

From the Pulpit: Homosexuality is not a sin

By DAVID ENGLUND

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I do not usually write to newspapers, but recent articles on the religion page of the Mercury-Register caught my eye. I felt that I needed to respond.

The article was printed in "From the Pulpit" on July 4, 2009. It was entitled "The 'sin of homosexuality,'" by Pastor John Frazier of the Temple of Praise. I do not want in any way to cast aspersions against my fellow pastor. After all, everyone is entitled to an opinion. I pray God's blessing on him and his ministry.

In the article, Pastor Frazier states that "no person in their right mind can say that homosexuality is normal."

That seems to me to be a statement that begs contradiction. Many right-minded people actually do believe that homosexuality is normal. We have to think about what 'normal' means. Does it mean natural? Or, does it mean what the majority thinks? And who gets to decide what is normal? There is no scientific proof that absolutely settles this question one way or the other, but the fact is that people with same sex orientation have existed throughout history. There is growing evidence that this orientation begins in a person's life at very early stages if they are not actually born that way.

I have a cousin who was born left handed. You might recall that many years ago some people thought being left handed was a defect. In fact, some people called left handed people abnormal. We know now that a certain portion of the population is born left-handed, and they are completely normal. Different, yes, but normal.

It is Pastor Frazier's "opinion" that homosexuality is abnormal. Again, he is entitled to his opinion. But that does not make him right, just opinionated. That's okay because I have opinions too. What bothers me is that Pastor Frazier is trying to speak for all God's people in the church. He cites the Bible as if it categorically condemns homosexuality. All I can say is that the Bible is a complex book. I have spent my life studying it, and I am not so sure that Pastor Frazier is right. The Bible also condemns many things that we seem to think are OK.

For instance, the eating of pork is condemned. I am a bacon man, myself. In fact, I love the whole pig pork chops, ribs, bacon, pigs' feet and so on. The Bible also tells us to stone those who are caught in adultery. That seems to be pretty severe by modern standards. If you are anyone who has been involved in adultery, I would stay away from those who takes the Bible too literally.

I don't think the debate over homosexuality is going to be solved in a year or two. It will probably go on for a long time. Look how many years we people of the United States practiced slavery before we gave that up.

I just want to go on record to say that there are many Christians in Oroville and throughout this state who are truly welcoming to those who are homosexual.

Pastor Frazier also says, "If they are a lesbian or a homosexual they are not followers of Jesus." There are quite a few people who believe they are Christians, and seek to follow Jesus, and they are homosexuals. Pastor Frazier may disagree with them, and that is his right.

However, in the long run, it is Jesus himself who will determine if they are followers of Jesus. Pastor Frazier can do whatever he wants in his own church. Lesbian and homosexual Christians will do what they think is right in the churches in which they worship.

At St. Paul's, some of us are normal, some abnormal, and some of us are trying to figure it out. But we do know God loves us, and we all are trying to follow Jesus, whatever our sexual orientation.

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