

The Gay Marriage Debate

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I have a friend who was gay. One day the Lord spoke to him and told him being gay was not the way he was designed. Over time, he changed his sexual orientation. No one forced him or suggested treatment for being homosexual. He credits the transforming power of God for his change in sexual identity—but the mental health and gay communities try to discredit what he calls a healing.

Today, the hot issue of gay marriage has taken center stage. If you oppose it, you are labeled prejudiced and discriminating. If you voice a personal belief against it in any public forum, you will probably be attacked by gay activists. Frankly, I fail to understand the hostility.

In 1973 when Columbia University psychiatrist Robert L. Spitzer led the charge to remove homosexuality from the official list of psychiatric disorders, the gay community respected him. Years later (2001), when Spitzer presented his research findings to the American Psychiatric Association convention on whether or not a person could change his or her sexual orientation, he was blasted by gay rights activists. They didn't like what the data showed—that some people in Spitzer's study were able to change aspects of their sexual orientation.

So the gay activists claimed the sample was biased and infected by a religious connection, and they declared Spitzer an enemy of the gay community. What's interesting is that Spitzer did not conclude that all gays should try to change

their orientation or that they would be better off if they did. He simply concluded that sexual orientation was not invariably fixed for all people. The angry reaction to his conclusions was beyond reason.

Professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA) support the legalization of same-sex marriages. They take the strong position that sexual orientation is not a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed: "Human beings cannot choose to be either gay or straight."

They are partly right. Human beings have a poor record when it comes to change in this area. But when you move out of the human realm and make way for the spiritual, nothing is impossible. Apparently, the APA chooses to limit God.

Other mental health organizations such as the National Association of Social Workers not only support same-sex marriage but also maliciously go after Christian reparative therapy (designed to change sexual orientation), labeling it futile and immoral. Never have I seen such a venomous attack aimed at one group.

Gay activists have been extremely successful in reframing gay marriage. It is no longer a moral, social or religious debate but a civil rights issue. Just read this conclusion from the APA briefing statement on same-sex marriage and families: "Psychological research provides no evidence to justify discrimination against same-sex couples and families."

I would hope not. Who wants to justify discrimination? That's not the issue.

It seems mental health organizations have succumbed to the political pressure put on them by gay activists, who control the dialogue. Actually, there is no dialogue—just a monologue. If you don't agree with their position, you are homophobic, discriminating and intolerant. There is no room for a different opinion based on religious argument, even when people testify to having changed.

My concern is that in today's climate, researchers might avoid asking questions if there is a chance the answers won't support the gay agenda. Can gay marriage legitimately be studied if researchers are vilified for even questioning its validity?

My point is this. Why is there such anger and hostility addressed to those who believe differently? To my knowledge, no one is rounding up gay people and forcing them to change their sexual orientation. But if a gay or lesbian person asks for help because he or she wants to change, why should that person be denied help and forced to accept their sexuality, or be personally discredited?

Christians acknowledge the life-changing power of Christ, a variable rarely studied in research. When God intervenes, nothing is impossible. To think otherwise is disrespectful to those who desire change.

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