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We Are All The Same

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Daylin Boatner

We Are All the Same

“Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.” “Adam and Eve, not Eve and Evelyn.”

Homosexuality, defined as sexual desire or behavior directed toward a person or persons of one’s own sex, had always been displayed to me as a bad thing. My family and fellow church members all had similar thoughts on people who are gay, and because I wasn’t exactly educated on the topic, I began to believe exactly as they did: that being gay wasn’t right. “Gays don’t believe in God.” “Gays go to hell.” “Being gay is a sin.” It all seemed simple to me; stay away from homosexuals. However, as I grew older my whole perspective changed. I began to question my parents, the church members, and my initial beliefs on the topic of homosexuality. I pondered the mistreatment of persons due to their sexual orientation, and I was confused as to why liking or falling in love with a person of the same sex was greater than any other sin. It didn’t register to me that I had been taught to hate people because of something so simple.

I attended Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet School, in Baton Rouge, and this junior high was nothing like what I had seen on television at the time. I never expected to encounter such a plethora of personalities all at once, nor did I expect to have to interact with homosexuals on a daily basis. I began to befriend homosexuals. I didn’t see any difference between them and me besides their sexual orientation. We liked the same music, had similar hobbies, and had so much fun together. These were my friends. They weren’t “the devil.” They believed in God as much as I did, which is why it baffled me that I had been previously told they did not. Because these were my friends, I invited them to my house for a sleepover, which was what teenagers typically did. On the day before the sleepover, in excitement, I began to describe my friends to my parents.

Mistakenly, I forgot not to mention that they were gay. My parents were not having it! The sleepover was cancelled. They yelled at me for making such a poor decision when it came to choosing whom I wanted to be friends with. They explained to me how I “am” the company I keep, and that if I hung around my friends, I would be classified as being gay also, even though I wasn’t. They reminded me of the Bible’s take on the subject of homosexuality, which is that homosexuality is a sin. I didn’t understand. Through my tears, I attempted to tell my parents how my friends were just like me. They didn’t understand. The following morning in the courtyard, I was forced to tell my friends about the events that had taken place the previous night. I had never seen so many sad and confused faces all at once. We could not interpret what was so wrong about being one’s self because that is what we had also been taught. But, how could one possibly be oneself in a world that judges us because of who we are? At that moment, everyone became hypocritical to me. My experience inspired me to research what exactly made “us” any better than “them.” I found the answer to be absolutely nothing. My pastor had preached for years about the subject but failed to mention that divorce was a more harsh sin than homosexuality in the Bible. My family failed to realize that discrimination and hate were also sins. They forgot that God expressed how we should love one another as our brothers and sisters, regardless of our differences. My friends remained my friends because they were exactly that--my friends. Their sexual orientation had nothing to do with me, and I vowed to myself that I would never again take on the beliefs of someone else about a topic without doing the proper research for myself.

After my experience in middle school, I no longer believed the ignorant facts directed towards homosexuals. I know plenty gays now, and although all of them may not be saints, neither am I. No one is perfect. We lead our lives according to what we believe to be morally good and bad based on the Bible’s text. However, I believe that people are often belligerent to

the fact that the Bible states, a sin is a sin. No one sin is bigger than another and after repentance, our sins are forgiven. I am now educated on the topic of homosexuality, and that alone has changed my entire perspective on what I had thought to be a deadly sin.