

IV. Progressive Christianity in Biblical Perspective
Historic Biblical Christianity and Contemporary Progressive Christianity
“Political Correctness and Contemporary Issues: Revoice Theology”

I Corinthians 6: 9, 10

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June 20, 2021 • Evening Sermon

In this study we will be looking at about three passages of Scripture and I will start out with the one in Ephesians 5. This is our fourth study in this series and I'd like to give some context to this topic. Out in the broader culture there is this progressive secular humanist movement that is being felt in entertainment, corporations and the academy. The Bible warns us about what happens in the larger culture as it begins to move, Satan has a way of taking the professing church and coopting it so it becomes a handmaiden of the culture. This is seen in Revelation when the beast of the sea which represents the trancey of government and culture and the beast of the land which looks like the church but is actually doing the work of the dragon (Satan) also, in terms of supporting the beast of the land. The fact that we have had and do have for 2000 years now, Satan's attacks of infiltration, intimidation and imitation upon the church to silence, coopt and marginalize her is not surprising.

With the progressive secular humanist movement in the culture, now has risen in the last 20 to 30 years this progressive Christianity. I have asked people to go back to the 19th and 20th century to see what happened with what was known as liberal Christianity, where it led to and out of that I have recommended the book *Christianity and Liberalism* by J. Gresham Machen for which I have been roundly criticized for doing. The criticism has to do with the denial of the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the inerrancy of the Word and the miracles that were found in liberal Christianity and people try to tell me that no progressive Christians in the evangelical world or even those promoters/supporters of progressive Christianity to some degree in the PCA itself, are promoting such theological apostacy. I would agree with them that they are not, yet, but then again maybe they are. Hopefully you will see what I mean by that from this study.

I know they will because progressive Christianity is liberal Christianity 2.0, why? It is because it has the same road map. Liberal Christianity did not start out in order to establish theological adulteration, confessional abandonment and theological apostacy. No, in the 19th century it was a movement that had this motivation; we are going to save Christianity from the dustbin of history. The modern mind is going to dismiss Christianity so we want to make sure Christianity is not culturally irrelevant. It must be culturally relevant and therefore the motivation was to save Christianity into cultural relevance. That motivation led to a rethinking of the mission of the church and at the turn of the century with all of the advancements of technology and things that were happening, there was this amazing movement in the mainline Protestant denomination to establish the post-millennial utopian kingdom who would bring that home.

To bring that home in their mission of cultural transformation and human flourishing to be successive, they had to make sure they were not irrelevant so with the motivation of cultural relevance and the new mission of cultural transformation then what happens, as we are warned in Scripture about this and see in church history, is whatever becomes the functional motivation and mission of a church will inevitably define its message and edit its confession. To be relevant to the modern mind they would say they couldn't hold on to these doctrines that contain the supernatural or how can you be so foolish to believe an incarnation or exclusivity of Christ for

salvation. The primary culture player for cultural transformation it was a short moment to change the message by cultural accommodation thus the birth of liberal Christianity. They didn't start out with theological liberalism that led to liberal Christianity for they started liberal Christianity with its motivation and mission which is what led to the adulteration and apostasy of the message.

It is my contention that on the one hand, they are right for no one in progressive Christianity is currently denying the deity Christ or the inerrancy of God's Word or the miracles, but they are saying they have to be culturally relevant or they will lose their children, the students, the next generation and be relegated to the dustbin of history. Therefore, they want to seek the welfare of the city, but not as the Bible says to seek the welfare of the city, but as the city says to seek its welfare. Instead of using the tools of the Bible they want to use the tools of the culture. So instead of Biblical justice they go to social justice. Whatever becomes the mission and the motivation will control the message. There is the same motivation and mission in progressive Christianity as there was in liberal Christianity. What will come from this, is progressive theology and it's already going at the doctrines of first order.

Currently, progressive Christianity is not tracking down the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy but the doctrine of the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture. Now there is the canonization of extra Biblical literature that is rooted out of cultural philosophies that are anti-Christian, anti-Gospel, anti-God and we're being told just to 'chew the meat and spit out the bones' but the reality is it's more like a thirsty man in the ocean thinking he can drink the sea water and spit out the salt – it will kill you. It will adulterate the message and it will also allow movements that will deny the Gospel which I'm going to try and show you in this study.

The doctrine of God, the doctrine of God's Word, the doctrine of the incarnation and all those things that theological liberalism attacks, not all of them are being attacked now. That does not mean that doctrines of first order are not being attacked. The doctrine of the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture – sola Scriptura, the Scripture alone is our only rule of faith and practice – has been eviscerated and is being eviscerated as other instruments take precedence over the Gospel dynamics. There are a number of areas here which I'm going to try and show you in this study.

Also, related to that is the denial of the first order of the Gospel. Now, we have a half gospel, dealing with the sins that are found in the culture that the culture is celebrating. We are in the midst of a cultural revolution, but the reality is, we are not in a cultural war. We are in a spiritual war. The culture will either be blessed by us fighting the spiritual war with the armor of God and the weapons of the Spirit or the culture will become the casualty. One of the sacraments of rebellion against God throughout society is the cultural embrace of sexual promiscuity, sexual perversion and sexual anarchy and all of its attendant deprivations and degradations.

Romans 1 paints the picture that when men and women deny the truth of who God is as Creator then they will attack. We have the Creator and His creation and that's a binary. When God creates, we see binary after binary – light/darkness, land/sea, male/female. God reflects the binary of the Creator and the creation in the very creation itself. The place of the pointed attack then will be in marriage, family and foundationally sexuality. What does God do if they exchange God's truth for a lie, if they worship the creation instead of the Creator? It is that declaration of forensic judgment where God gives them over. He gives them over as we see in Romans 1 to sexual promiscuity with all of its penalties and destruction, then to sexual perversion and then to social approval. Have you ever noticed there is nothing more evangelistic

than those who embrace sin? When this happens, you want to recruit others into it and you want society to call that which is evil good and that which is good and evil. The sacrament against God is sexual immorality, promiscuity and perversion and that creates a culture of insanity, absurdity and immorality.

When God called His people out to the Promised Land He gave them the first books of the Bible – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Read in detail Numbers 18 and 19 for there, God begins to list the culture of the surrounding nations and their downgrade and death spiral – bestiality, Molech, child sacrifice, homosexuality, effeminacy. Then God in essence tells His people, ‘Do not let that which is embraced by them to ever be named among you.’ He did not want that culture to press them into its mold. Here is New Testament language for this. Romans 12:2 says [2] *Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* Then God tells them ‘For if you do, I like a feather will tickle the throat of the land and vomit you out’ (Leviticus 18 and 20). In the New Testament language God says ‘I’ll remove the lampstand’ (Revelation 2:5). So, did Israel embrace sexual immorality, promiscuity, Molech, child sacrifices, etc.? Yes, and then several things happened when they did this. There was the Assyrian captivity and the Babylonian captivity for God tickled the throat of the land to vomit them out.

We are in a culture that is in a cultural revolution. Our warfare is not the culture but ours is understanding that the heart of the problem is the problem with the heart that men and women are suppressing truth in unrighteousness so we have a spiritual warfare. We have a mission, message and ministry from the Lord. Our motivation is the love the Lord and the lost. Our motivation is not to make the culture culturally relevant for there is nothing more culturally relevant than the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the saving power of Christ. We don’t need a new mission, we just need to do the mission – make disciples, teaching them to observe all that I (Jesus) have commanded you (Matthew 28:18–20). With the right motivations we need to stay on mission, on message and in the ministries of the Gospel. The culture will be blessed if we do that, not because we tried to transform the culture, but we moved to transform sinners with the power of the Gospel and when they get saved they get changed and when they get changed the culture becomes blessed – the culture becomes the beneficiary. If we don’t stay on mission and on message then the culture will be one of the casualties. This is why it’s so crucial to understand this.

Now in progressive Christianity the motivation is being culturally relevant and the mission is cultural transformation and we find our culture in a sexual revolution telling the church that this is a true revolution and no one is looking for a seat at the table for sexual sins. The culture is telling the church in their revolution that they must celebrate what they once condemned and must condemn what they once celebrated – gender, marriage, sex within marriage, one man one woman one life. The culture says ‘we’re not asking you to tolerate us, we’re telling you, the church, to change it or you will be dismissed.’ So progressive Christianity buckles down and under that threat as they begin to say ‘why don’t we make this adjustment, this adjustment and this adjustment.’ As the issues are raised of the sexual revolution, racism, etc., does progressive Christianity look to the Bible to fulfill the message and mission or do they look to the culture for the tools and the culture begins to direct the church?

This is exactly what happened in 2018 with clarity, in a PCA church – Memorial Presbyterian – when a conference was established known as Revoice. At that time, that conference was focused on how the church can minister to Christian sexual minorities,

specifically with the focus on homosexuality. This was not a PCA ministry or originated by PCA leadership but it was hosted in a PCA church and the leadership did receive, support and participate so it caught our attention. There were many in the PCA including me that said 'ok let's take a look at this.' Why would we take a look at it?

The first reason we would take a look at it is, would this give us (PCA) some instruments and help in how to reach those who are struggling with, under the addictions of unnatural desires and carrying those desires into practice, and those that we reach, will it help us know how to minister to them? So we wanted to see what they had to say regarding this. Some of our own people are engaged in it so there must be something there that we need to look at.

Secondly, there was not an immediate rejection and a call to arms because one, we all wanted to reach everyone with the Gospel, including those in sexual addictions, both promiscuous heterosexual and that which is disordered, homosexual. The second reason that motivated us to take a look into this, was we had to confess we haven't always done it well and that there are those who are wanting to come out of homosexuality into Christ and to grow in grace. In many churches, not all, these particular individuals have been marginalized, segmented and put on the side. I'll never forget what I heard from Dr. Schaffer who said 'shall we preach against drunkenness, yes, should we preach against immorality and sexual perversion, yes, but if you won't bring the drunk into your house and be willing to clean up the floor or let the sexually immoral have a bed with linens you have provided, then you're not really dealing with the sin.' You have to address the sin if you love the sinner and you have to love the sinner to address the sin. So, we decided to hear what they had to say in this Revoice conference.

We began to hear what they had to say and while I'm not going to say they were wolves in sheep's clothing because I don't think they were in many cases, but here were sheep in wolves clothing that had through the progressive Christianity who wanted to be relevant and transform the culture felt they needed to do that, instead of believing the Bible ended up getting the solution and the ministries to apply that solution, there began a re-interpretation of how to deal with these issues. Therefore, the door is opened for the deterioration of our confession and message on an issue of first order and that is the Gospel itself. That is why I keep saying that progressive Christianity, not is it promoting theological liberalism, but it will promote theological progressive-ism because it has the same motivation and same mission and therefore it will eventually accommodate the present culture in the message, which will become an adulterated and apostate message.

So what is it that Revoice was saying? I want to give you the mission and the vision from the Revoice website. The Revoice mission is "to support and encourage gay, lesbian, bisexual, and other same-sex attracted Christians—as well as those who love them—so that all in the Church might be empowered to live in gospel unity while observing the historic Christian doctrine of marriage and sexuality." Basically there is the recognition of something out there called 'side A' and then something called 'side B.' Revoice in the present ministry has said 'no' to Side A.

Side A says that homosexuality is the product of if there is a God, He made us this way, for why would we have chosen it. Forget what the Bible says about unnatural lust it is in our DNA for it is a created appetite that God has given to us and the church has gotten this thing wrong for thousands of years. Therefore, people must embrace the LGBTQ agenda. They didn't want the church to give them the Gospel, they wanted the church to change the Gospel in order to understand they didn't need the Gospel for they didn't think they needed to be saved from anything and ought to be affirmed and make room for it.

Then there is Side B which is by professing Christians. Side B says ‘no’ to Side A. This is not a matter of creation. It’s a matter of the fall. All of the sexually disordered dynamics represented by LGBTQAI+ come from the fall. They are of sin. We uphold the Biblical doctrine of marriage and sexuality. Marriage is to be between a man and a woman for life. In that one who agreed with this would applaud Side B Revoice position.

That is what is in their mission statement and note the words and their repetition in this Revoice mission statement. They say ‘to support and encourage’ – do you hear some relational disconnect? ‘To live in gospel unity’ – not marginalized. Here is the problem. Built into that is a grenade that won’t allow that – gospel unity, love, encourage, support, oneness, with any and all sinners that are being saved by grace – yet at the same time division into sexual minorities where I’m not identified as a Christian. I’m identified by my sins before I profess becoming a Christian. As soon as you have any other identity than Christ, you have undermined any opportunity for demonstrable unity. We can still extend love, encouragement and truth but you can’t get to unity unless Christ is our life – no matter what sins or besetting sins you have come from or are still dealing with.

It becomes even clearer in Revoice’s vision statement which says “Revoice exists because we want to see gay/SSA (same sex attracted) people who adhere to historic, Christian teaching about marriage and sexuality experience peace and belonging in their local faith communities. **We envision a unified, faithful, and peaceful Church where these individuals are able to grow in holiness and in their knowledge of the scriptures, knowing that they are of infinite worth and value to their Creator;** where transparency about one’s orientation and ongoing experience creates enhanced possibilities for local churches to utilize and celebrate the unique opportunities that these individuals have to serve the Kingdom of God; and where these individuals are welcomed into the lives of spiritual families so that all can grow together in their knowledge of God and his Kingdom.”

Notice that their identity is not Christian but it’s same sex or gay or whatever the moniker is for the identifying term. It is their identity within the church yet they want to see their peace, encouragement and unity in the church. Praise the Lord for the statement above in bold and in the next statement every believer has a unique set of gifts and experiences but the sin culture of our life doesn’t bring treasure to the work of the Kingdom. It is the redeeming work of grace that brings treasure into the work of the Kingdom. There is much in that vision to applaud and there is much in it that you feel – that feeling of being disconnected, marginalized, the desire to have community and acceptance. Yet in order to accomplish what their mission and vision says there is ‘fly in the ointment’ that must be addressed, otherwise we can’t really reach the LGBTQ community in general and the homosexual segment of it, in particular. And to be able to grow one comes into the body of Christ dealing with their sins and being supported as they deal with their sins, but your sins are never your identifying mark.

We don’t come in as racist Christians though we may have to deal with racism. We don’t come in as pornographic Christians though we may have to deal with the besetting sin of pornography. We don’t come in as alcoholic Christians though we may have to deal with the sin of drunkenness. Why would you identify with your sin when you come to Christ and you’re dead to your sins so now you have declared war with them, so why would you be named by them? It is because what is informing Revoice is as much or more psychological categories and therapies than the Gospel itself. That’s why it needs to be dealt with and why Side B theology can have no place in a faithful church.

Reaching homosexuals with a Biblical Gospel, Biblical ministries, discipleship that is patient, loving, accepting people without having to accept behavior, can be established, but not an attempt to baptize psychological therapies and categories with Biblical terms but a different definition for those terms. This is what is known as sociology, psychology and behavior modification. One of the reasons we have tried to give a good voice to listen to Revoice is because of a certain amount of realization that some of the efforts to help those who are captured by besetting sins of sexual immorality, sexual promiscuity, sexual anarchy and perversion have been terribly anti-Christian yet they have been administered in the names of Christianity. Such as, reparative therapy on homosexuals that says ‘what can we do to accomplish behavior modification’ and have included some of the most awful things as shock treatments to “get rid” of their problem, yet not the Gospel.

One whole organization thankfully has folded its tent. It had a Biblical name and proclaimed itself a Biblical organization and I don’t doubt their motivations but their ministry was totally psychologically engaged and dealing with an issue of the heart, as if it was simply a matter of behavior modification of your children to do better manners at the table. Then there were things that were drastically done that denied the dignity and respect of individuals.

So, yes, we listen but here are the problems with Side B. There is Side B theology of Revoice. They render for all of its stated good mission and vision and for the realization that those who hold to this, are under constant assault from the LGBTQ community, because they affirm Biblical marriage and that homosexual practices are sin. With the realization of all of that we have to deal with the theology of Side B. Here are five areas that need to be addressed and why it can’t find root and rouse within the PCA if we really want to reach the sexually disordered and the homosexual community with the Gospel.

Number one is, identification with your sin – sexual minorities, sinful identities. Let’s look at Ephesians 5. In Ephesians 1 through 3 Paul tells us all the Gospel blessings that are ours in Christ and then in Ephesians 4 through 6 he gives the Gospel life that you live for Christ because of the Gospel. In other words, Ephesians 1–3 tell you who you are by justification and adoption and Ephesians 4–6 tells you how you live in light of those Gospel blessings with the Gospel life of sanctification.

Ephesians 5:1–14a says [1] *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. [2] And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

[3] *But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. [4] Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. [5] For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. [6] Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. [7] Therefore do not become partners with them; [8] for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light [9] (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), [10] and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. [11] Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. [12] For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. [13] But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, [14a] for anything that becomes visible is light.*

Here Paul is showing us our life in rebellion against God with our evil desires, sexual aberrations and all of those things, and what we need to do is eradicate them – desire, thought,

word and deed. We eradicate them by God's grace and for His glory and that's what we need to do. You are doing this, not to be saved, but because you are saved. Because you are saved you want to go to war with what is there. Are there some sins that are besetting, that you will fight, that seem to be coming back all the time? Yes, but don't make a peace treaty with them. The assault they have on you just calls you to kill them in thought, word and deed all the more with the weapons of the Spirit, because if you don't kill sin, it will kill your testimony, your joy, your life so you have to deal with sin. If your objective is that your sins are not to be named then why in the world would we name ourselves by the sins?

Christians are not going to be sinless, but I'm just saying I believe the Gospel – they can sin less. I don't think one will ever be sinless except positionally and legally through Christ's blood and righteousness on this side of eternity. I also don't think you will ever be where you want to be, but I don't think you will stay where you are. I don't know any Christian who is where they ought to be but Christians, while they never get to where they want to be, they praise God they are not where they used to be. They can begin to have victory. Some victories you will get almost with complete triumph on this side of eternity but some of them you will fight all the way up until you get the new body for the new heavens and the new earth where you won't sin or even be able to sin.

Adam was created perfect with the ability to sin. When Adam fell, he could sin and only sin even when he did what was good. When you get saved the power of sin is broken and you will still sin but you now have the power not to sin. When you get to heaven you won't even be able to sin so where we are now as a Christian is that we have been born again – the power of sin has been broken therefore it need not name me anymore. I don't even want it to be named in my life so I'm going to war against it, not to be saved but because I love my Savior and I will not be identified by my sin.

The second issue with Side B is that Side B gladly accepts the declarative blessings of the Gospel – justification and adoption – but it undermines the transforming blessings and power of the Gospel – regeneration and sanctification. One of my colleagues in the PCA just recently wrote about this issue and he says 'I have never acted out my same sex attraction but my desires and attractions, now into the third decade haven't changed one millimeter.' I don't know what that means about the individual but I do know that the Bible gives you not only the ability to say 'no' to the act but the ability to begin to erode the desires – that you can begin to attack them through the power of the Gospel. Why? I believe that the same Gospel promise that when you come to Christ by faith and repentance you are declared right – your sins are wiped away, God's righteousness is yours, you are justified meaning innocent, condemnation has been removed. I believe in adoption and no longer do I serve Satan as my father but now God is my Father and I'm in the family of God.

I believe those declarative blessings but the same Gospel that gives those blessings effectively says when you come to Christ you have been born again. You not only have a new record legally, but you have a new heart experientially and while sin is still in you, you are no longer in sin under its domain. In other words, when you become a Christian, you have sin remaining but no longer is it reigning. Now grace reigns in your life. We don't believe in perfectionism. I John 1:8 says *[8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* But if you live under sin, then grace is not with you for as a Christian, Romans 6:14 says *[14] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.* Grace breaks the power of sin and that regeneration then enables you to a life of sanctification, whereby you put off and put on, put off evil desires and put on the better desires, put off the old

man and put on the new man for the rest of your life. It will be an uneven sanctification for it will be up at times and down at times. Was the great King David sinless? Absolutely not, but this man who had great sins also had great repentance and great growth by the grace of God. That is what God's grace does for you.

Revoice theology says homosexual desires are of sin but not sin, for it is only the practice of them that is sin. So, if one commits to being celibate then one is mortifying the sin of homosexuality. You are mortifying the actual sin, but not the thought sin and the Bible says we have an old man living within us that is more powerful than you, but God's grace that fixes you on Jesus can kill that old man every day. Sin is not a syndrome to be managed, sin is sin to be killed in thought, word and deed. Every day you go to war against it – to put off and put on.

Thirdly, we don't manage sin as if it's a syndrome, we kill it for what it is – our enemy and the enemy of God.

A fourth issue is that Revoice theology turns to psychology and sociology ultimately rather than Gospel discipleship. Let's look at I Corinthians 6. Here Paul is not talking about Christians who are covered with Christ's righteousness positionally and are attacking unrighteousness in their life, but he is talking about those under the governance of their sin – not those who have sin still living in them but still living under sin.

I Corinthians 6:9–11 says [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,* [10] *nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

If Paul is teaching works salvation, then he would say 'do you not know that the unrighteous will not *earn* the Kingdom of God.' He uses the word inherit for you get into the Kingdom as a blessing of the death of Christ and you now inherit everlasting life, but those who inherit everlasting life do not live under the reign of unrighteousness. As he goes on he is referring to those under the reigning sin of those he lists. In other words, when you are saved by the grace of God you say 'no' to those sins by the power of God's grace that positions you in the perfections of Christ and now is working on you to mature you for Christ. Those who don't have the presence of regeneration and sanctification cannot lay claim. It's not that you don't have sin in your life because we all of sin in our life. We have an old man remaining in our life so we have sin remaining.

When you become a Christian you get a new record, a new heart and a new nature but you still have an old man and that old man is greater than your new record and new heart unless you keep the heart fixed on Jesus every day to kill sin and to grow in grace. Therefore, Paul is telling us that the Gospel works positionally as well as powerfully. I know this personally for in that list of sin Paul gives, seven of them were dominating my life when I became a Christian. Yet when I became a Christian, that's what I was, but that's not what I am. I am in Christ and Christ is in me. I have a new record, a new heart and I'm growing with my new life, up, down and unevenly, but I'm growing. Some of those seven – boom – gone! For they were microwaved out the day I was converted, but some of them I'm still fighting in my life and that's why I have an accountability group, prayer warriors and encouragement teams to hold me accountable, to deal with those things with some being more powerful than others, but I will not be identified with them nor will I sign a peace treaty with them or surrender to them. Why? It is because I believe in not only Gospel conversion, but I believe in Gospel discipleship.

The besetting sins call for more effort of what we call the means of grace. I get sermons dealing with those subjects and don't wait for one to just pop up on me. I try to deal with those things. Some things can be pulled out and by grace they are gone, praise God! But sometimes I pull it out and in a week it's back trying to take over my heart again. You not only have to pull out but you have to push out. It's just like with some trees, you lower the sap and the leaves just fall off. Just don't feed the sin, feed your life in Christ. Then when the grace sap gets into you life, not only has the old sap been cut off and the sin starts to fall away, but you get filled up with the grace of God's sap through Lord's Day preaching, worship, means of grace, fellowship, small group discipleship, just stay in it. Broken vessels can be filled up if you immerse them. Immerse yourself in the means of grace so that you push out your sins. Get people around you that love you enough where you can share those issues, those things that are laying hold of you that you don't want to lay hold of you.

This is a Roman Catholic doctrine where you have this old man in you where the good that you would do you don't do but you practice the evil that you do and therefore there is nothing you can do about that but if you keep from doing the sin you are okay. No, we don't believe that the actual sin is just the sin but we believe the thought sin, the desire sin is sin and that's why Jesus said don't just keep from committing adultery but don't lust in your heart (Matthew 5:27–28). Go after it and pull it out. Flee temptation – don't go stay in that community. I had an issue with alcohol. I didn't go to those places for years and do not hear me say I'm going to them now. I wouldn't even walk down a street that had places that served alcohol where the smell would come out. Flee temptation and fill up with something else. I can say 'no' to immorality if my wife just fills my life up in Christ and for Christ and if Christ fills my life up. Those are the ways you go after it. It's fine if you want to be celibate but that's not just the victory for the victory is not just that you don't do it, but the victory is that you want to get rid of the inclinations to it. So that now when you get up in the morning you want to more and more think about Christ, that Christ is your life.

Fifthly and finally, are those who embrace Side B theology. I am a same sex erotic attracted man or woman. I'm a same sex *phileo* guy who love men, brothers, who love the Lord but same sex erotica who is committed to being celibate and remain celibate – does that qualify for above reproach and ordination in the PCA? You will others accuse people like me of saying that they are raising up a strong man as people say the PCA is about to ordain practicing homosexuals. I have never said that. Side A has not been talked about in the PCA. Now, I'm always concerned as to where it's going to lead to, but we are dealing with Side B. The issue is, is someone who is same sex erotically attracted qualified to be ordained ruling and teaching elders in the PCA – which is the battle that is before us today.

I say all this because I want to make sure we say 'no' to progressive Christianity and in the next study we'll look at critical theory, critical race theory and all of that but what is opening the door, is a motivation and a mission that thinks we have to be culturally relevant and culture transforming, therefore we keep modifying the message with the instruments, tools and messages of the culture. We are at first order issues – the sufficiency of Scripture, Gospel discipleship and the whole Gospel of God (justification, adoption, regeneration and sanctification). They are not deity of Christ but Paul says in I Corinthians 15:3–4, [3] *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4] that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.* You get the Gospel wrong and you get everything else wrong. These are first order issues and do we want proponents of this to be ordained in the PCA?

I believe with all my heart those whom I have reached out to in the homosexual community in which I'm discipling two now, I don't want to go to them with a management therapy. I want to go with them with a Gospel that says you can be forgiven of all the shame and guilt and the power can be broken. I am not promising that you're going to get fixed here completely, but I am promising you God's transforming grace is powerful, just like His forensic grace that declares you right with Him. We can get on a journey because Jesus starts the makeover when Jesus is the Takeover. That's the Gospel that I want to bring.

To my brothers in the ministry, I would say we can't keep silent about this for you have to say something. It doesn't mean when you say something you say the wrong thing – be thoughtful, be careful – and don't just say something because everyone wants you to say something. Say the right thing but we're going to have to say something from the pulpits and we must not say the wrong thing. Hear me. While I have listened to Revoice because I want to increase my effectiveness in reaching those who are sexual disordered sins both natural heterosexuality and unnatural desires, I want to reach them. I want them to be brought in, be loved and cared for, but I'm not going to do it with the tools of the world that manage sin but I want to go to the heart of the problem which is the problem of the heart and the Gospel will get there.

Therefore, we want to have that kind of discipleship that trusts the blessings of the Gospel declared and the blessings of the Gospel transforming for the rest of your life. Some of those sins will be microwaved and some will be crockpot-ed but that is the way the Lord does it and the perfection is eternity. On the way we're not named by our sins, we're named by Christ. We don't manage the sins, we mortify the sins for the glory of Christ who saves us to the uttermost. We have to have people of God who with truth and love know how to engage this. With all due respect, how many of our people are concerned about it? Part of it are either preachers are preaching the wrong thing or they are saying it's not a big issue for it's just philosophy, personality and stuff like this. But I want our people to know these are first order issues, yet will the people want to know it?

Where is our heart for Christ's church that by God's grace we don't get vomited out, by God's grace the lampstand is not moved, but we'll be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together in Your Word. God, give us carefulness and courage to deal with these issues in our day to win everyone to Christ who trust Christ, live for Christ and then help them grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, even the besetting sins. We go after, not their weeds only, but the root for the Gospel is glorious. I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.