

Same-Sex Attraction Part 2 - Answers to Difficult Questions

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of standing on the truth of God's word, even in the face of division and opposition, and the role of the pulpit in proclaiming and convicting the church to stand on the truth.

Duration: 1:02:27

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:9

Topics: "Sexual Purity", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon addresses the importance of surrendering to God and seeking His will, emphasizing the need for repentance and turning to Him for true change. It delves into the struggles individuals face with desires and the power of God to transform lives. The sermon also touches on the significance of standing firm on biblical truths amidst societal challenges and the role of legislation in curbing evil. Ultimately, it highlights the need for individuals to submit to God for lasting transformation.

Transcript

Lord, I would just ask that you visit us tonight in a special way, Lord. Lord, we thank you for Calvary. We thank you for Golgotha.

Lord, we thank you for the empty tomb. Lord, we are here today because of you, because of your Son, because of the power of your Spirit. Lord, I pray that this service tonight would change lives, transform lives.

Lord, rebuild marriages. Lord, restore the brokenhearted. Lord, I pray, Lord, that you would please visit our valley, Lord.

Bring revival, Lord, to the churches. Lord, we want to see you move in our nation again. Lord, we give you this service tonight.

Lord, I pray that you would just give me, Lord, not only the words to say, Lord, but the passion to say it, the clarity. Lord, give me purpose behind what we're about to speak on tonight. Lord, I pray right now that those who came here with heavy burdens, you begin to release those burdens, Lord.

Give them peace and hope and joy. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, for some of you, you might wonder if we start a little early now, and we don't. We still start at 5.30. But at 5.15, we've decided to kind of close the doors and start worship. The only thing that we ask is that you would just remain quiet during that time.

If you want to talk, then definitely stay out in the foyer and do that. But we're trying to just set a time for worship, before worship, if I can use that term. Maybe I'm missing something here.

There we go. Love when that happens. Luckily, it was just the introduction, right? So that's why we start a little early now, 5.15. We're getting in.

We're just going to worship a little early. And if you don't like that, then 5.30, you can still come on in. But we want to just keep it quiet.

We just want to honor God. And as we go into part two, it's definitely been heavy on my heart. As you know, last week I spoke on same-sex attraction.

How do we balance grace and truth? How do we balance that topic of grace and truth? We talked about homosexuality and the homosexual agenda. And how we have love for those people. But at the same time, we want to hold true to God's word.

So if you were not here last week, I want to encourage you to get that message. Go online. You can watch part one.

It's the sister to part two. It's going to make a lot more sense when you put part one with part two. And what part two is, I was getting a lot of questions from Facebook and email and just different people on this topic of same-sex attraction, homosexuality, and gay marriage.

And it's in our culture today, big time. So what I want to do this week was answer some of those questions. However, looking at the questions, looking at the bulletin, as you can see, there's a lot of questions.

And I don't think I can fully exhaust this in 60 minutes. So what I did was I put a Bible scripture, a verse, underneath each question so you can also go back on your own and look at these questions. And that's why I titled the message tonight, Solid Answers in Confusing Times.

And I'm often reminded of Psalms 119, 105. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. So what we do is we answer everything according to God's word, especially on this topic.

God's word has a lot to say on this. And we're such in unstable times, but there is a solid rock on which everything is built. So that's what we're wanting to accomplish tonight.

Now I don't think I'll get through all those questions, so you can kind of look at those later. Some of those I can probably answer when we get to the study in Proverbs. But I want to ask a question tonight.

And I kind of alluded to this last week, but I want to ask it again. Why are Christians divided on this issue when the Holy Spirit is not divided? Think about that. Why is there such a polarization in the church today? Why are Christians divided on this topic of same-sex attraction or gay marriage? Why is there a division? The Holy Spirit is not divided.

The Holy Spirit is a spirit of unity, a spirit of truth. So it begs the question, why are we divided? And there's one word, truth. The battle is over truth.

That's what you're going to see in our culture today. The culture mocks truth. The culture despises it.

So that's why Christians are divided on this issue. The truth is crystal clear. This is crystal clear, but we're divided on this issue.

Why is that? Why are Christians divided on this issue? It comes back to truth. And that's why I often ask people, are you upset at me when I talk about this topic? Or are you upset at the truth? Because see, I'm just a messenger. I'm just a messenger on this type of topic.

God's word is crystal clear. And what a lot of churches are doing, a lot of people are doing, is they're straying away from this. And they're bringing in opinions.

And what I think, and what do you think. And all these different opinions are coming into the church. So that's why Christians are divided on this issue.

You look at Facebook, you look at all these different things. You can wonder, what's going on here? What's wrong with me? Nothing's wrong with you. The problem is, people are pulling away from the truth.

Does that make sense? So I want to clarify that. Before I get into these questions, I want to talk about three things with truth. And many of you have been coming here a while.

You know that I really want to drive this point home. But it begs repeating, because of where we're at with this issue. Truth is a non-negotiable.

Do you realize that? Truth is non-negotiable. Jesus said, sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth.

See, everybody wants to quote Jesus. Turn the other cheek. Do nice to people.

Love your enemies. But Jesus said, the totality of God's word is truth. Jesus said it.

Everything, every jot, every tittle. He said, I came to not abolish the law, the Old Testament. I came to fulfill it.

I am the fulfillment of everything you've been looking for. I am the totality of the law. So Jesus said, sanctify them, God, by your truth, because your word is truth.

Now the next scripture I want to look at there is Ephesians 4.36. Paul writing to the church in Ephesus says, Endeavoring. You've got to endeavor. You've got to struggle to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called, and one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and the Father of all, who is above all and through all. You might say, Shane, what in the world does that have to do with everything? Well, I want to look at that first sentence. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit.

When we talk about unity in the church, when we talk about unity among Christians, it's always unity with the spirit. Unity with truth. It's never unity for the sake of unity.

Can't we all just get along? No, we can't all just get along if we're rejecting the truth. Does that make sense? As much as we'd love to have a big ecumenical movement, we can't with those who deny the truth. When you deny the inerrancy of the truth, when you say there might be other ways, I don't know,

Jesus was a good teacher, I don't know, all these things.

When you deny the truth, I can't fellowship with you because I've got to be in fellowship with God. So when I'm in fellowship with God, one spirit, one truth, one baptism, one faith, I must reject other groups that don't embrace that. It's not arrogance, it's not narrow-minded, it's biblical.

Anytime you study unity in the Bible, it's unity of truth, unity of faith, unity of love for Christ, unity of the word of God. So when we talk about unity in the body, what's going on, I see this, you know, why do you have to talk about this, people? It's a difficult issue, we just need to be united, we all need to come together. How can we come together when we're divided on truth? Truth is what holds everything together.

I love what A.W. Tozer said, I've said this before, but it bears repeating, he said, God will bless the peacemaker, but what? He abhors the religious negotiator. And that's what's happening in our culture today, we're wanting to negotiate this. Let's negotiate it, let's reconsider, let's remove all these difficult things.

So as I'm talking about this topic, that's why people are divided, they're divided on the truth of God's word. The next point here, truth can never, never, never be extinguished. Do you realize that? Truth, no matter what they do, they might try to silence it, they might try to pass laws against it, legislation against it, silence the church, but truth will never be extinguished, it can't, because God said, I will send my word and it will not return void.

The truth can never be extinguished, they might try to cover it, they might try to get rid of it, but it can never, ever be extinguished. And on this point, I've been dying to tell a story that I've told almost two years ago when the church started, but I've held it for two years because you don't want to be repetitive and all these different things. But the story that I told probably almost two years ago on this issue of truth, and some of you remember, I remember there's probably a dozen faces here, but it bears repeating because it's going to bring this point home and what's going on in our culture.

And many of you have heard, it's about that battleship that was doing exercises off the coast of Alaska. You remember this? Deep water exercises off the coast of Alaska. It was dense fog, it was midnight, and the battleship is out there doing whatever battleships do.

And the captain was on the bow of the ship and he could see a light approaching. He could see that there was something, there was a vessel there. And he woke the signal man up and he said, listen, signal to that vessel to turn 20 degrees or he's going to run into us.

So they signaled to the vessel and the vessel signaled back, no, you turn 20 degrees starboard. Captain said, who does this guy think he is? Signal back. Turn your vessel 20 degrees.

I am the highest ranking officer in the United States Navy. And the message came back, Captain, with all due respect, I'm a seaman, first class. Change your course immediately.

And this infuriated the captain. He threw down his coffee. He said, give me that signal.

Let me signal. I am a battleship. I'm going to blow you out of the water if you do not change your course immediately.

The signal came back. Captain, with all due respect, change your course. I'm a lighthouse.

Isn't that what our culture does though? It says get out of the way. Get out of the way. The Bible says I can't.

I can't get out of the way. I'm a lighthouse given to guide, given to direct, given to save man from himself. I cannot hide.

I cannot move no matter how hard you try. I am given to save you. But in our pride and in our arrogance, we have told it to move and get out of the way.

Truth, we don't want to see you. We don't want that protection. Would you move? Would you get off course? But it says, no, I stand as a lighthouse.

I cannot move. I cannot be removed. You cannot quench me.

You cannot quench me. I will stand the test of time. And the church must be reminded of that on a continual basis.

The next point is there, the pulpits are responsible. The pulpits of America are responsible because when you proclaim the truth, the church will repent and receive it. Paul told Timothy right there in your notes, Timothy, I beseech you, I charge you, which is a command, I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who will judge the living and the dead.

Timothy, preach the Word. Be ready in and out of season for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. So convince the people, rebuke the people, exhort the people so that they will turn and turn back to me.

That's the job of the pulpit. It's not here to coddle and comfort all the time and never challenge and never convict. If we would just preach the truth of God's Word, the church would break, the church would repent.

That's what we're seeing today. And you guys know I've quoted Jeremiah 23 often. It reminds me of that time though when God said, I have not even sent these pastors, I have not even sent these teachers.

What they do is they strengthen the hand of evil doers. How, Jeremiah? By not confronting them. They say peace, peace, when God says there's no peace, there is judgment coming upon your land.

And these guys cry peace, peace peace and safety, the Lord is with you. So God says, I have not even sent them. I didn't even send them.

But they ran. I have not spoken to them, but they prophesied. But had they truly stood in my counsel, they would have turned the people from the error of their way.

Is not my Word like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? The Bible says it's a hammer, it's a rod, it's iron. It is a fire that devours the Word of God. He sends His Word and it heals them and it restores them and it breaks them.

That's the whole point of preaching is to go forth through the power of the Holy Spirit and change and convict the heart. That's why I often say, I can't just play church. You've got the wrong guy.

We've got to go for what God wants and convicting and changing and challenging. And yes, we need to be encouraged. And yes, we need to be upheld.

And yes, we need to be strengthened. But there comes a time in the history of a church when they have to start standing on solid ground and going back to the Word of God. There's enough comforting out there.

There's enough fluff out there. We need to call the church back to truth. So that's why this is such a divisive issue in our nation today is because we're not going back to the truth.

Everybody's confused. God's not confused. God's Word's not confused.

It's very, very clear on this issue. So we've got to stand on the truth. That's what this division is all about.

And as I read through some of the, you know, when this thing, when last week's messages went on YouTube and we have over a thousand hits now in a couple days and all these comments and people are saying this and that, and a lot of times I don't look, but this one doesn't bother me too much because these people don't understand it's truth. It's not me. It's the truth.

They just don't want to look at the truth. It's like trying to argue that the sun doesn't come up. I mean, how long do you argue about that? You don't get upset about it.

You go, oh, geez, they don't even understand the truth. So unless you embrace the truth of God's Word, you will never have clarity and direction. You will never have solid answers in confusing times.

You have to be in the Word of God. You have to study. You have to cherish it.

God has given us His written, revealed Word for us to guide us, to direct us, to encourage us, to lead us. It provides everything we need right there, so we have to look to that. So with that said, can I get to the questions now? Now that we have that foundation of truth, so everything I'm about to say is built on the foundation of truth.

Okay, the first question that is thrown out there, and if you have your Bibles, you can turn to Matthew 7, 1 through 5. Who are you to judge? Doesn't the Bible say, let me put in here what they really said, doesn't the Bible say, shut your mouth? Some people drop the F-bomb in there, shut your mouth. Who are you to judge? That's a big argument today. Who are you to judge? Remember when Charles Barkley was running for office a couple years ago? He made the same statement.

Who are you Christians to judge on gay marriage and abortion? Who made you judge? Jesus said, judge not. The problem is you have to keep reading the text and put it in context. You can't just pick out, you can make the Bible say whatever you want if you just pick and choose little things here and there.

Let's read the rest of it so you'll know. These are going to be the arguments coming against us. If the church would just stand her right ground, know the word of God, be confident in it, and speak it in a spirit of love, we would be able to come against the culture.

Now I said this last week and it bears repeating, but we're not as a church against those who struggle with same sex attraction. One guy said, I'm not coming to hear that because it's gay bashing. It's not gay bashing.

It's the last thing I'm doing. It has nothing to do with that. We love those who struggle with this.

We've helped those. I talk to those. I counsel those.

I pray for those who struggle with them. We are the church. We are a hospital for people who are broken.

We're all sinners in the same boat. However, I'm against the agenda this perverted agenda that wants to push this junk on kindergartners. It wants to lower the age of sexual consent.

They want to do all these things so they say, you're prohibiting me from doing this. No sir, I'm not prohibiting. I'm protecting.

I'm called to stand and protect the word of God that has been in place for thousands and thousands of years. So who is actually attacking? I'm not being attacked. I'm defending.

I'm defending. I'm just holding the post. Hey, this has been in place for thousands of years.

This was in place in Adam and Eve. This was in place in Sodom and Lot and Abraham. This was in place during Israel's history when they made their laws.

This was in place when Christ came. This was in place when the early church fathers said, look at the writings, Tertullian, Augustine, Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Irenaeus. And it's still true today.

So we're just holding ground. They're attacking God's word. They're attacking truth.

So I must stand ground. If I can't stand ground, I need to retire and go get a secular job. That's what the church is called to do.

So we are to judge. Because right here in Matthew, Jesus says, judge not that you not be judged. For with what judgment you use, it'll be judged.

And with what measure you use, it'll be measured back to you. Now he goes on to say, hypocrite, first remove the plank from your own eye, then you'll be able to see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's. So see, you can go to a person at some point in time, once you're humble, once you're broken, once you say, Lord, I don't want to do this, I don't want to go in a spirit of arrogance and a critical spirit, but I need to judge rightly.

What does John Calvin say in his commentary? These words of Christ do not contain an absolute prohibition from judging, but they are intended to cure a disease. Criticism. See, Jesus was listening to all these critical Pharisees and Sadducees, so this judge not, he's saying, listen, judge not you sin-sniffing, finger-pointing Pharisees.

Whatever judgment you use is coming right back at you. This has nothing to do with judging rightly, because Jesus says in John, I believe it's 724, he encourages his followers to judge with righteous judgment. Wait a minute, what's going on here? Scripture's contradicting itself.

No, it's not. This word judge and condemn and all these things, Jesus, he's saying, judge not. In other words, condemn not.

I cannot pronounce judgment on somebody. That's why Paul says in Romans, who are you to judge another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. He will be judged based on, so we can't condemn a person.

In other words, you're going to hell, you're condemned to sin, I'm done with you. Boom, we cannot judge in that regard, but we can judge righteously by godly standards. I mean, that's the whole point of God's word and the pulpit is to dissect God's word and to judge rightly, so the people know how to live.

So it makes no sense that we can't say anything based on this one little scripture of judge not. So that's putting it in context, and I put a little bit more info there if you want to read on that later. So we are to judge, but we must judge in a spirit of humility and love and brokenness and come out of truly wanting to help somebody, not wanting to be right.

You see the difference? That's why I said before, is it the truth that offends you, or is it my attitude? See, my attitude I can change, but the truth I can't. That's going to offend people. The truth of God's word is going to offend people.

Number two. This one I probably won't answer much because I'm going to answer it in Proverbs, but a lot of Christians have been asking, well, when do I say something and when do I remain silent? When do I say something about this? That's what I said before. Everybody else is coming out of the closet, but Christians can't come out of the closet.

We can't post one little scripture on Facebook about this or we're attacked, but they can say everything, everything out there, but we can't come against it. That's part of the agenda. Make this lifestyle look real.

Make it attractive. Make them appear to be victims. Make everybody see it in all the media and all the sitcoms and everything so it looks normal.

It's part of this whole agenda to get society to embrace this. So when do we answer that? Proverbs 26, 45. Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you'll be like him yourself.

And then it says, answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes. And I'm actually going to pick that apart in Proverbs, so I don't have a lot of time to do it tonight. It's going to be repetitive.

But James McDonald wrote a good blog post on this. In a nutshell, he says, you tell someone once with clarity and brevity, anything more than that draws us into the web of folly. Say it once clearly and lovingly.

Anyone seeking wisdom will get the message of benefit. Fools will argue and debate and blame shift. And if you don't get off that train in a hurry, you'll become one of the fools trying to help a fool, and that doesn't help anyone.

But I did write that. I want to share this. When to share something with somebody, a friend, a relative, Facebook, whatever it is.

When do I say something? When don't. I've been silent for years. I haven't said anything.

What I do, here's what I do. I wait, pray, and I search my heart. And then guess what I do? I wait, pray, and search my heart.

Because it's like, sometimes you just want to, man, I've got to say something. So you wait, pray, and God usually leaves that impression on you. He'll keep, you know, you've got to do this.

Like speaking on this topic, I don't want, no, not right now. You know, and the Chick-fil-A and people, and it's like, okay, this time. So God's going to put that on your heart, and you're going to say it in love, not

arrogance.

You're going to say it in love. And think it through. Often it's not what you say, it's how you say it that tilts the scale.

See, that's vitally important. That's why it took me 30 minutes last week just to get to the introduction. So I'm going to be very careful to clarify everything.

So you have to, it's not what you say, it's how you say it. Again, here's another one. Don't react, instead respond.

Don't react, instead respond. There's not a Saturday that goes by that I see a negative editorial sometimes that's just smearing my name all over the page of the religion section. Oh, let me shoot this guy an email.

I'll find him on Facebook. Let me write an editorial. Let me set him straight.

No. Sleep on it. Change my mind the next day.

You know, let other people do that. So there's a lot to just waiting on the Lord and not reacting, but responding in love. And then I often ask, does it hurt, help, or harm? Like the person, you know they're not receptive right now.

It's just going to hurt them. It's going to hurt the relationship. What's the point? Or somebody genuinely seeking, genuinely asking questions.

Always remember this too. What you write now is recorded forever almost with the internet. Every time I go to publish a book, I'm like, oh goodness, there's no way you're getting this back once you put it out there.

So with Facebook, with anything else, remember that. You can't erase it. Once you say it, so you better say it kindly and with love and with gentleness.

You better make sure God's directing you. But more on that when we get into the Proverbs series that starts September 8th. All the studies are going to be in Proverbs, September 8th.

Number three, I know that homosexuality is a sin, but if it's just like any other sin, why do many Christians hate people for it? And I answered this in length last week. So again, if you weren't here, go listen to that. But in a nutshell, Christians don't hate people for it.

We recognize, and that's why I put here, a true Christian's response is all sin is wrong in God's sight. All sin. So we don't hate somebody for it.

We don't like sin in general. We abhor sin like God does. Sin is what's destroying man.

Sin is what's destroying marriages. Sin is what's going to put people in hell for eternity. So we look at sin as all sin.

And again, the battleground is the agenda, not the person who's struggling. So it's funny how just speaking about this, as loving as we can be, they're going to say, you hate. You're hate bongers.

You hate. I don't hate. Who hates? Look at the backlash, and you'll see what side really hates.

We're saying it in love. Why would I put myself and subject myself to criticism and maybe being attacked someday or whatever? Why would I open myself up for that? Because of God's word of loving and wanting to share the truth. So it has nothing to do with hate.

I mean, people can carry on their lifestyle and do whatever they want to do, but if somebody genuinely loves them, they're going to warn them. Not belittle, but warn. Not upset, but convict.

That's what the truth does. Number four, the Bible encourages... Oh, here's my favorite one. The Bible encourages slavery.

And it says that certain foods are an abomination. Therefore, homosexuality is obviously okay now. Well, a couple things.

First, you have to remember, the Bible never encouraged slavery. It often taught a time in history when this happened, and we also have to make the differential between slavery, like what this nation knew. We have this atrocity on our hands, and like Joseph being sold into slavery.

But a lot of times in the Old Testament, it was indentured servant. They owed this person money, so they worked for them. And sometimes it turned out so good that in Deuteronomy, I believe it's Deuteronomy, early part of Deuteronomy, where they would say, if you want to stay with that person, we'll put a mark on you and your ear, and if you say, I love this person, I want to stay with them for the rest of my life, then you can remain with them.

Because after seven years, they would free the people that were under this financial bondage. So we have to be careful here. I mean, I could spend a lot of time on that.

But the Bible doesn't encourage slavery, and it says certain foods are an abomination, like shellfish is an abomination. So they say, well, obviously, you know, now homosexuality is okay. Well, that's a quantum leap.

I mean, because all the moral laws that God put in place are still applicable today. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, all the moral laws. And by the way, as a health thing, shellfish are not good for you.

They eat off the bottom of the ocean. They eat the cesspool, the septic of the ocean. There's a little bit of wisdom in the Bible.

It says don't eat swine, don't eat shellfish, don't do these things, don't eat the blood. All these things are also very sanitary and healthy. It's funny how clothed foot, and God picks out the clean and unclean animals.

I'm like, man, these birds, just for health reasons, He's nailing it. All the animals you can eat, all the ones you can't, these are unhealthy things for the body. Isn't that amazing? God's Word doesn't contradict itself.

It confirms itself. Doesn't mean you can't go back and have shrimp. Just understand that it's not good what they eat.

Because you're eating them, and then you take in that. So I'm gonna leave it at that. But the Bible verse for that one is 1 Timothy.

If you have your Bible, 1 Timothy 1, 9 through 10. Or just hold tight, because I'm gonna go through these pretty quickly. Realizing the fact that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and for sinners.

For the unholy and the profane. For those who kill fathers and mothers for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and purgers. Whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.

So Paul right there is telling Timothy, listen, whatever's contrary to sound doctrine, he even breaks it all down. These things are not encouraged today. A lot of people, what they're doing is they're grasping for the wind.

They're taking all these things and they're trying to say, well, see, the Bible is so clear on this that it makes me wonder how they miss it, unless it's intentional. It is intentional. Number five, Jesus never said that homosexuality is wrong.

Yes, He did say it was wrong. Matthew 5, 17. Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, nor the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished. Jesus, and I've quoted this before, last week, but I'll do it again.

In Matthew again. Matthew 15, 9. He said, Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, and fornications. These defile a man.

Notice the word plural, fornications there. Anything outside of sex between a man and a woman, Jesus said, is evil. It's a perversion of the truth.

Anything. Anything. I like this one too.

John 8, 10-11. Jesus, remember the story when He straightened up and the lady was accused of adultery and all the people left? Everybody left. And Jesus said, Where are your accusers, woman? And she said, Lord, there are none.

He said, Then neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more. But they always use this, even those that embrace this lifestyle, they use this verse.

See, He didn't condemn the lady, but He said, Go and leave your life of sin. See, compassion and mercy were there, so He didn't condemn her right there to judgment. He said, Listen, I don't condemn you, but go and sin no more.

I do not condemn you does not mean I approve of your lifestyle. Jesus said, I did not come to judge just yet. I will.

There will become a day when I will judge the living and the dead. But He said, Right now I've come that I may give life, that I seek to save the sinner, that they find me, that they repent of their sin. So He's not condemning her right now, but He's also not saying, I agree with your lifestyle.

Because He said, Go and don't do this anymore. So all we have to do is put these scriptures in context when people throw out things out there. Just look at what the Bible says.

It's solid answers in confusing times. Now what about this one? Number six, But I was born this way. You ever hear that? I was born this way.

What would you say if somebody told you that? Somebody told me this. I remember it clear as day. And I shocked them, and I'm going to shock you.

You know what I said? I was born a thief. I was born a liar. I was born to lust after women other than my wife.

I was born to steal. I was born to cuss. I was born to curse.

I was born to blasphemy. I was born to gossip. I was born to hate.

I was born this way too. But had it not been for the cross of Christ, I was born a sinner too. See, how is that an excuse? And then He said, Oh yeah, but you have a release for your desires.

I don't. There's some good questions here. I'm just being open with you.

We're going to get to that in a minute. But I was born this way. The whole debate, is there a genetic gene? It doesn't matter to me, because we're born into sin.

What David said right here, Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time of my mother conceived me. Romans 3.23 For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by His grace through redemption in Jesus Christ. But you have to embrace that redemption.

It's there, but we have to embrace it. Many people come to church, think they're saved. They're not saved.

They need to embrace that redemption. They need to repent of their sin, and trust in Christ. So many times when somebody says, I was born this way, and you say, of course.

I was born a sinner too. It doesn't make it right. Does that make sense? Just because somebody was born this way.

Now there's arguments against this. There wasn't a male role model, and at a young age, there's a lot of studies, a lot of research, and persuaded that direction. To me, even though those are nice, and fun, and good, and let's look at this a little closer.

To me, the bottom line is, we were all born sinners. What do you do with that sinful lifestyle? What do you do with that sin nature? Do you give it to Christ at the cross, or do you carry it as if it's no big deal, I was born this way? You see the difference there? One person says, Lord, I need you. I was born this way.

That's why Paul says, the law was given. The law was given to show us our need for Christ. That's why the Bible says all these things.

You read the Bible and go, oh my goodness, I'm in trouble. I'm in big trouble. I'm in big trouble.

But all who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Thank God for that verse. It's okay to convict people.

That's usually why they turn to God. He wants to get the Word out, the preaching of His Word, the reading of His Word, the teaching of His Word, so people see their need for Him, and they change, and they turn.

So the born this way argument really doesn't fly at all.

It has no scriptural support whatsoever. Number seven, can a person embrace the homosexual lifestyle and still live in harmony with biblical Christianity? No. No.

A person cannot embrace any sinful lifestyle. The Bible gives a whole list. Nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor covetous, nor homosexuals, nor idolaters, adultery and idol worship.

He goes down the list. None of these lifestyles, if we embrace this lifestyle, enter the kingdom of heaven. Paul doesn't just take out homosexuality and put it way up here.

Look at this. He just lists them all. Any lifestyle, any lifestyle that is against God's will and has not been repented of, that is sinful, leads to judgment.

Anything. That's why sometimes I just crack up at people. They think that we're pulling this big old sin out there, and it's way up here, and oh my gosh, and the churches, and they're homophobes, they don't know what to do.

We're just all sinners. You can call it homosexuality. You can call it drunkenness.

You can call it covetousness. You can call it immorality. You can call it lying and cheating.

There are some people, they can't go a whole day without lying. They just love to lie and tell a story and lie and lie and lie. They don't turn from that lifestyle, and they're not right with God, there's a judgment coming.

So we have to remember, we don't just look at one sin and point fingers at it, we look at every all sin that's against God and needs to be repented of. But for verses on this, can a person embrace a homosexual lifestyle and still live in harmony with biblical Christianity? Actually, there was an emergent church leader who said this a few years back. That's just his exact words, that you can.

You can live as a homosexual and embrace that lifestyle and still live in accordance with biblical Christianity. It's not surprising then that they're departing from the truth. Interesting note, all these churches that now are welcoming and embracing are all liberal churches that deny the inerrancy of scripture.

They want to sit around on couches, they want to remove the pulpit, I wrote about this in the book, they want to remove the pulpit and all sit down on couches. Can't we just all talk and can't we just converse? And what do you think? Dialogue. What do you think? Well, here's what I think.

I could be wrong. What do you think? I don't know. Who knows? What in the world is that about? That's just a social club therapy session.

So that's what's happening. All the churches that we have seen that welcome this lifestyle, now let me clarify, we welcome homosexuals to the church all the time. There's not a week that goes by that we don't invite this one guy.

We know. We invite him, we welcome him, we're welcoming. We are a welcoming church, but we're not an affirming church.

See, we cannot affirm that lifestyle, but we welcome you if you want to learn and grow and you want to repent of that sin, you need help. We are there for you. That's the church.

It's a big hospital for broken sinners, for people who need Christ, who need redemption, who need God, that are struggling with sin. So we welcome that, but we don't affirm it. You see the difference? All the churches, when you go online and you'll have the pastors, if they're two guys and they'll be holding each other and they're on the church website and this, all these churches are not embracing the truth.

I mean, they'll make statements like, you know, since we don't really have a clear cut teaching on the scripture in this and since the scripture has been written by men and changed over thousands of years ago and since nobody seems to know, they never can say, this is the word of God, this is what it says. We're going to say it boldly, we're going to say it clearly, we're going to say it lovingly, but we're going to say it. So that's where the divide is over.

That's why I get passionate about this. This has nothing to do with biblical hermeneutics and all these things and exegetic, you know, taking the text apart and looking at the Hebrew and going deep and what it did. It's very crystal clear.

Either you embrace truth or you don't. And that's where this issue is of can a person embrace a homosexual lifestyle. Many Christians say, yes, of course, as long as they love the other person.

But the Bible says no. John 3, 6, no one who lives in him, in Christ, keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or knows him.

John 1, 2 through 4, whoever says, I know Christ. See, a lot of people say, I know Christ. I mean, we talk to people all the time, they'll say, oh, yeah, Jesus, I learned about him when I was little and I know Jesus Christ.

Absolutely. Wasn't he some guy died on a cross and people even go to church and they say, I know him. But if you do not keep his commandments, you are a liar and the truth is not even in you.

See, that scripture right there should give some people pause for concern. If I say, I know him, but my lifestyle does not reflect me knowing him, I'm a liar and the truth is not in me. I mean, these are some serious warnings.

John, who walked with Jesus, wrote these words. Now, number eight, that's easy for you to say. You don't have to live the rest of your life with these desires.

Now, isn't that a valid point? I mean, you could see where, you know, oh, that would be tough. However, a couple of things we talked about. We believe and we would pray to God that God would relieve them of these desires, that he would change them.

That's why, behold, you are a new creation in Christ. That's why you see a lot of people that finally repent of this lifestyle, come to Jesus, they end up getting married, they end up having kids. You can, it is possible for this to change and to remove this sinful life.

Ask any person who's quit anything, whose God's delivered them from, say, pornography addiction or pills or alcohol or you name it. Sometimes it's gone. It's done.

Thank God. But for other people, there's a struggle there. That beer still looks good in the refrigerator.

That Vicodin up in the counter, ooh, I don't know, hide it, please. I still have a problem with the mouth. I mean, there's still sometimes some of these lusts are still lurking to what? Take us down.

The devil looks for an opportune time. So that's the argument here. What do I do with all these desires? If God doesn't necessarily take them away, look at Galatians 5, 16 through 17.

So I say, live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature, for the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit. And the Spirit, what is contrary to the sinful nature, they are in conflict with each other so that you do not do what you want. And I put a lot more Scripture on there, but in a nutshell, the Spirit and the flesh are warring against each other.

The Spirit and the flesh. You say, but I have to live with these desires the rest of my life. And a light bulb went off in my head this week.

I talked to my wife. I said, think about this. Many of you know Johnny Erickson Potter, right? The wheelchair.

The wheelchair. Would you rather be bound to a wheelchair, paralyzed from the neck down or deal with some unhealthy desires now and then? Remember I told you about that man who had three blind daughters born who were also deaf, still changing diapers at 12 years old? Would you rather want that or fighting some desires now and then? Think about that. Taking care of your parents with Alzheimer's, doesn't even know who you are for 10 years, 15 years.

We have the audacity to say, oh, I've got to fight these desires. And there are people going through more hell than we've ever known in our life. I'd rather fight unhealthy desires until the day I die instead of have three blind daughters who can't hear me or see me.

So don't you dare think that just fighting some difficult desires and everybody else has it easy. There's people in deeper prisons than you ever knew in your life. Have you ever dealt with fear and anxiety? It's almost as uncontrollable.

You can't go places. You can't do things. Would you rather have that or fight some unhealthy desires now and then? See, let's put all this in perspective from the Word of God.

There are Christians who've been through hell and back and they have to say like Job, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him, for my Redeemer lives. It's through that broken and dependent relationship that we know who the Shepherd is. That's why Paul can say, God told Paul, my grace is sufficient.

2 Corinthians 12, 17. Let's read that. To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassing great revelations.

Now this is where Paul, some say, went to heaven, had a vision. Whatever it is, I don't want to debate it. I just want to read the Scripture.

Whatever happened to Paul, it would have elevated him. He would have become so arrogant because of this great revelation that God has given him. There was given to me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me.

And Paul prayed three times, Lord, take this away. And you know what God kept saying? I'm not going to answer your prayer because my grace is sufficient. What the heck? That makes no sense.

Yeah, it does, because once you're broken and humble and you have this thorn and you have this messenger of Satan buffering you, then you don't have to teach me how to pray then. I'll be in that prayer closet at 4.30 in the morning praying, Lord, take this away. My relationship with Him flourished.

It's because of the pain of affliction I stand up here today and I can know Him as Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Nisi, Jehovah Rapha, my provider, my shield, my strength, my high tower. When I get into Him, He is my Sabbath rest. He is everything.

Is He everything to you? Sometimes I wonder, people are just worshiping like that. I've said it before. They want to hurry up and get out of here.

They know nothing of the manifest presence of God in their life. They don't know Him as provider because they've always just put on a charge card. They don't know Him as healer because they've never been sick.

They don't know Him as deliverer because they just call their parents to bail them out. They don't know God until life chews you out and spits you out. Then you have to turn to God because there's nobody else to turn to.

That's what this is all about because I would know Him. Paul said, I want to know Him in the fellowship of His suffering so that I may know Him in His resurrection. Paul has been beaten.

He's been stoned. He's been shipwrecked. These guys went through hell and back and we sit here in our comfortable chairs with air conditioning complaining about little tiny things.

We say, my grace is sufficient. Yeah, you're going to struggle with unhealthy desires sometimes. You're going to struggle with a whole bunch of stuff but you better run into the One who has the answer.

You better build your life on the rock because your mind is where the battle is won or it's lost. That's why Romans 12 says, Be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you can change this perversion. One of the reasons people say stuck in this lifestyle is because they keep feeding this lifestyle by Facebook, by images, by pornography, by friends that encourage it, by this, by the media.

They just keep feeding that desire so they think, I'm good. No, you're not good. God's word has some serious warnings against that and that's my job to say it in a spirit of love and humility.

Listen guys, God's word is crystal clear on this issue. There's no gray area. There's no compromising.

There's no, I'll get to God and just tell Him when I die that I really love this person. He won't hear anything. I doubt you'll even speak.

When people see the manifest presence of God, they fell down on their face as dead men. Not as little negotiators giving God a sales pitch. I mean, let's be real, let's be honest.

He is a holy, righteous God and He's calling the church back to a holy, righteous standard. No wonder there's no more power in the pulpits anymore. No wonder lies aren't being changed.

No wonder people aren't turning from this lifestyle because it's encouraged. It's never confronted. If my kid is running, riding his bike and he's done it before, he's going really fast and he's heading for a busy road, I'm going to scream.

I'm going to say, stop, don't do that. I might even throw a rock. I might even chase him.

I'm going to stop him from getting hit by a car and dying. That's what the Word of God says. That's what I'm supposed to do.

Listen, this is what this says. You need to turn from the wrath that is to come and turn to Christ and be a new creation. It's that simple.

You can hate me, you can mock me, but you cannot ignore the truth because it will stand as a lighthouse to a dying and dark world. Listen folks, I don't manufacture this passion that God's given me because I've counted on Him. I've experienced His powerful presence.

I've experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit. What many people are scared of, he didn't tell, he got me in my room back in 1999 and just poured into me. I used to make fun of everybody raising their hands and worshipping, oh, the tongues or whatever.

He blew my mind. I just began worshipping for hours, getting into His Word, devouring it. You just call that experimentalism or emotionalism? No, I call it the power of God radically changing a person's life.

Wanting to go get drunk, now wanting to get into the Word of God. Wanting to be arrogant and build a career, now wanting to build God's career. See, that's how He changes you.

Most people don't know that so they don't know what I'm talking about. It's like you just want to grab them and say, listen, you need to break. You need to humble yourself.

That's why there's depression and anxiety. That's why God seems distant. I don't know where He's at because there's no genuinely seeking heart after Him.

There's not that there. And that goes right with this point, I hope. We all have to fight against the flesh.

1 Corinthians 10-13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as common to man, but God who is faithful will not allow you or I to be tempted beyond what we are able. But with the temptation will make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. So those who might still struggle with this and they've named the name of Christ, they've repented, there is no temptation in you.

There is an exit door. You can choose to exit or you can choose to enter. I mean, yeah, you have to fight desire sometimes.

Ask men in this room. They've got to fight desire sometimes that are not good. Let your mind... Where's your mind going? Get your mind back on track.

Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Every thought must come into captivity and then I bring it into obedience of Christ. Is it glorifying Him? No, it's not.

Then I need to remove that. Lord, help me remove this thought because the devil is going to come and look for opportune times. Number nine.

Why do you care about legislation? You can't change someone's heart. This whole thing about gay marriage and different things. Why do you care about legislation? You can't change someone's heart.

You're right. Well, let's ask this question. Can we legislate morality? Everybody always says, can we legislate morality? No, you cannot legislate morality, but you can definitely curb evil and remove and begin to restrain evil.

You can't legislate. You can't change a person's heart, but you can restrain evil. Think about it.

Remove the police force. Remove the military from our landscape today. I would not even want to live here.

Why can Exxon take a tanker right past Iran with a million dollars or a million gallons of oil? Take it right past Iran. You can see Iran, and they won't touch it with the American flag on it. Why is that? Because they know in about 12 hours they're going to have a couple of stealth bombers saying, hello, you cannot change the heart, but you can restrain evil.

That's the whole point of law and legislation is to say this is what our nation stands for, God. We don't honor You in many ways, but we are honoring You by our legislation. The laws of a land reflect its foundation.

The laws of a nation reflect its foundation. Blessed be the nation whose God is Lord. That's why there's a huge split right now.

The church should not be in politics. The church should be in politics. Who has the answers? It's very clear on answers that are in Scripture, not endorsing people.

I mean, I could say something about Obama, and I'd lose half my audience. I could say something about Mitt Romney, I'd lose half my audience. You know, boom, boom, boom.

It's like, oh my gosh, what do we do? We talk clearly on the issues. Same-sex marriage cannot be legislated because it's against God's Word. Well, that's old time, that's Puritanism.

I don't care what you call it, I call it true. So the church has to, at some point, at some time, take a stance and say, listen, we believe in the sanctity of life, abortion, we believe in embryonic stem cell research. I mean, don't get me started.

We don't believe in that, actually, is what I'm saying. And gay marriage, we don't believe that we should ordain that and recognize that. That's just what we believe.

And instead of criticizing organizations, we should thank God for, Jay Sekulow, Focus on the Family. We should thank God for, you name it, Tony Perkins, the Family Research Council, and you heard about the shooter that came in this week, right? Gunman, came into Family Research Council, Washington, D.C. He said, after he shot the guard, I don't have a beef against you, I hate what you stand for. So who really hates who? See, this is a moral battle for the very soul of a nation.

Because once a nation begins to call evil good and good evil and embraces what God calls in a perversion, that's a slippery slope to be on. I don't care if you want to get political or not, that's just a slippery slope to be on. And on this issue of politics, what happens is God gives some people more passion for this area, so we should thank God for them, not challenge them.

You're not going to hear John MacArthur talk very much on politics because he's a teacher of God's Word. You're going to hear Tony Perkins spend a lot of time on politics, thank God for both of these men. Stop

judging them.

Stop judging Chuck Colson because he doesn't just teach the Word of God, he's been called to be salt and light in our society. Thank God for those people. If you remove all the people who are doing some type of legislation and being some type of salt and light, we'll have nothing.

And then of course, the men who are called to preach God's Word, that's going to be their primary focus. They're not going to be politically active, and you better stop criticizing them as well. God gives us different callings and different levels of interest.

He's called a man to preach and teach, He's called another to become active. We should thank God for those differences, not become judgmental and fight against them. So that's my brief little stint on the political thing because it really doesn't need to be an issue if you look at what the definition of politics is.

The definition is leading or directing a group of people. To say that God's Word has nothing to say about leading and directing a group of people to me is ludicrous. It has a lot to say.

As a matter of fact, the whole entire Old Testament was about leading and directing a group of people. But what happened is the church has become so political on this political influence that we're not called to be a political influence, we're called to be a spiritual influence. And then the congregants go out and become the salt and the light.

Not the pulpit. It's not a platform to preach a whole bunch of political agenda. So you see the difference there.

You're not going to please everybody on this one. There's a big divide there. I mean, I've talked on this before, but when they start to pass things in some states, and whether you believe it or not, it happens.

Partial birth abortion. When you can pull a baby out of the mother's womb, pierce the back of its head, pull out its brain, throw it in the trash. I have a problem with that.

And to tell the church to remain silent makes absolutely no sense to me. Well, that is so cold. Where's your spiritual health at? The church is just being silent.

Preach the gospel. Yeah, preach the gospel while they're murdering a little baby. What am I missing here? And the people that say that are often the judgmental people that haven't wanted a person to Christ in ten years.

They just don't want to do anything. They're lazy. They're lazy spiritually.

They're lazy politically. They're lazy in everything. And they just want to say, oh, we shouldn't get involved at all.

Well, tell that to that child in the trash can. It's ridiculous. God had harsh words for the nation when it started to give their children to Molech.

God says, you're doing things that have not even entered my mind. You're giving your children, you're burning your children in the fires of Molech, and I'm going to judge you, nation. Listen, if you don't think these things are applicable today, Paul says the Old Testament was written that we might not lust after evil things that they lusted for.

The Old Testament is our example. I like what Alexander Hamilton put, one of the founders of America. He said, the law dictated by God Himself is, of course, superior in obligation to any other.

It is binding over all the globe in all countries at all times. No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this. Boy, it would be to God that we would get another senator like that.

We have drifted so far off course that now when we just want to speak some spiritual life into the political climate, they call you extreme, outrageous. Many of these people, that was their whole profession was to speak God's Word into how to govern the land. That's why you'll hear that phrase, the laws of nature and of nature's God.

The laws of nature and of nature's God. They kept saying that at the founding of the nation. What does that have to do with anything? I'll tell you what it has to do with at this point.

Gay marriage, this whole thing, it's a right. You can't deny me my rights. Constitutional rights, when you're talking about rights, I have the right to freedom of press, freedom of speech, freedom to due process, all these different freedoms.

You're talking about God-ordained rights. God sets those perimeters, not man. So the next time you say, I have the right to marry, first the constitutionality of it, the rights are given by God, the laws of nature and of nature's God.

If God says it's not a right, it's not a right. We're not denying rights, we're holding tight to what God has set forth in His law. Now, of course, on this whole issue of legislation, we do have to be careful as we cross that line of becoming too involved and becoming this, the church now is viewed as this right-wing, conservative, fundamentalist, against the gay community.

We don't want that. That's the last thing we want. But it's very difficult to fight against the agenda to keep God's word in center focus and then to love the homosexual without kind of convoluting all that.

And that's what a church's stance really has to be. We have to say, listen, this is wrong according to God's word. We're going to love you for it.

We're not going to promote the agenda. We're going to fight against it and we're going to stand truth to God's word. That's where it must stand.

Gay marriage is a right. You can't deny me my rights. Number 10, we talked about this.

In Psalms 33.8, I'm not going to go over these because we've got to get going. Chelsea can come on up in the band. But I want to just answer the last one, number 13.

I answered it last week but a little different twist on this one. This is the people who say, I want to change, but I don't know how. I want to change, but I don't know how.

You have to remember something. You don't change you. God changes you.

You say, I want to change, I just don't know how. You don't change. I don't change.

God changes us. What you do is you submit and you surrender to His will. Throughout the entire Bible, Genesis to Revelation, it says whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

In Noah's day. What about Noah? The Bible records that Noah was building an ark. He moved with fear to build an ark to save his family.

That ark of safety and protection. Throughout history, God is saving and redeeming His people. Sacrificial system.

I will send prophets to warn the people. I will send priests to minister. I will send John the Baptist to call people back to Me, Christ to die upon that cross.

He's always trying to redeem and save, not always trying to. God does whatever He wants to do, but He's provided the way. So all you have to do, you embrace Him.

You repent. You say, Lord, I need You. What Shane's talking about, I need that tonight.

I turn to You. I give You my life tonight. I can't change myself.

I can't take away these addictions. I can't do anything. Lord, I give it to You tonight.

And it's that simple. And you might say, well, why is this the shortest point of everything? Because it's the simplest. You don't need a long breakdown of the Greek and the Hebrew and let's bring in the history of Israel and let's bring in archaeological... He just says, repent.

Repent and turn back to Me. And I will rebuild your land. If My people are called by My name, they will humble themselves and seek My face.

So that's what He's saying to those tonight who are going to hear this later. If you want to change, you don't change. God changes you.

But you have to repent and turn to Him. That's the only hope. That's the only hope for our nation.

It's the only hope for those outside of God's will. Lord, I pray tonight that You would continue to bless the service, Lord, even afterwards, that people would leave here convicted. Lord, on areas we need to change, Lord, help us change those areas, dear Heavenly Father.

I pray for just a strong anointing on the worship tonight. Lord, as we conclude, Lord, draw people to You. Draw them to the cross.

Draw them to Your Son, Lord. And I ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Yfp-2t9_3Ps.mp4

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