

A RESPONSE TO 'ACCEPTING EVANGELICALS' THE NEW 'EVANGELICALS' WHO BACK SAME SEX MARRIAGE.

I am a Christian Counsellor who has worked in the area of mental health for some 25 years, and the past few years have been particularly counselling in the area of same sex attraction. I am also a psychotherapist and I see both Christians who struggle with their sexuality and those who have no belief and who still struggle. Clients come feeling depressed and unhappy with their sexuality knowing their same sex attractions are what causes them anxiety and confusion. This of course is no longer the accepted orthodoxy. Because of that clients say they feel they are not listened to when they express those thoughts to most professionals and some within the 'evangelical' churches.

My work then with helping those who desire to change their attractions for the same sex is made increasingly more difficult by those in the church who call themselves the new 'evangelicals' and who back same sex marriage. Steve Chalk (Oasis Trust) is the most recent example of a high profile 'evangelical' who has now joined this group.

What are those of us who back orthodox biblical teaching about our sin nature and forgiveness won on the cross, and the original meaning of 'evangelical' to do about this and how should we respond.? I admire those voices who speak truth and warn about the liberalization and compromise within much of the church, not only in this area of same sex attraction but other areas as well. We need to continue above all calling out to our God and our Lord Jesus Christ for His strategy for 'such a time as this'. We need courageous leadership and a clear prophetic voice that will break through the fog of deception, misinformation, hubris, good intentions and just plain lies that abound in the church today. We need to 'contend for the faith' in our everyday lives as well as speaking out in the wider sphere.

There are many good and Godly people who do all of this, but although we are ultimately on the winning side, for His plans cannot be thwarted no matter what the opposition does, there is a sense that for the moment we are losing ground, at least here in the UK and maybe America. The hour is late for Jesus is coming soon and there a sense of urgency.

Most of the media aids and abets this pro-homosexual agenda of course, as they are firmly in the kingdom of this world. The Independent newspaper in the UK has helped give the pressure group 'Accepting Evangelicals' a higher profile by describing this group as 'the prime mover in promoting pro-gay evangelicism', probably though this is over generous in its description, as there are several such groups. On its website however it claims to be an 'open network of evangelical Christians who believe the time has come to move towards the acceptance of faithful, loving same-sex partnerships as every level of church life, and the development of a positive Christian ethic for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.'

Fine sounding, altruistic, well intentioned words, but in reality leading their people into hell. 'Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?(Luke 7 v 39). Only those leaders who love their people will teach the truth no matter how difficult and 'offensive' truth is to some; to others it is life itself.

Let me say here that I am very aware of the painful and genuine struggles of those who are caught up in this life and we the church have been negligent in our duties of love and compassion to those who are same sex attracted; but we must understand love as the Cross, as a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, and all love flows from that, within His word. Love is not defined as mans feelings however strong and well intentioned but according to His loving boundaries who has made us.

Peter Saunders (head of Christian Medical Fellowship) says on his blog (I recommend it) the key evangelical distinctives are the need for personal conversion,a high regard for biblical authority, an emphasis on the saving death and resurrection of Christ and an active obedience to and proclamation of the gospel. Sadly 'evangelical' today can have a different meaning and can mean virtually whatever you want it to mean.

In conclusion then much of what I have been saying in this response is that we have become much like the church in Laodicea, the church 'of peoples opinion'. Jacob Prasch in his book 'The Dilemma of Laodicea' explains it perfectly; (Moriel Ministries 2010).Peoples opinions no matter how well intentioned will lead to deception and ultimately to apostacy, as is presently

happening. And the 'new evangelicals' group are in danger of this. All of us must understand there is only one way out of sin and condemnation and one way to freedom and that is the way of the Cross, whatever the sin.

Homosexuality is but one example of sin but one of the hour.

Which way will it be then? Will we be 'seduced' by peoples opinions or heed and be obedient to the true prophetic Voice which will save our nation.

Increasingly and at this late hour followers of the Lord Jesus Christ are being called to the cost of true discipleship of the Cross, as it has of course always been, but somehow now there is an urgency and a 'calling' that this is the way He is leading us. It will cost us everything but at the same time it is the greatest priviledge; only God can do it like that.