

Church Under Fire for Gay Exorcism

✖ A Connecticut church has come under fire for a YouTube video showing ministry leaders attempting to cast a “homosexual demon” out of a teenager.

Gay and youth advocacy groups accused Manifested Glory Ministries in Bridgeport of abusing a teenager in the 20-minute video and say the ministry should be investigated.

The video, which the church removed from YouTube, shows the teen convulsing on the floor as ministers hold him down and command “homosexual spirits” to leave him. **(View a segment of the video at the end of this article.)**

“Rip it from his throat!” one woman yells. “Come on, you homosexual demon! You homosexual spirit, we call you out right now! Loose your grip, Lucifer!”

Robin McHaelin, executive director of the gay youth advocacy group True Colors, told the Associated Press (AP) she planned to report the church to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. “They have this kid in a full nelson,” she said. “That just seems abusive to me.”

Gary Cass of the Christian Anti-Defamation Commission said Manifested Glory is being attacked for exercising its religious liberty. “This church is being unjustly maligned for a spiritual practice that goes all the way back to Christ and the apostles,” he said. “The New Testament records very strange activity associated with demonic spirits. Jesus and the apostles confronted these bizarre situations by praying for deliverance.”

“The fact that the video may be strange or uncomfortable

should not be surprising, but it is not a reason to attack people who are simply trying to help," he added. "People have been delivered out of homosexual lifestyles ever since the church began."

But D.L. Foster, founder of Witness Freedom Ministries in Atlanta and a former homosexual, agrees with gay activists that the church's behavior was extreme. He told *Charisma* the video shows a woman putting her foot on the teen's neck while he lay on the floor thrashing. Another minister pours water in his face.

"It wasn't like anything that I've ever seen, and I've been Pentecostal my whole life," said Foster, whose ministry helps people find freedom from homosexuality. "I've seen actual demons cast out. I thought it was just bizarre, the whole thing—the way the young man was treated, this obsession with making sure it was on camera."

Though he doesn't believe the church's behavior was criminal, Foster wrote in a blog posting that its actions were "a very poor reflection upon the church and Christ to film this as if it were some entertainment and treat the young man in the manner in which he was treated."

Manifested Glory's pastor, the Rev. Patricia McKinney, said the church was trying to help the boy. She told the AP that the teen visited the church last year and collapsed on the floor during a service.

"He was out of control in the church," she said. "This young man came to us. We didn't go to him."

She said the church took care of the youth, giving him clothes. "He was dressing like a woman and everything. And he didn't want to be like that," McKinney said of the teen, who told the AP he was 16. McKinney said he told her he was 18.

Foster worries that Manifested Glory may be one of many

churches that have responded harshly to people seeking freedom from homosexuality.

“I’m not sure how common that [church’s actions are], but I have seen other instances where people who had issues with homosexuality were treated almost like they were some kind of criminal if they came up for prayer,” he said.

He said he once saw a televangelist effectively “push” two men down when he laid hands on them after they acknowledged they struggled with homosexuality.

“It was a very stark contrast to what he did with a girl who came up and said she was struggling with suicide,” Foster said. “He took her and held her and comforted her. But the two men he knocked down. That’s always been my concern: What happens after these services like this? What happens to these people?”

Meanwhile, Cass said Manifested Glory is bearing the brunt of “intolerant” gay activism.

“Where is the tolerance for a church who tried to help a young man who freely asked for help to overcome homosexual temptations?” he asked. “No church deserves to be maligned for trying to help a troubled teen who asked for prayer.”

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