

THE PENTECOST

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Hello. In this November, 2012 issue of The Pentecost we will conclude our series on the Downgrade Controversy and Faith For The Upgrade. How important is truth? How important is it to stand for truth in the arenas of the Church and the World? In this issue, we will also discuss the controversial issue of gender-identity disorder. At Zion Christian Ministry, we love those who struggle with gender-identity disorder. I have written a little to help you understand this condition and the dangers of yielding to its impulses. God bless you.

Shawn Stevens

Although this is our concluding issue on the Downgrade Controversy and Faith For The Upgrade, my prayer for you, the reader, is that this is only part of your own personal journey in the pursuit of truth, which is needed in every area of our lives.

Ramona Stevens

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THE DOWNGRADE CONTROVERSY AND FAITH FOR THE UPGRADE – PART 3

In this series called the Downgrade Controversy and Faith for the Upgrade we have looked at Charles Spurgeon's fight against the inroads of liberal theology into the Church. We looked at the erosive and destructive consequences that watering down truth can have, and has had, in the Church world. We looked at postmodernism and its influence upon many in the modern Church. We also held out a foundation for, and an appeal for, reforming to biblical truth as part of the upgrade. We will continue that appeal in this article.

Upgrade travelling also means the recovery of truth and the embracing of truth. Embracing truth means both living it out and declaring it. There are two great arenas for the living and declaring of truth to be done in, the Church and the World.

Embracing Truth In the Church

You would think that the embracing of truth in the Church should not need to be stated. However, the Church, that is, the organized Church, has become an arena where truth and error are up for grabs. Postmodern teaching has supplanted much Christian teaching and liberal positions, on just about everything, can be found taught from many pulpits. I am not saying that all churches or even most churches are on the downgrade. I am not saying that. However, today many professing Christians practice anything and everything, from yoga to homosexuality, despite how God feels about rebellion. There is so much darkness and untruth practiced among professing Christians that we must ask, “What can be done?” What

must be done is for us to return to God's Word, the Bible, and begin reading and following it. We need a revival of Bible truth. Friend, if we give up truth we will become like the religions that don't know God. We need to rediscover the truth that has been given to us, handed down to us from God, by way of prophets and apostles, through martyr's hands, and laid before us. Then, having discovered it, we need to delight in the truth. We cannot allow skepticism and unbelief to flash from the pulpit and spread among believers. It is not that we want to spread disunity. We are happiest when others are walking in truth and unity. However, when truth is subtracted from unity, what kind of fellowship do we have? What kind of unity do we have? Are we uniting with God or with men when we let go of truth? We need to stand for matters that are vital for our faith. It is ironic that, at the same time, one section of the Church world may be full of the freshly grown wheat of truth, and another section may be full of thorns and briars of falsehood. What are we to do with the thorns and briars? Let us pull them out and replant wheat. Let us purge out the lies that weaken and pollute. Let us not tolerate the watering down of doctrine. Our leaders must accept the responsibility of holding God's Word high. There is only one direction of travel that we can accept, forward. This is no time to blend our truth with the world's philosophy. If early preachers of the truth had not taken their stand in history, would we have the truth today? Now it is time for us to stand for truth so that there is still truth passed on after us. The stakes are so high, so high. Now is the time to guard our life and doctrine. Let us allow God's word to be our plumb line and our measuring stick. We can't afford to lose the truth. All too often the threat is from within. Little compromises become larger ones and, before long, our beliefs may be influenced or changed by people on the inside of the Church who have not kept the standard high and who have not defended truth. If we are not careful, that folly spreads in the Church, to us, and we may become

agents of error. Truth in the body of Christ is too precious to be lost. It brings stability and security. Many will be offended by truth, even in the Church world, but what is more offensive, piety or hypocrisy? Surely there is nothing more offensive than hypocrisy, so let us not take our values from television, the theatre or secular education. God is so much higher than all of these things. The Bible says; "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." (1 John 2. 15-16 NASB). Many are sacrificing reverence for relevance, or so they think. However, truth is always relevant. Let us be careful in living it out and forthright in its proclamation.

Living And Speaking The Truth In The World

The other arena to live and proclaim truth in is the "world." We are not of the world but we are in it and we can very definitely have an impact on our world by how we live our lives and by what we stand up for. In so many ways, skeptical daring has pushed out evangelical zeal. It is time to resist this push and raise high the banner of truth. We are to love truth and hate every false way. We read in Scripture: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." (Psalm 119.104 KJV). When a strong sense of duty and conviction pervades public speech, truth is not so easily put down. Let's speak our conviction for truth in the public square and push the battle to the gates. Let the cause of truth be our goal, no matter how much men oppose us. Are we afraid of the educated and the influential in the secular world? Let it never be. Let us be zealous for God and His truth in society's sphere. The gospel makes men fear sin and it is the gospel that we need proclaimed. This is not a time for

fear; this is a time for faith, determination and bold opposition to evil. Truth does not just automatically become established in the earth; truth must be fought for. Is truth worth fighting for? I will answer that with another question: "Do we want our lives to be lived in vain?" We read; "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (1 Corinthians 1.25 KJV). The foolishness of God is so much wiser than the wisdom of man. That is because the wisdom of man is just a deception. Society wants a philosophy which is inclusive and broad. However, we learn from Jesus that the way to destruction is broad. (See Matthew 7.13). It is time to reveal to the world the narrow road of truth that confronts error, sin and evil. Truth combats evil in its many philosophical and religious forms. The challenge is for the truth-loving Christian to take his stand and not to change. (See 1 Timothy 4.16). When society resists truth, don't change. When society says you are closed-minded, don't change. When society offers incentives to compromise, don't change. The unflinching declaration of truth will lead to some men becoming free. It is worth the stand. Keep your perspective. If the true God is our God, if Jesus is our Lord and if heaven is our home, what does it matter what others think of us? Let us run the race and not take our hands from the plough.

Liberal theology in Spurgeon's day put much of the Church on a long, spiralling downgrade. Much of the 20th and 21st century Church has been sliding down a downgrade of her own, postmodernism. However, those brave souls who hear the voice of Jesus and choose to obey and follow Him are on a very different pathway. This one leads up. The upgrade is that heavenly pathway which is marked by truth and faith. Let us be the upward-climbing Christians who learn, live and declare truth in both the

Church and the world. Let it be that we climb this pathway with all of the vigor and tenacity of the mountaineer who would scale Everest, yearning and stretching and persevering to the peak.

Shawn Stevens

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TRUE CONVERSION

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus *said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear*

the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

John 3:1-17 NASB

Nicodemus was a very religious man who served the Jewish people as a teacher of God's law. However, Jesus, in this passage, was pointing out a spiritual need within Nicodemus, a need that is in all men. Jesus was saying that a person cannot even see God's kingdom unless that person is “born again.” This spiritual birth is essential and it is the initiation of a person into Christian faith. Jesus was saying that it is not enough to be born just once. Nicodemus, despite all of his religious tradition, had not experienced this second birth for himself and he struggled to understand the concept. All of his tradition and his performance of rituals hadn't transformed him inwardly. Faith, before it is expressed externally, must be

experienced internally. Perhaps Nicodemus had felt secure in his religious tradition, trusting in the same traditions for salvation. Jesus, however, repeats Himself, underscoring this important point; “Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'” (John 3:5-7 NASB)

In spite of his religion, Nicodemus was outside of God's kingdom and in need of conversion every bit as much as the Samaritan woman at the well (found in John, Chapter 4). She had also been trusting in her religious tradition of worshipping on a certain mountain. Friend, what are you trusting in for the salvation of your soul? Is your security in your membership to a church or religion? Have you come to Jesus Christ with your soul? Is He your Mediator? Do you belong to Him? If your answer is “no,” then do not marvel that you must be born again.

On another occasion, Jesus addressed another group of religious men with these words; “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.” (John 5:39-40 NASB) Here, Jesus was saying that their study of the Scriptures, in itself, was not enough for them to obtain eternal life. The purpose of studying the Scriptures is to let the Scriptures lead you to Jesus, Who alone can give you eternal life.

Those who belong to Christ instinctively begin relating to God as their Father. That is why the Apostle Paul tells us; “And because you are sons, God has sent

forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!’” (Galatians 4:6. See also Romans 8:15). Friend, is this true of you? Do you relate to God as your Father? The Scriptures call us to examine our spiritual condition. We are asked to “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5 NASB). You may be religious or non-religious. You may be a priest or a pastor, but have you examined yourself, whether or not Jesus Christ is in you and whether God is your Father? If not, then marvel not that you must be born again. God bless you, as you settle this matter with Him.

Perhaps you are asking, “What can be done that will put me in a proper relationship with God?” Before finding this place of relationship to God, we must have a heart-felt understanding of a specific fundamental truth. Friend, do you understand that you are a sinner in the eyes of God? Your sins, and mine, are not just mistakes; they are offences against the God of truth. God is morally righteous, holy and has standards of truth that are eternal and universally binding for all mankind. Just as our God has created natural laws, so too, God has put in place moral and spiritual laws, laws which we have broken.

The Scriptures tell us; “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? 'I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.” (Jeremiah 17:9-10 NASB). What is our heart deceitful about? It often deceives us about our standing with God. There is a process of denial in which our heart does not want to acknowledge personal sin, or acknowledge our need for God's forgiveness and salvation. Jesus says this about the human heart; “For out

of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.” (Matthew 15:19-20 NASB). Friend, is this not true of your heart and mine?

How clearly do you understand what Jesus Christ has done for you? He took the penalty for your sins and mine and died by crucifixion. He was, and is, good, righteous, pure and innocent, having perfectly kept God's laws. He lived selflessly, continuously seeking God, and helping, healing and teaching those who came to Him. But, there was still the problem of your sin and mine. So He made the hard choice and accepted the penalty of death on our behalf. It was an early death; He was thirty-three years of age. It was a painful death, by crucifixion. It was a shameful death, before crowds. Yet, it was a necessary death if you and I were to be forgiven of sin and freed from the penalty for sin. Having died, He resurrected three days later and is now seated at the right hand of God.

It is Jesus alone who legitimately offers forgiveness for all sins and gives us eternal life. To receive this forgiveness and eternal life is to be born again. Are you trusting in Christ alone for salvation, not in your church, not in rituals, but in Christ alone?

You may be saying, “I have tried this, and it hasn't worked for me.” Perhaps there is something that you have missed. Have you repented of sin, and chosen to accept the lordship of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter says in the Scriptures; “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;” (Acts 3:19 NASB). Jesus said on another occasion; “ I have not come to call

the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5:32 NASB). Both then and now, Jesus calls sinners to repentance. Repentance is to turn away from following sin and from following our own ways, and to follow Jesus instead. To follow Jesus is a choice in favor of living a holy life. A holy life is radically at odds with the lifestyles of our surrounding society. It may also be radically at odds with the lifestyles of many church people, who hypocritically claim to know and follow Jesus. Nevertheless, living a holy life is the way of Jesus Christ.

Isn't repentance trusting in my own righteousness? No, because biblical repentance is in a specific context. Biblical repentance is in the context of accepting the lordship of Christ. Jesus Christ is the Lord of heaven and earth. When we accept Jesus, by faith, this is the Jesus we are accepting, the Lord of heaven and earth. By accepting this Jesus, we are acknowledging His rightful lordship over us, as well. If we don't accept this Jesus, the One Who is Lord of heaven and earth, and therefore, Lord of our life as well, then we haven't really accepted Jesus.

Commit at the outset to faith, repentance and to following Jesus in living a holy life and He will show you the specifics of that choice with each passing day. Do you acknowledge that you are a sinner? Do you know what Christ has done for you? The Scriptures say; “ for 'WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'” (Romans 10:13 NASB). Friend, will you call on His name, receive forgiveness, and be saved?

Shawn Stevens

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PREVENTING AND REPAIRING GENDER-IDENTITY DISORDER

What if someone said to you that no one has to be gay? What if someone said that the gay lifestyle is a choice, not an orientation? There is a great deal of misinformation in the world today concerning gender-identity disorder. Many think that they are born with same-sex attraction but, actually, this has never been proven scientifically. Instead, much research shows that this condition is developed through a process of thinking and conditioning.

How does thinking and conditioning lead a person into having gender-identity disorder? It can happen when boys start to perceive themselves as being different from other boys at school. Similarly, girls may have the same perception of themselves as being different. They may have been made to feel different by others at school who don't accept them. This may become a seed which grows in them as they reflect on these feelings more and more. Other factors then come into play. Perhaps the boy has a very negative experience with his father. Perhaps his father is rough and abusive and, as a result, the boy comes to hate everything masculine. This can lead to him, in his own mind, to becoming more and more like a girl. Or, perhaps he does not have a father in the home at all. This makes it much harder for the boy to develop positive feelings about manhood. In fact, any dysfunctional home can be instrumental in setting up a child for gender-identity disorder. The turmoil that the child feels can be processed in different ways, one of which is manifested in this kind of sexual deviation. Then when children are introduced to a same-sex experience by a friend, they become vulnerable. When they do experiment with same-sex activity, the experience is affirmed by the partner who

has become a friend and a support. This is part of the conditioning. The boy or girl is very vulnerable. Once the boy or girl has made the experience known, often other heterosexual friends drop them as friends and they feel like they have burned the bridges behind them. Many times, the only ones who accept them are others with this disorder, or so they feel, and, so, it is difficult to leave this lifestyle.

If gender-identity disorder is a result of thinking processes and conditioning, then what can parents do to help protect their son or daughter against developing gender-identity disorder? Firstly, if you have a dysfunctional marriage, start there. Face your own problem head-on, pray for help and get counselling. Build a strong functional home and the chances of your child becoming gay will be slim. Invest quality time into your family. Set examples your children will want to follow. A boy who has been loved, affirmed and mentored by a strong and kind father-figure is very unlikely to develop gender-identity disorder. Conversely, a girl who has been loved, affirmed and mentored by a strong and kind mother is more than likely to steer away from the path of same-sex attraction.

What are signs to look for that may indicate that your child is prone to gender-identity disorder? One sign would be that of your children coming out and saying that they are really the opposite sex, or if your child cross-dresses as the other sex. Also, if there are instances of cross-sexual roles in their games, playing or making believe, this may be an early indicator. If they have strong desires to be involved in games or activities that are usually practiced by the opposite sex, or if they strongly want to play with friends of the opposite sex and not other children of their own sex, this also could be an early

indicator. All of these things should be taken seriously by parents. However, it should be stated that girls abandon these types of behaviours much more easily than boys do and, in the case of girls, all, except for the first sign mentioned, may just be normal tomboy phases that they pass through.

Reparative therapists talk of the three “A”s in helping children adhere to proper identity. They need affection, attention and approval. Without healthy, steady doses of these requirements provided by a parent of the same sex, a child will grow to resent that parent and, possibly, their gender. Fathers and mothers must work on strengthening their bonds with their children. As one parent is trying to strengthen this bond, it is equally important that the other parent does not impede his or her efforts. If there is tension in the marriage and if this tension involves one, or both, parents putting down the other or the other's gender, then this will, possibly, do injury to their child's developing sexual identity.

Another important rule for parents to follow is, if in counselling over your child's same-sex tendencies/attractions, to find out from your counsellor what their views are concerning gender-identity disorder. If they do not view this kind of behavior as a disorder, you have the wrong counsellor. They are a part of the great world of misinformation. Regardless of how many degrees they have, they will not be able to help you with your problem because they don't really view it as a problem. They might even say, “Don't worry, your son is just getting in touch with his feminine side.” This is not the kind of advice that you need. Your child's future relational, sexual and spiritual life is too important to have the wrong advice directing them at this pivotal time. There are counsellors out there who will handle gender-identity

disorder for what it is, a disorder.

What should a single mother do for her son who has no father in the home? She should find a healthy, male role model for her son and find ways of including this role model in her son's life.

Some individuals struggling with gender-identity disorder are surprised to learn that the condition is treatable and that many people recover from it and lead heterosexual lives. The National Association For Research and Therapy of Homosexuals (NARTH), is an organization founded by psychiatrists who believe that gender-identity disorder is fully treatable. It is an organization that, by 2007, had swelled to 1,500 members. They report:

Based on our review of 600 reports of clinicians, researchers, and former clients - primarily from professional and peer-reviewed scientific journals, we conclude that reorientation treatment has been helpful to many and should continue to be available to those who seek it. Further, mental health professionals competent to provide such care ethically may do so.

1. There is substantial evidence that sexual orientation may be changed through reorientation therapy.

Treatment success for clients seeking to change unwanted homosexuality and develop their heterosexual potential has been documented in the professional and research literature since the late 19th century. What Research Shows reviews 125 years of clinical and scientific reports which document that professionally

assisted and other attempts at volitional change from homosexuality toward heterosexuality has been successful for many and that such change continues to be possible for those who are motivated to try. Clinicians and researchers have reported positive outcomes after using or investigating a variety of reorientation approaches.¹

The fact that same-sex attraction is reversible is often challenged by gay advocates. However, study after study confirms that people can experience a change in their orientation from gay to straight. Homosexual activists have entered, and influenced, many areas of society, even the educational system. Many times, groundless propaganda is passed off as fact by professional people.

Some lesbians have reported making entry into such a lifestyle in midlife, after marriage or divorce, and that they had no feelings of same-sex attraction previously. This shows that they were not born this way but that they changed through conditioning.

Even the renowned Dr. Robert Spitzer has come out and said that same-sex orientation can change and is not fixed. Who is Dr. Spitzer? He was a member of the American Psychological Association, and was probably the most influential psychologist in turning that organization in the direction of supporting homosexuality. He was regarded as one of the biggest friends of the gay and lesbian community, until he made the evidence of his research known; he has since suffered a fury of backlash from this community.

It will surprise many readers that gender-identity disorder, for many people, just wears off on its own, even

without counselling. In fact, this is especially true of young people. A study was done by USA ADD Health Survey – Savin-Williams and Realm, which discovered that a large number of 16- year-olds who claimed to have same-sex attraction usually had their feelings wear off by the age of 17. In this study, a very small percentage of those who said they had same-sex attraction at age 16 still had this attraction to the same sex when they were 17. Further study showed that of those males who report same-sex attraction at age 17, by age 22, 75% had switched to opposite-sex attraction.² It can be concluded that same-sex attraction is not fixed but is changeable and, for young people, is usually reversed on its own.

Imagine the rage of a teenage boy who, although he has friends, has experienced some level of rejection in his life, either at home or at school. This rejection, however small it may be, is enough to generate some feelings of not fitting in at school. He meditates on these thoughts. He is introduced to a group of gay teens. They befriend him and this acceptance is intoxicating. They argue that their lifestyle is fine and that they were born this way. He starts to question his own sexuality and may even feel some attraction to the same sex. He comes out of the closet and announces that he is gay. In the extremely cliquy, image-sensitive teen culture, that he is a part of, all or most of his straight friends reject him, including members of both the same and opposite sexes. He lives with the stigma for a year and then realizes the feelings that he had, or thought he had, have worn off. He is not gay, but he has crossed over into this world and feels like he has burned the bridges behind him. If he has participated in this lifestyle, he may even have a sexually-transmitted disease. His name and his reputation have been used. Imagine the inner rage that he might feel, if he learned that losing these feelings is the usual experience, the normal

experience, of most people his age who thought that they were gay. Whether he comes to understand this, or not, he is deeply frustrated by his experience and his choices. Is he a sinner, responsible for his actions? Yes, but he is also a victim. He is a victim of gay activism. Sadly, most school officials will not offer protection from this kind of victimization. It is not responsible for a school counsellor to affirm the same-sex attraction feelings of someone who is an adolescent.

How can one know that gender-identity disorder is reversible? He can find a reassuring answer in the Bible. It is the Bible which condemns a homosexual lifestyle as sin. It says; "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22 KJV). However, the Bible also says; "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36 NASB). Friend, the Bible extends the hope of freedom to those bound in sin. Come to Jesus Christ to find this freedom and forgiveness. Put your faith in Him and commit your life to following Him.

Even though most schools are unlikely to protect a young person from the exploitation of gay activist groups, there is somewhere that a young person (or someone of any age) can turn, the Church of Jesus Christ. The person who struggles with gender-identity disorder can come to a Bible-believing church where he or she will be shown love. It will be a tough love that maintains that the gay/lesbian lifestyle is sin and must be repented of. Facing such a truth is a major step towards wholeness. Even more important a step is to repent and put faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. With Jesus in a person's heart, the battle to overcome gender-identity disorder is very winnable, although a person's attractions may not change immediately. There may be a process of healing.

Reparative therapy is available by organizations such as NARTH. There is great hope for all who will come and make their surrender to God and to His way? God bless you.

Shawn Stevens

ENDNOTES :

1. "What Research Shows: NARTH'S Response to the APA Claims on Homosexuality." (Summary) <http://www.narth.com> page 1.

2. Savin-Williams & Realm, 6, "Prevalence and Stability of Sexual Orientation Components During Adolescence and Young Adulthood." *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 36, 2007, pgs. 385-394.

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THE HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA DOES NOT BELONG IN A HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

When you think of human rights, what comes to mind? Perhaps you think of Black Americans being given freedom from slavery in Lincoln-age America. Or, perhaps you think of women being given the right to vote. Perhaps you think of political prisoners being freed as a result of international pressure placed upon a regime. These would all be good examples of human rights being championed. However, imagine adding to this list a man's plight to get his surrounding culture to accept, affirm and applaud his sexual disorder and sexual involvement with another man. This falls short of human rights.

Human rights have been fought for, and achieved, in all arenas of life. They have been fought for in families, in schools, in courts and in parliaments. Courts and parliaments owe it to the citizens that they serve to protect their human rights. They also owe it to their citizens to keep a respectful distance from issues that are not in the sphere of human rights but do directly challenge and contradict the faith convictions and consciences of people. When courts and parliaments do cross this line and do call on their citizens to violate their moral consciences, they unravel the very fabric of society. It is a violation of human rights to insist that people must accept gender-identity disorder as being an acceptable sexual orientation. To use the legal, or governing, system to achieve this end is to take away people's freedom. It is to take away their freedom to believe, their freedom to think, their freedom to feel and their freedom to follow conscience.

Governments that support gay activism have not considered enough how much harm this does to Churches

and Christians. By taking sides with the gay movement, many governments directly oppose the beliefs, and statements of faith, of Christian Churches, maintaining that the Churches are wrong and that gays are right. I realize that current laws in Canada allow Churches to refuse to perform marriages for gays and lesbians and that our freedom of speech to voice objections to the gay lifestyle, on grounds of religion, is protected. Still, how long can we count on current legal protection? Current laws and current positions can be amended to take away the religious freedom of Christians. To prevent this from happening, governments should not entertain supporting gay legislation. Once laws have been passed legitimizing gender-identity disorder, it spreads quickly in society, in our school systems and in other forms of public life. Then the Church and individual Christians, in many cases end up having to stand against social institutions, both governmental and private, which oppose their faith position. We may then be forced to have to defend our beliefs in our very places of work. Governments should never put a citizen in this position. Governments should, instead, protect the right of citizens to object to the gay lifestyle. The right to object to such a lifestyle is deeply based in a person's right to follow their own conscience and their sacred cherished faith. This is the moral sphere of faith, conscience and creed and governments should not tamper with their citizen's rights in this way.

The Bible states in no uncertain terms; "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22 KJV). Opposing legislation that validates same-sex marriage, as well as opposing other bills which give political support to the same-sex lifestyle, is not about denying equality or denying rights. It is not about discriminating against a people-group. It is not about intolerance toward people. It

is not about being homophobic. It is not about denying human rights. Opposing same-sex lifestyles and same-sex marriage is about obeying God. It is also about preserving values and protecting families.

Propagation of sexual disorders should not be considered a human right. Rather, governments, legal systems, institutions and places of employment should encourage and protect the rights of people to object to lifestyles that violate their conscience and their sacred beliefs.

Thank you.

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Scripture taken from the King James Version.

SAME-SEX LIFESTYLE IS DANGEROUS

It is dangerous to cross a freeway, blindfolded. It is dangerous to jump from the rooftop of one building to another. It is dangerous to hand-feed a tiger. These things are self-evident. However, did you know that it is dangerous to participate in the same-sex lifestyle?

In spite of what the modern media has told us, the same-sex lifestyle is very harmful and is connected to many risks. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reports that men who have sex with other men (since 1977) have an HIV prevalence that is sixty times higher than that of the general public's. Active homosexuals have been found to be the largest group of people who are found HIV positive by blood-donor testing.¹ It has also been found that medical, psychological and relational pathology is significantly higher in the homosexual population than in the rest of society. According to the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality, homosexuals are more likely to develop mental health concerns, eating disorders, paranoia, personality disorders, anxiety and depression.² They also claim that, according to an objective synthesis of the clinical and research literature derived from hundreds of sources, forty percent of adolescent homosexuals report suicidal tendencies; homosexuals have the highest number of sexually-transmitted diseases; social discrimination does not account for all of this harm; it is a result of a deviant and dysfunctional lifestyle.³ According to the Center for Disease Control for the United States, homosexuals account for the single largest exposure category of males who have AIDS in the United States. The XIII International AIDS Conference, in Durban, South Africa,

presented a study which says that 16% of a surveyed 1,397 homosexuals with HIV admitted having sex with a partner who was unaware of their virus.⁵ It is shocking that so high a percentage of infected homosexuals would not disclose the truth about their deadly virus to their partner. If those statistics are shocking, then what should we make of a Los Angeles study of bi-sexual men with HIV, that found that over 54 % did not disclose their infected status to their sex partners.⁷

While AIDS is a deadly disease, it is not only AIDS that is rampant in the gay community but other diseases are as well. The Center for Disease Control warns that outbreaks of hepatitis A among active homosexual men are a repeated problem in many large industrialized cities in the world.⁸ HVP, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis and gay bowel syndrome are among the diseases which can be commonly found among the homosexual community.⁹ The Center for Disease Control studied 3,492 homosexuals between the ages of fifteen and twenty-two and found that one in six had sex with women, too. Of those who had sex with the opposite sex, one in four said that their sex was unprotected and nearly 7% of the men in this study had HIV.¹⁰

Some will feel that exposing this kind of evidence is a form of gay-bashing. However, it is evidence such as this that may help steer someone away from the dangers of sexually-transmitted diseases which, in so many cases, have been closely linked to the gay lifestyle. Sincerely warning someone of real dangers is not prejudice; it is love. The health and welfare of people is more important than the offense that some may feel over these words. I hope what I have written will be taken in the spirit that it is given in and that is to bring a helpful warning of real

danger to those at risk.

Sexually-transmitted diseases take and ruin people's lives. Active homosexuals have the highest rates of sexually-transmitted diseases. Statistics and reports should be a red flag of warning to all who would venture down this deadly path. The Bible says; "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22 KJV) Numerous studies suggest that mental health, as well as physical health, is at great risk for anyone who would engage in this destructive and dysfunctional lifestyle. If you are considering practicing the gay lifestyle, look long and hard at the repercussions others have suffered for choosing this way of life. I have not written this out of dislike for those struggling with gender-identity disorder. You are loved and your life is precious and of enormous value. It is because your life is precious, that I plead with you to protect it by abstinence from the same-sex lifestyle. There is hope and help for those who would courageously turn from the same-sex lifestyle to God and His ways. I hope that you never have the horrible experience of having sex with someone who has a sexually-transmitted disease and, knowingly, does not disclose that information to you. God bless you.

Shawn Stevens

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