

Tony and Peggy Campolo's embrace and normalisation of homosexual practice within the Christian church aligns the couple with growing confusion in Western Christian culture with respect to sexual ethics. Britons will not be surprised to see this development following his involvement with Steve Chalke, Vicky Beeching and Bishop Alan Williams following the Oasis Conferenceⁱ earlier this year.

In his "For the Record" statement (9th June 2015)ⁱⁱ Campolo forsakes the evangelical principle of obedience to Scripture in favour of the heartwarming recommendation of homosexual coupling from his wife's friends. Marriage, he suggests, is a spiritual institution designed to help "actualise" the fruits of the Spirit. Yet, in truth, marriage is not just for Christians - it is equally for people who deny the very existence of the Holy Spirit.

Campolo also takes a swipe at therapists who support client rights to seek change. Such a move will bring him accolades from his president and those professional mental health bodies now recruited to enforce gender non-conforming practices and policies - including presumably, the UK's Association of Christian Counsellors and its silent, compliant membership. Campolo objects to the very thought of change and any means of altering sexual patterning or "orientation". In so doing he has aligned himself to the categorical notions of "gay" and "straight" and their concomitant notions of 'innateness' and 'immutability' which in fact are increasingly recognised as invalid because of the fluidity of sexuality. Gay is not the new black, and Campolo is merely repeating outmoded gay liberation theology.

Having approved the lie of gender as divorced from biology, we can expect to see this pastoral family to further divorce themselves from orthodoxy by embracing the transgender agenda - denying the objective differentiation of male and female. This is an absolute departure from truth - both scientific and revelatory.

Core Issues Trust rejects the basis of the arguments supporting the notion of "Gay Christians" offered in the Campolo statement today and regrets the departure from plain truth represented by this affirmation of homoerotic behaviours under the sanction of gay "marriage". Arguments about women in leadership, slavery and the like are not equivalent to the regendering of the institution of marriage. Christians experiencing homosexual feelings are always welcome to the Gospel Feast following the sorrow of repentance for sins of commission. We continue to support any individuals and their families who seek to move away from homosexuality. Such repentance characteristically leads to sexual discipline and sometimes to true marriage under the Lordship of Christ. A person comes to Christ "Just as I am" but asks Christ not to leave them in that state.

We see good therapeutic models supporting change-aspirations as a useful aid to Gospel goals, not to be deprived from seekers. We find no imperative in available scientific evidence to deny this help. We deplore the fact that UK professional bodies continue to evade our requests to provide such evidenceⁱⁱⁱ.

We urge Tony Campolo to reconsider his position and to submit to the plain teaching of the Bible and further, to retract his unfounded claim without evidence, that therapeutic support for unwanted homosexual feelings and change therapy is harmful. The American Psychological Association was unable to find such evidence: "None of the recent research ... meets methodological standards that permit conclusions regarding efficacy or safety". (Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation, 2009, p.2)

We encourage those who seek Christian truth to reappraise Pastor Campolo's fitness to safely represent the Gospel of Christ that was entrusted to him.

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ⁱ <http://www.oasisuk.org/openchurch/speakers>

ⁱⁱ <http://tonycampolo.org/for-the-record-tony-campolo-releases-a-new-statement/#.VXaVJ9JVikr>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.core-issues.org/uploads/National%20Professional%20Bodies%20Refuse%20to%20Provide%20Evidence%20%20Final2.pdf>

Council of Reference: Mr Andrew Comiskey (CEO Desert Stream /Living Waters), USA; Professor Robert Gagnon, (Pittsburgh Theological Seminary), USA; Rev David Johnston, (Presbyterian, NI); Andrea Minichiello Williams (CEO Christian Legal Centre) GB; Canon Chris Sugden (C of E, GB); Mr Dermot O'Callaghan (Church of Ireland, NI); Rev Hadden Wilson (Baptist, NI)