

Family

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Research Council

Gary L. Bauer, President

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Dear Friend:

Early last month, I went to Harvard to give a speech on morality in foreign policy. It ended with an exchange on morality in domestic policy – an exchange I would like you to read. (A copy is enclosed.)

The moral issue I am talking about is one most public speakers fear – homosexuality. They fear it for a variety of reasons, some good and some not-so-good. No one wants to be heckled or shouted-down on a college campus by homosexual activists – people who answer even the mildest criticism of their agenda with rage, personal attacks, and often violence. Fear of that kind of response is understandable.

But many public speakers, including government officials, refuse to speak out for less understandable reasons. It isn't the vocal outrage of the activists they fear, but the scorn of the cultural elite – Hollywood, the media, and academics – whose favor they curry. And so they conceal their convictions, not only weakening themselves but actually inviting the ridicule of the activists who confront them.

So I went to Harvard, knowing that in ultra-liberal Cambridge, Massachusetts, a confrontation was possible, even if the reason for my visit was topics like Saddam Hussein, not same-sex marriage. Sure enough, as soon as my remarks were over, student after student approached the microphone not to protest my views on China and religious persecution, but to challenge what I have written and said elsewhere about the sadly misnamed “gay” lifestyle.

Believe me, I was tempted to ignore these questions. And there was a graceful way to do it, too. My hosts at the Institute for Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government had invited me there to talk about the missing dimensions of human rights and moral values in U.S. diplomacy. When the first question came from a young man who asked me how I could support “persecution” of homosexuals, my first urge was to dismiss it and say something like, “Thank you, but my subject today is the relationship between the vision of people like George Marshall and Ronald Reagan and America's role in the world today. If your question is on other issues, that's a debate for another day.”

Something inside me told me, however, that this was not the time for the easy response. Harvard is one of those cultural temples on whose thresholds too many conservatives now tremble. The homosexual creed is now well-established there. Though born in the early 17th century as a Christian institution dedicated to the spread of biblical wisdom, Harvard has deteriorated into a place where a same-sex wedding ceremony in the university chapel is seen as