

HELPING HOMOSEXUALS

Jason Patrick Hilburn

Some of you may have seen something similar to this on Facebook:

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| If a homosexual were hurt...would I help him? | YES |
| If a homosexual's car broke down...would I help him? | YES |
| If a homosexual got lost while traveling...would I help him? | YES |
| If a homosexual were hungry...would I help him? | YES |
| If a homosexual were drowning...would I help him? | YES |
| If a homosexual asked me to conduct a "gay marriage ceremony"...would I help him? | NO |

"Hate" has never been the issue. It is about loving God enough to refuse to condone things that are against God's will (Isaiah 5:20; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:11). It is also about loving others and wanting what is best for them (Matthew 22:36-39). If God says that impenitent homosexuals will be punished forever for their sins, then truly compassionate people will not encourage homosexuals to continue down that road (Matthew 7:13-14; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Jude 7).

The truth is that all sins are deadly, and we have all been guilty of some type of sin; therefore we all need help (Romans 3:23; 6:23). The help we all need comes only from God through Jesus (Acts 4:12). However, forgiveness and salvation are only received when we submit our will to God through obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 14:6,15; Romans 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17). To be forgiven of homosexual sins or any other sins, one must hear God's Word (Romans 10:17); believe in Jesus as the Son of God (John 8:24); truly regret that we have sinned against God and be willing to change (2 Corinthians 7:10); confess faith in Jesus before men (Matthew 10:32); be immersed for the purpose of washing away sins (Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11); and be faithful (1 John 1:6-7; Revelation 2:10).

Being faithful does not mean that the former homosexual will never again be tempted to commit the sins of his past. It means that he has decided to stop doing those things and will do his best to be faithful to God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 John 1:6—2:6). There is nothing sinful about being tempted, else Jesus would have committed sin by being tempted (Hebrews 4:15). However, being tempted does not give a person the right to give in to the temptation. If he gives in, then deadly sin appears again after baptism:

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot

be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren (James 1:13-16).

It is encouraging to know that there will always be a way out of every temptation:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

If one sins after baptism, he must truly regret his sin and determine to do God's will, confessing his sin to God in prayer for forgiveness (2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 John 1:9). Then the blood of Christ will wash his sin away (1 John 1:7). If the sin is known by others, Biblical principles teach us to confess the sin in repentance as far as it is known, and a faithful Christian can pray on another brother's behalf for him to be forgiven (Luke 17:3-4; Acts 8:22-24; 1 Corinthians 5; 1 Timothy 2:1; James 5:16).

Christians must remember that at some point in our lives, we all needed salvation as badly as any practicing homosexual. Let us all remember that Jesus died for everyone, and He wants all people to be saved, including homosexuals (1 Timothy 2:3-6; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 3:9). In our zeal for defending the Truth of God's Word, let us not lose our compassion for our fellow man. Let us not forget our own sinful past. Let us speak the Truth in love, having speech seasoned with salt: *"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man"* (Colossians 4:5-6; cf. Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 3:15). Let us show the world that God wants to give people greater blessings than anything they can experience here on earth!

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