

‘We Made the Right Decision’ to Kill Book By Author Who Came Out As Gay, Christian Publisher Says

Citing major financial considerations, Nori Media Group CEO Don Nori continues to stand firm behind his company’s decision not to publish Brandan Robertson’s manuscript, *Nomad: Not-So-Religious Thoughts on Faith, Doubt and the Journey in Between*.

Destiny Image, a subsidiary of Nori Media Group, recently expressed its stance to Robertson in publishing the manuscript, telling him there were concerns that evangelical bookstores would not carry the book.

A former student at Moody Bible Institute, Robertson made a reference to homosexuality in his manuscript. He recently revealed to *Time* magazine that he “identifies as queer.”

Had Destiny Image continued on its course in publishing the book, Nori said it would not only have been a bad decision for his company, but also for Robertson.

“I can tell you this. If we had published this book, I would have failed him as a publisher,” Nori said. “We would not have been able to sell more than a few hundred copies in our marketplace. We are solidly a Christian company.

“Some may scoff—and they will—at that reasoning, but I wanted to honor the author in a gentle way, giving him the respect he deserves, by releasing him. I believe that Jesus wants us to take everybody’s best interests at heart and to make the best decisions for everyone. I believe we have done that. The author can now take the book to a secular publishing company and he will most likely be very successful with it.”

Upon his graduation from Moody, Robertson became a national spokesperson for Evangelicals for Marriage Equality, an organization started to persuade evangelicals to support civil gay marriages.

According to the *Time* article, “the word gay appears in (Robertson’s) manuscript only one time.” In the manuscript, Robertson is quoted as saying, “One high school biology class is all that it takes to begin asking some serious questions about the book of Genesis and the origins of humanity. One conversation with a close friend who is struggling to be gay and Christian is all that it takes to begin wondering if the interpretation of Leviticus we heard in Sunday school is actually applicable in today’s context.”

In a phone interview with *Charisma*, Robertson said his “issue isn’t with Destiny Image, it’s with the buyers. The real problem is the Christian book industry won’t pick up my manuscript because of my support for LGBT equality.

“Yes, I am disappointed that Destiny dropped my book. The phone call I got from them was very apologetic, and that it was for financial reasons—that it wouldn’t be bought by Christian bookstores. My understanding was that they wanted to publish a progressive book and that there was space for me there. It’s very frustrating and disheartening.”

Nori said Destiny initially agreed to publish Robertson’s manuscript because the author is “very progressive.” Nori said Destiny “knew he was an endorser of the LGBT, but didn’t know that he was a participant” until he refused to honor Destiny’s position statement on the gay and lesbian lifestyle.

“When we recently discovered questions that arose regarding his position on homosexuality in the church, I sent him our statement,” Nori said. “We told him if it’s something you can agree with, that would be fine. He said he did not agree with our statement.

“Based on that, I would not be successful in promoting him as an author in our marketplace. Financially, it simply would not be prudent. We would not be a good steward of the finances that the Lord has given us. We simply cannot get behind where he is at.”

Destiny Image’s position statement on the gay and lesbian lifestyle, released in June 2007, says:

“Destiny Image accepts the Holy Scriptures as the infallible word of God and answers all questions concerning life and godliness. We do not condone, encourage, or accept the homosexual lifestyle. Destiny Image renounces this lifestyle as ungodly and completely contrary to the Kingdom of God.”

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6: 9-11).

“But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted” (1 Tim. 1: 8-11).

Nori said the pushback from this issue has been “scathing and harsh,” and that he anticipates more to come.

“I believe we made the right decision, and it’s one I know that other kingdom leaders would applaud,” Nori said. “We

reached out to some very important kingdom people and they advised us on this. "Simply put, we dropped a book. His (the author's) value system is not in line with ours."

Nori reiterated that the decision not to publish the book was financial in nature.

"We did not reject or refuse," Nori said. "As with all books, a publisher decides what is financially viable. We released the book back to the author with our sincere prayers for his success. This occurrence happens every season."