

April 6, 2005

Dear Mr. Daly,

Thank you for your March 28 response to my March 9 letter. Your letter gave me a sense of hope. To my knowledge, this is the first time that anyone from Focus on the Family has responded to the multiple requests for dialogue and reconciliation made by Soulforce leaders.

One of the foundational principles of the “soul force” principles of nonviolence as taught by Jesus, Gandhi, and King is to “seek the Truth.” Therefore my hope turned to disappointment when I read your statement that “*The series of charges your organization (Soulforce) has leveled against Dr. Dobson is, quite frankly, composed of an appalling list of errors and distortions.*” Because you did not offer any examples, I was confused by your words.

Perhaps I was not specific enough in my first letter. If so, I apologize. Allow me to explain our concerns more clearly with just two examples of the false and inflammatory words Dr. Dobson has spoken against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community:

On page 127 of his book, Bringing Up Boys, Dr. Dobson says, “*Moms and Dads, are you listening? This movement is the greatest threat to your children. It is a particular danger to your wide-eyed boys, who have no idea what demoralization is planned for them.*” In this same chapter, he frightens parents by suggesting repeatedly that homosexuals are more likely to sexually molest children than heterosexuals. This false and outrageous claim is completely denounced by every major mental health association in America and discredited by the research as well as court records. The most common form of child sexual abuse is father-daughter incest.

On October 15, 2004, I videotaped Dr. Dobson as he delivered his speech at the “Mayday for Marriage” rally in Washington, DC. In that speech, Dr. Dobson said, “*This issue has everything to do with the welfare of children. More than 10,000 studies have showed that children do best when they are raised by a mother and a father who are committed to each other.*” He then went on to say that this is why Americans must oppose marriage equality for same-gender couples (inferring that same-gender parents hurt children). The studies Dr. Dobson is referring to compared children raised in *heterosexual* single-parent homes (either a mother *or* a father) to children raised in *heterosexual* two-parent homes (*both* a mother and a father). Those studies did not examine same-gender parenting at all. It is no surprise that the research shows that children do best with two parents instead of just one, regardless of the parents’ sexual orientation. Yet Dr. Dobson manipulates the facts and uses this distortion repeatedly in speeches as well as in his book, “Marriage Under Fire.” The fact is, research comparing heterosexual and homosexual parents finds that children develop equally well in both family structures.

I hope these two examples (from the many we have collected) help you understand our concerns. We are not asking you to change your First Amendment right to talk about your deeply held religious beliefs. But, we are challenging Dr. Dobson to stop misrepresenting the scientific research in order to support his religious beliefs.

The following list of health and mental health associations have issued policy and position statements that clearly dispute the false claims made by James Dobson and Focus on the Family:

American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy
American Counseling Association
American Medical Association
National Association of Social Workers
Child Welfare League of America
American Academy of Family Physicians
North American Council on Adoptable Children
American School Counselor Association
American Psychoanalytic Association
National Association of School Psychologists
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatrics

Each of these organizations has thousands of highly educated members from varying social, ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds. Are you really asking the public to believe that all these professionals have it wrong and that only Dr. Dobson and Focus on the Family have the accurate scientific information on homosexuality?

Frankly Jim, it is Focus on the Family, not Soulforce that has composed an “appalling list of errors and distortions”. Those distortions have real and tragic consequences. They are literally killing the spirits and souls of many in the lesbian and gay community. I hear those tragic stories almost every day from the clients I treat in my psychotherapy and counseling practice.

I regret that you will be out of the office during our May 1-2 visit in Colorado Springs. I believe your heart would be moved and your spirit renewed if you could only meet our children and hear the inspiring stories of same-gender couples who have been deeply committed to each other for 20, 30, 40, even 50 years. When the spirit of God moves through people, the words and rhetoric fall away and the truth becomes self-evident.

Please let me know when you will be in your office and available to meet with my family. We will fly back to Colorado Springs, at our own expense, to meet with you at a time and date of your choosing. In the meantime, I ask again that you cite specific examples to support your claim that our charges against Dr. Dobson are “...*composed of an appalling list of errors and distortions.*” We have re-examined our booklet “A False Focus on My Family” and found no errors or distortions at all. We have carefully listed all sources and references.

May God continue to bless you, your family, and all our families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeff Lutes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jeff Lutes, MS, LPC