

A Scriptural Response to Homosexuality

Lesson 5: A Crucial Conversation

INTRODUCTION

What are the inherent dangers of a certain subject or topic being taboo/off limits? What happens when it is discussed openly?

1.) Since many Christians struggle with recurring unwanted sexual desires (and some of these struggle with unwanted homosexual desires), why address this issue specifically? What happens if we don't have this conversation?

- a.) "I'm all alone." "No one else struggles with this." Cycle of sin and shame.
- b.) Our silence means letting souls fend for themselves among the wolves.
- c.) The legal, social, and church support of this lifestyle sends a mixed message.
- d.) Guard against our overreaction.
- e.) Guard against oversimplification or quick fix mentality.

2.) Why might having homosexual desires be a particularly challenging struggle for a Christian?

3.) Why is it often so difficult for many Christians to extend help, loving support, and patient counsel to a brother or sister struggling with homosexuality?

4.) Let's review the Apostle Paul's own struggle with sin in Romans 7:7-25:

Romans 7:7-13 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ⁹ Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

- Because of our sin-brokenness, what does God's law (and really any law) now automatically invoke in us?
- Since the law stirs up sinful desires and sin in us, how would we respond to those who would say we'd be better off without it? (v.12-13)

Romans 7:14-23 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

- Describe what is constantly going on in the heart of every Christian every day. How may this help us make a brother or sister's struggle with homosexuality more relatable?

Romans 7:24-25 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

- Once we reach this common ground, what is our only recourse and God's solution?

5.) Another crucial part of this conversation is defining homosexuality vs. being defined by homosexuality.

Homosexuality: *sexual or romantic attraction (desire in the mind) to others of one's same sex : the quality or state of being gay; sexual activity (behavior) with another of the same sex*

Certainly homosexuality does not describe a person's physical appearance or mannerisms. Effeminate traits in a man or masculine traits in a woman are socially/culturally defined and do not identify either as a homosexual.

6.) What are some complications with any Christian using sex and sexuality (*eros*) to define themselves or be the source of their immutable identity?

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

Ephesians 4:14 Then [when we reach unity in faith, knowledge, and maturity in Christ] we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

7.) Instead of allowing our godless society or even our own sin-warped minds define us, what should be the unchanging core of our identity? What label should we embrace instead?

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart."

Psalms 139:1, 13, 23-24 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. ...For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ...Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

CONCLUSION

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