

LESSON 6B – Listening to Friends and Members of the LGBTQ+ Community



(based on pp. 203-258)

Introduction: Overview of the Scripture's Warnings about Sexual Sins

Old Testament Warnings:

- Exodus 20:14 (the commandment)
- Leviticus 20:10 (the civil penalty for adultery was death)
- Proverbs 5; 6:20-35; 7
 - Adultery is tempting but leads to physical and spiritual death.
 - Stay far away from it. It will ruin you and enslave you.
 - Adultery brings merciless retribution.
 - Will bring you under God's judgment.
- 2 Samuel 11-12 (David and Bathsheba)
- 2 Samuel 13-15 (Amnon and Tamar, which results in Absalom's rebellion)

New Testament Warnings:

- Matthew 5:27-31 (Adultery starts as lust in the heart, and if unrepentant leads to hell.)
- Romans 1 (Sexual depravity as a function of idolatry. See later in lesson.)
- 1 Corinthians
 - Chapter 5 (Expel the sexually immoral from your fellowship for their eternal spiritual good and your own because "a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough".)
 - 6:12-7:40 (Flee from sexual immorality. The body is meant for the Lord. Better to marry than to burn with passion, otherwise be chaste.)
- Galatians 5:19 (Sexual immorality is among obviously disobedient acts of sinful nature.)
- Ephesians 4:17ff (Leave sensuality and impurity in the pagan past.)
- Colossians 3:5 (Sexual immorality, impurity, lust are idolatry that bring God's wrath.)
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3ff (Avoid sexual immorality and gain self-control. Live purely, else you have rejected God and his Spirit.)
- Revelation 21:8; 22:15 (The sexually immoral will be thrown into hell and have no place in the city of God.)

Why does God let us be tempted?

1.) Review of Biblical truths and principles from previous lesson:

- God is holy and tempts no one to sin. Rather temptation is caused by the sinful nature in us that deceives us so we give into the temptation from the devil, world, or our own flesh.
- In this life each believer has their own unique struggle with temptations. This is due to our own brokenness/personal weaknesses, exposure, history/sinful habits, etc.
- While we are alike in our brokenness, this does not mean we minimize sin, rather we seek God's forgiving grace in Christ and empathize with each other (i.e. our struggles are not so different).

1. How are sexual sins different from other sins?

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

We noted earlier that one person may be especially tempted by one sin while another person's struggle may be with an entirely different sin. We might like to ask God why we have to be born with a sinful predisposition to anything. Why can't we all just be born with a clean slate? And if we do have to be born with a sinful disposition, why can't it be to a sin other people won't look down on? God hasn't told us these things. He tells us only what we need to know in order to be saved!

2. Whenever our sinful nature gets the better of us and we repeat a sin, whatever it is, how can we be reassured that we are still God's children?

1 John 1:8-2:2 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

3. What blessings does God graciously work in us through our struggles against our sinful nature and against temptations (including when we fall)?

Psalms 51:3-4, 7 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. ...Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

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

4. What if people don't hang on to Christ? What if they hang on to sin and try to cover it up?

Psalm 32:3-4 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

2 Samuel 11 (The sad series of events of David's lust, adultery, and attempted coverup.)

Romans 1:18-32 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

²⁸ Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

5. What explanation does Paul give for why does God allow people to go down the path towards sexual sins (including homosexuality)?

6. Based on Romans 1:26-32 Describe the downward trajectory from idolatry through sexual sins to more sins and the consequences of those sins.

7. What hope can we hold out to all those who admit they are trapped in sin and want to be freed from the sins of their past?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. 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.

8. In your own words summarize why God allows us be tempted.

9. Complete this sentence: "Reading this section from Romans chapter 1 encourages me to . . ."

NEXT TIME: How does God help us overcome temptations?

Prayer