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RESPONSE

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Editor
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To the Editor:

I read letters like the one from Edward Howe, "Homosexuals do have a choice of lifestyles" (August 27) with great unease. It is this sort of "liberal" who poses more of a threat to the rights of lesbians and gays than do the vicious crusaders of the Far-Right; for while the latter are generally perceived as extremists and bigots, the former are taken as reasonable and knowledgeable spokespersons. And they are not.

Quoting and interpreting the Bible is a futile exercise since each person firmly believes in the infallibility of his own (or his preacher's, or his Pope's) interpretation of Scripture. Mr. Howe's statement, "God and I are in agreement," amply testifies to that.

Where he is in error is in his belief that "they" can change, if they really want to. I believe Mr. Howe is confusing superficial practice with underlying belief.

In a world which openly hates and persecutes gays, who would voluntarily choose to be hated and persecuted? If it were a simple "choice" no sane person would make such a choice.

It is to avoid this hate and persecution, and the attendant stress and anguish, that some gay people "attempt to change." But there is no evidence that anyone has actually changed from being gay to being straight through hoping it would be so. Such a person may stop practicing homosexuality, but that does not change the inner emotions.

Mr. Howe speaks for millions who hide their bigotry behind a veil of liberality and "understanding." It would be better for us all if Mr. Howe acknowledged his deep seated (and perhaps repressed) hatred, and helped the 10% of the population which is lesbian and gay lead open, happy, and, consequently, more productive lives.

Rick Rudy

8/27/86

Homosexuals do have a choice of lifestyles

I agree with Geoff Puterbaugh ("Letters," Aug. 15) that "Selectively read, Bible can prove anything." The Bible offers many principles for living life but fewer specifics, and it should not be interpreted purely in a literal fashion.

However, based upon Biblical principles, it is possible to provide in-depth counseling to those in desperate need, including homosexuals who wish to change lifestyles. Contrary to Geoff Puterbaugh's selective interpretations:

- The David and Jonathan of the Bible did not have a "homosexual love" but a deep brotherly love.
- The God of Christendom and I are

in agreement. We do not hate the homosexual, but we hate the sin of homosexuality.

• Our Christian God did not make homosexuals. Homosexuality is a lifestyle of personal choice.

We all have predispositions, but we are free to choose our own lifestyles. Just as the recovering alcoholic chooses to change his lifestyle, so the homosexual who comes to recognize that lifestyle as creating problems, as one of immorality, can change.

Homosexuals who have come to us *desiring* to change believe we love them, and they do change. Of course, this change must come as a free choice, without pressure and without

prejudice or condemnation.

As a long-term counselor, I believe that the so-called "evidence that is just starting to come in that homosexuality is inborn (inherited)" is incorrect. There is a world of difference between a predisposition and a binding inheritance without choice.

A person predisposed to athletics may have the genetic predisposition, but unless dedicated training (practice by choice) is undertaken, this gift will lie dormant. Ditto with alcoholism, homosexuality and consciously uncontrolled habits of any kind which involve compulsive, obsessive or addicted behavior. — Edward Howe

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