



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### “God’s Word Dethroned and Man’s Opinions Enthroned”



The synopsis of a sermon preached by Rev. Ivan Foster in Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church on Lord’s Day evening, June 22nd, 2003, on the efforts to have sodomites elected to high office in the Anglican Church.

*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen, Romans 1:25.*

**The present controversy within the Church of England regarding the appointment of Canon Jeffrey John, a self-acknowledged and unrepentant sodomite, as Bishop of Reading, reveals the depths of the apostasy to which that organisation has sunk (I call it not a ‘church’ for I believe that the Church of England has long ago forfeited the right to such a description).**

One or two matters need to be borne in mind when considering the issue.

**a]. Before this matter could have reached its present stage of development, the problem must have been in existence for a long time.**

Sodomites within the C of E is no new thing. They have been accepted into membership and into office for some number of years.

**b]. The objectors protesting against this ordination are not all that they may appear.**

The term “evangelical” has been applied to them. But many of them are, at best, ecumenists who still have a measure of regard for the teaching of the Bible on marriage. Many of them are pro-Alpha Course, with its agenda of charismatic union with Romanism. This may be easily seen by a visit to the websites of the various parishes represented amongst the objectors.

**c]. While acknowledging that the theological and moral position of the protesters is better than that of the pro-sodomite section of the ‘Church of England’, their position is still far from the truth of the Bible.**

They admire the “qualities for the work of a bishop” of Jeffrey John. In a letter, published in The Church Times, dated 16th June, nine Diocesan Bishops said of Dr. Jeffrey John: “Dr. John has many admirable qualities for the work of a bishop.” This is utter nonsense and an evil compromising of the holy pronouncements of God. Sodomy is an evil and wicked thing. It is deemed an “abomination” by God. “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination,” Leviticus 18:22. If the lifestyle adopted by an individual is termed an abomination by God, then all that the person engages in is abominable and everything about him is abominable. Jeffrey John has no “admirable qualities for the work of a bishop.” All that he is and does is seen by God as utterly evil. You cannot be both abominable and admirably qualified to be a bishop at one and the same time before God, irrespective of the opinions of these bishops. Their thinking displays the fact that the



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apostasy has undermined and corrupted the understanding of the person and holiness of God and of His law, even amongst those in the 'Church of England' who would call themselves evangelicals.

These same bishops went on to say in the same letter that they "value, of course, the gift of same-sex friendship and if this relationship is one of companionship and sexual abstinence, then, we rejoice." This makes sickening reading. There is a world of difference between the friendship of David and Jonathan and the relationships that perverts establish today, whether or not there is "sexual abstinence." The thoughts and inclinations of a sodomite are sinful and if given any expression or manifestation become even more so.

They base their objections on "The Church's understanding of scripture and of long-standing tradition." As stated by The Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapter 1, paragraph IV): "The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God." The bishops' statement may have the appearance of orthodoxy but in fact is half-way to the position of the Romanist and his view of ultimate authority resting with the 'Church.'

One 'Church of England' minister, Reverend David Banting of the organisation, "Reform," said of Jeffrey John: "He lives one thing and says he will teach one thing, but on the other hand he says he will uphold the teaching of the Scriptures. Those two things cannot be done together in this particular case." That is a little more like a protest but still does not address the fact that this man, Jeffrey John, has long held office while promoting the views of sodomy. Such views do not merely unfit him for the office of bishop but also for acceptance as a Christian at all! These observations serve to have us question the merits of the opposition to sodomites within the 'Church' of England.

Local Reading MP, Jane Griffiths, said: "There have been lots of polls on this, it's been a big story in the last few days. And so far only one person on the streets of Reading has said he should not take up his appointment and that person was too embarrassed to give his name. The people of Reading are better than that - they are not bigoted and homophobic. People have expressed concern and outrage to me that this kind of view can be presented as the Church of England's."

One expects a Member of Parliament to judge all matters by the yardstick of public opinion. But that is not the authority of the believer. However, there appears to be little reference to the Word of God in this debate.

In this issue, it appears to me that it is man's reasoning that is put on the throne and God's Word which is cast off the throne. One retired bishop, an acknowledged sodomite, was interviewed on the Radio 4 "Today" programme. He stated that Paul was wrong in what he wrote in his denunciation of sodomy in Romans chapter 1. That sums up the issue at the heart of this debate. It is admitted that the Bible condemns sodomy, but the Bible is wrong and man's reason is right.

That has been the way now for quite some time. Issues such as the ordination of women, the errors of Rome, the inspiration of Holy Scripture and many other vital matters have all been decided by the views of men, and God's views, set forth in the Bible, have been dis-



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missed with contempt.

We are not of such a school of thought. For us the Holy Scriptures, which are “for ever, . . . settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89) decide all such issues beyond dispute.

Let us consider . . .

### I. THE PEOPLE OF WHOM PAUL IS SPEAKING

Who are the “who” to whom Paul refers in verses 20-24?

**1. They are those who rejected the knowledge of God.** Verses 20-23. These are the actions of those who were acquainted with the mind of God on His will for men, but who deliberately rejected His commands. This has ever been the disposition of natural man. Pharaoh is representative of the fallen mind of the sinner when he responded to the message of Jehovah relayed by Moses: “And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go,” Exodus 5:2.

**2. They are those who believed that they acted in a very wise manner in rejecting the Word of God.** They were led by reason but acted as fools. This action of casting away the Word of God was deemed the wisest course of action to take. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,” Romans 1:22. How nauseating it is to hear of men such as the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, lauded as men of wisdom!

**3. They are those who changed the truth of God into a lie.** They declared God’s view as erroneous and deceitful and their view as correct. That has ever been the attitude of men to the gospel. Naaman the Syrian leader, in response to the Word of God said: “Behold, I thought,” 2 Kings 5:11. On the basis of what he thought he turned from the only cure available to him for his leprosy and he would have remained a leper and died a leper had he not been persuaded to bow to the authority of God’s Word. That is what is central to the conversion of sinners. “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son,” 1 John 5:10. Rejectors of the gospel message of salvation through faith in the blood of Christ alone make God a liar!

### II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS.

**1. They were given up of God.** “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: . . . For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature,” Romans 1:24, 26. indications There was not an immediate indication of the dreadful judgment that had fallen on those evil people. If anything, life became even sweeter to them as they embraced sin with an unrestrained vigour that heretofore they had been kept back from by the grace of God. But their judgment was seen in their sinking down in vileness and iniquity without the slightest awareness of abandonment by God. How bold is the sodomite! How brasen and impudent in their demeanour and statements they have become! They have no shame at all for the wickedness of which they are guilty. They take a perverse pleasure in shocking decent people with their outrageousness. Paul speaks of this in the last verse of Romans 1. They “not



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only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

**2. Being abandoned by God, they became the slaves of depravity.** Today’s acceptance of sodomy is a sure token that God has given up those so inclined. The phrase: “Wherefore God also gave them up. . . ,” verse 24, refers to God handing them over to the control and captivity of their own evil desires. These poor creatures are the slaves of their own abominable desires. They will be led to hell in chains. It is to be noticed that the Bible teaches that sodomy does come from within a person — the depraved nature. “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts,” verse 24. Sodomy is a breach of God’s law as inexcusable as murder or theft and is traceable to man’s depraved heart.

**3. There is a natural recompence for such wickedness.** “And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet,” verse 27. The increase in various diseases associated with sodomy is that of which Paul is here speaking. Immorality brings its immediate and temporal consequences, as well as its less immediate but nevertheless eternal consequences. The increase in sexually transmitted diseases and the devastating lasting effects of these on those infected testify of society’s immorality and uncleanness.

### III. THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST ALONE DELIVERS SINNERS FROM SUCH CHAINS.

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Here are both a warning and good counsel.

This passage contains:

**1. The purpose of God in Christ.** It is to save from the very sins which men are today excusing and claiming God is pleased with.

**2. The power of God in Christ.** Washed, sanctified, justified. Our sins are washed away in the blood of Christ, we are given a new nature and made holy and we are declared righteous and just before God when we come in faith to Christ.

**3. The breadth of God’s love in Christ.** Paul says to the believers in Corinth “such were some of you.” That is, amongst the saved believers in Corinth were ex-fornicators, ex-idolaters, ex-adulterers, ex-effeminate, ex-abusers of themselves with mankind, ex-thieves, ex-coveters, ex-drunkards, ex-revilers, ex-extortioners. Sodomites may be saved. Today, modern “Christianity” simply wishes to pronounce sodomy acceptable. That will deliver the sodomite from Hell. But Christ can by His power and grace make a sodomite an ex-sodomite! That is what happened in Corinth.

It is not recognised by sodomites but nevertheless true that those who deal most kindly with them are those who tell them plainly that sodomy is a sin and it will bring them to hell. Those professing ‘Christians’ who campaign for the acceptance of sodomy may well be



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applauded today by the sodomite but a day is coming when they will turn their blessings to cursings. Be it noted that Heaven will have those of the most wicked backgrounds and evil records. Those guilty of murder and the vilest of crimes have found pardon and peace through the blood of Christ. We echo Paul's great statement in conclusion. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief," 1 Timothy 1: 15. "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." Psalm 34: 8.