



TRANSCRIPT – Day 1

For Faith & Family with Dr. Richard Land

Guest: Dr. Stanton Jones
Co-Author: *Ex-Gays?*

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This is a rush transcript. It is not in its final form and may be changed.

HAROLD HARPER: In a culture which insists that science has declared homosexuality to be normal and unchangeable, it is refreshing to hear clear voices that are not afraid to challenge conventional thinking. Stay tuned as today's guest presents new research that honestly examines if changing sexual orientation is possible.

STANTON JONES: The remarkable thing is there isn't a single scientific study showing change to be impossible, and if you ever understand the logic of scientific inquiry, it would actually be impossible to conduct such a study.

HARPER: Hello, and welcome to For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. I'm Harold Harper and today on the broadcast, our special guest is Dr. Stanton Jones, co-author of the book, Ex-Gays?. Dr. Jones is the provost of Wheaton College and a professor of psychology. Let's join Dr. Richard Land as he welcomes our guest.

RICHARD LAND: This is Dr. Richard Land and we are visiting today with Dr. Stanton Jones. He has written, along with Mark Yarhouse, a very, very controversial book; a book that I believe anyone who has anyone within their circle of influence who is ministering to homosexuals or who has homosexuals within their circle of influence or circle of acquaintance, as I suspect almost all of us do, I certainly do, they need to read this book, Ex-Gays?: A Longitudinal Study of Religiously-Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation. Dr. Jones, welcome to For Faith and Family.

JONES: Thank you very much, Richard, for having me. I'm honored.

LAND: First of all, tell us a little bit about yourself.

JONES: I'm a clinical psychologist by training. I became a Christian in high school and so I was a Christian throughout my training, but my training has exclusively been in non-religious settings. I was trained in the area of human sexuality almost by accident along the way in my doctoral training and came to Wheaton College in 1981 and have spent my

entire career here. I spent fifteen years in the Psychology Department, helped to build our doctoral program in Clinical Psychology, which is accredited by the American Psychological Association. Then twelve years ago I moved into an administrative role at Wheaton College as the provost or academic vice president of the college and have enjoyed that role of leadership here at the institution but have kept my fingers involved in doing research and writing in the area of human sexuality and some of that work being in the area of homosexuality.

LAND: Well, we appreciate your being with us today and, let me just say for our listeners' sake, that you have a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Texas A&M University. I suspect that means that you are a native Texan.

JONES: That's right, born in Dallas and raised in Austin.

LAND: Well, as am I; born in Houston and raised there. So, we have both started out understanding the meaning of blessing because we were born in the Lone Star State and got to live there. And then you have an MA and a PhD in Clinical Psychology at Arizona State University, did an internship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and in the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi. For those few people who are listening who might not know, Wheaton College has often been called the Harvard of evangelicalism, or I would prefer to say, the Princeton of evangelicalism, being a Princeton graduate, but, really, has had a sterling and impeccable reputation as trying to meld together biblical values and rigorous scholarship.

JONES: That's right. That's really what drew me here, Richard, was I found that in my graduate training, I often times was the lone Christian trying to figure out how does this relate to the claims of scripture, since the early days in my Christian faith, believed in the scripture is God's authoritative revelation of his truth and relevant to everything, Christ's Lordship extends to all of creation, and so, I was constantly asking questions about how to bring my faith to bear on the subject matters that I was studying and so I had the wonderful experience of coming to Wheaton and finding for the first time really in my academic and intellectual life, a place that held the highest standards of intellectual endeavor, but also, and more deeply, first was founded on a commitment to exercising the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of life. So, I came here and felt like I had come home and it has been a great place to spend the last twenty-seven years.

LAND: Well, for our listeners who would have no way of knowing this, we had the opportunity to have fellowship together on a trip to Germany and, as you know, I told you then, I almost went to Wheaton. I came very close. It came down to the last day when I had to decide between Wheaton and Princeton and the Lord led me to Princeton and, looking back on it, it was the right decision for me, but Wheaton, of course, is the alma mater of Billy Graham and so many other giants in the evangelical Christian faith over the generations and it must be exciting to know that you were training people who are going to be really future influential and significant leaders within evangelicals.

JONES: You are giving my speech to new faculty that we were recruiting. I just finished an interview where we were screening incoming possible faculty candidate and one of the

things that I like to say is that, you know, God can raise up leaders anywhere, but proportionally, you have more of these young people who are capable who are going on to incredible leadership whether it is in the church in theology, in science, in politics, in business, in the domestic world, in any area that these are just incredibly capable young people and it is a honor to serve them.

LAND: Well, I'm sure it is, I've been there several times to visit and it is a very exciting and a beautiful place. I actually think it is a little more beautiful when it is not winter time but I have an aversion to cold weather that comes from having been reared on the gulf coast, but you have written a new book, Ex-Gays?, along with Mark Yarhouse, A Longitudinal Study of Religiously-Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation, and this is not a book that is for those who have any problem with attention span. It is 414 pages and I think that is very important because it has got the documentation and the data and I think that it is important, particularly when you are going against the popular culture's wisdom as you do in this book, it is important to have that documentation. Now, how did you come to take up, I mean, human sexuality is still a fairly controversial issue in evangelical Christianity. I mean, I know that Tim and Bev LaHaye sort of broke the ice with The Act of Marriage, and Ed Wheat's Intended for Pleasure, but you know better than I that this is still a fairly controversial issue and an evangelical Christian view concerning human sexuality is certainly a topic of white hot controversy in the culture at large. So, what led you to this?

JONES: Well, in some ways Richard, getting the training in the first place that prepared me to do things as a psychologist was almost accidental. My doctoral advisor in my graduate program had her first area of expertise was depression, which was the main area I was interested in, but her secondary area of interest was a treatment of sexual dysfunctions and, in grad school you often study what your professors are interested in. It's just the politic thing to do and so I got drawn in. I didn't anticipate that I would wind up teaching in that area at Wheaton College at the Graduate level, but I will say that one of the things that drew me further into this subject matter, oh, I will actually mention two things. One, in terms of our broader writing about sex education in the family, I had the naïve view, not having had much Christian influence directly in my family of origin, I was under the vague and naïve impression that Christian families handled the area of sexuality wonderfully well, simply because they were Christians. When I came to Wheaton, what I discovered among my students was these wonderful Christian students had often times grown up in wonderful Christian families but families where the topic of sexuality was simply off the table; they could not discuss it, and that students were ill-equipped to grapple with this highly divisive, highly controversial subject matter. So, I found the great enrichment in teaching in this area and exploring it. What I found was that there were tremendous resources in the Christian tradition for thinking rigorously and well about human sexuality that, while there is much that is distorted in this area, we, as Christians had nothing to fear about coming in and having something to contribute. The thing that grabbed me that drew me in the direction of writing about homosexuality was particularly that, now we are talking back in the 80s, I was beginning to see how the social sciences and the supposed scientific findings about sexuality were being used like a bludgeon against the church. The church was being, in a sense, beaten into submission

saying, you can't stand by the traditional moral teachings of the church because all of those moral teachings have somehow been overturned by the findings of science. I was enough in touch with the primary findings of science to be completely dumbfounded that these claims were being made because I would see these distorted summaries of what science actually said, followed by completely illogical applications of those supposed findings. So, in the contemporary world, the classic example is science teaches that homosexual orientation is completely genetically caused and, therefore, the churches moral teachings about homosexual conduct are illicit. Both parts of that argument are completely wrong. The scientific evidence about genetic causation is much more confused and partial and suggestive and inconclusive than what people think. The findings do not have the power that people imagine them to have and then the application to the moral case is equally unfounded logically. So, that dynamic, I began to see that I had some skills by virtue of my social science training to go in there and look at some of the primary scientific literature and try to get a better sense of what actually science can tell us. I do believe that science can be quite helpful but, the way that science is being used as a political tool, not as an issue of dispassionate inquiry, is really quite distressing.

LAND: Well, it is and, you know, I used Jeffrey Satinovers' book, Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth in a course that I teach in our seminaries on modern ethical issues. I was a little surprised by the reaction of the students, they were angry. They were angry, why hasn't somebody told us this before? Because, as you know, Satinover just eviscerates this idea that there is some kind of a gay gene. His conclusion is gay science is neither gay nor science. I mean, it's a devastating argument. Dr. Jones, tell us in a nutshell, what's this book about.

JONES: I just mentioned the causation issue. There are really two big areas of these kinds of stark claims. One is that it is genetically caused; nobody has any choice and it is all biological is one set. The other set is, change is impossible. What really struck me in my early reviews of the literature was there literally have been dozens and dozens and dozens of studies, many through the fifties, sixties, seventies, even trickling into the eighties, where psychologists attempted to modify through the techniques that they use, attempted to modify sexual orientation and those studies consistently report that homosexual orientation is a challenge to change but there was always some level of success reported. Sometimes it was a quarter of the people that went through the process, sometimes it was a third, up to a half of the people, reporting significant change. Then we go through a period where hardly any of this research is being done because it is politically non-favored and there is no funding for it, and so forth. Then, somehow as we begin to move into the late eighties and early nineties, the claim begins to be made over and over and over again that change is impossible. Even more strongly the claim is argued that science has proven that change is impossible. The remarkable thing is there isn't a single scientific study showing change to be impossible. If you ever understand the logic of scientific inquiry, it would actually be impossible to conduct such a study to prove that change is impossible. So, how can people even make that claim? Well, one is the anecdotes of individuals who say, I tried to change and, in fact, I thought I changed and then I discovered that I hadn't changed at all and I thought for a while I was gay, then I was ex-gay, and now I'm an ex-ex-gay. We have to take those anecdotes seriously. I

mean, there are people who go through precisely that trajectory but the existence of a few anecdotes like that doesn't prove that change is impossible.

LAND: One of the smartest things I ever heard a professor tell me is the plural of anecdote is not data.

JONES: That's exactly right. I think the other thing that began to occur is all those studies that previously stood as suggestions that change was possible for at least some people is that those studies became under withering criticism and, indeed, they were strong enough to be published in the scientific journals of the day but they are not superb studies and one of the particular gaps that began to emerge in the literature in this criticism, in this barrage of criticism, is that nobody had gone through the length of actually following people over long periods of time to look at the stability of the change process. So, somewhere along the way, Richard, we began to see that the claims that science have proven that change is impossible, there simply is no such data supporting those claims, but, it is a reality that we didn't have strong studies following people over long periods of time and so Mark Yarhouse and I began to examine whether we might be able to do such a study. We were blessed to have an affiliation with Exodus, a friendly relationship with Exodus. Exodus is a national and international umbrella organization that seeks to help people change through faith-based means to change sexual orientation. We approached Exodus and asked if we might study their population. One of the things I need to say is that studies like this are expensive to do and the only place, we tried for funding from several non-religious foundations and they just looked at us like we were crazy, so in the end the only way we could get the funding was from Exodus itself. They agreed to fund us and we said from the beginning, look, we want you to understand that we are going to accept this funding, but we are not for hire researchers. We are going to publish whatever we find; if we find that zero percent of the people that we test change, that's what we are going to publish. So, in short summary, Richard, our study is the first ever attempt to follow over a long time frame, individuals who are seeking change through a religious organization as they seek to change their sexual orientation.

LAND: You know there are really a couple of things that the politically-correct in this society want to shut down all debate on, really there are three that I can think of. One is evolution, and the Darwinian theory of Evolutionary origins and they act like an inquisition against those scientists who argue for intelligent design. The second area is in the area of climate change. They want to shut down all debate on the causes and the extent of global warming. The third, and perhaps the most vigorously and viciously enforced is they want to shut down all debate on the question of homosexuality and whether or not people have a choice in their sexual orientation and whether they can change that preference. So, I understand, Dr. Jones, when you said in the first chapter that you acknowledge that you anticipated that you were stepping into the very eye of the perfect storm, explain that to our listeners and what's been the response to the book?

JONES: The perfect storm was our discussion that, you know, quite a number of people of faith disagree about these issues and I am an evangelical Richard, and you represent the Southern Baptist Convention and the world of evangelicalism and we are pretty firm

about that sexual ethic, but, of course, the mainline churches are getting ripped to shreds over these issues right now and it is an extreme difficulty and our society is in great debate about it. The topic of sexual orientation itself is highly politically charged. What's more, our study is working at this interface of imperial science and religious faith and the very idea of bringing those two together is controversial as well. Add that into the mix that here we are as explicitly religious individuals trying to follow the best canons of appropriate top notch empirical science, and you just have the mixture of a highly volatile concoction so, the reaction to the book has actually been very interesting. Again, let me back up just slightly, our goal originally was to publish with a top notch non-religious publisher. We wanted to publish our book, our results as a book, because the results are sophisticated, the methods are sophisticated, we wanted to lay out the whole argument in a way you could never do in a journal article because there is just not sufficient space. So, our goal, many of the great studies in human sexuality and in all of social science have been published not in journals, but in books; so, we wanted to publish with a non-religious publisher, as I say. We actually retained a top notch literary agent who worked the streets of New York for almost a year trying to get someone to accept this manuscript. Frankly, no one would.

LAND: I'm shocked. This is like trying to find somebody who would publish Galileo.

JONES: That's right, and so, as a result, we turned to our old and dear friends at Intervarsity Press, a very respected Christian publisher, but in terms of the reaction of the book, word began to get around the gay advocacy world about two months before the book was published, but a pre-emptive strike began to develop in certain parts of the world. There's this research coming out, you can't trust it, these guys are biased researchers, they made fun of our institutions, they called Mark's affiliation at Regent University, they called it Pat Robertson University and just called Wheaton a tiny fundamentalist Bible college, and we were held up for personal ridicule and so forth and so on.

LAND: You always know they are losing the argument when they turn to that kind of stuff.

JONES: That's right. So, I really would segment the response to the book in three categories. First of all, the Christian world has been very kind and very interested. There has been lots of attention to the book in the Christian media and I think the book has had an impact in that area. The second area I would describe is this sort of world of gay advocacy. In those contexts we have been just eviscerated on multiple blogs and web sites and so forth in such a way that the folks who might be inclined in that world to at least take a careful look at the book have just ignored it. The third world that I would describe is the solidly academic world and, as best we can tell, nobody is paying attention in that world because, not to invoke Al Gore's phrase, it is an inconvenient truth. But there has been enough evisceration in the gay advocacy world that people look at it and say, hmmm, Intervarsity Press, Religious Researchers, not sure I need to take this seriously, and so it is being ignored. Interestingly, there is a recent parallel, well, I wouldn't call it parallel book, but there is a lesbian researcher named Lisa Diamond who

is at the University of Utah who has published a book with Harvard University Press, of all things. She has been doing something somewhat akin to what we have been doing; she has been following a group of eighty-five lesbians for almost a decade. She is publishing her research showing that a subgroup of the lesbians she has been following have converted to heterosexuality over time and her research is actually making an in-road in the secular world but, because of what we are studying, Exodus, because of our affiliations, we have not yet cracked the attention of the secular academic world—which is a shame.

LAND: It is. It is, but you know, shoring up the position in the Christian world is a good start because everywhere I go, I mean, let's face it, in the year of our Lord 2008, you can't go into any evangelical church of any size, and there aren't people in that church who have family members and loved ones who are struggling with this issue.

JONES: That's right.

LAND: And so, it is a real ministry to start there and to, you know, make sure that all the players that are wearing your color jersey know the plays and know what their assignments are in the struggle for the high ground in this culture. Well, Dr. Jones, we've got a lot more that we need to talk about. Can you come back again tomorrow and be with us again?

JONES: I would be delighted to.

LAND: That would be wonderful.

The apostle John told us in his gospel that knowing the truth would set us free. There are countless individuals struggling with same-sex attraction who are not free at all. The mental health community tells them they can never be free, but that is not the truth. It is possible for homosexuals to change their sexual orientation.



TRANSCRIPT – Day 2

For Faith & Family with Dr. Richard Land

Guest: Dr. Stanton Jones
Co-Author: *Ex-Gays?*

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This is a rush transcript. It is not in its final form and may be changed.

Hello, welcome to For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. I'm Harold Harper and today on the broadcast, Dr. Stanton Jones returns to finish a discussion he began yesterday with Dr. Land, on his book, *Ex-Gays? Now*, Dr. Jones is the Provost of the Wheaton College, as well as a Professor of Psychology there. He and Mark Yarhouse, a Professor at Regent College, have completed a rigorous three-year study on people who desire to change their sexual orientation. Let's join Dr. Land as he welcomes back our guest.

RICHARD LAND: This is Dr. Richard Land. We want to welcome you to For Faith and Family. Again today we have as our guest, Dr. Stanton Jones, who is a provost, fancy word for academic dean, at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. He is the co-author, along with Mark Yarhouse, of *Ex-Gays? A Longitudinal Study of Religiously-Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation*. This is a very important scientific study that comes up with startling results that contradict the flat assertions of the American Psychological Association, which is the professional association of psychologists. Welcome to For Faith and Family.

STANTON JONES: It's great to be with you, Richard, thank you.

LAND: Stan, before we go into the book again today, tell us about your own personal spiritual journey.

JONES: I'd be glad to. I grew up in a home where we were part of the mainline church, I think my parents are people of faith and they are very definitely vibrant Christians today, but, somehow the faith connections did not work for me as a young person and so, I went through a period in adolescence where I fancied myself to be an atheist or an agnostic and I was really into the science thing. I saw science as what was going to save the world, and then really through the faithful witness of some loving Christian folks through Young Life and Fellowship of Christian Athletes, I was led to commit my life to Christ as a

senior in high school and, since that time, I've been following a path of, I hope God has been leading me into deeper realms of faith with Him, attempting to be faithful. So, it has been a blessing to serve at Wheaton College in that context.

LAND: Now, the American Psychological Association has said on their public affairs web site, that the question is, "Can therapy change sexual orientation?" and the answer is "No. Homosexuality is not changeable." Now, that's the kind of absolute truth claim you would not expect from the scientific community and I'd like for you, at this point, to put your scientific hat on and explain to our listeners the concept of falsificationism.

JONES: Okay, that's the first time I've been asked that in a radio interview. You've caught me cold, Richard. That will be a delight to do that. I always think in terms of black crows when I think of falsificationism. In science, even though we know that crows are black, you can never actually prove that all crows are black as a universal claim because no matter how many crows you tally, a dozen crows, a hundred crows, a million crows, a trillion crows, there can always still be an off-black crow somewhere around the corner, but what science can do is it can take a theory like, all crows are black, and it only takes one non-black crow to disprove the theory. So, in science, often times what you are doing is not so much trying to produce positive evidence for theories as you are trying to disprove bad theories. So, what you often times are doing is pushing theories to their limits and finding those places where they are weak. So, what makes this claim really rather incredible is the fact that such an absolute claim, as you said, goes up on the web site of a scientific organization. Now, if I can just point out, Richard, at the end of the interview yesterday, you asked me about the impact of the book and I said in terms of its impact in secular academia, it has had very little that we can know of to date. I will say this, the web site that used to say this, homosexuality is not changeable, it was an emphatic claim, is no longer up on the American Psychological web site.

LAND: Ah ha.

JONES: Now, we know that some copies of our books have made it into APA. We know that discussions about this issue have gone up. What is up there now is still very discouraging but it no longer contains this absolute claim at all. It simply says things like, the possibilities have changed by therapy are not well substantiated, and so forth, and the risks are substantial. But there is now a more nuanced claim up, which, I think has got to be in part as an effect of the study that we did.

LAND: I think you're right. It's interesting when you get scientists, particularly behind closed doors; they are a little less certain on some of these issues than they appear to be in public. I think that you are doing something very important; you are taking on untruth on their own terms, with their own language, and their own disciplines. At some point they have to listen to that.

JONES: One of the things that we were really striving for in the book, Richard, was just to make reasonable accessible discussions and examinations of this for the public. You know, science is really understandable by the public if you just take the time to explain

what you are doing. One of the things we wanted to do in this book is to examine past research and the various claims that are made to examine them in a reasonable dispassionate way and try to make our arguments in a methodical and accessible manner. Could I just give your audience just a quick summary of what we actually found?

LAND: Absolutely. Let me identify you again. This is Dr. Stanton Jones. He is the provost at Wheaton College. He is a psychologist and he has written, along with Mark Yarhouse, a book entitled, Ex-Gays? A Longitudinal Study of Religiously-Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation. So, shoot.

JONES: The distinctives of the study is this phenomenon of following people over long periods of time. We wanted to do some things that had never been done before. First is following people over a long period of time. Secondly, is to catch people early in the change process and follow them rather than catching people who say, oh, I changed twenty years ago. Here's what I remember about it. Thirdly, we wanted to use some of the best standardized measures of sexual orientation and psychological distress and things like that, so we went to many of the great journals in the field including *The Journal of Homosexuality* where much of the pro-gay literature studies are published and so forth. We used the measures that gay researchers themselves are using. So, those are some of the markers of our study. Then, we picked people up, a group of almost one hundred subjects early in the change process and followed them over approximately three years, as reported in the book. I would mention, by the way, that we still continued to gather data and are still analyzing, we are hoping the next stage is going to be publishing a study of a six to seven-year time frame. Here in essence is what we found. Approximately a third of the population, as we followed them, didn't change substantially or actually went in a sense backwards in what Exodus would view it, and re-embrace the gay lifestyle. So, about a third report, I gave up on that, I am now gay, or another subcomponent of that third said, I didn't experience change, I don't know what I'm going to do next, or I'm just totally confused but I didn't experience change. About a third of the population report that they made significant gains in distancing themselves from homosexual desire and towards heterosexual interests but they did not regard the changes they made as achieving what they saw as success. In other words, they made some progress but where they are at is not a good enough place that they are ready to stop in that change process, and so, we are particularly interested in continuing to follow those people. But the final third were people who, by their definitions and the definition of Exodus, achieved what they regard to be success. The success actually took two different forms and this is one point of significant controversy for the study, and that is that one type of success is what most people would agree is definitely success, and that is, conversion to heterosexuality. These are people who said, I ceased being gay and I am now heterosexual. That was about 15% of our population. It is important for your listeners to understand that for these people, their conversion to heterosexuality is not uncomplicated. For instance, one of the things that critics say is, well, show me that those people never again experience a homosexual desire. Well, that's not what these people are reporting. What they report is that they no longer consider themselves to be homosexual, their homosexual desires are no longer so powerful or potent that they shape or mold their daily experience and that they are experiencing significant ability to function in heterosexual relationships. Many of these

people are married. The other success group that was slightly larger, 23% of our population was what we called success chastity. These were people who distanced themselves from their homosexual desire but are now living as single people who say, my homosexual desires are no longer dominant, they no longer control my life, I am now able to live as a Christian single person and I don't have to have overt sexual gratification to find satisfaction in my life. My religious faith, my life with friends, gives me joy and blessing and I consider that to be a success. I would much rather be here than back in the gay lifestyle. One final thing I would mention about our findings, Richard, it is common for critics of the change process to say not only that change is impossible but to say that the attempt to change is harmful. There are, in fact, you know, some anecdotes that are really deeply distressing of people who get deeply depressed when they try to change and those anecdotes are real. But the anecdotes can also be exaggerated for political reasons to discourage people from the attempt to change. So, we were interested, what happens to these people in terms of their psychological distress as they go through this process, particularly it should be the case that if the attempt to change is harmful, that the people who continue to attempt to change should get more and more psychologically distressed as time goes on. What we found was that that was not the case. Psychological distress levels didn't change very much as people went through the process. The people who kept at the change process did not get more distressed and, so, while this doesn't disprove that certain individuals might experience distress or difficulty as a result of change, on average, the group did not become more distressed as they attempted to change.

LAND: Dr. Jones, what percentage of your study would be people who were people of religious faith?

JONES: Because we were looking at people who were already involved in Exodus, the vast majority of them, for instance, well, over 90% of them said flat out, I am a born-again Christian, that's what is motivating me. The vast majority of our subjects were people of faith. The methods that they were using to change always were thoroughly integrated into life of the faith. One of the things, by the way, Richard, that we can't say from our study, we cannot exactly say what allowed those people who changed to change. Because we wound up picking up subjects from a variety of different Exodus groups and the Exodus groups are not all the same; some of them really emphasize more charismatic faith healing elements, many of them emphasize education, they emphasize group support, they have different approaches in different groups and there are certain things that hold them all together. They all look at homosexual action as sin. They regard this as something that God does not have for them. They all seek healing from God. They all use prayer and so forth, but the emphases differ from group to group.

LAND: Now, you and your co-author are both evangelical Christians, and you both approach the study with the best scientific methods and with a scientific background. There are plenty of people who suggest that science and religion are at war with one another. But your study would certainly stand as an illustration that that is not necessarily the case.

JONES: As a quick response, I would say, first of all, historically the idea of warfare between Christianity and science is almost pure myth. In reality it was Christianity that set the standard, set the foundation for science to flourish because Christianity demystifies the world. It believes that God created the world and gave the world its separate existence. It also believes that because God is rational, that His creation is going to bear the imprint of a rational mind. We also believe that while God reveals truth by revelation, God also gives us minds and sets us free to do something creative in the world to study the world. So with that and many other philosophical backgrounds that flow straight out of Christianity, it is notable and significant that science has flourished more in Christian cultures than any other cultures in the world, though many other cultures have also contributed things of value. What we brought, as evangelical Christians, into this study was, first of all, a commitment that God honors truth; that whatever else is the case, and Christians should not lie about reality. So, we are committed to pursuing the truth. We also felt a certain freedom, Richard, in approaching this subject in that I think that what Christians have to be committed to in terms of our moral absolutes is a belief that homosexual conduct is immoral and that it is always possible for people who commit themselves to lives of faith to live lives that honor God. The future of Christianity isn't in a sense dependant on showing that homosexual people can become heterosexuals because God always holds open a path of chaste singleness for people. So, God is a God of truth and we can study this and publish what we find.

LAND: Dr. Jones, a couple of questions as we come to the close here. Do we know what causes homosexuality?

JONES: We absolutely do not. I feel that there is conclusive evidence that it is not all biological, but that doesn't mean that biology isn't involved for some people. So, I really genuinely feel that Christians can look forward with anticipation to what science is going to show in terms of the possible contributions of biology. But we need to know that that is not going to fundamentally change our moral structure because there are lots of contributions of biology to all that is good about humanness and all that is broken about humanness. Take, for instance, the addictions. There seems to be some pretty strong evidence these days that some people are more inclined toward addictions than others, but does that mean that addictions are not a moral issue? Well, absolutely not. Life is not a level playing field. You don't have the same proclivities to certain sins that I do and God holds me morally accountable for what I do as He holds every human being morally accountable.

LAND: That's exactly right. We know that there is a biological genetic predisposition toward alcoholism for some people, but we don't give people a free pass to become alcoholics.

JONES: That's right, that's exactly right.

LAND: And there's a good deal of evidence that in the heterosexual world, there is considerable difference in the, how shall I put it, sexual motivation of heterosexuals. That

doesn't mean if somebody tends to be a little revved up in that area that we give them a free pass to be promiscuous.

JONES: Exactly right.

LAND: Now, this brings me to my next question and that is talk to us about the very important and seldom understood distinction between homosexual desire and homosexual behavior.

JONES: That would be great. Let me just add one more thing on the causation thing before I do and that is to say that there is a lot of emphasis on the biological causation evidence right now and there is a down playing of the reality that there is lots of evidence that non-biological factors, family factors, cultural factors, environmental factors, play a role. We could go on for a half hour about that, but there has been huge studies of populations showing that things like broken families, absence of fathers, contribute to this, as well as the experience of early sexual abuse. There are lots of these environmental factors. There is no one cause of homosexuality. There are lots of factors that feed in and there is so much that we don't know. Now, about the difference between desire and action, I think it is very important to distinguish; orientation is in a sense a proclivity to experience certain kinds of desires, and I don't think Christians should deny that people differ in terms of what their sexual appetites are directed towards. On the basis of our orientation, we experience desire. We are not the helpless puppets of the desire we feel. So, for instance, in the contemporary world right now, we are seeing an explosion of promiscuity and sexual addiction. In part it is because we are saturating ourselves as a society with sexual stimuli. We are feeding the beast, so to speak. We don't decide autonomously what desires we feel but we influence what we desire by what we expose ourselves to and what our culture throws at us. So, orientation sets the stage for desire and desire sets the stage for action. It is very significant to me that in scripture what is condemned is homosexual conduct and, so, God, in a sense, looks at the end of the chain and says, don't do these things. He also paints, I think, a picture of what He intends for us and by doing so, He sets us on a path of trying to sculpt our lives to head in the direction that He holds up of one of beauty and health and I think there heterosexual marriage is a standard of the fulfillment of what He wants when it is experienced in the blessed form He intends. But we also need to remember that by the witness of the Lord Jesus Christ himself and the apostle Paul and others, that living as a single person is also a path of beautiful expression of what God intends for our lives.

LAND: At the conclusion of your book you have a section that says, "What We Did Not Find." Talk to us about that.

JONES: We have had some Christian commentators about our book who take it in directions that we explicitly don't want them to go; so for instance, one of the arguments that is made is that if anybody can change from homosexual orientation to heterosexual orientation, then everybody can change. We would want to argue from a scientific basis, but also from a Christian basis, that that is not necessarily true. The fact that one person can make the jump doesn't mean that everybody can.

LAND: But they all can resist homosexual desire as believers.

JONES: Let me put it really bluntly, if someone comes to me and says, look, I struggle with homosexual orientation, what does your book prove to me and what should I do as a result? What I would say to that person is, look, if you're a Christian and if you embrace the traditional view as taught by the Scriptures that homosexual conduct is wrong, then I think our book says to you, you should pursue healing. You should do so with open hands wanting to receive what ever God will give to you. I would argue to you as a Christian on the basis of scripture that the minimum that God will give you is a life of release from homosexual desire driving everything about your existence, being the cornerstone of your identity. God will provide for you the opportunity for chaste singleness and you can live a life where your life is defined not by your sexual desires that you don't want, but rather by the contours of your living relationship with Jesus Christ. But, in addition, God may grant you enough release, and our study proves that it's possible, that you may be able to move in the direction of heterosexual experience and the embrace of relationship with a person of the opposite sex and possibly marriage, so, pursue God with open hands ready to receive what He will give you, what ever it is, it will be a life of goodness and blessedness.

LAND: Well, Dr. Jones, I want to thank you for taking time to be with us and for having the courage to pursue this research and to publish it, and I know my listeners would want me to ask you this, how can we pray for you?

JONES: Well, at this point and time, thank you very much for asking that. At this point and time, I would say to pray for the impact of the study in the scientific world and as we prepare our analyses for the next phase and continue to follow this subject population, pray for us that God would allow us to give voice to the truth, and that would be the greatest gift He could give.

LAND: Thank you so much for being with us today, Dr. Jones.

JONES: Thank you, Richard. It's an honor to be with you.

LAND: What the mental health community will do with the results of this study is yet to be seen. What is truly important here is that the truth has been presented. Changing one's sexual orientation is possible. I hope and pray that anyone who hears this broadcast who seeks relief from the distress of the homosexual lifestyle or if they have a loved one or a friend in that situation, they will not be deterred by the prevailing council of the mental health community that has stated flatly that there is no hope for change. Changing one's sexual orientation is decidedly complicated and very difficult, but as I Corinthians 6 and this study illustrates, we serve a God who is in the business of changing men and women. Thanks for listening, God bless you, God bless your family, and God bless America.