

HOMOSEXUALITY?

Providing answers from the sufficient Word to many common questions.



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PART 1

THE AUTHORITY IN ALL MATTERS OF LIFE & GODLINESS -- INCLUDING ALL ISSUES RELATED TO HOMOSEXUALITY

One ultimate authority exists. There have been nor have there ever been rivals. This ultimate authority is the written Word of the living God contained in the sixty-six books of Holy Scripture, the Bible. One lives according to his authority. For many in the world, they themselves are their own authority and so they live by and abide by their own standard of morality, ethics and goodness. For Christians, God Himself is the authority and He has manifested Himself sufficiently and gloriously in the sufficient and Spirit-inspired pages of Scripture as they all point to the glory of the crucified and resurrected Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has given all that the Christian needs for all of life and all of godliness in the inerrant Bible, the Word of God. The worldview for the Christian is formed, shaped, and governed by the authoritative, powerful, and living Bible. Nothing so binds the heart and conscience of God's people more than the Word of the Lord contained in the Holy Scriptures.

Issues related to sexuality, marriage, gender-roles, and all matters related to homosexuality are referenced and found in the Bible. God has not muzzled himself about this topic. He did not fail to discuss these important issues. He did not shy away from dealing with these controversial matters. On the contrary, he has spoken clearly, faithfully, eternally, unchangeably, and authoritatively in the Bible. That — and that alone — is the ultimate authority.

In Psalm 119:120 the psalmist writes:

“My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of your judgments.”

These parallel phrases reveal a great deal of insight regarding the psalmist's love for God and His reverence for the Word. Much can be learned from a proper understanding of this text. One's response toward God is inseparable from his response toward Scripture. The way one honors God will always manifest itself in a reverential honor for the Scriptures. We owe to the Bible the same reverence as we owe to God because the Bible is the word *from* God. God has revealed Himself in the written Book. To claim to love God and yet have a disregard for God's Word is a contradiction. The psalmist says that his flesh trembles for fear of God (Ps 119:120). This means that the psalmist understands who God is and trembles with a holy terror before the almighty majesty of God. This fear of the Lord is in fact the beginning of wisdom (Prov 9:10). Then in the parallel phrase, the psalmist affirms that he is afraid, that is, he reveres, he honors, he stands in awe of the judgments of God. To know God is to know God's Word because God is supremely known through His revelation of Himself. The authority for all matters is the Bible which is the sufficient, clear, eternal, unchanging, true, and supreme authority for all matters for the Christian.

PART 2

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE GOSPEL

God came into the world in human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ and He said near the beginning of His ministry: “I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also for I was sent for this purpose” (Luke 4:43). When Jesus said “*I must preach*” the Greek word is that which speaks of the verbal announcing of the *good news*. With this message of good news, Jesus kept on “preaching” in the synagogues throughout Israel (Luke 4:44). The God-Man came to seek and save the lost. He knew that mankind was lost in sin, blinded by Satan, depraved in corruption, and dead in transgressions. Christ came to announce the good news and to be the atoning sacrifice which is the climactic event that makes the good news *good*. Jesus is the good news.

1) The NEED for the gospel. All have sinned and stand condemned before God (Ps 130:3). There is not a person on the earth who has ever been naturally born from parents who has not sinned since all have inherited the sin nature from Adam (Rom 5:12; Eccl 7:20). All people, young or old, regardless of race, nationality, culture, or background need the gospel! Heterosexuals need the gospel just as much as homosexuals do. All stand as guilty sinners before God’s judgment bar because of their sin and desperately need perfect righteousness before God.

2) The WARNING with the gospel. The gospel is news for everyone! All must be warned of coming doom unless they repent (Luke 13:3). Christians must lovingly and yet firmly declare to all homosexuals the compassionate plea that unless they repent of their deviation and immoral behavior, they will not enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10). A warning is in place for all!

3) The SOLUTION in the gospel. Following on the heels of the warning of hellfire because of sin, Christians must proclaim the solution to this human problem: that in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith (Rom 1:17). Thus, the righteous person lives by faith (Rom 1:17; Hab 2:4). How does one escape hell? Faith alone in Christ alone!

4) The HOPE in the gospel. The God of hope fills believers with all joy and peace in believing so that they will abound in hope by the power of the Spirit (Rom 15:13). The God of hope gives eternal hope to those who repent of sin and trust in Christ alone for salvation from wrath (2 Thess 2:16). Those who are justified by faith alone in Christ have hope of eternal life (Tit 3:7).

5) The GOD of the gospel. The gospel is the good news of how God saves sinners by Himself, for Himself, from His wrath, for the fame of His Son. The gospel spotlights the magnificent grace of God and the unbending righteousness of God. God is both just and the justifier of those who have faith in Jesus (Rom 3:26). He is just to punish sin and yet He also justifies sinners by displaying Jesus Christ publicly as a propitiation — wrath-appeasing sacrifice — for sin. Thus, the gospel presents a substitute: one who bears the just judgment of God for our sins (Rom 3:24-25). Homosexuals need to hear about the *true* God, for this is where true hope can be found.

PART 3

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE HOPE OF BEING CHANGED

If sinners all fall short of God's perfect standard of righteousness and together stand condemned before the unbending justice of God, can someone have hope? Can someone be changed? Jesus Christ has come as the Savior of sinners! He has come to seek and save the lost! Those who put their faith in Christ alone are transformed by God's power and conformed into Christlikeness.

Specifically, the Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 that God does change sinners:

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

1) The SOURCE of change. Sinners who remain in their sin will go to hell. Those who reject Christ, scorn Christ's salvation, and abide in lawlessness will suffer under God's wrath in the Lake of Fire. *But!* There is hope for change! And it's not in a person's motivation or power. Rather, the source of change comes from God. Thus, the source of a person's change — conversion of the soul and transformation of conduct — must come *outside* of a person. A person cannot work himself up, by his own strength, to effect lasting change. The source is external.

2) The GOD who brings change. That outside source which brings change is God. God brings change to sinners, by His grace, for His glory, by His will, by the Spirit's power. The Apostle Paul says that the believers in Corinth *were washed*. That's a passive verb which highlights that an action happened *to* a person; that is, they received it. God brings the change. Sinners receive it by grace.

3) The MIRACLE of change. Can fornicators (any and all forms of sexual immorality), idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers or swindlers get to heaven? The only way is by God Himself to work the *miracle of salvation* by His sovereign will, by the Spirit's power, and for Christ's glory. Salvation is not a human achievement, it is divine accomplishment. It's not a gift in response to man's merits; it's a sheer miracle from God that comes to dead, undeserving, blasphemous sinners! Salvation is a miracle!

4) The DEMONSTRATION of change. All those whom God saves are changed. It is a progressive change and it happens gradually, progressively, and certifiably as the person grows in Christlikeness, but true change in the soul (salvation) always demonstrates itself in changed conduct (sanctification — growing in Christlikeness). Those whom God justifies (salvation), He sanctifies (conforms more to Christ). Can homosexuals change? Is it even possible? Yes, only through the mighty power of God's gospel as He changes the heart by His grace & for His glory!

PART 4

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Bible speaks clearly concerning issues of sexuality and gender roles. In fact, the opening chapter of the Bible says that God created male and female (Gen 1:27). In the next chapter, God brings the woman to the man and He joins them together in marriage. The only two people on the planet — a male and a female — are joined together in a lifelong covenant (Gen 2:23-25). Thus, the Old Testament [OT] specifies what marriage is (a covenant) and it defines the only two parties that comprise a legitimate marriage (a male and a female). In Genesis 3, sin enters the world and corrupts what was good and beautiful.

One does not get too far in reading through the book of Genesis before marriage is warped and twisted. In Genesis 19, the men of Sodom, both young and old, from every quarter of the city, gathered around Lot's house and pleaded for Lot to bring out the traveling men who were residing with him so that the men may have 'relations' with them (Gen 19:4-6). In response to this, Lot pleads with them not to act "wickedly" (Gen 19:7). Because of the sin of immorality and the unbridled longings for same-sex relations, God rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven (Gen 19:23-26). So bad was this sin and so severe was God's judgment that later on the prophet Jeremiah speaks of divine judgment by comparing it with "when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors... no man will live there, nor will any son of man reside in it" (Jer 50:40).

Without any ambiguity, Moses presents the Lord's commands to the nation of Israel and tells them that a man must not lie with a male as one lies with a female (Lev 18:22). God goes on to say that this act is an abomination (Lev 18:22b). Furthermore, in Leviticus 20:13, God says that if there is a man who does lie with a male as those who lie with a female, God says that both of them must be put to death. Under the Mosaic Law, they must be killed because they committed a detestable act (Lev 20:13b). The judgment of God came upon those who deviated from God's perfect plan for sexuality. When sinners stray from God's design for sexuality, genderism, and marriage (including all forms of immorality), divine judgment will come upon them unless they repent from that sin, forsake it altogether, trust in Christ, and follow after Him!

When Judah and Jerusalem had grown so brazen in their sin and so callous to the ways and Word of God, the prophet declared that they had stumbled and fallen and that they had rebelled against God's glorious presence (Isa 3:8). When they indulged in high-handed, blatant sin, they did not even try to conceal their sin for Isaiah prophesied that they displayed their sin like Sodom (Isa 3:9). This kind of abhorrent behavior will receive divine punishment because it distorts the beautiful plan of God for human sexuality and for sexual relations within the bounds of a monogamous, heterosexual marriage. What God created was good, beautiful, lasting, and eternal. Marriage has not changed. From the early chapters of the Bible till the present hour in the twenty-first century, God's plan for sexuality, marriage, and sexual relations remains the same.

PART 5

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament speaks with clarity regarding the sin of homosexuality. The writers of Scripture include homosexuality in lists of various sins that prevent people from entering the kingdom of God. That is, those who engage in such behavior will face the wrath of God forevermore.

In his first epistle to Timothy, the Apostle Paul states that the Law is given not for righteous people but for those who break the law and those who rebel, such as the unholy, profane, for murders, for sexually immoral men and for homosexuals, for kidnappers, for liars and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching (1 Tim 1:8-11). In these verses, the Apostle Paul says that homosexuality (amongst other sins mentioned in this paragraph) are contrary to God's Law and describe the rebellious. It is people who commit these sins who do what is contrary to sound teaching (1 Tim 1:10). This text clearly includes homosexuals (and their behavior) as those who have rebelled against God, who are living contrary to sound teaching, and are in need of the gospel.

In another text, perhaps even one of the clearest texts in the New Testament on this issue, Paul states in Romans 1:26-27 that one of the divine curses upon a society is when God gives people over to degrading passions. Paul defines this as women exchanging the natural function for that which is unnatural (Rom 1:26). Interestingly, Paul brings up lesbianism first as this movement often leads the homosexual wave. God states that the women abandon the *natural function* (with men) and they indulge in that which is unnatural (with women). Thus, homosexuality is *never* natural. People are not born with this disposition. It is contrary to nature. All are born heterosexuals. In Romans 1:27 Paul turns to the men and says that the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another -- men committing indecent acts with other men. Again, God makes clear that just as with the females, the males have abandoned the natural function (that is, to engage in sexual contact with females) as they burn in their desire toward other men. This action leads to the penalty of their error. God will judge all those who engage in such behavior. Homosexuality is sin. It is contrary to nature. And those who burn with desires toward the same sex also commit this sin. God has spoken clearly.

The Word of God warns that those who live unrighteously will not inherit the kingdom of God. None who live in ongoing sin and who practice sin will enter heaven (1 John 3:4-9). Paul warns the Corinthian church not to be deceived (which means that there were some who were trying to teach the acceptance of such vices) that neither fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will enter heaven (1 Cor 6:9-10). But thank God for His matchless grace and power! This text says that those who engage in such behavior can be washed, justified, sanctified by God's power! The powerful gospel takes filthy sinners and washes them clean through Christ's blood (1 Cor 6:11).

PART 6

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE GLORY OF CHRIST

All of Christ's own delight in Him and are ravished by His beauty and glory (2 Thess 1:10). He resides with His own, provides endless promises for them, guarantees their preservation till glory, and empowers them as they minister the gospel to the lost (Matt 28:18-20). Christ is full of glory (John 1:14) and God's people endeavor to imitate Christ in all things: to love righteousness and to hate lawlessness (Heb 1:9).

1) The Righteousness of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is perfectly righteous in His being, His essence, His character, and His works. Believers have an advocate with the Father -- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One (1 John 2:1). He glistens with splendid righteousness and always performs what is perfect in accord with His divine character. Homosexuality is contrary to God's law, rebellious against God's Word, and it will incur that which is in accord with Christ's holy character -- the just punishment that it deserves. The righteousness of Christ exposes all sin.

2) The Holiness of Christ. The Lord Jesus is "holy holy holy" (Rev 4:8) and nothing unclean can come before His radiant presence in glory (Hab 1:13). Because God is infinitely holy and separate from sin, no sinner can stand before Him blameless. Thus, because homosexuals have lived contrary to God's Word and ways, the holiness of Christ demands and certifies their destruction unless they repent, flee from their sin, and follow after Christ and Him *alone*.

3) The Deity of Christ. God has entrusted all judgment to the Son (John 5:22) and since Jesus is God (John 1:1) He can, He must, and He will punish all lawbreakers. Christ, as God, will sit on the great, white Throne to judge all those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life. He will condemn them to the Lake of Fire. Christ has almighty power to save His elect and damn His enemies.

4) The Blessing of Christ. Unending blessings flow down from the fountain of delights in and through the Person of Jesus Christ. He is full of goodness, glory, beauty, and love. He tenderly leads His own and powerfully preserves His elect. He redeemed those whom the Father gave Him and bore the full weight of the divine curse at Calvary as He bore their punishment in full. The blessing of Christ comes upon those who have repented of sin (forsaken it) and have believed in Christ (trusted in and continue to abide in Him).

5) The Power of Christ. The matchless power of Christ is unrestrainable. None can stand before Christ and give excuses on the final day of judgment. All stand guilty together and will be condemned forever unless Christ saves them. Homosexuals must understand that God cannot and will not overlook their sin. His power is unstoppable, His judgment is unquenchable, His wrath is unbearable, His fury is irresistible, and His holiness is unbreakable. Flee to Christ and live forever! Turn from sin and know Christ's power as Redeemer and not as executioner! Turn today!

PART 7

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

Those who live a lifestyle of homosexuality tangle themselves in perverted sin. All forms of homosexuality, same-sex attraction, and transgender issues are contrary to nature and do not come from God. The Bible speaks of the Spirit as the “Spirit of Holiness” (Rom 1:4) and as the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17). Everything that the Bible says comes from the very mouth of God (2 Tim 3:16-17) and since the Spirit of God carried the human authors as they penned precisely what God wanted (2 Pet 1:20-21), one must conclude that the Bible is wholly and perfectly inspired by the perfect, sovereign, clear, and unchanging Spirit of God. God wrote Scripture. And since the Bible speaks of homosexual behavior as that being contrary to nature and being a sin that prevents people from entering the kingdom of God so long as they persist in that lifestyle (1 Cor 6:9-11), all Christians must love others enough (including homosexuals themselves) by calling them to flee to Jesus Christ alone to find refuge from the coming deluge of God’s wrath.

1) Homosexuality insults the Spirit. For one to continue sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, the Bible says that no sacrifice for sins remains but rather a terrifying expectation of judgment for those who trample underfoot the Son of God and His redeeming work at the cross and in so doing, they insult the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:26-29). To remain in ongoing patterns of sin is to trample underfoot the Son of God and His glorious and gracious crosswork. It is to expect the fury of fire which will consume all God’s adversaries (Heb 10:27). To reject God is to reject Christ and to reject Christ is to insult the Spirit. The sin of homosexuality and all those who engage in such living insult the Spirit of grace.

2) Homosexuality opposes the Spirit. The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit and the Spirit sets its desire against the flesh (Gal 5:16). They stand opposed to one another and can never coexist (Gal 5:17). Those who walk in the flesh and perform deeds of the flesh (e.g., immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing; cf. Gal 5:19-21) will not enter the kingdom of God (Gal 5:21). Those, who have been changed by the Spirit, and who have the life and joy of the Spirit no longer walk in the flesh but the Spirit of God produces fruit through the believer (e.g., love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; cf. Gal 5:22-23). To live in homosexuality is to live in immorality which is to live walking in the flesh which opposes the Spirit and has, in fact, made war with the Spirit.

3) Homosexuals need the Spirit. It is the Spirit who gives life (John 6:63) and it is the Spirit who regenerates (John 3:3-8). The Spirit convicts sinners of sin and shows them their need for righteousness (John 16:8). Those who have engaged in homosexual practices, same-sex attraction, deviant gender identity, and any and all forms of immorality desperately need the Holy Spirit’s gracious and saving work in giving new life to dead souls and transforming those lives into conformity with Jesus Christ (Rom 8:28-29). O for the power of the Spirit to come!

PART 8

HOMOSEXUALITY & JESUS' VIEW

Many who advocate the legitimacy of same-sex marriage including those who profess to be Christians who attempt to make arguments in favor of homosexual marriages will quickly turn to the common statement that Jesus never spoke regarding homosexuality; thus, they assert, he did not ever speak against it. This argument has won the ears of many and those who profess to be Christians while at the same time arguing for the legitimacy of same-sex marriage need to understand that no one spoke clearer on the topic of marriage and sexuality than Jesus.

1) Being God, Jesus upholds all that the Father spoke in the Old Testament Scriptures.

When Jesus came to earth, He existed in the form of God and did not regard equality with God a thing to be held on to and so He obediently submitted to His Father's will and was born of a virgin. He never lost deity. He gained human flesh. Thus, as Jesus walked in this world He perfectly existed as fully God and fully man as He never forfeited his humanity or his deity. As God and claiming to be God and proving those claims by means of His miracles, He upholds all of the Old Testament Scripture. All that the Scriptures reveal concerning marriage in the Old Testament and regarding the abominable practices of homosexuality, Jesus, who does not change, affirmed the Word of God perfectly. He relentlessly quoted them as the Word of God as He hid the Word in his heart and fought temptations with and by the Scriptures. He upheld the written Word's unchanging, eternal, perfect, inspired, supernatural, and authoritative nature.

2) Jesus unequivocally affirmed that marriage only consists of a union between one man and one woman. But those who say that Jesus never condemned homosexuality have missed a very crucial point. He condemned homosexuality by the unmistakable and exclusive affirmation of the covenant of heterosexual marriage. Jesus rebuked the Jewish leaders by saying: "Have you not read that He [God] who created [Adam and Eve] from the beginning made them male and female, and He said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'" (Matt 19:4-5)? Jesus noted that the man and the woman who come together in marriage no longer are two but they are one (Matt 19:6) and what God joins together (in the covenant bond of marriage), no man must ever separate (Matt 19:6b). These statements affirm the marriage roles: one man and one woman who have left parents and join to each other. This, and this alone, is Jesus' view of marriage. Nothing else is included.

3) Jesus affirmed that marriage is a covenant between one man and one woman that points to the ultimate marriage union between Himself and His Bride. Using Jewish language of marriage customs of the day, Jesus promised His own that He would go to the Father and then return one day and receive them to be with Him so they may be together (John 14:1-3). Jesus affirmed that marriage was a pointer, a picture, a demonstration of a greater union, the more lasting and eternal union between Christ and His elect bride. Homosexuality destroys this image. Christ, the Bridegroom, is joined to His bride, the Church forevermore. And they shall enjoy perfect intimacy for endless ages. By Jesus' own strong words, he excluded any and all forms of homosexuality and homosexual marriages as legitimate. He upheld God's design for marriage.

PART 9

HOMOSEXUALITY & HELL

The road to hell is broad. Jesus declared that many enter hell and that there are few who are saved. All men have sinned and have broken God's Law and rightfully deserve His just vengeance. The punishment for sin is an infinite punishment from God that will come in hell unless men repent, trust in Christ, and are clothed in His righteousness. As those who have sinned and have turned away from God's truth, homosexuals will perish in hell unless they repent.

1. True love warns. The most loving thing a person could ever do is warn a friend of impending doom and disaster. Hell looms on the horizon for unrepentant sinners. Homosexuals must be warned that hell awaits them unless they repent of their sin, forsake it fully, trust in & follow Christ.

2. Homosexuality (among other sins) is a sin that breaks God's Law and deserves punishment. God clearly reveals in Scripture what marriage is and His stipulations for all sexual relations. Those who live homosexual lives commit grave sin against God's holiness and they deserve God's punishment. They are lawbreakers and will meet God as righteous Judge in the future unless they turn from their sinful lifestyle.

3. Those who engage in ongoing homosexual behavior will go to hell. Those who engage in ongoing patterns of sin will not enter the kingdom of God. A life of homosexuality will lead one to hell.

4. Those who persist in unmortified same-sex attraction, homosexual lusts and desires will face God's wrath in hell. Even if one does not 'act out' the homosexual impulses but merely lives with same-sex attraction and perpetual lust for the same sex, they also will face God's judgment for sinful hearts that have turned from God's ways and have followed their own lusts.

5. Those who give hearty approval to same-sex marriage, homosexuality, and same-sex attraction as legitimate lifestyles are guilty of and will receive God's just judgment. All who approve homosexuality and condone it as a permissible lifestyle are just as guilty as those who commit the act. In giving hearty approval to such behavior, they themselves are held guilty.

6. Hell is the just punishment that God inflicts upon sinners forevermore. All who live in sin and die in that state will face God's justice with flaming fury that will never provide a moment of rest. God punishes sinners in hell. He crushes them justly and fairly forevermore in hellfire.

7. There is only one way that sinners can escape hell. Though all people deserve hell (homosexuals, heterosexuals or whatever), God has intervened and provides one way of escaping judgment: to be clothed with the righteous merits of Christ. Turn from sin and believe in Christ.

PART 10

HOMOSEXUAL DESIRES (SAME-SEX ATTRACTION—SSA) WITHOUT ACTING OUT

Gender identity swirls in a pool of confusion in our day. Boys who want to be girls and girls who want to be boys and those who identify themselves in various ways at various times. But additionally, many affirm that they battle with same-sex attraction [SSA] and yet quickly state that they do not act out on the homosexual desires. They battle with longings and lusts for the same-sex but they do not act out on those desires. Shamefully, the Christian community has quibbled on this issue and has not spoken clearly and biblically as to what God has said on the issue. Much resides in Scripture that is pertinent to this topic. Believers must understand the issue of SSA is alive and well in our day — and in the church! — and they must know how to respond to and provide help to those who find themselves battling with SSA. With this, a few points must be mentioned.

1. God sees the heart. Let us understand that God sees the heart. There is nothing that a man thinks or feels that is hidden from God. What a man thinks or feels in the darkness is exposed in the light before God. God sees the desires, attractions, longings, passions, and lusts in the heart.

2. God judges the heart motives. Just because someone thinks something *even if he does not act out upon that thought* does not mean the impulse is innocent and *a-moral*. God does not just judge *deeds* or one's *conduct*. God will disclose the motives of men's hearts (1 Cor 4:5). It is the Word of God that exposes the thoughts and intentions *of the heart* for there is nothing hidden from God's sight but all people are open before God and will give an account to God (Heb 4:12-13). The unrighteous man must forsake his thoughts (Isa 55:7). Even the heart motives, the thoughts of one's heart and the internal purposes of man will be judged by God.

3. A heart fixed on a sin even if it is not acted out is still deemed guilty before God. The men of Sodom gathered around Lot's home and had the strong impulse and desire to have relations with Lot's visitors yet they never acted out on that deed (Gen 19:5) and yet Lot spoke of their motives and intentions as wickedness (Gen 19:7). Even if a thought in a person's heart is not acted upon it does not negate his responsibility before God. If a person lusts in his heart after a woman, Jesus said he is just as guilty as an adulterer (Matt 5:28). A person who has SSA even though he may not act out on his impulses and temptations is still guilty before God because the trajectory of that desire is sinful, twisted, and disobedient to God.

4. Salvation changes a heart and one's conduct. It is only the working of God in a person's heart that provides real *heart* change which results in true *life* change. Those who battle with SSA must affirm that the *desires themselves* are sinful and they must come humble, broken, desperate, and needy to Christ and plead for His grace, mercy & strength for change. And it is the true working of God that forgives sinners, changes the heart, and empowers to live purely.

PART 11

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE CLAIM TO BE BORN WITH THAT DISPOSITION

The Bible affirms that all people come into the world with sinful natures and are guilty as sinful lawbreakers before God. The Bible also speaks to the issue of *how* people are born and *with what kind of desires* people are born. God's Word says that no one is born with a genetic disposition toward the same gender.

1. What God says is natural. The Bible says that the natural function of humanity is a male to have a passion for a woman and likewise the woman for the man (Rom 1:26). To change this (in any form) is to have something that is unnatural. The Bible says that when men abandon the passion for the woman (which is the natural function) and burn in desires toward each other that it is unnatural (Rom 1:27). So then, God who is the creator of mankind affirms that heterosexual passions are natural and normal.

2. What God says is unnatural. What is unnatural is when women exchange the natural function with men for that which is unnatural — that is, with women (lesbianism) (Rom 1:26). And likewise, when men abandon the natural function of the woman (heterosexual passions) and burn in their desire toward one another (homosexual passions, attraction, lusts), this is unnatural and called an indecent act (Rom 1:27). Thus, no one is born with the disposition of same-sex attraction. None. All are born into the world as heterosexuals. This is part of God's creative design and order.

3. The truth regarding homosexuality. Homosexuality is unnatural and disobedient to God. It destroys God's grand design for marriage and it distorts what God created and called 'very good' (Gen 1:31).

4. Eliminating all excuses. And even if someone attempted to claim or prove genetically that one *could* be born a homosexual, no profit has been made to the discussion. Because even if one is born a particular way, still in no way is the person excused from their sinful behavior. For instance, every person is conceived in sin (while in the mother's womb) and is born into the world a sinner. No other option exists. The person is not exempt from the need to repent and believe the gospel just because they had no choice and were *born* that way. Even still, they stand guilty before God as sinners (even though they were conceived in sin while still in the mother's womb) and must repent of their sin, renounce all self-righteousness, and fly solely to the Lord Jesus Christ and surrender to His Lordship over their entire lives.

Even though no one is born a homosexual, whatever a person may assert or claim, true Christians must love such persons with genuine care, patient compassion, and fervent courage so as to minister the only true remedy for the soul and for the body, the person and substitutionary crosswork of the Lord Jesus Christ. In caring for homosexuals, true believers must minister the truth in love so as to call them to repent of sin and do so with an attitude of care and compassion.

PART 12

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE WIDESPREAD ECCLESIASTICAL ACCEPTANCE OF IT

Many individuals, professing Christians, pastors, church leaders, movements, denominations, professors, institutions have come together in recent times in acceptance of same-sex marriage. To refuse to accept homosexuality is to welcome ridicule, isolation, a degree of persecution, and mocking. Nevertheless, the true Christian stands with God and with the clarity and everlasting trustworthiness of sacred Scripture. If all the world stands against him, he stands with Christ.

1. Widespread Tragedy. Devastating! How utterly devastating it is that churches — *churches!* — have embraced homosexuality. The institution created by Christ that is to bear His name to the lost world is now, in many spheres, embracing the cultural wave of tolerating same-sex marriage. It is widespread. It is not only in America but around the world.

2. Biblical Clarity. The Bible speaks clearly regarding the sin of homosexuality and regarding the divine judgment and eternal punishment in hellfire that it brings upon those who persist in such lifestyles. The Old and New Testaments speak clearly in condemning homosexuality. Jesus, the prophets of old and the Apostles all unanimously speak to the heterosexual union that God ordained as marriage and thus deny any and all forms of homosexual marriage.

3. Loving Warning. Christians must sound the alarm! Divine judgment is coming! The wave of God's fury quickly comes on nations and people that embrace, condone and live in such ways of life. Homosexuals will receive God's wrath. Those who give hearty approval to such lifestyles will also incur God's judgment. The *loving* thing is to speak truth to such people! Hate speech is not speaking up about the evil of such a lifestyle. To remain silent is to hate! We speak up because we love much!

4. Urgent Plea. The urgent plea is for pastors, church leaders, professing Christians, and denominations to heed God's clear truth in Scripture and surrender to the authority and clarity of the Word. The Apostles were not naive. Nor were the Old Testament Israelites primitive and ignorant. God's Word is eternal, true, unchanging, and everlastingly relevant. The urgent plea is for ministers of the gospel to humble themselves and sit submissively under the sole authority of God's truth found in Scripture.

5. Future Confidence. To stand on God's Word and to courageously affirm Christ and His gospel is to have confidence in the future day when Christ comes in power and glory. To deny Him, His Word, His truth, and His gospel (which is what those who condone homosexuality do) is to deny all confidence of entering heaven and to certify that one will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Stand with Christ, on Scripture, with power, against the world, and be resilient for Him!

6. Christ Exaltation. Christians do not live to please the world or gain man's approval. True believers live to exalt Christ and to worship Him! Nothing in all the universe is more glorious than the person of Christ! Exalt Him by standing for truth! Preserve His gospel, O men of God!

PART 13

HOMOSEXUALITY & LASTING JOY

A massive disconnect exists when those in contemporary society attempt to marry their homosexual lifestyle with true joy. They are polar opposites; they cannot coexist. For that reason, this essay serves to speak on the pertinent issues related to homosexuality and the quest for joy.

1. The power of the conscience. All human beings have a conscience given to them by God that either accuses them or defends them (Rom 2:15). No person can escape the conscience. Those who live enslaved to homosexual passions have the divinely given accusation in them that alerts them to their twisted way of life that brings no ongoing, lasting joy.

2. The shame of sin. Joy is entirely removed from homosexuality and its various lusts because sin crowds out joy. The reality of sin is that it brings shame and it forsakes joy. To pursue sin is to shun joy. The sin of homosexuality pursues a lifestyle of shame at the expense of true, lasting, God-given joy.

3. Freedom in Christ to be a slave for Christ. Those who live in the lifestyle of homosexuality need to hear biblical truth. One way exists for men and women to be released from the bondage to sin (however bad, public, enslaving, or debilitating that sin may be), namely, through the greater pursuit and the eternal delights of turning from sin and being a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone is a slave to that which he obeys. Either one will obey his lusts and be enslaved to his sin or one will obey Christ and be enslaved to Him. Everyone is enslaved to something or Someone. Ultimate freedom comes in Christ and through His work at Calvary which defeated Satan and his fiery darts of temptation.

4. Proving to be Christ's disciple with unending joyfulness. One of the certain proofs that a person has received the new birth is that the Spirit of God produces godly fruit in him and through him in his life. And one such fruit is joy. The Spirit abounds with joy because, as God, the triune God manifests perfect, limitless and unending joy in Himself. To follow Christ is to be caught up in this divine joy because it is the Spirit producing this joy in the believer and it is the believer eagerly conjoining with God in praising *God* for His person, work, deeds, and glory. Those who lack joy prove themselves to not be Christ's disciples.

5. Being caught up in the gladness of God in Himself and His beauty. To rejoice in God is impossible for one who lives at enmity with Him. Nonbelievers cannot please God or worship God. Nor do they want to. But those who have been born again and have been changed by sovereign grace and by His irresistible love are caught up in the gladness of God in Himself and in His beauty. That is, the true child of God loves God Himself and loves what God loves. That means that the child of God must hate what God hates. Those engaged in ongoing lifestyles of homosexuality cannot please God nor do they rejoice in God. But the redeemed rejoice in Him because they have a new nature. They *must* love what God loves because they love God.

PART 14

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE FAMILY

The first institution that God ever created was that of a family. Family relationships are the closest and most intimate of human relationships. God is the designer of the family and the intimate closeness within a family context is meant to model that within the Godhead with God as Father and the Lord Jesus, as His beloved Son. To change the definition of a family is to corrupt the institution altogether and present a distorted and perverted view of the Godhead and of the gospel.

1. The importance of the family. God made Adam from the ground and then God made Eve from the body of Adam. God brought the woman to the man because it was not good for the man to be alone. Thus, the design of family came from the mind of God. Then, the man, Adam, came together sexually with his wife, Eve, and they conceived and bore children. Thus, the human race began and it grew quickly and exponentially. The importance of the family cannot be overestimated.

2. The design of the family. The design of the family originated from God. God created the family because the closest of all relationship is ultimately observed with the Triune Godhead. The human family is to model the closeness of God as Father and His beloved children. Human families should emulate and exemplify the perfect family of God where God is perfect Father.

3. The picture of the family. God is the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. That is to say, every earthly father and every earthly family is a picture of and a demonstration of the ultimate family and the supreme Father — God. As God relates to His children serves as the pattern by which every human father should love and nurture his own children. And as the children of God love, honor, obey, and cherish their heavenly Father, this should be the way in which children love their fathers.

4. The ultimate family. The ultimate family has God as Father. The ultimate family encompasses scores of men and women from the ages past and includes those from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. The ultimate family is bound together not with biological genetics but with something far more intimate, lasting, and supernatural. The family of God is tied together through an irrevocable union with the Living God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only way to this God and Father. All who exist in this family have God as Father and Christ as brother.

5. The destruction of the family. Contemporary culture has instilled in people the mindset that they can pick and choose and define and redefine what family is and how it must be defined. In reality, however, homosexuality destroys the family because the *only* definition of a family includes that which is in accordance with God's plan, purpose, and stipulations revealed in holy Scripture. To submit to God's pattern for family is the path of blessedness, abundance and peace.

PART 15

HOMOSEXUALITY AND PARENTING

One of the divine purposes for marriage is procreation. A blessed result that usually comes in the union between a man and a woman in the covenant bond of marriage is the blessing of bearing and rearing children.

1. Homosexuality eliminates the roles of father and mother.

When two men or two women come together in a so-called marriage, the normal, biological procreative opportunities no longer exist and thus the divine pattern and command is inhibited. Homosexual relationships eliminate the roles of father and mother. The father is the leader, the head, the visionary of the family. He leads, he protects, he provides, he guides, he serves. The mother is to follow her husband's leadership as she cares for the home, nurtures the children, and submits to his servant-leadership and authority in the home. Same-sex marriages eliminate these different roles so that the role of father and mother no longer exist.

2. Homosexuality abandons the natural, normal means of procreation.

Quite simply, it is absolutely impossible for two men in a relationship or two women in a relationship to procreate physiologically and biologically. With the advances of modern science, individuals can find ways (and, creative ones at that) to become pregnant. But by God's original and timeless design, same-sex relationships fundamentally prohibit individuals from even being capable of obeying God's decree of bearing children and populating the earth as a man and a woman come together in sex within the confines of marriage. Thus, homosexuality simply abandons God's plan for procreation.

3. Homosexuality passes on a twisted and confused family lifestyle to the next generation.

The modern era sees more young boys and girls growing up in families with two dads or two mothers. As these children grow up and move out of the house from under the supervision and oversight of the guardians, these young men and women find themselves gravely confused as to what a family is, much less, what a family ought to do. Many individuals cannot even define a family nor have they even seen one that is healthy, happy, holy, and God-honoring. Same-sex marriages pass on a twisted and confused family lifestyle to the children which harms them emotionally, confuses their understanding of a family, and completely abandons the God-given picture of the gospel interwoven in a monogamous, heterosexual marriage as God originally designed.

4. Homosexuals cannot obey God's directives for fathers and mothers instructing the children.

All over the Scriptures, God repeatedly instructs parents to teach their children. All through the Proverbs, for instance, verses arise where both the father and the mother are mentioned as instructing the children, disciplining the children, and providing counsel and guidance for them. Same-sex couples fundamentally are unable to obey God's directives for parenting.

PART 16

HOMOSEXUALITY: EDUCATION & UNIVERSITIES

If one were to survey the landscape of institutions of higher education, one would quickly find a massive tidal wave of verbal, outright, bending-over-backwards support for the gay (and transgender) community. The mantra in today's culture appears to be none other than to find oneself, express oneself, disclose one's true self, and be happy in one's identity (whatever or however he or she may perceive that identity to be).

1. The Tragic, Academic Abandoning of Biblical Authority.

In once biblical institutions that held to the absolute authority of God's written Word, many colleges, universities, and seminaries that once were pastoral training schools now lead the parade in equal rights and equal opportunities. Over the course of many decades, the abandoning of biblical authority has crept into schools so that God's Word no longer holds *the* place of authority. Now, higher reason, academic scholarship, and pluralistic ideologies rule the day.

2. The Widespread Acceptance by Christian, Academic Institutions of Homosexual Practices.

This wave of acceptance of the homosexual movement even now receives open arms from many professing Christian institutions. Most colleges and universities all across the nation embrace the gay community and provide groups on campus for those in profess to be gay or transgender. Many institutions have published statements of equal opportunities of employment and enrollment regardless of whether one is gay or not. From the secular campuses, one would expect such things. But that such realities come from professing Christian institutions is appalling.

3. The Real Issue.

The real issue is not the accepting or rejecting of people. It's not favoritism. The root issue has nothing to do with respecting people, people's opinions, or welcoming people. The real issue that has brought academic institutions to where they are (in the professing Christian realm) lies in the abandoning of the *sole biblical authority*. Far from being the authority that governs the institution, now many educational boards deem it best to welcome all and any individuals regardless of background, gender, identity, or way of lifestyle. The issue is not who to hire or who not to hire. The issue is not growing the academic institution to be the biggest in the region. The issue is not so much the passion to be accepted by other academicians and institutions. The real, root issue rests in the fact that God's Word has been lost and human reason has replaced it as the sovereign authority.

4. What's At Stake & The Ultimate Remedy.

What's at stake is nothing short of a full-fledged civilization change. Those who go to college are indoctrinated with tolerant, pluralistic ideologies that fundamentally rejects biblical truth, biblical authority, and God's design for the family. The only remedy is for God's people to hold His Word as the *absolute, sole, supreme authority*. Till this happens, America is doomed.

PART 17

HOMOSEXUALITY & PERSECUTION

Let no one ever think that Jesus promised His followers comfort, ease, prosperity, and receptiveness from the world. He did, nonetheless, provide many promises to His people. But He promised that suffering would come, that they would receive hostility from the world, and that just as they treated Christ, so the world would also treat His followers. No believer who is light should expect warmth, acceptance, tolerance, and receptivity from those who are darkness.

1. The Intolerance of Tolerance.

Perhaps no wave of coming persecution in the western world is as widespread and sweeping as the one coming from the homosexual community. Those who live and herald their tolerance of all people, all backgrounds, all races, and all religions just cannot handle one group of people: bible-believing, resolute, devoted Christians committed to proclamation of the Word and the glory of God! Thus, those who champion their tolerance of everyone suddenly become intolerant of Christians. Their ideology drastically, publicly, undeniably breaks down by their own actions.

2. Defining Tolerance.

One might define tolerance as: “the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with.” Or, Merriam-Webster defines tolerance as the “willingness to accept feelings, habits, or beliefs that are different from your own.” Of course, multitudes of people, groups, institutions, charities and political agendas champion the necessary ingredient of ‘tolerance’. But they cannot tolerate true Christ-followers.

3. The Unambiguous Promise from Jesus Christ.

Let all Christians hear and heed the promises from the lips of Christ. He promised that in this world you will have tribulation (John 16:33) and that the Church has tribulation and poverty (Rev 2:9). Indeed, the world hates Christ’s followers (John 15:18-19). The Apostle John writes that believers must not be surprised if the world hates us (1 John 3:13). Paul affirmed that all who desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Tim 3:12). These clear, undeniable statements unequivocally affirm that hardship, suffering, and rejection is the divinely given lot for *all* of His followers.

4. The Growth of the Church in Hostile Times.

All the while, Christians must not fear. Indeed, Christians must rejoice when mistreated and reviled for the name of Christ. When those in the world revile, slander, blaspheme, and mock Christians, surprise must not overtake us! Rather, we must pray for those who persecute us, turn the other cheek, love them intentionally, call them to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone, and seek to live godly as pilgrims in this present world while journeying to our heavenly Zion. For the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. God purifies His church through affliction and He strengthens their faith through opposition. Let believers not cower away in fear but stand strong with Christlike courage, Spirit-given power, and God-exalting joy. This will glorify God!

PART 18

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE FEAR OF GOD >> DON'T FEAR MAN, BUT FEAR GOD.

God declares in His Word that the fear of man brings a snare but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted (Proverbs 29:25). This verse exposes one of the deep, heart-sourced sins that every single person battles with: the longing for the approval of others. And often, this craving for acceptance from others trumps a person's craving to please God and Him alone. No wonder God states that this fear of man brings a trap. It certainly does trap, catch, seize, and enslave.

1. Understanding the Fear of God.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. To really know anything at all, one begins with the knowledge of God. To fear God is to revere Him, to stand in awe of Him, to marvel at His power, His beauty, His glory, His majesty, His sovereignty, and His love. To fear God means that one lives willingly and obediently as a slave before God, the Sovereign Master and Lord of all creation. To fear God includes trembling and terrors. It also includes reverence, honor, respect, and love. A child of God does not fear and tremble before God because of the possibility that God may cast him forevermore into hell. No! A true child of God lives in fear of God because he understands who God really is, who he really is, and he marvels that God would stoop so low to love such a vile worm as he. Then, fearing God results in obedience, submission, and love.

2. Understanding the Fear of Man.

To fear man, on the other hand, is something entirely different. To fear man means that one strives for acceptance from others. It includes a personal ambition to please people and to win people's respect, honor, and love. Many people live in the fear of man every day. It is blinding and it is enslaving. Those who second-guess all their decisions based on what others think show that they fear man. Those who get easily embarrassed are trapped by the fear of man. Most diets assuredly are to help the body look good, be healthy, and impress others.

3. The Trap that Blinds, Seizes, and Indoctrinates.

Ed Welch has aptly put it when he wrote that other people's "opinions, possible opinions, attitudes, or withholding of love become YOUR master." This means that the concern to please others is trapping because it grips *me* and dominates *me* and controls *me* and enslaves *me*. I wear what I wear so that I may impress others. I talk a certain way. I do certain things. I go certain places in order to *win the approval and acceptance of others*.

4. The Call to Persevere in Order to Please the Lord Christ.

All of this relates directly to the discussion on homosexuality as a widespread and sweeping movement in our day because believers *must not fall into the trap* of the fear of man. Believers must live to please the Lord Christ *alone* rather than win the acceptance of others. Fear God!

PART 19

HOMOSEXUALITY & LOVE

The psalmist declares: “my eyes shed streams of water, because they do not keep Your Law” (Psalm 119:136). O how this must define the hearts of every Christian when interacting with homosexuals and those engaged in such lifestyles. The proper attitude must never be anger, hostility, vengeance, or insults. Rather, believers must pour forth love and compassion toward all men, including those within the homosexual camp.

1. The Example of Love.

Culture has demonstrated its utter confusion in trying to define what love really is. To the secularist and to the worldling, love revolves around self, and self’s feelings, and self’s protection and promotion and progress in health and happiness. But the ultimate example of love is something that is found entirely outside of *self*. It is found in *God*. God loved the world that He *gave* His own beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Even when sinners hated God, ran from God, despised God, and waged war with Him and His absolute sovereignty, God demonstrated His *love* by sending His Son Christ Jesus to die for the ungodly (Rom 5:6-11).

2. The Command to Love.

The Lord Jesus reiterates the command from the Mosaic Law which states that all people must love God and love one another (Matt 22:39; Lev 19:18). God has spoken in a straightforward fashion and commanded His people to love one another. In fact, in the New Testament, a person asks Jesus: *who is my neighbor?* To this question, Jesus replies that even what one may consider an enemy, a hostile foe, still is one’s neighbor. Thus, Christians must love all men, including our enemies (Matt 5:44).

3. The Ultimate Act of Love.

The ultimate act of love finds its expression most fully in the person and work of the God-Man, the sinless one, the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, and the Wonderful Counselor as the Lord Jesus entered this world and died a cruel death at the hands of sinners and bore the full weight of divine justice, *not* for His own sins (for He committed no sin), but *for* the sins of His own people. That is to say that the ultimate act of love is found in the substitutionary sacrifice that the Lord Jesus accomplished for His people when He received the full weight, the infinite anger, the divine fury, and the unswerving righteousness of God’s wrath poured out on the cross. He did this *in the place of* His people. Divine punishment will be meted out either on sinners in hell who refuse to repent or on the Savior who died at Calvary in love for His people.

4. The Truest and Fullest Expression of Love.

Thus, as true Christians, the truest and fullest expression of love resides in the verbal proclamation of this gospel truth to the gay and homosexual community. The proclamation consists in calling all men and women to repent of sin (=to turn/flee from it) and to trust in Christ Jesus alone (=believe in Him/follow Him/surrender) and be saved. Thus, to show kindness *without* verbal proclamation is not love at all. But true love verbally proclaims the gift salvation!

PART 20

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE LIVING POWER OF THE GOSPEL

We live in a culture where the moral revolution is shifting at such a warp speed that it seems as though whenever a Christian opens his mouth to proclaim the gospel, people immediately see this as hate-speech (what some may term it: “bigotry”) against the homosexual community. In such events, people will make many claims: “I was born this way!” or “I can’t change the way that God made me!” or “God accepts and loves me the way that I am!” or “I can’t change my sexuality!” Christians hear these sorts of statements with frequency. So how does one respond?

I would propose that the power to change is *not* found in preaching heterosexuality or seeking people to change their *homosexuality*. Rather, change comes from the proclamation of the living power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. The Ultimate Power of this Message.

“I am not ashamed of the gospel,” the Apostle writes, “for it is the power of God to salvation for all who believe” (Romans 1:16). The most powerful and the most explosive power that exists in all of the vast universe is not nuclear in nature, but rather it is found in a message. This message consists of God’s holiness and intense loathing of sin — all sin — and His righteous and promised vengeance that will punish those who have sinned as lawbreakers. Yet this holy God had every divine reason to cast all mankind into hell to suffer under His just and fair wrath for endless eternities to come. Yet God, out of His free and sovereign love and compassion, send His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man, to live a sinless life and obey divine Law impeccably and then to die and bear divine judgment *in the stead of those whom the Father had given Him*. He vindicated His deity and work of redemption when God raised Him from the dead forever crushing Satan, sin, and death. All men must repent of sin, forsake it, flee to Christ alone, trust in Him, and follow after Him. This is the message that saves. This is the most powerful message!

2. Reaching the Innermost Part of a Human Heart.

No other proclamation to the gay community can reach the heart. Men and women might argue all day long about whether people might be ‘born’ with a certain disposition. People may argue all day long about this or that claim. The point is not to change homosexuals into heterosexuals. For heterosexuals still stand in desperate need of the same gospel! That which can reach the innermost part of a human heart is the *proclamation of the message of the gospel*. The Spirit of God uses the Word of God and the proclamation of Jesus Christ to convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment. This is what reaches the heart. Only God can change a sinner’s heart.

3. The Confidence in Announcing this Powerful Gospel.

When Christians engage in dialogue with homosexual friends, they must remember that there is live-changing and life-giving power in this message as it is faithfully delivered. The Spirit uses the Word to convict the heart so that sinners look to Christ and trust in Him so as to be saved. This, then, permits a Christian to *always* evangelize with confidence knowing that God predestines who will be saved and also the *means* by which people hear and believe! The living power resides *not* in my delivery or in a person’s finesse nor in a person’s ability to ‘relate to’ a person living in a kind of lifestyle. The power is in the gospel-message. Announce it confidently!

PART 21

HOMOSEXUALITY & ONE'S TRUE IDENTITY

Identity. This word alone, in our culture, stirs a vast array of emotions, thoughts, perspectives, and ever-changing ideologies about oneself. Who am I? How do I define me? What is it that really is my identity? What is my *true* self? These sorts of questions plague young and old alike in our western culture. Our society celebrates the “coming out” of men and women who have *identified* themselves as a particular gender or they have *identified* themselves with a particular lifestyle or community or relationship. But, really, what is one’s true identity? Where can help be found?

1. The Simplicity of One’s Identity.

Ultimately, God boils everything down in the Bible into simple, clear-cut, understandable terms. Every person lives in the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of light. Everyone dwells under the domain of Satan or the domain of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every person is a child of God or a child of the devil. All are dead in sin and trespasses or alive in Christ and dead to sin. Thus, one could boil one’s identity down to these simple terms. Am I a child of God or am I a child of the devil? Am I *In Christ* or am I *outside of Christ*? Am I His or am I not? When everything is peeled back, this is the simplicity of one’s identity. It is a very important issue to present to men.

2. The Glory of a Christian’s Identity.

Something earth-shattering happens when a child of God reads through the Living Word of God and realizes that there is something profoundly supernatural and supremely baffling to the secular world. A true Christian understands that his identity is bound up with the glory of the divine person of Christ and the sufficient work of Christ. The Christian receives oceans of comfort in realizing that he has died *with Christ* and he believes that he also *lives with Him* (Rom 6:8). A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ realizes and revels in the amazing glory that is his *not* because of his merit but because of Christ’s righteousness and merits. Thus, a Christian can glory in Christ and boast in Him by saying: “My identity is bound up *in Christ*.” All that He is *is mine*.

3. The Tremendous Blessing of the Unchanging Identity *in Christ*.

In this swirling world of temptation and in this downward-spiraling culture of narcissism, the believer needs an anchor. When trials invade, when hardships rain down, when sea-waves crash over our heads, when death claws its way into our lives, and when uncertainties cripple us there is something rock-solid that a believer needs to remember. The Christian knows that even amidst all of the changes that occur in this world (in me, to me, outside of me, because of me, etc.), a true Christian’s identity is *never* changing. Though the world may change, my identity is unchanging because it’s forever bound and inextricably linked to the immutable power of Christ.

4. The Need for Proclaiming the Gospel to the Lost.

Thus, a homosexual’s self-proclaimed assertion that he is coming out with his new *identity* is in actuality invalid because he still stands as a sinner in need of sovereign grace. Thus, Christians must lovingly proclaim Christ and Him crucified to gays and those in the transgender movement so that they may become children of God. May God encourage believers with their *identity with Christ*. And may God sovereignly awaken the spiritually dead so as to find life *in Christ* alone!

