

Ex-Gay Is Here to Stay

For 11 years, the Truth Wins Out website aggressively attacked those who claimed to be ex-gay, along with individuals and organizations that supported ex-gays. Last month, Wayne Besen, the founder of Truth Wins Out, announced he was closing shop because, he claimed, “we accomplished our major goals.”

What, exactly, were those goals? Wayne writes, “We helped expose and ultimately vanquish (with the help of other heroes) major ‘ex-gay’ programs including Love Won Out, Exodus International and JONAH.” Still, he reluctantly notes, “similar programs will always exist, as charlatans will provide a supply of snake oil to fill a demand.”

The reality is quite the opposite. It is true that some specific networks and ministries no longer exist. But it is more and more common for local churches to help individuals struggling with same-sex attraction, meaning that this is not only a specialist ministry.

Not only so, but the ultimate reason Exodus closed was because it lost sight of its mission, which was helping men and women deal with unwanted same-sex attraction. That’s why the most important organizations that were affiliated with Exodus left before it closed. And that’s why those organizations are still going strong to this day.

In fact, new groups like Restored Hope Network have risen up in place of Exodus, and they are not selling snake oil. They are selling the truth of the gospel, namely, that Jesus can help and change anyone and everyone. He does not exclude homosexuals from His transforming love.

Professional counselors and therapists have seen great results too, and they continue to network together to help those who struggle.

There's something else that has happened, making it more difficult for organizations like Truth Wins Out to raise funds and continue their work. More and more people have friends, family members and co-workers who are ex-gay, and so it's becoming increasingly difficult to deny their existence.

Some of these ex-gays are in wonderful, heterosexual relationships and have been for decades. Others have seen a real decrease in same-sex attraction in their lives, for which they're thrilled. And others are still attracted to the same sex but recognize this as wrong in God's sight and contrary to His design, and they are enjoying their new lives in God, even as singles.

In all cases, "gay" no longer defines them, and there are too many of these precious men and women to ignore. In fact, I'm facing a new problem now. I'm getting flooded with requests to write endorsements or forewords to books by men and women who formerly lived as gay, bisexual or transgender. That is who they were. It is not who they are.

Not only so, but the whole myth of homosexuality being "innate and immutable" has been exposed, with some gay activists even saying that they don't need to use the argument anymore, acknowledging that sexuality is fluid. As a recent headline in *USA Today* announced, "'Born this way'? It's way more complicated than that.'"

Regarding the notion that some people are born gay and can't change—something that has been a central mantra of gay activism for decades—the article notes that, "many members of the LGBTQ community reject this narrative, saying it only benefits people who feel their sexuality and gender are fixed rather than fluid, and questioning why the dignity of gay people should rest on the notion that they were gay from their very first breath."

Old myths die hard, but they do eventually die.

As for Wayne Besen himself, he is certainly a tireless, take no prisoners campaigner, and in his final Truth Wins Out statement, he listed his many accomplishments.

As for those whose efforts he did not appreciate, he spared no venom.

Accordingly, in 2011, after I worked with a group of several hundred Christians who handed out 2,500 bottles of "Jesus Loves You" water at a gay pride event in Charlotte, North Carolina, Wayne branded me an "anti-gay monster."

He wrote that my "game is to try inciting followers to possible violence against LGBT people, while innocently maintaining that he loves homosexuals and simply wants them to meet his militant and perverted version of God."

He called me "a slick dude," a "sick and cynical" person, someone with "a messiah complex [who] is a diabolical individual who aims to manipulate impressionable followers to launch some sort of holy war," noting however, that, I'm "too much of a coward to start the war" myself.

He confessed, "I do strongly believe to my core that Brown's ultimate goal is to create the conditions for a nasty physical clash." Indeed, he wrote, "The madman fully understands that he only has to create a hostile climate to inflame the most unstable of his thugs and they will eventually provoke the type of confrontation that this pathological monster deeply desires."

What makes this really sad is that, to my knowledge, Wayne actually believed what he wrote, meaning that he lived in a terrifying world of false reality. What an awful place that must be, where you imagine that peace-loving, followers of Jesus who would lay down their lives for the LGBT community are actually pathological monsters planning a violent assault.

I once interacted with Wayne on the very liberal "The David

Pakman Show,” telling him that it was his rhetoric, not mine, that was dangerous. I also asked him why it was that those who listened to my teaching most carefully showed the most love for the LGBT community. You can judge our interaction for yourself here.

The bad news is that a bullying, falsely accusing spirit is on the rise today, as gay activists and their allies try to stop people with unwanted same-sex attractions from getting help, beginning with minors. (In other words, “Thou shalt be gay, like it or not.”)

The good news is that, in the end, truth always wins out (see 2 Cor. 13:8), which is why an organization like Wayne Besen’s “Truth Wins Out” actually proclaimed its own demise the moment it was named.

As for Wayne himself, I appreciate his passion, I admire his focus, and despite the venom in his words, I enjoy his literary touch. And so, without the slightest animosity towards him, as a fellow Jew, I pray he would come to know the one who is Truth Himself, Jesus, our Messiah and Lord.

If He could transform me, a heterosexual sinner, he could transform anyone, including Wayne Besen. An ever-growing number of ex-gay readers say, “Amen!” {eoa}