

Will Chris Broussard Become a Martyr of the Media?

You knew it was going to happen sooner or later. An athlete in a major pro sport would come out as gay, declaring himself a Christian as well, and a Christian journalist would be asked for his take on the subject, only to be labeled intolerant and bigoted. How could it be otherwise?

It's true that in 2009, ESPN writer Chris Broussard opined that the NBA was "ready" for an openly gay player, explaining, "By 'ready' I don't mean that everyone on the guy's team or in his organization will like the fact that he's a homosexual, or that the guy might not get called names by opponents on the court, or even that his own teammates might not chuckle behind his back."

Instead, Broussard explained, "By 'ready' I mean that players will tolerate a homosexual teammate or opponent. Like Charles Barkley said, some have been doing that already ... Thus, whenever a current player comes out as gay, you will hear overwhelming support for the guy."

At the same time, Broussard stated plainly, "I'm a born-again, Bible-believing Christian (no, I'm not a member of the Religious Right). And I'm against homosexuality (I believe it's a sin) and same-sex marriage.

"But," he said, "before you label me 'homophobic,' know that I'm against any type of sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman. That includes heterosexual fornication (premarital sex)."

That, however, wasn't Broussard's punch line. Rather, his point was this: "I'm saying all that to say that if I can play basketball with a homosexual, just about anyone can."

So, Broussard holds to basic, biblical teaching about sexual morality, but that doesn't stop him from being a friend or a teammate or a neighbor to a gay man or woman. In fact, he went on to mention his friendship with openly gay ESPN journalist LZ Granderson, with whom he also played basketball in several rec leagues.

But the stakes are much higher now, and it is virtually forbidden today for a secular journalist (as opposed to a religious commentator) to express any difference with homosexual practice (although it's becoming increasingly difficult even for a religious commentator to speak out).

So, it's no surprise that, on the day that NBA center Jason Collins declared his homosexuality, Broussard was asked for his take on Collins' claim to be a Christian.

His answer was consistent with his beliefs: "I'm a Christian. I don't agree with homosexuality," Broussard said. "I think it's a sin, as I think all sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman is.

"If you're openly living in unrepentant sin"—speaking again of homosexual practice, not simply being gay—"that's walking in open rebellion to God and to Jesus Christ."

Now, from a biblical perspective, this is pretty basic stuff, but in speaking so candidly, Broussard violated an unspoken media rule: Thou shalt not speak critically of homosexuality in any way, shape, size or form.

I wonder how long it will be before Broussard is pressured into offering a groveling, "I'm not homophobic" apology or before he is required to go to sensitivity training, being reminded that his comments were the cause of another gay teen suicide. (I'm not for a moment belittling the tragedy of a young person taking his or her life, and we should do whatever is right to help prevent that. I'm simply pointing out that today, when you hold to biblical standards, you're told that

the blood of gay teens is on your hands. I'm often told this in the comments section after my articles.) Is it even possible that Broussard could be fired if he doesn't recant?

Already in Canada, sports broadcaster Damian Goddard "lost his job after tweeting his support of marriage as the union of one man and one woman."

According to Goddard's website, "After a career of nearly 20 years spanning both radio and television sports broadcasting, and at the time one of the leading anchors on Sportsnet, Goddard was immediately fired for voicing his view on marriage. He now has a case before the Human Rights Commission challenging his dismissal." (Unfortunately, Goddard's case was just dismissed by the Human Rights Commission.)

Could this happen to Broussard? It wouldn't surprise me in the least if it did.

Interviewed along with Broussard was his gay colleague LZ Granderson, who stated that he would love to be able not to have premarital sex (another sin listed by Broussard) but that today in America, he can't even marry.

Of course, there are now nine states where Granderson could "marry" a gay partner, but that's hardly the point. First, no one is making him have sex if he wants to avoid "premarital sex." Second, he can walk into any number of churches and have a same-sex "wedding" ceremony performed, if the issue is doing what is right in God's sight. (To be clear, I'm talking from the perspective of a "gay Christian," not from the perspective of Scripture.) Third, the sexual desires and romantic attractions of a tiny percent of the population are not a legitimate justification for redefining marriage, regardless of the latest PC mantra.

But returning to Chris Broussard, who is being lambasted for his "intolerant and bigoted" stand, will he become the next martyr of the media for openly holding to biblical

convictions?

Time will tell, but my message to Chris is simple: Stand strong, brother. You have spoken the truth.

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