

# David Myers

A soft-spoken psychology professor and an elder in the Reformed Church in America, David Myers seems an unlikely person to



be calling on conservative Christians to welcome same-sex marriage for the good of everybody. But with coauthor Letha Dawson Scanzoni, that's what he does in his new book, *What God*

*Has Joined Together? A Christian Case for Gay Marriage*. Myers, a scholar at Holland, Mich.'s Hope College, has himself been married—to a woman—for 41 years and has three children.

**What makes your book different from other arguments for same-sex marriage?**

Because of our conviction that gay marriage would be good for the institution of marriage. The world would be a happier, healthier place if sex, love, and marriage were part of the same package for all people. Our book speaks from within the faith community—ground zero for the cultural war over sexual orientation.

**So why is there a cultural war over gays?**

I scratch my head a lot trying to figure that out. The Bible has 31,103 verses. About seven deal with same-sex behavior, and biblical scholars argue about what those really mean. Why don't people of faith focus on the 99.9% of the verses about other important themes, like love and how we treat the poor? They don't because they're starting with their own emotional reactions and then finding justification for that in the Bible.

**Indeed, some like to compare same-sex marriage to marriage between a person and a dog, or a piece of furniture.**

That sort of talk causes us in the church pain because that does not represent the faith that is here. I hope people can read this book and see a different Christianity, one that is not hostile to gay and lesbian people.

**What's been the reaction to the book?**

I live in Holland, Mich., [in] one of the most Republican counties in the United States. It's on a different planet than San Francisco. This book has been a front-page story in the press here. People aren't happy with it. They haven't even read the book, and they're not happy with it. I'm told that our [college] president's office is getting angry phone calls. People are worried about our physical safety. But this is like what gay people living in hostile environments have endured for years.



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**So why are you jumping into the fray? Do you know many gay people?**

I have gay colleagues. I have gay neighbors who are active in my church. But the book is not written for a personal agenda or because I have a gay child or something like that. That's not the case. My upbringing and assumptions were where the conservative right is today. That's the culture I came from, so I understand how they think and feel. [My coauthor] Letha and I can reach these faith communities in a way that *The Advocate* never could. We don't pretend to speak for gay people. They're quite capable of doing that themselves! [Laughs]

**What should gay people understand about conservative Christians?**

That people of faith have a great appreciation for marriage. If gay marriage becomes available, I hope gay people will truly contemplate it as a possibility and appreciate stable, enduring, committed relationships.

**What should conservative Christians understand about gays?**

That sexual orientation is not chosen and cannot be changed.

—Interviewed by Patrick Letellier