

Responding to Proposition 8

By Pastor Paul Viggiano
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That over six million Californians entered polling places last November being governed by hatred, fear and bigotry could have happened; but it seems unreasonable and is certainly not a necessary conclusion to draw. Yet this is the assertion by the incensed anti-Proposition 8 community.

Demonstrators against Proposition 8, which restricts marriage to one man and one woman, see the same seething, xenophobic, hillbilly mentality which held blacks in contempt during the civil rights movement, rearing its ugly head in progressive California toward homosexuals.

That fifty-two percent of Californians went to the polls catering to their own premeditated hatred, though not impossible, is far-fetched. Are there a small percentage of citizens accommodating their own angry flesh when it comes to homosexuality? No doubt! But are there millions? Unlikely.

And if there are millions of hate-filled Californians, is it effective to accuse hateful people of being driven by hate? If a person is full of hate, will they be won over by being told they're hateful? Name-calling is generally not effective against hateful people. It is only effective against people who have a tender conscience—who don't want to be called hateful or be identified with hate. But it was those very people—people with a tender conscience—who didn't respond to the anti-Proposition 8 campaign. Why?

Citizens in favor of Proposition 8 did not respond to being called hateful because it didn't resonate with them. It simply isn't true. To be against a certain behavior doesn't mean you hate or fear the people engaging in it.

Most citizens believe adultery is wrong; but that doesn't mean they hate or fear adulterers. They might even vote against a parade that celebrates adultery or school curriculums that seek to sanction adultery. None of that means they hate or fear adulterers.

Citizens voted for Proposition 8 for a variety of reasons: Some simply view homosexuality as unnatural; others think the paradigm of a mother and father is the healthiest paradigm for a culture to countenance; some might depend upon historical sociological analysis or contemporary psychological studies indicating that departure from traditional marriage

leads to unhealthy behaviors in children and the eventual decimation of families and the cultures which families form.

The substructure of all the reasons people voted for Proposition 8 is a belief that there is a God who formed mankind in such a way that families, consisting of mothers and fathers, is the highest and best order for society. Even in a society where not everyone gets married or has children, the mother and father model forms the ideal.

Of course it is natural that many people (forty-eight percent in the case of Proposition 8) don't accept these reasons. The fifty-two percent should not be surprised at this. The pursuit of godliness, at least according to Scripture, will regularly be met with adversity—even hostility. And it is no small irony that those who are accusing others of hatred have themselves become intimidating hooligans—perhaps the governing disposition has been unveiled!

Nonetheless it is critical that those who support the marriage sanctioned by the Scriptures stay above the fray of anger and name-calling. There will be a natural temptation to become vindictive in the face of this moral satire where good is called evil and vice-versa. Good citizens must overcome the irony of the accusation of hatred and intolerance while at the same time continuing to contend for societal virtue.

And those who continue to hurl epithets in their demonstrations must realize that it's not hitting the mark. Instead of raising their voice they should strengthen their argument.