

Media Release

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BEING GAY AT HILLSONG

Whether you accept Kinsey's figure of 10% or the more conservative estimates of 3-5% of the population, it still means that there are 100's of gays and lesbians who are a part of the 35,000 strong Hillsong 20th Anniversary Conference at the Acer Stadium this week.

"There was a time when this was believed impossible," says Anthony Venn-Brown, Australia's first openly gay Pentecostal, "I've discovered not only a change in attitude but also people within Pentecostal circles who have completely resolved their faith and sexuality issues. There are 100's, all at different stages in their journey. Some still hate that part of themselves, some have married believing it will fix their "problem", others have resolved it but are fearful to come out, while some of us have come to a place of total openness. We know there is nothing to be ashamed of if we happen to be attracted to the same sex instead of the opposite, its just the way we are", Venn Brown added.

Anthony Venn-Brown, is very familiar with the conflict of being gay in a bible believing denomination. He was once a popular leader within the Assemblies of God and a regular preacher in the Hillsong churches. Believing that being homosexual was evil, he spent 22 years attempting to change his attraction to the same sex. His autobiography 'A Life of Unlearning Coming Out of the Church – One Man's Struggle' details that traumatic journey and is about to go into its second print.

"The church's' stand against gays and lesbians will be proven to be the greatest heresy of the 20th century", Venn-Brown said. "Its tantamount to the church rejecting scientific fact and labelling Galileo a heretic when he said that the world revolved around the sun. One only has to look at church history to see errors of the past being repeated today. Sincere bible believing Christians were amongst the opponents of the abolition of slavery, interracial marriages and the equality of women. The enemy we are fighting today is ignorance. The debate will continue until the opponents learn and understand the simple difference between behaviour and orientation."

"I'm in the strange position of getting opposition from both sides. I find people in the gay community who tell me I should have nothing to do with Hillsong church and people in the church who try to tell me that I can't be gay and a Christian. All I can say is there will always have to be a Rosa Parks and I ain't going to the back of the bus for nobody"

Anthony is also co-founder of [Freedom 2 b\(e\)](#), a network which provides support, information and advocacy for same sex attracted from Pentecostal and Charismatic backgrounds.

More Media information available from:

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First chapter can be downloaded at: <http://www.anthonyvennbrown.com/book.html>