

The Queer Hypocrisy of Religion

As the years progress, the world grows ever more accepting of those who identify themselves as part of the LGBTQ+ community, beginning to leave the hatred and bigotry of the past behind. However, that does not mean that LGBTQ+ no longer are victims of prejudice and discrimination. In recent weeks, the parliament of Georgia has signed an anti-LGBTQ+ bill into law.

This bill has sparked outrage throughout the LGBTQ+ community as this bill 'gives authorities the *right* to ban Pride events and flags and bans gender-affirming care and LGBTQ+ people's right to adopt, as well as the ability to nullify same-sex marriages performed on Georgian territory.' ([Billson, C. \(2024\) Georgia's parliament speaker signs anti-LGBTQ+ bill into law](#)). This has raised an ethical conundrum as from both sides of the debate the argument of *how far freedom of speech can go before it becomes unethical* can be justified. Many ethicists and philosophers would argue that freedom of speech should only extend to the point where it begins to affect others negatively. Looking at this bill from that perspective, it becomes evident that the bill negatively affects those who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community as it restrains them, therefore causing them to be able to live their lives and access opportunities in the same way heteronormative individuals do. From the perspective of those of religious belief who pushed for the bill to be legalised, they could also argue that the freedom of speech of those from the LGBTQ+ community is harming them negatively.

Due to this bill being passed the Georgian Orthodox church has been able to further the discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community by hailing the LGBTQ propaganda ban. Their argument to justify this action is that most Georgians are opposed to sexuality due to their strong religious beliefs. As in the bible it states 'If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.' (*Leviticus 20:13*). Despite some Christians growing more accepting of homosexuality, the Georgian orthodox church is still holding on to their beliefs and traditions. The patriarchate of the Georgian orthodox church stated 'an important and decisive step to protect the traditional values that determine the identity of the *Georgian nation*.' and that this legislation is 'a positive step forward' ([Christian church hails 'LGBTQ propaganda' ban \(2024\)](#)). Christians often preach the idea of '*love thy neighbour*,' however in this case it can be perceived that this teaching is being subsided and ignored. This raises many questions, which includes whether the bible is in fact outdated. Many religious philosophers would argue that an omnibenevolent, omniscient God firstly would not allow any hatred to be brought down on his creation, for example this bill that will undoubtedly cause harm and even the deaths of many LGBTQ+ individuals. Secondly an omniscient God would not contradict themselves in their own writing as the quote from the bible on homosexuality is taken from Leviticus which is in the Old Testament. The Old Testament God is known for bringing down his wrath, however this version of God is then put in contrast with the New Testament God who preaches forgiveness and agape. One could argue that this is highly hypocritical, which explains the hypocrisy of literalist Christians. This then links to the argument of whether faith and abstention from thought are interconnected, because if they were that would then mean that those of religious belief who have discriminated against others may not be ethically moral. Croce states

'Every faith is the product of a rational process, even when the process has led to belief in a revelation or an authority' (Croce (1967) *The Conduct of Life*). This implies that faith can be deemed individual as it is dependent on the thoughts of the person. However, this is not to say that there are not persuading factors that would cause an individual to think in such a way. For example, if a child were raised in a Catholic household by parents who were opposed to homosexuality, the likelihood is that the child would also be raised with such morals, whether these morals will stay with them is a different question. However, according to Croce, faith is a product of thought which indicates that faith is not the problem, the people are, which is a common belief amongst modern day man.

This debate can be argued back and forth extensively, but the main thought is that from a religious perspective the anti-LGBTQ+ bill is a display of the people rather than the church itself. The idea is that faith is a product of thought implies that the bill has nothing to do with church and religion but everything to do with the individuals' oppositions against homosexuality. This ties nicely into the philosophical and ethical perspective as if the individual is expressing prejudice and discriminative views upon others under the justification of the church then that individual would be deemed immoral. Hence, making them ethically wrong, to further exemplify this point, the individual could then be deemed a sinner in the eyes of God since they are using their faith for selfish gain and bringing harm onto others.

Furthermore, the anti-LGBTQ+ bill that was established in October 2024 can be deemed equally harmful from both perspectives. From a philosophical standpoint, the bill can restrict the freedom of speech of both parties, if it hadn't been signed it would negatively affect the freedom of speech for the followers of the Georgian Orthodox Church, as they would feel pressured by the LGBTQ+ 'propaganda' whereas now that the bill has been legalised the freedom of speech of the LGBTQ+ community has been restricted. From an ethical perspective, the anti-LGBTQ+ Bill is morally unjust as it targets a minority and will cause more harm than good. Finally, from the viewpoint of religion, both sides can be justified, however through religious philosophy, the notion that faith is a product of thought questions the validity of the arguments a religious person can make regarding the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill.

Bibliography

(Billson, C. (2024) Georgia's parliament speaker signs anti-LGBTQ+ bill into law).

(Christian church hails 'LGBTQ propaganda' ban (2024)).

(Croce (1967) The Conduct of Life).