

Subject: newsletter Update

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Conversation: newsletter Update

HURRICANE KATRINA

What do I say to you about this terrible tragedy? I have been pondering it for the last few days and have not come up with an answer. I think, not only of all those who died, but now those who are dying for lack of food and water. What terrible suffering! I think about the mothers who have lost their children, or who can't give them a drink of water to quench their thirst. And I think of the elderly and the sick who are at the mercy of someone to rescue them, because they are too infirm to help themselves.

For the first time in my life, I have seriously thought about the possibility of us being in the End Times. I know that preachers have been preaching it for years, but I always felt that God wouldn't create, and put us on this earth for just a few thousand years. It just didn't make sense to me, but now I'm seriously questioning it.

"And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Luke 21:11

With the ozone layer being depleted and global warming increasing, disasters such as these can only continue and get worse. God help us all to be ready, and to pray for those we love, but also pray for those who are in power to stop the insanity of killing our Mother Earth for the almighty buck! The technology is there for alternative energy sources, but oil makes them more money, so the heck with polluting the planet as long as the rich can get richer – while all around, people are dying! It truly is insanity!

I have tried to make ChristianGays.com a website of optimism, but I could not neglect the toll of human life that is happening on our earth without mentioning it. I am at a loss as to what to ask you to pray for, because there is just so much need, but please do take a minute just now, and speak to God with whatever is on your heart about it.

Then please go to <http://www.consciousone.com/wisdomflash/WFView.cfm?PID=194> for a flash presentation on Inner Peace in this world of turmoil to give your heart some balance.

(Thanks Linda for directing me to this website!)

SEEKING INFORMATION – TRANSEXUALS IN IRAN

There is an article on the website about transsexuals in Iran. I have received a letter from someone in Iran who would like to get in touch with Dr. Mirjalali, the referenced surgeon, or his clinic, but we have been unable to find any contact information for him.

If any of you know how to contact Dr. Mirjalali, could you please let me know so that I may pass this information on.

BLACK GAYS & LESBIANS GAINING VISIBILITY ON NEW CABLE TV PROGRAMS

He won't be on the major networks this fall, but "Herndon Davis Reports," launching Sept. 1 nationwide on a DISH network channel, is a big step toward increasing the positive images of black gays and lesbian in the media, says Davis, author of the book Black, Gay and Christian and executive producer of the show.

Another show, "Noah's Arc," which features four black gay professional men as main characters is planned to debut in October on Logo, a gay and lesbian channel.

Other shows, observers say, are more frequently sprinkling black characters into the mix who are gay and lesbian.

On this Saturday Sep. 3 (tomorrow), we need audience members to participate in a taping titled "The State of Black Gay Atlanta."

Time: 11:00am Place: Sheraton Colony Square Hotel in midtown Atlanta Cost: Free Contact: zconway1@bellsouth.net for seating reservations.

Read more at: <http://www.blackamericaweb.com/site.aspx/bawnews/blackgays830>

CHRISTIAN RIGHT ONCE AGAIN BLAMES GAY COMMUNITY FOR DISASTER

By Archbishop Bruce J. Simpson, OSJB
OSJTB.ORG

Even though we have other examples of the right-wing fundamentalist Christian movement in the United States blaming the gay community for everything from Bushes receding hairline to the attacks on America by other religious fundamentalists, I am shocked that they have once again used a disaster to bolster their insidious attacks on the gay community.

"Repent America" one of the many whacko right-wing groups who claim to follow Jesus Christ as their God and savior, have issued a statement that states that hurricane Katrina was caused by the upcoming gay party in New Orleans known as "Southern Decadence." Although they profess a regret for the loss of lives, they say that God destroyed New Orleans on purpose.

"However, we must not forget that the citizens of New Orleans tolerated and welcomed the wickedness in their city for so long," Michael Marcavage, director of "Repent America" said. This line of thought follows the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in that God destroyed the wicked cities for being gay; a school of theological thought long discredited.

That any group of Americans would use this mega-disaster to further their poisonous social agenda is beyond words. These same Americans damn foreign terrorists for acting and stating these same kinds of things about Americans, while they themselves use the same tactics against fellow Americans. Terrorist groups continuously call Americans evil as well as a multitude of other adjectives. Is "Repent America" really any different when it uses this same language directed at other Americans?

What of all the fundamentalist Christians killed in New Orleans? Why did God give the gay community a week's notice to cancel the festival and clear out of New Orleans, so that thousands of gay men would not be killed? Did God look at the wrong month on his calendar or did he just not have his glasses on? How many gay bars versus conservative Christian churches have been destroyed by this disaster? Should we in the gay community infer that God is displeased with all the hate being preached in his name, and chose to strike down the heart of the Bible belt? Why not, it holds just as much water?

There is no law that these radical fundamentalist Christians who are every bit as dangerous as the Muslim fundamentalists, will not sink too when it comes to attacking the gay community. I believe in a loving God, and in his Son and the mission on which he came to earth and became man. I reject and disown the God of the Christian right as a false God likened unto a statute of a golden bull.

Those of you in the glbt community who believe in this same loving God that I believe in, can rest assured that it will not be you who answers in fear that question when asked: "And what did you do to carry out my greatest commandment which was to love

me and one another?"

For a humorous perspective of the Religious Right's accusations, please read "*Do Gays Cause Hurricanes?*" at <http://christiangays.com/humour/hurricanes.shtml> I think you'll get a kick out of it.

IN THE BEGINNING – The Story of the King James Bible (continued)

Excerpts:

By 1525, Luther was widely seen as the leading light of the growing movement for reform within the Western European church. His ideas were being debated and discussed across Europe. Two ideas can be seen as underlying both his critique of the Church and his proposals for reform.

1. The church had lost sight of the basic New Testament idea that salvation is given by God as a gift, not earned as a reward;
2. That the key to the reform and renewal of the Church was to put the Bible in the hands of lay people.

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The Old Testament was written in Hebrew (apart from a few sections in Aramaic), and the New Testament in Greek. The most widely available text of the Bible was a Latin translation known as the "Vulgate". The origins of the Vulgate lie in the translation work of some early Christian writers such as Jerome in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. For Jerome, it was important that the Bible should be available in the official language of the Roman Empire. The fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century did not, however, lead to the end of Latin as an international language. If anything, Latin became increasingly important as time progressed, and was well placed to become the language of scholarship and diplomacy when the so-called "Dark Ages" finally lifted over Europe around the year 1000.

Jerome's Latin translation now became increasingly important as a business proposition, as demand for the Bible in Latin increased. A twelfth-century syndicate of stationers in Paris reckoned they could make a quick profit by publishing – in manuscript form, of course – a Latin version of the Bible. It is this Paris version of the Vulgate that would go on to become widely used and accepted within medieval Christianity. When a medieval Christian writer talks about "the Bible", it is quite likely that it is this specific

Latin translation of the Bible that is being referred to.

Not everyone could read Latin; in any case, as Erasmus would make clear, there were some big problems with the accuracy of the Vulgate translation. In 1516, Erasmus declared that this traditional Latin translation of the Bible was awash with translation mistakes. Once Erasmus began his scholarly work in earnest, it did not take him long to expose problems with this widely used Latin translation. Convinced of the importance of studying the New Testament in its original Greek, Erasmus traveled to various libraries to take notes on the best Greek manuscripts of the original text. The outcome was devastating. The Latin text was shown to include seriously misleading errors in translation. Erasmus's solution was simple: he would point out these errors, and offer a new Latin translation of the New Testament, which would correct them. In 1516, he combined a single volume, the first printed Greek New Testament and a new Latin translation, based directly on the original Greek, which avoided the errors that had crept into the Vulgate.

I include this section to emphasize that there have been errors in translation of the Original Scriptures since the beginning. We have all been taught that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. I personally believe that to be the truth, but I think that we need also to be very aware that the translations into other languages may not have been inspired by God. Some translators did so from strictly a business perspective of making money. So it is essential that we understand the Original Scriptures if there is a discrepancy between the Original and subsequent translations, which has been the case with the interpretation of the verses regarding homosexuality.

For an explanation of each of the "clobber verses" used against us, please see Anita's ChristianLesbians.com website at <http://christianlesbians.com/articles/biblehomosexuality.php>

FAMOUS GAYS' BIRTHDAYS – Sept 1 - 15

September 1: Actress Lily Tomlin, 1939

September 7: Ice Skater Rudy Galindo, 1969

September 11: Novelist D. H. Lawrence, 1885

September 14: Literary and Social Critic Kate Millett, 1934

AOL USERS

I regret to say that AOL users are still not receiving any of my mail. I am therefore taking the drastic step of changing web hosts. I will try to do it with as little interruption as possible, but if you try to visit the site in the next week or so and encounter difficulties, please know that it is a temporary situation while I get everything up and running on a new server. Please pray that it will go smoothly and I will be able to figure out everything that I am going to have to do to get it all going again.

Thanks!

JOKE

The poor country pastor was livid when he confronted his wife with the receipt for a \$250 dress she had bought. "How could you do this!" he exclaimed.

"I don't know," she wailed, "I was standing in the store looking at the dress. Then I found myself trying it on. It was like the Devil was whispering to me, 'Gee, you look great in that dress. You should buy it.'"

"Well," the pastor persisted, "You know how to deal with him! Just tell him, "Get behind me, Satan!"

"I did," replied his wife, "but then he said "It looks great from back here, too!"

(Thanks Gray and Dennis!)

God bless,
Mary

Gay AND Christian? YES! It IS Possible!

<http://www.ChristianGays.com>

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Gay by God. Proud by choice!

If you have any questions or concerns, please write to Jan at jan@christiangays.com

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