Gospel LGBT Artists Proudly Come Out Rejecting the Church's Antiquated Homophobic Teachings

April 8, 2011 By Angel Mason

This morning after dragging myself out of bed, I stumbled into my living room and sat down in front of my computer in order to check my email. After wiping the sleep from my eyes, I was shocked when I read an email from BlackPlanet.com and Newsone.com disclosing the fact that DeJuaii Pace (a renowned gospel singer, a member of the famous Pace Sisters) had just announced to the entire world that she is a lesbian and has been suppressing her natural inclinations since the age of four. The article also mentioned the fact that she would be telling her story of how she had overcome her food addiction and had come to terms with her sexuality this Tuesday on the OWN Network (owned and operated by Oprah Winfrey).

As I finished reading the article, I immediately scrolled down to the comment section of the article (s) to get some type of idea as to what other reader's reactions would be, regarding DeJuaii's disclosure. I have to tell you that after reading several of the comments, my heart literally sunk into the pit of my stomach, due to the fact that the comments were filled with so much hatred and homophobic venom. The comments were so extreme until it made me ashamed to even refer to myself as a Christian! Nothing that anyone had to say even mirrored anything that looked, acted or sounded like the love of God! And the most offensive thing of all was that they did it in the name of Jesus, and felt justified in doing so! Anyone who knows anything about Christianity or the Bible will tell you that love is kind, patient, forgiving, not boastful, never arrogant, edifies and never destroys!

DeJuaii, like thousands of African-American children, grew up in a Pentecostal, holiness environment and any notion of even sleeping with a man before wedlock was completely out of the question and frowned upon by the Church in every way. If a young woman would come up pregnant, she would immediately be ostracized from the church and/or prohibited from participating in any aspect of ministry until she had come before the entire congregation to repent and ask forgiveness, possibly then, she could be reinstated.

Instead of DeJuaii, yielding to the temptation of sleeping with a male or a female (like most contemporary Christians do) she did something that most of us could never fathom, and that was to remain sexually inactive. Even today, at the age of 45, she is still a virgin.

Tonex, now known as B. Slade was also publically and ruthlessly attacked by his gospel peers, (and so-called brothers and sisters in Christ) after disclosing that he was a same-gender-loving Christian man. Almost immediately, other gospel artists (who had claimed to be die-hard friends and fans) began to venomously slander him and quickly distanced themselves from him. Furthermore, they could even be

heard in public arenas referring to him as a pervert, sexual vampire and heretic!

Ray Boltz, a renowned Gospel singer and composer, who sold about 4.5 million records before retiring from the Christian music industry a few years ago, rocked the Evangelical world after he disclosed to the world that he was also gay. Like DeJuaii Pace, Ray's life was plummeting into a valley of despair, and deep depression, and he almost committed suicide; the result of having suppressed his sexual preference for most of his life. In his own words Ray reveals the deep emotional trauma, mental anguish, and agony that he suffered for years while in ministry:

"I'd denied it ever since I was a kid," Boltz said, then 55. I became a Christian, I thought that was the way to deal with this and I prayed hard and tried for 30-some years and then at the end, I was just going, I'm still gay. I know I am. And I just got to the place where I couldn't take it anymore -- when I was going through all this darkness, I thought, 'Just end this! "

And that is exactly what thousands of children, teens and young adults have done over the past few decades, "They simply got tired of trying to change something about themselves that was a natural as their skin color or as an inherent as their musical gifts and abilities, which birthed some of the world's most anointed gospel music," - They just simply gave up and ended their mental and emotional torment by committing suicide! Had Tonex (aka B. Slade), DeJuaii Pace and Ray Boltz done the same, the world would have suffered a loss that they could have never recovered from or ever recreated! You see, we are all uniquely placed on this planet with a divine destiny and a divine purpose that only each of us individually can fulfill.

When the Ted Haggard and the Bishop Eddie Long scandal came out the entire Christian world was shocked and devastated after it was alleged that these revered spiritual leaders had been accused of engaging in gay sex. But if the truth be told, there are thousands of same-gender-loving people in the church (functioning in every aspect of ministry) and there always have been! Suffice it to say, if all same-gender-loving people would leave the church and/or refuse to participate in any aspect of ministry, hundreds, if not thousands of ministries would shut down!

Wednesday night, while in the midst of teaching Bible Study, I came across this marvelous scripture in the Bible, found in the book of St. John, Chapter 4, vs. 24

"God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [Him] in spirit and in truth."

Nobody in the world will ever be able to convince me that we are worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth hiding who we really are, in a closet of self-rejection and denial. Moreover, we do this because we fear being rejected by the world. Yet, I must admit that this is exactly what countless heterosexual Christians do all the time. They may not be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, but they sleep around with everybody and anybody which accounts for much of the spread of Std's and HIV in the African-American community today. They cheat on their husbands and wives, engage in unethical business practices daily and neglect their children. Yet, hypocritically, they are quick to point the finger at someone like DeJuaii, whom by the way is living a celibate and holy life! Makes you wonder just what is wrong with our ability to discern truth and walk in it.

On one occasion (in Biblical times) the people of the city brought a woman to Jesus whom had been caught in adultery, demanding that she be stoned. Instead of condemning her, Jesus quietly knelt down and began scribbling something in the sand. Many theologians believe that he was scribbling all the

names of the people in the crowd who had slept with her and were just as guilty; hoping she would be stoned to death so that their sexual involvement with her would never be publically revealed. After a few minutes the crowds dispersed having left their stones lying in the street.

Jesus, immediately arose and asked the woman this question, “Woman, where are thine accusers?” She answered by saying, “They are gone!” He responded by saying, “Neither do I condemn thee…”

The other night I sat in a dimly lit room devastated by the fact that one of my most beloved friends refused to participate in an upcoming musical Christmas CD project with me, solely because I am a gay man. But what is most astounding is that this same person has been married over four times and has slept with more women on the planet than any self respecting God-fearing Christian man would dare to claim in good conscience. Ironically, he still is not living a celibate life, even though he claims to be a die-hard Christian!

And even though I have experienced this type of rejection all of my life, I must admit that it still hurts when someone you love rejects you in this manner. I was able to recover from the rejection but that is not the case for many same-gender-loving believers in the church who sit there Sunday after Sunday hearing sermons that reinforce self-hatred and brainwash people into believing that the Creator does not love them. Moreover, I sadly wonder how many more people will jump off bridges, take overdoses, eat themselves to death or shoot themselves in the head with a gun before the church wakes up and truly learns to walk in love.

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