

Phil Robertson Says He Won't 'Give or Back Off' in Wake of Controversy

Phil Robertson has spoken publicly for the first time since A&E indefinitely suspended him from the hit reality series *Duck Dynasty* last week following controversial statements he made.

The patriarch of the Robertson family found himself embroiled in controversy when an interview he did with *GQ* magazine was published Wednesday, in which he made remarks about homosexuality. On Thursday A&E announced his suspension.

When asked what is sinful, the 67-year-old answered, "Start with homosexual behavior and just morph out from there—bestiality, sleeping around with this woman and that woman and that woman and those men."

Paraphrasing 1 Corinthians, he said, "Don't be deceived. Neither the adulterers, the idolaters, the male prostitutes, the homosexual offenders, the greedy, the drunkards, the slanderers, the swindlers—they won't inherit the kingdom of God. Don't deceive yourself. It's not right."

On Sunday during a 45-minute Bible study class he leads at his church in West Monroe, La., Robertson responded to the controversy.

"I love all men and women. I am a lover of humanity, not a hater," the Duck Commander company founder said at the class at White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, which he allowed a *Daily Mail* reporter to attend.

"I am just reading what was written over 2,000 years ago," he explained. "Those who live like this will not inherit the

kingdom. All I did was quote from the Scriptures, but they just didn't know it. Whether I said it, or they read it, what's the difference? The sins are the same, humans haven't changed."

Robertson closed the Bible study with a prayer, which included the words, "I will not give or back off from my path because You conquered death, Father, so we are not worried about all the repercussions."

The future of *Duck Dynasty*, which just finished shooting its fifth season, is unclear.

"While some of Phil's unfiltered comments to the reporter were coarse, his beliefs are grounded in the teachings of the Bible," the Robertson family said in a statement released late Thursday night. "We have had a successful working relationship with A&E, but as a family we cannot imagine the show going forward without our patriarch at the helm."

Other networks that have offered to run *Duck Dynasty* include Daystar, the Hunt Channel and the Pursuit Channel, but the Robertsons' contract with A&E reportedly says the family couldn't do another show for a certain period of time.