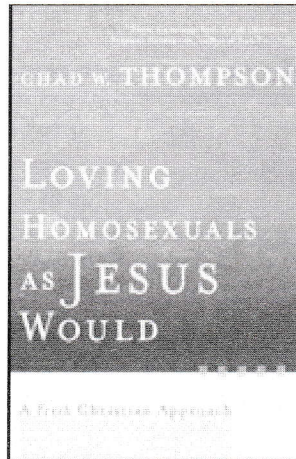


Ex-Gay Looks At Ways To Minister To Homosexuals As Jesus Would

Reviewed by Frank York

Writing on the back cover of Chad Thompson's new book, *Loving Homosexuals As Jesus Would*, NARTH Treasurer David Pruden says this:

Chad Thompson is one of a new breed of writers who has the courage to confront conventional thinking about homosexuality. He challenges both the gay and lesbian community, as well as traditional Christians, to end the "homophobia" that requires those who experienced unwanted same-sex attractions to remain silent and shackled in a world of shame. This new book sounds a clarion call of liberation for all those who feel trapped by their feelings and want to find a way out.



invite homosexuals into their homes for dinner; attend a gay pride rally to build relationships with them; assemble a group to visit AIDS patients in the local hospital; invite homosexuals to Bible studies; invite gays to speak at a forum on homosexuality to discuss the problems faced by gay teens.

Conservative-Interest Groups

Thompson expresses concern that there are many conservative-interest groups that are contributing to a mischaracterization of gay people. He quotes Cal Thomas in *Blinded by Might* who warned against conservative

Thompson observes that Christians can engage in promising dialogue with gay activists by loving them unconditionally—whether or not they wish to change their sexual orientation. He has found in his own experiences speaking before hostile audiences that once he lets them know he genuinely loves them—without conditions—they are far more likely to listen to his message of hope.

He says, "Our kindness in such moments will add more to the credibility of our message than the best academic reasoning will ever achieve. Yet, so often, these moments are lost."

Thompson urges Christians to adopt the philosophical strategies implemented by the Apostle Paul in speaking to different audiences in the First Century. Paul tried to find common ground with non-believers and frequently quoted from the writings of pagan philosophers in order to connect with his audiences. Paul used this technique when preaching the Gospel to the Athenians on Mars Hill.

The author warns Christians against using language that will alienate the listener. He notes that while homosexuals use such terms as "love" and "relationships" to describe homosexuality, Christians more often use such terms as "sin," "sodomite," and "abomination." These terms should be avoided if we are to effectively reach the homosexual with our message.

Practical Ways To Minister

Thompson outlines numerous ways that Christians can minister to homosexuals. He encourages Christians to

groups using homosexuals as a fundraising tool: "One must constantly have enemies, conspiracies, and opponents as well as play the role of righteous victim in order to get people to send in money."

He warns against sending money to any conservative-interest group unless it specifically tells how it will be spending the money. He also notes that many of these groups are strangely quiet when gays are attacked by such radicals as Fred Phelps who serves as pastor of a church in Topeka, Kansas.

Thompson says, "We owe the homosexual community some recognition that while some of their hardships may have been caused by promiscuity or poor lifestyle choices on their part, some have been caused by uncaring or uneducated Christians. We must promise to do better."

GLSEN Advocacy In Public Schools

Thompson notes that the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has made inroads into the public schools under a "safe schools" strategy because the organization really does address the legitimate needs of gay, bisexual, and transgender students to be free from harassment. However, he also warns that GLSEN materials contain inaccuracies—including statements that homosexuality is an unchangeable condition and fails to present both sides of the issue. GLSEN also fails to mention the thousands of homosexuals who have successfully redirected their sexual orientations through counseling and prayer.

“GLSEN’s strategy is effective because there will always be people, mostly Christians, who don’t use discretion when stating their beliefs about homosexual behavior,” said Thompson. “It is our militancy when dealing with this issue that allows GLSEN to characterize Christians as the perpetrators of hatred toward LGBT students and their curriculum as necessary to combat this hatred.”

Thompson urges Christian teachers and students to avoid using derogatory terms to describe homosexuals and to even consider placing a pink triangle on their office or dorm room door to show that opposition to homosexuality is not hatred.

He urges parents to encourage their children to befriend someone who is gay but cautions that the child should be rooted in the Word of God and “secure in his or her beliefs about homosexuality.”

What Causes Homosexuality?

In Chapter 6, Thompson discusses the various factors that can lead a person into a homosexual lifestyle and quotes Dr. Nicolosi on the importance of a child identifying with his same-sex parent. He notes that research has shown that a child’s need for same-sex affirmation and identification are met, “the child’s need to identify with his or her same-sex counterparts will lessen.” He quotes Dr. Nicolosi, “We do not sexualize what we identify with; when we identify with someone, we are no longer sexually attracted to them. It is always to the other-than-ourselves that we are drawn.”

Dr. Nicolosi observes that a child’s relationship with his or her same-sex parent is generally the child’s primary means of identification with and affirmation from his or her gender.

According to Thompson, “Anything that creates a sense of disconnection between a child and his or her gender, consciously or unconsciously, can stifle gender identification and potentially create homosexual attractions.”

Thompson believes that those struggling with same-sex attractions can diminish or lose these feelings through non-sexual touch, surrogacy (substitute parenting) as well as camaraderie with members of the same gender.

Coming Out Of The Ex-Gay Closet

Thompson concludes his book by urging ex-gays to come out of the closet and proudly declare who they are.

He notes that a hostile media, coupled with rejection from friends and family members often keeps ex-gays from speaking out about the freedom they have found through Jesus Christ or counseling. He observes: “I believe the most powerful tool we have to garner acceptance of ourselves and our ideas is personal transparency before people whom we come in contact with daily. ... Change is possible. And it’s time that those of us who have changed start to ‘say so.’”

Chad Thompson, *Loving Homosexuals As Jesus Would: A Fresh Christian Approach*, (Brazos Press, a Division of Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, MI, 2004, 183 pages.)