

If Your Child Told You 'I'm Gay,' What Would You Do?

Thirty-five years ago at an outdoor Christian festival, I made an erroneous statement for which I was sued for \$19.5 million dollars. Thank God the case was settled. The nightmare revolved around the mistaken notion that the author of a pop psychology book was dead. The book was called, *I'm OK – You're OK*.

That catchy title is repeated oftentimes to this day in counseling parents how to handle a son or daughter revealing they are gay or lesbian. "Don't be judgmental. Convey unconditional love. Accept them as they are. Realize they're born this way. Reassure them you're okay and they're okay in whatever sexual identity they choose."

Understanding the Situation

A Catholic Republican Governor states unequivocally that he believes homosexuality is not a sin and that people are simply born that way. He'll be speaking soon at a major conservative conference and many believe he is a viable presidential candidate. His unbiblical thinking is typical of scores in our culture today.

In addition to influential politicians, advice columnists, celebrities, talk-show hosts, sports figures, famous singers, educators, counselors and even ministers affirm and celebrate individuals of all ages who are "courageous and honest to come out" as gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual. If you are a person of some importance, you'll even get a congratulatory phone call from President Obama or Michelle!

Little children are featured in YouTube videos, in DVDs and in books like *It's Perfectly Normal* (more than 1 million copies in print) that are used in schools across America to educate

and convince children from kindergarten up that it's okay to be gay. "I was really scared of coming out at an early age ... it was soothing to hear teachers and faculty at school letting me know that it's okay. Just to know that I had that support and to hear from other people at my school that it was okay, I think it really lifted a burden off my shoulders." (from *It's Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School*)

A few weeks ago in Boston a major conference of LGBT leaders and activists convened to discuss strategies for aggressively blanketing elementary, middle and high schools across the nation. Workshops and seminar sessions were held to lay out plans for continuing to establish gay clubs in every school, promote "Days of Silence" to stifle negative comments, and more effectively disseminate information to educate as well as inspire youth on the LGBT lifestyle.

This full court propaganda press is unprecedented and of epic proportions. States are now enacting laws to prevent counselors from helping a child struggling with same-sex attraction know that they can change. It is coming at our children from schools, media and political realms, including the prominent placement of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in TV, music and films.

To compound the situation, we have influential ministers who in their churches, on radio, TV and interviews downplay the entire gay issue and smile explaining it's not really part of their ministry. Their silence is deafening as they prefer to remain quiet and noncontroversial while not "offending" people they're trying to draw into their growing ministry.

Houston's lesbian mayor just passed a law making all public bathrooms, showers and dressing rooms totally accessible to either sex, any molester, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person under the guise of "eliminating discrimination." The mayor models gay partnership with her same-sex lover while declaring the legislation is "the most

personally meaningful thing I will ever do as mayor.”

I wonder what “silent” ministers in the city will do when transgender men, identifying as women, walk in on their young daughters while they’re using a public restroom?

Apostate ministers are more upfront in actually promoting the LGBT lifestyle through their so-called “biblically-based” books, instructional DVDs or their pulpit ministry. What message is sent to the youth of America when the minister at our National Cathedral in D.C. welcomes a transgender minister to preach with, “This is in support of greater equality for the transgender community ... to send a message of love and affirmation especially to LGBT youth ... that’s the way God made you!”

Here’s the deal: People of faith must awaken to these demonic schemes to destroy marriage and family in America while not being surprised that more and more children and youth are entertaining demonically planted thoughts: “I’m gay” or “Am I gay?” We need godly counsel so we’re prepared to handle this emergent reality.

My Child Says “I’m Gay” – A Suggested Scriptural Strategy

1. “Pray Continually” (1 Thess. 5:17). From the moment of the initial confession throughout the entire journey, pray and fast in faith the same way you would engage with God for someone’s salvation or healing. “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26). Reject all fatalism and leanings towards some predestination of your child to this lifestyle. Do not believe this to be a life sentence!

2. Listen Lovingly and Intentionally. “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...” (James 1:19). Make a quality decision to keep the lines of communication open from the initial disclosure and beyond. It

will take time to process what's unfolding so avoid any knee-jerk response. "Pressure reveals the person" so draw on the grace of God to be gracious and self-controlled, remembering that youthful confusion about sexual identity is common.

Young people also are usually very uninformed on the serious health risks associated with the not-so-gay lifestyle. Counter the ignorance by sensitively sharing CDC facts—not made up "scare tactics". (See "Why Homosexual Love Stories Don't have Happy Endings" on my website, .) Read it aloud to your child.

3. Clarify Exactly What Your Child Means by "Coming Out as Gay." "The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out" (Prov. 20:5). Is your son or daughter struggling with temptation toward the same sex or acting on the attraction? Is this an incident or a persistent pattern? If the openness is there (it's advisable to go dad with son/ mom with daughter) gently go further to inquire about origins, fantasies, gay pornography, frequenting gay bars and hanging with gay friends. Finally, try to ascertain what adults/friends are influencing your son or daughter's thinking at this vulnerable and impressionable season of their life.

4. Encourage Disclosure by Calm and Skillful Inquiry. Ask if there has been sexual abuse; youthful curiosity and experimentation; adult manipulation or molestation; masturbation with gay pornography; etc. Lead the way here with humility, wisdom and age-appropriate transparency regarding any of your youthful indiscretions (being discreet and avoiding names) and what lessons you learned.

5. In Your Prayerful Preparation for Times of Discussion, Avail Yourself of the Right Resources. "Wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matt. 7:15) are out there like Matthew Vines, Jay Bakker, Ray Boltz and other gay-affirming leaders. They must be avoided like the plague! They're smooth and sneaky and

seducing multitudes.

Instead go to the websites of biblically faithful leaders like Dr. Michael Brown, Dr. David Foster, Dr. Robert Gagnon, Stephen Bennett and, may I humbly submit, myself, for resources that will keep you on the right path and encourage you in your time of need. At the right time, may I suggest that you sit and watch together with your struggling son or daughter, "Such Were Some of You" by David Foster's ministry or "Is Gay OK? 10 Things Everyone Needs to Know" at my website listed above. If your son or daughter is living at home under your authority, make this a directive not an elective. Remember you are not their "buddy" but their parent and one day you will give an account to God for their life.

6. "Take Your Thoughts Captive" (2 Cor. 10:5) Knowing "Fear Has Torment" (1 John 4:17). Be intentional in renouncing all negative thoughts such as "We'll never get through this," "God is punishing us," "What will our church think?" "Our other children may follow," "He'll bring his 'lover' over and neighbors will see," "He'll die of AIDS," or "She'll kill herself." Be radical in replacing these destructive thoughts with faith-building thoughts as you wield the "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Go to and listen regularly to "Biblical Declarations to Build Your Faith" as a free resource to keep you "strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might" (Eph. 6:10). In 42 years of ministry, this has always been the No. 1 requested resource!

7. Confide in Trusted Friends and, Ideally, a Pastor. "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up" (Eccl. 4:9-10). The Christian life was never intended to be lived in isolation but rather true community. Pray and then approach those you trust so they can hold up your arms during this season.

8. Consider Contacting "Lead Them Home Ministry" () For

Supplemental Help. This wonderful ministry trains church leaders and families how to minister to those with same-sex attraction. Their “Posture Shift” seminar and “Family Care” support team can come alongside of those in need until they find their breakthrough.

9. Extend Compassion and Care to Your Child Without Compromising or Condoning the Homosexual Lifestyle. God requires absolute purity before marriage and total fidelity in marriage, as He ordained it, between one man and one woman. All sex outside of covenant marriage is sin, strictly prohibited, including ALL homosexual involvement.

When a child casually or flippantly says, “I’m coming out—I’m gay. I’m just affirming who I really am” a parent has a solemn responsibility to charitably and clearly set the standard straight. “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

At God’s appointed time, ideally the father in a united front with the mother must resist any manipulation or intimidation and state something like the following: “My son/daughter, we love you more than you can imagine, and God allowed us as a couple to unite in a procreative act that brought you into this world. Your thinking is totally unacceptable to God and us. It dishonors our Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to save us from our sins. It is contradictory to His eternal plan for marriage, which has been upheld for over 5,000 years of human history. Therefore this ‘coming out’ needs to be a coming out of deception and, like the prodigal son, returning to the God and Father who created you, loves you and has a wonderful destiny for your life. Have we made ourselves perfectly clear?”

10. Never Forget Your Child is Jesus Christ’s Purchased Possession Whom He Loves Immensely and Will Fight to Rescue From This Deception.

No matter what the culture conveys about the beauty and finality of homosexuality, it is built upon lies propagated by Satan himself. Only God knows how many hundreds of thousands of formerly deceived men and women have been set free from the bondage of this sinful and shameful lifestyle through the proclamation of the gospel and biblical truth.

My Christian brother, Stephen Bennett, was entrapped in a lifestyle of depression, drugs and homosexuality where he gave himself to more than 100 homosexual partners (many of whom are now dead from HIV/AIDS). He was born again in 1992. Today he lives a liberated life with his beautiful wife of over two decades and their two children. His full-time ministry is helping reach those identifying as LGBT (). What God has done for him and others, He can do for you!

"Don't you realize that this is not the way to live? Unjust people who don't care about God will not be joining in his kingdom. Those who use and abuse each other, use and abuse sex, use and abuse the earth and everything in it, don't qualify as citizens in God's kingdom. A number of you know from experience what I'm talking about, for not so long ago you were on that list. Since then you've been cleaned up and given a fresh start by Jesus, our Master, our Messiah, and by our God present in us, the Spirit."

I Cor. 6:9-11, MSG