

IRIS ROBINSON - HER BEING ATTACKED FOR SEVERELY CONDEMNING HOMOSEXUALITY

Northern Ireland's First Lady, Iris Robinson MP, has come under fire for being vocal about her Christian convictions regarding homosexuality. She has been reviled for asserting that the Bible God condemns homosexuality. Like him, she says it is disgusting, unnatural and an abomination. She caused further rancour by declaring that gay people need psychiatric help and can be cured. This was in the wake of a homophobic attack on a young gay man in which he was left for dead. She condemned the attack and took refuge in the outlandish religious boast that loving the sinner and hating the sin is possible. However, sins cannot be separated from the sinner for they reflect the kind of person the sinner is. To hate the sin is to hate the sinner. Jesus commanded hatred for sin when he said we should prefer an eye gouged out than to sin with it – indicating that stress and upset are essentials for being a Christian. These things alone exacerbate the tendency to hate others.

If you want to be a member of a religion there are rules to be followed. You cannot for example become a Catholic if you don't believe in baptism. You cannot be a true Christian and believe that homosexuality should be respected. The Bible is clear that marriage is the only place for sex and Jesus condemned homosexuality by implication when he said that marriage was for one man and one woman for life. He allowed divorce for adultery but he never said remarriage was allowed. He said his sexual ethic was not easy. It is totally inconceivable that Jesus could have said anything different about homosexuality than what Robinson said. It is Christianity that needs to be opposed not Robinson.

No religion, no matter how abhorrent, deserves to be distorted. That is what people who say that Jesus preached love and equality are doing for they use this as an excuse for thinking he wouldn't condemn homosexuality as a sin. Are we being asked to think that just because it is wrong to condemn homosexuality that Jesus must have been pro-gay? That is foolish. Who is to say that Jesus or any religion should necessarily be always right or agree with us all the time? Every religion asks hard things of its followers and if people agreed with one another there would be no such thing as hundreds of religions. The Catholic believes for example that when he gets his baby baptised that the baby is being turned from bad into good by the power of the sacrament. A most unbecoming and uncharitable idea! If people don't like the teaching of a religion they know where the door is. They should start one of their own.

The personal attacks upon Robinson disturb me. They disturb me because they attack a person. What should be condemned is the religious and theological system she speaks for. To disagree is to say that she is like a dissident from Christianity. It is to pretend that Christianity is not homophobic. It is to give a protection and reverence to Christianity that can only be interpreted as counter-productive for gay rights campaigns. The idea that promoting gay rights is right therefore Jesus would agree with it is saying Jesus doesn't err so if he condemns homosexuality then he is right.

Only a saint could really love the sinner and hate the sin and Robinson claims to be a sinner – assuming it's possible to pretend that the sinner and the sin are not one and the same. We are justified in disbelieving her when she says she loves the homosexual and hates his sinful homosexuality. Take her at her word just for the sake of argument. Then she must love the attackers of the young man. They must be more evil in her eyes than the victim. They are in worse danger than he is for he didn't sin in being attacked and they did and all sin deserves everlasting punishment in Hell. So the attackers are to be loved more than the victim. Also, her condemnation of the attack has more to do with the theological opinion that Jesus has done away with God's laws that homosexuals who practice must be put to death by stoning than any abhorrence for the suffering caused to the victim. If I am wrong then why does she eagerly accept the vile Old Testament which lays down these laws as the writings of a perfect and flawlessly good God? The love of Christianity for the victim is unimpressive.

Until gay people get their name off Church records and divorce Christianity, they cannot say they are loyal to the cause of gay rights. They need to know what to fight - the system. A war that goes after the wrong target is doomed.