

## MISCONCEPTIONS

“Christians Shouldn’t Judge”

July 26, 2015

*“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.*

*“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? ...Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.”*  
Luke 7:1-5 (NLT)

### 2 Extremes: Condemning or Condoning

When it comes to rightly judging any issue/question, a Bible-believing Christ-follower should start by asking the question: “What does the Bible say?”

- We trust it’s God’s Word to us
- We trust it’s God’s Best for us

#### Arguments that claim the Bible condones homosexual behavior:

- “Christians are inconsistent.”

3 types of laws in Old Testament:

- Ceremonial Law: related to Israel's worship. (Leviticus 1:1-13)
- Civil Law: dictated Israel's daily living (Deuteronomy 24:10-11)
- Moral Law: direct commands of God. (Exodus 20:1-17)

- “Jesus says nothing about homosexuality.”

*“Haven't you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”*  
Matthew 19:3-6 (NIV)

- “If someone is born gay, how can the Bible say it’s a sin?”

*“It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable.”*

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NIV)

God’s Best often requires us to deny our natural desires.

God’s Word always trumps the way we feel.

Conclusion: According to the Bible, a homosexual lifestyle is in direct contradiction to God’s original design in creation, and is not God’s highest and best intention.

There is a difference between acceptance and approval.

### **3 things the Bible resists:**

- The idea of attaching identities to people's sexual desires. (John 1:12, 13)
- The denial of choice to those seeking change. (1 Colossians 6:9–11)
- The idea that anyone who opposes same-sex marriage is homophobic. (John 1:14)

### **Resources:**

#### **Books:**

- “Homosexuality and the Christian” Dr. Mark Yarhouse
- “What to do when your child says, ‘I’m gay.’” Tim Geiger
- “Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis” William J. Webb

#### **Websites:**

- <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/making-sense-of-scriptures-inconsistency>
- <http://www.faithit.com/5-things-jesus-would-say-to-the-gay-community/>
- <http://www.churchandculture.org/Blog.asp?ID=9165>
- <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2015/07/01/40-questions-for-christians-now-waving-rainbow-flags/>

**Leadership Tip!**

Typically the Study Guides are used as outlines for discussion. Usually we emphasize the bolded and underlined statements by leaving room for the leaders to share their thoughts. This week we ask that you follow along with the words as close as possible.

## Misconceptions - Christians Shouldn't Judge

This week Pastor Hank discussed judging others as we wrapped up our Misconceptions series. Specifically this topic was looked at through the lens of homosexuality and the ever increasing conversations in our culture surrounding this issue.

This week's Life Group discussion will be guided by an article from NewSpring church in South Carolina. This is one of the best articles pertaining this topic we have read as a staff. With that being said, we have decided to have a guided discussion through it.

Ultimately as Pastor Hank shared with us on Sunday, this entire conversation comes down to whether or not we choose to stand firm on the Word of God. Do we truly believe God's Word is accurate, applicable, and our foundation for how we are to live? Practically speaking though we realize there are many questions within this topic. Our prayer is that you would walk through this while embodying grace and truth.

For more questions on this topic please contact myself, or any of our pastors on staff and we would be happy to help and take a deeper look with you.

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## 5 Things Jesus Would Say to the Gay Community

It seems as though culture has a lot of opinions about homosexuality these days, but how much of it is informed by the Gospel? Here are 5 things we think Jesus would be known for saying if He walked among us today.

1) I love you.

**1 John 4:8-10**

***But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.***

Amidst the protest signs, yelling crowds, and political referendums, the simple message of Jesus' love for you is often drowned out. Never doubt that Jesus loves you more than you could ever know. Jesus doesn't just love a future version of you; He loves you exactly as you are right now. Jesus' love for you has no prerequisites or requirements. Even if you hate Him, Jesus loves you and wants what is best for you. Love is at the core of everything Jesus taught. Unfortunately His message of love has been conveniently left out by many who would rather make a point than make a difference (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Psalm 86:15).

**“Love Wins” has become a popular tagline throughout social media and the news.**

**How does the verse from 1 John paint the picture of Love winning?**

**What does Jesus's love look like in the midst of gay marriage and same sex attraction?**

2) I understand rejection.

**Isaiah 53:3**

***He was despised and rejected—***

***a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.***

***We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.***

***He was despised, and we did not care.***

Jesus knows how it feels to be a social outcast. You would think the religious leaders would have been His best friends, but they hated Him. They sought to kill Him and publicly shame Him any chance they had. Eventually, the religious elite joined forces with local politicians and murdered Jesus in front of a cheering crowd. Rejection hurts. Jesus' own family thought He was out of His mind; you probably understand how that feels. In Jesus' greatest moment of need, His closest friends deserted Him.

You may feel rejected by society and the church right now, and that daily pressure takes a toll. Jesus understands. His heart always breaks for the rejected and the outcast. Jesus wants to gather you in His arms and let you know that He loves you. You have a home with Jesus, you belong to Him, and you are His child. Don't reject Him because He has not rejected you (Mark 3:20-21; Matthew 26:55-56; Matthew 27; Ezekiel 18:21-23).

**What ways can we (as the Church) show acceptance and not rejection to those who may not agree with us?**

3) I also was tempted.

**Hebrew 4:15-16**

***This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the***

***same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our***

***gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.***

Jesus was tempted in every way that we are tempted. He does not shame you or reject you because of your temptations and feelings. He faced the same thing when He walked the earth. He never married, and faced daily pressure and temptation in every way imaginable. Some like to pretend they are perfect and never face any struggles, but they're lying. Jesus really was perfect and still faced temptation. He battled the desire to run away from His Father's plan.

He understands what you are going through. If you read about His life, you will see it was no cake walk, but if you will walk with Him and obey Him, you will find a greater reward than you could ever imagine (Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 12:2-3, 7-11).

**How does the fact that Jesus was tempted and tested like we are impact you?**

**Why is this so important to us as humans and specifically Christ Followers?**

4) I want more for you.

**Matthew 19:4-6**

***“Haven't you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female.’” And he said, “This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. ’ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.***

God created marriage and sex for your enjoyment. Sex was created for one man and one woman within the covenant of marriage, and it has been that way from the beginning. Anything else is sin. Sin is not a fun word or a comfortable topic, but Jesus will not stop bringing it to our attention because we will miss out on life with Him if sin is left unaddressed. You may think Jesus is trying to take the one thing you enjoy or spoil your fun, but that is not the case. The reason He clearly defined marriage and sex in the Bible is because He wants what is best for you.

Ignore the political arguments, the protestors, and the yelling. Jesus wants you to trust Him. Trust that He has good things in store for you. Trust that He wants what is best for you. Before you decide that what you feel is right, decide if you trust Him (John 10:10; Ephesians 3:17-21; 1 Timothy 2:4).

**Jesus created us and designed us with a certain plan. The plan was that he wants the best for us, and that applies to our marriages and relationships too.**

**How does God's best for us often compete with what the world suggests is best for us?**

**What more is God asking from you in order to continue to become more like Jesus?**

5) I will be here for you.

**1 Peter 3:9**

***The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.***

You may disagree with Jesus's thoughts on sex and marriage, but He will not turn away from you. You may enjoy the life you live right now even if it disagrees with the guidelines He laid out in Scripture. Jesus understands your hesitation to make changes. He does not give up on us. For a long time now, people have disagreed with Him, yelled at Him, and run from Him, and He patiently waits. Jesus is patient with us because He wants you to know Him. Jesus wants you to live the life He has planned for you. When you are worn out from doing things your way, He will be here. Turn to Him and ask for help, and He will be there before you can blink.

There is no permanent joy outside of Jesus. Jesus wants what is best for you, and He wants you to experience a full life. Jesus is not concerned with winning an argument or forcing you to do something you don't want to do. Jesus wants you to know that your relationship with Him is better than anything else out there. Until you reach that point, He will be here patiently drawing you to Himself (Romans 2:4; 1 Peter 5:7; Hosea 14).

**How can we embody God's patience and never ending love as we encounter those around us with different beliefs or opinions?**

**What is God speaking to you overall through this topic?**