

## FIRST-PERSON: A biblical response to unholy gay 'matrimony'

Posted on Sep 19, 2003 | by Ronnie Floyd

*EDITORS' NOTE: Baptist Press today carries a sermon by Ronnie Floyd preached Sept. 14 at First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark. The sermon outlines a Christian stance in response to homosexual activism in American life. The biblical text for the sermon is 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will 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 and by the Spirit of our God" (NKJV). Floyd has been pastor of the Springdale church since 1986, and his messages are aired via "Invitation to Life," a syndicated national broadcast. He is a former chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee and former president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, and he delivered the 1996 SBC annual meeting's convention sermon.*

SPRINGDALE, Ark. (BP)--Introduction: The events of our nation and the episodes happening in the courts and churches of our land have caused me to stand and speak to you about "The Gay Agenda: A Biblical Response to Unholy Matrimony."

I do not rise to speak on this issue with my own agenda, but I do rise to speak on this issue with God's agenda. I do rise to speak on this issue out of brokenness, realizing the many families in our own church who have lost family members to the homosexual lifestyle. I have seen them weep, grope and beg God for divine intervention. I have sat in a circle with them, their faces drooped, so burdened with something that is beyond words. I have had some say to me, "Pastor Floyd, it would have been easier to have lost my child to death than to homosexuality. It is killing me." With this same burden, I have attempted to assist those who are in that lifestyle who want out but are so blinded by their sin they do not think there is a way out.

This burden translated into challenging one of our families to begin a ministry that would assist and minister support to other families who have lost sons, daughters, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts to the homosexual lifestyle. This ministry is called "HOPE," meaning, Heal Our Pain El Shaddai. Due to our commitment to helping these families receive assistance, our own church and this ministry has come under attack from other churches and Christians because we even minister to these families. Well, we do believe there is hope. Through the years our ministry has also ministered to those in the gay lifestyle, attempting to see them receive what they want so desperately -- deliverance.

So for any media that may be represented here due to the sensitivity of the issue, please balance what I say in relationship to my heart and actions to help those in a practical way be released from the bondage of the gay lifestyle and help their families who wait in hope for them to be set free.

It is interesting to see how the word "gay" became so distorted. It has gone through quite a journey. The root of the word can be traced back all the way to the 12th century in Germany. Its root meant "hurried or imperious." In the 13th or 14th century, the German root of the word then evolved and eventually came to mean "full of joy or mirth" in the Old French language. In the 13th and 14th centuries, it began to be used around the French city of Provence in reference to courtly love. Provence was an area that was apparently known for activity by homosexuals. In a master's dissertation by Ken Cage at Rand Afrikaans University, he writes, "gay people throughout the Western world have, for a long time, used a secret form of language to communicate among themselves."

So the term, "gay," came into use by the homosexual community in reference to themselves long before the word came into common usage. In 1938, a very public use of the word occurred in a movie starring Cary Grant. In this movie he was dressed in a woman's lace nightgown and he was asked if he always dressed this way. His reply is, "No, I've just gone gay all of a sudden." In 1941, the term "gay" was used as a slang term for a homosexual in a book entitled, "Sexual Variations." In 1969, New York City police raided a bar at Greenwich Village that was frequented by homosexuals. Through that ordeal and the ensuing protests, the word, "gay," took on its modern usage in our world.

It appears now that everywhere you look, everything you read and everything you hear is about the gay lifestyle. Satan has taken his tool of homosexuality, a gross and evil sin, and done a con job on the American culture, making it seem like all is okay when you are gay. I hope you are aware that what was once subtle has now turned into the rage of a lion as brazen and threatening as anything in our culture. I must sound the trumpet loud and clear, praying that we do not run in retreat, but march in the truth of God valiantly. This is not a skirmish or a conflict or a disagreement, but it is a war. The war they have declared against our culture has an agenda and we need to be aware of it.

Let me address it because:

1. The gay agenda is beginning to win some major battles.

- (1) Legally.

In the court case, Lawrence v. Texas, John Geddes Lawrence and Tyron Garner were engaging in homosexual acts in Houston, therefore, fined due to a Texas sodomy law. This occurred five years ago. After legal battles, it ended up in the United States Supreme Court. On June 26, 2003, a legal and moral earthquake occurred when the United States Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that Texas' law against private consensual sex between adults of the same sex is unconstitutional. This is the case that has catapulted the gay issue since June 26. This is why you are hearing and seeing it everywhere. Some believe it is as profound of a case as Roe v. Wade that permitted abortion in this nation.

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote in sharp dissent of the decision. He accused the court, of which he is a part, as having "largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda," forecasting that "same-sex marriage" would be the logical next step.

Three years ago the state of Vermont became the first state to enact a law allowing same-sex civil unions. Massachusetts and New Jersey are expected to rule on cases of like manner very soon.

The Netherlands and Belgium already extend marriage rights to gay couples. Germany, France, Sweden and Denmark also have "civil union" laws. Canada is in the middle of it right now. The Canadian government appears to be heading for a showdown on this issue as they are leading the way to same-sex marriage. However, the opposition is ferocious. One of the members of the Parliament stated, "I've never seen an issue like this." Pray for Canada to not take the action of sanctioning same-sex marriage.

The gay agenda is winning some major battles legally.

(2) Politically.

In our whimsy, flimsy, non-courageous poll-driven political world, the gay agenda is winning some battles. Politicians are all over the map on this issue, not certain where they will land.

USA Today reported on July 28th that something interesting has occurred. In early May, the polls showed that support for legal relations between gay couples was as high as 60 percent favoring that action. At the same time, only 35 percent of Americans said no. However, since the Supreme Court made their decision, this has changed dramatically. Now the polls are showing many less people in favor of it and the opposition to it has risen to almost 60 percent. What has happened now is people are seeing the reality of this gay agenda about to take over our culture and they are just now becoming aware of the issue. It takes time for the American public to wake up on these issues.

President George W. Bush has been caught in a major challenge in this issue. Yet, he stated courageously on July 30 to the American people, "I believe in the sanctity of marriage. I believe marriage is between a man and a woman, and I think we need to codify that one way or the other." The White House is considering supporting an amendment to the Constitution limiting marriage to being between a woman and a man.

Personally, I do not see any way to keep marriage sanctified between a man and woman only in this nation unless major spiritual revival occurs or a constitutional amendment is adopted limiting marriage as being between a man and a woman. This action alone will take a miracle and at least at this point in time I would support it. However, if they attempt to tag on to the legislation other matters, such as recognizing the gay lifestyle as an alternative lifestyle, then I would have to reconsider my support. The war wages on because the gay agenda is also winning some major battles.

### (3) Educationally.

The University of Michigan is offering a course called, "How To Be Gay: Male Homosexuality and Initiation." Professor David M. Halperin says the course does not teach students to be homosexuals but does teach them there are right and wrong ways to be gay.

New York City has created the nation's first public high school for gays, bisexuals and transgender students. It will have 170 students in September, tripling its enrollment from the year before.

Do you remember the words, "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine"? In The Cambridge Friends School in Cambridge, Mass., the gay light is shining brightly. Children in this entire school even as young as 5 or 6 celebrate Gay and Lesbian Day. In a school-wide assembly a man named Jeff, one of its teachers, stood and said, "I can tell the truth that I'm a gay man. That gives me much more energy to be a better teacher, to be a better coworker and to be a friend." The students applauded as if he had cancelled school for one month. Other teachers came out that day besides Jeff admitting they were gay.

One of the hot things happening in our high schools and colleges today is bisexuality, mainly occurring with girls. This means that girls enjoy being with boys sexually and also enjoy being with girls sexually. They are bi-sexual, meaning they cross over the sexes. I have been informed this is happening very much in our local schools as well. This is a very distorted view of sexuality, one that will lead to major pain for the rest of their lives.

An illustration of the perversion of bisexuality occurred in New York at the 20th Annual MTV Video Music Awards. The event that proudly defines our youth culture presented the surprise of the night when Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera were performing to Madonna's "Like a Virgin." Madonna joins them and then enjoys an "open mouth kiss" with both Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera. This is an outright abomination to God.

The way that Madonna, Spears and Aguilera closed the song was they got all in a line, held up their fists and shouted together, "We're bored with the concept of right and wrong." The crowd stood in ovation and, afterwards, the kiss and this statement has been the talk of the event.

To all of you moms who tried to dress your daughter like Britney, well, what do you think now? To all of you girls who try to look and dress like Britney, well, what do you think now? To all of you boys and young men who have lusted after her, what do you think now?

There she is telling you who she really is ... telling you what she really stands for ... telling you what is important to her. What a disgrace to God. Someone so beautiful, so gifted, but so perverted and so lost.

The gay agenda is shining brightly across the educational venues of schools, books and all other

media, straight to the hearts of children and young people. Beware -- administrators, teachers, students and parents of the books, the speakers, the seminars, the emphases and in everything you participate. The gay agenda sings proudly "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine." To each of you parents, you are responsible before God for the education of your children. If something does not change, this gay force will take over our schools. Under God, you will have to make a decision: "Will God be pleased with me if I permit a gay teacher to instruct my children or gay material be taught my children?" At that point, you had better consider other options or you will answer to God for it. Listen: The gay agenda is focused and committed to evangelize the educational systems of this nation. Do not put your heads into the sand, thinking it is not happening or will not happen here in this region. Remember, they sing proudly, "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine." Parents, watch out, your children may already be in the process of being lured into the gay lifestyle because we know the problem exists in the teenage community in this region.

#### (4) Visually.

Do you know what is happening on television? The newest is called "Queer Eye For The Straight Guy." Five gay men who call themselves "The Fab Five" do a makeover on a straight guy. Another show, "Boy Meets Boy," is where a gay bachelor chooses one man among 15 other men to be his partner. Then there is the television show, "Will and Grace", and another one called "Queer as Folk."

I have never seen any of these and do not intend to do so, but understand, the goal is to baptize you into their lifestyle where it becomes normal for you to hear and see it, making you accept eventually that it is a non-threatening norm in our society.

#### (5) Practically.

The attack everywhere in our culture is to get you to see the gay lifestyle or gay couples as being the same as you. The agenda is also trying to desensitize you to them, their verbiage and lifestyle. In other words, "if you get use to us you will eventually ignore us or accept us." The bombardment and intentionality is already so great that the desensitization is already occurring. Of course, inclusiveness is their theme song. Their goal is to get themselves included into all of society and its benefits, including benefits economically. As they play the song of "inclusiveness," gay couples are now adopting children. What a tragedy. As each of us desire, the homosexual and lesbian want affirmation and will do whatever it takes to receive it. The love and acceptance they have found in the homosexual community is what lured them there and will keep them there until God intervenes.

#### (6) Ecclesiologically.

The gay agenda is now making major advancements into the church. They are winning many battles in the church. According to USA Today, in the major denominations in America five of

them ordain openly gay clergy and bless same-sex unions. These are the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Presbyterian Church USA, Episcopal Church, American Baptist Church and United Church of Christ. Remember, just because a part of these names may be on a church sign does not mean they are a part of this denomination because there are many and varied groups within some of these labels.

The recent episodes at the annual meeting of the Episcopal Church have really ignited this issue ecclesiologically. When they elected the Rev. V. Gene Robinson as bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire, rejoicing and division happened in that denomination like never before. Compromise is the only way they will not see it severed deeply. My prayer is that those who oppose it will oppose it with tenacity and with no compromise at all based on the authority of Scripture. In response to the election of Robinson to be a bishop, even though he is an active homosexual, the Rev. Sandye Wilson of the Minnesota Diocese exclaimed to The New York Times, "It's a great day for the church."

This newly elected bishop, Rev. Robinson, with his daughter, Ella, and his sexual partner for 13 years, Mark Andrew, stated, "God has once again brought an Easter out of Good Friday." That statement is an abomination to God! By the way, don't ever call me Reverend. It is obvious anyone can wear that label.

In an article in the Northwest Arkansas Times, Aug. 17, entitled, "All's God's People," subtitled, "Local Episcopal Church officials react positively to appointment of church's first gay bishop," one of the pastors of St. Paul's Episcopal Church was quoted as saying, "What God has made clean you must not call profane." He quoted from Acts 10. He said that blessing same-sex relationships of two people who plan on a lifelong dedication should not be considered less.

Saying that Acts 10 is the justification of same-sex marriage and the ordination of gay bishops is one of the highest distortions of Holy Scripture I have ever heard of in my life.

An article in the paper from Aug. 30, 2003, entitled, "Episcopal Leader Defends Approval," says: "The head of the Episcopal Church ... Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold says, 'I must say in the strongest possible terms that if I believed in any part of my being that the consent to this election was unfaithful to an authentic way of reading Scripture and contrary to the leading of the Holy Spirit, I could no longer serve as the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church,' Griswold wrote in the letter released Monday."

Well, Mr. Griswold, your position is not found in the Word of God and is contrary to the Holy Spirit of God, therefore, you should resign.

The good news is that all Episcopal churches in our region do not adhere to what has happened. The press reports that meetings have already been held nationally by many Episcopal leaders wanting to change what has happened or sever from the denomination. We need to pray for these churches to be strong in their very turbulent environment.

Unquestionably, the gay agenda is beginning to win some major battles legally, politically, educationally, visually, practically and ecclesiologically, BUT the good news is that...

2. The gay agenda will never win biblically and theologically.

In Leviticus 18:22 and in Leviticus 20:13 homosexuality is referred to as being an abomination to God. An abomination is an outrage, a disgrace, and is detestable to God. This is what God says homosexuality is.

In Romans 1:26-28, the Bible says that "God gives them over," meaning that he lets sin run its course with the homosexuals. Their rejection of God's truth has now resulted in them being given over to their vile passions, letting it run its inevitable course toward the judgment of God. This debauchery exists when women are engaged sexually with women and men are engaged sexually with men. Then God gives them over to a debased mind, which means He gives them over to the depths of their degenerate mind and lifestyle, which is not fitting to God at all. In other words, God lets their sin run its course with them.

In 1 Corinthians 6 that we read at the beginning of [today's] message, it says very strongly in verses 9-10, those who are practicing the homosexual lifestyle will not inherit the Kingdom of God. By the way, these Scriptures speak to a few other sins. The emphasis is on practicing those sins, meaning they are your habit, your lifestyle and this is what you have become.

The Word of God is saying that homosexuality is a sin that indicates strongly that there is a need for the salvation of Jesus Christ. Yet, at the same time, in verse 11 Paul reminds each one of these Christians, "And such were some of you." Listen to how else it is used in other Scripture readings:

"A number of you know from experience what I'm talking about, for not so long ago you were on that list...." (The Message).

"There was a time when some of you were just like that" (New English Translation).

"Some of you used to be like that...." (Contemporary English Bible).

In Greek, the word translated as "such" is the word "tauta." This is a nominative, neuter, plural form of the demonstrative pronoun. A simple translation of it is simply "these." Because it is a neuter form, the word "things" can be supplied in English, thus it can read "these things." This is significant because Paul is not referring to the Corinthians as people, but as things. It is as if their sin was so deep in their lives they were known specifically for it. They practiced it. It was their lifestyle. If these things are practiced or is their lifestyle and no repentance takes place, it is indicative that genuine salvation in Jesus Christ has not taken place. This should also remind us we are not against homosexuals, gays and lesbians, but we are against their sin that is blinding them even though God speaks against it so clearly.

Paul tells the people -- some of you were living in that lifestyle but now you are washed by the blood of Jesus and now have new life. You are sanctified by the Holy Spirit being transformed into a new life. You were justified, set free from your sin and now are wearing the robes of Jesus' righteousness and no longer the garments of your sinfulness. To the glory of Jesus, the Holy Spirit has done and is continuing to do this work of transformation in your life. Further, Paul was saying to them because you are washed, sanctified and justified, don't go back into these sins because if you do and stay there, it is indicative that genuine salvation has not occurred. In verses 9-10 the banner of God's truth is lifted up and in verse 11, the banner of God's grace.

Upon the authority of God's Word, the Bible, due to its inspiration being of God alone, and its infallibility as pure as God, and its impression can be made upon all of the world and even in this culture, the Bible gives no sanction to homosexuality at all. Never does God approve of it at all. He never calls it an alternate lifestyle. God is against civil unions of homosexuals. God is against same-sex "marriage." God is against the ordination of homosexuals into the ministry. Never, never, and never does God give any credibility to any issue or act of the gay lifestyle. Therefore, same-sex "marriage" is an abomination to God and any matrimony ever performed to do it is unholy, ungodly and will receive the judgment of God. Same-sex "marriage" is nothing more than an attempt to redefine one of the holiest ordinances of God, marriage between male and female. It is an attack against marriage and family.

So, upon the authority of God's Word you need to become actively involved against any effort in the courts of our land, the political processes of our land, the educational systems in our nation, the invasion of television, the practical attacks and the liberal slants of various churches and denominations toward the gay agenda. Stand strongly, wisely and tenaciously, but with love against this gay agenda. Remember, you are not against people, but against what they are doing because it is a slap into the face of God. For example, let me remind all of us, anyone who practices homosexuality can attend our church and I pray they will because in time they will be convicted by God, see a need to change and be transformed by God's grace. Yet anyone who practices homosexuality cannot serve in a ministry or lead in any capacity in our church.

Conclusion: The Good News today for each one of us, regardless of our past, our sins, or our present, is that we can be washed by the blood and given new life in Jesus Christ. We can wear the robes of Jesus' righteousness. And we can be freed, acquitted from our sins.

All sin is wrong. Only one sin determines whether you go to heaven or hell when you die -- the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as your Savior and not letting Him live actively and daily as the Lord of your life. Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins and to set us free from the penalty of those sins. He became sin for us. He became sin for you.

Regardless of your past or present, Jesus wants to save you today, cleanse you from your sin and give you eternal life in heaven. Will you receive Him today? Will you ask Him to come into your life? Luke 1:37 says, "For with God, nothing will be impossible."



If you are here today, have heard this message and you want to associate with a church that is committed to what the Bible says, I invite you to come in a moment and join in fellowship with our spiritual family. We need you and you may need us. Be bold and be courageous and come today.

If you have a friend or family member in the gay lifestyle, you might want to come to this altar and pray for them. If that is not your situation, perhaps God has given you a burden for some area of our nation concerning this gay issue, so you come and pray for that area in our nation. Let's pray together right now.

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