

Freedom
2 b[e]



Support - Information -
Dialogue

Networking GLBT
People from
GAYS & THE GOSPEL

*Pentecostal, Charismatic &
Evangelical Backgrounds*

Patrons

- The Hon. Michael Kirby AC
CMG
- Rev. Dorothy McRae-
McMahon

In some circles Anthony Venn-Brown is unwelcome. Some have even gone to the extreme of banning his autobiography and forbidding him to speak. Despite this opposition, he was voted as one of the 25 most influential Gay & Lesbian Australians. As a gay ambassador, he builds bridges between what previously had been considered irreconcilable enemies; the church and the gay community.

In the 1980s, Anthony Venn-Brown was a leader in the Assemblies of God and a popular preacher in the mega-churches of Australia.

Then one day his life took a dramatic new direction. After 22 years of counselling, exorcisms, 40 day fasts, 'ex-gay' programs and marriage he was forced to face the reality that nothing had changed: he was still gay.

After his public confession and resignation from the ministry he struggled to come to terms with the loss of his friends, faith and purpose.

Anthony's moving account of his journey to wholeness is detailed in his award winning book, '*A Life of Unlearning – a journey to find the truth*' which is now in its second print.

The Hon. Michael Kirby said in the foreword "*Human stories, like the one in these pages, play a part in advancing understanding and acceptance. It is the story of a quest to find not only self-acceptance but one of the most powerful forces in nature—human love.*"

Anthony is also the Convenor of Freedom 2 b[e], a support network for people from Pentecostal, Charismatic or Evangelical backgrounds, who are gay or lesbian.

Anthony will be in Melbourne August 20-22 to meet with church leaders, and run a seminar entitled "*Homosexuality, Christianity and the Church - the conflicts resolved.*"

"History reveals the Christian church has not always demonstrated God's unconditional love and in many cases was the last to realise that all human beings should be treated equally. Some Christians, using selective texts of scripture, opposed the abolition of slavery, equal rights for people of colour, two people from different races being allowed to marry and equality for women. This is not a good record". Anthony says.

"The current item on the agenda is sexual orientation and we see that in some denominations the issue of homosexuality is tearing them apart. Behind the scenes though there is a silent majority of people who know homosexuality is an orientation not an abomination. Even in Pentecostal churches in Australia the figure of acceptance of gays and lesbians has climbed to over 50%. I've been enormously encouraged by the dialogues I'm having with church leaders.

When I began this work five years ago people laughed when I said the Pentecostal world would change their view of homosexuality. I think we are actually ahead of schedule". Venn-Brown concluded.

Anthony Venn Brown will be available for interviews. He can be contacted on 0416 015 231.
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