

# Our actions speak louder than our words

The Bible appears to be the weapon of choice for those who wish to declare the LGBT community void of humanity and on the road to hellfire and brimstone. A closer examination of the word of God might reveal some deeper truths and challenge the followers of Christ to be more vigilant in their own faith journey.

Some on the far radical fringes of society are using the word of God not as a roadmap for personal living but as a weapon to validate any idea, philosophy or personal bigotry they may have and to condemn those who they do not understand or agree with. It might be appropriate to ask, "What would Jesus do?"

Jesus came into this world as a sacrifice for humanity. His life has become an example for all believers. Instead of thumping people over the head with the Holy Scriptures, he gathered them around on a hillside and taught them the beatitudes. Instead of rounding up all those in society who were misunderstood and labeled outcasts by the elitists, he had dinner with them, befriended them and healed them.

It appears to me that one can cherry-pick verses in the Bible to support or discredit any issue or ideology. For every verse used to condemn homosexuals as the "Mary Magdalenes" of modern society, there is another urging the church to love one another and to not judge each other.

My Bible has taught me that instead of a weapon used to tear down and divide, it should be used as a tool to build up and make whole. Instead of a tug of war between existing views, the word of God should become an element of peace, love and hope to all people.



**ROBERT  
KELLOGG**

*My Turn*

We often use the word to strike a dagger in the heart of our enemy or to shoot down a group, ideology or people we don't understand, but let's look at the responsibility Jesus put on the believer and the trust emplaced on his followers with the truth they had been enlightened with.

Although mostly a demonstrator of love, Jesus did have his

moments of anger and personal rebuke. Rebuking the Pharisees and Sadducees for hindering the personal worship of the common folk while raising their own personal stature was the very reason Jesus entered the world. He came that "whosoever" might be able to come unto him. Upon his death the curtain dividing the holiest of holy places in the temple was torn in two allowing the average Joe the opportunity to come before him just as he is and worship without the need of a self-declared religious leader to intercede for him.

For all the finger pointing toward the LGBT community that they are intolerant of Jesus and his teachings, they too must face an unpleasant realization. It was the church that crucified the savior of the world while the prostitutes and outcasts of the day were at his feet weeping. It was the disciples who deserted and betrayed him. It was the religious leaders who cried out "crucify him, give us Barabbas," not the tax collector, harlot, adulterer or leper.

I would like to think that if given

another chance, the church and its leaders would be on the right side of justice this time around. That perhaps they would look beyond the outward appearance and not judge the messiah as a traitor and government insurrectionist but embrace his message of radical love and peace. I am afraid that looking at some of our faith leaders today the outcome would be the same as they could not see the love in the chosen one's eyes due to the blindness of condemnation and self-righteous piety.

I know people who think homosexuality is a choice and that those who profess to be gay will come back with a barrage of scriptures. The constant battle to undo another side's personal ideology and identity will never end. We can toss the word of God around like a bean bag all day long, and in the end the only thing we can and must agree on is that God is love and that his plan for humanity involves a personal walk that only he can and should judge.

We must also agree that the word of God is a holy and sacred thing, but how we treat one another is a much better indication of who or what resides inside us than how many scriptures we can quote.

Knowing and understanding the word of God is admirable and a great way to gain truth into the wonderful gift of eternal grace, but our actions speak louder than words. Maybe we should truly live the word rather than decree it and maybe we should show the love rather than crucify it. Maybe, just maybe, we should take better care to dislodge the plank in our own eye before we go after the speck in our brother's.

*Kellogg is a resident of Gastonia.*

Pen pals during war, they fell in love:

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