

Freedom to Choose

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by Caleb H. Price

A former self-identified homosexual defends the right to change one's sexual identity.

The on-going controversy surrounding Focus on the Family's *Love Won Out* conference reveals the hypocrisy of liberals who call for "tolerance" and unquestioned acceptance of "diversity" yet attempt to stifle all opposing views to their politically correct, pro-gay agenda. As a result, another liberal mantra – the freedom to choose – is denied to those seeking to walk out of unwanted homosexuality.

Apparently, in today's America you can still Be Who You Want to Be – so long as it isn't "ex-gay."

Even more troubling is the vitriol unleashed against those who dare to consider the notion that homosexuality is not an immutable characteristic. Pro-gay activists regularly charge that messages such as those shared at *Love Won Out* are "vile," "dangerous" and "deplorable." Much of their most virulent rhetoric is saved for the debate over the cause of homosexuality.

At best, the evidence for a genetic basis to homosexuality is inconclusive. Even the authors of the recent pheromone and fruit fly studies urge caution in interpreting their work as "proof" of inevitable homosexual behavior based on biological or genetic circumstances.

Indeed, the current consensus in the scientific community – even the left-leaning American Psychological Association – is that homosexuality is likely caused by a complex interaction of biological, psychological, and social/environmental factors.

While many homosexuals have come to the conclusion that they were "born gay," there exists a surprising and not insignificant minority of gays and lesbians who recognize that sexual orientation is, in fact, quite changeable.

For example, Kate Kendall, director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, argues in the gay magazine *Frontiers* that sexual orientation is not fixed. Lesbian author Camille Paglia argues that homosexuality is not normal and that it is an adaptation – not an inborn trait.

Apparently, the reality that people can change their sexual identity isn't just a right-wing Christian thing.

While no one knows for sure what causes homosexuality, recent research confirms that permanent change is indeed possible. Pro-gay ally Dr. Robert Spitzer of Columbia University is now convinced that many homosexuals have successfully changed their sexual orientation. In 2001, he published results from a five-year study of 200 gay men and lesbians who had sought "re-orientation" therapy. Spitzer found that most have been able to achieve fulfilling heterosexual relationships.

While his research shows that such change often involves a difficult and long journey, it is nevertheless possible for highly motivated individuals.

Clearly, pro-gay activists aren't dealing with all the evidence in their insistence that people are born gay and cannot change. In presenting an orthodox Christian viewpoint on this complex topic, *Love Won Out* educates attendees on the issues and provides hope to those who seek change in their sexual identity and to those whose loved ones are gay-identified. In presenting the truth about homosexuality with compassion, the conference message is centered in the redemptive and restorative love of Jesus for all people – gay and straight.

In America we are blessed with the freedom to make choices about how we define ourselves while stewarding our sexuality as we see fit. If people want to change their sexual identity, it is their right to choose.