

## Romans 1\_26-27.mp3.mp3

**Todd Fletcher** [00:00:04] "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchange the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchange natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the death penalty of their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossip, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless and ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them." Thus reads the Words of the Lord you may be seated.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:01:30] So as we can see from this passage, this is not very popular. There's no clearer passage in all of your Bibles about the sin of homosexuality. But I felt I had to title this sermon, "Is homosexuality a sin?" Because I think that's the question that most Christians today are asking, is it a sin? And the only answer is whatever the Bible says it is, right? Throughout history, Christians have stood under one standard, which is this, that the Bible is our only rule for faith and obedience, it's our only authority. So the question that we ask is homosexuality sin can only be answered by the word itself. There's a man named Matthew Vines, and he wrote a book in 2012 and he titled the book "God and the Gay Christian." Matthew Vines was a seminary student, he was wrestling with his own homosexuality, but he loved the Scriptures and he and he wanted to find a compromise between what the Scriptures taught and the way he lived. And he came up with his own definition for sin that essentially sets the ground for how he approaches the Scriptures. He says, "but as I became more aware of same sex relationships, I couldn't understand why they were supposed to be sinful or why the Bible apparently," that's a key word, "condemned them. With most sins it wasn't hard to pinpoint the damage they cause, adultery violates a commitment to your spouse, lust objectifies others, gossip degrades people. But committed," notice the word committed, "committed same sex relationships didn't fit the pattern. Not only were they not harmful to anyone, they were characterized by positive motives and traits instead, like faithfulness, commitment, mutual love and self-sacrifice."

**Todd Fletcher** [00:03:40] Matthew Vines has a ministry today. It's a very popular ministry, he's going around the world seeking to reform the church and reform the church in their understanding of sexual relationships. You can imagine he is booked years in advance because many denominations now promote and champion homosexuality. You can drive by churches that have gay flags flying that say we are open, that we support homosexuality, that we celebrate gay pride. You have pulpits right now around the world that are filled by practicing homosexuals. And we need to ask the question. Is there a difference between homosexuality and sin, can you redefine sin according to your culture rather than according to the word of God? You'll notice with Matthew Vines his definition of sin is that which hurts others. Did you notice that?

**Todd Fletcher** [00:04:41] And he said if it doesn't hurt others, then in my mind it cannot be sin. Let me ask you the question, does Matthew Vines get to define sin? No, do you get to

define sin? No, I'm seeing a lot of no's, which is good. The problem is, is today we use what is called a cultural hermeneutic, which hermeneutic is the science of interpretation you put cultural in front of that means a cultural science of interpretation that rather than allowing the text to say what it says in its original in its original intent, we reimagine or reinterpret the text according to our culture. And so anything that doesn't fit culture must be reinterpreted in the Scripture the problem is, is that is an incredibly dangerous slope, isn't it? It's a very slippery. And we see this has been happening for years in the church and we're sitting here asking the question, how did we get here?

**Todd Fletcher** [00:05:38] It's very simple, we gave up the Bible. We gave it up here and then we gave it up here and then we gave it up here. Why not just give it all up? I can tell you where we're heading next, and the next thing that they will attack is the exclusivity of the gospel. Well, that's very offensive to say that there's one way to salvation and that Jesus is the way the truth and the life, and there is no way to the Father except through Him that's very offensive to Muslims. That's very offensive to atheists. That's very offensive to Buddhists, that cannot be, and I guarantee you it's already happening that people will reinterpret the gospel saying that it's just a way to God, that's next. Because when you give it up and you give it up, it's like a battle when you just give up a little ground and you give up a little ground and you give up a little bit more ground, all of a sudden you've lost the war. And Matthew Vines, I would argue, while well intended, again 2012 is when he wrote that book, it has had dire consequences on the church today. And so as we come to the text, the answer that I want to give is, what does the Bible say about homosexuality? Because that's all that matters to me. Because this is my only rule for faith and obedience, isn't that bigoted, if that's your definition of bigger than yes, I'm a bigot.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:06:58] If I believe that the word of God is the only rule for faith and obedience and that is your definition of bigotry, then put it on me, because I according to the world and I'm a bigot, but I am committed to the Word of God, and I will give my life in service to the Word of God, by His grace. As should you. What matters is not what the world thinks of us, what matters is what God thinks of us. All of us will stand before his throne and give an account. And you cannot point to those around you and say, but they didn't they didn't like that or or that offended them and God says either well done and good and faithful servant or depart from me, you worker of iniquity for I never knew you. And so we need to get back to what the Bible says, and this is actually, let me argue from the very beginning, this is the most loving thing we can do for those who are in the sin of homosexuality is preach the truth to them, in love.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:07:56] We're all sinners, are we not? We all deserve hell, do we not? All of our sin is equally offensive before the Lord and praise God that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to live a perfect life, to live a life that I couldn't live, that you couldn't live, that no one could live. That He lived a perfect life and paid for sin, all of it. No matter how dirty, no matter how depraved, no matter how fallen, He paid it all so that we could be delivered from sin and live in righteousness. That is true joy in this world is not to be caught in the trap, in the tatters of sin. So now let's get to this section. We're going to approach this in three ways. One is we're going to do an overview of the Old Testament and the New Testament and its teachings on homosexuality. And then we're going to look specifically at Romans one versus 26 through 27 and see that it's contrary to nature versus 26, and that it's a dishonorable or shameful act, according to verse 27. And then we're going to conclude by this, asking the question, how should Christians respond? Because I know everyone in this room is asking that question right now. How do I respond to a world that has so quickly turned against the biblical view of marriage, if you don't think this is here, if you don't think that this is upon us right now, Max Lucado, one of the most prolific writers

of our age in Christianity, was essentially canceled by cancel culture. And the reason why is because in 2004, he preached a sermon on the sanctity of marriage, that marriage is between one man and one woman. And his response, sadly, was expected. And his response was this, he said that he is sorry if he offended anyone and that he never meant to hurt anyone and that he recognizes that there are many, catch this, faithful Christians who disagree with the Bible's view of marriage.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:09:58] Al Mohler in his podcast responded and he said, "Max I need to tell you, there are no faithful Christians who reject the Bible's view of marriage." By definition, they are not faithful because they've abandoned the word of God. So we need this today, this is a very important sermon, and the reason why is because this is the question that the church has to answer. Every generation has something that they have to deal with. Every generation of Christianity throughout its history has had an issue that needs a response. And the response has to come from the word of God. And I can tell you there is no more pressing issue than the issue of homosexuality, transgenderism, gender identity, that is the issue of our age, that is the issue that God will hold this generation of the church accountable to. And did we answer it in love according to the word of God? You'll notice verse 32, it says the very bottom of the barrel, the sign that God has totally given you over to depravity, the sign that God has unleashed your sin on the world, is that they not only practice it, but they also approve those who do practice it. So you may say, well, I'm not a homosexual, I just approve of it, let me tell you, the word of God says you're just as guilty. Does that convict us? It should. So this is a hard section of Scripture. But you know what, when you preach through a book of the Bible, you can't ignore sections of Scripture, you have to preach the whole Council of God's word.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:11:39] I may very well, I'm thinking of my brother in prison right now, James, who I roomed with for three weeks. I'm thinking that this perhaps this sermon, as it gets out on the Internet, might cause me some problems down the road. So be it, to live is Christ and to die is gain, and so we press on. Now let's get into this, what does the Bible say about homosexuality? We need this, we need to write down these verses, we need to understand this so that we can share it with others. But first, before we do anything else, we need to define a word up there and that is sin. What is sin? How do we define sin? Is sin really that big a deal? You know, today sin is a very unpopular word in the church because it's offensive. It causes problems, Pastor can't you just encourage me, can't you just tell me how good I am? Can't you just tell me how healthy and wealthy I'm going to be, how good looking that God will make me? The problem is the Bible talks about sin a lot, and so if you avoid the issue of sin, you just have to hopscotch all around your Bible to avoid sin. And we see that today. This is why people often don't preach through books of the Bible, they jump through books of the Bible.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:12:57] But what does the Bible say, that's the question. First, let's turn to 1 John 3:4 and here is the clearest definition of sin in the Bible, 1 John chapter 3 verse four, and this is one that needs to be underlined in your Bible. 1 John is an amazing book, by the way, 1 John is one that we're going through on Tuesday nights, and it's one where he's dealing with the question of the faithless Christian or the unrepentant Christian. And he says this in verse 4, this is his definition, everyone who makes a practice of sin also practices lawlessness, here's the definition, sin is what? Lawlessness, that is the very definition of sin, sin is lawlessness.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:13:49] Well, what law? The Bible, the law of liberty. The law, the law that Jesus gives us, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, love your neighbor as yourself. The Ten Commandments are picture of loving God and

loving your neighbor. And what we see is that sin is anything that goes contrary to God's word. That's that sin is lawlessness. So if we can prove from the Bible that it speaks against homosexuality, then it's sin, because the law says that homosexuality is a sin and if you practice homosexuality, then you're in sin, it's very clear. But our world, sadly, has given up logic, as Duane said earlier, we don't allow logic to have any room. It's all emotion, it's all feeling, well I just feel that it's right. Is that an argument before the Lord? Is that an argument before a judge, why did you murder this person? I just really wanted to, it just felt right. Did it really feel right? Yes, it felt right. Okay you're off the hook. Logic and reason matter. So let's see what the word of God has to say, let's turn to Genesis 19. And in Genesis 19. We see something that we've all likely heard, either taught at Sunday school or we've heard about it through entertainment or whatnot, and that is Sodom and Gomorrah. Sodom and Gomorrah, Sodom is where we get the word "sodomy" from, sexual perversion. Genesis 19:5 you see this whole story of of God rescuing Lot.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:15:28] I'll start in verse 4, "but before they lay down the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man surrounded the house." Whose house? Lot's house. Who does he have inside? Some angels, some beautiful angels, some very good looking angels, apparently. In verse 5 it says, "and they called to Lot, where are the men who came to you tonight bring them out to us that we may know them." Lot goes out of the house, shuts the door after him and says, I beg you my brothers do not act, so what? Wickedly. We know the story he offers his daughters, they don't want his daughters and then the angels blind the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, we see that eventually Sodom is destroyed by God's fire. Well, Leviticus 18, let's turn there, Leviticus 18, this is the law, this is the Mosaic law. Leviticus 18 we read this starting in verse 22, Leviticus 18, verse 22, "you shall not lie with a male as with a woman it is an abomination." Look now at verse 13 of Chapter 20 of Leviticus, "if a man lives with a male, as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination, they shall surely be put to death, their blood is upon them." We see here that this both times it's referred to as a abomination. And I want to ask the question today is why is it an abomination? Why is homosexuality an abomination to God? That's the question we should all be asking.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:17:31] Why is it such a big deal? Is it a big deal? Well, here in Leviticus, at least in the old covenant, in the Old Testament, it was such a big deal that those who practiced homosexuality should be put to what? Death. That's a big deal, this isn't a small sin, this isn't a white sin, this isn't something that it's not great, but it's acceptable. This is a big deal. Go to Judges, we're not going to turn to Judges, but if you know the story of the Levite and his concubine, it's one of the worst stories in the Bible. The Levite and his concubine, one Levites, shouldn't have had concubines. He has a concubine and they invite some guests and some men in and this is a Judges 19 if you want to go back and read it. And Judges 19, he invites some guests in. The Bethlehemites, the people in that region see the men, they're very attractive men, they want to lay with the men, they want to know the men. And they demand that the Levite sends the men out so that they can know them. Instead of sending the men out, we know the story, he sends out his concubine, he throws her out to the wicked, sexually immoral Bethlehemites, yeah Benjaminites, sorry not Bethlehemites. Benjaminites, and they know the woman, they raped her all night long, they raped her to the point of death, he wakes up in the morning, goes outside his concubine is laying there dead.,He cuts her up into 12 pieces and sends her to all the tribes of Israel to show how wicked the Benjaminites are.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:19:03] That's the Old Testament in all of those stories, homosexuality is the epitome of wickedness in the Old Testament. You see that once, once a city, once of people, and in response to the Benjaminites, the rest of the tribes of Israel said that we

need to cut them off and swear that our daughters will not marry their sons to essentially end the line. That's the response of Israel to that sin. Well what about the New Testament? Does the New Testament continue this? Because some have argued that the Old Testament is very clear on homosexuality, but not the New Testament. So let's turn to 1 Corinthians 6, this is besides Romans 1, the clearest teaching on homosexuality in the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 6 starting in verse 9, "or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters, nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality. Nor thieves, nor the of the greedy, nor drunkards nor revelers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God and such were some of you but you were washed, you were sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit of our God."

**Todd Fletcher** [00:20:29] Notice, he says, such were some of you. Some of you used to practice idolatry. Some of you used to practice sexual immorality, some of you used to be swindlers, some of you used to be homosexuals. But God washed you and cleansed you and delivered you from this sin. Notice homosexuality appears in the list, but it's not the only word used, is it? It's one of many sins. I'm going to get back to that and a little bit, but I want you to see that in the 1 Timothy 1:10, you see that it's referred to as a ungodly characteristic. It's put as "wickedness" in Paul's list to Timothy. Jude 7, which will address later, refers to it as a unnatural passion, one that deserves eternal hellfire, Jude 7. So,ml think it's pretty clear, isn't it what the Bible says? That's the only thing that matters. Because when you stand before the Lord, you can't argue that your culture said one thing and so you agreed with the culture rather than God's word. When you stand before the Lord, you can't plead ignorance, especially not after this sermon.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:21:49] You can't say, God, I didn't know. God, I just thought it was, you know, something that maybe was wrong for Paul's age, not our age, I didn't know. Or I thought sin was just when I hurt someone else, not not me, just enjoying my own thing in my own room, in my own privacy, the privacy of my own, I thought I could define sin, not You. Those will be the common responses and so we have to ask the question, is sin cultural? No, it's not. I so wish the church would understand this today. That we don't get to dictate God's law. That we don't get to change God's word. That we don't get to use our black highlighter to highlight passages that we hate. That we have to actually submit ourselves to the authority of God's word in every area and in every doctrine that it affirms, whether it's unpopular or not, who cares? Because if this world is just a blip on the radar, if we're here today, gone tomorrow like flowers in the field that are beautiful for one day in the next day, they're gone. What does it ultimately matter what this world thinks of us? All that matters is what God thinks of you. Remember I said, I preach for an audience of one, and you're just the beneficiaries of that. Which is all that matters is what God says, Todd well done, good and faithful servant.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:23:14] I'm a herald of heaven. I'm not the chef of heaven. What I mean by this is this. A good server doesn't take the master chef's meal that he's been given and say, you know, I don't quite like what the master chef did, I'm going to add my own spices and my my own salt and pepper on the way to the table. And as I as I correct the Masters master dish with my amazing brilliance, I'll give it to the customers and say I fixed the master chef's mistakes with some salt and pepper. Isn't that what preachers try to do is here is the master chefs meal and the preacher says, you know, it's just it...Let me fix it for you. That's not a good preacher, fact that's a false teacher. That's a wolf in sheep's clothing who seeks to correct the word of God and make it his own or her own word? So what we see here is the New Testament is very clear and look at, if you will, 1 Corinthians 6, 12 through 19. Paul says this, "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful.

All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy both one and the other. The body," noticed this, "the body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body."

**Todd Fletcher** [00:24:49] Here is the answer to why homosexuality is wrong, because the body wasn't designed for it. That's everything, and I'm going to explain that, is that God is the Creator and God gets to determine how His creation is used. God is established a created order, He's established natural laws, and He expects that His creation follows those laws in order to glorify Him, honor Him with their bodies. It's all about worship, it's all about proper roles, it's all about doing how we're doing what God designed us to do and God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. "Do you not know, again, that the bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ to make the members of a prostitute? Never. Or do you not know that he who has joined to a prostitute becomes one body with you?" Here's a different type of sexual immorality, "rather it is written the two will become one flesh." Where does that come from? Genesis 2, a man and a woman shall become one flesh in the act of sex. Which should only take place in the confines of marriage, that's God's design, that's how He designed it. And it says this, "but he who has joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him," verse 18, here's the response, "flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you whom you have from God? You are not your own."

**Todd Fletcher** [00:26:36] That's the point, "for you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body." That's the point of why homosexuality is wrong, and just so you know, why all forms of sexual immorality are wrong because your body is not your own, it was given to you, you're a steward of the body that God has given you, you're called to use your body for His glory. You will give an account one day for how you used your body. Did you use your body to glorify God in your members or did you use your body to become united with prostitutes, with the sexually immoral? That's the response and that's all that matters. That's what God is going to ask. And so now let's get into our text, because we've done an overview we see the Bible says, now let's see what Romans says. Romans verse 26, "for this reason," you should be asking the question, for what reason? For what reason did God give them up to dishonorable passions? For this reason, don't you know? Well, if you weren't here last week, we need to do a quick review of where we've come from. Verses 18 through 23, we see that the wrath of God is revealed against all forms of unrighteousness who men by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. So we see that all men goes on to say that His divine attributes, His power, His divinity is clear to all people.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:28:02] So there are no atheists in this world, everyone knows there's a God it's clear, His creation proclaims it is His power, His attributes, His divinity it's clear to everyone. But people suppress that truth in unrighteousness. I've said it like this, it's like trying to keep a beach ball underwater it will eventually come back up. So they suppress the truth with unrighteousness and notice verse 23, "for they exchange" they changed, they traded, "the glory of an immortal God for images resembling mortal men, birds, animals and creepy things." So here's the issue idolatry. They exchanged an incorruptible God, a God that doesn't change a God that doesn't decay, and they exchanged that God for creatures that decay, men, women, animals, creeping things, all those things. So we see the first judgment of that.

[00:28:55] Verse 24, "Therefore, God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity, to dishonoring of their bodies among themselves." Notice that the issue is now people are dishonoring their bodies, they're bringing shame to their bodies. That can also be understood as they're degrading their bodies, they're falling apart. They're causing, all this sin is causing their body to break apart because it's being used in a way it wasn't designed to be used. And it says, "so God gave them up," so here is God's divine judgment on humanity is our sins, our hearts are desperately wicked, are they not? But God restrains our sin. But God's judgment in a nation, God's judgment in a world and God's judgment in an individual life is to unloose, to unleash sin. And think about it as being chained by righteous restraints and God's judgment is simply unlocking one chain at a time so that you begin living according to the depravity of your own heart. And so God's action is an active passive, He actively unrestrains you so that you can go further in your sin. We see this with Pharaoh, remember, Pharaoh hardens his heart, God responds by hardening Pharaoh's heart and Pharaoh hardens his heart further than God responds by hardening his heart further. We see that God's act of judgment is simply unleashing sin that is found in a person's heart. And then verse 26, "for this reason," because they exchanged in verse 25, because they exchanged the truth of God for a lie that can be understood as 'the lie,' it's got a definite article in front of it. The Lie of Satan all the way back in Genesis 3, you can be like God, you don't need to follow His design, you can do whatever you want to do. You can define sin.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:30:45] That's the lie that you can be like God, that you can subvert God and that you can worship the creature rather than the Creator. Notice, it says, because they exchanged they traded the truth about God for the lie and worshiped and serve the creature rather than the Creator. So rather than submitting to how God designed our bodies to be used, we, in idolatry now tell God how we will use our body because we worship the creature now instead of the Creator. When a creator makes something, guess what, they get to determine and design how it's going to be used, the thing they're creating. The creation itself doesn't have the right to tell the Creator that they're not going to be used that way, that they were designed. They can try but the Creator will destroy that creation, He will judge that creation. And that's what we see here. So there's the "for this reason," God gave them up to dishonorable passions. I want to go back to Matthew Vines for a second. I've asked the question, what is Matthew Vines do with this passage? It's interesting because whenever you have someone that takes a cultural issue and they apply it to Scripture, they have to do what's called fancy footwork. They have to start saying this passage doesn't say what it actually says it needs to be interpreted in light of how our culture would understand it. And this all started back in Harvard when they got rid of what was called authorial intent from Scripture or from reading a book or from reading literature.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:32:15] It used to be that when a person read a book, they had to write a report on what the author meant, what was being communicated through the book. And then Harvard, those brilliant people, they decided that, you know we bring way too much baggage to any piece of literature, therefore we could never understand what this person meant. And so truth is found in your experience of the text, it's not what it objectively meant because you can never access that because of your cultural baggage, because of your prior prejudices, so don't try to understand what the author meant the truth is found in your experience of the text. Has this infiltrated Christianity at all? Yes, this is why we are where we are is because we've said I could never understand what Paul meant here, it's the truth is found in my experience of what he meant. That's called subjectivism, postmodernism, it's the very air we breathe, it's the very milk we drink, isn't it? And so what Matthew Vines does with this passage is actually brilliant, and it's what most people do

today. So let me read the passage and let me tell you how Matthew interprets it. "For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions for their women, exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature and men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another. Men committing shameless acts with men receiving in themselves the death penalty for their error." So Matthew says this "what I understand is natural is not a physical thing." You know, we would argue what Paul meant here is that God physically designed a man and a woman to fit together and to procreate, that's what Genesis 2 says, the two shall come together in one flesh.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:34:06] Well a child is the best example of what that means two individuals that procreate and have a child that takes half of the mom's DNA, half of the dad's DNA, and creates a new human being. That's Genesis 2, that's nature. That's God's design. And so what these men and these women are doing, we're going to get more to this, is their flipping nature on its head, they're twisting nature and God's design. So Matthew Vines says this, "this does not refer to physical aspects of nature, but simply to a natural sexual desire that one has. And so it is sin for someone not to fulfill their natural sexual desires." Do you see what he just did there? it totally reinterpreted the text. He said that actually it's a sin for a gay person to not fulfill their gay desires because it's natural to them. Wow. Where did you get that? From our culture. That is how our culture tells us to interpret this text. He explains that one must submit to their natural sexual desires, and if a person has same sex attraction, it is okay, in fact it is encouraged in Scripture. That's what the world is teaching, that's what the church's teaching today. And I have to ask the question, is this a plausible argument? Is this something that can be defended from Scripture? Let's look at Paul's answer in 26, "God gives them up to dishonorable passions for women exchange natural relations," that word relations is most basically or literally means 'use' their natural function.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:35:54] And also he uses a term for woman that's uncommon, which is just simply female. And females exchange natural use or natural sexual functions for those that are contrary to what is natural, those are contrary to nature. So here we have women exchanging the way they were designed to operate for what is unnatural or undesigned. That's the clearest understanding of that text. And what we see here is you refers to those as dishonorable passions or degrading passions. And what's especially shocking here is that it begins with women. Why is that shocking? Let me read you a quote from Charles Hodge, he says, "Paul first refers to the degradation of the female among the heathen because they are always the last to be affected in the decay of morals. And the corruption is therefore proof that all virtue is lost." What he's saying is, is it was less common for women to practice homosexuality than for men, especially in ancient times. For men, they said the old saying was 'women are for families, men are for fun.' That's what they used to say in ancient times, but they understood that homosexual marriage was unnatural. In fact, Plato, Philo, all these different people, Aristotle, they all realized that marriage was meant for a man and a woman because that's what's natural. However, they said it's okay to enjoy homosexuality because that's just fun. But women were the least likely to become homosexuals.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:37:26] But we see what Charles Hodge says and others says is this shows how far the society has fallen when women embrace lesbianism. And so we have to ask the question, but what if they're born this way? Isn't that the question? How can they go against the natural desires that God has given them? What if they're born this way? Well, let me ask you this question. What if someone's born towards a propensity to steal? What if someone's born with a propensity to lie? Or to be angry, or to lust, or to be greedy, or to be an idolator, is that okay? Someone who murder someone says, well I was born



this way, I was born with a propensity to kill and someone says, well that's okay because you were born that way. The reality is, is all of us are born with natural desires, and many of those are sinful, are they not? Some people struggle with pornography, some people struggle with the love of money, some people struggle with lying. Others struggle with thievery, people all around the world struggle with different sins. And the fact is, it doesn't matter if they were born with that propensity, the fact is, as Jesus died for that sin so that you could repent and turn from that desire. And so it doesn't matter if you're born that way, what matters is what God's word says about that sin. Again, sin is not determined by man's preferences, it's determined by God's law.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:39:07] So just because you prefer something doesn't mean that it's okay or that it's right. I love McDonald's, as I made clear last week, that doesn't mean it's right. I was laughing, my dad and I were talking yesterday on the phone and he orders his usual at McDonald's and I thought, there you go, good man. It was his birthday so he treated himself to McDonald's, just all you people that hate McDonald's get over it. Okay, now let's get to verse 27, you need a little bit of laughter in this type of sermon, verse 27 "and men likewise gave up natural functions," natural relations with women, "and we're consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the death penalty for their error." So here we see not only have women been given to homosexuality, likewise men have given up women. And they've given up what's natural, the way they were designed to operate. And it says they are inflamed or consumed with longing for other men. In the Greek, it says men with men. Men with men inflamed with passion for one another, exchanging their love of women for men. And it says this, it says, men committing shameless acts, dishonorable acts, degrading acts with men receiving in themselves the death penalty for their error.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:40:46] Why is this shameless, what's wrong with men being inflamed, with love for other men? What's so wrong about that? Why is God so against homosexuality? It's not hurting anyone, according to Matthew Vines. Why is it so wrong? Because let me say this again, your body is not your own it was created for a purpose to glorify God, to fulfill the role that He had called you in. And this is why, let me add some other sins into this list, this is why sex before marriage is wrong. It's equally offensive. This is why living with your boyfriend or your girlfriend is wrong, it's equally offensive. This is why bestiality is equally offensive, this is why pedophilia is equally offensive. Love is love is not in the Bible. God is love who gets to determine what love is? God. And so right now, we're saying that it's okay for a man to marry a man, but right now it's still wrong for an adult to marry a child, for right now. Right now it's wrong for a man to have relations or a woman to have relations with an animal, for now. For right now it's wrong for someone to have more than one spouse, for now. Where does it stop? It just gets worse and worse and worse until all of society is destroyed by depravity. And just so you know, what you see here is this jealousy that rises among men in verse 27 in homosexual love, you can read many articles on the fact that many horrific homicides are caused by homosexual men who are enraged, inflamed with passion and jealousy. Let me just read this by a secular doctor in New York City, "a New York City forensic expert, Dr. Milton Helpen, who makes no claim of being a Christian and avoids making moral judgments about homosexuality, never the less comments that after having performed thousands of autopsies, he would warn anyone who chooses a homosexual lifestyle to be prepared for the consequences. He says when we see brutal multiple wound cases in a single victim, we just automatically assume that we're dealing with a homosexual victim and a homosexual attacker. I don't know why it is so, but it seems that violent explosions of jealousy among homosexuals far exceed those of a jealousy of men and women, or a woman for a man. The pent up charges and energy of homosexual relationships simply

cannot be contained when the explosive point is reached the result is brutal violence. But this is the normal pattern of these homosexual attacks, the multiple stabbings, the multiple senseless beatings that obviously must continue long after the victim dies."

**Todd Fletcher** [00:43:33] This is a doctor in New York City who is writing in a secular magazine, is explaining the jealous, inflamed passion between homosexuals. Here's what happens when you start giving into sin, it gets hotter and hotter and hotter, deeper and deeper and deeper and darker and darker and darker. You see this with pornography, don't we? It starts with light porn and then it begins to get harder and harder and more disgusting, darker and darker. Because sin knows no depths, it just goes deeper and deeper and deeper. And so it's unloving, in my opinion, and in the Bible's opinion, to allow someone to continue in homosexual sin. So let's ask this question, this is where we'll end, can a Christian be a practicing homosexual? Notice the word I said, practicing homosexual. Let's turn to 1 John 3 versus 9 through 10, again don't take my word for it, my word means nothing but if God's word says it you have to deal with it. 1 John 3 verses 9 through 10, he says, "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God, by this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of , " the who? The Devil, "whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:45:28] 1 Corinthians 6:9 through 11 says that, "the sexual immoral, the idolaters and homosexuals and others, thieves, swindlers and others will not inherit the kingdom of God." Now it got really unpopular, right? But let me tell you this. No unrepentant sinner will go to heaven. Wow, Todd that's a big claim. Turn to Matthew 7, I'm going to back this up with some very good things at the end but we have to understand the depths of our sin. Matthew 7, and Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and the most famous sermon ever preached, Jesus ends His sermon with this, He says in verse 21, "not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of the Father who is in heaven. On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do mighty works in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you depart from me you workers of," what? "Lawlessness." Here's the fact is, no matter what your sin, if you have not repented and you have not trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ and you are not living in a life of confession and a struggle with sin, and you are proud of your sin and you champion your sin. What John says, what Jesus says, what Paul says is that you are a worker of iniquity and you will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Broad is the way that leads to destruction, narrow is the gate that leads to eternal life and few find it, Jesus says. And so I would argue that it is most unloving and it is a lie from the pit of hell to tell a gay Christian that you can be assured of your salvation and champion homosexuality and when you stand before the Lord, he will say, welcome my good and faithful servant. That is a lie from the pit of hell. You may not like me right now. You may be angry at me right now, but when you're standing before God, you will have no excuse. Because the word of God says it.

**Todd Fletcher** [00:47:56] I just...If you can't tell, I'm so angry at pastors right now. I'm so angry at the church right now. Because the church are sending people to hell and they're applauding them on their way to the eternal fire. Let's turn to Jude 7, Jude 7 says this, and this is where we'll end. If you think Paul's off his rocker and you think Jesus is off your rocker, maybe you think Jews got it together. But Jude says the exact same thing, Jude 7, "just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued," what is it, "unnatural desire to serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of what we

don't want to do. To give in to unnatural desires, which deserves eternal fire. So I think we got it. Now, let me ask you, how should we respond to this sermon? I know some of us have homosexual relatives, some of us have homosexual children. Some of us have homosexual grandchildren. And you know what the Bible says. But you don't know how to deal with this. How should the Christian response? Let me tell you this all sin is equally offensive to God, all sin. If you're a thief, I'm going to tell you the exact same thing that I would tell an idolater, the exact same thing that I would tell a murderer, the exact same thing that I would tell a homosexual, the exact same thing that I would tell someone who is committing adultery, the exact same thing that I would tell someone who is greedy and is stealing money from others. I would tell them all the exact same thing and that is that you need to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repent and believe. This is the point, is Jesus came to deliver us from sin, not to keep us entrapped in sin.

**Todd Fletcher [00:50:15]** Romans 3, eventually we'll get to Romans 3. Romans 3 has an amazing passage that says if you turn their Romans 3, it says this in verse 21, "but now the righteousness of God is revealed, it has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all to believe, there's no distinction." Whether you're a homosexual, whether you're a murderer, whether you're an idolater, whether you're greedy, whether you love your sin, no matter what the sin is, there is no distinction because you can be saved by placing your faith in Jesus Christ. So how should the Christian respond, we proclaim the gospel to homosexuals, we love them, we pray for them. We tell them that we were just like them, that we deserve what they deserve. And we treat homosexuality no different than we treat other sins. We call them to repentance. Sin is sin, is it not? Sin is sin, and you don't get to determine what sin is, God does. So let's get back on mission. Let's pray for homosexual pastors. Let's pray for homosexual brothers and sisters, let's pray for homosexual children and homosexual grandchildren. Let's pray that they would come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of their sins. Let's pray for them and let's love them. And let's be willing to be stabbed by them and persecuted by them and hated by them. Because they hated our Lord. Because He called sin sin.

**Todd Fletcher [00:52:06]** Let's pray, Father, God, we come to You today. All of us struggle in this world, in this culture, and this is a very hard sermon for many of us to understand or to accept. In fact, there may be some in here that don't accept it. But, Father, I pray that we would bow the knee to King Jesus, that we would submit ourselves under the authority of God's word. And that we would be willing to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ to be hated on His account so that we might be considered worthy to suffer for the name. Father, I pray for those right now who are suffering around the world, who are receiving persecution for proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. God I pray that all of us would love our homosexual brothers and sisters, that we would love humanity, that we would lay our lives down so that we might save some. Father, we aren't banking here, we know where our treasure is, we know where our Judge is, we know where our Father is and that is where our hope is. We have a spot at your table reserved by the power of the Holy Spirit, by His sealing and we can lose nothing in this world. They can take it all away and to die is gain. So, Father, I pray that we would all be emboldened to preach the gospel and that we would call sinners to repentance and to place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We know we'll struggle, Lord, we know that sin is a struggle, but may we always struggle against it. We pray this in Your Son's name, Amen.