

(1 Corinthians) Flee Sexual Immorality

by Brian Brodersen

The Bible teaches that sex is a gift from God to be used within the boundaries of marriage, and outside of marriage, sex is considered sinful and will lead to eternal death unless repented of.

Duration: 57:14

Scripture: Matthew 5:29-30, John 15:18, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 2 Corinthians 6:17, Galatians 4:16

Topics: "Sin And Temptation", "Spiritual Freedom"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the severity of sin and the consequences it has on one's inheritance of the kingdom of God. He highlights the power of Christ to deliver and set free those who have become entangled in sin. The preacher also discusses the importance of understanding the severity of sin and the need to avoid practices that can lead to temptation. He emphasizes the need for Christians to replace carnal things with spiritual things and not to live on the edge of the world while expecting God's blessing. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the two approaches to dealing with sin: a compassionate and loving approach, and a fear-based approach that highlights the reality of God's judgment.

Transcript

The culture's obsession with sexuality has also impacted the church. Many churches and entire denominations are in turmoil over issues pertaining to sexuality. In some cases, churches and even denominations have been formed on the basis of sexual orientation.

It seems that the world has gone mad over sex. The question is, how are we as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to respond to the sexually obsessed world that we live in? Paul's answer is simple, flee sexual immorality. Now, the first thing that we need to recognize in Paul's statement is the fact that there is such a thing as sexual immorality.

You see, we're living in a culture that denies that there is any such thing. We're living among people who say that any form of sexuality is just as good as any other, and no one should ever be challenged or questioned on their sexual preference. But what we learn from Paul's statement is that there are indeed moral absolutes.

In other words, there is sex that is right, and there is sex that is wrong. Now, before we address the sex that is wrong, let's for a moment consider the sex that is right. Because the Bible does, of course, speak

about sex in a positive sense.

Sexuality has indeed been given to us as a gift by God to be used in the proper context. So sex that is right is sex that is taking place within God's boundaries, and those boundaries are clearly stated in Scripture. Let me quote to you, first of all, from the words of Jesus found in Mark chapter 10, verses six through eight.

He said, From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh, so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. So proper sex is between a husband and wife, according to the words of Jesus, referring back to God's original intention when he created man.

Secondly, from Hebrews chapter 13, verse four, we're told, Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled. But fornicators and adulterers God will judge. So what the author is saying, in essence, is that within the boundaries of marriage, the bed is undefiled.

In other words, the sexual relationship is pure within the boundaries of marriage. But outside of marriage, those who are involved sexually are referred to as fornicators or adulterers, and the Scripture says that God will judge them. So this is right sex.

Sex that is right, according to the Scripture, is sex between a husband and a wife. Now, there is also sex that is wrong. And in this sixth chapter, Paul has made reference to the sex that is wrong.

In the ninth verse, he mentions fornication, adultery, and homosexuality. And he speaks of these things as sinful practices, which will prevent a person from ultimately entering into the kingdom of God. So we want to look at each one of these individually under the heading of sex that is wrong.

First of all, fornication. The word fornication, the English word fornication, means sexual intercourse between partners who are not married to each other. This is the meaning of the English word.

Sexual intercourse between partners who are not married to each other. But the Greek word that is translated fornication has a broader application than that. And in some of the newer translations, the word is translated more properly sexual immorality.

You see, the word is not only speaking of sexual intercourse between people who are not married, but it's speaking of all forms of sexual activity among people who are not married. So it's a very encompassing word. It's not limited simply to the issue of intercourse between unmarried people.

Some people justify their sexual exploits by saying, well, you know, we didn't have intercourse. As a matter of fact, the president of the United States, who is in all kinds of trouble right now over these kinds of issues, is denying adultery because he claims not to have had intercourse with certain women. But you see, under the scriptural understanding of things, he has committed adultery.

He has committed sexual immorality because it is an all-encompassing term. So the Greek word is pornos, and it's the word that we get our word pornographic or pornography from. And it is used in the New Testament of all kinds of immorality.

The word fornication, which, again, is a translation of the word pornos, appears 36 times in the Bible. 36 times in the Bible. The last reference to fornicators in the Bible is found in Revelation 21, verse 8, which

says, So we see what God has to say about fornication.

Now, the next thing that Paul mentioned was adultery. Here's the definition from the Dictionary of Adultery. Voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner other than the lawful spouse.

Once again, voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner other than the lawful spouse. The word adultery appears 40 times in the Bible. The seventh commandment of the Ten is you shall not commit adultery.

Adultery was punishable by death under the Old Covenant and will lead to eternal death, according to the New Testament, unless repented of. So, again, this is sex that is wrong for a person who is married to have sexual relations with someone other than their lawful spouse. That is the definition of adultery.

That is also the biblical definition of the word that's translated adultery. Now, the third thing that Paul mentions under the heading of sex that is wrong is homosexuality. Homosexuality is simply sexual relations between persons of the same sex.

Now, here as in other places in Scripture, homosexuality is clearly condemned. Because of the current debate over the subject, I think it would be wise for us to take a closer look at what the Scriptures say. So going back to the Old Testament, our first reference is found in Leviticus 18, verses 22 through 24.

Leviticus 18, verses 22 through 24. Listen to what the Lord said through Moses. And you shall not lie with a male as with a woman.

It is an abomination. Nor shall you mate with any animal to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it.

It is perversion. Do not defile yourself with any of these things. For by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

Again in Leviticus chapter 20, verse 13. If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death.

Their blood shall be upon them. Now moving to the New Testament, we come to Paul's epistle to the Romans. And in verses 26 and 27 of chapter 1, he says this.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise, also the men leaving the natural use of the woman burned in their lust for one another.

Men with men committing what is shameful and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error, which was due. And then one more reference beside the one that we read here in the sixth chapter of 1 Corinthians. Another reference would be found in Paul's first epistle to Timothy.

Chapter 1, verses 9 and 10, he said, knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, which is our word that is translated homosexuality, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine. So we can see from the teaching of Scripture, both Old and New Testament, that homosexuality is clearly condemned. As with adultery, homosexuality was punishable by death under

the Old Covenant and will lead to eternal death, according to the New Testament, unless repented of.

Now, we have an understanding of what sex that is right is. We have an understanding of what sex that is wrong is. We see what the apostle meant by sexual immorality by looking at the text here.

Now, what we want to do is look more closely at the exhortation. So what does he say that we are to do? Having come to an understanding of what sexual immorality is, what is to be our response to it? Paul said our response is to flee. We are to flee sexual immorality.

The word flee could be translated to run away from. It can also be translated to shun or to avoid. And that is God's instruction to us when it comes to this issue of sexual immorality.

We are to run from it. We're to shun it. We're to avoid it.

We're to stay as far away from it as possible. That mentality is not prevalent in the church today. Many in the church today are contemplating it.

Some are actually involved in it. Some are reconsidering whether or not what the Bible has to say about sexual immorality has any application to the modern culture. But again, let me remind you that Jesus said that his words would never pass away.

And we believe that the Bible is as relevant today as it was the day that it was written. Some people have said that the Bible is not capable of addressing issues of modern sexuality. As though sexuality today is any different than it was in past ages.

I've always wondered what in the world is modern sexuality? Because all the sexuality that we see going on around us is addressed in the Bible. Not only in the New Testament, but back in the Old Testament. We've seen homosexuality is clearly addressed.

We've seen that the subject of bestiality is addressed. And under the term sexual immorality, you have virtually every kind of sexual perversion imaginable, all addressed by the scripture. So this is a great misnomer to think that there is something called modern sexuality that cannot be addressed by the Bible.

This is utter foolishness. And of course, we can understand non-Christians thinking in those ways. But for Christians to think in that way is absurd.

We should never find ourselves thinking in those terms. If we're Christians, if I'm a Christian, I must believe in the inspiration and the authority of the scriptures. I must believe that what God spoke 2,000 years ago or 3,000 years ago or 5,000 years ago is as relevant today as it was when he spoke those words.

And the problem that has arisen in the church where people are now questioning the morality that's stated in the Bible has more to do with the fact that they do not believe the scriptures nor the authority of scripture than anything else. That's the underlying factor. That is the root of the problem.

So, again, going back to our point here, we are to flee sexual immorality. Now, on a very practical level, what this means is that we are going to have to avoid, we're going to have to shun, we're going to have to run away at times from that environment that might lead us into this type of sin. In some cases, in order to avoid sexual immorality, I am going to have to avoid certain people.

I'm going to have to stay away from certain people. If there have been people that I have been involved with sexually that become a temptation to lead me back into that, I must cut off the relationship with that person. I must be willing to do so.

God calls me to do that. God calls me to be separate. And there are times when we must disassociate ourselves with certain people because of the temptation that surrounds our relationship with them.

In some cases, we've seen where a young man and a woman would be perhaps living together. One of them would become a Christian. They were planning to marry one another, but now one is in Christ, the other is not in Christ.

The one who's not a Christian is still insisting on having a sexual relationship. The counsel to that person who has become a Christian is you must separate yourself from this person. You must avoid this person.

You must shun this person. Now, this is difficult. And sometimes people have a hard time with this and they say, oh, but I love them and I'm so emotionally attached and I just don't know if I can do that.

Well, you see, you must do it. And know this, God will give you the grace and the ability to do it. And as you obey God and follow his plan, you'll find that his plan is much better than yours ever could have been.

So we need to avoid people in some cases. Secondly, we need to avoid places. There might be certain places that you had frequentant, forget it, visited regularly.

That's what that coffee will do to you before preaching. And those places are places that you would now have to avoid. You can no longer go to those places.

But you see, this is all consistent with the teaching of what the scripture tells us as Christians in the first place. As a Christian, I'm to be separated from the world. I'm to come out from the world.

I'm not to be involved in the things that I was previously involved with. So there might be certain places that I now need to avoid. And you can use your own imagination to figure out what those places might be.

And it would vary from person to person. You see, sexual immorality, before it works itself out into physical activity, begins in the mind and in the heart. And so we must avoid places that will implant within our minds those kinds of thoughts that could ultimately lead us to that kind of activity.

So I might no longer as a Christian be able to attend the cinema. I might not be able to do it. Because it's there that the temptation is brought back to me once again.

You see, I've got to be willing to make these kinds of steps. And know that in some cases, this is what God requires of me. If I'm in the habit of going to the cinema, and there I'm confronted with sexual immorality, and I find that lingering in my mind as I leave, and I find those images flashing up on the screen of my mind, and I find that I myself begin to think about those things.

Well, right away I should know I cannot frequent that place any longer. I just can't go there. I can't be there.

There are some other places, of course, where maybe you're not seeing some visual image, but you're in an environment where that is sort of the motive behind everyone else that is there. I know when I was a non-Christian and I would go out to attend parties and things of that nature, well, most people there had a

few things in mind at most. And probably the uppermost in their mind was a sexual encounter with someone.

So those are the kinds of things practically that we must avoid as Christian people in order to fulfill Paul's exhortation to flee sexual immorality. And then I must also avoid certain practices. I must avoid certain practices, certain things, practices maybe that just go on in my mind, fantasies, thinking.

Of course, to be involved in what we would call pornographic viewing or something like that, that in and of itself is sexual immorality. But it's sexual immorality in the mind which will inevitably lead to the other sin of committing the physical act. Either way, both fall under condemnation.

But I have to avoid or shun or run away from certain practices. Some people are brought back into temptation sexually by simply sitting in front of the television night after night, week after week, viewing the programming there, some of the advertising and things that go on. Those things can all be used to ensnare us.

We might have to avoid that practice of sitting down every evening and just absorbing ourselves with what's coming over the telly. But you see, again, as a Christian, what I'm called to do is replace carnal things with spiritual things. You see, there are too many Christians today that want to know how close to the edge they can live and still expect to have God's blessing upon their lives.

How close to the world can I live and still make it to heaven? That should never be a question that any of us ask. The question that we should be asking is, how close to Christ can I get while I'm here on earth? And so you see, what I need to be doing is I need to be saturating myself with the things of the spirit and avoiding the things of the flesh, the carnal things, those things that appeal to my flesh and could lead me into these types of things. So Paul says that we are to flee sexual immorality.

We are to run from it. We are to shun it. We are to avoid it.

I think as Paul used the term here, he also, in writing to Timothy, he said to him, he said, flee youthful lust, using the same word. I think Paul probably had in his mind the incident that he was familiar with from the Old Testament where that handsome young man, Joseph, had been taken captive into slavery and had been brought into the house of a man named Potiphar. And there in the house of Potiphar, the wife of Potiphar had become very attracted to Joseph and she was pressing on him regularly to have sex with her.

And what we're told is that she finally pressed herself upon him. Joseph said, how could I commit this great sin before my God? And Joseph actually physically fled from the presence of Potiphar's wife. He did just what Paul is advising us to do.

He ran away from the situation. And that's what we need to do. We need to recognize the severity of this type of sin, the danger of it, and we need to, if need be, run away from it.

Now, in the context of chapter six, Paul gives us two motives for purity, two motives to abstain from sexual immorality. And I look at these two motives as one being a lower motive and the other being a higher motive. The lower motive is that sexual immorality will inevitably bring the wrath of God upon my life.

And so he says to them in verse nine, do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? You see, Paul is trying to motivate them to flee sexual immorality, and he's doing so at this point

with fear. Now, fear is the legitimate motivation. We are to fear the Lord.

We are to fear sinning against God. We are to fear the reality of retribution against sin. Something that the modern church has forgotten is God's abhorrence for sin.

God has never changed. He utterly abhors sin. Jesus made it so clear when he said, if your eye offends you, pluck it out.

If your hand offends you, cut it off. Why? Because it would be better to live life maimed than to be cast into hell whole. Now, Jesus certainly wasn't advising us to pluck out our eye or cut off our hand.

What he was doing is he was seeking to show us the severity of sin and how it would be better to live life maimed than to allow that sin to dominate your life and eventually be judged for it. That's what Jesus was pointing out. But we need to be brought back to an understanding of the severity of sin.

Paul is very upfront with these Corinthians. He says the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. And then he goes on to list what he's talking about when he's referring to unrighteousness and sexual immorality was part of that.

So the first motivation is that of fear now in dealing with other people, just strictly in the area of evangelism. The Bible advises us to at times use fear as a motive to bring people to their senses. Jude tells us that we are to save some with compassion and others with fear.

See, there are some people that are unimpressed by your compassion. We're going to talk a little bit more in a few moments about the issue of homosexuality. But among the militant homosexuals today, your compassion toward them as a sinner and your expression to them that God will forgive them is something that they are not in the least bit moved by.

They're not impressed with your compassion because they've decided that what they're doing is not wrong at all. And therefore, your compassion is ill spent. Directed toward someone else, we don't need compassion, we don't need forgiveness because we're not doing anything wrong.

So you see, as you just, you know, are taking this compassionate approach. Well, there's there's no result to that. What some people need to be told is simply this, you're going to spend eternity in hell for your behavior.

You see, if compassion doesn't motivate a person to think about his eternal destiny, then we as Christians are called upon to show them the other side. I think Jude, as he stated that I think he gave us even the the proper approach chronologically. I think our first approach to everyone always ought to be a compassionate one and a loving one, regardless of what sin a person's involved in.

We should always seek to show people the love of God and the fact that God wants to forgive them and deliver them and so forth. But when a person mocks that, when a person shuns that, when a person says, I don't need any forgiveness, then we must go to the other tactic. And that is that of fear, letting people know about the reality of God's judgment.

So fear is the first. And as I said, I think the lower motivation to flee sexual immorality, the greater motive, the higher motive is that of love. It's that of love.

And that's really what Paul is talking about. In verses 18, 19 and 20. This flea sexual immorality for every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? You see, what Paul is saying, in essence, is that Jesus Christ came to this earth, lived a life of humiliation. He suffered and shed his blood in your place that he might purchase you out of the slave market of sin. He did it all because he loved you.

And your reasonable response is one of love also. Commit your body over to him. See, when he says you're sitting against your own body, he's talking about the body that was redeemed by God.

So when we commit sexual immorality, we're actually sinning against the temple of the Holy Spirit. See, that's why Paul distinguishes sexual immorality from all other sins. Now, some people say, oh, all sin is the same.

Not so. Paul makes that clear here. For a Christian to sin in the area of sexual immorality is very severe because they are sinning against the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The body that Christ purchased with his own blood. The body that he gave up his body for that he might obtain to live his life through you. So the higher motivation for fleeing sexual immorality is that of love for Christ.

When we consider all that Jesus did for us, that we want to in return, we want to reciprocate his love by obeying him. By presenting our body to him, by recognizing that our body was, first of all, created by him. And secondly, redeemed by him for the very purpose that he might indwell our bodies and that he might be glorified through our bodies.

So the first motive for purity is that of fear. Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, he said, For this, you know, that no fornicator, unclean person or covetous man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words.

For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them. This is what every Christian needs to realize, that there are many seeking to deceive with deceptive words.

And the deceptive words are, your lifestyle doesn't matter to God in the area of sexuality. You can behave any way you want sexually and that isn't an issue. Your sexual orientation isn't an issue with God.

These things are all deceptive words. Paul says, let no one deceive you with these empty words. Because of these things, the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience.

So many today, and even in the church, have bought into these lies. These lies that are being foisted upon us by people with an agenda. These lies that are saying the Bible is not adequate to speak to sexual issues today.

The lies that are saying that God isn't concerned with your sexual behavior or God isn't concerned with your sexual orientation. Nothing could be further from the truth. Nothing could be more clearly contradicted in Scripture.

From cover to cover, God addresses thoroughly the issues of sexuality. So, the lower motive is fear. And in some cases, that needs to be where a person starts.

I'm afraid of the judgment of God. Therefore, I am going to come to him and ask for mercy. But the higher motive, and hopefully, even those motivated by fear will finally come to the place of saying, I want to yield my body to Christ entirely, simply out of love for him because of what he did for me.

And so, Paul says, for you were bought with a price. And that's the thing we must always keep in mind. The price Jesus Christ paid for our bodies.

It was his own death upon the cross. It was his own blood that was shed. And whenever the Bible speaks of redemption, or as the terms here state, bought with a price, the implication behind it is always that of being purchased out of slavery.

See, that's what the Bible teaches. Now, of course, the Roman world was very familiar with slavery. And so when the subject of redemption came up among the culture of that day, immediately what they thought of was a slave being set free, delivered from captivity.

Now, the apostles took these terms and they gave them a spiritual dimension. But redemption, biblically, or being bought with a price or these things, what we must understand is the same idea is being communicated, except spiritually. What God has done is he's purchased us out of slavery to sin.

Sexual immorality is enslavement. It's being enslaved to sin. It's having sin master dominate, rule your life.

But you see, as a Christian, Christ is to be the master of your life. He's the one to dominate and rule and control your life. This is something that we all need to remember, that we are not our own, but we were bought with a price.

You see, I have no right to take my body and to use it in a way that God has forbidden. I have no right to do that. Why? Because I do not belong to me any longer.

I belong to Christ. He purchased me with his blood and therefore he has the right to tell me how I am supposed to live. And so Paul says, therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his.

Back in Paul's day, there was some teaching that was going around that said it didn't really matter what you did with your body. Your body is sinful. And as long as you're pure in your spirit, it doesn't really matter what you do with your body.

And I think that is why he said glorify God in your body and in your spirit. Some people even rationalize that today. Oh, well, you know, in my heart, I really love God.

I've heard that so many times. I really love God in my heart with my spirit. Oh, I love God with my body.

I do what I want. You don't have that prerogative. I'm to glorify God in my body and my spirit.

Which belong to him. Now, before we close, I want to take a few moments and address more specifically some of the issues pertaining to homosexuality. And I think it's important to do so today.

There was a time when there wasn't really a need to do that. But that time is long since passed. And therefore, I think it's important that we do spend just a few moments addressing it more specifically.

I have here an article. And it's dated. Twenty first of January.

So just last week. It's an article that has to do with the statement that's come out on homosexuality by the Evangelical Alliance. And I'd like to read just a portion of it to you.

A body of evangelical Christians yesterday apologized to homosexuals for the way churches have treated them and sought forgiveness. The Evangelical Alliance, which represents one million Christians, condemned all forms of discrimination against homosexuals. In its report, Faith, Hope and Homosexuality, and called on church leaders to treat homosexuals with love and compassion.

There is no place for homophobia within the church. It hardly reflects the character of Christ. And we reject it totally, said the Reverend Joel Edwards, general director of the Alliance.

We apologize unreservedly for the hurt which has been caused by our insensitivity and unchristian behavior, which is so often marked our response to gay and lesbian people. But in the next breath, Mr. Edwards said that he still believed that homosexual sex was sinful and against God's will. The Alliance has softened its stance only slightly by saying in its report that homoerotic sexual practice is no greater sin than adultery, fornication or other sexual sins.

The report states the Alliance's opposition to ordaining practicing homosexuals and calls on Christians to help save homosexuals by encouraging them to become celibate or to reorient them to heterosexuality. Good, I agree. I think that basically everything that's said here is good and I support the position that has been taken.

But let me read to you now the response of the lesbian and gay Christian movement. The lesbian and gay Christian movement gave the report a cool reception yesterday, claiming its argument was incoherent. You see, this is a difficulty, as I mentioned earlier.

There are people who will not be satisfied with actual tolerance, which is what the Evangelical Alliance is calling for, which is valid. But they have redefined tolerance to mean approval and support. And thus the response of the so-called gay and lesbian Christian movement is a cool response, claiming that the document is incoherent.

Why? Because the document does not approve of their lifestyle. And we have to realize that many will never be satisfied with tolerance. They want approval and they want special privileges.

And anyone who takes the Bible seriously will never be able to do that. It's impossible. We can't do it.

We have to deny the clear teaching of Scripture in order to do it. So, let's address just a few issues concerning homosexuality. The number one thing that I want to encourage you to do when you're dealing with the subject or when you meet a person who's involved in that lifestyle is to start with the Bible.

Start with the Bible. And of course, as the document stated that we just read, of course we're to be loving. Of course we're to be compassionate.

We're to be like that toward everybody. That's the way a Christian is supposed to be. But that doesn't mean that we approve of sin.

You see, I can certainly love a person, but yet at the same time be able to tell them that something is wrong about their life. But you see, nowadays, love means that you never disagree or disapprove or say anything is wrong with anything that anybody's doing. Well, that's not love.

That's certainly not what the Bible refers to as love. Jesus was the personification of love, but he told us that we were all wrong. The world hated him for it.

Paul, in writing to the Galatians, he had to tell them that they were wrong in their theology. And he asked this question. He said, have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth? See, in some cases that will happen.

We will become the enemy because we simply tell people the truth. But we're to start with the Bible, with a loving, Christlike attitude. We're to start with the Bible and share with people what the Bible has to say.

People believe the Bible more than they say they do. We need to remember that. Now, people will scoff at the Bible and people will mock it and ridicule it and, you know, put it down as being irrelevant and just the words of men.

But quite often, those same people, you will sense almost a superstitious fear in regards to the Bible. There was a debate some years ago between a man named Charles Colson and a woman named Madeleine Murray O'Hare, the great American atheist who succeeded in getting prayer out of the public schools and so forth. And she, of course, made the claim that the Bible is full of contradictions.

And during the course of the debate, Charles Colson pushed his Bible toward her and asked her to show him a contradiction. And as he pushed his Bible toward her, she recoiled. And that happened several times.

And he realized, oh, there's something going on here. So he kept pushing his Bible toward her and she kept, you know, scooting further and further back. She was afraid of the Bible for some reason.

Now, you're not afraid of something that means nothing. You see, I think that that is true. In many people's lives today, they believe the Bible more than they say they do.

The fact that gay theology. I didn't know that. I don't know if you knew that there was such a thing, but there is.

The fact that gay theology tries to deny that the scriptures condemn homosexuality is evidence that what the Bible says matters. You see, they want to prove that the Bible doesn't teach against homosexuality. Why? Because apparently the Bible does matter.

If it didn't matter, why even address it? Why not just completely cast it out? So we need to start with the Bible. That needs to be our foundation. We need to go back and let people know what God's word has to say.

Now, another question that we need to address, and this one is very important considering the propaganda that's going about today and the numbers of people that have embraced this idea. The question is this. Are people born homosexual? Are people born homosexual? There is certainly no indication in scripture that that is the case.

As a matter of fact, the overall picture given us in scripture would necessitate an emphatic no to that question. Now, think about this with me. If God created people homosexual, then homosexuality would necessarily be a good thing.

But the scriptures are clear that it is not a good thing, but an abominable thing. See, if God created people homosexual, then it would of necessity be a good thing, but it's not. Scripture is clear about that.

If God created people homosexual, then, based on what we just said, He created them to sin. Yet we know that God did not create man to sin, but to be holy as He is holy. So you see, the idea that a person is born homosexual, the whole idea runs completely contrary to the teaching of scripture.

And I think any Christian that concedes even an inch on this matter is someone who hasn't really thought the whole thing through very thoroughly. It flies in the face of all that the scripture teaches, not only specifically, but generally about man and his purpose and about God. Another question that is often asked, can a homosexual change? Well, through Christ, absolutely.

Apart from Christ, not necessarily. I think it's important to understand that. Through Christ, absolutely.

Apart from Christ, not necessarily. Now, why can a person not necessarily change apart from Christ? The answer is because sin is more powerful than you. And some people have become so bound through sin that they no longer have any power to relieve themselves from it.

Their willpower is completely broken, and they are truly and perpetually a slave to that type of sin. So there are some people who will not be able to change apart from Christ. Some have, without even becoming Christian.

Some have changed. But what we're concerned with is, through Christ, does Christ have the power to change someone who has been involved in homosexuality? Maybe even their entire life, maybe even never knew anything other than that. Absolutely.

Of course he does. That's what the power of Christ is all about. And the tragedy is that the church today is forgotten about the power of Christ.

Oh, no, we must send these people to years and years of psychotherapy and things of that nature. And we can never really hope to see them delivered and so forth. That kind of thing is coming out of the churches.

But the Apostle Paul certainly knew nothing of that. He said to the Corinthians, he said, And such were some of you. Some of you were involved in homosexuality, but you have been washed.

So you see, through the power of Christ, change is absolute. God will set you free from sin, and that's what makes the change possible. That's why some will never change apart from Christ, because the sin has dominion over them.

Now, that's not to say for a person involved in this lifestyle who comes to Christ, it's not to say that they will be entirely free from thoughts or feelings or even temptations that are peculiar to that sin. We all live with scars from the past. We all suffer to some degree the consequences of our sin, even though we become Christians.

And so a person might have to live the rest of their life with battling in that area, battling thoughts and feelings and peculiar temptations and things of that nature. But the promise in Scripture is victory. Christ will give you victory.

A homosexual who becomes a Christian should never refer to himself or to herself as homosexual. The Bible only uses the term to describe behavior. It only uses the term to describe behavior.

And for a person to go on referring to themselves as homosexual is an embracing of modern humanistic psychological thinking. It has nothing to do with Scripture. A person should never go on referring to themselves in those terms, because the Bible only uses the term to describe behavior.

I used to be a fornicator, but I am no longer. I would never introduce myself as, hello, I'm Brian, a fornicator. You see the absurdity of it? You see, all the confusion exists over the propaganda that says that there's something distinct and different going on with the homosexual.

Now, the final thing I want to say is this. We should neither maximize nor minimize the sin of homosexuality. We should neither maximize it nor minimize it.

It is certainly not the unpardonable sin. We should never, ever give anyone the impression that they cannot come to Christ, that Christ doesn't have grace and mercy for them and power to deliver them. We should never do that.

We should never maximize. As Christians, we should never be involved in what you might call gay bashing or mockery or making fun of people involved in that lifestyle. Because sin is never a laughing matter.

It's never anything to to jest about. It's never anything to joke about. And we should never be involved in it.

You see, we don't want to be guilty of maximizing this sin. And I like what was stated in the Alliance document that homosexuality is no different than fornication or adultery or any other form of sexual sin. That is accurate biblically.

That is exactly what the Bible teaches. And to maximize it, to make it something unique and unusual is fallacy on the part of the church. We should never do that.

But let me also say this again. We should never minimize the sin of homosexuality. And because of the pressure today to not merely be tolerant, but to approve, there's a tendency among Christians to minimize and to see the person who's involved in homosexuality as somehow different and as, you know, sort of more of a victim and things of that nature, not recognizing an act of their own volition.

That has led them into this activity. We should never minimize the sin of homosexuality. We should never give the impression that homosexuality is anything less than wickedness.

It is absolute wickedness. And so is fornication. And so is adultery.

And so is every other form of sexuality outside of the God ordained relationship between a husband and wife. But we shouldn't minimize it. People need to understand that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But in closing, finally, we're reminded once again of Paul's words in verse 11. And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of our God. That is the glory of the gospel, as I mentioned in our previous study, that regardless of how deep and entangled a person has become in sin, Christ is able to deliver.

He's able to set them free and notice the past tense that the apostle uses. And such were some of you. This is what you were, but it is no longer what you are.

For in Christ, you've been washed, you've been sanctified, you've been justified. A church, this church in particular, should be a place where any sinner should feel welcome. Any sinner should feel welcome.

Of course. They'll need to acknowledge the fact that they are sinners. But any sinner, regardless of what sin they're involved in, should feel welcome that this is a place where they could come and receive the mercy and the grace of God.

And I think that. Partially, the church has been guilty of giving the impression to certain sinners. That their sin was somehow unforgivable.

And therefore, that they had no business coming into the church. Of course, we could never agree that people practicing any sinful behavior could be brought into the full fellowship of the church. Of course, we understand that a person who is brought into full fellowship is a person who's repented of their sin and been forgiven.

But our doors are open to anyone and everyone. And anyone and everyone that comes through needs to know that God loves them. And if they're willing to admit that they're sinners and that they're wrong, Christ will forgive them.

One final thing. I think for those who are steeped in this particular sin. I've thought about it.

I think the clearest thing that we could emphasize to them. And I think the step that will lead to salvation is their need to simply admit that they are wrong. That's the thing that prevents.

Every sinner from experiencing the grace of God, a refusal to admit that they are sinners. But that's where a person needs to start. A person needs to start with just this statement.

I am wrong thoroughly. From head to toe. I am wrong.

God make me right. Whenever a person does that, the grace of God is there. And the life-changing power of Christ is available.

And the transformation comes.

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