

Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship - May 15, 2024

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Q. WHY does the local MB Church need to provide better support for:

- **parents of LGBTQ+ kids (any age)?, AND**
- **people who have LGBTQ+ friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors, co-workers, family members?, etc, AND**
- **people who identify as LGBTQ+?**

A.

What is the framework I am using for this discussion?

Grace & Truth

John 1:14 - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- LOVE is both Grace and Truth (not one without the other)

TRUTH - Scripture As outlined in the MB Confession of Faith	GRACE
<p>The Good News of Jesus Christ is for ALL (Matthew 28:18-20)</p> <p>Each person is created in the Image of God - valuable, deserving of respect, care, love, etc (Gen 1:26,27, Psalm 139)</p> <p>We are ALL sinners We ALL need Salvation through Jesus Christ (John 1:5-10)</p> <p>Sexual Ethic = HOLY SEXUALITY (Christopher Yuan) Single and celibate or Married and faithful (1 man/1 woman - lifelong, covenant union)</p> <p>All sexual expression outside this covenant union is sin (Gen 2:24, Matthew 19:3-9, 1 Cor 6:18-20)</p> <p>Gender is binary - we are created male and female (Gen 1:26, 27)</p>	<p>What does Grace look like in action? Kindness, care, compassion, gentleness, respect, practical support, etc. (Col 3:12-17, 1 Corinthians 13:1-12)</p> <p>No assumptions - examples....</p> <p>Love does not equal agreement Love does not equal approval Love does not equal affirmation of everything a person thinks or does It is possible to love people well - and not agree with (or approve or affirm) everything another person thinks or does.</p> <p>Encouragement to engage with people (using healthy boundaries)</p> <p>Encouragement to hear people's stories - asking good questions to understand their perspectives</p> <p>Curiosity (or asking good questions) rather than immediately criticizing, correcting or condemning another person</p>

I think there are better questions to ask...

HOW does the local MB Church provide better support for:

- **parents of LGBTQ+ kids (any age)?, AND**
- **people who have LGBTQ+ friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors, co-workers, family members?, etc, AND**
- **people who identify as LGBTQ+?**

LOVE

As Christians, we are called to **LOVE God and LOVE others** (Mark 12:29-31)

Loving someone well does not mean that we agree with - or approve of - or affirm - everything another person thinks or does. (LOVE = Truth and Grace together - NOT one without the other)

Q. LOVE others - is there an exemption clause?

Q. What does LOVE look like in action? (Practical)

Q. How can churches welcome all people - including LGBTQ+ people and their families warmly and faithfully?

A. Who is the church?

B. How do we engage with all people - including LGBTQ people warmly and faithfully?

LEARN

Are we willing to **LEARN**?

- Learning someone's else's perspective **does not equal agreement** with everything that person thinks and does
- We can LOVE well and still have different perspectives, convictions, values and beliefs. (We do not need to pester, nag or bully each other to change beliefs. God is the one who has the power to change minds, and hearts)

Some of the ways we **LEARN** are by:

- Listening to the stories of our LGBTQ family and friends (listening to understand - not listening to rebuke or correct or criticize or condemn)
- Asking good questions, being curious - rather than immediately jumping to assumptions, criticizing, correcting or condemning
- Pursuing good resources - to understand the terms, the issues, and the challenges faced by people who are LGBTQ

Engaging well is often done through relationship = hearing their story, finding points of connection, learning about their perspectives on all kinds of things, showing LOVE (or GRACE) in ACTION.

- The importance of hospitality - because good food and coffee helps 😊

LGBTQ+ terms

Helpful to build engagement. Please do NOT mock the acronym. LEARN about it 😊

Q. What are the felt needs of parents of LGBTQ kids? (or families of LGBTQ+ people)?

A. How do we learn what anyone needs?

Resources

Online

- The Center for Faith, Sexuality and Gender - this website has video courses, Pastoral Papers, webinars and more
- Posture Shift

Book Recommendations:

- Preston Sprinkle (2015) - People to be Loved
 - Sam Allberry (2013) Is God Anti-gay?
 - Dr. Preston Sprinkle (2021) Embodied
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LIVE

When Christians engage with people in the LGBTQ Community, there may be some sticky situations we face.

So...if we commit to **LOVE** our LGBTQ+ family and friends

And...we are willing to **LEARN**

Then...how do we **LIVE**?

How do we apply the truth of scripture to the everyday sticky situations of life?

TRUTH _____ **applied with WISDOM & GRACE** _____ **to the sticky situations of life**

In our MB Churches:

We want to agree on the TRUTH of our Theology - and have GRACE for our applications to everyday life

- If I am invited to a gay wedding - should I go? What if this is my child?
- If someone I love comes out as gay (or lesbian, bisexual, transgender or queer), how do I respond?
- If my child is gay and has a partner - can they come to Christmas dinner? Can they be part of the family photo? Can they come to the family cabin? What about sharing a room?
- If my adult son wears makeup - how do I handle this?
- If my adult child says they are transgender - and they want a new name and pronoun - what do I do? (how does this change if they are a teenager?)

You may not have wrestled with these questions yet - but in the meantime,

- **LOVE** your LGBTQ family member or friend (just as you are called to love everyone else)
- Start to **LEARN** (terms, issues, challenges, etc)
- Start wrestling with how to **LIVE** (Truth applied with WISDOM & GRACE to the sticky situations in your life)
 - Pray for wisdom - seek good resources - talk to other Christians - keep learning God's word (attend church plus a good Bible study)
 - It is ok for Christians to disagree with each other on how to live this out. Respectful, kind conversations are helpful as we sort out how to handle sticky situations.

LEAD

How do we LEAD other people around us to:

LOVE the LGBTQ+ community (and their family and friends)

LEARN

LIVE this out

This will be unique to each person here today - and unique to each church

We LEAD by example - in all of these areas

We LEAD by offering training evenings like this one

We LEAD by educating ourselves - and providing more education in our churches (online courses? In person courses?

Making resources available? etc)

We LEAD by sharing our stories

Other?