

The Adventist Homosexual Book

MANY OF THE AUTHORS CONTINUE TO BE EMPLOYED AS DENOMINATIONAL TEACHERS

This year, 2008, a new Adventist book was privately published. Entitled *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*. It is remarkable for two reasons: *First*, because it contains astounding statements to the effect that all Christians should accept active homosexuality as not only Biblical, but godly. For example, it is stated that Christ cannot return for His people until, with open arms, Adventists welcome homosexuals and their practices.

Second, because significant portions of it were written by individuals currently employed as teachers in key positions in our denominational colleges and universities.

For these reasons, some of these statements are being reprinted here, along with the names and positions of the ones who made them. This situation should be brought to the attention of the employing organizations.

The three editors are listed as David Ferguson, Fritz Guy (currently a theology teacher at La Sierra University), and David Larson (currently a religion teacher at Loma Linda University).

Excerpts from six of these articles in the book are quoted. **Four of those six authors are currently teaching in our denominational colleges or universities.** In each instance, their employing institution is named.

It should be mentioned that a very strange system of pagination was used throughout this book: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, etc. This would mean that when a quotation runs from one page to the next, it would have to be paged as 1-1-2, etc. Therefore, I have changed the paging to 1/1, 1/2, 1/3, etc.

Here are these excerpts from articles by Ben Kemena, Harry Wang, Aubyn Fulton, Rene Drumm, John Jones, and Fritz Guy: —vf

Ben Kemena, article entitled “Biological Determinants of Homosexual Orientation.”

Kemena, “a former [Loma Linda University] faculty member fired earlier because of his sexual orientation” (p. 3/53), provided a brief history of how the American Psychiatry Association eventually gave full endorsement to homosexuality as perfectly natural. He concluded his article with this remarkable statement:

“May we pray for change in the institutional [Seventh-day Adventist] church, and may we understand that **until the Word of God is presented to gays**

and lesbians in a way recognizably Christlike, the promise of a Second Coming will remain unfulfilled.”—Kemena, p. 2/19.

Harry C. Wang, article entitled “Psychiatry, Antihomosexual Bias, and Challenges for Gay and Lesbian Youth.”

Wang is a psychiatrist at the University of California, Davis. His article, which was concerned with gaining acceptance for homosexuals from the general public, mentions in passing the startling results of a number of different scientific research studies, including medical journal sources about gays and lesbians:

“**Anxiety and depression is common**, occurring three to four times more frequently for gay and lesbian youth than for heterosexual youth. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for all youth aged ten to twenty-four, but **it is believed by some to be the leading cause of death for lesbian and gay youth.** Many studies have shown that **gay and lesbian youth attempt suicide at two to three times the rate of heterosexual youth.**”—Wang, p. 2/37.

“Gay youth continue to be at significant risk of acquiring HIV infection. Recent preliminary findings from the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance system show **a HIV prevalence rate of 14 percent for gay men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four.**”—Wang, p. 2/38.

“It has been estimated that **gay youth account for 25 percent of homeless youth.**”—Wang, p. 2/38.

Aubyn Fulton, article entitled “Response: Science and Sexual Orientation.”

Fulton is a professor of psychology at our own Pacific Union College, and regularly counsels with students. A person in such a position should be in full agreement with the principles of Christian conversion and the beliefs of the Bible.

Fulton agreed with the other authors of articles in this book that no attempts should be made to help gays and lesbians leave their practices, but that efforts should instead be directed to let them do as they wish without suggestions to do otherwise. He mentioned that he had threatened one Adventist college with a lawsuit if they did not try to stop gays from being harassed at the school (p. 2/51). He then made this interesting statement:

“**We do not all need to agree that homosexuality is not a sin; [but] all of us need to agree that not treating homosexuals as our neighbor is**

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a sin.”—Fulton, p. 2/51 [*italics his*].

Fulton also cites an interesting scientific research report:

“Most contemporary social scientists would put the figure [of male homosexuality] at between 3 and 6 percent.”—Fulton, p. 2/48.

Rene D. Drumm, article entitled “The Social Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Seventh-day Adventists.”

Drumm is chairperson and Professor of Social Work and Family Studies at Southern Adventist University.

Drumm attempted to show that homosexuals are naturally born the way they are; indeed, that **there is no such thing as “males” and “females” among any of the human population**, because some have a mixture of more or less of the male and female hormones!

“A common myth exists that people are biologically ‘either or,’ either biologically male or biologically female. In reality, people are much more complex. **Some individuals are positioned along the continuum between male and female** . . . Hormones such as testosterone and estrogen occur along the biological continuum and differ in levels from individual to individual.”—Drumm, p. 3/4.

Several pages after this amplify on Drumm’s concern to show that homosexuality is not something that the person chooses to do.

In addition, Drumm also provides evidence that **many heterosexual men are actually homosexual:**

“Among men who engage in anonymous sexual encounters with men, the majority identify themselves as heterosexual and more than half (54-58 percent) are married. In another study that examines sexual labeling of men who have had sex with men and have requested an HIV blood test, 25 percent reported a heterosexual orientation.”—Drumm, p. 3/7-3/8.

Later in the article, Drumm severely condemns an earlier Adventist denominationally supported treatment center, which received homosexuals who wanted to escape from that way of life. Drumm, currently teaching our young people at Southern Adventist University, made this comment:

“These individuals suffered fraud at the hands of this Seventh-day Adventist-supported institution. **There was and is no ‘cure’ for homosexuality**—although church leaders wanted to believe there might be. The only ‘cure’ is a life of sexual abstinence, which for most people is a setup for sporadic promiscuity. The recovery from the disappointment and abuse suffered at the center proved a long and difficult journey for the participants. The experience left significant emotional scars on the victim-survivors that they later had to address.”—Drumm, 3/19.

In other words, **Drumm, a teacher at one of**

our colleges, advocates that gay and lesbian young people should never be encouraged to stop indulging in homosexuality, for attempts to do so will only bring them sadness and damaged lives.

Drumm then provides the reader with this startling statement:

“Did the spider spin a deceptive web before sin or was the lion capable of digesting meat? Probably not, but we can only admire the ingenuity, adaptability and, yes, ‘beauty’ in some of these changes. If we allow that homosexuality may have followed as a result of sin, **does that mean we cannot find beauty in it, or even allow it to exist within the framework of God’s plan?** If other changes occurred after the fall which we readily accept, should homosexuality be different?”—Drumm, quoting a letter, p. 3/20-3/21.

John R. Jones, article entitled “‘In Christ there is Neither . . .’: Toward the Unity of the Body of Christ.”

Although officially retired from denominational employment, Jones teaches year after year under contract at La Sierra University. The book says he is “Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and World Religions” at LSU. He makes the most astounding statements!

In his article, Jones attempts to downplay and sidestep every Bible passage forbidding homosexuality. He wants the reader to believe that the practice is perfectly natural and accepted by God.

He dismisses the statements against homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, by declaring that they are just part of a Mosaic “Holiness Code” in chapters 17-26:

“Leviticus 17-26 encodes the legal framework of Israelite society as attributed back to Moses. This framework structures an ethic of ritual purity, a code of sacral taboos through which Israel is to maintain a state of holiness before God.”—Jones, p. 4/4.

Ignoring the fact that the Bible addresses rules for males as generically inclusive of women and children,—Jones says that **the rules are only for men!**

“Throughout the Holiness Code, **it is only the adult males of the community**, the ‘sons of Israel,’ **who are addressed; what women do sexually with women is not on the horizon.**”—Jones, p. 4/4.

Later, on the same page, Jones infers that **the prohibition against homosexuality is due only to taboos against mixing two kinds of crops**, or cross-breeding two varieties of animals. He says that the prohibition against homosexuality is only made because “the expressed **intent is to avoid contamination by association with any practices that characterize other peoples**” (Jones, p. 4/4). In other words, there is nothing wrong with homosexuality itself. It was only not to be done by the Israelites because non-Israelites also were doing it.

Jones continues on, page after page (4/6-4/24), neutralizing other Bible prohibitions against homosexuality.

“Romans 1:24-27 contains the Bible’s only substantive consideration of homosexual conduct.”—Jones, p. 4/12.

That, of course, is not true! Jones overlooked Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; and Jude 7; all of which just as clearly condemn homosexual relations as extremely vile and sinful. It is of interest that **the story of Sodom and its destruction (Genesis 19) is carefully ignored throughout this entire book.**

Jones next uses six pages to tell the reader that **the Apostle Paul was not actually condemning homosexuality as sinful or evil.**

Emphasizing Paul’s statement that “in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek,” Jones says that this means that this phrase also applies to no more distinction between heterosexual and homosexual activities. He infers that **both practices are equally accepted by God when we accept Christ as our Saviour.**

Keeping in mind that John Jones is a currently employed teacher at La Sierra University, it is an astounding fact that four times in this article, he says that lesbian/gay relationships are “loving same-sex relationships”: pp. 4/24, 4/25, 4/26, and 4/28. In the last two, Jones says that they are done “in Christ,” and he clearly defines them as referring to “loving same-sex relationships.”

“What biblical implications can we find for the ethics and boundaries of sexual expression in the context of **loving same-sex relationships?** How might this look as we seek scriptural fidelity today?”—Jones, p. 4/24.

The remainder of the chapter (pp. 4/30-4/42) is used by Jones to answer this question of how to hal- low and render godly such practices. This is accomplished, *first*, by “the ethics of our interpretations” (p. 4/24), as he says here:

“Sexual expression in the context of loving same-sex relationships in Christ will answer to and build upon interpretive parameters established through shared perspectives, voiced in conversations, rather than through any dominant structure of authority— ecclesiastical, academic, or other.”—Jones, p. 4/25.

Jones says that, *second*, homosexuality is accepted by God when we regard it as a “moral quality” that “goes beyond” church rituals and dogmas.

“Sexual expression in the context of loving same-sex relationships in Christ will be validated [approved by God] on the grounds of a deeper morality that goes beyond ritual [church] observance, in the context of a faith community [denomination] that sees itself as growing in Christian understanding [of homosexuals] toward a unity that transcends

‘weak’ and ‘strong.’ ”—Jones, pp. 4/27-4/28.

“For most of us under the banner of the new order in Christ, the ancient ritual taboos have largely been emptied.”—Jones, p. 4/26.

He says that **Paul’s statement in Romans 14:14 eliminates all such taboos, such as negativity toward homosexual practices.**

“Paul seeks to carry his hearers along with him as he moves them toward fuller knowledge—from a pre-Christian to a Christian stance.”—Jones, p. 4/27.

Jones says that, *third*, **we must only select “scriptural themes and passages that emerge as relevant”** (p. 4/28) when we decide whether or not the Bible considers homosexuality to be sinful. Continuing on, he says:

“Our discipleship in Christ means being faithful to the Christian principles that Scripture provides to govern our sexual relations . . .

“Limiting our quest for guidance to those texts that deal explicitly with same-sex relations, especially given their focus on particular acts as viewed from perspectives of ceremonial uncleanness, proves inadequate precisely because such a limitation derives from a category error on our part.

“From a Christian standpoint, it is fair to ask whether our questions today about homosexuality are more naturally addressed in just those passages that point to the new levels of responsibility Christ brings into all our relationships, especially our domestic ones. **Once the revolutionary message of mutuality between life partners is received, if this message is predicated on the core value of Christ’s modeling and salvation,** its leverage must extend across all relations. If under Christ’s lordship, husband and wife are led beyond conventional cultural norms to new levels of mutuality and consideration toward one another (1 Cor. 7), ought not the same principles govern the relationships of all couples in Christ?”—Jones, p. 4/28.

Jones thus totally whitewashes homosexuality, declaring it to be fully accepted by God as long as we are kind when we do it! Here is his very next sentence:

“Sexual expression in the context of loving, same-sex relationships in Christ manifests the qualities of mutuality, equality, respect, and consideration.”—John Jones, p. 4/28.

Jones then returns to his theme that Paul gave, “There is no longer Jew nor Greek,” and says:

“Precisely because in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek **the symbols of ethnically defined sanctity lose their substance.** [That would include the Ten Commandments.] . . .

“ ‘There is no longer male and female.’ With this pronouncement, Paul’s vision continues to challenge the church. Given that much of the an-

cient and contemporary objection to same-sex relations is predicated on the alleged confusion of this distinction, the implications of Christ's reign in this regard still summon us beyond our conventional assumptions. The biblical associations of sexism with patriarchalism should alert us to our unfinished work here.

"There is no question that **the Spirit's onward call [toward universal acceptance of homosexuality], from comfortable stasis to destabilizing rethinking in line with Christ's rule**, will continue to affront many."—*Jones, 4/29.*

"**If we citizens of the Kingdom are to continue our journey toward ever fuller living out of that Kingdom's values in this world, we can only seek to grow beyond the level of mechanical obedience to ordinances** [such as the Ten Commandments] that Paul calls 'bondage,' and into the joyous discipleship that he calls 'freedom' (Gal. 5:1)."—*Jones, 4/29.*

In conclusion at the end of his article, **John Jones, a religion teacher at La Sierra University, carefully undercuts the need to consider or obey anything in Scripture, for the Holy Spirit will now lead us beyond such old-fashioned concepts:**

"Among his final words to his followers, Jesus says, 'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come' (John 16:12-13). If John's Gospel, in which the new wine is better (2:10), still speaks to us today in new ways, can we now bear to hear? For Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8), still reserves the right to surprise us."—*Jones, p. 4/30.*

Fritz Guy, article entitled "Same-sex Love: Theological Considerations."

The book says that Guy is "Research Professor of Philosophical Theology at La Sierra University."

"The theological considerations outlined here consist of a series of affirmations [things which Fritz Guy believes]: (1) Physical pleasure and sexual intimacy belong to the created goodness of humanness. (2) Sexual intimacy symbolizes a profound personal and moral relationship. (3) **The moral quality of physical intimacy does not depend on the sex of the partners.** (4) **Scripture does not condemn all same-sex love.** (5) **Same-sex love is not 'unnatural.'** (6) Antagonism toward same-sex love has deep psychosocial roots. (7) **Christians should affirm [approve] caring, committed same-sex love.**"—*Guy, 4/43.*

"Most people are right-handed, although a minority are left-handed and very few are truly ambidextrous; but **we do not make the characteristics of the ma-**

jority a requirement for every individual.

"**Nor is the moral quality of same-sex physical intimacy dependent on sexual orientation . . . The moral quality of physical intimacy is determined neither by the sex of the partner nor by the factors involved in the choice, but only by the moral quality of the intimacy itself.**"—*Guy, 4/48.*

"**There are no evident theological [Bible] or psychological reasons for condemning same-sex love. It is neither a sin nor a sickness. It is not a psychological, moral, or spiritual aberration, much less a 'perversion.'** It is a problem only because of the widespread and profound prejudice against it."—*Guy, 4/50.*

"**It is theologically and morally imperative for serious Christians—Adventist and otherwise—to welcome, affirm, celebrate, nurture, and support individual choices for caring, committed same-sex relationships.** This conclusion entails several practical implications . . .

"**Christians should discontinue their moral condemnation of same-sex intimacy in caring, committed relationships . . . Christians should encourage their congregations to welcome, affirm [approve], and support [encourage] persons engaged in morally appropriate same-sex relationships . . .**

"**In these and other ways serious Christians can contribute to the realization of God's intention for all humanity and the actualization of God's loving will 'on earth as it is in heaven' (Matt. 6:10).**"—*Guy, 4/57-4/58.*

In order to bring the book even more to the attention of Seventh-day Adventists, a widely circulated, video-taped press conference was held by its three editors (Larson, Guy, and Ferguson) at the headquarters of the international gay/lesbian *Human Rights Campaign* in Washington, D.C. on June 17, 2008. They are anxious that our leaders and you learn about their book. This present article will help do so.

The special executive meetings, held on September 2 or 3, 2008, at the Pacific Union Conference Headquarters were attended by all seven conference presidents and the union president. Although they were notified of this book, it was not on the agenda and no mention was made of it.

AS WE GO TO PRESS—Quite by accident, I came across a Spirit of Prophecy passage which states that one of the special sins of Sodom was the annihilation of marriage. Homosexuals rarely remain with the same person very long, nor is it a natural marriage. In addition, their current agenda is to change the laws so that any kind of strange relationship can be legally called "marriage." Read *Great Controversy, 270:1.*