

A LETTER TO AN OLD FRIEND

BY DR. ROY CLEMENTS

In March 1999 I relinquished the pastorate at Eden Baptist Church, Cambridge England where I had served as senior minister for twenty years. In June of that year I confessed to my wife the long struggle I had experienced throughout our marriage with my underlying homosexual orientation. I explained that I had resigned my pastoral ministry and was planning a two-year study-leave so that I could reflect on this matter further. She asked me to correspond with an old friend on the issue: John Stott, the Rector Emeritus of All Souls Church, Langham Place in London. Not surprisingly, John wrote urging me in the strongest terms to resist any thoughts of compromise with homosexuality. His letters are confidential but below you will find a slightly edited version of one of my replies. I take up some of the arguments at greater length in the essays published on my website: www.roy-clements.co.uk



To: Rev. Dr. John Stott
From: Dr. Roy Clements
20th August 1999

Dear John,

First let me say a sincere thank you for your willingness to correspond with me at this time. In this letter I want to respond briefly to some of your comments in the hope that you will understand where I now stand on the gay ? issue.

Let me begin by saying that I agree with you when you assert that neither the possible existence of a homosexual gene nor the experience of falling in love with someone of the same sex ipso facto provides a moral justification for gay relationships. However, accepting that gayness is, in many cases at least, built into a persons

identity rather than a piece of learned behavior greatly affects ones expectations of change. Changing behavior is a matter of the will alone. Once moral victory is achieved and conduct is re-educated the person concerned will be more personally fulfilled and happy than before. A change in identity on the other hand involves either a miracle (for which we can do no more than pray, and miracles are by definition rare events) or a painful suppression of that individuals true nature, which can never be a fulfilled or happy outcome and may well generate enormous inward distress. I wish to confess that the latter is my condition. Such an admission in no way dehumanizes me as a victim of my emotions? (to quote your last letter). It is necessary to my personal integrity that I face this truth and the boundaries it places on what I can and cannot do to solve the problem. In short I do not believe I can be cured by behavioral therapy. I am gay and will always be so.

Very rightly you wish to relate my attitude on this issue to Scripture. You admit that the Bible provides no clear discussion of why it condemns homosexuality, but you argue that such a theological rationale is implicit in the Bibles discussion of marriage in Genesis 2, which Jesus reinforced in his discussion of divorce. The trouble is this means we have to work out the informing principles behind the biblical view of marriage and then extrapolate these to the case of homosexuality. Such an ascent and subsequent descent of the ladder of abstraction is notoriously vulnerable to subjective prejudice. You accuse me of rationalizing my desire to sin. But (forgive me) you could equally well be rationalizing your self-righteousness on this issue. Evangelicals are notoriously prone to the assumption that their reading of Scripture is self-evidently correct. I could interpret your negativity as an example of

Continued p.3

I have been deeply unsatisfied by the standard evangelical response to the gay condition, which seems to me to have far more about law than gospel

NEXT time: Bible Abuse

Summer 2002

thECable is a quarterly publication of Evangelicals Concerned Western Region, an affirming fellowship of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Christians.

thECable is published quarterly - March, June, September, and December by Evangelicals Concerned Western Region (ECWR)
PO Box 19734 Seattle, WA 98109-6734
206.621.8960 ecwr@ecwr.org

Subscriptions are available upon request at no cost.

ECWR Membership is \$24 annually.

Submissions of issue oriented articles and stories of personal Christian faith journeys are welcomed.

Letters to the editor, local group announcements and other news must be submitted by the last day of April, July, October, and January.

ECWR reserves the right to select and edit all stories, articles and letters as necessary.

Send correspondence to:

thECable Editor
c/o ECWR
PO Box 19734
Seattle, WA 98107-6734
or email to fryemister@msn.com

"Prayer doesn't change God, prayer changes me."

-C.S. Lewis

Leaders Leaving an Indelible Mark

BY RON POINDEXTER

During my senior year in college, Campus Crusade for Christ was promoting a particular theme to encourage its student leaders: "Leaving an Indelible Mark." The graphic that accompanied the campaign was that of a fish, an ancient symbol of Christian fellowship, carved deep into a block of wood. This image inspired me. I loved God, and in response was motivated to love Gods people. The thought that I could actually leave a positive, permanent mark on peoples lives was a powerful driver for this young, idealistic evangelical Christian.

That carved image remains a vivid one for me, even today. As I think about my life, I am reminded of how I have changed, and how it has most often been through people that God has changed me. My life is, indeed, indelibly marked with the love and sacrifice of others.

Many of the marks left on my life have been made by ECWR members and friends as I walked the journey of integrating my faith and sexuality. Leaders in local groups like Jallen Rix, Jack Pantaleo, Earl Viau, Dan Stohler, and Paul Bandy. And national leaders like Kelley Combs, Dirk DeVries, Sheila

Northcutt, Peter Benson, and Jan Rich. I could fill an entire page with names like these - people who invested their time and energy to challenge me, to heal me, to love me.

All over this continent there are local and national ECWR leaders who are making indelible marks in peoples lives. The ministry of EC exists because of these people. The ministry of EC IS these people. They are making daily sacrifices to help Gods children know they can be both Christian and GLBT.

As president of the board of ECWR, I have a simple message to you local and national leaders:

Thank you.

I hear stories nearly every day of how you're making indelible marks in the lives of Gods people, and I'm so grateful.

Many of you reading this edition of thECable were once EC leaders, carving marks of your own. While we trust that your decisions to leave active involvement were right for the time, please know that wed love to have you back. Any time. There are still so many who need what you have to offer - who need to be freed to leave their own indelible marks in the lives of others.

FINALLY FREE

BY JAMIE HORN

These are the things that God has taught me along my journey in reconciling my sexuality and spirituality:

I have learned that legalism is a deadly poison consisting of nothing more than using the Bible as justification to view myself as "better" than others. I grew up in the church from the time I was six years old on up through college where I obtained an AA degree in Biblical Studies. My father was the pastor of a conservative fundamentalist non-denom-



inational church for most of my growing up years. And because I so desperately wanted to please my parents and God, I became the "best" Bible Thumper in town. I was like Paul of the New Testament and David of the Old all

rolled up into one super-spiritual kid, I truly sought to love God above all else. But because I didn't understand then that God couldn't be "known," instead, God had to be "experienced," I exhausted the realm of intellectualizing

God, philosophically defining Him and then morally judging on His behalf. Wow, if you were God, I was pretty sure you were glad to have me on your team!

I lived the straight-laced life; my

Continued p.6

Continued from p. 1

the kind of psychological defensiveness, which often parades itself as moral zeal. How would you rebut the charge? Both the Bible itself and church history provide ample examples of issues over which sincere, Bible believers have been proven to be in serious error. One drawn from the New Testament itself is the Pharisees interpretation of the covenant as unconditionally salvific for ethnic Jews. This was contradicted by both Jesus and Paul who re-interpret the OT in a universalist direction to embrace Gentiles too, although this was regarded as heretical by Bible-believing orthodox Judaism at the time.

Other examples that could be cited at length are: the Trinity, polygamy, divorce, conversion by military crusade, transubstantiation, charismatic gifts, slavery, the role of women, creation/evolution, Hell etc. - on all these issues biblical orthodoxy has been divided at some point and on many of them the majority viewpoint within the Church has changed. On at least a couple of these issues you, yourself, have taken a lead in challenging the received interpretation of Scripture and suffered criticism from conservatives who insisted their point of view was so clear in the Bible that anyone who denied it had to be undermining its authority.

What makes you so sure that the gay issue is not one more controversy of this sort?

I observe at least two factors which are responsible for Christian disagreement on this kind of issue:

(a) As I have already indicated above, the Bible does not always provide a clear theological rationale for its doctrines which means there is room left for debate whenever one tries to deduce things from the presumed general principles which are held to lie behind the doctrines. On ethical issues like homosexuality, in particular, where there are really very few biblical texts to go on, it not easy to distinguish concessions to culture from trans-cultural universal norms (compare the women and veils debate).

(b) Some obscurantists refuse to admit the influence of extra-biblical knowledge and experience upon biblical interpretation. But such influence is both inevitable and necessary. Thus, 7-day creationists shut their eyes to the scientific evidence insisting their interpretation of Genesis 1 is self-evidently right. Again, on moral issues this is very hazardous. Slavery was once self-evidently acceptable to many of our Bible believing brethren who grew up in a culture which endorsed it. There are still Christians in South Africa who support a racist interpretation of the Bible as you well know.

As I said in my last letter, this does not mean that I wish to surrender to the kind of polyvalent indeterminacy in biblical hermeneutics which is characteristic of extreme postmodern critics like Derrida and Rorty. But it is clear that biblical orthodoxy has often been wrong in the past and may therefore be wrong on this issue too. For a very long while I have been deeply unsatisfied by the standard evangelical response to the gay condition, which seems to me to have far more about law than gospel, and is effectively shutting one particular social group out of the church and denouncing them as sinners in just the way lepers and the physically handicapped were ostracized from the synagogue in Jesus day. I need to rethink my approach on this subject. I had hoped to have the leisure to take a couple of years over this review. But because it is for me

“Ordo Amoris”

BY DON FRYE

One of my favorite spiritual writers is Margaret Guenther. In her book *The Practice of Prayer*, she writes this about spirituality, "It is important to remember that we all-even the most ordinary and least holy among us-have a spirituality. It may be bland, rejecting risk and adventure in favor of the safe and predictable, the spiritual equivalent of a tuna casserole instead of a challenging curry. Our spirituality can be selfish, destructive, or even daemonic... Whatever it's characteristics, everyone of us has a spirituality, what Augustine called an *ordo amoris*, an ordering of our loves."

Margaret goes on to ask what do we most cherish or desire? What is the treasure hidden in the core of our being? Then she makes a most profound statement, "Our spirituality is not what we profess to believe, but how we order our loves. The mission and ministry of Evangelicals Concerned is to help LGBT Christians to reconcile their spirituality and sexuality. Profession of faith is good in that it gives us the core of our belief, but it is not a substitute for the dynamics of the spiritual life and our relationship with God and others."

As Christians we know that our identity in Christ is our true identity. What has to shape and govern our spiritual lives and the ordering of our loves are the two Great Commandments: to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and body, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Observing both commandments makes us mindful that our spirituality is both contemplative and active. We must be ever mindful of our relationship to ourselves, others, and God, and we must act on it in our work, leisure, and play. This is risky because spirituality is not to be based on legalistic do's and don'ts, but on God's law of love. Many of us have sacrificed and risked all to love ourselves as God loves us at the rejection of our churches, families, and friends.

In this issue of thECable, Dr. Roy Clements shares part of his story how after twenty years of teaching ministry was forced out of the church and Jamie Horn shares her miracle of reconciling faith and sexuality. As you read these stories, may you be encouraged to order your loves and be challenged not to settle for the spiritual equivalent of tuna casseroles.

Treasurer's Report

January, 1, 2002 — May 1, 2002

Fund	Income	Expense
General Fund	\$14,656.00	\$16,012.50
Conference Fund	1,461.00	6,357.91
Resource Center	37.65	412.95
Totals	\$16,154.65	\$22,783.36

EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE

DR. NICK WARNER

"I am convinced that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus," wrote Paul to a church of young Christians. It is the objective of Evangelicals Concerned Western Region to proclaim to the GLBT community that God's love for us is just as pure and strong as it was for the first century church. But long before Jesus was born, long before Paul, Hebrew believers struggled to understand God's love in a way that would make sense to those for whom God was invisible and unfathomable. One of the ways they did that was to incorporate into their worship the exquisite love poetry of the Song of Songs.

Originally written as an intimate poem to her beloved, the writer praises his virtues, his beauty and his faithfulness, writing "I'm my beloved's and he is mine, his banner over me is love. He leads me to the wellspring of salvation. He brings me to his banqueting table." The author finds picturesque, sometimes even sensuous ways to proclaim the depth of her love and the worthiness of her lover. Israelite worshippers, striving to find ways to express the depth of their love for God



and God's worthiness, found this poem and discovered that it sensitively described their feelings for Yahweh. As a result, it became part of the body of Hebrew scripture and was, in part, memorized by Israelite children.

When Christians worked to decide which portions of the Hebrew scripture, which we call the Old Testament, to incorporate into their Bible in the 4th century, they included the magnificent Song of Songs. Since Jewish poetry was designed to be chanted or sung, Christians naturally sang portions of this Song; perhaps you sang it as a child in Sunday school,

complete with the arm motions. Most of us know the song, "I'm my beloved's and he is mine, his banner over me is love." Are you singing it right now in your mind?

When it came time to plan ConnEction 2002, we chose as our theme: "God's banner over me is love," because the banner represents the covenant of protection that is guaranteed to the one covered by the banner.

ConnEction is a place to stand under the banner of the God whose love and grace have set us free to live proudly as the women and men we are. ConnEction 2002 will rejoice in the proclamation that we are covered by that banner and that whoever we are, nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Join us from July-28 in Orange California at Chapman University. Then you will experience God's love under the banner and our love will be made complete.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Flying to ConnEction 2002

Chapman University is located in Orange County only 10 miles from Orange County's John Wayne Airport. We are encouraging everyone who is flying into Southern California to fly into John Wayne Airport. From there you can easily get an inexpensive shuttle to Chapman University. All the details will be in ConnEction packet which will be sent to you after you register. If you have special transportation needs, please indicate that when you register and we will provide the special transportation. If you find you have to fly into Los Angeles International Airport, please indicate so on your registration form.

Location

ConnEction 2002 is located in the heart of Southern California, close to some of the best tourist attractions in the world. Add some vacation days before or after conference by enjoying area attractions such as Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Laguna, Venice and Malibu Beaches, Hollywood, Universal Studios and Catalina Island - all just a short trip from Chapman College.

WOMENS RETREAT JULY 24-25

Our Women's Retreat theme will reflect the other portion of the scripture we have chosen for this year's conference theme.

Anita Cadonau-Huseby served as a licensed minister for more than fifteen years within the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel denomination and was a frequent contributing writer and speaker for several large evangelical curriculum publishing companies prior to coming out as a lesbian in 1994. Anita is the webmaster of www.christianlesbians.com which provides an online community for women struggling to reconcile faith and orientation. Anita works at the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry, while earning her MDiv. at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. She will be seeking ordination with the Disciples of Christ.



KEYNOTE—SPEAKERS



Dr. Ralph Blair, founder of Evangelicals Concerned, Inc., has outspokenly supported the integration of evangelical Christian faith and homosexuality since the mid-1960's. A psychotherapist in New York City, Ralph has consistently and articulately promoted the acceptance of and justice for gay men and lesbian women.

Ralph founded Evangelicals Concerned, Inc. in 1976. He has edited EC's two national quarterlies, *Review and Record*, for over 24 years. He currently serves as a private consultant to leaders of a variety of national gay/lesbian and AIDS organizations. Ralph's keynote addresses are always thoughtful, challenging and full of unexpected insights. This year's address is entitled "Jesus Christ is Lord! So What??"

You can find out more at www.ecinc.org

Dr. Roy Clements, until recently the long-time pastor of Eden Baptist Chapel, the most vibrant church in Cambridge (England). Though a PhD in physics, Roy has been one of the most sought-after Bible conference speakers in the English-speaking world. A captivating Bible expositor ("Christian teaching at its best."- John Stott), Roy came out as gay a couple years ago and lost his church and his position with the Evangelical Alliance in the UK as well as the international invitations he'd had for many years.

You can find out more at www.royclements.co.uk



Rev. Deanna Jaworski, is the pastor of the (predominantly lesbian/gay) Church of the Holy Spirit Song in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Her congregation is affiliated with the Alliance of Christian Churches. She used to have a music ministry in the Assemblies of God. That was over when she came out as a lesbian a few years ago. She sings and preaches in a dynamic style, lots of humor and lots of no-nonsense.

You can find out more at <http://members.aol.com/cohss/revd.htm>

REGISTER FOR CONNECTION 2002 ON-LINE OR BY MAIL

On-Line

To register on-line go to www.ecwr.org and click on "Come to ConnECtion". Click on "Register" and fill in the information. It is fast and easy.

By Mail

If you have not received the ConnECtion 2002 brochure, contact the ECWR office and request a conference brochure by email at ECWR@ecwr.org or call 206-621-8960. Complete the registration form and fax or mail back to ECWR.

Conference Fees

Check the website for ECWR member and early registration discounts by July 1, 2002.

Scholarships

If you think you are unable to attend ConnECtion 2002 because of financial reasons, contact the leaders of your local EC Chapter. Limited scholarship money may be available for you. If you are not associated with a local group, write, call, or email ECWR in Seattle. We do not want anyone to miss attending ConnECtion because of finances.

Scholarship Donations

If you are unable to attend, you can still help others by making a generous donation to the Scholarship Fund and receive a tax deduction for your gift. Your financial gift will make it possible for someone to experience the life change of ConnECtion! Contact ECWR in Seattle to send your scholarship gift.



Continued from p. 2

I have since learned that I can't tip the scale away from my true self and the orientation I have been given since birth.

motto was "I don't smoke, drink or chew or go out with any people who do." Whatever the church said was bad, I said it was horrific. And as I look back, I now understand that all this zealous passion was really just an attempt to keep myself occupied with doing as many good things possible in hopes of tipping the "bad homosexual person" scale away from Hell.

I have since learned that I can't tip the scale away from my true self and the orientation I have been given since birth (Ps. 139), and that all my efforts to seek perfection were really just giving me away as the broken, insecure, rejected, and fearful person I was. I couldn't earn my acceptance, love or salvation from God, no matter how many hard years I tried, and I was actually to discover later that I didn't have to.

I have learned that life-crippling rejection can be miraculously healed and triumphed over by God's love. Understanding my difference as a young gay child and feeling tremendous shame over it was my personal rejection which was fed later by society's intolerance, the church's ostracism, self-hatred, and the awkwardness of never really fitting in. This kind of rejection and shame led me to believe I could never share my understood homosexuality with anyone, ever. I just assumed I would die with my secret, and I believed myself to be the only one in this world so unloved by God as to have been born with such a curse (this very belief accounted for my legalistic action), I was nothing more than a rejected and unloved kid feeling she had to "make it all up to God." How can one ever make up to God simply for being themselves?

But the day finally came when I learned through my love-encounter with God that I am completely accepted just as I am and NOT as I should be, because no one is as she should be this side of Heaven. Jesus' love broke through my world with the truth about freedom for the Gentiles through Peter's vision in Acts. There God told Peter not to call what He had created "unclean" and this was actually God's call to the Gentiles. The disciples were to extend to them the message of salvation by faith alone, just as they were (the Gentiles were NOT required to "become Jews" through circumcision, all they had to do was believe).

I understood the homosexual to be the modern-day Gentile right then and there. I understood the Lord saying to the church, "Don't call my beautiful daughter, Jamie Horn, whom I have created unclean." The truth so deeply connected into my heart at that moment, tears began to stream down my cheeks I realized the pain of all the past years I spent feeling "unworthy" because the law of "becoming straight" could not be lived out in my life. I sat dumbstruck thinking of all the agony, confusion and alienation that never had to be, all the self-doubt and devastated confidence that never should have been allowed to cripple my heart's love for God and life.

The next day there were more tears, only these were uncontrollable tears of freedom and joy that poured through me. I had never experienced such emotions when crying before. God seemed to be saying, "You are free, my child, go and dream your dreams of me and live your visions of public speaker, pastor, and teacher. Come get your purpose from me and be my Paul (boldly proclaiming the Gospel) and my David (focusing your heart and passionate love on me, and becoming a woman after my own heart). You are finally FREE!" I had

been radically touched by God and would never be the same. What God gives to a soul through experience, no human can ever take away.

I have learned that God is everything, faith is a necessity and that neither the Bible nor doctrine should ever become an idol or interpretational stumbling block. You see, my miracle had destroyed the foundation of knowledge I worked for so many years to build- knowledge had become more than a foundation, for me, it was my castle and my God. My own tiny, finite human mind had built a mansion of beliefs about God that were substantiated by nothing more than human intelligence. But as I encountered God's true love, I realized that God is beyond our human comprehension and that we can't define Him. His timeless and fathomless love is far beyond all the wisdom of this world (I Cor. 1:19-21, 25, 27), and no matter how we would like to capture it in a prescription and hand it out as a cure for human nature, only God's touch can truly transform a life on earth.

I discovered that without faith we don't have the courage to step away from our foundations and castles of knowledge to experience the miraculous love of God. The familiar keeps us grounded, but instead it's often a risk that God is calling us to live. When we let go of our own safety nets and respond to His beckoning, it is there that we are soaked with blessings we never thought possible. It is only in our response to His call that faith becomes salvation and God the magnificent extender of love; and if we're not careful, our own biblical interpretations and intellectual understandings can rob us from this experience.

I have learned that suffering is the way to true compassion, freedom, and love; and that without the desert one cannot understand the oasis. As one who has known suffering in this life, I have asked the Lord to make me a "Wounded Healer." How can one know what acts like a salve to the soul unless s/he has known the heartache of pain? A few years ago God allowed every good thing to be taken away from me . . . my soul mate (the deepest known human love of my life) decided she could not live with me and even that she could no longer speak to me. In horror and shock after already having purchased the plane ticket and preparing my life for the union we decided to share, I grew numb with disbelief because I so strongly understood this to be God's special gift for me. My health lapsed terribly right after that, I lost my job and the money dried up, I had no place to move. Every friend I had up until this point in my life had simply vanished for one reason or another during this trying time. And for 9 months of my life there was utter darkness and not a word of explanation about it from God. I had nothing and no one daily job was to survive the intense loss and loneliness, even though my heart had no will for it at all.

And then one day, little by little, God gave things back to me-a great job, money, a beautiful home, my health, and a courageous girlfriend. It seemed as if this marked the end of my dry desert suffering. I learned I would never know God completely and probably never know why these things had happened to me. But I discovered I could survive with God alone, even in His silence and my total loss. I realized that pain is such a deep wound that teaches in ways that nothing else in this world can, and it's also an agony in others that calls for a level of compassion that we humans don't possess

on our own. As one wounded by my orientation and suffering, I carry the reminding scars that God is the great Healer through love and that my life longs to emulate that same love.

I have learned to love others with a depth of concern I have never known, and I am convinced that it is because Christ first loved me. Caring for others and praying for them to experience the love of Jesus is the most important thing to me now. I pray that my life reflects this more and more each day. My heart is broken for my rejected brothers and sisters who do not know they are loved beyond any depth they could ever imagine. I long for them to be accepted by the church and know its extended arms of grace, however, I have yet to see that dream for my GLBT family.

I am currently being “removed” from a mainstream church’s fellowship and ministry, no longer welcome to attend because I am gay. I believe that this is the unjust world I was born into, but this was by God’s design so that I would cry with the heart of the rejected outcast and love them with all that Christ has filled me with inside. I am God’s beloved and I tell my story for the world to know the grace and mercy God extends unto all for salvation. There is no greater love. ■

Jamie is a member of EC Houston

Six Components of a Healthy Local Group

BY PAT EVERETT

In the past 6 years on the ECWR board it has been my passion, pleasure, and challenge to develop and encourage new and existing EC local groups/chapters across the country and now in Canada. I marvel at the way God continues to use these groups to bring hope and healing to GLBT Christians.

As a way to encourage both the existing groups and those of you waiting for a group to start or restart in your area, I’d like to share what I have noticed seems to be present in all healthy functioning local groups. This is a very dynamic organization and it is normal for groups to ebb and grow as people move through the groups. It takes special people to lead these groups. Not necessarily special gifts or talents, but special people. It takes people who catch the vision, who commit to allowing God to use them and who wait on God through those days when no one shows up maybe for weeks at a time.

In addition to the leaders who help start and/or maintain a group, I see six components that appear in various forms and levels, but are vital to any local group. They are:

1. Prayer
2. Hospitality
3. Safe Environment
4. Relevant topics/studies
5. Consistency
6. Valuing and honoring of members

Prayer – The foundation of the group. Without God’s direction and people listening to God, the group cannot start

on the right foot (or stay there). Many groups had the leadership or the board or another group pray for them long before they even started. We need to be praying continually for all our groups.

Hospitality – Feeling welcomed and safe starts with the very first contact. The person who answers the phone call or email message will set the tone for the new comer’s experience with the group. Some people may need to talk or meet 1:1 before they are ready to come to their first meeting. This is a very special gift.

Safe Place – People need to know they are accepted and that the group is safe for them. There are many things that make a group safe for people: from the people who are there, to what the group allows to happen, to the format, to how problems are resolved. Think about what you need to feel safe and create that in your group.

Relevant topics/studies – The study or discussion needs to be relevant to peoples needs. Is the need to reconcile sexuality with our faith? People want to take something away that they can apply and that benefits their life. Does it help them in their relationship with God, others, and self?

Consistency – Consistency builds trust and loyalty. The specific areas that need to be consistent are: mission/vision, locale/time, people/communication.

Valuing and honoring of members – Nothing is more healing than to realize how much God values us. We get that through being valued and honored by others. God created each and every person as a gift that reflects God’s character. Just being a part of a group, you bring that gift to play. ■

Workshops at ConnEction Cover Broad range of Topics

Workshops at ConnEction continue to cover a broad range of topics and issues of interest to attendees. For first timers there is the ever popular “Newcomers 101”. This workshop welcomes newcomers to conference, what to expect, and how to make the most of their time at ConnEction.

Other workshop topics will include:

- Recovery from “Ex-Gay” ministries,
- Justice Issues
- Relationships for couples
- HIV and AIDS
- Dating/Relationships/Sex
- Sexual Integrity
- Dealing with Parents and Families
- Starting an EC Chapter
- Homosexuality and the Bible
- Foundations of Faith
- Diversity Forum

Keynoters will also lead discussions after each main address for question and answer sessions. You won’t want to miss any of these great workshops!

It takes special people to lead these groups. Not necessarily special gifts or talents, but special people.

CONNECT with a Group

Come find a safe place for GLBT evangelical Christians to deal with issues of reconciliation and integration of your spirituality and sexuality. For up-to-date listings of EC groups or information on starting an EC group, contact the ECWR Regional Office 206.621.8960 or visit our website at ecwr@ecwr.org.

CALIFORNIA

EC Bakersfield
661.664.9464
ecbakers@aol.com

EC Laguna
ECLagunaOC@aol.com

EC Pasadena/La Crescenta
626.568.4803
818.951.9801 – Women's Group
ecsocal@aol.com

EC Mid-Peninsula
650.344.5162
ecsf@bigfoot.com

EC Monterey
831.646.1804
twf450@yahoo.com

EC Palm Springs
706.202.2795
ECpalmSprings@aol.com

EC San Diego
619.281.6256
ecsdiego@earthlink.net

EC San Francisco
415.820.7373
ecsf@bigfoot.com

EC San Francisco – East Bay
925.398.6540
mail@rickhocker.com

EC San Jose
650.344.5162
ecsf@bigfoot.com

denver-er@juno.com

MICHIGAN

EC Grand Rapids
616.452.7928

MINNESOTA

EC Twin Cities
952.423.7010
ectwincities@excite.com

NEW YORK

EC Inc. - New York City
212.517.3171
ecincnyc@aol.com

NORTH CAROLINA

RECNC (Reconciled Evangelicals
of North Carolina)
919.523.3332
reconcilement@yahoo.com

OREGON

DirECtions Portland
503.727.3387
503.281.2764
DirECtionNW@msn.com

PENNSYLVANIA

EC Philadelphia
215.860.7445
ecphila@juno.com

TEXAS

EC Houston
800.310.6718, ext BIBLE
houstonEC@hotmail.com

WASHINGTON

EC Seattle
206.721.6574
DNWseattle@aol.com

CANADA

EC Toronto
416.925.9872, ext 2207
ectoronto@hotmail.com

Continued from p. 3

an issue of personal lifestyle and well as ethical opinion, it is clear now that it is unrealistic to expect that I shall be able to engage in such a relaxed and objective consideration of the matter.

I know this letter will do nothing to dissolve your anxieties about me. My only plea is that there are times when a man must be true to himself if he is to stop being false to everyone else. It has taken me a long while to find the courage to do that. I am more of a Cranmer than a Luther when it comes to theological debate! But if I must face the flames of evangelical censure I am now ready for the heat.

With much love,

Roy

Final note:

In early September 1999, my wife and a small number of Christian friends decided that the possibility of my coming out? at some point in the future posed an unacceptable risk of scandal. As a damage-limitation exercise, a press release was therefore issued by the Evangelical Alliance in the UK, informing the secular media that I was gay. As a result, a half-page article and large photograph appeared in the London Times newspaper. ■

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES AT CONNECTION 2002

ConnECtion 2002 is a time of listening, learning, praying, praising, meeting new and old friends and connecting with GLBT Christians. One of the most memorable and moving events at conference is a time of remembrance and recognition of men and women, now deceased, who have been involved in Evangelicals Concerned over the years. If you have the name of persons who have been directly active in ECWR or any EC chapter, we want to know. During the Communion service on Sunday morning, we want to present the names, birth and death years, and a picture of our friends and loved ones. If you have information that you would like to share during the memorial service, please email Kathy Wilson for further directions as soon as possible. Her email is katooshka@aol.com and Kathy will provide you on how to send the information. If you have a photo or think you can find one, please let us know; it will greatly contribute to our memorial.

Take this list with you when you travel and visit other EC chapters.

ECWR CALENDAR

Womens Retreat, Chapman University, July 24–25

ConnECtion 2002, Chapman University, July 25–28

Fall Board Meeting, Sisters, OR Sept 27-29