

Universalism Is Next for the Soft Love Crowd

Demi Lovato is the latest professing Christian (and celebrity) to declare that, “The LOVING God that I believe in, would never condemn anyone for loving another human of the same sex.”

What’s the next step on this slippery theological slope?

I predict it will be: “The LOVING God that I believe in would never condemn anyone.” Just watch and see.

We know that one of the greatest strengths of the “gay Christian” movement is that there are lots of really nice people who are same-sex attracted, and some of them profess deep faith in Jesus and are active in compassionate and sacrificial service to the poor and needy.

How could a loving God condemn people like them?

I personally find that to be a very powerful question—one that I have agonized over before my heavenly Father many times. In fact, I honestly believe that if questions like this don’t cause us some level of pain then we don’t really have the heart of the Lord.

But here’s the problem: It’s not just same-sex attracted people we’re talking about.

I personally know many fine individuals who are ultra-Orthodox Jews. In fact, as human beings go (meaning, we’re all flawed and lacking), some of them are exceptional people, fearing God, seeking to keep His commandments, willing to give their lives for their faith, pouring into their families, studying the Scriptures and their traditional writings, and praying for hours every day.

How could a loving God send people like that to hell?

But it's not just Orthodox Jews. Some Muslims are exceptional human beings (most Muslims are not suicide bombers), as are some Hindus and Buddhists and atheists and others, including secular Jews and Mormons and people of all kinds of faiths and non-faiths.

Some are extremely kind and generous. Some are very patient and long-suffering. Some will give you the proverbial shirt off their backs.

How could a loving God send people like that to hell?

It was not that long ago that Steve Chalke, then recognized as a top evangelical leader in England, came out against the concept of substitutionary atonement (the idea that Jesus took the penalty for our sins on the cross), declaring it to be "cosmic child abuse." (Chalke also had a big problem with the idea that God actually required blood to appease His wrath, basically rejecting inspired teachings of the Torah as accommodations to pagan religion.)

Last year, he declared his support for committed, same-sex relationships within the church, calling on other believers to stand with these same-sex couples.

Is that really such a big surprise? And where will Chalke eventually land on the subject of future punishment for the lost, given his current stands? (I understand that Chalke has done a tremendous amount of good over the years in the U.K., with some even calling him the "Billy Graham of the U.K.," which makes his theological backsliding even more painful.)

A breakdown in one area of theology leads to a breakdown in another area of theology, and over time, these kinds of breakdowns—specifically, minimizing aspects of God's wrath, failing to grasp the depth of human sin, affirming committed homosexual relationships—will lead to universalism (or, at

least universal reconciliation, a related but slightly different concept).

Rob Bell is another example of this, although proceeding in a little different order, first questioning concepts of future punishment in his *Love Wins* book and then affirming his support for same-sex couples in the church.

But this is just a variation of the same theme, one that allows us to sit in judgment of God, and, based on our standards of right and wrong, determine what His standards should be. The biblical way, of course, is the exact opposite.

According to Steve Chalke, the traditional teaching of God's wrath being poured out on His Son on the cross "stands in total contradiction to the statement 'God is love.'"

But couldn't it be just as easily argued that any type of future punishment for the lost, especially if it does not result in their ultimate salvation, "stands in total contradiction to the statement 'God is love'?"

After all, why would a loving God punish someone or judge someone when there's no hope of their redemption? Wouldn't that be utterly cruel?

And what about all the nice people who don't believe just as we do? Are they eternally lost? And let's not forget all the "gay Christians" (by which I mean those who claim to follow Jesus and practice homosexuality at the same time). Surely a loving God would not condemn nice people like them.

Do you see the pattern?

In a previous article, I pointed out that, although not an absolute rule, "with consistency, you'll see that as a church group gets more liberal, they become pro-abortion, pro-gay activism, and pro-Palestinian (at the expense of Israel)."

In the same way, as churches and church leaders become more

embracing of committed, homosexual couples, they will move further and further away from the preaching of future wrath and divine judgment, ultimately embracing universalism in one form or another.

As I said, watch and see. And don't forget to pray that our loving God would deliver them from error and bring them back to the truth as it is found in Jesus.

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