

Recently, TCG Australia published the article 'Love across the divide' by Amy Isham, which claims that 'conservative' Christians are failing to love and include gay and trans people, by speaking 'about and not *to* them'.

However, as a conservative Christian with over ten years' experience working with and loving real gay and trans people, I cannot help but view Isham's article as woefully uninformed, arrogant and hypocritical.

Firstly, in lieu of evidence for her claims, Isham offers her interpretations of social media interactions. Apparently, from the vantage point behind her computer screen, Isham can detect this cohort of Christians, 'identify' them as 'conservative', 'perceive' their motivations, pinpoint their theological errors and perhaps most amazingly, describe (and condemn) their offline behaviour!

Her sociological theory goes like this: '*other*' 'conservative Christians', embittered by their rejection from mainstream society, and enticed by the pleasure of 'ostracising others', are constantly peddling 'panic-porn' about trans ideology and the de-Christianisation of schools without ever speaking to real LGBTQ people; and that this behaviour amounts to ungodly, public, narcissistic gossip that makes the LGBTQ community feel hated and excluded.

Her remedy goes like this: be more like her, because she's had at least two years' experience being more like Jesus in this arena and has at least one ongoing gay and one ongoing trans friendship to prove it. Isham attributes her (apparently unique) success to not forgetting basic Biblical truths (like the other Christians), avoiding difficult online and in person conversations until 'the right moment', 'lovingly' using 'negotiated' wrong-sex pronouns to "show them that their value and dignity is much greater than they know", and just generally keeping "the door, if not open, then at least ajar" (whatever that means).

How very bold of her to presume she knows anything at all about the personal relationships other Christians have with the LGBTQ+ community! She failed to even *mention* the massive international backlash against trans-ideology coming from *within* the LGBTQ+ community. She failed to *even mention* the decade long collaboration between gays, radical feminists and conservative Christians, who have been working hand in hand to raise the alarm (read: peddle panic-porn) against their mutual oppression under trans-ideology? If Isham had taken the time to educate herself about or even take part in this mission field, she would know that in fact, conservative Christians all across the world have been *demonstrating* our love and compassion in far more fruitful and costly ways than leaving a metaphorical door slightly ajar.

Isham seems completely uninterested in the worst consequences of trans-ideology, and instead provides us with two adult examples where the worst conflict she conjures up is a difference of opinion. Her adult cousin comes out as gay? She reassures her she loves her and is welcome. Nice. Done. Next. Her adult trans friend on social media? She agrees to use 'negotiated pronouns' and the Facebook relationship continues (it is unclear if Isham even admits to disagreeing with the trans friend). I don't agree with Isham that affirming the self-hate and bodily disassociation that trans people suffer from is loving at all, but I digress.

The main issue here is that pronouns are easy. What is the Isham model of love for the rape victims in England whose *rape counsellor* is lying about the fact that he is a man? What is the Isham model of love for the vulnerable women being locked in prison cells with male rapists,

and predictably, getting raped? What is the Isham model of love for the generation of children being groomed to reject and loathe and disassociate from their own bodies? What is the Isham model of love when those children are put on drugs that their doctors admit are known causes of osteoporosis, heart problems, cognitive delays, sexual dysfunction, infertility and ultimately, 'secondary gender dysphoria'? For the children who are surgically mutilated in a vain attempt to metaphysically change their sex? What is the Isham model of love for the parents who are criminally prosecuted for attempting to protect their children from these harmful and irreversible medical abuses? What is the Isham model of love for the gay men and women being coerced and gaslit into believing that refusing heterosexual sex with 'gender identities' is akin to refusing sex due to the colour of their skin? What is the Isham model of love for all the women and girls losing out in sporting competitions and women's equality grants? And for when mothers and daughters find they aren't allowed to complain about males walking around naked in their public changerooms?

Perhaps your super successful non-conversations with your trans and gay friends are so unloving and selfish, about as useless as a closed door.

There are many reasons that this article is disappointing, but one of the worst is that it perpetuates the harmful lie that Christians are bigoted against and discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community. And just like the media and lobbyists who push this narrative, she does so without any evidence at all. Rather than promoting love or bridging any divides, Isham's article was a thinly veiled attempt to demonise Christians whom she clearly knows nothing about, and yet deeply disdains.