

God's Love Language

Robert A.J. Gagnon, Ph.D.

God has done so much for us. Through Jesus he has put us in relationship with himself, not for just a moment but for eternity. He is in the process of freeing us from the tyranny of skewed sexual desires, one day to be completed with resurrection bodies. What can we do for him?

Jesus instructed his followers to regard as the “first” commandment (Mark 12:29-30) what Jews of his day knew simply as the Shema, a Hebrew word meaning “hear,” which introduces Deut 6:4-5. Translated from the Hebrew it reads:

**"Hear O Israel: Yahweh<sup>1</sup> (is) our God, Yahweh one (i.e., Yahweh alone). <sup>2</sup> You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."**

Everyone has a love language. What makes one person feel special (deep verbal communication, flowers, jewelry) may not have quite the same effect on another.

What is God’s love language? Deuteronomy 10:12-15 clarifies: God's "love language" is that his people keep his commands. He wants them to do this, not slavishly or mechanically, but with all their hearts in gratitude for his mighty deeds of deliverance. And he wants them to do this in the knowledge that keeping his commandments is for their own good.

**"So now, O Israel, what does Yahweh your God require of you? Only ... to love him, to serve Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, to keep the commandments of Yahweh your God . . . for your own well-being."**

Let us resolve, in keeping with Jesus’ words to us, to make our chief end in life to love God with our whole being, above all else. Let us strive to obey his commands for our sexual purity, and for all other areas of life, not just because we have to do so. Let us obey in the heartfelt belief that such commands are for our own good (after all, God loved us first and gave his only Son for us). And, most of all, let us obey him from the heart because this is the best way that we can show God our love for him. These are the “flowers,” the sacrifice, pleasing to God’s heart.

<sup>1</sup> Greek translations generally replaced the divine name “Yahweh” (meaning either “He will be [who he will be]” or “He brings into being [or: creates],” for example, heavenly armies) with the word *kurios*, meaning “Lord,” out of reverence.

<sup>2</sup> Most scholars recognize that the word “one” here is to be taken in an adverbial sense: “Yahweh is our God, Yahweh *alone*.” Zechariah 14:9 speaks of a day when "Yahweh will become king over all the earth; *on that day Yahweh will be one and his name one*" (i.e., all people will then worship Yahweh alone and invoke only his name).

Robert A.J. Gagnon is the world's leading theologian on the topic of [The Bible and Homosexual Practice](#), (Abington Press, 2001), his tome on historical evidence and scripture. Robert was on the forming committee of Restored Hope Network and currently serves on RHN's Board of Advisors. He is professor of New Testament Theology at Houston Baptist University. You can learn more about Robert at [RobGagnon.net](#).

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Anne Paulk, Executive Director

HOPE2021 was held online in June and was a powerful time of people sharing their life stories, wonderful teachings from Dr. Nancy Heche, Andrew Comiskey, Alex McFarland, and Dr. Andre Van Mol. Dr. Van Mol's teaching was full of important information about the transgender movement of our day.



Our keynotes were joined by Joe Dallas and Linda Seiler to present live breakouts; additional breakouts were pre-recorded. You can easily watch them on our YouTube channel. Feedback afterwards and chat during the event showed that people were very engaged with the life stories and the teachings.

We were delighted to give Karen Rogers a lifetime achievement award on behalf of her husband Sy Rogers. Alex McFarland was presented our Champion of Hope award, and Carol Wagstaff won the Best New Healing Resource for



parents and family for her book, Reclaim, Restore, Rebuild. My thanks to our friends who joined us Friday afternoon--Pastor John K. Jenkins, Elizabeth Woning, Dr. Ann Gillies, and Dr. Michael Brown.

"Pray Away" Response

I have been busy sharing the love of Jesus in response to the Netflix movie as we have had a bunch of mean notes, emails and messages on social media. You can check out a few responses on Facebook.

Happily, we have also been able to help more people as they seek for help. I recorded three video responses (on our YouTube channel) alongside Joe Dallas and Elizabeth Woning to the movie. Although harassment increased, this gave us a chance to respond with God's love and appeal at the same time.







A brand new ministry to call prodigals home has risen and was initiated by Kenneth Jung, Brian Owyong, and David Fisher called HomeComing Global. I was glad to accept their invitation to join their Board of Reference. I am also thrilled to support Mastering Life Ministry as a member of the Board of Directors, producer of Pure Passion videos and much more.

**New Member: Spiritual Mentor Steve Goble (NC)**

Steve joins us with much experience supporting others. He spent 15 years as a Living Waters coordinator and worked closely with Dean Greer (Desert Stream Ministries). His church is a tremendous support for his ministry and his overseeing pastor says that "Steve is remarkably intentional, compassionate, and accessible." Welcome Steve!

**Amazing Love Event/AACC**

In September, His Wonderful Works held their 3rd Amazing Love Event in the Atlanta area. What a privilege to join with my brothers and sisters in Christ to proclaim His wonderful works in our lives, celebrate with worship and enjoy fellowship together. Individuals testifying were many groups including Changed Movement, Freedom March, Restored Hope Network, and local friends in the southeast of the US.



A few days later, I headed to Orlando for American Association of Christian Counselors which was a wonderful time for our team to network. It was great to reconnect with counselor friends, minister to and provide resources for Christian counselors, attend breakouts, and deepen relationships with other RHN leaders--Maria, Wendy, Phil, and Dan.

**Speaking Engagements**

In August, I joined RHN's Faith, Hope, Love Ministry to present to their largest yet gathering of parents online; Mike Davidson and Dr. Laura Haynes UK's video podcast Thinking Gay: Is Counselling Harmful?, spoke at Duncan Heinly's group in Florida and gave radio interviews to Moody's In The Market with Janet Parshall and others.



In October, I will be speaking at The Ambassador's Forum online apologetics conference, Freedom March in West Palm Beach, FL, giving a podcast interview with Joe & Renee Dallas, sharing with X-Out-Loud's UK group online, and several other things. As usual, I am involved in conversation with medical and family policy groups.

**HOPE2022**

We are excited to host HOPE2022 at Ridgecrest Conference Center (NC) for June 9-11, 2022. This IN-PERSON conference will be held for three days in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Wonderful keynote speakers--Tamika Sanders (Coming Out Global), Jeff Simunds (Tower of Light, Board Member of Restored Hope), and Dr. Julie Hamilton, LMFT, will join us. Registration opened October 1st. We anticipate special times of fellowship and worship that are long overdue!



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**FEATURED MEMBERS & AFFILIATES**



**Pure Heart Ministries**

Jim Venice, Director  
Saint Peters, MO

Our primary purpose is to lead those desiring sexual and relational wholeness into a liberating relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We provide confidential pastoral care/Christian counseling and discipleship, support groups, and informational and educational presentations for the body of Christ.



**Jason Thompson, Director**

Portland Fellowship offers:

- Family and Friends support, RSVP [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)
- Online support for those with unwanted same sex attractions: [www.takingbackground.com](http://www.takingbackground.com)
- Online youth support with unwanted same sex attractions: [www.reachtruth.com](http://www.reachtruth.com)



Eric & Amanda Lundstrom, Directors  
Rockford, IL

Hope2Turn is a ministry to individuals with same sex attractions who are in search of healing and are desiring to walk in a manner that is pleasing to God.

**MEMBER NEWS**

**Higher Ground - New York, NY** Congratulations to Peter and Higher Ground NYC as the ministry prepares for its 13-year anniversary.

**Jennifer Thorne, Pastoral Affiliate - Missoula, MT** Jennifer is starting up a Living Waters support group in the Missoula area this fall. An exciting opportunity for Montana and eastern Idaho.

**Ginger (Haan) Stahl, Pastoral Affiliate - Aurora, CO** Ginger helped create Assembly of God's ReStory Ministries, equipping AG church leadership in areas dealing with LGBT. Also, congratulations to Ginger on her recent marriage!

**FEATURED RESOURCE**

**Restoring Sexual Identity**

by Anne Paulk

Restoring Sexual Identity offers answers to the most commonly asked questions from both homosexuals desiring change and friends and relatives of women struggling with same-sex attraction.

- Is lesbianism an inherited predisposition or is it developed in childhood?
- Does becoming a Christian eliminate all desire for members of the same sex?
- What support is available for women who struggle with lesbianism?
- Can a woman be a lesbian and a Christian at the same time?
- How does childhood sexual abuse relate to the development of lesbianism?

These and other important questions are answered as the author draws from her own experience and that of many other former lesbians who participated in an extensive survey on same-sex attraction.

