

Again, don't stop sponsoring the kids

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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Well, there you have it: [World Vision has reversed its decision to allow Christians in same-sex marriages to work there](#). For 48 hours, the evangelical organization was poised to join [Ken Wilson](#) and others in acknowledging that SSM is a subject Christians disagree about, not a dividing line between who does and doesn't count as a Christian in the first place.

But [as Katherine Willis Pershey put it yesterday](#), in trying to stay out of the SSM fray, World Vision ended up right in the thick of it. The evangelical-osphere more or less exploded over the original decision, with the by-now-predictable pronouncements of anathema.

Also: with threats to withdraw child sponsorships, threats [some apparently made good on](#). In [today's letter announcing its reversal](#), World Vision's board didn't specifically cite this loss of financial support, but it did acknowledge "the pain and confusion we have caused many of our friends, who saw this decision as a reversal of our strong commitment to Biblical authority." It's not a big stretch to connect the dots.

Since World Vision's original announcement, pro-gay Christians have been vocal in urging people on the other side to *keep sponsoring the kids*, whose basic needs aren't especially related to debates over who can staff the Stateside office. I've heard from friends and colleagues who have been busy drumming up support to try to replace whatever sponsors World Vision lost over this.

Today, with the shoe on the other foot, yesterday's line of argument is no less relevant: please, keep sponsoring the kids (and buying the farm animals, etc.).

Yes, there are other faith-based relief and development groups to give to, starting with the relevant arms of our denominations. Many are just as worthy of our donations as World Vision is. Still, what was true last week remains true today: World Vision does good, important work all over the world, work that Christians on both sides of the SSM debate can enthusiastically support. And while World Vision

reversed the position president Rich Stearns was promoting on Monday, that doesn't make his words any less true: "We—meaning other Christians—are not the enemy. We have to find way to come together around our core beliefs to accomplish the mission that Christ has given the church."

I supported that mission then, and I still support it now.