

Taking a Stand for Righteousness

Note: This story originally appeared in the August 2008 issue of Charisma and on . It is the second in a series of six.

It is no secret that religious gays and lesbians are on a relentless quest to establish theological credibility for same-sex relationships in the black church today. It's also no secret that they are continually gaining ground.

Although the quandary of religious homosexuality is not unique to the black church, certain efforts by religious gays are destabilizing the foundations of order, faith and biblical authority in the church.

Although a majority of black Christians believe that homosexuality is sinful, there is a sharp disconnect between belief and the application of our beliefs. In this, we are people of dead works. A myriad of sexually immoral practices exist within our churches, even among our leaders. The open stench of this blatant hypocrisy is the primary reason we have lost the authority necessary to confront the rapid advancement of homosexual-affirming theology.

Can we eradicate homosexuality in the church? No ... But we can hold false teachers and their false doctrines in check by advocating a radical return to holiness and the Word of God.

Using a false construct of "love and acceptance," these congenial prophets in our pulpits are loaded with talent, charisma and energy, but like Balaam their ultimate goal is to turn the church away from the standards of God's Word.

The church cannot become so tolerant, relevant and "next-leveled" that we forget that on the surface Satan and his ministers are attractive, engaging and persuasive (see 1 Cor.

11:14).

Despite the work of these false teachers, the greatest threat to the black church lies within. In 1996 I spoke with my pastor, G. Gillum Jr., about what I believed the Holy Spirit was showing me regarding homosexuality in the church. I recognized it because I spent 11 years in homosexuality before my radical return to Christ.

I told my pastor, "Somebody needs to do something." I'll never forget his response. He said: "You're somebody. Why don't you do something?"

His words impacted me because, the truth was, I didn't think I was anybody, and I felt powerless to do anything. Far too many saints today feel the same way, believing homosexuality is too complicated for them to address. But our silence and inaction will only make matters worse.

Despite the work of numerous ministries, including the one I founded in Atlanta, homosexuality has become more rampant among churchgoers. What's more, it is better organized and openly hostile to the truth. What is now a "storm out on the ocean" could evolve into a spiritual Katrina in the black church. Wise pastors should prepare themselves now in several ways.

First, we should heed the voices of men and women skilled in ministry to homosexuals. We must offer discipleship-based training rooted in the biblical foundations of change, healing and transformation despite sociopolitical theories about sexuality.

Second, pastors and churches must revise their procedures and policies in the face of these new challenges, including training ministers to cease using intentionally derogatory terms against homosexuals.

Third, when confronted with homosexuality among professing

Christians, we must follow the biblical mandate to offer balanced, spiritual restoration.

If we fail to prepare now, the next generation of ministry leaders may not view homosexuality as a sin but as an acceptable variant of human sexuality. Neither homosexuals nor the black church need the false hope of “radical inclusion” but a radical return to holiness and its loving truth.

DL Foster is the founder of Witness Freedom Ministries (witnessforthe) based in Atlanta.