

Special Edition: Concordia

Homosexuality And Heterosexuality In The Context Of the Christian Gospel

A Dialogue on Sex at Concordia

By Jessica Leatherman

On Nov. 7 Concordia University, St. Paul experienced something that it had not in the past; a discussion with panel members that were speaking on homosexuality and heterosexuality in the context of the Christian gospel. The panel included student Amy Abrigo, English professor Matt Ryan, and Director of Hoffmann Institute Dr. Rev. Mark Press, discussing their personal experiences with homosexuality and the Christian campus. President Tom Ries opened the discussion by stating, "Sexuality is a topic that is often difficult to discuss. At Concordia, we have a marvelous opportunity to have that discussion in the context of the Christian Gospel, a context often not available at other universities. This convocation was a first attempt to model a dialogue on the topic on our campus, and I anticipate that it will spur many more such discussions in the future."

• "We can choose to be curious, to experiment, or to ignore that attraction or passion we feel towards another individual, but just as we may have darker or lighter skin, female or male equipment, a higher or lower voice, the fact of being gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual is not a life-choice. It is not something to be fixed." (Amy Abrigo)

• "When diversity of viewpoint is celebrated, it becomes apparent that although not everyone has the same beliefs and customs, all good people have decency as one of their core values. If everyone at Concordia continues to practice decency, then Concordia will live up to its promise that all are truly welcome." (Matt Ryan)

• "Of all the topics that [the] church has dealt with (or decided not to deal with), homosexuality is one of the toughest. Our sexuality speaks to the deepest and most central part of who we are as man and woman...It is my hope that our conversations here at Concordia will assist each of us to live in God-pleasing ways, as people who have learned through His forgiveness to live as servants of those around us." (Mark Press)

A Biblical View on Sexuality

The Continuing Dialogue on Sex at Concordia

By Alicia Eckman

On Jan. 16 students, faculty, and a few alumni were treated to the second installment of the ongoing discussion of sex at Concordia. The second convocation, "A Biblical View on Sexuality," presented by President Tom Ries, was a continuation from the first convocation that occurred Nov. 7. The president opened his presentation by repeating what was heard back in November: "We have the opportunity, and are very lucky, for a great discussion at Concordia."

Ries outlined his 'agenda' for the discussion highlighting four key points of his talk: the Law and Gospel, God's design for sex, homosexuality, and what does it mean for us. Ries stressed the fact that, "There is no topic or question out of bounds here [at Concordia]."

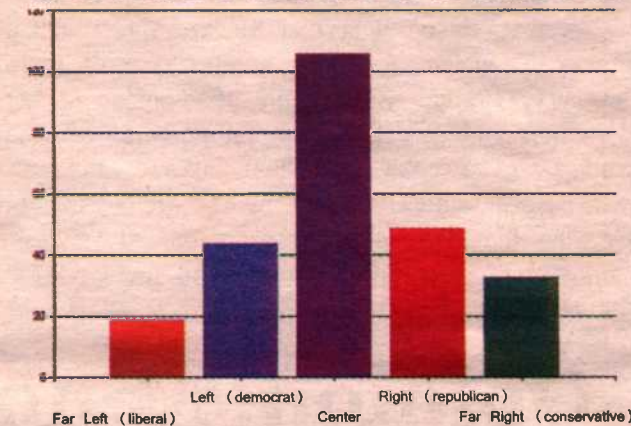
To support his (and Concordia's) belief of the design of sex, Ries stated Genesis 2:24-25. These verses state four specific criteria in God's design of sex: 1) Sex was designed to be between a man and a woman 2) Sex was designed for marriage only 3) Sex was designed for adults 4) Sex was intended to be a good thing. This criteria describes appropriate sexual activity, the president emphasized. Another piece of scripture Ries discussed was the entire book of Song of Solomon, exclaiming it was an "erotic love poem" about the beauty of sexuality and encouraged all to read it. His focus for this scripture was to point out the "grace of God runs through sex," supporting his claim that there are no questions or topics out of bounds at Concordia because the grace of God provides a "safe

Student Survey Results

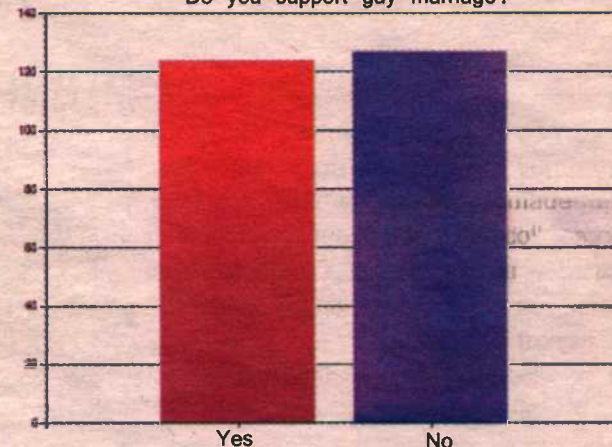
Do you support civil unions of homosexual couples?



In your opinion, where do you feel Concordia University, St. Paul, as a whole, lands on the political scale?



Do you support gay marriage?



To the best of your ability, identify where on the political scale you see yourself?

