

## ISSUES IN PERSPECTIVE

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### *The Cultural Left's Winning Strategy on Sexuality*

The cultural left's strategy on human sexuality is shifting—and it seems to be working. In the 1970s and 1980s, the cultural left, perhaps learning a lesson from the pro-abortion forces, began to wrap any discussion of sexuality around the treasured cover of rights, freedom and liberty. As abortion is a guaranteed right, so is being a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person. Therefore, the government, the church, the broader culture or any religious conviction cannot suppress or deny such sexual expression. In terms of sexual activity, the only cultural prohibition seems to be rape and pedophilia; virtually everything else is permissible and acceptable. Since personal autonomy is now the primary ethical standard driving the culture, any opposition to defining sexual freedom (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender activity) as a constitutional right is considered arcane, even bigoted and discriminatory. By the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the cultural left's strategy has won the day. The apex of that achievement came when President Obama declared that his “journey” led him to embrace same-sex marriage as legitimate, with the practical result being that the US government now sanctions the gay lifestyle and gay marriages. Thousands of years of history and deep-seated convictions, rooted in clear biblical teaching, have been set aside. The accommodation of government, culture and even some religious leaders to this astounding re-definition of marriage and human sexuality has been utterly shocking. Having won the victory of cultural accommodation, the cultural left has now adopted a new strategy, what theologian Albert Mohler calls a “new moral McCarthyism.” Let me explain.

- First, consider the case of Atlanta pastor Louie Giglio. The Presidential Inaugural Committee had invited him to give the benediction at President Obama's recent inauguration. In addition to leading the Passion City Church in Atlanta, Giglio also founded the Passion movement, which brings thousands of young people together at conferences featuring Giglio and other speakers such as John Piper. Calling for youth to make a deep commitment to Jesus, the Passion movement has also raised awareness of and encouraged activism against the horrific issue of worldwide sex trafficking. But 20 years ago, Giglio preached a sermon in which he stated that homosexuality is a sin and that the “only way out of a homosexual lifestyle . . . is through the healing power of Jesus.” Once this sermon was discovered, the pressure to disinvite him mounted. Before he was officially disinvited, Giglio voluntarily withdrew. Addie Whisenant of the Inaugural committee stated, “We were not aware of Pastor Giglio's past comments at the time of his selection, and they don't reflect our desire to celebrate the strength and diversity of our country at this inaugural.” The committee in effect promised to “repent and learn from their failure.” Mohler correctly argues that the Giglio imbroglio evidences this new McCarthyism: “During the infamous McCarthy hearings, witnesses would be asked, ‘Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?’ In the version now to be employed by the Presidential Inaugural Committee [and

I believe the broader cultural leaders], the question will be: ‘Are you now or have you ever been one who believes that homosexuality (or bisexuality, or transsexualism, etc.) is anything less than morally acceptable and worthy of celebration?’ . . . Louie Giglio was cast out of the circle of the acceptable simply because a liberal watchdog group found one sermon he preached almost twenty years ago. If a preacher has ever taken a stand on biblical conviction, he risks being exposed decades after the fact. Anyone who teaches at any time, to any degree, that homosexual behavior is a sin is now to be cast out.” In fact, the cultural left has succeeded in having the President of the United States, his inaugural committee, the Vice President of the United States and virtually the entire media empire of this nation affirm that historic, biblical Christianity is out of bounds. No Christian who holds to biblical orthodoxy is welcome!! The accommodation of this administration to the cultural left on the matter of sexuality is absolutely staggering. The effects of this accommodation are deep, thoroughgoing and shocking. Those who believe the Bible and God’s Creation Ordinance when it comes to heterosexual marriage are now marginalized.

- Second is the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). In late January, the Boy Scouts of America made clear that it will change its policy of prohibiting openly homosexual scouts and leaders. This apparent change comes six months after the BSA Board declared it would *not* change its policy. It also comes over 12 years after the 2000 Supreme Court ruled that the BSA had the constitutional right to set its own membership standards. Further, it comes over 8 years after the 2004 BSA policy that the “Boy Scouts of America believes that homosexual conduct is inconsistent with the obligations in the Scout Oath and Scout Law to be morally straight and clean in thought, word, and deed.” The Boy Scouts of America is now, in effect, offering a local option—each local council and troop must come up with its own policy. As theologian Mohler comments, this “is almost sure to please no one and to lead to disaster for the Scouts.” The cultural left’s pressure will be relentless. But those organizations, especially churches who host BSA troops, will no doubt reconsider their relationship with the BSA. As Mohler shows, conservative religious bodies sponsor the vast majority of Boy Scout units: Mormons lead with more than 37,000 units, involving 400,000 boys. United Methodists sponsor 11,000 units; the Roman Catholic Church sponsors 8,000 units; along with Southern Baptist and other evangelical churches sponsoring many of the rest nationwide. It certainly seems reasonable that many churches and other sponsoring bodies will exit the BSA as sponsors. But perhaps much more importantly, this change in the BSA governing board demonstrates the virtual impossibility of ever again speaking about human sexuality in ethical terms. Since its founding, the BSA has affirmed that homosexual conduct is “inconsistent with the obligations in the Scout Oath and Scout Law to be morally straight and clean in thought, word, and deed.” But the unyielding pressure of the cultural left has produced this abandonment of what an esteemed organization understands “morally straight” to mean. It is abandoning what it called a “core” belief and conviction. As Mohler argues, “the new policy reveals what will [now] stand at the core of the Boy Scouts of America’s national policy—a vacuum of moral conviction.” There is little doubt that this policy change will destroy the Boy Scouts of America. It will be sued and it will lose! Although I found the *New York Times*’ editorial on this policy change offensive, the editors are correct in this observation: “The new policy would, however, undermine the rationale the Supreme Court voiced in 2000 when it affirmed the right of

the Scouts to discriminate against gay people. The 5-4 ruling turned on the court's acceptance of the Scouts' claim that being antigay was a 'core' part of its mission and that its freedom of association right trumped any state nondiscrimination rules. Of course, much has changed since that decision—including the growing acceptance of same-sex marriage and the ability of gay people to serve openly in the military. Now that the group is on the verge of making discrimination optional, it can no longer claim that discrimination is a 'core' purpose—and therefore nondiscrimination rules should apply to the Scouts. The halfway policy change would inevitably invite litigation.”

The strategy of the cultural left has worked. To hold or to have ever held the historic, biblical Christian position that homosexuality or same-sex marriage is a sin is to now be marginalized in American culture. Regardless of what the cultural mainstream affirm, God establishes the ethical standards for His world. To accept this truth is to experience His common grace blessings. To deny this truth is to invite his discipline and judgment. The choice of the cultural left on this matter is now becoming the choice of the broader American culture. May God have mercy on us!

See [www.albertmohler.com](http://www.albertmohler.com) (10, 29 and 31 January 2013) and the *New York Times* editorial (29 January 2013).