



Proclaiming Truth for a New Generation

By Andy Comiskey

Seated next to me on the plane was a lapsed Christian, now a New Ager; she looked at me slightly bemused as I prepared my talk for the upcoming conference. Spying my Bible, she began to share of absolute faith in her intuition, and of the god who guided her through the power of her feelings. I returned the witness, and shared of Jesus' transforming power in my life, and how His love helped me sort out the good from the bad of my passions.

"Oh yeah," she exclaimed, looking as if she were going in for the kill. "How does your Jesus love homosexuals?" I gave her all I had on the subject, which she received, slightly slack-jawed (to my bemusement.) She wasn't a lesbian, but was sure that being Christian meant hating gays and insisting that everyone live a dreary, self-righteous life. For this woman, like many in our culture, the homosexual has become a symbol of the new tolerance.

By that I mean that she defined love as accepting all values and lifestyles as equal. No one claim to truth is more valid than another claim. One determines his or her truth; that determination makes one's beliefs true. The tolerant person treats all such truths as equally valid.

Tolerance used to mean putting up someone or thing that you may disagree with. No more. For this generation, to tolerate means to celebrate and embrace another's point-of-view, simply because it is.

I briefly dialoged with a gay activist who wanted me to join forces with him in preventing violence against gays. As I considered his position, I realized that the issue at core wasn't gay-bashing; his goal was to ensure that homosexuality was embraced by our culture as a normal and healthy alternative to heterosexuality.

In the true sense of the word, I tolerate his right to make adult moral choices, even if I disagree with those choices. In the same breath that I decry anyone who would harm him because of his moral choices, I decry his efforts to normalize homosexuality within our society and will not partner with him toward that end.

Empowering the new tolerance is the presupposition that homosexuals and lesbians are a distinct people group, like an ethnic minority. Recently, a California judge defined homosexuals as a "cognizable" group because like ethnic groups they share a common perspective based on shared life experiences. Such a parallel between race and sexuality removes homosexuality from the moral and ethical realm, and renders it a predetermined condition. Now a "people," gays gather to secure a corporate defense and identity. Their goal is not tolerance, but full acceptance within society. I entered into a new and alarming dimension of the new tolerance when I read in the paper about the efforts of a local group of high school students to start a gay advocacy group on campus. I didn't know whether the kids had legal grounds for starting this group or not. I just knew that it was wrong. I wrote an editorial for the LA Times on the subject, which was printed.

While writing that article, I reflected upon God's amazing provision for me. My kids, two of who are now high schoolers, continually interrupted me as I wrote with the demands of their full and challenging lives. I considered my own high school years--the profound alienation I felt as a teenager struggling with same-sex attraction, the "cure" of coming out of the closet and into the Hollywood gay scene with two friends (both now dead of AIDS), the closing of my relational horizon as I embraced homosexuality. God's intervention in my life made all the difference; Jesus established me in my true self and reopened the window of His intentions for my sexuality. My kids' noisy presence never sounded better as I considered God's faithfulness to restore my life.

And now as a parent I am concerned about teenagers embracing their homosexuality and the school system validating their misdirected decision to do so. Kids are kids--questioning who one is sexually and relationally is appropriate in the teen years, but to validate a child as gay or bisexual or transgender is premature and should be beyond the scope of our high schools.

Gratefully, I met like-minded people. I joined with Randy Thomason who directs a pro-family lobby in Sacramento, and Donna Segales, a parent from the school district who started a grassroots opposition to the gay high school group. Together with other parents and many Desert Stream supporters, we attended a school board meeting where we had a chance to share our perspective. As I testified of the destructive nature of homosexuality and God's transforming power, I realized that our prophetic voice was going forth in the context in which it needed to be heard. The School Board voted down the club 7 to 0.

That was only the beginning. An army of pro-gay lawyers and educational experts came alongside the kids and filed a lawsuit against the school board, claiming that the kids and their rights had been violated. Amid the court battle that ensued, I glimpsed the powerful, deceiving forces that we were up against. The two gay teenagers who testified were alike in many ways--both were fatherless, rebellious, and empowered by the rhetoric of the new tolerance. It was clear that they had been trained in their responses. In the absence of any real authority in their lives, these kids had been "fathered" by legal and educational experts that were empowering them to advance the cause of gay rights for children.

Make no mistake. The 6 (at least) lawyers who were present in court, working for free on behalf of the kids, had a bigger agenda. They were seeking to make this case a binding one that would grant every high school in America the right to offer gay support groups. The kids' lawyers want to take this case to the Supreme Court.

Punctuating the initial court battle was the language of the new tolerance. The kids and their legal team refused the request of the School Board to adjust their club to a more inclusive group that would support anyone harassed on campus for being different. They refused on the basis of the new tolerance. Nothing less than full acceptance on campus as gays, bisexuals and transgender people would suffice. Furthermore, the kids would not downplay their sexual status on campus but would rather proclaim it as a way of asserting its legitimacy. They interpreted anything less as a violation of their civil rights.

The outcome of this case is not yet clear, though I suspect the judge will grant the kids the right to meet on campus until the case is settled. In the meantime, we at Desert Stream are provoked by the powerful deception at work in our culture. No longer is our culture content to champion the rights of gay adults--now we confer that "right" upon our children and name it as justice.

It is shortsighted, and evil. And we must fight it if we are to be true to the Gospel and to the future of a new generation. Do you want to sit back silent while lies about homosexuality are becoming foundational within our culture, and in the lives of our young people?

How do we best fight these lies?

We pray for truth-filled love, and realize that there is only one enemy, the deceiver, Satan himself, and one source of transformation-the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must take every opportunity to proclaim God's plan for sexuality and redemption, using our lives as the vehicle of truth. Through our lives, we make it clear that a homosexual identity and lifestyle is a moral and spiritual choice-so is redemption.

We must work that much more fervently in our churches, making the most of every opportunity to prepare our young people with a sure foundation for sexual and relational wholeness. I am grateful for The River, our Living Waters program adapted for 18-25 year-olds. Young people face challenges and temptations that my generation never faced. Through discipleship programs like The River, we can prepare them to face who they truly are in light of the world's distortions.

We must pray for the lost ones, those kids without fathers who grow up with a host of confusing emotions and desires. Their answer is Jesus, not the false fathering of gay advocates. I believe that if we pray without ceasing for them, and prepare healers and healing places for them in the church, we will witness their exodus from the world into the church. We will participate in Sovereign acts of transformation. And we will raise up a new generation of healing, truth-filled warriors.

'Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, "Do not hold them back." Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth-everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." (Is.43: 5-7)