

Christian Leaders, Please Speak the Truth about Homosexuality Plainly and with Love

To my brothers and sisters in ministry, I appeal to you in the sight of God: Please speak plainly and clearly when it comes to homosexuality, and please do so with compassion and love.

At this critical time in history, we've got no business dancing around these life-and-death issues, issues which affect people we love. We've got no business playing games with words, trying to be so subtle that no one understand us, working so hard not to offend that we fail to warn and save. We've got no business being unclear when God's Word is so clear, and we've got no business calling ourselves representatives of Jesus when our hearts don't flow with His love.

Just consider what's happening in our society today.

Drag queens are reading stories to our two-year-old children in libraries.

Kindergarteners are learning about being trans.

Middle-schoolers are encouraged to come out as gay without their parents knowing. College students have to share their PGPs (Preferred Gender Pronouns) at the start of each semester (as in, "I'm Shannon, and my preferred gender pronouns are ze and zir.").

Business colleagues have lost their livelihoods because they could not in good conscience participate in a same-sex "wedding."

And we're afraid to be direct and clear because we don't want to offend someone? How is that strategy working?

In Ontario, if your child identifies as transgender and you don't affirm and support them, they can report you to their school, which can report you to the government, and your child can be taken from you to be raised by others. This is now the law in Ontario!

Yet we're afraid that if we speak up we'll lose some tithing members? What kind of compromise is this? Are we mercenaries or are we men and women of God?

Things have gotten to the point where boys and men are competing against girls and women, smashing records and winning competitions because they identify as females. But we don't want to rock the boat just in case one of our friends or family members is transgender.

How about speaking the truth in love – with tears, with compassion, and with care, but without compromise? True compassion is not silent. True compassion warns.

There's a reason some of us have been sounding the alarm for years, despite the vilification that comes our way and despite the doors of ministry that shut in our face. We've seen where this was going and we've known that the price to pay for silence is much greater than the price to pay for obedience. Do we still not see the handwriting on the wall?

Our society is now celebrating menstruating "men" and glorifying pregnant "dads" who plan to breastfeed their kids, yet we don't want to rock the boat. My friend, the boat is ready to capsize!

One California college is dealing with a credible threat of violence from a 46-year-old male student who identifies as a woman and is upset because there are no urinals in the women's restrooms. As a local website reports, "She also noted how

walking around on Southwestern's campus in a bra or panties for three days has opened her eyes to having the brain of a having male anatomy."

This is sickness and madness, yet rather than raise our voices like a trumpet and teach clearly about gender and sexuality and marriage, we retreat behind our safe sermons and soft words. In the process, we hurt people far more than we help them.

I was speaking at a conference last year when the conference organizer stated that a famous American pastor now supported same-sex "marriage." Because I had this pastor's contact information, I texted him, asking him how he would respond. He replied, "I don't support this. Please ask him to correct it."

I was glad he responded like this, but that only begged the question. Why was there any confusion to start? Why did the conference organizer, himself a careful theologian, get this pastor's position so wrong?

Some of you are loud and clear when speaking about these issues in private but warm and fuzzy when speaking about them in public. To what purpose? To help whom?

I fully understand that most of us these days have loved ones who identify as LGBT, and we care for them deeply. As expressed very powerfully in a blog post by Rebecca K. Reynolds, "There's a huge difference between speaking of gay people categorically and speaking of your gay friend, Christine, who was brutally abused by her uncle for two decades and now feels nauseated every time she smells a man. It might be possible for me to walk with an evangelical swagger and act like an expert when postulating about the first category, but the second is a real person whose story brings me to my knees."

That is a perspective we must carry in our hearts, and when people ask me about me about reaching out to the LGBT

community, the first thing I tell them is to ask God for a supernatural baptism of love for them. Love reflects the heart of God. Love reflects the life and death of our Savior. Love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:7).

But love doesn’t compromise. If it did, it would no longer be love. That’s why Reynolds could also write, “Do I think sex outside of marriage is wrong? Absolutely. Do I believe in the sanctity of male-female marriage? Yes.

“Do I also sometimes kneel beside my bed and weep for my abused friends by name—friends who seek relief in ways that don’t align with God’s word? Yes. I do.”

Oh, that all of us would have such hearts!

And that brings me to the last reason why we must speak the truth in love to our congregations and followers.

If we don’t lovingly warn that gay couple in our church about the wrongness of their relationship, we have their blood on our hands.

If we don’t tell that lesbian-identified teenager that God did not make her gay, offering her real hope in Jesus, we are contributing to her demise.

If we don’t urge that husband not to leave his wife and have sex-change surgery, telling him we’ll get in the trenches and stand with him for his marriage, he can point to us on judgment day: “They never told me it was wrong!”

So, I’m pleading with you as a fellow-leader and fellow-elder and fellow-servant. Let us stop dancing around the greatest spiritual and moral challenge of this generation, and let us do the right thing, regardless of cost or consequence. We owe it to God. We owe it our kids and grandkids. And we owe it to those who identify as LGBT.

Just this week I received an email from a woman named Nadia who used to be “married” to another woman. She wrote, “Hi Dr. Brown! First I want to thank you for having the courage to speak the truth in love on various unpopular topics, especially marriage and sexuality. Your teaching helped me find freedom in my own life.”

Let us help others find freedom as well, the freedom that comes by knowing the truth (see John 8:31-32).

So from the depth of my heart, in the strongest way I know, I urge you once more: Please join me in speaking the truth in love. The Father will be glad as you do.