains celibate, does not endorse homosexual behavior, and gives every evidence of wanting to remain committed to the Bible’s and church’s teaching on homosexuality. In order to join as a member, or continue in good standing, the lesser standards of abstaining from homosexual intercourse or, in cases of occasional lapses, a willingness to repent should be adequate.

In addition, even to those who cannot meet these minimal standards for membership, the church could show hospitality in other ways (for example, welcoming them as visitors to church meetings and reaching out to them in their homes). Through these means, as well, the church will have opportunities to

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communicate the gospel message… The homosexual and lesbian are not the church’s enemy, but people in need of the church’s support for restoring to wholeness their broken sexuality through compassion, prayer, humility, and groaning together for the redemption of our bodies. The old saying “Hate the sin but love the sinner” holds true…491-492.

**The Heidelberg Catechism: LORD’S DAY 1**

* + 1. **Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?**
1. That I am not my own, but belong—**body and soul**, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ (emphasis added).[[75]](#footnote-75)

From the outset, we may consider this first Q/A as being quite troublesome, as it presents us as persons only understood by God the way we really are. The real person we are is neither readily, nor totally understood by those around us, among them our spouses, children, and best friends. This is true, despite the fact that they hear us speak, see us behave, and read what we write.

As a Christian, I need to know personally the most important thing in life, namely, that I belong, body and soul, to God my Maker who is the only One who really knows us. We may take note of what David wrote in Psalm 139: 13-16,

 *“For you (LORD) created my inmost being; you knit me together*

 *in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and*

 *wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full*

 *well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in*

 *the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the*

 *earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained*

 *for me were written in your book before one of them came to*

 *be.”*

In general, we need to know that with ‘body’ we speak of what we see, feel and think, while our souls are only really seen, understood and spiritually affected by God. It is only the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who sees and knows who we really are, think, and act. With our visible, physical bodies we express ourselves in ways observed by others.

However, what really lives in our souls is only observed by God alone. Our hidden thoughts can only be known by God, as we are an ‘open book’ to God. It is therefore only God who really knows if we are honest with each other, with ourselves, as well as with our loved ones and close friends. It is therefore only God who absolutely knows in how far we live according to a faith that is rooted in and thriving by the steadfast truth of God’s Word.

We can speak and elaborate on our faith, knowledge and understanding of Scripture, while it is only God who knows if we are honest with ourselves, what we really think, wrestle with and in expressing ourselves to others. Therefore, it is only God who has the final word to approve or disapprove our thought, desires and actions. These facts play a decisive role in discussions we have on immorality and the entire LGBTQI culture.

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**Final Expositions**

It has become clear that those in favor of the homosexual lifestyle and of the entire LGBTQI community don’t have the support of the Word of God. Thereby, they also have no support from the Reformed Confessions, including: The Heidelberg Catechism, The Belgic Confessions and The Canons of Dort. As a matter of fact, The Belgic Confession, Article 7: *The Sufficiency of Scripture.* Second paragraph reads as follows,

Therefore we must not consider human writings—no matter how holy their authors may have been—to be equal to the divine writings; nor may we put a custom, or the majority, or age, or the passage of time or persons, or even councils, decrees, or official decisions above the truth of God, for biblical truth is and remains above everything else. For all human beings are liars by nature and more vain than vanity itself. Therefore, we reject with all our hearts everything that does not agree with this infallible rule, as we are taught to do by the apostles when they say, “Test the spirits to see if they are of God,” and also, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house.

What that all means is that those in support of lifestyles not supported by either Scripture, or the Reformed Confessions, are mere personal opinions, gained from information developed by sources incompatible with Scripture, or derived from sources interpreting Scripture. There is no biblical support for Christians who push their particular homosexual-oriented agenda taken from other sources than the Word of God.

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The present, conflicting situation regarding the homosexual lifestyles has much to do with the fast-changing world around us, in which we hear about growing support for those living God-opposing lifestyles, including the LGBTQI community. God-opposing or God-denying support is also shared by various governments, either provincial, state, or federal, for the most part very much Far-Left orientated. Those pro-LGBTQI powers, protected by their lawyers, are using their positions to override any influence that would hinder opposing voices to get sufficient influence upholding Judeo-Christians norms and values.

What has been overlooked or even denied by too many voices is the fact that the many Christian norms and values have greatly contributed to the economic and social welfare enjoyed for many years on this continent. There is much information about the influence Far-Left ideology has on LGBTQI communities. Those communities have a destructive influence on both society and on Christian organizations such as churches, colleges and universities.

Today, many local churches have undoubtedly a serious conflict on their hands that, in my opinion, cannot be solved by trying to find a workable middle-ground position, and continue to worship together. Both sides are entrenched in their motivation not to give in: one side convinced that the Word of God is the absolute norm to live by, and the other side, without the support from the Word of God, to live by the motto ‘love, respect and acceptance.’

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I am reminded of a particular parable of Jesus found in the Gospel of Matthew. In this parable Jesus speaks of two different kinds of gates and roads. Each kind can be either broad or small. Let us carefully read this parable,

“*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it*.” Matt. 7:13-14.

As we have that mental picture of traveling on these two completely different, illustrative roads, we should imaging them as two radically-different roads, though enabling travelers on both roads to influence each. We can visualize an between those two roads, as they can be either curious or attracted by the way of life on the opposing road.

We can also imagen that through outreach, evangelism and other mission or outreach activities by those traveling along the small road that many of those traveling on the broad road could and indeed have switched over to join those traveling along the small road. At the same time, it is possible that travelers on the small road could, and indeed have been drawn to those traveling on the broad road, being intrigued by the apparent unhindered, care-free, light-hearted lifestyle of those broad-road travelers.

We need to remember on the broad road, there is no talk about the need for repentance, healing and restoration. For them, this life is the one and only life to live, and thus to be enjoyed to the fullest with the least restrictions. That means a life without a God who gives all kinds of restrictions for and guidelines how to live.

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Then, there is also the possibility that some of those traveling on the small road have a desire to come along those traveling on the broad road, as they seem to agree and/or attracted to the homosexual and the general LGBTQI lifestyles in general. The remarkable thing is that those who are accepting the general LGBTQI lifestyles want the church welcome those broad-road travelers as full members. This is the situation we have today.

In Revelation 2: 12-17 we read John’s words Jesus dictated to him concerning the Church in Pergamum. These words are chosen as they may help us understand the seriousness of the discussion we presently have regarding the matter of allowing CRC church doors being open to members and supporters of committed LGBTQI community people,

*“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin… by committing sexual immorality… repent therefore! Otherwise I will soon come to you…”*

There are two answers we need to ask ourselves to the words of the above quoted Bible verses. One answer is found in the Bible that speaks of repentance, healing and restoration. The other answer is more related to the vocabulary of the world that speaks of love, respect and acceptance.

It is clear from the above mentioned verse that it is the Lord God who introduced Himself as being *“the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty”* Rev. 1:7. He is the One who speaks with ultimate and final authority that all

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immoral behavior of human beings is unacceptable, deserving punishment His way.

Nevertheless, it become clear that there are Christians who are of the opinion that the world is right to love, respect and accept the homosexual, including the entire LGBTQI culture. Yes, one can, and even love those, people, as Jesus love those people, but not their behavior. It is precisely out of love that Jesus warns those people to change and quit their ungodly lifestyle. The question hereby is, on what ground to quit such immoral lifestyle, and for what reasons do Christians support the LGBTQI lifestyle?

May be the following information, derived from Dr. Lutzer’s book*, “WHEN A NATION FORGETS GOD”* [[76]](#footnote-76)is helpful,

The Christian influence was weakened by the introduction of *liberal theology*. The Bible was stripped of the miraculous and considered as one book among others. No longer was it generally believed that we have in our hands an objective revelation of God. In the end, liberalism was reduced to humanism in theological dress. Evolutionary thought and liberal theology profoundly influenced the way the law was understood. No longer was it true that man had certain ‘unalienable’ rights derived from creation.

John Warwick Montgomery summarizes how this sad state of affairs came about by pointing out that in the eighteenth century the Bible was killed by unwarranted destructive criticism; in the nineteenth century God was killed; and in the twentieth century inevitably man has been killed. Montgomery adds,

This generation is not accidental; each step logically follows from what has preceded; the loss of the Bible leads to the loss of God, for in the Bible God is most clearly revealed; the loss of God leaves Man at the naked mercy of his fellows, where ‘might makes right.’ Abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, homosexual marriage—these are the inevitable results of secular humanism’s worldview. When God dies, so does man.

It feels like a long time ago when I wrote my First Pastoral Letter, but I like to return briefly to two almost identical verses the apostle Paul wrote down in his first Letter to the Corinthians. He undoubtedly wanted to emphasize the realization of the Holy Spirit, guiding him in all his letters, to put the matter of immorality to heart:

“*Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple*.” 1 Cor. 3:16-17.

“*Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body*.” 1 Cor. 6:18-20.

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All three Pastoral Letters have been written during the so called “Cancel Culture.”[[77]](#footnote-77) They have looked at and discussed issues of

immorality in a straightforward way, either directly or indirectly, related to this very important subject in God’s Word. Not often have I come across matters now discussed in the Three Pastoral Letters. May the Holy Spirit freely work in our hearts, thereby giving us the knowledge and wisdom in dealing with the reality of homosexuality, at a time we are experiencing growing anti-Christ sentiments and actions towards the Church.

We do well to include the following wise, even prophetic, words Francis Schaeffer once wrote,

First one starts questioning what the world around us is saying, then scientific study—until finally what the Scriptures teach is completely subjected to whatever view is currently accepted by the world.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Following these helpful thoughts of Schaeffer we turn now our attention to some of David’s words found in Psalm 139,

*“O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.”* Ps. 139:1-4

 *“How precious to me are your thoughts, O GOD! How vast is the*

 *sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the*

 *grains of sand.”* Ps. 139:17-18.

 *“Search me, O GOD, and know my heart; test me and know my*

 *anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and*

 *lead me in the way everlasting.”* Ps. 139:23-24.

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**WHO IS SATAN?**

For those who may wonder about the existence of Satan and his evil influence on mankind since its creation, as well as on God’s special creation of the Church, may take note of the following brief overview presenting Satan.[[79]](#footnote-79)

Satan is not mythological. He is a real being who truly exists in the world (Job 1:6) and whose name means “accuser” or “adversary.” He possesses the attributes of personhood: intellect, emotion, and will.

God created Satan full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, and Scripture identifies him as an anointed cherub who headed the order of cherubim who protect God’s throne. He was endowed with the ability to worship God in perfection and led the heavenly host to praise God on the holy mountain (Ezek. 28:12-14). However, the sin of prideful self-will was found in him. Satan rebelled against God in a desire to dethrone the Almighty and rule over all of heaven and Earth (Isa. 14:12-14).

God instantly stripped Satan of his position and cast him out of heaven to be confined to Earth’s atmosphere (Ezek. 28:17). He is now the ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31), roaming the earth with his demons (fallen angels) and seeking to destroy God’s program for mankind—especially Israel (and the Church, addition mine).

He holds human beings under his control (cf. Eph. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 5:8). Only when someone is born again is he or she delivered “from the power of darkness and conveyed…into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). Jesus described Satan as a liar and murderer from the beginning (Jn. 8:444). The apostle John said, “The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one”

(1 Jn, 5:19).

Although Satan has superhuman and supernatural powers, they are limited. Unlike God, Satan does not possess all power, nor can he be everywhere at the same time or know and see everything before it happens. Satan is always limited by God in what he can and cannot do. As seen with Job, Satan could do nothing without God’s permission (1:12; 2:4-6).

God allows Satan to accuse and attack believers like Job. But He imposes limits and uses everything for His purposes only. God knows all of Satan’s thoughts even before they are expressed in words and deeds. For example, God knew Job would remain faithful before he was even tested, but Satan had no such knowledge.

Satan’s destiny is the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).

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THE RAINBOW LETTERS

FOURTH PASTORAL LETTER

(PL4)

**POST-TRUTH REALITIES**

Food for Thought and Action

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**Introduction**

Only a short while ago I learned about four specific reasons why one particular Christian University (CU) had rejected the Report of Synod regarding the issue of homosexuality. In the Second Pastoral Letter (PL2), page 61, it was stated that,

The CU’s letter was written for people to understand that “The Report insufficiently engages with a relevant scholarship from our disciplines, leading to a biased view of the theological, scriptural, and scientific basis for The Report.

Furthermore, the CU’s letter wants us also to realize that the discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation lack the scientific and hermeneutic rigor and accuracy of prevailing peer-reviewed scholarship and thereby have the potential to compromise the CU’s academic reputation. In sum, the report and its potential adoption by Synod could undermine the academic freedom of faculty and our standing as a reputable academic institution in the Reformed tradition.”

The CU’s letter also states its two-fold concern for The Report’s conclusion that “prohibitions of “homosexual sex have confessional status, that homosexual sex “threatens a person’s salvation,” and that the failure to call people in same-sex relationships “to repentance is…acting like a false church.” 148

We only now learn about the following four specific reasons why the CU has rejected the Synodical Report as mentioned in the Agenda of Synod 2021,

* + Adoption of this report by synod has the potential to negatively impact CU’s status as an academic institution;
* Adoption of the report by synod has the potential to harm the CU’s Vision 2030 goals;

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* The CU’s plans to continue to support its LGBTQI students by fully including them in the life of the University, and plans to continue to support staff and faculty as they care for our LGBTQI students in the way that their conscience dictated;
* The CU’s plans to continue to protect its faculty and staff on these issues especially in their scholarship, teaching and service.

**Two Alarming Reasons**

The first two reasons are the most critical ones, as they most clearly indicate what at the heart of their rejection of the Synodical Report is: its status in the world and their desire for future growth. These two reasons are difficult to be regarded as fruit of the Holy Spirit. More explicitly, CU, by its own admission, regards the findings and guidance of sinful, fallible scientists of greater value and inspiration than the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Was it not the Spirit of God that *hovered over the waters when the earth was still formless and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the deep* as we listen to the words in Genesis 1:1-2?

In his letter to the Colossians Paul, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, writes about ‘The Supremacy of Christ’ as follows,

*“He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in*

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*everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”* Col. 1: 15-20.

The CU’s rejection of the Synodical Report on homosexuality seems in direct conflict with the Word of God, the Creator of all mankind. He only has all the credentials to overrule and thus to reject the opinions of these scientists the CU leans on. What we are witnessing could be interpreted as a frontal attack from scientists, as well as the CU’s faculty and staff, against the Word of God, as we can see from the above quotation of God’s Word.

The CU seems to promote the status of fallible, sinful scientists above the Word of God that clearly speaks about immoral lifestyles expressed by LGBTQI students. The boundary lines concerning human sexuality laid out by God have been moved, if not removed. This fact is alarming and should be taken very seriously.

**Realities of radical-Liberal Influences**

Being a member of a denomination that shows hesitancy in addressing fast-changing realities in our present, radically-changing world I have good reason to point out that our societies are deeply and widely influenced by those embracing expressions of a radical-liberal ideology that aims at one goal: the removal of the Judeo-Christian finger-print expressed in the many norms and values that have already influenced North-American societies for many decades.

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However, Satan has been, slowly but surely, very successful in influencing colleges and universities through a very destructive ideology for quite some time. Satan has successfully indoctrinated many past and present leaders in the various social disciplines to undermine and even remove Judeo-Christian influence in our societies as a consequence a radical-liberal ideology, à la Marxism and Communism. This has become quite evident through initiatives by recent radical-liberal governments.

Yes, I use those references to Marxism and Communism, as they are increasingly being used by well-informed people interested and committed to seek and speak the truth in our present Post-truth societies. One may check this out by reading e.g. The Epoch Times.[[80]](#footnote-80) Yes, there is reason for fear, certainly for changes in societies in which our children and grand-children will live in! The question is how to help them to holding on to the Christian faith, to Jesus Christ and the truth of God’s Word?

What biblical examples do we use to train the next generation(s) to follow in Jesus’ footsteps and to remain obedient to the Word of God? Are our children helped by getting along with changes forced upon them by radical elements in politics, science and education, where money and prestige play a significant if not a dominant role? Are we, Christians, supposed to give in to fear for repercussions when standing up for the Truth?

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Nearly thirty years ago, Charles Colson wrote,

The truth is that educators have abdicated their responsibility for moral training,” 33, and that “today’s curriculum doesn’t stress objective knowledge but *self*-knowledge. Social studies don’t develop awareness of the world but *self*-awareness. Art is supposed to encourage not expression but *self*-expression,” 53, and that “…you and I believe there is an objective truth and that the heart of that truth is the Scriptures.[[81]](#footnote-81)

In our days, younger generations seem to have developed greater focus on themselves, who they are, feel and a desire to be towards self-fulfillment. The Epoch Times writes,

Liberalism and progressivism reject traditional faith and moral judgment, seeing morality as a secular agreement that changes according to the development of society. Marriage, for example, is regarded as a simple contract between two people who are willing to state their commitment to each other, rather than a vow made before the divine.”[[82]](#footnote-82)…“Followers of liberalism and progressivism occupy key political positions across the United States and dominate academia, the media, and social movements. This has allowed the communist specter to wield unprecedented power over the legislative and judicial processes.[[83]](#footnote-83)

In this review of the decision of the CU to dismiss the Synodical Report on homosexuality it will not hurt us to listen further to the following opinion written by The Epoch Times’s weekly newspaper that the aim of communism is to abolish the traditional family, as the family unit is an obstacle to human liberation,

The “liberation of mankind” is the fantastic delusion sitting at the heart of communist ideology. Communist thought holds that oppression is not merely economic or social, but ingrained in the very culture of a society. For communists, “liberation” thus means the destruction of cultural norms ‘imposed’ by traditional social morality. In their view, the patriarchy of the traditional family structure oppresses women, and traditional sexual morality represses human nature.[[84]](#footnote-84)

**Needed Actions**

It becomes very important to analyse the CU’s very focal reprimand of Synod’s Report on homosexuality. It is of great importance to find out who those scientists are in whom the CU put so much confidence, its own reputation and the future of its students. We are living in unusual times, as radical-liberalism à la Communism is determined to ‘dethrone’ Christianity. We need to establish in how far Christian education at all levels are prone to new ideas and findings of scientific research that seem to be in conflict with God’s Word. In all of this, we need to be aware that money, prestige and keeping one’s job are beginning to play a significant role in today’s societies.

Churches and Christian institutions, among them colleges and universities, and even high schools, will continue to face and deal with a strong, determined, fast-changing, anti-Christ epidemic

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disease called Marxism. Read Marx’ Satanic poems at school, at home, or read my book, *THE REAL DEAL: Making the Case for the One True God*.” Christians, need to form an inter-denominational front against a very smart and ruthless Satan-led demonic forces, a reality Paul mentioned already in his letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 6.

As said before, persecution is finally also upon us in North America, and it will not disappear! We need to learn how to oppose it. Many books have been written about millions of our brothers and sisters in Christ, who are persecuted because of their faith in and standing up for Christ! One such book has been recently written by Brobbel, *“TROUBLE ON THE WAY: Persecution in the Christian Life*.*”[[85]](#footnote-85)*

Let us pray for our Christian leaders in the many disciplines of learning and local churches to lead Christian men, women and young people to stand firm in their faith, while deepening their love and knowledge for God’s Word. Therefore, let all of us Wake-Up (to reality) and Stand-Up (for Christ) together, no matter the consequences, as we continue to live in our post-Truth societies.

See especially the ‘Second Pastoral Letter’ that includes suggestions how to discuss in small groups the issue of the

LGBTQI issue that is becoming a most prominent and serious subject and hard to avoid. The future of many local churches and denominations are at stake!

**Related information concerning the CU**

[Came in **j**ust recently**]**

NOTE: The following belated official news information concerning the CU’s position regarding LGBTQI students has been received via email after I had written all the above information about the CU’s position as known. No personal comments on this belated information will be added other than to say that the full name of the university will not be mentioned and instead will be addressed as CU. In addition, some paragraphs have been deleted as they had no direct bearing on the issue concerned.

The added information about the situation around the LGBTQI at the CU campus has the following headline: **Fallout over LGBTQ Spouses at Calvin University Captures Broader Evangelical Divide**

CU professor Joe Kuilema, right, officiates the civil wedding ceremony of Nicole Sweda and Annica Steen on Oct. 15, 2021.

Photo courtesy of Nicole Sweda.

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EXPLANATION

The Banner *has a* [*subscription*](https://www.thebanner.org/columns/2021/06/news-from-the-church-worldwide-how-and-why-the-banner-uses-religion-news-service) *to republish articles from Religion News Service. This story by Bob Smietana was published on religionnews.com* [*March 22*](https://religionnews.com/2022/02/09/rain-gardens-are-a-practical-ecological-and-theological-solution-for-houses-of-worship/)*.* The Banner *may publish its own article connected to this news, but in the meantime shares this coverage. The article has been edited for length, and a quote from and link to Calvin’s position have been added.*

For years, the CU, a leading evangelical school in Grand Rapids, Mich., has tried to walk a fine line of being welcoming to LGBTQ students while still enforcing traditional Christian Reformed Church views on sexuality.

The school sponsors a [support group](https://calvin.edu/offices-services/student-organizations/sexuality-and-gender-awareness?_ga=2.198344559.1535830377.1647984525-655903597.1638977255&dotcmsredir=1) for gay students, gave an alumni award to an LGBTQ graduate, and last year saw a [gay undergrad elected](https://calvinchimes.org/2020/10/16/i-am-calvin-universitys-first-openly-gay-student-body-president/) as student body president.

But after a CU professor officiated a wedding last fall for an LGBTQ staffer at a campus-based research center, putting both employees in violation of school policy, school leaders tried to resolve the matter quietly. The Center for Social Research, part of the school since the 1970s, was allowed to [spin off](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/02/20/center-for-social-research-announces-split-from-calvin/), and the staffer was able to stay.

Things changed when *Chimes*, the CU student newspaper, [broke news](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/03/14/calvins-policies-against-same-sex-marriage-a-motivator-in-split-with-center-for-social-research-sources-say/) about the reason for the split.  *Chimes* later [interviewed](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/03/21/im-not-going-to-be-ashamed-queer-csr-employee-quits-to-speak-freely-about-split-from-calvin/) Nicole Sweda, the Calvin staffer whose marriage led the research center to leave Calvin.

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“I’m not going to be ashamed for being queer,” Sweda, who ultimately quit her job in order to speak openly about her

wedding, said in the Chimes interview. “I’m not going to be ashamed for being married to Annica.”

The events reveal the dilemma facing many Christian schools, who want to welcome a diverse range of students to their campus while upholding their beliefs that marriage is for one man and one woman and that sex outside marriage is sinful.

Striking that balance has become increasingly difficult in recent years as more and more young Americans, including students at Christian schools, identify as LGBTQ—a recent Gallup survey [found](https://news.gallup.com/poll/389792/lgbt-identification-ticks-up.aspx) that 1 in 5 Americans born between 1997 and 2003 say they are LGBT.

“I want Calvin to be honest,” said Sweda. “If they are going to cut ties with staff members, faculty, and an entire center over this, then just say that. And stop promoting things that make the CU look more welcoming.”

When Sweda and Annica Steen decided to marry in the fall of 2021, they knew their wedding day would be bittersweet: Amid the celebration there would be the pain of rejection by friends and family who disapproved of their relationship on theological grounds. The couple wanted to find someone to officiate who could capture the range of emotions they were feeling. Because the wedding would be a civil ceremony, the couple was not looking for a clergyperson, but still someone they admired.

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“Right away Joe came to mind,” said Sweda, referring to Joseph Kuilema, an assistant professor of sociology and social work at CU who had been a friend and mentor to Sweda.

Last Oct. 15, Kuilema stood with the couple in front of a gathering of family and friends and pronounced them legally married.

Things began to unravel in January when Sweda was summoned to a meeting at the provost’s office, where, [according to](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/03/21/im-not-going-to-be-ashamed-queer-csr-employee-quits-to-speak-freely-about-split-from-calvin/) Chimes, Sweda was told that her marriage violated university policy and that she could no longer stay at the CU.

She told *Chimes*, “If they had fired me that day, that would have been fine by me.” Sweda told Religion News Service that fellow staff and supervisors were aware of the marriage.

But instead of firing Sweda, the school told her it was working on an alternative solution: to spin off the Center for Social Research, which is largely self-sufficient. In February, the center, which performs surveys and other research projects for non-profits, businesses, and churches, [announced](https://calvin.edu/news/archive/center-for-social-research-evolving-for-a-flourishing-future) plans to become independent by the end of April 2022.

Neil Carlson, director of the Center for Social Research, [told](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/02/20/center-for-social-research-announces-split-from-calvin/) *[Chimes](https://calvinchimes.org/2022/02/20/center-for-social-research-announces-split-from-calvin/)* the split between the school and the center was amicable. “We still have a desire to stay in social and economic proximity with the community; it’s not a bad breakup, more of a ‘let’s just be friends,’” he said in February.

The CU’s policies reflect the position of the Christian Reformed Church. At this year’s denominational annual synod, a report

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from a Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality will be presented. [Made available](https://www.thebanner.org/news/2020/11/sexuality-report-released-to-churches-suggests-historical-position-is-already) to member churches in the fall of 2020, the report affirms the church’s traditional beliefs.

A precursor report [approved in 2016](https://www.thebanner.org/news/2016/06/synod-2016-recommends-pastoral-advice-for-same-sex-marriage) bans pastors and church leaders from officiating weddings of same-sex couples. That report allows church members to take part in such weddings as long as they realize that such weddings are sinful.

“The CU is an institution of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and our positions and policies are intended to follow its doctrines,” said Toly. “We don’t follow the doctrines of the church because we have to,” he added. “We follow the doctrines of the church because we believe that’s the right thing to do.”

Toly also confirmed that CU employees, both gay and straight, have left the school for violating the school’s policies. When an employee violates policy, the school would prefer to bring that employee into compliance with policy, but doing so is not always easy or possible, he said.

“Joining a community or institution almost always means inheriting positions and submitting to rules made by others, even if we don’t agree with all the rules, wouldn’t make those rules ourselves, or want to change the rule,” he said. “This need to live within a doctrinal framework and set of rules we don’t make is heightened in a confessional institution. Colleges and universities aren’t the only places where this happens, but they’re great places for students to grapple with this reality.”

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Not all CU students or alums who disagree with the school want to break ties. Ryan Struyk, a CU graduate and journalist who [won](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=253779796525249) the school’s 2021 young alumni award, says the school’s mission still inspires him. Though he disagrees with the school’s beliefs about sexuality, he taught a journalism class as adjunct professor last spring.

“I taught my course with a robust, wholehearted Reformed Christian perspective, even though I’ve also come to a different conclusion than the university about how God calls me to live in this specific area,” he said. “I have no doubt that many LGBTQ Christians like me have much to offer CU and its students. We should be able to do so. Calvin’s mission still inspires me today, and my deep desire is to live out my place in that mission, no matter who I marry.”

Kelsey Coburn, former coordinator of student support and sexuality programming at the CU, said the tensions between the university’s policies about sexuality and the reality of students’ lives made it difficult for staff to be supportive of LGBTQ students.

While at the CU, Coburn oversaw the Sexuality and Gender Awareness support group for LGBT students. She said she felt pressure to support the school’s policies, which she felt limited her ability to care for students.

“Calvin wants to present that they are more than happy to have conversations across ideological divides, but the reality is that the CRC is not affirming,” Coburn said. CU’s position on homosexuality, as articulated in an [online FAQ](https://calvin.edu/events/sexuality-series/lgbt-homosexuality-faq.html), includes the

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understanding that, “Chastity is the biblical pattern for ordering the sexual dimension of our lives, and honors sexual relations as having their proper place in a marriage relationship between a man and a woman.”

Sweda said she might return to the center after it becomes independent or might find another job. Until then, Sweda and her wife plan to enjoy their first year as a married couple.

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THE RAINBOW LETTERS

FIFTH PASTORAL LETTER

(PL5)

**SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**ON**

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

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**Sexual Orientation, Controversy, and Science**

First PublishedApril 25, 2016 Research Article



Fig. 1. Average prevalence for each of five categories of sexual orientation in recent Western population surveys. Data are from [Table 1](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1529100616637616) of [Savin-Williams and Vrangalova (2013)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1529100616637616).

**Summary**

Political controversies about sexual orientation have often been overlapped with scientific controversies. That is, participants on

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both sides of the socio-political debates have tended to believe

that scientific findings—and scientific truths—about sexual orientation do matter a great deal in making political decisions. The most contentious scientific issues have been concerned with the causes of sexual orientation—that is, why are some people heterosexual, others bisexual, and others homosexual? The actual relevance of these issues to social, political, and ethical decisions, however, is often poorly justified.

[Find in PubMed](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27113562) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100616637616>

**Scientific reports on ‘Brain structure changes associated with sexual orientation’**

A new study says that same-sex sexual behavior is influenced by many genes as potential biological pathways show genetic correlations with various traits, and indicates that sexual preference is a complex heterogeneous phenotype.

While sexual orientation (hetero versus homosexuality) has been similarly linked to functional differences in several phylogenetically-old brain areas, the research on morphological brain phenotypes associated with sexual orientation is far from conclusive.

It is especially in social sciences that we find scientific studies and research results about gender and sexuality, including sexology and genetics. There are ‘no gay genes linked to same-sex behavior’ but genetics. From a different source we learn that genetic models of homosexuality show that its genetic and evolutionary basis is poorly understood.

**Important questions**

First of all, how can a Christian university ever embrace

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wholeheartedly students living one of the LGBTQI lifestyles on such a weak, questionable scientific basis? Would Jesus’ follow-up Counselor, the Holy Spirit, ever have been instructed, or ever have been expected to contradict Jesus, to lead the writers of the Bible to say that all kinds of immoral behavior, including all LGBTQI lifestyles, is right, or at least is acceptable?

Given the kind of information as described above, we may ask ourselves some questions such as:

1. Whether accepting the LGBTQI lifestyles is more important than accepting all of God’s Word that clearly and repeatedly forbids such lifestyles for all generations.
2. Whether present conversations on homosexual lifestyles (LGBTQI), as well as the Bible’s rejection of such lifestyles, is worth splitting local churches and even denominations.

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SIXTH PASTORAL LETTER

(PL6)



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

**TO THE POINT**

One More Missing Viewpoint

in

Discussions on Immorality

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**Introduction**

As Christians we need to ask ourselves the question how it is that so many of them, contrary to Scripture, pride themselves to support the homosexual lifestyle, including all of the LGBTQI lifestyles. This question can be answered in the following viewpoint not yet publically considered in discussions on homosexuality and in the broader context of immorality, as expressed in the LBGTQI culture. This one viewpoint reflects on the times we live in.

**Understanding the times we live in**

It is a fact that we live in North-American societies under the influence of radical-Liberal governments in Canada and the USA. Let us take note of what we need to realize what that influence of radical Liberalism (à la Communism, Marxism) means, as it is successfully replacing long-existing Judeo-Christian norms, traditions and values. The following excerpts are taken from two highly respected Christian sources: The Epoch Times, *How the Specter of Communism is Ruling our World*, and Erwin Lutzer’s book, *We Will Not Be Silent*.

From The Epoch Times, Volume 3: *How the Specter of Communism is Ruling our World*

 Communism is neither a trend of thought, nor a doctrine, nor a

 failed attempt at a new way of ordering human affairs. Instead,

 it should be understood as a devil—an evil specter forged by

 hate, degeneracy, and other elemental forces in the universe…

The goal of the specter (of communism) is to ruin humanity. While the divine offers salvation, communism tells people not to believe in the divine, attacks human morality so as to make

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people abandon tradition and, ultimately, to be destroyed...it

takes recourse in the language of “science” and “progress,” offering a wonderful blueprint for the future in order to deceive people.”[[86]](#footnote-86)

Globally, the United States leads in the political, economic, and military areas. Its unique position in these fields carries over to American popular culture…After infiltrating and corrupting the family unit, politics, the economy, law, arts, the media, and popular culture all aspects of daily life in the United States, communism made use of cultural globalization to export this corrupt culture…Cultural globalization is the hurricane that blows the deviant culture of the West and the Party culture of communist totalitarian regimes throughout the entire world…

Communism promotes values that seem noble, but, in reality, are aimed at having humankind abandon traditional values, replacing them with homogeneous and deteriorated modern values instead…The aim is to control humankind by seducing, indulging, and satisfying people’s superficial desires… Communism uses different means and entertainment to prompt people to pursue the satisfaction of their base desires. As people indulge these desires, they move away from the spiritual plane, causing them to deviate from their long-held divine beliefs and traditional values within a few short generations.[[87]](#footnote-87)

From Erwin Luther’s book: *We Will Not Be Silent*

The radical secularists…have discovered that vilifying those who disagree with them gets more results than reason and civility...Go after people and not institutions; people hurt faster than institutions. A scientific society ignored empirical studies and yielded to the demands of a militant group…the gay movement let it be known that intimidation would replace research, science, civility, and dialogue.

Bullying would overcome any obstacles in their path…The radicals are viscerally intolerant of anyone who does not agree with their view of tolerance…Those who oppose any aspect of

LGBTQ rights are bigots. And bigots deserve to be ostracized and, if possible, punished…In the Marxist playbook, peaceful coexistence does not mean peace. It means to continue the

struggle for utopia without resorting to war…Those who disagree with their agenda for moral reasons must bow or be shamed.

We gladly celebrate Black History Month, but now we are told we should celebrate Gay Pride Month. Incredibly, many well-meaning Christians comply by flying the rainbow flag or

wearing an “ally pin” to show that they observe Gay Pride Month. As Joe Carter says, “In doing so, they show that they will not incur the wrath that will be poured out on those who are

not “affirming.’” Carter goes on to say,

We are so troubled by the thought that LGBT-friendly advocates will fall away for the faith that we fail to see that they’ve already rejected the faith of historic, orthodox Christianity and replaced it with an idolatrous heresy—one that is as destructive and hateful as any that has come before. We do not love our neighbor when we tell them they can continue to engage in unrepentant rebellion against God…If we truly love our LGBT neighbors, we must speak the Word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31.[[88]](#footnote-88)

We certainly should reach out with love and compassion to those who struggle with same-sex attraction, but we should also abide by what Scripture says. While we are to be kind and

gracious we are not called to become allies by bowing the knee to cultural pressure. We have to choose whom we will server.[[89]](#footnote-89)

Both, The Epoch Times’s book, consisting of 3 volumes, and Luther’s book are strongly encouraged to read, in order to gain a good, and much needed understanding about the moral decline in North-American societies, as this decline in morality does and continues to affect many churches with the various social problems we are facing.

It is also my understanding that, with the issue of immorality, Satan has found the ‘Achilles heel’ of the church. Satan may well succeed in his plan to split local churches and denominations, eventually leading to serious decline in church attendance and membership. Such decline has already happened in Europe for at least the last three decades in Europe.

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**PART THREE**



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

 Five Documents

and

An Overview of Applicable Bible Verses

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FIRST DOCUMENT



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

**CHRISTIANS MOVING FORWARD**

**AS**

**FOLLOWERS OF JESUS**

A Response to the Rejection of the Human Sexuality Report

Prepared by a RCA Classis in New Jersey

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1. **Introductions of Jesus Christ by Apostles John and Paul**
	1. We may first listen to the introduction of Jesus in the Gospel of John,

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it…The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

 John 1:1-5; 15.

* 1. In his letter to the Colossians Paul writes the following

introduction of Christ,

“*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created: Things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the Head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.”* Col. 1:15-20.

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The above introductions by Paul concerning Jesus Christ make us realize how important it is to be very much aware of who Jesus is, and also of the prolific position He has in heaven and on earth. This information is of great importance, as we take note of what He further says about immorality. Therefore, we need to carefully listen and take to heart His closing remarks regarding a last farewell warning on this very subject in the last book: Revelation.

1. **Against Homosexuality/LGBTQI in Church and Societies**
	1. **Bible Texts in the N.T. in which we hear Jesus speaking**
2. **In the book of Revelation**

We may take note of the following words of Jesus written down by the apostle John, and exiled to the Island of Patmos, many years after Jesus’ ascension into heaven. We will first turn to the beginning of the last Bible book, and then to the very end of this same N.T. book,

 “*Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there (in the Church of Pergamum) who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality...Repent therefore…”* Rev. 2: 14-16a.

“Some of Jesus’ final words to His followers, *“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs those who practice magic arts, the sexually*

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*immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”* Rev. 22:14-15.

In the Gospels Jesus speaks to His disciples, and thus to all those who were following Him. Especially in the verses quoted above, Jesus explains what He expects His real followers to be. They are identified as ‘fishers of men,” who “*deny themselves and take up their cross*,” “*those who lose their lives for Jesus*,” and “*those who follow Jesus as they hear His voice*.” What we understand from Jesus’ words is that only those who listen to His voice will follow Him without hesitation or questioning, are Jesus’ real disciples.

In the book of Revelation we hear Jesus’ words of warning at the beginning (Rev. 2:14, and at the very end of the same book (Rev. 22:12-17), He was speaking to church-going people who may or may not be His real followers of Him. Among the latter group there might be members who are involved in immoral lifestyles, also those who support such lifestyles. It goes without saying that Jesus voiced a very strong warning that needs to be taken seriously by Christians throughout all generations.

 **b. In the Gospels**

The following words Jesus spoke to His disciples prior to His crucifixion, death and resurrection:

Matthew 4:19: *“Come, follow Me, “Jesus said, “and I will make*

 *you fishers of men.”*

Matthew 8:22: *“Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own*

 *dead.”*

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Matthew 16:24: *“If anyone would come after (follow) Me, he*

 *must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”*

Matthew 19:28: *“I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things,*

 *when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have*

 *followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve*

 *tribes of Israel.”*

Luke 9:23: *“If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself*

 *and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wants*

 *to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will*

 *safe it.”*

John 8:12: “When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, *“!*

 *Am the light of the world. Whoever follow Me will never walk in*

 *the darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

John 10:4: *“When he (the shepherd in the parable) has brought*

 *out all his own (sheep), he goes out ahead of them, and his sheep*

 *follow him because they know his voice. But they will never*

 *follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because*

 *they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”*

John 10:27: *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they*

 *follow Me.”*

1. **Lessons we learn from Jesus’ words concerning those who follow Him**

**First**, Jesus’ real followers are the ones who take His words and warnings seriously. They are the ones who also take to heart Jesus’ farewell words in Rev. 22, reminding His followers to stay the course that leads to eternal life.

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**Second**, those who think they are followers of Jesus, but actually overlook, or forget to take Jesus’ warnings concerning immorality seriously, have a good reason to be alarmed. Furthermore, they should not only take Jesus’ warnings seriously, and need to realize that they are meant for all generations. Jesus’ warnings do still count in today’s post-truth, anti-God societies in North-America.

Christians who accept, encourage and embrace those who live immoral, LGBTQI lifestyles, are misguided based on God’s Word. Anyone who thinks he/she can ignore any of Jesus’ direct and everlasting warnings might well lose ‘*their right to the tree of life and going through the gates into the city*’ according to Rev. 22:14.

**Third**, Christians who endorse, embrace and even publically support the LBGTQI lifestyles on the basis of love, respect and acceptance need to remember that such types of endorsements are to be considered as secondary and judged by the first commandment: ‘*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*’ (Matt. 22:37-38). Anything less will undercut or decrease one’s positive, healing influence on the person who lives the immoral lifestyle as understood in the light of God’s Word.

When we line up this first commandment with our correct understanding of Rev. 2:14-16a and 22:14-15, we need to ask ourselves whether one’s acceptance and endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle agrees with the first commandment. In other words, does one’s intimate, and wholly sincere love for Christ

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allow endorsement of people embroiled in the homosexual lifestyle clearly rejected by Jesus Christ.

Let me add then also John’s warning following Jesus’ words in Rev. 22:12-16 as also expressed in Rev. 22:19: *“And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.”* When then Christians embrace the homosexual lifestyle, including the entire LBGTQI lifestyles, as well as those who endorse and protect such lifestyles, may also take away similar parts on immorality mentioned in Rev. 14-16a and Rev. 14-15. In that case, the warning in Rev. 22:19 will become effective. Think about it!

**Fourth**, in light of forenamed conclusions another question arises, namely what other reason(s) could there be to accept the homosexual lifestyles, given the fact that one’s love, respect and acceptance for such lifestyle, including all immoral lifestyles, are unacceptable on biblical ground. Reasons to accept, and even participating in immoral lifestyles, is due to a growing social conformity in societies at large, and often within many work environments. Thereby comes also one’s fear for repercussions that may include: disrespect, ignorance, avoidance, missing a promotion, or and even facing the reality of losing one’s job.

Social and cultural developments in our North-American societies during the last number of years are not only undermining Judeo-Christian norms and values, but removing them all together for ways of living derived from radical-liberal ideology without

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discussions. As a result, Christians experience the beginning of persecution, which is persecution by *word* and *deed* (not yet persecution by *sword*) as I have already experienced personally. Many Christians try to either simply deny or avoid such conflicting situations, often due to lack of courage instead of standing up for Jesus, no matter the consequences.

**Fifth,** Followers of Christ are part of a growing counter-culture (*alternative* culture, added mine).

Hank Hanegraaff (Email: November16, 2021) wrote:

In our age of multiculturalism, there are some cultures that scare me to death…namely, **what might be coming if more Christians don’t wake up and act… the truth is that we’ve lost the culture war…finding ourselves** in a **post-truth…, post Christian…, post-reality culture.**

The cumulative ravages of the “-ism” above, combined with an unbridled subjectivism (“It’s all about me”), have caused millions to embrace the notion that ‘truth’ is now how they feelabout something…Thomas Sowell has succinctly captured this “cognitive crisis,” now reinforced and turbocharged daily by an increasingly mindless media…“The problem isn’t that Johnny can’t read. The problem isn’t even that Johnny can’t think. The problem is that Johnny doesn’t know what thinking is; he confuses it with feeling.” Sadly, Christians aren’t exempt. And Sowell hits the nail on the head when he says, “Too much of what is called ‘education’ is little more than an expensive isolation from reality” (emphases mine).

**Sixth**: Those of us, who, like Jesus, stand up against Satan’s deceptions, like Jesus did, may also listen to Paul’s words written

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in his first letter to the Christians in Thessalonica:

“…*For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. It is God’s will that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.*” 1 Thess. 4:2-8.

In our North-American countries, Christians become part of a growing counter-culture movement when they stand up for Jesus Christ no matter what kind of obstacles and inconveniences confront them. Christians need to be united in standing up for Jesus. It also means that churches need to be places of spiritual healing instead of ignoring or preventing such healing. More on this subject read my most recent book: *THE RAINBOW LETTERS: Immorality: The Church’s Achilles Heel***.** (amazon.com, note author’s name: Peter Hendriks Okello).

1. **What Sexual Immorality Means and How the Bible Defines it**[[90]](#footnote-90)

The following excerpt**s** express Brittany Rust’s deep knowledge and experiences concerning immorality

3.1 **What Sexual Immorality Is**

Sexual immorality is a road I (Brittany) know too well, sadly. I was addicted to pornography and masturbation by high school. And at the age of twenty-five, I had a moral failure in ministry when I had sex with my boyfriend. There were some dark nights of the soul wrapped up in those struggles. By the grace of God, I’m now able to proclaim freedom from sexual addiction in my life and I can testify that I have been redeemed and restored from the mistakes I have made.

As a result of being well acquainted with sexual immorality, I can tell you with certainty that it always has a cost…including: Brokenness. Shame. Loneliness. Hurt relationships. Lost trust. Open wounds without proper healing. And that’s not a complete list. Sin hurts, and sexual immorality is no exception. It’s an ugly thing that sucks the life out of its victims and devastates the hearts of those they love. Please, run.

There are many verses in the Bible on sexual immorality, but perhaps the best place to start is with the Creation story in Genesis. In Chapters 1 and 2, we find reasons as to why God created for Adam the woman Eve, namely to be a compatible partner. God continues to describe that the two of them should join in [marriage](https://www.crosswalk.com/family/marriage/) and become one flesh. With that said, the emphasis is placed on the important role their relationship plays in procreation. In its purest form, sexual immorality would include any sexual act outside of a marriage between one man and one woman.

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The Bible paragraph [1 Corinthians 6](https://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/6.html) provides us with further insights regarding the dangers of sexual immorality, and what it entails. For example,

“*Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality...will inherit the kingdom of God*” (verses 9-10).

From these verses we understand that adultery and homosexuality align with sexual immorality. The root word for immorality in the above verses is *porneia*, meaning illicit sexual intercourse, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, intercourse with animals or close relatives, or sex with a divorced person. It also stems from *porneuo*, which has a similar meaning but also is defined as prostitution and lust.

These are a lot of words, yes. Attaching the word lust to sexual immorality creates room for a longer list including porn, pedophilia, and [masturbation](https://www.crosswalk.com/family/marriage/doctor-david/is-it-a-sin-to-masturbate-988042.html) (in most cases). But if we return to the simplest context of God’s desire for sex in Genesis, we find again that sexual immorality would entail any sexual activity outside of a husband and wife enjoying each other with mutual respect for God and each other.

**3.2 More about Sexual Immorality**

God has a lot to say about sexual immorality, and I’ve only brushed the tip of the iceberg on the topic. As already seen in [1 Corinthians 6](https://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/6.html) alone we find valuable instruction concerning these sins. We’re reminded that although all things are permissible, not all things are beneficial. It means, you have free will but that, and the grace of God, shouldn’t be an endorsement to engage with whatever sensuality you’d like. Sexual immorality is certainly not beneficial.

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Paul continues in verse 18, declaring that, while all other sins are outside the body, sexual immorality is an act that sins against the body, which is the temple of the [Holy Spirit](https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/10-supernatural-ways-the-holy-spirit-wants-to-empower-you.html). This is a vital warning to the dangers of sexual sin and its effects not just on you physically and emotionally, but spiritually. What do we do with this knowledge regarding the dangers of sexual immorality? We take to the words found in verse 18, “flee.” Run in the opposite direction of the temptation and scenarios that lead to such sin. It’s not worth it, friend.

In my many years of ministry, I (Brittany) have heard the question asked, “how far can I go before that’s technically a sin?” Please, never ask that question—it’s a dangerous mindset that plays with sin. I’ve always asked, and encouraged others to ask, what’s the boundary and how far can I stay from it? You see, a true believer in Christ who is healthy and flourishing will not flirt with temptation. They will not give Satan that foothold. In fact, they will stay far from the path of destruction. If you find yourself wondering how close you can get, that right there is a heart check that you’re not in a healthy place. But I’ll talk more about that in a moment.

We do have hope, however. A hope that there is always a way out of temptation. [1 Corinthians 10:13](https://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/10-13.html) says,

“*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it*.”

God reminds us that in every temptation, there is a way out. This passage is used by Paul to encourage Christians to keep their focus on God, so they don’t stumble and fall. But even if they do,

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God is gracious enough to provide a way out, which will always involve turning back to Him. Grace is available to us, even on the other side of sin. When we reflect true repentance, mercy is extended. But again, that goes back to [1 Corinthians 6:12](https://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/6-12.html) that just because grace is available to you isn’t an endorsement to do what you’d like.

**3.3 Warning Signs of Sexual Immorality**

What are those warning signs to keep an eye out for? First, remember that when you start asking the question of how close you can get, that’s a warning sign. It’s temptation knocking at the door and wanting to plant a seed. Trying to figure out how to justify an act you know isn't right, means you're already facing temptation.

Another warning sign is when you find yourself making compromises. A car ride with a married co-worker here, a little flirting there. Or watching questionable shows or [movies](https://www.crosswalk.com/culture/movies/) with nudity. Perhaps it’s pushing the boundaries with your boyfriend or girlfriend, taking it a little further each time. Small compromises lead to big messes.

Another warning sign is that an inner morality light goes on when one is flirting with temptation. If God is in you, a believer, then the [Holy Spirit](https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/10-supernatural-ways-the-holy-spirit-wants-to-empower-you.html) will set off alarm bells when you start going in the direction of sinful behavior. It is then up to you to recalibrate your trajectory when you recognize the warning signal.

This is hard because those temptations and flirting with the boundary lines can send a wave of excitement. Additionally, that’s when the enemy starts whispering lies that this is good for you or you should follow your heart if you want happiness. The

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closer you get to the boundary the harder it is to pull back. This is

why it’s better to stay as far from the temptation as possible in the first place.

**3.4 How Christians Can Avoid Sexual Immorality**

First, if you know there are certain temptations or areas that you struggle with, identify the weaknesses so that you can take the next step—stablishing boundaries. Implementing guardrails in your life is incredibly important to a healthy life.

Don’t ride alone in the car, or attend after-work happy hours with that one co-worker. Refuse to be alone in a space with the person you are dating. Get the app on your phone and computer that blocks porn and nudity. Do what you need to do, even if it’s hard or inconvenient, to put a guardrail between you and that temptation.

Second, hold the boundary lines. You’d think this would be assumed, but humans are very good at blurring those lines when they want to. I (Britany) have done it. It was by blurring the lines and not holding the boundaries my boyfriend and I had established that led to sex outside of [marriage](https://www.crosswalk.com/family/marriage/).

Sexual sin is a serious and damaging matter. As someone who has been there and back, it’s not worth it. Don’t sin against yourself in an attempt to fulfill a momentary desire. God will always give you a way out, but you must choose to take it.

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1. **Those In Favor of Homosexuality/LGBTQI in Church and Society**

**4.1 A church with LGBTQI people fully included**

There are churches that staunchly believe that being a member of the LGBTQ community can also enjoy full membership in the church and that it is a normal thing that needs to be celebrated. We read in a RCA Classis report[[91]](#footnote-91), the following excerpt,

Through personal experience, the churches and members have come to believe and affirmed that LGBTQ people are not broken people, inherently sinful, or damaged, but healthy and whole persons, vital members of society and the church. The Holy Spirit has moved LGBTQ people to become members and leaders in our church, as the Spirit has moved members and leaders of our church to come out, living openly in the dignity of their God-given identities…who represent natural occurring variations in the human experience.

This particular Classis accepts the following theological and cultural reasoning to include gay and lesbian persons (including all LGBTQ people):

Eph. 4:21 (p.5) and 1 Pet. 1:21 (p.7)

1 Cor. 6:9 – some text may have prohibited pederasty – the sexual use of younger boys by older men (acc. to James Brownson) (p.8).

Lev. 24:20/ Mt. 5:38-39 – Jesus demonstrates a faithful way of interpreting texts.

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Jn. 1:14 – Jesus guides our way of thinking (p.9).

Ps. 139:13-16 – our faith in God’s sovereignty in determining personal identity…God weaves our gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation into our very being. No element of our personal identity is more inextricable! People whose identities do not conform to dominant identities – lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, a sexual, and gender non-conforming identities – are gifts of God to humanity (p.15).

Gen. 1:27 – Since we are all God’s image bearers, none of us is more worthy in God’s eyes…equality of all human beings has become our secular world…God’s plan for each of us is unlike God’s plan for any other person (p.16).

Deut. 25:5-6 – The church acknowledges that the Bible is a poor book for sexual ethics when it modifies Jesus’ prohibition against divorce to accommodate the social, emotional and spiritual well-being of hetero-sexual couples (17).

Phil. 2:12, Mk. 5:31 – The Bible alone is insufficient for providing the rules for a modern sexual ethics… Adhere strictly to the Bible’s most ethical principles: Christ’s prescriptions for

treating one another with justice, mercy, forgiveness, mutuality and with the infinite respect due to persons created in God’s image (p.17) Our conclusion, based on Gen. 2:18: sexual desire, encourages each person to find a suitable life partner (p.18).

Gen. 1:1--2:4 – is not about coercion. It is, rather, a relationship of free gracious commitment and invitation… (p.20).

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Gal. 3:27-28--sweeping away the distinctions of insider/outsider, powerful/powerless and the pairing of male – female for protection (p.22)….all these societal distinctions are wiped away in the new lives we have in Christ (Brownson, pp. 65, 66) – (p.22).

A same-sex couple, when encouraged and supported in a life-long commitment, can become an “extraordinary force” for good in God’s world (p.22).

LGBTQ people being hurt(pp.29-30). Faithful LGBTQ people and their allies…say that the church hurts them in the following ways:

1. Personal condemnation
2. Compelled celibacy
3. Persecution by others
4. Life-threatening Mental Health

**4.2 Dénouement**

This particular RCA Classis wants us realize that their elaborated analysis of biblical support for the inclusion of LGBTQ in the life of the church has been guided by the Holy Spirit. That presumption asks for a biblical analysis of the truth of such claim. In its Report: ‘Affirmed + Celebrate, A Reformed Theology of Inclusion’ they assume the involvement of the Holy Spirit in their observations such as: “The Holy Spirit may move us when we read personal stories of faithful LGBTQ Christians,” p.28, and then this bold claim, “At this time in history, the Spirit is calling the Church to widen the circle to full and equal inclusion of homosexual people.” p.33.

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This RCA Classis seems to have assumed that Jesus Christ was directly involved in the creation of the first and last two sinless

human beings, Adam and Eve, Col. 1:15-20. These same two human beings also were the first to become sinful creatures after being misled by Satan. From that moment on, Jesus knew how sin, and thus also immorality, would develop and deeply affect creatures throughout subsequent generations. The Bible gives us sufficient evidence of that reality, as we experience this as we speak and write, leading us to pray daily for forgiveness and the spiritual power to stay away from sinful behavior.

The question is on which biblical grounds has this Classis made such bold claims about the correctness of living immoral lifestyles, while it is abundantly clear that those lifestyles are expressions of human sinful nature. It is perplexing how this Classis came to the decision that it is OK to live lives Jesus strongly disapprove of as we read in the last book of God’s Word, Revelation. Come to think of it!

In light of the above paragraph, we are stunned to hear that this particular CRA Classis claims to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the triune God, and also our Counselor according to Jesus’ own words in John 14,

*“If you love Me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him”* John 14:15-17a.

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After having said these words, Jesus continues,

“*…the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you”* (Jn. 14:25).

At no time in history have we learned that Jesus words have changed due to changing times and circumstances.

It is hard to understand how this Classis came to the conclusion that the Spirit they have listened to has apparently explained to them that it is OK to live immoral lifestyles, while Jesus has condemned it. The only explanation that this Classis has apparently listened to another spirit, which leads to the assumption of listening to the spirit of this age, namely the spirit of the anti-Christ. It is the same spirit that pushes the growing influence of radical-Liberal ideology. This conclusion could well be the reason for RCA’s pronounced idea that ‘The Bible alone is insufficient for providing the rules for modern sexual ethics derived from Scripture passages Phil. 2:12, Mk. 5:31.

**4.3 Final Question**

A final question we may raise is “Who is deceiving who?” Those who remain faithful to God’s never-changing Word will point to the greatest and most successful deceiver known as Satan. He has and continues to roar, causing the destruction of societies and church communities in Europe. Today, Satan is also successful in North-American societies and churches as well. The tool Satan uses is called radical-Liberalism that has also as a goal the destruction of the family.[[92]](#footnote-92)

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1. **Brief Reflections**

Following are reflections on possible reasons why some Christians endorse the homosexual lifestyle including all LGBTQ lifestyles.

**5.1 Fear**, **Animosity**

One is reminded of the fact that animosity was something Jesus’ disciples experienced. As a matter of fact, they would even be executed for standing up against sinful behavior. They would even be persecuted and killed for refuting sinful behavior. Christians in today’s world are persecuted and executed for their unwavering faith in Christ Jesus. So far, Christians in North-American societies are only persecuted in *word* and *deed*, not yet by *sword.*

 **5.2** **Spiritual Response**: Another, important reason why Christians come to accept various immoral lifestyles is of a spiritual nature. We may turn to a Bible passage such as Matt. 4:1-11, as referred to earlier. We read in those verses about the clash between Satan and Jesus Christ. In that confrontation Satan tries to convince, better said to deceive Jesus to do what he suggested by reminding Jesus of His powerful position as the Son of God. However, rather than giving into what He was challenged to do, Jesus responded each time by turning to God’s Word!

Jesus’ response to Satan’s deceiving challenges in referring to God’s Word needs to be used as a powerful and successful ‘weapon,’ for Christians in faithful response to Satan’s deceiving influence by pushing the ideology of LGBTQI in societies. Therefore, Jesus’ words of warning, clearly expressed in the

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earlier quoted words in Rev. 2:14-16a and Rev. 22:14-15, need to

be used to firmly oppose any influence of communities that embrace God-denying lifestyles.

We may remember how that particular RCA Classis is trying to deceive Christians in holding back any reference to Jesus’ warnings concerning immorality. They even suggest that God’s Word is actually not sufficient to give helpful answers how to deal with immoral lifestyles in our times. Seriously?

* 1. **Jesus guides our Thoughts**.

This RCA Classis also critiques the Bible concerning the lack of a more modern approach to Jesus’ uncompromising warning not to live these immoral lifestyles. Remember another reference to God’s Word (p. 8) by the same RCA Classis, “*Jesus guides our thinking*’’ (Jn. 1:14). However, Jesus’ real thoughts are expressed in e.g. Revelation, Chapters 2 and 22, referred to earlier.

 **5.4** **Consideration**. As reader, you make up your mind who is speaking the truth. Remember that Jesus’ responses to Satan’s manipulative suggestions in Matthew 4 were countered with words directly taken from the Bible, thereby defeating Satan. Today, Christians, need to do the same and defeat the wiles of the evil one in the anti-Christ culture we live in. In our considerations we do well to reflect on Paul’s words written in his letter to the Ephesians,

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”* Eph. 6:10-12.

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These days, living on the North-American continent, we feel the force of evil expressed in and through the specter of radical Liberalism.[[93]](#footnote-93) We need to realize that this growing anti-God power not only wants to eradicate all Judeo-Christian norms, values and traditions, but also our entire Western culture by destroying family life, as we have noticed earlier (See note[[94]](#footnote-94) below).

 **5.5** **Moral Narcissism**: Please read the following excerpts explaining Moral Narcissism,[[95]](#footnote-95)

Moral Narcissismis understood a**s** an appropriate concern for one’s own moral integrity turned into moral self-indulgence. Being over-reflective can be self-indulgence. Moral narcissism is a pathology that underlies the whole liberal left ethic today and some of the right as well. It is destroying—if it hasn’t already destroyed—our families, friendships, workplace atmosphere, and democratic republic? (This is the goal of radical Liberalism, successfully influencing countries in North America, as it has done earlier in Western Europe, addition mine).

In short: What you believe, claim to believe, or say you believe—defines you as a person and makes you at least feel “good.” In 21st-century America, “you are what you say you are. You are what you proclaim your values to be, irrespective of their consequences.” That is moral narcissism…It is a narcissism that emanates from a supposed personal virtue augmented by a supposed intellectual clarity. This is a narcissism of political and social thought, a narcissism that evolved as religion declined, a narcissism of group thinking that makes you assume you are better than you are, because you have the same received conventional ideas as your peers.

If your intentions are good, if they conform to the general received values of your friends, family, and co-workers, what a person of your class and social milieu is supposed to think, everything is fine. You are that “good” person. You can do anything you wish. It doesn’t matter in the slightest what the results of those ideas and beliefs are, or how society, the country, and in some cases, the world suffers from them.

1. **Church’s Responsibilities towards those involved in Immoral Behavior**
	1. **Position of churches in today’s World**

It is important that Christians realize that they live in a world that is becoming troublesome very quickly. This reality is certainly not a recent developing situation. The following two paragraphs inform us that the world around us has been troublesome for quite some time. We learn that,

1. Christians need to stick together and embrace the liberating truth of God’s Word in opposing anti-Christ pressures by and within today’s so-called Post-truth societies. We may listen to what Solzhenitsyn once wrote,

Man’s sense of responsibility to God and society has grown dimmer and dimmer… Humanism which has lost its Christian heritage cannot prevail…we have placed too

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much hope in politics and social reforms, only to find out that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life (206)…The religious believer must bring his religious commitment to bear on the whole range of human affairs…Christians must also relate their beliefs to the real world in which they live. (212).[[96]](#footnote-96)

1. Charles Colson reminded us of Francis Schaeffer’s words when he said,

Christians need to stop seeing issues in bits and pieces and start seeing the big picture. The big picture behind the family values debate is simple: Are morals absolute, or are they relative? Are they God-given, or do we make them up as we go along?[[97]](#footnote-97)

The above quoted words introduce us to the reality of the spiritual battle between the truth and the lie, between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world influenced by Satan, between those within the sphere of Christ and those captured within the sphere of the anti-Christ. The spiritual battle that is presently enfolding around the issue of homosexual lifestyle (LGBTQI lifestyles), outside and within the Church.

It is important that Christians, who would be interested in participating in a healing ministry towards people struggling with same-sex attraction, realize that the fast-growing radical-liberalization of the society has a firm grip on and stimulation of the fast developing interest in living such a lifestyle.

**6.2 Churches reaching out to those attracted to or participate in Homosexual Behavior**

Charles Colson explains the importance of small, genuine communities within the church. He writes:

How we belong to one another goes beyond the 'sweet fellowship' of potluck suppers and finding a comfortable social circle. True community involves real koinonia, a deep communion – the kind the apostles described in Acts 4, which is the first real sign of the Kingdom on earth, where each person in need was helped (vv. 32-35). This is where people truly bear one another's burdens and, yes, even suffer for and with one another.[[98]](#footnote-98)

In addition to Colson’s words, we may say that each church community needs to act as a healing community, as she comes alongside the hurting person. Those who are willing to seek the help from specialized/ professional therapists in dealing with those who want to overcome their homosexual lifestyle, would benefit from a support group. Such a support group would come alongside a person who wants to leave his/her homosexual lifestyle, or even a person who struggles with feelings to be a homosexual relationship.

Small support groups are encouraged to seek contact with a Christian therapist, or psychologist. Such specialists need to be adequately trained and experienced in helping people who struggle with overcoming their homosexual lifestyle, including the help and support of the Holy Spirit.

However, before taking on such a task, members of a support group are encouraged to start with informing themselves about possibilities and ways how to help active homosexuals, how spiritual and physical healing can be realized, and how to support these people. In that process, such support groups could be helped by seeking advice from professional therapists.

 **6.3 Dunamis Fellowship Canada (DFC) and Dunamis Fellowship International (DFI)**

Support groups will benefit to pay special attention to a course on the ‘Power of Prayer’ provided and led by Dunamis Fellowship International (USA), or Dunamis Fellowship Canada. This course could be a good, helpful way to find out if one is really drawn to be part of a healing ministry. FYI: DFC or DFI receives financial support from Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI, with professors who are enthusiastic about the work of DFI.

In addition to the above mentioned book, this growing organization has courses in both the USA and Canada. One so-called DUNAMIS Course/Project is called ‘*In the Spirit’s Power: Cooperating with the Holy Spirit to do the Work of Jesus Chris*t.’ The headquarters of PRMI is located in the Black Hills, NC., and the headquarters of Dunamis Fellowship Canada is in Guelph, ON N1G 4T4; dfc@dunamisfellowshipcanada.org; 519-821-3603; [www.dunamisfellowshipcanada.org](http://www.dunamisfellowshipcanada.org).

Familiar with PRMI through a weeklong participation in training at its headquarters in NC, as well as by taking several special cources, I would recommend to seek contact with this growing, worldwide Christian organization. Canadian headquarter is in

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Guelph, ON. A highly recommended reading: *LET JESUS HEAL YOUR HIDDEN WOUNDS: Cooperating with the Holy Spirit in Healing Ministry*, 2001, by Rev. Dr. Brad Long & Rev. Cindy Strickler,

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SECOND DOCUMENT



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

**IGNORING JESUS’ WARNING RE IMMORALITY**

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* + 1. **Jesus on Immorality**

Allow me to briefly repeat the following two references to Jesus’ warning not to tolerate, accept or indulge immoral lifestyles.

It is critical for all who want to be considered as real followers of Jesus Christ to listen carefully to Jesus’ stern warning concerning immorality to prevent serious disruption in the church,

*“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there (in the Church of Pergamum) who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality...Repent therefore…”* Rev. 2:14-16a.

*“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”* Rev. 22: 14-15.

The above quoted words of Jesus, spoken at the very end of the Bible, were His final farewell words to all who would read them. These last words of warning Jesus spoke need to be heard and taken seriously throughout all generations. I emphasize ‘all,’ as there are too many Christians making the mistake to ignore Jesus’ warnings. The question that needs to be raised is why anyone would throw Jesus’ serious warnings in the wind?

* + 1. **Jesus and His Followers**

We read at different places in the Bible that Jesus describes His

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followers as ‘fishers of men,” who “deny themselves and take up

their cross,” to be “those who lose their lives for Jesus,” and “those who follow Jesus, as they hear His voice.” Note then also what Jesus said about little children,

“*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it…”* Mk 10:14b-15.

We understand from these words of Jesus that His followers are simply listen to His voice, take them to heart and continue to follow Him, no matter what the difficulties they will have to face and deal with. Followers of Jesus don’t dispute, don’t misinterpret, don’t overlook nor change the meaning of His words. To those Jesus says, “*Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life…*” (Rev. 22:14). John warns us that, *“… if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life…*” (Rev. 22:19a).

* + 1. **Church within an Evil World**

The church of the Thessalonians was surrounded by an evil, immoral world. Paul understood the influence of that world on the Christian community. He therefore exhorted them to be vigilant, and to continue as a witness to Christ, being set apart from that world. He exhorted especially the leaders in the church to be true guardians of the church. In today’s similar evil, immoral world, our spiritual leaders need also act as true guardians of the church.

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However, many Christians may agree about serious negligence among church leaders regarding the influence of an evil-driven radical Liberalism in North America. Christians do well to realize that today’s social realities concerning immoral behavior need to be realized, faced and to be opposed are to be warnings against them. Followers of Jesus need to know how to respond to those realities. Read, for example, NT letters such as Galatians 5, 1 Thess. 4, 2 Thess. 2, Jude, half- brother of Jesus. Then, we may listen to what John wrote in his first letter,

*“For everything in the world-the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does-comes not from the father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”*

 1 John 2:16-17.

[Eph. 6:10-18]

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THIRD DOCUMENT



THE RAINBOW LETTERS

**IMMORALITY: THE CHURCH’s TROJAN HORSE**

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* + - 1. **Introduction**

For a quick and concise communication on a subject of great concern to the well-being of the Church the following brief comments on immorality, including its denial and acceptance. In too many communications on this troubling subject it is noticed that essential information on immorality is missing. Thereby comes that any reference to Jesus and His healing is completely missing by those embracing immorality. I dare to say that such an avoidance is both stunning and clarifying, especially when we understand that we live in an era of a radical-Liberal ideology taking root in North-American societies.

This anti-Christ ideology found its way in especially education and media for quite some time. That ideology not only influencing younger generations, but also churches and workplaces. It is disappointing that this kind of worldly influence is hardly shared in many pulpits, while young people are daily confronted with it. It is no wonder that many of them become convinced that the way they feel is the way they want to live, including homosexuality.

In the meantime, there seems among leaders in the church those who are open to accepting immoral lifestyles, thereby ignoring any reference to God’s Word on this very issue! This perplexing reality asks for, even demands, explanation. It is true that some have tried to make references to Scripture, as did a particular Classis in New Jersey, an efforts to find possible support for living an immoral lifestyle. However, this Classis neither made any reference to what Jesus has said about this important issue,

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nor to the many places in the Bible where immorality is absolutely

forbidden. Some speak of more than 100 places where such a warning is expressed. See also some Scripture Quotations concerning Sexual Immorality toward the end of this book.

1. **The Clincher**

Rosaria lived for many years in a lesbian relationship as a self-proclaimed believer in Marxism until she became at last a Christian woman married with a pastor, Pastor Kent. That significant change in her life followed from an interesting friendship with actually another pastor, Pastor Ken Smith, who had been patiently coaching her during a period of several years. Reading Rosaria’s book, “*The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*,”[[99]](#footnote-99) Thus, Rosaria writes that instantly that after reading her acknowledgement, having been reading the Bible for some time, and still being in a state of crucible confusion, she learned the first rule of repentance: repentance requires greater intimacy with God than with our sin.

In her own words, Rosaria continued, writing,

Repentance requires that we draw near to Jesus, no matter what…Repentance is an intimate affair. And for many of us, intimacy with anything is a terrifying prospect. When Christ gave me the strength to follow him, I didn’t stop feeling like a lesbian. I’ve discovered that the Lord doesn’t change my feelings until I obey him. After listening to Jesus word’s, “*If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own*,” (John 7:17), which the preacher referred to as ‘the hermeneutics of obedience.’

After she heard the above-quoted words of Jesus, Rosaria responded with,

Ah ha! Here it was! **Obedience comes before Understanding**. I *wanted* to understand. But did I actually will doing his will? God promised to reveal this understanding to me if I “willed to do his will.” The Bible doesn’t just say *do* his will, but “want to do his will.” Wanting to understand is a theoretical statement; willing to do his will takes action. I knew I didn’t have that! I prayed that the Lord would give me that wholehearted will…The Lord made it clear to me that I had to make some serious life changes...

I (Rosaria) started to obey God in my heart, one step at a time. I broke up with my girlfriend…My heart really wasn’t in the breakup…I started to go to church…I learned that we must obey in faith before we feel better or different…obeying in faith, to me, felt like throwing myself off a cliff. Faith that endures is heroic, not sentimental.

The above-quoted words from Rosaria, may be helpful to many Christians struggling with this issue of immorality, and even are living in an immoral relationship according to biblical standards. Reading God’s Word does not automatically mean a listening to God’s Word, and then also practicing what the Bible wants us to

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understand and to live out that understanding. As followers of

Jesus Christ, we not only listen to Jesus but also obey what He tells us, and make a stand for Jesus in the current spiritual battle around the issue of immorality.

1. **Hailing the Trojan Horse ‘Immorality’ into the Church or Not**

For several decades, the well-accepted influence of communism has been introduced to students at universities and colleges. During the last several decennia, students from China have been accepted by many of these institutions in North America, and thereby received much needed financial support via those students, as well as from China’s government. Many students, educated at those schools of higher learning, have been placed in leadership positions in governments, and working as lawyers.

Both our North-American countries are saturated with Far-Left rhetoric, and anti-Christ ideology to dissolve long-held Judeo-Christian norms and traditions, that eventually will lead to the destruction of Western societies. Christians who express their opposition to and their rejection of immoral lifestyles of LGBTQI people can expect serious opposition and hurtful consequences.

Notice: A recent email (December 17, 2021), stated: ‘It is now a crime for pastors to help LGBTQ people to deal with/overcome non-heterosexual behaviour,’ as it has been passed in the House and Senate with unanimous consent, and with royal consent as well.

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The challenge Christians (churches) face right now is to be steadfast, while facing the spiritual battle presently raging on the North-American continent and in their churches. The question is whether we are prepared for this spiritual battle. Considering this important question, we may remember the following words of Jesus,

“*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and* teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* Matt. 28:18-20.

Jesus said, **“***He who has ears, let him hear*” Matt. 1:15.

1. **Closing Thoughts**

After writing for 16 months about matters concerning the issue of immorality, I have come to the following conclusion that all the rhetoric of those embracing immoral behavior include at least two things: 1. They have taken Jesus out of the equation, not looking at what He has said about this very issue, e.g. at the very end of the last book of the Bible, Revelation. 2. They also have tried to take Paul out of the equation by torpedoing his understanding of the truth about homosexuality in Romans 1:26-27.

Taking both, Jesus and Paul, out of the debate on immorality, proponents of immoral lifestyles have given Satan a foothold in this very critical debate, without realizing it. We may now understand how serious present discussions on immorality actually have become.

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We need to wrestle personally with this question: Do I believe *in* Jesus Christ, and, or do I *believe* Jesus Christ when He says in His parable on ‘Clean and Unclean,

 *“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery,*

 *sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are*

 *what make a man ‘unclean,’* Matt. 15:19-20a.

At the end of this book we end with Paul’s words that provides a most helpful biblical perspective on how to regard our lives as followers of Jesus Christ,

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship.* ***Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*** *Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is-His good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Rom. 12:1-2.

**Prayer**

Brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ,

May the Holy Spirit lead us with spiritual wisdom and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ now and into the future unto everlasting life on a renewed earth.”

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APPENDIX A

Overview of Scripture Quotations concerning

Sexual Immorality

Note: Following Scripture quotations have been taken from the internet. Unless otherwise indicated, these quotations have been taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. Copyright ©2001 by [Crossway Bibles](http://www.crosswaybibles.org/), a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

### [Genesis 1:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A28&version=ESV) ESV

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

[Leviticus 18:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+18%3A22&version=ESV) ESV

*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.*

### [Leviticus 20:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+20%3A13&version=ESV) ESV

*If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.*

### [Matthew 15:19-20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+15%3A19-20&version=ESV) ESV

*For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a*

*Person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”*

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### [Mark 7:20-23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+7%3A20-23&version=ESV) ESV

*And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”*

### [Acts 15:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+15%3A20&version=ESV) ESV

### *But should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.*

### [Acts 15:29](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+15%3A29&version=ESV) ESV

*That you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”*

### [Romans 1:24-27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3A24-27&version=ESV) ESV

*Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.*

### [Romans 1:26-27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3A26-27&version=ESV) ESV

*For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error*.

### [1 Corinthians 5:9-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+5%3A9-11&version=ESV) ESV

*I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.*

### [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6%3A9-11&version=ESV) ESV

*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

### [1 Corinthians 6:13-20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6%3A13-20&version=ESV) ESV

*“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and*

*Destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for*

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*for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.* *And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?*

### [1 Corinthians 6:18-20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6%3A18-20&version=ESV) ESV

*Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

### [1 Corinthians 7:1-40](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+7%3A1-40&version=ESV) ESV

*Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. ...*

### [1 Corinthians 7:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+7%3A2&version=ESV) ESV

*But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.*

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### [2 Corinthians 12:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+12%3A21&version=ESV) ESV

*I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned* earlier *and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.*

### [Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+5%3A19-21&version=ESV) ESV

*Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

### [Ephesians 5:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A3&version=ESV) ESV

*But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.*

### [Ephesians 5:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A5&version=ESV) ESV

For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually *immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

### [Colossians 3:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3%3A5&version=ESV) ESV

*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

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### [1 Thessalonians 4:3-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Thessalonians+4%3A3-5&version=ESV) ESV

*For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;*

### [2 Timothy 2:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Timothy+2%3A22&version=ESV) ESV

*So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

### [Hebrews 13:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+13%3A4&version=ESV) ESV

*Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.*

### [Jude 1:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jude+1%3A7&version=ESV) ESV

*Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.*

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APPENDIX B

|[News](https://www.thebanner.org/news), [Church Worldwide](https://www.thebanner.org/department/church-worldwide) |[Religion News Service](https://www.thebanner.org/bio/religion-news-service)

*By Yonat Shimron for Religion News Service*

March 19, 2021

Note: Following are parts of Shimron’s article

At the end of February the Democratic-controlled U.S. House of Representatives passed a sweeping LGBTQI rights bill called the Equality Act ([H.R.5 - Equality Act](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5))… Republicans for the most part objected, with some of them advocating instead for a bill called [Fairness for All](https://stewart.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=704), reintroduced by Rep. Chris Stewart of Utah on Feb. 26 with 20 Republican co-sponsors.

Both bills would ban discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. But ‘Fairness for All’ would also carve out exemptions for faith-based organizations, which played a big role in drafting it.

The bill would still likely face opposition from other religious groups that oppose the idea of adding sexual orientation and gender identity, as protected classes. The Southern Baptist Convention and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, for example, will likely oppose ‘Fairness for All’ or any bill extending LGBTQI protections.

The bill is strongly opposed by many religious groups on multiple fronts. They say houses of worship, like churches and synagogues, must be explicitly excluded from the public accommodations list, otherwise religious groups that oppose

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same-sex marriage might be forced to offer their fellowship halls to LGBTQI wedding ceremonies, for example.

‘Fairness for All’ has been championed by the [Council for Christian Colleges and Universities](https://www.cccu.org/), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the [National Association of Evangelicals](https://www.nae.net/), which hasn’t formally endorsed it but was consulted in its drafting. The Christian Reformed Church in North America is a member of the NAE; Calvin, Redeemer, and Dort universities are all [member institutions](https://www.cccu.org/members_and_affiliates/) of CCCU.

“Our coalition has always had a problem-solving mindset,” said Shirley Hoogstra, CCCU president. “We believe LGBTQI people should be treated with equity and equality in the U.S. We have Supreme Court cases that have set that up. And we know religious organizations play an important role in society and that nobody should coerce the other.”

The bill would still likely face opposition from other religious groups that oppose the idea of adding sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes. The Southern Baptist Convention and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, for example, will likely oppose ‘Fairness for All,’ or any bill extending LGBTQI protections…Champions of a compromise point out that Americans broadly support LGBTQI protections. More than eight in 10 Americans favor laws that would protect LGBTQI people against discrimination in jobs, public accommodations, and housing, according to a 2020 PRRI American Values Survey.

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IMPORTANT READING *https://www.thebanner.org/news/2021/03/equality-act-is-in-the-us-senate-what-s-in-store-and-why-some-religions-want-a-revision.*

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APPENDIX C

What Small Groups *Are* and *Do* In a Nutshell

Small *ministry* groups are the ‘building blocks’ in the spiritual development of believers, to the point of being aglow in Christ. This spiritual reality is due to the active, unrestrained ministry of the Holy Spirit at work in and among participating believers. For those churches that have some small groups, those who have no small groups at all, and may be some churches who have most, if not all, of their members taking part in small groups, it is important to realize what small *ministry* groups actually *are* and what they *do*.

Within a church community, we speak of small groups of believers who as priests want to serve their one High Priest, Jesus Christ. Each small group of priests may consider meeting together in a circle, with or without a real or imagined empty chair, symbolizing the presence of the Holy Spirit, at the center of the small-group gathering. Those believers share their faith and hope in Christ, together with a deep longing to grow spiritually and closer to their Saviour.

Small groups are environments in which believers help and support each other to learn, and also, over time, to open themselves to God and to each other. In that process, believers begin to sense and experience the way God wants them to serve Him and each other within the small group, as led by the Holy Spirit.

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**Format of Small-Group Meetings** (for consideration)

* + - 1. Welcome time
			2. Worship time
			3. Word time
			4. Works time

 The ***Word*** time, is at the heart of all small group meetings. It is not a teaching time, but a time for people minister to each other. This happens when people discuss a recent sermon text used by the pastor in his preaching, or use an appropriate Bible passage for reflection and sharing personal insights. For the Bible discussions the facilitator may use questions such as:

(Generic Questions (Boren and Tillman, 35)

* 1. What stands out to you in this passage?
	2. What seems to be the main point of this passage?
	3. Can you illustrate this truth from an experience in your life?
	4. What is God saying to you right now?

(The Growth Group Cycle)

1. What does the passage say?
2. What does the passage mean?
3. What does the passage mean to me?
4. How will I live in the light of this passage**?**

Participation in this part of a small group gathering develops spiritual growth, greater openness to the Spirit’s leading, as well as a growing eagerness to understand what following Jesus Christ really means. At the same time, one will experience an increase in spiritual discernment. All this brings about a closer fellowship with God, a growing in understanding about the ongoing, growing spiritual warfare in the world, and how to participate in that battle.

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The ***Word*** time, is a time the Holy Spirit speaks to and through his people, giving them new insights and understanding, encouragement, comfort, and direction, as well as reconciliation with God and/or with one another. It is a time when people reach out in personal ministry to others in the group, as they are led by the Spirit of Christ, to minister to each other in sensitive ways and at appropriate times. In such a time of mutual ministry, the leader/facilitator needs to leadin a thoughtful and perceptive manner.

When a serious need is sensed, that person is ministered to. This is often done by laying on hands, anointing with oil in case of sickness (Jas. 5:14, indicating the presence of the Holy Spirit) while prayed for through words of wisdom, knowledge, or prophetic words (1Cor. 14:3-5; Jas. 5:13-16)). It can be expected that, over time, visions are expressed, Bible verses shared, and various forms of healing occur.

Such time of mutual ministry brings to mind the words the apostle Peter spoke in his first Pentecost sermon referring to the prophetic words spoken by the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-32):

 *“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all*

 *people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young*

 *men will see visions, Your old men will dream dreams.”*

Ac. 2:17

The job of the small *ministry* group leader is to facilitate discussions and ministry among participants, as well as between meetings if deemed necessary. It makes these meetings different

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from more traditional small group meetings, and as a result becomes more effective and enduring. This effectiveness is further enhanced when group members experience the results of their involvement in one or more spiritual disciplines/sacrifices, such as prayer, fasting, solitude, meditation, submission, simplicity, confession, and so on (see Appendix C).

The ***Work*** time is basically a planning time. The facilitator needs to keep this part of the meeting concise and group oriented. It is a time to discuss evangelism: sharing about family, friends, acquaintances who do not know Jesus, to discuss how best to reach out to them. It is also a time to pray for the Spirit’s leading in making new and repeated contacts.

Furthermore, small *ministry* groups may think of participating or cooperating in World Relief/Renew projects, or to get involved in World Missions projects and/or establish connections with churches in third-world countries through World Missions/World Relief/Renew. Small ministry groups, therefore, don’t limit their participation and ministry to bi-weekly meetings, but continue their mutual and outreach ministry between meetings.

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1. A. M. Lindeboom, *De theologen gingen voorop: Eenvoudig verhaal van de ontmanteling van de Gereformeerde kerken*, J. H. Kok, Kampen, Nederland, 1987, speciaal pp. 176-216. Those who are familiar with the Dutch language wish to read the book. Transl. *The Theologians Leading the Way: Simple story of the dismantling of the Reformed churches.*  24 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Erwin W. Lutzer, *We Will Not Be Silenced*, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. 25 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Charles Colson, “*Kingdoms in Conflict*,” Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, Grand Rapids, etc., 1987. Also, Charles Colson with Nancy R. Pearcey, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines*, Word Publishing. Dallas, etc. 1993.

26 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Read Gushee’s remarks on same-sex marriage in the ninth topic of the Grand Rapids East Report of 2016. 28 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Charles Colson, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines*, WORD PUBLISHING, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Erwin W. Lutzer, “*We Will Not Be Silenced*,” Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, 2001. 30 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Rev. Dr. Long, Founder and director of the charismatic organization Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International (PRMI), Black Mountain, NC, USA. 32 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. David Horowitz Freedom Center – <http://www.horowitzfreedomcenter.org/> Mission Statement: The DHFC is dedicated to the defense of free societies whose moral, cultural and economic foundations are under attack by enemies both secular and religious, at home and abroad. Google). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Brad Long, Tactical Manual, 155. 33 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid., 154. <http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/viewSubcategory.asp?id=1217> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ravi Zacharias, YouTube ‘*Is Truth Dead?’* [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. CitizenGo was founded in [Madrid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrid), Spain, in September 2013, spreading globally to expand its scope of action beyond Spanish-speaking countries, advancing the use of [online petitions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_petition) to increase public participation in the democratic process. This organization defends Judeo-Christian values. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Hank Hanegraaff’s *LETTER FROM HANK*, Email February 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Email: May 06, 2019. 37 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. CBN News, Feb. 21, 2020

38 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Joe Dallas is the program director of Genesis Biblical Solutions in Tustin, California, a Christian biblical counseling service to men dealing with sexual addiction, homosexuality, and other sexual/relational problems. He is a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors and is the author of seven books on human sexuality, including *The Gay Gospel? How Pro-Gay Advocates Misread the Bible* (Harvest House, 2007) and *When Homosexuality Hits Home* (Harvest House, 2015).

40 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Christian Reformed Church’ Agenda for Synod 2019, p. 422. Read more on what Gagnon has to say see p. 67-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Brian Giesbrecht is a retired judge and a senior fellow with the Frontier Centre for Public Policy. His article is entitled, *The Problem With Canada’s Proposed Ban on Conversion Therapy* appeared in ‘The Epoch Times’, July 9-15 2020 issue, B3. 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Hank Hanegraaff (The Bible Answer Man), *THE COMPLETE BIBLE ANSWER BOOK*, Collector edition, Thomas Nelson, 2008, 414-416.

62 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Wendy VanderWal-Gritter, *Generous Spaciousness: Responding to Gay Christians in the Church,* BrazosPress, Grand Rapids, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Robert A. J. Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The Epoch Times, article called ‘OPINION,’ June 25-July I issue, B1. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Charles Colson, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines*, WORD PUBLISHING, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Don Williams, *The Bond That Breaks: Will Homosexuality Split The Church?”* BIM, Inc., 1978, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid. 125-126. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Read my book, *THE REAL DEAL: Making the Case for the One True God*. FriesenPress, Victoria, BC, Canada, August 2018. Notice my author name: **Peter Hendriks Okello**. This book leads to an understanding how Satan uses Islam, especially radical Islam, to destroy Jews and Christians. Chapter Four provides an overview and details about the present spiritual battle. See especially APPENDIX A: *The Lion Is Still Roaring*, 149-180. The information in this Appendix has been approved and supported by Rev. Dr. Brad Long., Executive Director of PRMI (Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International), Black Mountain, NC., USA. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. **Peter Hendriks Okello**, *THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case of a More Respectful Society*. Mijnbestseller, the Netherlands, August, 2020, amazon.com [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The Voice of the Martyrs – Canada, *Pray for the Persecuted*, July 21, 2020, www.vom.canada.com [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Peter Hendriks Okello, *THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society,* 2020, Amazon. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Brad Long’s email of July 23, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Peter Hendriks Okello, *THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society*, Amazon. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Information received from Activist Mommy by email on July 24, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Allan Parr, video on the question, “*Should Christians Support Black Lives Matter*,” July 14, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. STILL WATERS REVIVAL BOOKS, Email August 05, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. **Peter Hendriks Okello**, *THE RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society*, Mijnbestseller, the Netherlands, August, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Charles Charles Colson, Nancy R. Pearson, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines*, WORD PUBLISHING, 1993. 88 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Edward E. Ericson, Jr., *SOLZHENITSYN: The Moral Vision, Grand Rapids*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.Com., 1980. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Charles Colson, *A Dance with Deception: Revealing the Truth Behind the Headlines*, WORD PUBLISHING, 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. ‘Persecution by Sword’ is explained in detail in my first book, “*THE REAL DEAL:…*”, as executed by Radical Islam, while “Persecution by Word:…” is discussed in my second book, “*THE RIGHT DEAL:…*” as executed by Radical Liberalism. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Floyd A. Brobbel, Magazine: *The Voice of the Martyrs, Canada*, Issue August 2020, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Brad Long, Founder and Executive Manager of Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International (PRMI) and Dunamis headquarters in Black Mountains, NC. In my book, *The RIGHT DEAL: Making the Case for a More Respectful Society* (2020). This book is written under my author’s name: Peter Hendriks Okello, as is my first book, *THE REAL DEAL: Making the Case for the One True God* (2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *During* my 2-year mandatory service in the military I became acquainted with the term ‘platoon.’ A platoon is a small group of specially-trained soldiers in the military to do quick support work such as building a bridge to allow military trucks pass sometimes difficult or unexpected obstacles. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. R. Albert Mohler, *THE GATHERING STORM: Secularism, Culture, and the Church.* President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
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90. ***Brittany Rust***has a passion to see people impacted by the power of God’s Word and His abundant grace through writing and speaking. She is the founder of Truth and Grace Ministries, Truth x Grace Women, and is the author of five books. Brittany lives with her husband, Ryan, and son, Roman, in Castle Rock, Colorado. Learn more at [www.brittanyrust.com](http://www.brittanyrust.com/).

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