

Pro-LGBT Christians Take Aim at Bible-Based Nashville Statement

When prominent evangelical leaders, including Francis Chan, John Piper and Russell Moore signed their names to the “Nashville Statement,” they ignited quite a controversy.

Named for the city where it was signed, the Nashville Statement affirms the Bible’s description of marriage as between one man and one woman. Hundreds of evangelical leaders signed the document and released it Tuesday.

But other leaders in the faith community were not happy, and they created a statement of their own.

“For decades, many pastors, theologians and reformers have boldly responded to the Holy Spirit’s call and have stepped forward to call the church to a renewed understanding of Christian teaching on sexuality and gender identity that includes, affirms and embraces the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and non-binary, queer community as created and fully blessed by God and welcomed in to the life of the church and society just as they are, without a need to conform to the heteronormative, patriarchal, binary sexuality and gender paradigm that Christianity has come to promote and embrace. As these prophetic voices have stepped forward, some within traditional Christian institutions have gone great lengths to demonize, exclude and marginalize those who have faithfully followed the Holy Spirit’s leading to reexamine Scripture and the tradition, claiming that these reformers were false teachers or heretics, and represented only a small percentage of Christians worldwide,” reads the Christians United statement, which is signed by “Science Mike” McHargue, Brendan Robertson and Trey Pearson, among others.

The statement continues by affirming culture's definition of marriage and romance.

"WE AFFIRM that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and that the great diversity expressed in humanity through our wide spectrum of unique sexualities and gender identities is a perfect reflection of the magnitude of God's creative work," according to Article 1. "WE DENY any teaching that suggests God's creative intent is limited to a gender binary or that God's desire for human romantic relationships is only to be expressed in heterosexual relationships between one man and one woman."

Despite the contrarian statement, signees of the Nashville Statement are holding to their convictions.

Here's what some of them are saying:

Denny Burk, President, Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

The spirit of our age does not delight in God's good design of male and female. Consequently, confusion reigns over some of the most basic questions of our humanity. The aim of The Nashville Statement is to shine a light into the darkness—to declare the goodness of God's design in our sexuality and in creating us as male and female.

Russell Moore, President, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

The Nashville Statement is an urgently needed moment of gospel clarity. In a culture nearly defined by sexual confusion and brokenness, the church of Jesus Christ has to proclaim with one voice that God's good design for gender, marriage and sexuality. To capitulate to the spirit of the age or wring our hands in outrage at those around us would be to abandon our mission field. The Sexual Revolution cannot

keep its promises, and the church must stand ready to receive with compassion the many who are in need of a better hope. The Nashville Statement is part of that mission, and my prayer is that it will help anchor churches and Christians to the gospel of Jesus Christ for years to come.

Rosaria Butterfield, Author, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*

I am signing The Nashville Statement because I stand with biblical orthodoxy, the only witness for hope and peace and God's blessing. By God through the merit and power of Jesus Christ, here I stand.

John Piper, Founder and Teacher, Desiring God; Chancellor, Bethlehem College and Seminary

The Nashville Statement is a Christian manifesto concerning issues of human sexuality. It speaks with forthright clarity, biblical conviction, gospel compassion, cultural relevance and practical helpfulness. There is no effort to equivocate for the sake of wider, but muddled, acceptance. It is built on the persuasion that the Christian Scriptures speak with clarity and authority for the good of humankind. It is permeated by the awareness that we are all sinners in need of divine grace through Jesus Christ. It affirms with joy that no form of sexual sin is beyond forgiveness and healing. It touches the most fundamental and urgent questions of the hour, without presuming to be a blueprint for political action. And it will prove to be, I believe, enormously helpful for thousands of pastors and leaders hoping to give wise, biblical and gracious guidance to their people.