

Brokeback Christianity

22 January 2008 ... Hollywood actor Heath Ledger died, aged 28.

By B. MICHAEL BIGG

BUT why do I mention it? Not because he was a Christian (I wouldn't know). Not because he advocated Christian values (though I don't know enough about him to TRULY comment). But because, three days later, at a client's office, the talk was not about mourning Ledger's death so much, as the unchristian and hypocritical comments by (supposed) Christians and Christian groups.

That Ledger was a popular performer is undeniable. And equally undeniable is the controversy behind the 2005 movie, and performance he gave in, *Brokeback Mountain*—about the “coming out” and twenty year relationship of homosexual cowboy Ennis del Mar, played by Ledger. That Christianity and the church in general criticised the movie is, or at least should be, a ‘given’. That Ledger was criticised for undertaking the role is not surprising, nor, I'm sure for Ledger, unexpected: controversial and/or varying roles seemed to be Ledger's preference.

Since Ledger's death, there has been the sacking of (previously) well respected US radio host John Gibson, who mocked “Heath's role in *Brokeback Mountain* by replaying audio clips from the movie, he also called Heath a ‘weirdo’ with ‘a serious drug problem’, as well as suggesting reasons Heath might have committed suicide—when suicide had not been confirmed as the cause of death.”¹

Also making headlines around the world is US-based Westboro Baptist Church, “a Kansas-based congregation infamous for its demonstrations outside funerals for US soldiers killed in Iraq”², who have released a statement concerning the actor.

“WBC will picket this pervert's funeral, in religious protest,” the statement said. “God hates the sordid, tacky bucket of slime seasoned with vomit known as *Brokeback Mountain*—and He hates all persons having anything whatsoever to do with it. Heath Ledger is now in Hell, and has begun serving his eternal sentence there.”

In a later interview, church spokeswoman Shirley Phelps-Roper told Fox News³ that the demonstrations would be limited to memorial services held in the US.

“He [i.e. Heath Ledger] got on that big screen with a big, fat message: God is a liar and it's okay to be gay” Ms Phelps-Roper said.⁴

Though, as a Christian, I do not agree with homosexuality—as the Bible prescribes—and would like to see advocated that point of view, there are better ways of saying it than the way Westboro Baptist Church have done. In today's politically-correct western society it is unpopular to reject or criticise homosexuality, with the slur “homophobic” being bandied around and applied to any and all who dare try—irrespective of WHAT they actually say.

Homophobia, by definition of all phobias, is a fear of homosexuality ... well I'm not afraid of it, I just don't agree with it. I think it wrong, and the Bible says the same thing. But this is the point; this is a “battle” for society; it is a battle for perspectives; and a battle for opinions.

The pro-homosexual camp openly demand that their opinions and perspectives be respected—and regarded as being true and the only correct one—and allowed to be taught in schools and accepted in public, and yet, in the most blatant epitome of hypocrisy, criticise anyone and everyone who disagrees, or has a different perspective, and seek to belittle, badger and crush all known opposition. Doesn't anyone see the hypocrisy? Give an inch, they take a mile. Where once it was their cry to have the right to their opinion, they, today, deny that very right to those who disagree—and somehow society blindly agrees. Hypocrites!

That God hates homosexuality—from a biblical and Christian perspective—is just a plain fact. Just as he hates murder, adultery, fornication, theft, etc. Whether Heath Ledger is in hell now—is a moot point. Unless people realise what “sin” is; unless they realise (from a biblical perspective) what is right and wrong, and can recognise that they are estranged (separated) from God because of their unholy, unrighteous, sinful and polluted lives (as we all are); and recognise that Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross as a sin offering (taking their punishment for their sin upon Himself and being estranged from God), then they are eternally doomed. Everyone is in the same boat.

Do I think, as some seem to suggest, that Heath Ledger's death was a direct consequence of his pro-homosexual point of view—not at all. We are all going to perish. It is just a question of how and when. How many “innocent” children have died—at such a young age—as to not even know right from wrong, or commit a “sin”? Thousands. Are their deaths the consequence of their sinfulness? If, yes, then how come I'm still alive? Rather, as with Heath Ledger, yourself, friends, families, acquaintances and strangers, let us consider a report that was given to Jesus, and his reply.

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish”.

—Luke 13:1-5 NAU⁵)

Criticising Heath Ledger in order to “advance” Christianity is a delusional idea ... and certainly not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All it does is get today's post-Christian atheistic society offside. They know what Christians and Christianity are supposed to be. It's just a shame we (well, me, anyway) aren't very good at it.

1 Shocking: more homophobic attacks on Heath. WWW page. <<http://celebrities.ninemsn.com.au/?blogentryid=62949&showcomments=true>>, 25 Jan 2008, cited 25 Jan 2008.

2 Hate Group to picket Ledger's funeral. WWW page. <<http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/story/0,26278,23100710-10388,00.html>>, 24 Jan 2008, cited 25 Jan 2008.

3 <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,324966,00.html>

4 Shocking: more homophobic attacks on Heath. WWW page. <<http://celebrities.ninemsn.com.au/?blogentryid=62949&showcomments=true>>, 25 Jan 2008, cited 25 Jan 2008.

5 NAU. New American Standard, Updated 1995.