

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Southern Baptists Respond to North Point Conference on Parenting LGBTQ+ Children

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SCOTT BARKLEY

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist leaders joined other evangelicals this week in addressing the Unconditional Conference hosted at North Point Community Church in Alpharetta, Ga., specifically, the way the conference and North Point's pastor, Andy Stanley, framed the discussion over homosexuality and the Bible.



Held Sept. 28-29, the conference billed itself as a “two-day premier event ... for parents of LGBTQ+ children and for ministry leaders looking to discover ways to support parents and LGBTQ+ children in their churches.” Speakers and breakout leaders included parents of LGBTQ+ children and those in a same-sex marriage.

North Point Community Church is not affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. However, its influence stretches across many congregations of all denominations. Stanley is the son of the deceased longtime First Baptist Atlanta pastor and former SBC president Charles Stanley.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President R. Al Mohler Jr. wrote [“The train is leaving the station”](#) on Sept. 18, a critique preceding the conference subtitled “Andy Stanley’s departure from Biblical Christianity.”

Mohler took note of the conference’s claim to construct a “middle space” for conversation over sexuality and Scripture.

“[T]he advertising for the Unconditional Conference indicates clearly that this event is designed as a platform for normalizing the LGBTQ+ revolution while claiming that the

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conference represents ‘the quieter middle space,’” he said. “In truth, there is no ‘middle space’ on these issues, and it is no longer plausible to claim that such middle space exists.”

Stanley addressed Mohler’s comments in his Oct. 2 sermon.

Leaked audio contained Stanley’s position that he and Mohler, while not naming the seminary president, subscribe to different representations of Christianity. Stanley used a metaphor in claiming that Jesus didn’t have a theology that drew lines but had one of large circles that “included so many people ... that it consistently made religious leaders nervous.”

That position was incomplete, at best, Mohler wrote in a [response on Oct. 3](#).

“The problem with Stanley’s assertion ... is that the four Gospels consistently present Jesus as drawing both,” Mohler said. “He did draw lines, such as when He told of the good Samaritan who, unlike the religious leaders of His day, helped the man assaulted by robbers. Casting the Samaritan as the God-honoring character in the parable was indeed a way of drawing a circle.

“Jesus came to save sinners, and thus we are saved. But Jesus never drew circles that ignored the reality of sin. Christ also drew lines with clarity, such as the line separating the sheep from the goats. Similarly, the Apostles preached the great good news of the gospel, yet also called Christians to holy living and to avoid sexual immorality.”

David Prince, pastor of Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., [wrote that he had not planned](#) on commenting about the conference. Stanley, said Prince, “clearly ... believes that unrepentant practicing homosexuals can be described, without question, as Christians who are ‘maintaining their faith’ and faithfully following Christ, so much so that they are reliable guides to Christians about how to respond to LGBTQ+ issues.”

This was the “trajectory I have been convinced Stanley is on for years now,” Prince wrote.

Stanley’s response to criticism prompted Prince to write, coupled with Stanley’s assertion that North Point “has never shied away” from biblical marriage as being between a man and a woman.

“The only way these two assertions can be reconciled is if you embrace a notion of Christianity where faith is severed from repentance,” Prince said. “In other words, it is a gospel where repentance is optional.

“Sadly, such a gospel is no gospel at all.”

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EDITOR'S NOTE: An earlier version of this article mistakenly stated that Stanley's sermon wasn't posted as of press time. The sermon is available [here](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Scott Barkley is national correspondent for Baptist Press.

© Southern Baptist Convention, *Baptist Press*, October 6, 2023. Retrieved October 6, 2023.

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