

Amish Have to Forgive Again as Abducted Girls Allegedly Sexually Abused

Two young Amish sisters whose abduction touched off a frantic search in northern New York were sexually abused by their captors, *The New York Times* reported.

The girls, aged 12 and 6, were kidnapped on Wednesday from a family farm some 10 miles from New York's border with Canada and released Thursday. Police have charged two suspects, Stephen Howells II, 39, and Nicole Vaisey, 25, with two counts each of first-degree kidnapping.

In remarks to *The New York Times* late on Saturday, St. Lawrence County District Attorney Mary Rain said the girls had suffered sexual abuse during their captivity at Howells' home in Hermon, New York. She did not elaborate.

The victims' names are being withheld due to the sexual-assault allegations.

Earlier on Saturday, St. Lawrence County Sheriff Kevin Wells said at a news conference that the couple had carefully planned the abduction and that the girls were kidnapped not because they were Amish but because they were seen as easy targets. The girls did not know their kidnapers, he said.

He said police had reason to believe that in helping to lead authorities to their captors, the girls had most likely prevented more kidnappings.

A preliminary hearing for Howells and Vaisey is set for Thursday, officials said. Federal charges could be filed at a later date, officials said.

The girls were returned home in good health on Thursday after

their captors dropped them off in front of a stranger's home in the hamlet of Bigelow, then fled, Rain previously said.

The man living at the home recognized the pair as the missing girls and drove them 30 miles back to their family farm in the rural Amish community of Oswegatchie, she said.

Reporting by Karen Brooks; editing by Sonya Hepinstall

© 2014 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.

Duggar Clan Adds Yet Another Member

The Duggar clan just keeps on growing—though this time it's through marriage.

Jessa Duggar, star of *19 Kids and Counting*, is engaged to marry Ben Seewald. Seewald and Duggar have been courting for 11 months.

“We are so blessed to be engaged!” the couple said in a statement. “God has written an amazing story through our courtship, and another chapter has just begun! We are thrilled to see what the future holds—especially the wedding bells!”

According to *US* magazine, Duggar is 21 and Seewald is 19. To celebrate 11 months together, Seewald gave Duggar a pearl bracelet and handwritten note.

“What good are such beautiful pearls if not to have the grace of being worn by one so elegant and majestic as yourself?” the

note reads. "These pearls were like I am when we're apart; but not anymore! I love you, my precious princess!"

In what is becoming a Duggar family tradition, Jessa will follow in the footsteps of her sister Jill and save her first kiss for marriage, *US* reports.

Most Pastors May Be Committing This Sin, Study Suggests

New research shows that while 90 percent of pastors believe the Bible has much to say about today's pressing political and societal issues, fewer than 10 percent are talking about those issues from the pulpit.

Researcher George Barna spoke recently on American Family Radio's *Today's Issues* about his research project over the past two years, in which the Barna Group asked pastors across the country about their beliefs regarding the relevancy of Scripture to societal, moral and political issues, and the content of their sermons in light of their beliefs.

What he found was startling.

"When we ask them about all the key issues of the day, [90 percent of them are] telling us, 'Yes, the Bible speaks to every one of these issues,'" Barna told American Family Radio. "Then we ask them: 'Well, are you teaching your people what the Bible says about those issues?' and the numbers drop ... to less than 10 percent of pastors who say they will speak to it."

Sam Rohrer, president of the American Pastors Network, says that while it is clear that there is a disconnect between knowing the truth and preaching it, the real question is why. Avoiding the politically unpopular portions of Scripture is in some respects understandable from a human perspective. From God's perspective, however, it is sin.

"The reality is that most people, including pastors, wish to be comfortable and to avoid controversy," Rohrer said. "If the primary goal is to see people leave on Sunday morning feeling good about themselves and feeling comfortable rather than seeing the holiness of God and the ugly reality of sin, then a pastor will answer to God for doing his own will rather than declaring God's will. The issues of the day that confront our nation must be dealt with from the pulpit if God's Word is to make a difference in people's lives and if the culture is to be impacted. This includes the areas of marriage and divorce, life and family, but it also includes the areas of honesty, servant leadership, following the Rule of Law, etc."

Barna added that many pastors are afraid to get involved in political issues because of the controversy it might create. And, he added, "Controversy keeps people from being in the seats, controversy keeps people from giving money, from attending programs."

He also found that when asked how they measure the success of their churches, most pastors look to five factors: "attendance, giving, number of programs, number of staff and square footage."

"The fact that so many pastors are more concerned with the size of their buildings and church bank accounts than with the condition of the souls they shepherd is without excuse," Rohrer continued. "By abdicating their responsibility as ministers of God to 'preach the Word' in favor of square footage, many pastors are, in essence, saying God's Word is not really authoritative. In reality, a pastor—or any person

for that matter—who feels they have the right to pick and choose what portions of Scripture they will believe or teach, rather than preach the ‘whole counsel of God’ have in effect made themselves god.”

Will You Just Lighten Up?

Getting to heaven is a simple proposition when you deconstruct it. Believe. More specifically, believe in Jesus (John 6:47). Say yes to the person and work of Jesus, mean it, and BOOM!

You now have your sins forgiven, a purpose for living, and a home in heaven. But now what? Between Earth (now) and my home in heaven (later), you have a “mission” from God only you can fulfill (Eph. 2:10). In fact, there are specific works, or deeds as the Bible calls it, specifically assigned to *you*.

You can go on mission trips, volunteer at the local shelter, usher on weekend services. There are all kinds of ways you can serve. But it’s easy to get sidetracked by trying to find the ideal way for you to minister to others. In fact, it *can become* a burden for some as they strive to “work out” God’s plan. The good news is that it’s much simpler than that. The fact is God brings YOU opportunities, people and situations every day. That’s called the opposite of heavy work. So, here’s a twist on the light work God asks of you, and it has life-changing, eternal rewards. It’s an excellent gauge of where we are in our faith journey.

1. Come into the light. Feeling safe with another person means revealing and exposing all that we are to that person. This is always a risk. Jesus explained that people fear being exposed to the light, because it reveals darkness in their lives.

“Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God” (John 3:19-21).

Many inaccurately perceive Christianity, thinking “if I team up with Jesus, He’s going to shame and judge me.” The enemy would much rather have us compartmentalize our faith, giving “private” sin a stranglehold that can eventually suffocate our faith. But God wants all of you into the light, so your life can be “seen plainly” by others.

“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” (I John 1:5-7).

The more we come into the light of God’s unconditional acceptance, the more light we can bring to others.

2. Be a light. In Matt. 5:14, Jesus compares those who believe and follow God as being “light of the world” and like a “city set on a hill (that) cannot be hidden.” The world represents darkness. You don’t have to search for a way to serve in a ministry; you just have to be a light. It’s like the city on the hill; it doesn’t do anything. It just sits there, but it can be seen. Following Christ will transform your heart, thoughts, attitudes and eventually your behaviors. It happens naturally. And, the resulting conduct is its own witness that you are different, a bright light shining in a dark world.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a

basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house ... ” (Matt. 5:14).

3. Shine the light. This last step is proactive. After coming into the light, and being a light in the world, God will bring people and situations to you so that you can shine the light. Often, we don't recognize these opportunities right in front of us, stop everything, and do or say something loving. Recognizing someone in need is the first step. Interrupting your schedule to engage is the second. Jesus called it loving your “neighbor.”

In Luke 10, Jesus answered a man who asked, “Who is my neighbor?” with this parable. A man is brutally beaten and left for dead in a ditch. One priest sees the man and crosses the street to pass by on the other side. A second man, a Levite, saw the man and also passed by without a word of helping hand. A third man, a Samaritan, saw the man, stopped what he was doing, bandaged the injured man and took him to safety, paying for a stay at a hotel. The beaten man represents our “neighbor.” The Samaritan is the shining light.

Shining the light is a simple principle: Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Help those in need. Don't think of ministry as an interruption. Think of it as an opportunity and an honor to shine the light of God's love.

The apostle Paul explains shining the light like this: “Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, ‘children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.’ Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life” (Phil. 2:14-16).

Every God's man is a work in progress. Step one may take time. Step two involves personal transformation, and then step three will come naturally. But it does require faith. Faith is the oil the keeps the lamp burning.

“Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (James 2:15-17).

So, you don’t have to look for ways to be a minister of God’s love. It’s you. You’re the light of the world. Lighten Up!

Kenny Luck, founder of Every Man Ministries, men’s pastor at Saddleback Church, and ChristianMingle advisory board member, provides biblically oriented teaching and leadership for men and pastors seeking relevant, timely material that battle cultural, worldly concepts threatening men and God’s men. Follow Kenny and Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everyMM) and YouTube.

For the original article, visit .

Robin Williams Was Part of the Baby Boomer Suicide Epidemic

Robin Williams’ suicide not only rocked the entertainment world—it rocked people in many parts of the world who loved his comic genius. In the wake of his untimely death, mental-health experts are pointing to statistics that reveal Williams’ silent suffering was part of an epidemic.

Suicide is a top-10 cause of death—more people die from self-harm than from car accidents—yet we don’t hear much about it until someone of notoriety ends their life. According to the

Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the suicide rate has jumped nearly 20 percent over the past 10 years even as heart disease, HIV and cancer death rates are declining.

The stats look worse when we come to Robin Williams' generation: the Baby Boomers. According to the CDC, the **suicide rate** among Americans aged 45 to 64 has climbed over 30 percent in the past 10 years. Cut another way, the category of upper-middle-aged white men has seen a 50 percent rise in suicides.

Why Are So Many Baby Boomers Committing Suicide?

Why are so many Baby Boomers committing suicide? What is the root issue? Where does it start? I've wondered this on a personal level as my uncle committed suicide a few years ago—and he was a Baby Boomer.

“Suicidal thoughts have numerous causes,” according to Mayo Clinic. “Most often, suicidal thoughts are the result of feeling like you can't cope when you're faced with what seems to be an overwhelming life situation. If you don't have hope for the future, you may mistakenly think suicide is a solution. You may experience a sort of tunnel vision, where in the middle of a crisis you believe suicide is the only way out.”

As it turns out, **suicidal thoughts** are not uncommon. Nearly 8.3 million adults age 18 and older in the United States—that's 3.7 percent—had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year, according to a study called “Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Adults > 18 Years” released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although some suicides are impulsive, most are planned out. More than 2 million adult Americans made a suicide plan in the past year, and about half that many went through with the plan.

Suicide Starts With a Thought

As I've said before, suicide starts with a thought. Indeed, every action we take starts with a thought. As one who struggled with depression for years, I am not trying to oversimplify the solution, but rather merely point out one contributing factor. Many of the harmful actions we take originate from the seed of a thought Satan whispers to our souls. That seed grows as our minds reason out the benefits of acting on the thought. For those contemplating **suicide**, I believe the seed grows in their minds as they reason themselves out of living because life's circumstances are too overwhelming.

When the enemy plants a vain imagination in our minds, we have two choices: cast it down or meditate on it. When we meditate on vain imaginations, we tend to connect demonic dots that create skewed pictures of reality. Believing what we see in our thought life is real, we talk ourselves into taking action based on a wrong perception. Although there are issues of chemical imbalances, I believe this is what happens with many **suicides**. The enemy plants a seed in the form of a thought that an already distraught soul doesn't discern as a demonic attack on their life.

Winning the Battle Against a Silent Epidemic

If we want to win the battle against suicide among Baby Boomers—or any demographic—we need to, among many other things, take a hold of Scriptures that instruct us about the battle in our minds. Paul told us, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled” (2 Cor. 10:4-6). No one can take your thoughts captive for you, but you can take your own thoughts captive, and it starts with girding up the loins of your mind (1 Pet. 1:13).

Paul also offered this advice: “Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:8-9). If we do what the Word says—if we meditate on what the Word tells us to meditate on—the enemy’s seeds won’t take root in our souls.

If you see someone struggling with depression or hear them speak disturbing thoughts that aren’t in line with the Word of God, pray and ask God what He would have you do. Then do it. Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States, and the enemy is targeting our spiritual leaders in this hour. Let’s rise up and battle against this disturbing trend in the Name of Jesus.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor of Charisma. She is also director of Every Nation Prayer Room in Fort Lauderdale and author of several books, including *The Making of a Prophet* and *The Spiritual Warrior’s Guide to Defeating Jezebel*. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.

9 Reasons to Say No to Soy

The information I posted on soy on my Facebook page in March 2013 created a big response. Many people have posted the problems they’ve experienced after consuming soy products. Take a look on my Facebook page.

A small amount of fermented soy is OK as long as it's organic. Avoid conventional soy; it is the largest GMO (genetically modified) crop in the United States. Here are a few more points to consider regarding soy. It should make you think twice before ordering a soy-milk latte:

1. Soy phytoestrogens disrupt endocrine function and have the potential to cause infertility and promote breast cancer in adult women. These phytoestrogens also cause hypothyroidism and possibly thyroid cancer.
2. In infants, consumption of soy formula has been linked to autoimmune thyroid disease.
3. Vitamin B12 in soy is not absorbed. Consumption of soy actually increases the body's requirement for B12.
4. Soy foods increase the body's requirement for vitamin D. Toxic synthetic vitamin D2 is added to soy milk.
5. Fragile proteins are damaged during the high temperature processing used to make soy protein isolate and textured vegetable protein—often used in packaged foods and even the so-called “healthy” protein bars.
6. Processing of soy protein results in the formation of toxic lysinoalanine and highly carcinogenic nitrosamines.
7. Free glutamic acid or MSG, a potent neurotoxin, is formed during soy-food processing, and additional amounts are sometimes added to mask soy's unpleasant taste.
8. High levels of aluminum, toxic to the nervous system and kidneys, have been found in some soy foods.
9. Soy foods such as soy cheese and ice cream, soy milk, and tofu are so processed that few pesticide residues remain; however, several very toxic pesticides are used to grow soybeans, and 90 percent of soybeans grown in the U.S. are GMO

(genetically modified). In the only human-feeding study published on genetically modified foods, seven volunteers ate Roundup-ready soybeans. These soybeans have herbicide-resistant genes inserted into them in order to survive being sprayed with otherwise deadly doses of Roundup herbicide. In three of the seven volunteers, the gene inserted into the soy transferred into the DNA of their intestinal bacteria, and continued to function long after they stopped eating the GM soy.

***Cherie Calbom**, M.S., C.N., is the author of 24 books, including The Juice Lady's Remedies for Allergies and Asthma, The Juice Lady's Remedies for Stress and Adrenal Fatigue, The Juice Lady's Big Book of Juices and Green Smoothies and Juicing, Fasting and Detoxing for Life. She has devoted her life to teaching people how to care for their bodies so they might complete their destiny. For more information, visit her at .*

For the original article, visit .

WATCH: ISIS Claims to Behead US Journalist, Threatens to Execute Another

Islamic State militants posted a video on Tuesday that purported to show the beheading of American journalist James Foley in revenge for U.S. air strikes against the insurgents in Iraq.

The video, titled "A Message to America," also showed images of another U.S. journalist, Steven Sotloff, whose life Islamic

State said depended on how the United States acts in Iraq.

The gruesome video presented President Obama with bleak options that could define America's involvement in Iraq and the public reaction to it, potentially dragging him further into a conflict he built much of his presidency on ending.

Obama held back from making a public statement about the beheading until the video could be formally authenticated.

"If genuine, we are appalled by the brutal murder of an innocent American journalist and we express our deepest condolences to his family and friends," White House National Security Council spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden said in a statement.

Other political leaders were swift to react.

British Prime Minister David Cameron interrupted his holiday to return to London to lead the hunt to identify the man shown killing Foley, who spoke on the video with a British accent.

Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said he was not surprised to hear the British accent and that large numbers of British nationals were fighting in Iraq and Syria.

"Our intelligence services will be looking very carefully on both sides of the Atlantic at this video to establish its authenticity, to try to identify the individual concerned and then we will work together to try to locate him," Hammond told Sky news.

French President Francois Hollande called for an international conference to discuss how to tackle Islamic State.

Grisly Message

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari urged the world to back his country against Islamic State, which he described as a threat to the world, not just to the minority ethnic groups

whose members it has killed in northern Iraq.

Germany and Italy said they were ready to send arms to bolster the military capabilities of Iraqi Kurds fighting the Islamic State militants.

The video's grisly message was unambiguous, warning of greater retaliation to come against Americans following nearly two weeks of U.S. air strikes that have pounded militant positions and halted the advance of Islamic State, which until this month had captured a third of Iraq with little resistance.

Foley, 40, was kidnapped by armed men on Nov. 22, 2012, in northern Syria while on his way to the Turkish border, according to *GlobalPost*, a Boston-based online publication where Foley had worked as a freelancer. He had reported in the Middle East for five years and had been kidnapped and released in Libya.

Sotloff, who appeared at the end of the video, went missing in northern Syria while reporting in July 2013. He has written for *Time* among other news organizations.

On Facebook, Foley's mother Diane Foley said: "We have never been prouder of our son Jim. He gave his life trying to expose the world to the suffering of the Syrian people.

"We implore the kidnappers to spare the lives of the remaining hostages. Like Jim, they are innocents. They have no control over American government policy in Iraq, Syria or anywhere in the world."

The video was posted after the United States resumed air strikes in Iraq this month for the first time since the end of the U.S. occupation in 2011.

Islamic State

Islamic State, which has declared a caliphate in the parts of Iraq and Syria it controls, opened the video with a clip of

Obama saying he had authorized strikes in Iraq.

The words "Obama authorizes military operations against the Islamic State effectively placing America upon a slippery slope towards a new war front against Muslims" appeared in English and Arabic on the screen.

It showed black and white aerial footage of air strikes with text saying "American aggression against the Islamic State."

A man identified as James Foley, his head shaven and dressed in an orange outfit similar to uniforms worn by prisoners at the U.S. military detention camp in Guantanamo, Cuba, is seen kneeling in the desert next to a man standing, holding a knife and clad head to toe in black.

"I call on my friends, family and loved ones to rise up against my real killers, the U.S. government, for what will happen to me is only a result of their complacency and criminality," the kneeling man says.

The man next to him, in a black mask, speaks in a British accent and says, "This is James Wright Foley, an American citizen, of your country. As a government, you have been at the forefront of the aggression towards the Islamic State."

"Today your military air force is attacking us daily in Iraq. Your strikes have caused casualties amongst Muslims. You are no longer fighting an insurgency. We are an Islamic army, and a state that has been accepted by a large number of Muslims worldwide."

Following his statement he beheads the kneeling man. At the end of the video, words on the side of the screen say, "Steven Joel Sotloff," as another prisoner in an orange jumpsuit is shown on screen. "The life of this American citizen, Obama, depends on your next decision," the masked man says.

Hostage History

Hostage crises have plagued U.S. presidents over the years.

Jimmy Carter's presidency sagged under the weight of the Iran hostage crisis when Americans were held captive for 444 days. Ronald Reagan's bid to get American hostages freed from Lebanon led to an arms-for-hostages Iran-Contra scandal that plagued his second term.

University of Virginia political scholar Larry Sabato said the current situation was more like the beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl by al Qaeda leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in 2002. He said it could help bolster a growing perception among Americans that the United States will have to be more aggressive in dealing with Islamic State militants.

Syria has been the most dangerous country for journalists for more than two years. At least 69 other journalists have been killed covering the conflict there and more than 80 journalists have been kidnapped in Syria.

The Committee to Protect Journalists estimates that approximately 20 journalists are currently missing in Syria. Many of them are believed to be held by Islamic State.

Islamic State also released a video on Tuesday that gave a strong indication it might try to strike American targets. The video with the theme "breaking of the American cross" boasts Islamic State will emerge victorious over "crusader" America.

It followed a video posted on Monday, warning of attacks on American targets if Washington strikes against its fighters in Iraq and Syria.

As well as taking territory, Islamic State has seized a number of oil wells in northern Iraq. The government in Baghdad said it was troubled by reports that Islamic State was smuggling oil to export markets and warned the purchase of such supplies could help the group fund its operations.

Additional reporting by Steve Holland in Edgartown, Mass., Stephanie Nebehay in Geneva, Oliver Holmes and Tom Perry in Beirut, Sabine Siebold in Berlin, Costas Pitas and William James in London, and John Irish in Paris; Writing by Giles Elgood

© 2014 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.

How Should We Respond to Vicky Beeching?

Believers throughout the English-speaking world were shocked and saddened to hear that Vicky Beeching, a greatly loved songwriter and worship leader, has announced that she is gay. How should we respond?

1. This should not be about your own feelings. When you sing to God words of worship and praise that someone else has written, it's easy to feel betrayed when that person lets you down. So it's understandable that some believers are asking, "How could she do this to us?"

The fact is that she didn't do this to you any more than she wrote worship songs for you.

According to her story, her sexuality is something she wrestled with for years, and as much as her "coming out" as gay was a public event, it was also an intensely personal decision before God, and that's where our first focus should be: praying for her to align her life rightly with the Lord.

To lash out at her now in immature ways will only drive her

further from the cross. While it is fine to speak the truth to her in love—assuming she reads some of the comments addressed to her on blogs and social media—praying for the Holy Spirit to convict her of her error is even more important.

2. She will not be the last Christian leader to declare that she/he is gay. We are living today in a perfect spiritual storm in which biblical ignorance, moral compromise, and societal changes have combined to produce deep spiritual deception.

That's what opened the door for contemporary Christian music artist Jennifer Knapp to "come out," and that's what opened the door for Jars of Clay front man Dan Haseltine to voice apparent support for same-sex "marriage" as well as for influential leaders such as Rob Bell and Jim Wallis to advocate for redefining marriage.

That's also what opened the door for an evangelical publishing conglomerate to publish and aggressively promote a book devoted to promoting "gay Christianity."

At any other time in church history, ideas like this would not been countenanced for a split second among committed followers of Jesus who were grounded in the Word. But today, professing Christians are questioning some of the most basic scriptural truths about morality.

You can expect a lot more surprises in the coming days—both from pastors and musical artists—but as painful as this is to witness, it is a necessary separation that will ultimately divide those who seek to change the Word from those who seek to submit to the Word.

3. God's Word has not changed. If 10,000 pastors declared they were gay tomorrow, it would not change the truth of the Bible one iota. If 10,000 worship leaders declared that God had made

them gay, it would not change a single scriptural truth.

As I have emphasized repeatedly, despite the increasing number of professing “gay Christians”—by which I mean those who claim that you can follow Jesus and practice homosexuality at the same time—there are “no new textual, archaeological, sociological, anthropological or philological discoveries [that] have been made in the last 50 years that would cause us to read any of these biblical texts differently.”

And so, once more, we see the fundamental error of “gay Christianity,” namely, people interpreting the Bible through the lens of their sexuality rather than interpreting their sexuality through the lens of the Bible.

4. Boycotting Vicky Beeching’s music is a matter of personal conviction. Although it appears that as a BBC broadcaster Vicky should be able to make a good living, she will lose royalties from the States if we no longer use her songs.

Should we attempt to punish her for coming out as gay? I don’t believe so, if “punish” is the goal.

Should we continue to use her music? That’s really a matter of personal conviction.

For some believers, it could be a serious distraction, putting the focus on Vicky Beeching and her sexuality rather than on Jesus the Lord and the glory of God.

For other believers, it is the truths and melodies of their favorite worship songs that help them connect spiritually, and they don’t know (or care) who wrote what they are singing.

Either way, whether we use her songs or drop her songs, since she did touch many lives in the past, there are many people who should be praying for her.

5. Embracing “gay identity” is the real problem.

In her coming-out interview, Vicky stated, “What Jesus taught was a radical message of welcome and inclusion and love. I feel certain God loves me just the way I am, and I have a huge sense of calling to communicate that to young people.”

Actually, what Jesus did in such a radical way was to reach out to the worst sinners of His day and change them by His presence and His words rather than affirming them in their sins. I call this “transformational inclusion” as opposed to “affirmational inclusion,” which is not the gospel.

In an interchange with American family activist Scott Lively, Vicky claimed that denying her gay identity is what caused her so much torment over the years, and we need to accept our sexual orientation as a gift from God rather than battling with our own selves.

But as Pastor Kris Vallotton noted in an extensive Facebook post (that I cited in *Can You Be Gay and Christian?*) in which he described his years of pastoral counseling, “These experiences have taught me that when you define yourself by your temptations or your passions (instead of managing your appetite and resisting temptations), there is no bottom to that cesspool! The truth is that we all have temptations and appetites that are not healthy and must be managed, or we will live with a deep sense of shame no matter what values our culture tries to validate because God has written His own values on our hearts.”

And so Vicky, if you will allow me to address you personally, you have told the world that you are same-sex attracted, but those attractions do not define you, and there are plenty of other Christians with deep-seated sexual desires that they have experienced all of their lives that are far more shameful than anything you have expressed.

And while it is absolutely true that God loves you even when

you wrestle with same-sex attraction, He did not create you to be with other women. If He does not give you the grace to change your romantic attractions and sexual desires, then He will so fill you with His love and goodness and presence that His embrace will mean more to you than any human embrace.

I appeal to you, Vicky, to go back to God once again, to recognize that His Word really is clear in terms of homosexual practice, and that you can advocate for freedom and wholeness in Jesus without advocating for homosexual practice. (In fact, if you advocate for homosexual practice, you will bring people into bondage, not freedom.)

Perhaps the Lord wants to use you to bring liberation to others in a way beyond anything you yet know.

I know you have experienced a sense of a large burden lifting, but ultimately, it will prove to be more a natural euphoria than a spiritual one. So again, I appeal to you: Go back to the cross; go back to the secret place of worship; go back to the unchangeable Word; humble yourself in His sight, and He will give you grace.

Michael Brown *is author of Can You Be Gay and Christian? Responding With Love and Truth to Questions About Homosexuality and host of the nationally syndicated talk radio show The Line of Fire on the Salem Radio Network. He is also president of FIRE School of Ministry and director of the Coalition of Conscience. Follow him at AskDrBrown on Facebook or at @drmichaellbrown on Twitter.*

What Eating These 5 Foods Every Day Will Do for You

There are various foods that help to make your skin naturally beautiful and healthy. But did you know that experts are now saying consuming these foods raw can be more beneficial for your skin?

A few of such foods are:

1. **Citrus and berries.** Vitamin C, abundantly found in citrus fruits, is a powerful antioxidant that increases the formation of collagen for promoting supple and soft skin. Berries are crammed with antioxidants that slow the process of aging. Moreover, the fiber contained in berries helps to eradicate harmful toxins out of the body before they cause skin disorders such as acne and zits. So, be sure to include at least one serving of fresh citrus and berries daily to achieve gorgeous skin.

2. **Pistachios and walnuts.** Pistachios and walnuts are loaded with vitamins B and E, which are known to protect the skin from cell damage. Vitamin E is a potent antioxidant that works by destroying the free radicals that accelerate skin aging. On the other hand, vitamin B enhances blood circulation and offers a youthful and radiant glow to the skin.

Experts suggest consuming pistachios and walnuts along with fruits in order to slow down the process of digestion and the breakdown of sugar.

3. **Spinach and kale.** Spinach and kale are green leafy vegetables that are rich in phytonutrients. They provide extra protection to the skin from the damaging effects of the sun's rays and keep the skin firm and smooth. Spinach is especially healthy since it is composed of nutrients such as lutein and beta-carotene, which have been found to increase the skin's

elasticity. It is suggested that consuming at least three cups of kale or spinach per week can do wonders for your skin. You can also consider mixing them together and relish the goodness of this delicious salad for beautiful skin and a healthy body.

4. Apples. Apples are another good source of vitamin C that works to increase the formation of collagen. The copper present in apples assists in the formation of melanin, which is a natural pigment found in the skin and works to protect the skin from the harmful effects of sun rays. You may consider adding chopped apples to a cup of yogurt or salad.

5. Almond milk. Another effective tip for increasing the natural glow of your skin is almond milk. It is rich in minerals such as manganese and copper. Copper is popularly known to boost the formation of collagen, and manganese has properties to protect the skin from damaging ultraviolet rays of the sun. You may drink almond milk as you would regular milk. It can also be used with cereal and blended with nutritious fruits to prepare a nourishing and scrumptious smoothie.

Don Colbert, M.D. has been board-certified in family practice for over 25 years and practices anti-aging and integrative medicine. He is a New York Times best-selling author of books such as The Bible Cure Series, What Would Jesus Eat, Deadly Emotions, What You Don't Know May be Killing You and many more with over 10 million copies sold. He is the medical director of the Divine Health Wellness Center in Orlando, Florida, where he has treated more than 50,000 patients. He also is an internationally known expert and prolific speaker on integrative medicine.

For the original article, visit .

WATCH: Lisa Bevere – How a Wise Woman Builds Her House

John Bevere was a tennis-playing engineering student and Lisa was in a sorority when they met in college. John introduced Lisa to Christ and after they got married, Lisa built her marriage on this key principle.