

***The Grace of Shame: 7 Ways the Church has Failed to Love Homosexuals* by Tim Bayly, Joseph Bayly, Jurgen von Hagen (Warhorn Media, 2017), 165 pp.**

Tim Bayly's dad was the late Joe Bayly, IVCF editor, author of *The Gospel Blimp*, and, for a quarter century, a popular columnist at *Eternity* magazine. In 1979, he wrote: "Most evangelical churches are very uptight about homosexuality, relatively very accepting of adultery, and the concomitant problems of desertion and divorce." Noting, "there is such a crusade against homosexuals", he asked: "Why?" His perceptive reply: "I think it's because homosexual sins are *their* sins, heterosexual sins are *ours*." Tim Bayly included this wise observation in his collection of his dad's columns, *The Best of Joe Bayly* (1993).

But now, with his co-authors, his son and another pastor, he's who's "very uptight about homosexuality" (i.e., *others'* sins, not *ours*). Indeed, their new book is a *moral panic*.

They *obsess* over "effeminate sodomites", their label for gays. But Ezekiel said that the *sin* of the real Sodomites was that, *having plenty for themselves they arrogantly refused to help the poor and needy*. Then, these Sodomites appeared at Lot's door, intent on self-righteously *raping* despised sojourners into submission. They weren't looking for *dates*.

Tim Bayly has castigated what he scorns as the "scandal" of "effeminate worship [at] the hole of Redeemerism", i.e., Tim Keller's Redeemer Presbyterian Church in America and he's mocked Keller's "effeminate" evasion on "sodomites". Bayly's left the PCA and now heads a "manly" church, a branch of which, his son, Joseph, is planting.

Their book's title is a phrase that *can* refer to God's grace that alerts us to our sin and our need to repent. But, in *sensing* shame, one must discern if it's biblically based in *true guilt* or in a *conscience* twisted by *false teaching*. Luther counseled: "God does not save *imaginary* sinners. So, *be* a sinner of *real* sins, but let your *trust in Christ* be even *more real*." This is no excuse to sin *willfully*; it's good counsel to take *real sin seriously*.

Bayly et al *rail against same-sex couples* for meeting *their* intimacy needs with mates of *their* mutual choice while Bayly et al *applaud themselves* for meeting *their* needs with mates of *their* mutual choice. Ignoring the Golden Rule, they *rationalize* their *reviling* as a "gift" of *graciousness* to the reviled. Their logjam looms so large that it blinds them to their lack of love. Their *first* line of "Acknowledgments" is all in caps: "FIRST, WE THANK OUR WIVES" – an all-too-familiar insensitivity from writers of *antigay* books.

They attack the "Errors" of homosexuality, starting with "The Sin of Effeminacy" and cite the cultural "gayness" of David Bowie: "Whether or not David Bowie committed sodomy [he didn't] live in submission to his manhood". Their attack isn't about his drug-fueled exploitation of underage girls; it's about his signature *drag schtick!*

Their "Bible" alibi against "effeminacy" is a Greek word for "soft" in a vice list from Paul. Epictetus used it for *softheaded* and others read it as *spineless*. But the NIV's Ed Palmer used to ask his Westminster students: "How do you turn a porcupine into an owl?" His punch line: "By translation!" Bayly's proof-text list includes *swindlers* and *revilers*. Hmm – *hucksters* of "ex-gay" hoaxes, *maligners* of same-sex marriage?

"MEN WHO ARE EFFEMINATE WILL NOT BE IN HEAVEN". That's the all-caps scare line of the authors' cocksure addendum on "effeminacy". They recall Jesus' noting that John the Baptist was *not* dressed in "soft" garments. They object to pictures of Jesus in a "long flowing gown that's pressed and clean" and they assure

readers: "Jesus was not a mama's boy." They shame by stereotype: "Hard men are in the kingdom of God. Soft men are not". They add: "By necessary implication, [a woman's body] is soft in receiving man's initiative". So, "hard women will not enter the kingdom of God."

Back in 1970, refuting a legalist ditty, "A Would-Be Lady", Joe Bayly discerned that all *false* gospels, "anti-smoking, anti-communism, anti-anything else, is 'another gospel' if it claims to solve the problem of this life and bring us a single step closer to heaven."

Tim Bayly et al bully even the *celibate* gay Christian. Each, they claim, is "counting on Christians to give him a pass on his effeminacy and the direction of his sexual desires". But, *he* no more *chose* his desires than Bayly et al *chose* theirs. Still, *he chose* celibacy.

Against the biblically based wisdom that "Godliness is Not Heterosexuality", they take another swipe at Keller for his saying: "Heterosexuality does not get you to heaven, so how in the world could homosexuality send you to hell?" Citing a *celibate gay* pastor's repeating this, they retort by *false analogy*, smirking: Suppose he'd "announced he was a 'pedophile Christian' stipulating that he didn't have sex with, or even touch, children." They ignorantly conflate *homosexuality* and *pedophilia* and conjure *pedophilic disorder*.

On "The 'Sexual Orientation' Error", they gripe: "Some within the church have begun to claim there is something more to sexual identity than male and female. They call this category of sexuality 'sexual orientation'." But this term has been in the psych literature for over 70 years and refers to the *direction* of *sexual attraction* – what led Bayly et al to wed wives and other men to wed husbands. They fault Southern Baptist leader Al Mohler for saying he was *wrong* to deny the *fact* of *homosexual orientation*. But by *their idolatry* of "manliness", isn't he just being "man enough" to admit his mistake? Will they "man up" and admit *they* are mistaken about *sexual orientation*? They're upset with "born that way", but *didn't they sense their* sexual desires the same "born that way" way?

Under "The 'Reparative Therapy' Error", they note Mohler's *changed his* mind again – after the "ex-gay" fiasco. They impugn his motives. Yet, in Golden Rule empathy, they *should* confess *they couldn't switch their* sexual attraction from women to men. Are they not "man enough" to admit this, even with assistance from the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors that's "manned up" to *revise its reparative goal*? Bayly et al reduce "reparative" to a "manly" *willed repudiation*: "Repudiate homosexuality and embrace heterosexuality." They claim: "This is pastoral care. This is love." *This is pathetic!*

They say, "The Church has failed to love homosexuals". It's true. But in bearing false witness and mocking "loving monogamous sodomy", they resemble Sodomites of old.

Perhaps they'd not have written such a bigoted book had they paused for a moment to learn from old Joe Bayly's good sense and Christian compassion, shared with his readers in 1974. But *this* wisdom from his dad was left out of Tim Bayly's collection of his dad's columns. Joe Bayly had long pondered and so, cautioned, now over forty years ago: "For years I have been troubled [over the] total judgment of the homosexual person [and] about a precise identification of every person of this type with the biblical model."

