

Prayers & Praises

- **Praise God** for providing the resources to hold the Joshua Fellowship Summer Intensive again this year!
- **Praise God** for the finances to update aging computer system hardware.
- **Pray** that God would show up powerfully for the participants of the Joshua Fellowship Summer Intensive.
- **Pray** for the Outpost staff as we travel to, and teach at, RHN's HOPE2024 Conference in June.
- **Pray** for God to strengthen our connections with local churches as we seek to equip the Body of Christ.

Ministry Calendar

- **May 3:** Wendy spoke on an episode of Agape First Ministries' podcast.
- **May 18:** Wendy and Scott attended Agape First Ministries' Freedom United Conference, where Wendy spoke on ministering to Generation Z.
- **Jun 3:** Joshua Fellowship's Summer Intensive begins.
- **Jun 20-22:** Wendy and Scott attend RHN's HOPE 2024 Conference. Both will be leading workshops.
- **Jun 27:** 20th Annual Called Out of Darkness worship and testimony night!

Summer Hours

Due to upcoming travel and holiday demands, the Outpost office will be closed the following dates:

- RHN HOPE 2024: June 19-21
- Independence Day: July 2-5

Regular office hours will resume July 8. Check our website for the listing of our regular office hours.

Truth, Love, and Pronouns

By Scott R., Used with Permission

"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ."

Ephesians 4:14-15 NIV

Growing up, I never heard the word "pronoun" used very much. It was only ever used in English classes to distinguish referring to first-, second-, and third-person. That has since changed dramatically. Pronouns are talked about constantly. One of my grad school classes started the semester by having us introduce ourselves and, among other things, what our pronouns were.

The question of pronouns is the single most common question people bring up during Outpost seminars and trainings. Should I use someone's pronouns when I have known him/her from a long time or since he/she was a child? How do I address people I've just met when I feel like I'm getting conflicting messages about their identity? People feel very confused and scared. They are afraid to lose the relationship with someone, yet they want to adhere to what the Bible says.

I have a strong opinion about how to handle the pronouns issue, and I believe it is biblically based. I also know other smart Christians—some of whom have worked at Outpost—who have sought the Bible and arrived at slightly different conclusions. We are seeking to be true to God's Word, yet we land in different places. Talk about a tough subject!

Rather than attempting to assert my position on the subject, let's discuss how we can navigate the topic of pronouns. The Ephesians passage above talks about how Christians are to "speak the truth in love." I'd like to give you two questions that you and your church community should ask in order to understand what this passage calls us to do.

What does it mean to speak truth? Ephesians 4:25 tells us to "put off falsehood and speak truthfully to [our] neighbor, for we are all members of one body." Seems simple enough, until you reflect on the "members of one body" part. What does that have to do with telling the truth? Because humans are made to be interdependent in healthy relationships. And while this passage is speaking directly to Christians, why would this principle be different with those who do not yet know Jesus? Falsehood and withholding the truth from someone are actually dehumanizing because a person is no longer walking in light of reality. To live in a lie, whether generated by oneself or someone else, leads to crashing into reality with disastrous results. Being truthful,



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then, is more than simply communicating facts: you can be untruthful by being silent when you should speak up, or even by giving facts in such a way as to mislead.

It is also possible to “speak the truth” in a way that is not intended to help someone. An example is that you might be angry at someone and don’t actually care how the person feels; the “truth” you are supposedly giving is actually meant to punish the person and make yourself feel better. At that point, you are likely not speaking truth at all because of your sin and bitterness. In the end, truth you speak without compassion does not help someone engage with reality.

What does it mean to love someone? The word “love” is very charged in our culture. The LGBTQ-affirming phrase, “Love is Love,” can be found on yard signs and bumper stickers. Experiencing love is the ultimate need to us, and any attempts to squelch what a person defines as love is considered bigoted and hateful. However, is what the world calls “love” actually love? The Bible makes it clear what love truly is and where it comes from: “This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10 NIV). We understand how to love from seeing how God loves us. God’s love for us is not self-seeking; God doesn’t gain anything from loving us! God does not need our love and adoration, and we do not fill Him up or benefit Him in any way. Yet God loved us so much that He suffered so that we might be able to come into relationship with Him, a relationship of deep intimacy and joy. God’s love for us, then, is completely self-giving.

However, if 1 John 4:10 is true, that also means that God showed His love by showing us the truth of just how wicked and sinful we are. It is impossible to receive God’s love without embracing the hard truth of one’s absolute sin and condemnation before God. The Bible teaches that to truly love someone means that you ultimately seek what is best for them (see Ephesians 4:29 – 5:2). Yet God ultimately dictates what is truly best for human beings, not us. This is why the phrase “Love is Love” is completely non-sensical; you cannot define something by itself. Our culture says your feelings for someone, however destructive they might actually be to the object of your affection, cannot be squashed because it tramples on “love.” When we examine people’s motivations, however, we see that culture’s definition of love is actually confused with using someone else to benefit you. We love people because of how it makes us feel. Talk about selfish! Using someone to make you feel good is not love at all; it is objectifying and consuming someone. In order to pursue love in the truest

sense, one has to die to oneself for the ultimate good of another. Sometimes, that love requires really hard conversations and pointing out painful realities in a person’s life. Love sometimes requires crossing another’s will. To avoid hurting someone in the name of “love” can actually be the most unloving thing to do sometimes.

Truth and Love. I hope you notice something odd about what I’ve just shared between these first two points. I haven’t been able to write about truth or love without talking about the other. The reason is simple: truth and love aren’t really separate issues or ways of doing things. As one preacher has put it: truth without love is not really truth, and love without truth is not really love. If someone “speaks the truth” but doesn’t have love, the person doesn’t care about the other person receiving the truth. Likely, the speaker is bitter or angry, hoping to punish the other person by cutting him/her down. On the flipside, you cannot truly love someone who is sinning by ignoring the sin and destruction in that person’s life. Granted, you may not be the best person to point out the other person’s flaws or behavior. However, to see someone who is rebelling against God and wish that person a “happy” life is to wish that person to hell. In short, truth and love and more like two sides of the same coin than they are different ways to relate to someone. To emphasize one over the other is to lose both.

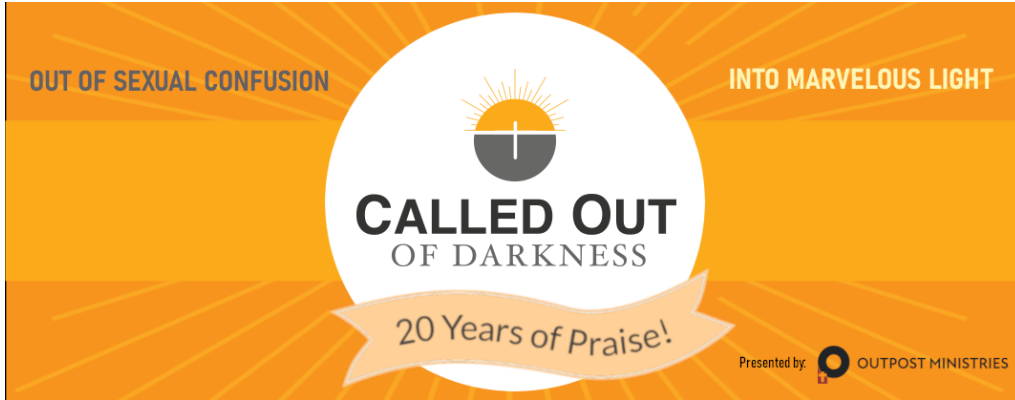
Conclusion. The issue of pronouns is complicated and nuanced in many respects. I hope, however, that what I have shared here can be a good starting point for you as you approach both this topic and your relationships. Without engaging with these questions, we cannot truly love those who are struggling with or identify as LGBTQ+, and we cannot meaningfully share the truth of God’s extravagant grace and love. The question now remains: what are you going to do with this information? I urge you to go before God and see how you need to relate with the LGBTQ-identified people around you. This is also a subject that should be discussed in a safe community of believers, those seeking to follow Jesus at any and all costs. We also have an extended version of this article on the Outpost website where I unpack several more dimensions of this topic, so make sure to check that out. My prayer is that all Christians would grow in humility, grace, love, and courage as they put their hope and identity in Christ alone. May we as the Body of Christ grow in being compassionate without compromising as we ourselves receive God’s truth and love for us!

Scott

Outpost Ministries was originally formed to meet the needs of men and women following their convictions and seeking freedom from unwanted erotic same-sex attractions. Since then, our ministry has expanded to offer teaching, encouragement and support to individuals, families and churches impacted by all forms of sexual and relational brokenness. We are located in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area of Minnesota, but our ministry reaches throughout the Upper Midwest.

Outpost News/Letters from Outpost is published 11 months a year and is sent free upon request. An annual donation of \$30 is appreciated to cover printing and postage costs. An electronic version is available through our website.

NEWS AND NOTES



Be sure to join us for the 20th annual Called Out of Darkness Celebration!

Called Out of Darkness is Outpost Ministries' annual celebration giving testimony of God's power to bring people out of the darkness of sexual confusion and into the marvelous light of Christ. This year, we are once again celebrating God's stories just before the Minneapolis Pride Festival gets underway.

Thursday, June 27 • 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Calvary Church, Golden Valley, MN

For over 47 years, we have been ministering to men and women seeking freedom from all types of sexual and relational brokenness, including sexual and gender confusion. Jesus has been faithful to bring freedom and transformation time and time again. For 20 years, we have gathered to celebrate with worship, testimonies, and prayer. Come again to hear our stories and celebrate freedom in Christ!

Called Out 2024 is sure to be an evening of passionate worship, inspiring testimonies and heartfelt thanksgiving to the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).

There is no cost to attend and no registration is required. Come as you are and bring a friend along with you. Be sure to plan to stay for a little while after for cookies, lemonade, coffee, and fellowship.

Hope to see you there!

Financial Update

We've had a busy year so far, and thanks to many of you, we've been able to meet all our obligations. As you can see in the graph, while we are behind on income overall, the deficit of the 1st four months will be covered by a major donation pledge. Additionally, due to the focus on creating resources to share with churches and individuals, we've been able to save on overall ministry expenses, meaning we have only needed to spend about \$2700 from our reserves. Praise God for His marvelous provision!

We do have some capital expenditures coming up over the summer as we replace aging technology resources. We've had some designated gifts to help cover those costs, and we will be dipping into our capital reserves to pay for the rest.

Finally, it seems the summer giving slump has already begun, a little early this year. We know the cost of living is increasing, and many of you are making adjustments. Every gift, regardless of size, does matter in the upcoming months, so please consider helping us to minister steadily again this year. Many blessings to you, *Wendy*



Call for Volunteers: Help with Called Out

We will need plenty of volunteers to help us with final details, set-up, and clean-up both now and the afternoon and evening of the event.

A full list of opportunities is available at signupgenius.com using the link bit.ly/2024CalledOutHelp Please consider how you might be able to give a hand.

If you have questions about Called Out or what's required to volunteer, please call the office at 763-592-4700 or email events@tcjhop.org.



There is a lot going on behind the scenes as we build relationships and plan for the next round of Living Waters. If you struggle with any kind of sexual or relational brokenness and are ready to experience more of God's healing and freedom in your life, then Living Waters is for you! Or do you know someone who is struggling in their own life? Invite them to check us out!

Contact the office if you have questions or would like to be informed once signups start. We don't want anyone to miss out!

Let's stay connected!

Return the slip on the back with your gift and/or a note to our staff. You can also use it to update us about any changes to your address, email, or phone number.

If you would prefer, follow the link in this QR code to donate using our secure online form:



Thank you and God bless!

ON: Office Use Only

Last Four _____

Date _____

Staff: _____



Mail to:
 PO Box 22429
 Robbinsdale, MN 55422

of all donated funds. No goods or services are provided in connection with these gifts unless otherwise noted.
 Act. Contributions are solicited with the understanding that Outpost Ministries has complete discretion and control over the use
 Outpost is a ministry of the Twin Cities Justice House of Prayer, which is incorporated under the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation

Signature for Credit Card Authorization: _____
 I authorize Outpost to charge my credit card for the above amount. Should I choose to change or cancel this transaction, I will contact the Donor Relations Manager within 24 hours at 763-210-2636 or donations@tcjhop.org.

Charge my Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express _____
 Check Enclosed _____
 To support the ministry of _____ (List staff name or other designation)

Here's my gift of \$500 _____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ Other _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

PLEASE CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ / _____
 STAFF WILL SHRED THE BOTTOM PORTION OF THE FORM TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY
 CVV (3 digit code): _____



Inside

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- Interested in Living Waters?

OUT OF SEXUAL CONFUSION INTO MARVELOUS LIGHT

OUTPOST MINISTRIES presents

CALLED OUT OF DARKNESS

20 Years of Praise!

An evening of worship, prayer, and testimonies of overcoming sexual and relational brokenness.

Thursday, June 27, 2024 • 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Calvary Church Golden Valley
 7520 Golden Valley Road

SAVE THE DATE

Silent Auction

brunch, gala and auction event

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TCJHOP OUTPOST MINISTRIES