
A POLITICAL AGENDA IN THE SBC

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This paper will seek to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Prove that Roman Catholicism is not Christianity, and therefore that Christians must not treat it as such.
2. Prove that Roman Catholic liberation theology has heavily infiltrated the Southern Baptist convention.
3. Prove that the new effort to acknowledge people who identify as LGBT as fellow Christians—which will use liberation theology by treating LGBT people as “sexual minorities”—is based on erroneous and unscientific information and therefore must be resisted.

Roman Catholicism

Southern Baptist Convention leaders are increasingly seen working together with Roman Catholics. Many prominent leaders signed the Manhattan Declaration, in which Protestants and Roman Catholics join hands as fellow believers for a common cause. But we need to ask the question: Is Roman Catholicism Christianity?

One of the most important differences between Christianity and Roman Catholicism pertains to the matter of authority. While Catholics do believe that the Bible is inspired, they also believe that the oral traditions of the church are meant to supplement the Bible. According to the Catechism of the Catholic church, “Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together and communicate one with the other.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 80) Furthermore, Roman Catholics believe that the Catholic church is the authority on matters of interpreting Scripture and tradition. Simply stated, they believe that church traditions are on an even plane with Scripture and that they determine the meaning of both. To defend this view, some Catholics claim that the sufficiency of Scripture, the idea that the Bible is all we need for godly living, is never taught in the Bible. However, when we examine what the Bible says about itself, and connect the dots, it is apparent that Scripture is totally sufficient. The Bible says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17) From these verses, we learn that all Scripture is inspired; but the Bible never teaches that traditions are inspired. According to these verses, Christian maturity hinges on Scripture rather than tradition. Furthermore, Jesus was not a proponent of teaching tradition. On the contrary, He rebuked the Pharisees for subverting the word of God with the teachings of man:

“Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.” (Mark 7:5-8)

As this passage demonstrates, traditions are to be judged by the word of God, and not the word of God by traditions. Jesus said, “thy word is truth.” (John 17:17) Catholic doctrine teaches that “[Holy] tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God, which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 81) However, anyone who compares the words of the apostles in Scripture with the traditions of Rome will see that they cannot both be true. When they contradict each other, what are we to do? The Scriptures are inspired by God, and all Catholic tradition must be tested by them. The truth is not Roman Catholic tradition, nor is it what the Catholic church says about tradition or the truth. According to Jesus, God’s word is the truth, and all other teachings and traditions must be judged by it. Catholic doctrine teaches that “Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence,” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 82) but it is impossible to simultaneously accept two things which contradict each other.

Some Catholics will refute these statements by claiming that the Bible does teach us to keep traditions. For this, they will quote from Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians where he writes, “stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.” (2 Thessalonians 2:15) However, as we have noted, traditions are to be judged by Scripture, and therefore, any tradition which opposes the teachings of Scripture is not authoritative, but false. Others will reply by claiming that the Bible was a product of the church, and therefore, the church has an authority higher than Scripture. But the Scripture was not made by the church. Rather, it was given to the church by God. The Bible says, “the prophecy came

not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy [Spirit].” (2 Peter 1:21)

The Scripture, and not the church, is our ultimate authority. Certainly, Catholics will object to this, often reminding us that the church is called “the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:15) But, the fact that the church is the ground of the truth doesn’t imply that the church determines the truth. The church does not determine truth, but is entrusted by God with the truth which He has already delivered (Jude 1:3). Catholics may also point to the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, where Jesus said, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” (Matthew 23:2-3) Using this statement, Catholics claim that the bishops and priests of the Catholic church sit in the seat of Jesus and the apostles, and therefore must be obeyed. However, Jesus was not teaching the Jews to blindly submit to anything the Pharisees taught. If we examine His ministry, we can see many instances where Jesus did not submit to the erroneous traditions of the Pharisees. On the contrary, He often rebuked them for putting their traditions above Scripture. Thus, it is evident that Jesus’ words are not an unqualified command to obey Catholic leaders. Once again, everything must be tested against Scripture.

Roman Catholics also believe that the pope, as the representative, or vicar, of Christ, can speak infallibly. In other words, they believe that the Pope can speak with the same level of authority as Scripture. To support this belief, they refer to the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, where Jesus said to Peter, “thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18) The idea is that in this passage, Jesus appointed Peter as the first pope, as the one upon whom the church would be built. However, a

careful study of the passage refutes this theory. Jesus did not say, “Upon you will I build my church.” Rather, He said, “upon this rock.” Catholics believe that Peter was this rock, but to believe this forces a contradiction with other Scripture which explicitly teaches that Jesus is the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11). When Jesus said, “upon this rock I will build my church,” He was referring to Peter’s confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16) And even if Roman Catholics refuse to acknowledge this, they still have another problem. According to Roman Catholic doctrine, the pope is God’s representative of Christ on earth. In other words, the pope is the mediator, the man in between God and men. However, the Bible tells us that “there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). If Jesus is the only Mediator between God and man, then the pope cannot be what the Roman Catholic church claims he is.

Roman Catholics believe in the infallibility of the pope when he speaks *ex cathedra*: “The Supreme Pontiff, in virtue of his office, possesses infallible teaching authority when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful...he proclaims with a definitive act that a doctrine of faith or morals is to be held as such.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 891) However, this belief is self-refuting. For example, Pope Honorius I was anathematized by the Sixth General Council for teaching that there was only one will in Christ. His anathematization was even confirmed by Pope Leo II. In light of these facts, the question is, “How could an infallible pope have taught heresy?” The Catholic church has responded by claiming that Pope Honorius was not speaking *ex cathedra* when he taught this heresy. But of course they have to say this; otherwise they must face the obvious fact that their doctrine of papal infallibility is itself a heresy. Unlike the contradictions of so-called papal infallibility, Jesus spoke of the word of God saying, “scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

With all of these things in mind, some might wonder whether a person can be a Roman Catholic and still be a truly saved Christian. Is it possible that, even with the errant belief in “Sacred Tradition,” and even with the belief in papal infallibility, that one could still be saved? After all, what is most important in believing in Jesus Christ! Based on this line of thinking, innumerable protestant Christians embrace Catholics as fellow Christians. However, there is a major and lethal error in this reasoning. The problem is that the Roman Catholic church doesn’t believe in the Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Granted, they will say that they do; but we need to read their official doctrine to know the truth. According to Catholic doctrine, “Grace is the help God gives us to respond to our vocation of becoming his adopted sons. It introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 2021) With the utmost subtlety, the Roman Catholic church introduces the word “help;” which may seem to be of no consequence, but is the difference between a works-righteousness system leading to hell and the true grace of God leading to heaven. The word help implies that salvation is by “us plus God.” Consequently, by this simply four-letter word, the doctrine of grace, which teaches that we are saved by God apart from any contribution of our own, is utterly destroyed. From the Catholic view, salvation is not by faith in Christ alone, but by faith in yourself plus the help of Christ. Where does Scripture tell us that grace is help? The answer is, It doesn’t. This is no small matter. It is one of the main reasons that there was a protestant reformation. It is the reason that no true Roman Catholic, a person who embraces official Roman Catholic doctrine, can be a true Christian. Grace is not “help.” According to the Bible, grace is an undeserved gift; and so, when we say that we are saved by grace, we mean that we are saved by God without respect to anything on our part, and not that we are saved as we respond to God with His help.

Roman Catholicism is a false religion that teaches people to work for their salvation. It is a subtle pseudo-Christianity that is deceiving billions of people into hell.

The Roman Catholic church teaches that “for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation. Sacramental grace is the grace of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ and proper to each sacrament.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 1129) In other words, saving grace comes to a person as they keep the sacraments—saving grace is seen as coming to “believers,” who already believe in Jesus, as they keep the sacraments. Thus, saving grace is not by believing apart from any works, but by believing plus works! Yet the Bible explicitly says, “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) This is not an insignificant error. This is heresy at the very center of the gospel! This is not something a true Christian can believe. True Christians don’t obey the Lord to obtain saving grace; they obey the Lord because they are already saved and because they love Him.

Roman Catholics also have a completely errant view of faith. They believe that “we receive the life of faith through the Church, she is our mother...” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 169) In contradiction to this, the Bible says, “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17) Christians believe that whatever the Scripture say goes, but Catholics believe that whatever Rome says goes. How can a Catholic, who is supposed to accept Scripture and Tradition equally, accept both of these contradicting views at once. The answer is, They don’t. Inevitably, just as with the Pharisees, the word of God is subverted by the traditions and teachings of men.

Roman Catholics are blind to the fact that they have put their faith and trust in a religious system rather than Jesus. Their official doctrine states that “No one can have God as Father who

does not have the Church as Mother.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 181) No system of religion can save anyone. We can only be saved by putting our faith and trust in Jesus Christ and His work at the cross. The Roman Catholic church has set the church up in Christ’s place as a savior. Furthermore, they have done the same thing with Mary. According to their doctrine, “[Mary] did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation...Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 969) According to this teaching, Mary brings the gift of salvation. Thus, she has been exalted up to the very place of Jesus as a savior. Not only this, but her title as Mediatrix goes directly against Scripture which says, “there is...one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

Roman Catholicism also contradicts Scripture in that it teaches people to venerate images. The Bible says, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them” (Exodus 20:4-5). We find it written in the Roman Catholic Catechism that “The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, ‘the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype,’ and ‘whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it.’” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 2132) Catholics suppose that, so long as they aren’t worshipping or venerating the image, but are worshipping or venerating through it, then they are not committing idolatry. However, they are doing exactly what Israel did with the golden calf at Mount Sinai (Exodus 32). Aaron supposed that it was allowable to worship the true God through an image, but this was idolatry, and it provoked God’s jealous wrath. Once

again, this is no small error. The Bible clearly teaches us that this is idolatry, and no idolaters will inherit the kingdom of heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9).

As Christians who love the Lord, we need to stop harming Roman Catholics and ourselves by acting like they are fellow Christians. Certainly, we ought to be friendly with people, though we must not further the cause of heresies, (2 John 1:11) and even when we are friendly, we must not give the impression that we accept them as fellow Christians. Christians are people who believe in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and as we have seen, anyone who embraces Roman Catholic doctrine does not believe that. They are simply religious unbelievers. Granted, there may be Catholics who have not embraced such heresies, and who may legitimately be saved; but remember, they are not true Catholics. True Catholics are those who embrace the doctrines of Rome, and no true Catholic can be saved. We must love them by sharing the truth with them, and praying that God will deliver them out of this massive lie of the Devil.

Liberation Theology

The Second Vatican Council (1963-1965) was instrumental in the birth of a new kind of theology—the theology of liberation. The council turned the attention of Roman Catholics from heaven to earth, as it stressed, by way of a new eschatology, the church’s mission to carry out the work of justice.¹ The groundwork had been laid; and in 1968, at the Medellín Conference of Latin American Bishops, the theology of liberation began to formulate.² Traditionally, Roman Catholic theology taught Christians to be generous, but also to accept inevitable suffering in life.

¹ Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 5.

² Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), ix.

To many bishops, especially those who had experienced the terrible poverty of Latin America firsthand, the church seemed to be encouraging people in a life of hopeless resignation—a life without any expectation of seeing God’s love and grace move on behalf of the poor.³ With the impetus for change in place, bishops at Medellín seized the opportunity, affirming that the church would “support the downtrodden of every social class so that they might come to know their rights and how to make use of them.”⁴ Then, in 1971, Gustavo Gutiérrez published *A Theology of Liberation*, in which the framework and primary tenants of liberation theology were set forth.⁵

The Marxist Worldview of Liberation Theology

Latin American liberation theology emphasizes the oppression of the poor by privileged classes, and asserts that the gospel of Jesus Christ liberates the poor as Christians take part in His mission of securing justice and equality for all. Segundo Galilea points to a dialectical tension between the slave and the master, a dialectic which Hegel saw as being weaved through social history, and one which Marx applied to economics.⁶ This dialectic is central to liberation theology, because it answers the question, “What must people be liberated from?” The answer is, “Any social class that may be construed as oppressed.” Based on this master-slave dialectic, the terms “oppressed” and “poor” are broadened to include many groups of people. Accordingly, Galilea claims that the poor include racial classes, the unemployed, the disabled, any marginalized groups, and even prisoners and exiles.⁷ Similarly, Gutiérrez defines the poor

³ Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 23.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), ix.

⁶ Segundo Galilea, “Liberation Theology and New Tasks,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 176.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 178.

as the exploited classes, despised ethnic groups, and marginalized cultures.⁸ Once society is seen through the lens of the master-slave dialectic, the next question becomes, “How can people be liberated?” The answer, according to many liberation theologians, is Christian engagement in social activism and social revolution. Gutiérrez writes that “It comes down to taking a socialist and revolutionary stand.”⁹ Likewise, Leonardo Boff suggests a movement to “get all people to bear their fair share of the social burden.”¹⁰ In his book, *Will it Liberate?*, Michael Novak sums it up well: “Liberation theology says that Latin America is capitalist and needs a social revolution.”¹¹ Arthur McGovern explains how liberation theology makes love out to be God’s preference for the poor, and then interprets this love through the lens of Marxist class struggle.¹² The writings of Gutiérrez, considered by many to be the father of liberation theology, are filled with quotations from Marxist social scientists;¹³ and Clodovis Boff, a widely recognized leader in liberation theology’s methodology, supports the “instrumental use of Marxism.”¹⁴ Juan Luis Segundo claims that liberation theology can be traced back to university classrooms, where Christian students were indoctrinated with Marxist ideas.¹⁵ In light of such facts, critics contend that this underlying ideology will inevitably lead to Marxist-Leninist class violence. They would

⁸ Tim Noble, *The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?* (Connecticut: Equinox Publishing Ltd.), 20.

⁹ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 9.

¹⁰ Leonardo Boff, “Christ’s Liberation via Oppression,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 126.

¹¹ Michael Novak, *Will it Liberate?: Questions About Liberation Theology* (New York, Paulist Press, 1986), 5.

¹² Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 54.

¹³ Michael Novak, *Will it Liberate?: Questions About Liberation Theology* (New York, Paulist Press, 1986), 23.

¹⁴ Tim Noble, *The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?* (Connecticut: Equinox Publishing Ltd.), 7, 107.

¹⁵ Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 28.

point to liberation theologians such as Severino Croatto and Pablo Richard, who implicitly endorse physical violence as a necessary aspect of liberation.¹⁶ They would also point to Camilo Torres, a Columbian priest who supposed that Christian love is expressed by “armed revolutionary struggle.”¹⁷ Segundo Galilea pushes back on such criticism, claiming that only one limited strain of liberation theology relies on Marxism for its views of “liberation, dependence, politics, and liberative commitment.”¹⁸ Novak largely agrees; and while he acknowledges that Marxist analysis does sometimes exist within liberation theology, he claims that equating the two is unwarranted.¹⁹ However, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, a leading critic of liberation theology, warns that one cannot separate Marxist analysis from the rest of Marxist ideology. In his 1984 work entitled “Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation,” he claimed that Marxist class-struggle analysis necessarily results in hatred and violence.²⁰ Also, when Pope John Paul II addressed the bishops of Peru in 1988, he called upon the bishops to denounce any erroneous talk of “permanent class struggle.”²¹

The Central Concepts of Liberation Theology: Preference for the Poor

Liberation theologians have worked hard to construct a full-fledged theology around the Marxist master-slave dialectic. They begin with a portrayal of God as a Deliverer of economically and culturally oppressed people. Gutiérrez claims that “The whole Bible, from the story of Cain and Abel onward, is marked by God’s love and predilection for the weak and

¹⁶ Ibid., 65-66.

¹⁷ Ibid., 7.

¹⁸ Segundo Galilea, “Liberation Theology and New Tasks,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 170.

¹⁹ Michael Novak, *Will it Liberate?: Questions About Liberation Theology* (New York, Paulist Press, 1986), 15.

²⁰ Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 16.

²¹ Ibid., 18-19.

abused of human history”²² José Maria Vigil explains that, according to liberation theology, God is not unfairly partial towards the poor, but as a result of His preference for justice, He is necessarily on the side of all who suffer injustice. Consequently, He opts for the poor.²³ Critics would point out that Jesus regularly ministered to the wealthy class and tax collectors, who until the time of their repentance, were on the side of corruption against the poor (Matthew 21:31, Mark 5:33, Luke 19:2, John 3). Critics also contend that the poor are equally capable of unjust acts. Gutiérrez himself seems to acknowledge this in a 2008 interview marking his eightieth birthday:

You believe that all poor people are good and generous? Then I would not advise you to go into my neighborhood at two in the morning because you’ll come out [naked] as the day you were born, only older.²⁴

In spite of these words, Gutiérrez believes that Christians must opt for the poor “over against” other classes.²⁵ But if the poor are inclined to injustice even as the wealthy, why do liberation theologians insist that God favors the poor? The answer seems to be found in the way that liberation theology defines sin.

The Central Concepts of Liberation Theology: Institutionalized Sin

Whereas traditional theology views sin is personal and internal, liberation theology views it as largely societal and structural. According to Gutiérrez, Sinfulness is found in oppressive

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²³ Tim Noble, *The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?* (Connecticut: Equinox Publishing Ltd.), 34.

²⁴ Tim Noble, *The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?* (Connecticut: Equinox Publishing Ltd.), 149.

²⁵ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 9.

social structures which benefit the privileged and plunder the oppressed masses.²⁶ Likewise, Raúl Vidales claims that sin is “hardened into structures, institutions, and systems.”²⁷

The Central Concepts of Liberation Theology: Love as Social Activism

By shifting sin from people to impersonal societal structures, liberation theology shifts the Christian focus from the condition of individual human hearts to the condition of governments and institutions. Consequently, there is a methodological shift from gospel witnessing to social activism. Gutiérrez claims that Christians “bear witness” to God’s love by fighting injustice and doing our part to help establish a “more humane and fraternal society.”²⁸ Consequently, he questions whether one can claim to be Christian without committing to remedying these injustices.²⁹ According to Vidales, seeing the gospel as active only in the spiritual realm and the salvation of souls causes people to disregard the injustices of society.³⁰ However, according to some critics, Christians have not disregarded injustice as Vidales claims, but simply recognize that social structures will not change unless human hearts are changed first. Gutiérrez responds to this logic by asserting that changing social structures will change human hearts.³¹ With these notions of institutionalized sin and social activist redemption, liberation theologians successfully devised a “Christian” worldview based on the Marxist master-slave dialectic. Having accomplished this, one obstacle remained: the person and work of Jesus Christ.

²⁶ Ibid., 21.

²⁷ Raúl Vidales, “Methodological Issues in Liberation Theology,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 53.

²⁸ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 27.

²⁹ Ibid., 4.

³⁰ Ibid., 53.

³¹ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith,” as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 11.

Liberation theologians were now tasked with portraying Jesus as the ultimate social justice warrior. Concerning the cross, Jon Sobrino, a leading writer on Christology in Latin America, downplays the traditional substitutionary atonement view, and claims that the cross is a symbol of Christ's undying struggle against societal oppression.³² Richard Shaull, a protestant proponent of liberation theology, claims that Jesus took up the cause of the poor and marginalized, and was crucified for preaching about the advent of a new order of justice and equality.³³ James Cone, a spokesman for black theology of liberation, says that the resurrection was a "disclosure" that, rather than being defeated by oppression, Jesus brings freedom out of it.³⁴ Thus, the meaning of the death and resurrection has been placed firmly into the political realm.

It is difficult to make a convincing argument that Jesus was a social activist. However, by introducing an eschatology in which Christians help to bring in Christ's kingdom of justice and equality, liberation theologians have found a way to convince many that their efforts in social activism identify them as subjects of His kingdom. Rather than the traditional view of God's kingdom as being spiritual, and consisting of His reign in the hearts of Christians, the kingdom is seen as the observable increase in societal justice and equality—an increase largely won by Christians engaged in social activism, and which prefigures and prepares for the second coming of Christ. Boff describes the kingdom of God as "the realization of a fundamental utopia of the human heart, the total transfiguration of this world, free from all that alienates human

³² Tim Noble, *The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?* (Connecticut: Equinox Publishing Ltd.), 7, 17; Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 78.

³³ Richard Shaull, *The Reformation and Liberation Theology: Insights for the Challenges of Today* (Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 72

³⁴ Leonardo Boff, "Christ's Liberation via Oppression," as published in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, edited by Rosino Gibellini (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 123.

beings, free from pain, sin, divisions, and death.”³⁵ The physical manifestation of Christ’s kingdom is no longer deferred to the second coming, but is partially realized as Christians win social and political battles. Critics object to this by pointing to Jesus’ words in the gospel of Luke, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;” (Luke 17:20) and again in John’s gospel, “if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.” (John 18:36)

Criticism Based on God’s Sovereignty

Throughout the Bible, God punishes national sins by sending them into seasons of severe oppression and spoliation. A survey of the book of Jeremiah alone reveals that such judgments are typical of God’s activity in the earth: “the Lord will spoil the Philistines;” (Jeremiah 47:4) “the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape...as the Lord hath spoken;” (Jeremiah 48:8) “I have made Esau bare...his seed is spoiled.” (Jeremiah 49:10) Even in the New Testament, Jesus reveals that the Roman Legions that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD were, in the ultimate sense, sent by God’s command.³⁶ While liberation theology credits international economic inequality to sinful social structures, the precedent of Scripture implies that much of it can be accounted for by understanding that God is always at work judging sin.

There can be no denying that all people are born into a world filled with temporal consequences of sin which they did not commit. Consider the Israelites who were infants or small children when God, as a punishment for Israel’s sin, sent the entire nation out into the wilderness to wander for forty years. God said to the older generation, “your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms.” (Numbers 14:33) Also, very late in David’s reign, there was a three-year famine, not for the sin of David, but for the sin of

³⁵ Arthur F. McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 74.

³⁶ Matthew 22:7

Saul who was long since dead (2 Samuel 21:1). Notice King Josiah's realization upon discovering the long-neglected law of God: "great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book." (2 Kings 22:13) Hezekiah's conclusion was accurate, for though God spared Hezekiah from wrath by giving him an early death, He was set on punishing Israel for the sins of previous generations. Consider also, the infants who perished in the great flood, in the conquest of Canaan, in the city of Jerusalem when it was destroyed by the Romans.

None of these truths refute the Christian responsibility to help the poor and the oppressed, but they do demonstrate certain complexities of theology that liberation theologians either gloss over or ignore. According to liberation theology, poverty is the result of sinful social structures; but there are a wealth of other causes found in Scripture. For example, according to Proverbs, adultery, laziness, wickedness, vanity, obstinance, pleasure-loving, foolishness, and greedy haste all lead to poverty (Proverbs 5:10, 6:10, 10:3, 4, 13:4, 11, 18, 21:17, 20). Furthermore, Scripture also teaches that suffering may not be a judgment, but rather, a necessary part of a specific work God is accomplishing (John 9:2-3). When all of these possible causes are taken into account, it is impossible to assume that all suffering and oppression is caused by present social structures.

When considering corrupt powers, Christians should remember that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1) Furthermore, God commands Christians not to rebel—no, not even to resist, for "they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." (Romans 13:2) There is no Scripture indicating that God wants Christians to transform the political situation through social activism. However, Christians are taught that the political circumstances around them largely hinge on humble prayer to God.³⁷

³⁷ 2 Chronicles 7:14

For example, Paul urges Christians to pray for all government authorities so that they “may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” (1 Timothy 2:2) God sovereignly controls political circumstances, and Christians can affect how He controls them through prayer.

Criticism Based on the Record of the New Testament

In the ministry of John the baptist, there is no indication that repentance and faith has a social activism implication. When the tax collectors, who played a part in the “institutionalized corruption” of the roman empire, asked John the baptist what they must do, he did not command them to quit their occupations, nor did he urge them to engage in any activity against the system, but only required that they exact no more than what was appointed (Luke 3:13).

Anyone searching for social activism in Jesus’ methodology is faced with the reality of a ministry focused on preaching and healing. Granted, Jesus did speak out against those who took advantage of the poor,³⁸ but the solution He preached was entirely spiritual rather than social or political: “cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” (Matthew 23:26) Apparently, the mark of Pharisees was that they focused on outward things rather than on inward things. Jesus’ method was to prioritize inward spiritual needs first, and then to meet physical needs as an accompaniment of that priority.³⁹

If Jesus commissioned the church to emphasize social activism, then the early church didn’t get the message. In the first twelve chapters of Acts, which essentially covers the first ten years of the church, there are over twenty references to preaching and not a single reference to social activism. In Acts 6:4, the apostles concluded that it was not good for them to give up preaching to serve tables. This shows how, in their minds, the proclamation of the word had

³⁸ Matthew 23:14

³⁹ Mark 6:34-42

priority over meeting temporal needs. Some might point to the miracles as a kind of social activism, but according to Hebrews 2:4 and Mark 16:20, those were confirming signs to accompany the proclamation of the word. Furthermore, the model for generosity does not match the one suggested by liberation theology. Firstly, as far as physical needs were concerned, the early Christians were focused primarily on meeting the needs of one another—not unbelievers (Acts 4:34-35). Secondly, the method was need-meeting rather than redistribution to achieve economic equality. Thirdly, giving was to be from a willing heart rather than by constraint (Acts 5:4).

Liberation Theology in the Southern Baptist Convention

Like it or not, some of the central concepts of liberation theology have made their way into the Southern Baptist Convention. Some pastors and teachers speak in a way that indicates adherence to the Marxist oppressor-versus-oppressed dialectic. For example, Matt Chandler is a popular Christian speaker who has publicly endorsed the concept of White Privilege. This idea of privileged classes, and by implication, oppressed classes, matches Marxist analysis perfectly. However, Chandler may not have picked up this philosophy from liberation theology. Cultural Marxism, and the associated popular philosophy of intersectionality, are widely accepted in secular society. There are other prominent teachers who appear to be accepting liberation theology's concept of institutionalized sin. In April of 2018, David Platt, addressing over ten thousand pastors at the Together for the Gospel conference in Kentucky, urged Christians to recognize and fight against "institutional" and "societal" racism. He described the problem of racism as a "system in which race...profoundly affects people's economic, political, and social experiences." After describing statistical disparities between whites and blacks on unemployment, income inequality, infant mortality, murder, and crime rates, Platt stated that

many of his statistics used to prove the presence of systemic racism were taken from a book entitled *Divided by Faith* written by Michael Emerson and Christian Smith. The book joins Emerson's passion for racial reconciliation with Smith's expertise in liberation theology.⁴⁰ Predictably, they describe racial division embedded in institutions and connect the gospel with social activism—a nearly perfect match with liberation theology. Mark Dever is another notable figure who has endorsed *Divided by Faith*, claiming that it has helped him to understand what is wrong with American churches. Eric Mason's book entitled *Woke Church*, the forward for which is written by Ligon Duncan, is a call for Christians to wake up to the fullness of the gospel, and to strive not only for individual morality but also for societal justice. Mason calls on Christians to fight for systemic justice—to bring gospel renewal to systems. He calls on pastors to preach against sin not only on the personal level, but also on the systemic level. At the MLK50 conference, Russel Moore, the president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention said, “we, as people who have a Bible, ought to be those who understand that the personal and the systemic go together.” In the context, Moore was describing the reality of systemic racism. The website for the Gospel Coalition also has many articles including elements of liberation theology.⁴¹ These examples are sufficient to demonstrate that the central pillars of liberation theology—institutionalized sin and social activism—are now being widely embraced in the Southern Baptist Convention.

⁴⁰ Emerson, who is the primary author of *Divided by Faith* was inspired to write the book by the racial reconciliation message of a Promise Keepers event in Boulder Colorado. He explained this at the *Divided by Faith* tenth anniversary conference in October 2010 at Indiana Wesleyan University. Smith is the author of a 1991 book entitled *The Emergence of Liberation Theology* in which he portrays liberation theology in a positive light. In the introduction to a 1996 book entitled *Disruptive Religion*, he paints a positive picture of organizations of faith that have “contributed indispensable resources to the mobilization of disruptive political activism.”

⁴¹ Mika Edmondson. “Martin Luther King Jr. and the Gospel’s Social Demands.” February 1, 2018; Joe Carter. “The FAQs: What Christians Should Know About Social Justice.” August 17, 2018; Michael Allen. “Is Heavenly-Mindedness for the Privileged?.” October 12, 2018; Jarvis Williams. “Why You Should Teach Your Kids About Racial Reconciliation.” May 3, 2018; K Edward Copeland. “Why All Christians Must Seek Public Justice.” April 10, 2015.

Some have suggested that there is a deep and insidious reason for the appearance of this theology among Southern Baptists—a political reason. In a lecture at Dallas Theological Seminary, Eric Mason, the author of *Woke Church*, said, “Capitalism has created a divide that the church should have been fighting to remain connected.”⁴² Is it possible that the greater goal of some of those who are embracing elements of liberation theology is precisely the same as those in Latin America: a social revolution against capitalism? This isn’t surprising when one considers a work entitled, “The Gospel and the Poor,” which was written by its founder Tim Keller. The document is nearly indistinguishable from writings by liberation theologians. Even contributors to the Gospel Coalition website seem to recognize the similarities. For example, an article by Justin Holcomb states plainly, “Theologians from a wide variety of backgrounds (from Gustavo Gutierrez to Nicholas Wolterstorff to Tim Keller) have concluded that God has a special place in his heart for the poor and vulnerable.”⁴³ Certainly, both Gutierrez and Keller have an almost identical theology regarding the poor, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that Keller also wants a socialist revolution—does it? Many of Keller’s statements throughout the document certainly are questionable. For example, Keller writes that “the ‘haves’ have what we have to a great degree because of unjust distribution of opportunities and resources at birth. It is simple justice to spread the wealth around.”⁴⁴ Greg Forster, director of the Oikonomia Network, a large network of seminaries which are working together toward a common goal.⁴⁵ In his article,

⁴² This lecture can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnS6c9oOf9g>.

⁴³ Justin Holcomb. “The Just Church.” May 1, 2013.

⁴⁴ A link to the document can be found at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/the-pursuit-of-biblical-justice/#defining-terms>.

⁴⁵ Participating seminaries are Asbury Theological Seminary, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (Evangel University), Azusa-Pacific Seminary (Azusa-Pacific University), Bethel Seminary (Bethel University), Biola University, Talbot School of Theology, Criswell College, Covenant Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids Theological Seminary (Cornerstone University), Indiana Wesleyan University, Wesley Seminary, LABI College and Latin American Theological Seminary, Moody Bible Institute (Moody Bible Institute), Seattle Pacific Seminary (Seattle Pacific University), Sioux Falls Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Southern Baptist Theological

“Globalization Is Good for the World,” which appears on the Gospel Coalition website, he portrays capitalism in a negative light and promotes globalism.⁴⁶ In another article, he writes that “The church is not being the church if it is not highly mobilized in favor of the poor.”⁴⁷

According to the Oikonomia Network website, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary joined the network in 2013, and was tasked with developing digital learning courses and holding conferences dedicated to faith, work, and economics. In a December 2013 article on Southeastern’s website, it was reported that SEBTS received \$200,000 from the Kern Family Foundation for this initiative.⁴⁸ The Kern Family Foundation, based in Wisconsin, was originally formed to help fund education, especially Christian education, but times have changed. Recently, some of their money has gone to Teach for America, which has pushed the LGBT agenda in public schools.⁴⁹

The Kern Foundation has been funding an initiative of the Acton Institute, a Catholic libertarian think tank in Grand Rapids, Michigan; and more specifically of Father Robert Sirico who founded the institute.⁵⁰ Sirico was very close friends with Michael Novak, and encouraged Novak to write the book, *Will It Liberate? Questions About Liberation Theology*, which has been quoted throughout this essay. On the Acton Institute website, Sirico writes about a new and improved liberation theology, one which still aims at lifting up the poor, but which utilizes democratic capitalism rather than socialism. Rather than the old liberation theology, which seeks to use the socialistic redistribution of wealth, the new liberation theology uses targeted

Seminary, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Trinity International University), Western Seminary

⁴⁶ Greg Forster. “Globalization Is Good for the World.” February 24, 2017.

⁴⁷ Greg Forster. “The Poverty of Nations.” October 14, 2013.

⁴⁸ Kenneth Bonnett. “The Kern Family Foundation Grants Significant Funding to SEBTS for New Courses.” December 16, 2013.

⁴⁹ Thomas Littleton. “BETRAYED : AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CHURCH” November 12, 2019.

⁵⁰ edited by Brian Steensland, Philip Goff. *The New Evangelical Social Engagement*

investments aimed at helping the poor to lift themselves out of poverty.⁵¹ In essence, Sirico's political and economic philosophy is to limit the central government's role in aiding the poor, and to "[impose] obligations on lower order institutions such as the community, church, family, and individual...[obliging them to] fulfill certain moral and practical functions essential to the functioning of a well-ordered and free society."⁵² This sounds nice, but it is actually a system of socialism devised at Yale and spread into the seminaries by Tim Keller and the Acton Institute. One researcher has called it "repackaged Socialist Economics 'in the name of' Faith and Work' or Keller's 'Theology of Work' or 'Theology of Vocation.'"⁵³ Southeastern students, along with the unfortunate students of many other seminaries, are being indoctrinated with this unbiblical philosophy.

Maybe the best place to find elements of liberation theology at Southeastern is by listening to Dr. Walter Strickland, Associate Vice President of Kingdom Diversity Initiative. According to a New York Times article, he "travels around the country to advise Christians on how to recognize and mitigate systemic racism."⁵⁴ The article goes on to report that by reading the black liberation theologian James Cone, Dr. Strickland came to understand how white theologians often ignore the structural sources of earthly suffering."⁵⁵ The author even quotes Strickland as saying, "While Cone's ideas are in play, I don't mention him by name, because I don't want to put unnecessary stumbling blocks in their way."⁵⁶

⁵¹ Michael Severence. "Rev. Sirico: Change thinking on poverty." April 28, 2019.

⁵² Robert Sirico as cited in *Faith, Morality, and Civil Society*. edited by Peter Augustine Lawler, Dale McConkey (Lexington Books, 2003), 43.

⁵³ Thomas Littleton. "BETRAYED : AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CHURCH" November 22, 2019.

⁵⁴ Molly Worthen. "Can Black Evangelicals Save the Whole Movement?" May 24, 2011.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

There are indications that the next wave of liberation theology will include an aspect of sexual liberation. Just as the poor are seen as oppressed in the Marxist dialectic, so also homosexuals can be construed as an oppressed people group. The Kern Family Foundation, which is funding much of the social justice emphasis in the seminaries, partners with multiple pro-LGBT organizations. Also, Robert Sirico has a history of homosexual activism. The following excerpt shows his involvement in a homosexual slave auction in the 1970's:

As reported by the *Intelligencer*, on April 10, 1976, Los Angeles policemen dressed in riot gear arrested 40 persons participating in a homosexual "slave market" held at the Mark IV Health Club in Hollywood. The bathhouse was operated by a sadomasochist cult called the Leather Fraternity. Nude "male slaves" were led on stage by an auctioneer and inspected by potential buyers. "Slaves" went for \$10-75 per man. An undercover policeman at the auction told the press that he had picked up a man for \$16 following assurances from the auctioneer that the 'volunteer for charity' would perform specific sex acts on him. The auction room came complete with its own dungeons and cell blocks and sadomasochist apparatus including leather harness restraints and chains. In addition to the *Intelligencer* coverage, the *Pasadena Star-News* of April 12, 1976, reported that eye witnesses was men engaged in sodomy and other sexual acts prior to the opening of the auction.

The event was sponsored by the Los Angeles Gay Community Center headed by Rev. Sirico, who told the P-I reporter that the Los Angeles Police Department was "out to get" the gay community. Sirico called the event a "harmless fund-raising event" staged to raise money for the Center's venereal disease clinic.

A phone call by this writer to the UFMCC in Los Angeles in early 2007 confirmed that the Rev. Robert Sirico involved in the two history-making "gay" events at the Unitarian Church in Denver in 1975 and the Mark IV Health Club in Los Angeles in 1976, was the same Father Robert Sirico who headed the Acton Institute and St. Philip Neri House in Kalamazoo.⁵⁷

This is the same Robert Sirico who has cozied up to many well-known evangelical leaders. Both Tim Keller and Russell Moore have spoken at the Acton Institute, and it is easily discerned from their doctrines that they are working for the Kern Family Foundation and the Acton Institute in this massive effort to push liberation theology into America's churches. While we have already proven the liberation theology is making its way into the seminaries and churches in terms of the poor versus the rich and black versus white, is there really any evidence for the gay versus straight dialectic arising? One researcher notes that "As early as 2010 the

⁵⁷ Randy Engel. "'The Sirico Brief' makes news again - controversial priest to address Catholic men's conference" April 12, 2012.

‘conversation’ and the language on sexuality of the remaining biblically conservative churches began to show signs of impending derailment. The introduction of new phrases like ‘Same Sex Attracted (SSA)’ and ‘Gay Celibate Christian’ in reality betrayed a larger undercurrent intent on migrating the Christian churches toward affirmation of gay marriage and creation of a homosexual Christianity.”⁵⁸ In July 2018, Tim Keller spoke at the Living Out Conference in London. Shortly after this, Living Our published their church audit to help churches see how inclusive they are. The following are questions from the audit:

- “Your church family meetings include people who could be labelled LGBTQI+/ are same-sex attracted. True / False / Not Sure”⁵⁹
- “A godly Christian’s sexual orientation would never prevent them from exercising their spiritual gifts or serving in leadership in your church. True / False / Not Sure”⁶⁰
- “No-one would be pressured into expecting or seeking any “healing” or change that God has not promised any of us until the renewal of all things. True / False / Not Sure”⁶¹

Also, the audit uses the language of “sexual minority groups,” precisely the kind of language we would expect for a homosexual liberation theology to emerge. Couple this with the fact that J.D. Greear, the President of the Southern Baptist Convention, has “called on Christians to stand up for LGBTQ rights”⁶² and has said that he is willing to use someone’s preferred gender pronoun.⁶³ But this didn’t start with Greear. Albert Mohler, President of Southern Baptist Seminary, the flagship of the six Southern Baptist Seminaries, is often characterized as a conservative hero, but nothing could be further from the truth. At the time that Mohler was thought to be leading a conservative resurgence, he was an egalitarian and denied the inerrancy

⁵⁸ Thomas Littleton. “Trusted SBC and PCA Seminaries Producing Sexual Minority Activists” May 12, 2018.

⁵⁹ https://www.livingout.org/UserFiles/File/Living_Out_Church_Audit_2019.pdf

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Jeff Maples. “SBC President Says He Would Use “Preferred Pronoun” For Transgender People, Calls It “Pronoun Hospitality”” November 20, 2019.

⁶³ Ibid.

of Scripture—this being reported by his friend Mark Dever.⁶⁴ The 2018 Revoice conference, which was aimed at normalizing the notion of LGBT+ Christians, was founded by one of Albert Mohler’s followers Nate Collins. Collins spent over fourteen years ,earned two degrees at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. While teaching under Albert Mohler, he authored his pro-LGBT Christian book entitled *All But Invisible* and launched Revoice.⁶⁵ Mohler has been complicit in the Southern Baptist slide into immorality:

In his opening speech [at the 2014 ERLC national conference on the Gospel, Homosexuality, and the Future of Marriage] Albert Mohler completely abandoned his long asserted Biblical stance denying the existence of a “homosexual orientation ” . Mohler apologized for himself and Southern Baptist for being “wrong about sexual orientation “. Mohler then owned the APA version of human sexual norms and then abandoned so called “ex gay ministries” and efforts to help people wanting out of homosexuality.⁶⁶

Since 2016, the use of the term Sexual Orientation Gender Identity (SOGI) has arisen among evangelicals. This can largely be traced back to the popular blogs of The Gospel Coalition; and its use began there with Albert Mohler who used it in an article during gay pride month in 2017.⁶⁷ SOGI is known to have originated in the globalism and United Nations human rights arena.⁶⁸ What does the United Nations and their globalism agenda have to do with pro-LGBT philosophies saturating our churches? The UN is taking steps toward the full implementation of the New World Order by 2030. In order for all countries to be capable of participating in this world government, they must first establish the necessary infrastructure. The end goal is a planet of like-minded people subservient to the one world government.⁶⁹ Part of

⁶⁴ Reformation and the SBC: A Round Table Interview with Tom Ascol, Mark Dever, and Jared Longshore, <https://founders.org/interviews/reformation-and-the-sbc-a-round-table-interview-with-tom-ascol-mark-dever-and-jared-longshore/>

⁶⁵ Thomas Littleton. ““ALMOST AL” MOHLER WANTS TO BE SBC PRESIDENT: ACTUALLY AL HAS CONTROLLED THE SBC FOR YEARS.” November 22, 2019.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Thomas Littleton. “THE GOSPEL COALITION MARKETS -SOGI THE LATEST VERBIAGE ON SEXUALITY” October 29, 2019. See <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/debating-religious-liberty-and-discrimination/>

⁶⁸ Thomas Littleton references the following: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4a783aed2.pdf>;
<https://ijrcenter.org/thematic-research-guides/sexual-orientation-gender-identity/>.

⁶⁹ https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

this plan is to indoctrinate all the people of the world into a pro-LGBT mindset.⁷⁰ In order for Southern Baptists to go along with this agenda, their sexual ethics must be changed. They must be convinced that homosexuality is a benign trait, one set from birth which cannot be changed. This is precisely what Albert Mohler, J.D. Greear, and all of the others involved in this scheme are propagating. Make no mistake; millions upon millions of dollars are behind this machine, not to mention untold threats and bribery.

Homosexuality

America was founded largely on the Judeo-Christian ethic, and as a result, homosexuality was viewed largely as a heinous sin. However, over time, as the culture became increasingly secular, more and more people began to view it as a pathological condition. In any case, it was still thought of by most as either deviant or abnormal. The change in public opinion regarding homosexuality largely hinges on a decision made in 1973. After years of debate, the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association made the decision to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders* where it had been listed as a mental illness. In reaction to this, many psychiatrists compelled the Board to submit their decision for a vote of the entire association. As a result of this vote, which was heavily influenced by a letter from a pro-homosexual organization that went out to all of the members, homosexuality would no longer be listed as a pathological condition. Since that time, numerous pro-homosexual organizations have fought, sometimes by threatening their opponents, to normalize homosexuality. Since 1973, they have achieved amazing success, leading the majority

⁷⁰ <https://rm.coe.int/prems-125718-gbr-2575-safe-at-school-a4-web/16809024f5>

of Americans to believe that homosexuality is a safe and harmless alternative lifestyle. Furthermore, many people, including homosexuals, believe that homosexuality is a benign trait.

The scientific facts do not support the “born-gay” notion. However, because of misleading press releases, the public has been led to believe the opposite. The most prominent studies which have been misunderstood can be divided into three categories: studies measuring parts of the brain, studies comparing chromosome regions of the brain, and twin studies.

Firstly, studies which involve measuring and comparing parts of the brain between heterosexuals and homosexuals have not established a biological cause. A significant study, published in 1990 by Dick F. Swaab and Michel A. Hofman, was entitled “An Enlarged Suprachiasmatic Nucleus in Homosexual Men.” In this study, researchers compared measurements of the suprachiasmatic nucleus between cadavers—34 total and ten of which were known homosexuals who had died of AIDS. Based on their measurements, Swaab and Hofman claimed that the suprachiasmatic nucleus in homosexuals was 1.7 times larger than the others. However, this study also received heavy criticism, partly because the researchers simply assumed that six of the cadavers, who had died from AIDS, were heterosexual rather than verifying their sexuality. In a study of only 34 cadavers, this was a grave error.

There was another study, published in 1991 by Simon LeVey, which compared measurements of a bundle of neurons in the hypothalamus (a part of the brain which may be related to sexuality). LeVey claimed that the neuron bundle in homosexuals was three times smaller than in heterosexuals. However, three cadavers from LeVey’s control group had smaller neuron bundles than the average measurement for the homosexual group, demonstrating that simply having smaller neuron bundles could not have caused homosexuality.

In 2008, Ivanka Savic & Per Lindström published a study which claimed that the brains of homosexual men looked more like those of heterosexual women. The study also claimed that homosexual men had amygdalae connections similar to heterosexual women and that homosexual women had amygdale connections similar to heterosexual men. However, the study did not establish a connection between these differences and sexuality; nor did it establish whether or not these differences were present from birth; and this is the flaw in every attempt to compare parts of the brain. Even if there were differences between the brains of heterosexuals and homosexuals, simply comparing won't determine whether the difference is a cause or a result.

The second category of studies is those examining and comparing chromosome regions of the brain. These also have failed to prove a biological cause. In 1993, Dean Hamer published a study in which he claimed to have discovered evidence of a "gay gene." In the study, Hamer had counted alleles in the X chromosome of homosexual men and found more alleles than in heterosexuals. However, after over two decades and multiple attempts to replicate Hamer's findings, no one has been able to achieve the same results.

Also, a 2005 study by Brian Mustanski, who, unlike Hamer, could study the entire human genome, found no genetic cause for homosexuality. In 2014, Alan Sanders and J. Michael Bailey published a study in which they claimed to have found an indication of a genetic link to homosexuality. However, none of the homosexual brothers who were studied had matching markers at the chromosome regions which were studied. Without matching markers, their data, which was admittedly insignificant, has been discredited.

The third and last kind of study which we need to note is the twin study. Examining identical twins which have been separated at birth is a good method of separating biological from

non-biological causes, but no study has found a biological cause for homosexuality. In 1991, a twin study was published by J. Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard, both practicing homosexuals who had launched their study in an effort to prove that homosexuality was a benign trait. After comparing fraternal twins with identical twins, Bailey and Pillard claimed that, if one identical twin was homosexual, there was a 52% chance that the other would also be homosexual. When comparing fraternal twins, the incidence rate was only 22%. Since identical twins are a near perfect genetic match, and because the correlation of 52% was much higher in the identical twins than the fraternal twins, they concluded that there must be a genetic cause for homosexuality. However, this study violated one of the most important principles of twin studies, the necessity to distinguish environmental factors from genetic factors by studying twins separated from birth. Furthermore, research published by Bailey, Dunne, and Martin in 2000, Bearman and Brückner in 2002, and Niklas Långström in 2008 and 2010 have discredited Bailey and Pillard.

All attempts to scientifically establish a biological cause for homosexuality have failed, and have rather served to prove that it is an acquired behavior. In his book *Changing Homosexuality in the Male*, Lawrence J. Hatterer, M.D., a renowned psychiatrist in the field of homosexuality, concluded that “genetic, hereditary, constitutional, glandular, or hormonal factors have no significance in causing homosexuality.”⁷¹ Over the years, scientific studies have yielded no repeatable data showing a chemical, hormonal, or genetic difference between heterosexuals and homosexuals.⁷² According to psychotherapist Richard Cohen, M.A, a former homosexual (now married with three children) and a leading expert in the field of sexual reorientation,

⁷¹ *Changing Homosexuality in the Male* Lawrence J. Hatterer (New York: Delta Publishing Co., 1970) 47

⁷² J. Mamor, ed., *Homosexual Behaviour: A Modern Reappraisal* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), cited in Brad Hayton, “The Homosexual Agenda: Issues and Arguments” (Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family, 1990), 13.

There is a preponderance of scientific evidence conducted over the past eighty years that shows homosexuality to be an acquired condition. Dr. Irving Bieber, Dr. Charles Socarides, Dr. Joseph Nicolosi, Dr. Elizabeth Moberly, Dr. Lawrence Hatterer, Dr. Robert Kronemeyer, Dr. E. Kaplan, Dr. Edith Fiore, Dr. Gerard van den Aardweg, Dr. Earl Wilson, Dr. Jeffrey Satinover—these are but a few of the psychiatrists and psychologists who have substantiated these findings through years of clinical research and empirical studies.”⁷³

The science shows that homosexuality is a behavior—not a benign trait. The most significant evidence in support of this is the number of homosexuals who have recovered to a heterosexual lifestyle. Hatterer claims that “a large undisclosed population has melted into heterosexual society, persons who behaved homosexually in late adolescence and early adulthood, and who, on their own, resolved their conflicts and abandoned such behavior to go on to successful marriages or to bisexual patterns of adaptation.”⁷⁴ In line with these statements, Hatterer lists 49 recovered patients, 31 of which were married, and 14 of those had children at the time of the follow-up.⁷⁵ In her book, *Homosexuality: A Symbolic Confusion*, Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse also suggests that conversion from homosexuality to heterosexuality is not only possible, but already achieved by many of those who have desired it:

“Approximately thirty percent of those coming to treatment for any reason can be converted to the heterosexual adaptation... These facts and statistics about cure are well known and not difficult to verify. In addition, there are many people who have experienced their homosexuality as a burden either for moral or social reasons who have, without the aid of psychotherapy, managed to give up this symptom; of these, a significant number have also been able to make the transition to satisfying heterosexuality.”⁷⁶

William D. Gairdner has documented many examples of such recoveries in his comprehensive work, *The War Against the Family*:

“there are many organizations, most religion-based, such as Exodus International, New Directions for Life (Toronto), and New Beginnings in this very chore of helping homosexuals recover. Masters and Johnson achieved a 71.6 percent success rate (five years ‘straight’) for a group of 300 homosexuals. One psychiatrist achieved a 100 percent success rate. New Directions tells me that by its tally, ‘about 60 to 70 percent’ kick the habit. The prestigious *American Handbook of Psychiatry* (vol. 3, 2nd edition) states that ‘approximately one-third to one-half’ of all patients who seek a return to heterosexual life through therapy are successful. About half of all homosexuals claim to regret their habits, and the same percentage would

⁷³ 24 Coming Out Straight

⁷⁴ Changing Homosexuality in the Male Lawrence J. Hatterer (New York: Delta Publishing Co., 1970) 14

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Homosexuality: A Symbolic Confusion Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977)

‘become upset’ if their child became homosexual (Bell and Weinberg, 1978). Toronto psychiatrist Dr. Daniel Cappon, who has treated more than 450 homosexuals, says they are ‘as curable as anyone else.’”⁷⁷

With such a wealth of evidence, how is it that so many people—especially many homosexuals—believe that homosexuality is a benign trait? Evelyn Hooker has observed that homosexuals are plagued by an overwhelming desire to justify their behavior as an inevitable consequence rather than a personal choice:

“One of the important features of homosexual subcultures is the pattern of beliefs or the justification system. Central to it is the explanation of why they are homosexuals, involving the question of choice. The majority believe either that they were born as homosexuals or that familial factors operating very early in their lives determined the outcome. In any case, homosexuality is believed to be a fate over which they have no control and in which they have no choice.”⁷⁸

While homosexuality is not linked to biological factors, researchers have noted the importance of environmental factors. In reporting their findings from a study of homosexuality in seventy-six societies, Clellan S. Ford and Frank A. Beach wrote that “Human sexual behavior is controlled and directed primarily by learning and experience. It is possible to begin with a male whose physiological constitution is entirely normal and, by a process of cultural or individual conditioning, make that person an exclusive homosexual.”⁷⁹ This conclusion highlights the importance of faith and values in preventing homosexuality. In 1984, the Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality found that children raised in non-religious homes were 450 times more likely to choose a homosexual lifestyle.⁸⁰ Factors which have been connected with homosexuality include, but are not limited to, a mother who is overprotective, possessive, or who is hostile towards men; a father who is absent, indifferent, or cruel; or siblings who are aggressive, dominant, or emasculating. Common trends among homosexuals

⁷⁷ The War Against the Family 373

⁷⁸ Evelyn Hooker “Male Homosexuals and Their ‘Worlds’” (reprinted in *Sexual Inversion*, Judd Marmor ed., New York: Basic Books, 1965) as cited in *Changing Homosexuality in the Male* Lawrence J. Hatterer (New York: Delta Publishing Co., 1970) 13

⁷⁹ Clellan S. Ford and Frank A. Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 236-237.

⁸⁰ The War Against the Family 366

include an overdependency or overidentification with the mother, an offense towards or withdrawal from the father, an overidentification with female peers, fear of inability to meet stereotypical male standards, early emotional trauma, and sexual abuse. Other considerations include the hyper-sexualization of media and consistent exposure to overt homosexuals at critical periods of sexual development. All of these commonly identified factors only further serve to prove that homosexuality is an acquired behavior.

Aside from the fact that God prohibits it, what is so harmful about homosexuality?—and what would be wrong with allowing homosexuals to marry? Often, when Christians speak out against it, they are labeled as hateful and discriminatory. But truth is not hatred. Certainly, we need to be kind, compassionate, empathetic, and gentle, but going along with ungodly and unscientific claims is not loving. Many homosexuals are struggling with their homosexuality and feel as if they couldn't change even if they wanted to; and certainly, many Christians have mistreated homosexuals and acted with cruelty rather than compassion. However, before we can minister truth to people in a gentle, understanding, and compassionate way, we must first establish what the truth is. Is homosexuality really a harmless way of life? The truth is that it is a highly dangerous lifestyle, one which sets a person on a course towards destruction.

After studying the lifestyles of homosexuals, Evelyn Hooker describes the “one-night stand” as “one of the most standardized and characteristic patterns of social interaction in the ‘gay’ world.”⁸¹ This conclusion is not without warrant. According to a study of homosexual males living in the San Francisco area, 43 percent had sex with at least 500 partners, 28 percent had sex with at least 1000 partners, and 79 percent said that over half of their partners were

⁸¹ Evelyn Hooker “Male Homosexuals and Their ‘Worlds’” (reprinted in *Sexual Inversion*, Judd Marmor ed., New York: Basic Books, 1965) as cited in *Changing Homosexuality in the Male* Lawrence J. Hatterer (New York: Delta Publishing Co., 1970) 12

strangers.⁸² Some studies show that the average homosexual has between 20 and 106 new sexual partners each year and 300 to 500 partners in a lifetime.⁸³ Other studies surpass these figures. For example, after studying 50 AIDS victims, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta concluded that they averaged at 1,100 sexual partners in their lifetimes.⁸⁴

Being sexually active with this many partners is not just unwise—it is something akin to a death wish. A survey by the American Public Health Association reported that 78 percent of surveyed homosexuals had a sexually transmitted disease.⁸⁵ A 1954 study of 68 homosexual patients in two California penal institutions concluded that the majority of those who practice passive sodomy will obtain anorectal and venereal disease.⁸⁶ Rectal gonorrhea, gonococcal proctitis, and syphilis are typical among passive homosexuals, and gonococcal urethritis and syphilis are common in their partners.⁸⁷ By 1968, homosexuals accounted for 80 to 85 percent of the rising rate of syphilis in the United States.⁸⁸ The worst of these diseases is AIDS, which is almost exclusively a homosexual disease. Less than .005% of all AIDS cases are recorded as having been contracted by heterosexual means.⁸⁹ Concerning AIDS, Gairdner writes the following:

“AIDS is the first politically protected disease in modern history, and it is overwhelmingly related to high risk homosexual behavior. So much so, it was initially labelled gay cancer, or ‘GRID’—gay-related immune deficiency—before being changed, through political pressure, to remove stigma from homosexuals.”⁹⁰

⁸² Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 308-312

⁸³ *The War Against the Family* 391-392

⁸⁴ *Ethics for a Brave New World*, 309

⁸⁵ Enrique Rueda, *The Homosexual Network: Private and Public Policy* (Old Greenwich, CT: Devin Adair, 1982), 53

⁸⁶ Gerald Mason Feigen, “Proctologic Disorders in Sex Deviates: A Study of Sixty-eight Cases of Sodomy.” *California Medicine* 81 (2, 1954), 79-83.

⁸⁷ R.S. Morton, *Venereal Diseases*. Baltimore, Md. (Penguin Books, 1966), 185.

⁸⁸ Erwin H. Braff, “Venereal Disease, Sex Positions, and Homosexuality.” *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* 38 (3, 1962), 165-166.

⁸⁹ *The War Against the Family* 402

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 400.

Consider that fact that, by 1985, 75% of the 6700 homosexuals in the San Francisco cohort study were HIV positive.⁹¹

Homosexuality is not only linked to high risk sexual behavior and STDs. It is also linked to increased rates of violent crime. In a 1987 study entitled ‘Murder, Violence and Homosexuality,’ the Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality revealed that homosexuals were responsible for 68% of “all multiple or serial murders” in the United States between 1970 and 1990.⁹² How could less than four percent of the population be responsible for almost 70% of multiple or serial murders?

There is good reason to believe that homosexual behavior often leads to violence. According to Gebhard and Johnson, “Fully one-third of all homosexuals admit to sado-masochism—a rate about 600 times greater than for heterosexuals (Gebhard and Johnson, *The Kinsey Data*, 1979)”⁹³ Dr. Lorraine Day, the former chief of surgery at San Francisco General Hospital’s trauma unit is quoted as saying, “much of gay sex is of the harmful, sadistic and/or masochistic variety. Gays hurt each other. They also hurt themselves.”⁹⁴ Regardless of what the culture suggests, anyone who is willing to harm someone, or be harmed by someone, for sexual pleasure needs help. It is not loving or kind to ignore these alarming trends in the homosexual subculture, and it is not honest to ignore the correlation between homosexuality, dangerous diseases, and violent crime.

Many people turn a blind eye to the overwhelming evidence showing that homosexuality is a dangerous lifestyle, one which leads many down a path of increasingly violent and perverted

⁹¹ AIDS, *The Unnecessary Epidemic* (Tennessee: Covenant House Books, 1991), 303

⁹² *The War Against the Family* 388

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 389.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 389.

acts—one which, for many homosexuals, leads to an early grave. All of these statistics, when put together, prove that the affections of homosexuality do not stem from love, which is marked by commitment and which prioritizes the good of one's partner, but by lust, which simply desires to gratify sexual desires.

The idea of homosexuality being unbridled lust rather than a normal alternative sexuality is a thesis which is not only supported by scientific facts, but also by Scripture. In the first chapter of his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul describes homosexuals as burning with lust (Romans 1:27). This is precisely the picture that the statistics paint.

Some people have defended homosexuality, claiming that homosexuals act this way because of unequal treatment. In his 1989 book entitled *Being Homosexual*, Dr. Richard Isay implied that giving homosexuals marriage rights would help this problem:

Brief sexual encounters, both anonymous, recreational encounters and short-term relationships, cannot be considered apart from the social context in which they occur. There are no legal sanctions to bind gay men in relationships, as there are for heterosexuals: no marriage certificates, no tax advantages, and, usually, no children. Although we know that legitimization does not guarantee the monogamy of heterosexual couples or the stability of a relationship, the lack of validation has discouraged the formation and maintenance of gay relationships.⁹⁵

Now that homosexuals have received these rights, has the excessive and dangerous promiscuity been curbed? According to Gairdner, “so-called ‘gay marriages’ last an average of two or three years, most homosexuals engage in sexual relationships with others about halfway through the relationship, and so-called monogamous homosexual partners admit to having a minimum of one other new partner each week.”⁹⁶ Apparently validating homosexuality by granting marriage rights doesn't change the average homosexual's propensity to indulge in the

⁹⁵ Richard A. Isay, M.D., *Being Homosexual, Gay Men and Their Development* (New York: Farrar·Straus·Giroux), 84.

⁹⁶ *The War Against the Family*, 393.

one-night stand. The truth is that homosexuality is not just associated with promiscuity; it is promiscuity.

One of the counterarguments to such conclusions is based on the notion that classifying homosexuality as evil or abnormal will have devastating effects on homosexuals. One writer says, “The AIDS epidemic and increasing homophobia are producing developmental lags in some young gay men by adding to the perception that their sexuality is sinful, sick, or simply a matter of lust. It has caused some men to be afraid to express themselves as gay, depriving these young adults of the kind of experimentation necessary to understand themselves as men capable of a full and responsive sexuality in close and mutually loving relationships.”⁹⁷ Statements like this, which appear to come from compassion, are part of the cruel, negligent, and careless encouragement of an extremely dangerous and often destructive practice. By encouraging young men to experiment sexually with members of their own gender, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and others are laying aside scientific data and alarming statistics in the name of political correctness. According to Gairdner, “Researchers have shown conclusively that...masculinity in males is correlated most highly with their mental health...male psychopaths have low masculinity scores...”⁹⁸ Those who defend homosexuality with the pretense of caring about the sexual development of gay men are, in reality, working to destroy their sexual development—and not only their sexual development, but also their mental development.

Many homosexuals have justified their lifestyle by claiming that homosexuality is natural, but to assume that everything natural is good is entirely unwarranted. Cancer is natural; should we stop treating it? Uranium is natural. Does that justify eating it? Furthermore, even if

⁹⁷ Richard A. Isay, M.D., *Being Homosexual, Gay Men and Their Development* (New York: Farrar·Straus·Giroux), 68.

⁹⁸ *The War Against the Family*, 312

there was evidence showing that animals may be homosexual, does that justify the same behavior in humans? Some female spiders eat their mates; should we allow that too?

Observations of animal behavior can't dictate a moral code for humans. However, the Bible provides a moral code which matches the biological reproductive functions of male and females, and which avoids the associated disease and violence associated with homosexuality.

In the holy code of Leviticus, we read, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22) Again, "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination" (Leviticus 20:13). In the New Testament, the same moral law is upheld, for the apostle Paul warns that no homosexual will inherit the kingdom of heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Also, in his letter, Jude reminds Christians of the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, where the people were destroyed because they "[gave] themselves over to fornication, and [went] after strange flesh" (Jude 1:7). According to the Bible, homosexuality is not a benign trait such as race or gender. It is a immoral sexual practice motivated by unbridled lust. Even if many people refuse to submit to the Bible, there is no denying that homosexuality is disproportionately connected to violence, child sexual abuse, and deadly diseases.

Despite the facts, there is a growing movement in the Southern Baptist Convention to accept "LGBT Christianity." Instead of believing what the Bible says, and even what science indicates, namely that homosexuals can transition to satisfying heterosexuality, many Christians are buying into the propaganda of the LGBT movement.

Mark Yarhouse has worked with the APA, Gay and Christian psychologists to bridge that gap and provide common ground for these diverse and antithetical points of view. In the Yarhouse Whitepaper, which was developed in 2010 for The Gospel Coalition at the request of D.A. Carson for use in their College Campus ministries, the concept of Sexual Orientation as fixed was stated as a principle. Using the APA and his own very limited Research (around 98 selected people with SSA), Yarhouse's Institute for the Study of Sexual Identity concluded that since (as asserted) Sexual Orientation is real and fixed or "seldom changes," then a person who has a "homosexual Identity,"

which in the case of a Christian (or a follower of a particular faith historically opposed to homosexuality), has a conflicted “Faith Identity.” These two must be merged for the wellbeing of the patient or person with conflicted identities. Therefore, “LGBT+ or particular (Sexual) Identity” + “Faith Identity” = “LGBT+ Christian” or “Sexual Minority Christian.”

What is happening right now has happened before in other denominations. Being accepting of immorality is not loving. It is cowardice. Many people who have taken a stand against homosexuality, including former homosexuals, are labeled as homophobic, but the real “homophobes” are those who know the truth and who give tacit consent by remaining silent. If you love a drug addict, you won’t express your love by encouraging their addiction. Even if they become enraged, you will not affirm their behavior as if everything is just fine. Likewise, if you love a homosexual, you will not express that love by encouraging them in a harmful and dangerous lifestyle. Instead, you will strive to be compassionate and kind without compromising on the truth.

Conclusion

Holding hands with a false religious system has opened the door for error to enter into the Southern Baptist Convention. Specifically, the false Roman Catholic doctrine of liberation theology has now heavily infiltrated the denomination. In the near future, liberation theology will be used to gain acceptance of LGBT Christians. A response is needed immediately from godly Christian leaders. Connections with the Roman Catholic church must be condemned and severed immediately, funding from outside sources must be cut, the errors of liberation theology must be condemned, and the movement to acknowledge LGBT Christians must be condemned immediately and resisted.