

of the individuals we have mentioned are teaching that fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, the covetous, drunkards, revilers, or swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. They're *only* teaching that those engaged in the sin of *homosexuality* will.

Let us clearly state here that moral disapproval of any sin is not hatred. Lest we be misunderstood and you think we are saying we should be "hateful" toward practicing homosexuals — let us repeat a paragraph from the previous issue of *Diligence*.

"Hate" — having a *proper* and *correct* feeling of aversion toward something evil — and "love" — *agape* love — understanding that one does *not* show hatred by being concerned for the welfare of another's soul for all of eternity! Failure to *agape* love the sinner *enough* to risk being called "an intolerant homophobe" (or worse) is failure to understand the Biblical meaning of "hate" and the Biblical meaning of *agape* love. "Hate the sin but love the sinner" *requires* a Christian to confront (in as much of a *phileo* way as possible) the individual engaging in behavior that the Scriptures say will lead to his *eternal* death. To do anything *less*, is in fact the *ultimate* show of hatred toward another person!

When an individual *refuses* to accept the Scriptures as God's instructions for his life as well as his own salvation, he is unequivocally rejecting God."

Any sin can be forgiven, but it must be *confessed*. Before a sin can be confessed, the sinner must *recognize* before Almighty God that it *is* sin. Grace does *not* provide forgiveness for one who *refuses* to accept the Scriptures as God's instructions for his life as well as his own salvation

"For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins," (Heb. 10:26 NASB)

Filling your cart at a Christian bookstore is no longer safe for your spiritual health. Many of the books found there are dangerous! They're *especially* dangerous because a lot of them have a wealth of *good* things to say. But woven *into* the pages are poisonous ingredients. These toxins can become spiritually lethal — even in small amounts. There's an old saying that says snake venom contains 85% pure protein — but it's the 15% poison that gets you.

Remember the words of Paul when you make the choice to Scripturally (and lovingly) address the sin of one for whom you care —

"Now am I your enemy because I tell you the truth? Those people are working hard to persuade you, but this is not good for you. They want to persuade you to turn against us and follow only them." (Galatians 4:16-17 NCV)

People *do* work hard to persuade others. We must never turn against the teachings of *Scripture* to follow after the words or writings of people.

*"Diligence" is a privately funded publication of:
Dennis and Sherri Owens — Cincinnati, Ohio
diligence@gorfsystems.com — <http://diligence.gorfsystems.com/>*



DILIGENCE

"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure." — Hebrews 6:11

A ministry of Dennis and Sherri Owens

Volume 11

July 1, 2012

Issue 11

Twisting Theology

"Brothers and sisters, I became like you, so I beg you to become like me. You were very good to me before. You remember that it was because of an illness that I came to you the first time, preaching the Good News. Though my sickness was a trouble for you, you did not hate me or make me leave. But you welcomed me as an angel from God, as if I were Jesus Christ himself! You were very happy then, but where is that joy now? I am ready to testify that you would have taken out your eyes and given them to me if that were possible. Now am I your enemy because I tell you the truth? Those people are working hard to persuade you, but this is not good for you. They want to persuade you to turn against us and follow only them. It is good for people to show interest in you, but only if their purpose is good." (Galatians 4:12-18 NCV)

The last couple of issues of *Diligence* discussed the word "hate" and "love" as well as the phrase "hate the sin but love the sinner." Those issues contrasted how *different* the responses would be to the above phrase depending on whether one chooses to exercise *agape* love or chooses to exercise *phileo* love.

The view many denominations (as well as more and more individuals who call themselves Christians) hold nowadays concerning the particular sin of homosexuality is changing daily. This is due largely to the fact that *so many* authors, writers and celebrities are encouraging Christians to *accept* practicing homosexuals as genuine Christians — under the guise that doing otherwise is unloving, intolerant and judgmental. Anyone who read those two previous issues of *Diligence*, should understand that is simply not the case. It would in fact be the ultimate show of *hate* toward those individuals if — given the opportunity — one were to choose to exercise *phileo* love for fear of harming the "warm and fuzzy" side of the relationship rather than exercising *agape* love out of a true and genuine concern for the *eternal* well being of the person.

The Scriptures state —

"Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; (Eph 5:11 NASB)

There's hardly a limit to the number of authors from whom we could quote, that have made *very* problematic statements concerning the particular sin of homosexuality considering the fact that those authors are *supposed* to be well seasoned Christians

continued on page 2

and are *supposed* to know the Scriptures quite well. Let's look at just a few.

Philip Yancey is a best selling Christian author and editor-at-large for *Christianity Today* magazine. Some of his works include *What's So Amazing About Grace?* — *The Jesus I Never Knew* — *Where Is God When it Hurts?* and many others. Several years ago, Yancey did an interview with Candace Chellew-Hodge of *Whosoever* — an on-line News Journal For Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered “christians.” During that interview Yancey was asked “What is your position on gays and lesbians in the church?” Following is a brief excerpt from his answer —

“On an issue like that, I try to start with what I'm absolutely sure of, and work outwards. ... Even if I conclude that all homosexual behavior is wrong, as many conservative Christians do, I'm still compelled to respond with love. ... When it gets to particular matters of policy, like ordaining gay and lesbian ministers, I'm confused, like a lot of people. There are a few — not many, but a few — passages of Scripture that give me pause. Frankly, I don't know the answer to those questions.” For a guy who won the prestigious *Christian Book of the Year* award, this seems a bit strange. His comment “I'm still compelled to respond with love” coupled with the rest of his answer, would make one wonder if he has any clue as to the different responses that would be prompted by *agape* love and *phileo* love.

“Or 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 effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.” (I Cor. 6:9-10 NASB)

According to Paul's words to these Corinthians, for someone to be a “christian homosexual” is self deception and the person who practices this wicked sin (as well as the others in that list) will not inherit the kingdom of God. That means, according to Paul, they are going to Hell. Paul goes on to say that the Corinthians who *had been* engaged in those sins *changed* their behavior. He writes:

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.” (I Cor. 6:11 NASB)

This means that they no longer *practiced* those sins. They became new creatures in Christ.

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” (II Cor 5:17 NASB)

Keep in mind that Yancey currently has more than 15 million books in print, published in 35 languages worldwide (philipyancey.com). Can we see why so *many* are being persuaded in a way that is not good for them? Perhaps they are relying too much on authors *other* than God Himself. The *Bible* is *clear* on this subject.

In his book entitled *They Like Jesus but Not the Church*, Dan Kimball says, “... we can no longer just regurgitate what we have been taught about homosexuality”

Really? When did what the Scriptures say *change*? Homosexuality is a sinful lifestyle that will lead to eternal death and punishment. The only thing that has changed is what so called “christian” authors are *saying* about that lifestyle.

Donald McCullough — in his book *If Grace Is So Amazing, Why Don't We Like It?*, — states “condemning homosexuality feels natural because about 95 percent of us could never imagine engaging in such a practice,” but “in a world turned upside down by grace, we must distrust whatever feels natural.”

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2 NASB)

To refer to grace in the way McCullough did in this quote from his book, is just wrong. Grace is through the blood of Jesus Christ and “*if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away...*”. McCullough *is* right in the fact that “we must distrust whatever *feels* natural.” We can not determine what is right and what is wrong based on our *feelings* — but *he* seems to be completely ignoring *many verses* in the Scriptures that teach about grace. He has taken it upon himself to change grace into a “cover *everything*” magic potion that will allow one to continue practicing whatever *sin* one chooses to practice and yet still have God's forgiveness — *because* of grace.

“To forgive without demanding change is to make God's grace an accomplice to evil.” (John Hagee)

Tony Campolo's wife, Peggy, is a national leader of the *Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists*. According to their website —

“The AWAB is made up of a growing number of member churches, affiliated organizations, and individuals willing to go on record as welcoming and affirming of all persons without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity. These organizations and individuals have joined together to advocate for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons within Baptist communities of faith.”

Peggy Campolo argues that “the church's traditional teaching on homosexuality is mistaken.....”

Rick Warren (author of *The Purpose Driven Life* and many other books) most often chooses to quote from *The Message* version of the Bible. *The Message* is absolutely a pro-homosexual “bible” *since* the words “homosexual” and “effeminate” have been completely *removed* from it to make it favorable toward that movement.

But it's not just authors — Carrie Underwood is one (in a *long* list) of celebrities that has publically endorsed same-sex marriage. These people have somehow concluded that the sin of homosexuality is *acceptable* to God. No sin is acceptable to God — and the Scriptures *clearly* list homosexuality as a sin in numerous places. It seems as though however, that the *only* sin that *is being endorsed* by so many authors, denominations, celebrities and so called Christians is the sin of homosexuality. None