

Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God

What the Bible Teaches About Marriage

July 26, 2015

Genesis 1:26-31

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;

30 and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given* every green plant for food"; and it was so.

31 God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

To the Glory of God

Now as I told you last week- every so often there arises an issue that is so important and so serious, and one that has such far reaching ramifications- that it warrants an examination by the Church. I stand before you this morning to say that we are faced with just such an issue in our day. The recent ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States institutes a radical departure from almost 240 years of history and jurisprudence, and it *imposes* upon this nation a "standard" for Marriage that is based upon a logic that is patently *unbiblical* and *ungodly*.

And as we learned last week- God did not sovereignly and actively *cause* evil men to align themselves with demons to concoct false teaching to seek to overthrow the Truth of God- but He sovereignly and passively *allowed* these heresies and false teachings and crisis to come to the door of the Church. And by doing that- in His Divine Wisdom- God *forces* the Christian Church to stand up and speak out and to go back to the Source and to find out what God said about that issue in infallible Scripture. And then God the Spirit moves upon certain men to rise up and engage the enemy head on and fight to preserve the integrity and glory and beauty and clarity of Biblical Christianity, and to do what the half- brother of Jesus said in **Jude 3**:

... contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

And so it is *our* time now. God has moved *providentially* to bring the fight to us at this time. We did not seek this fight and did not want it- but it is here. And so now the world turns to us for a response that is both Biblical and, therefore, eternal about the evil that God has allowed wicked men to bring to the door of the Church here in the first few years of the 21st Century.

The issue that we face today is *not* the Nature of God the Father or God the Son; it isn't the Essence of Grace- but it is no less serious. We are faced with the issue of Human Sexuality, and whether sexual deviance and perversion- in *any* of its manifestations- can become *less* sinful and *less* egregious, and, therefore, more acceptable to God and His Church than Scripture declares.

But, there are several *secondary* issues that are also affected by the issue of Human Sexuality such as: "The Institution of Marriage", "Qualifications for Church Membership and Leadership", and "The Relationship between Church and State". And so this warrants me to take a "vacation" from our verse by verse "journey" through the Gospel of Luke and to examine just what God has revealed in sacred Scripture about "Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God".

So this series will be a serious and thoughtful, honest, and thorough look at what God has said about the subject of Human Sexuality in Scripture, and how we – as God's children- should believe and teach and speak and live as a result of that.

This series will result in us adopting the findings into our Doctrinal Statement and By-Laws- which will necessitate every single member to sign a *new* Membership Covenant that reflects this addition. I am also mindful that for the first time in my life- I personally and this Church will *officially* be at odds with the Government of the United States. And we will also be at odds with the general direction that American society is heading- event though *that* has been true for quite some time.

And that also means that the Christian Church and the people of the Church are on a collision course with the Government of this country and the Culture around us that will manifest itself in *some* way in the future. And how much or how big or how small that collision will be- is up to God- Who alone is Sovereign over all things- including the decisions of evil men. So this is a real big deal. And, therefore, I approach this series with great seriousness and great trembling because I realize what all is at stake.

But one thing I will *not* do- and that is I will *not* be silent about this subject. I will *not* hesitate to publicly and openly and formally and officially state with absolutely no equivocation what God has said in Scripture about this subject. Because, I am not ashamed of the Gospel. And so I will stand on that with full assurance that God is able to protect and deliver us out of the hand of anyone who would seek to undermine Biblical Truth. But if God chooses *not* to rescue us- and He *allows* the actions of evil men to negatively affect us- then know this- I will *not* bow my knees and I will *not* submit to any law or any ruling or any order by any man or any Government that seeks to discount or change or distort what God has already said about Human Sexuality. These messages will be recorded and will put on our Church's Website and they will be transcribed and recorded into both 15 and 30 minute radio broadcasts that should begin airing in just a few weeks.

Now the goal of this series will *not* be in analyzing the Supreme Court's decision, per se, or in discussing the encroachment by the Federal Government onto individual rights. I will leave that for others to do. My focus on this subject is on the grammatical, linguistic, contextual, and theological Truth recorded in sacred Scripture concerning Human Sexuality that will form the foundation of what we believe and teach at the Covenant of Peace Church.

For example- The United Church of Christ, the Episcopalian

Church USA, the Presbyterian Church USA, and other religious groups have made a *theological* argument as to *why* they have acquiesced about this issue and have officially, formally, and publicly changed their position on the issue of Human Sexuality and Marriage- disregarding 500 years of their own history. And that theological argument is based on a particular logic that they have used that is either correct and is in alignment with Scripture, or it isn't. I will examine both the logic and the theology of those decisions in this series.

Now you are free in the United States to be a citizen in good standing and completely disregard the Bible. You are also free in this country to know what the Bible says and then ignore it and rebel against it without suffering any negative response from the Government. Now those who do this will stand before God to give an account as their life comes to an end or when Jesus returns- but you may do this without any negative reaction by the Authorities of this country.

But what *no one* is free to do is to say that the Bible says something that it *doesn't* say or to teach that Scripture does *not* say something that it manifestly *does* say and still remain honest and scholarly and correct. Those who twist the Scriptures to make them say whatever it is that they *want* them to say are the very worst of all deceivers- because they have obfuscated the only Source of Divine Truth. This series is conducted in such a way that *assumes* that the 66 Books of the Holy Bible that you hold in your hand are a true and reliable *copy* of the original autographs that were written down by the 40 writers over a 1500 year time frame as they were moved along by God the Holy Spirit. So my statements and agreements and arguments and condemnation will come from *that* assumption.

For example- #14 of the addition to our Doctrinal Statement and By Laws states:

We believe and teach that the sacred Covenant of Marriage is primarily a religious event- *not* a secular one- having been sovereignly ordained by God *before* human Governments were instituted, and, therefore- Marriage is to be carried out by the Christian Church in accord with God's revealed Word in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible. We maintain that it is the Christian Church which has the primary Right and sacred Duty to define, defend, and uphold Marriage. This Church defines Holy Matrimony as being: "A sacred Union between one, unmarried, naturally born, Man and one, unmarried, naturally born, Woman

united together by the Power of God and the mystery of Holiness with the blessings and approval of the Church as a public and visible representation of the Mystery of the Divine Relationship between Christ and His Church for the primary purpose of bringing Glory to God through godly and joyful companionship and the establishment of the family by extending the human race through procreation (if God permits) and to raise children in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord.” (**Genesis 2:20-25; Matthew 19:1-9**)

And #15 says:

We believe and teach that the definition of Marriage contained herein is superior to and takes the place of any other definition given by any State, Government, Court, or other Religious Organizations. Therefore- any form of “Union” or “Marriage” or “Partnership” or “Sexual Expression” that deviates from this definition and/or is contrary to Scripture is hereby rejected, denied, and rendered null, void, and meaningless by The Covenant of Peace Church.

And then #16 says

We believe and teach that to assure God's merciful Blessings on those who are united in Marriage in this Church- three steps must be taken before any Marriage is conducted by any Elder or Pastor of The Covenant of Peace Church: 1) Both persons must give credible testimony as to their Salvation by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Jesus Christ alone to the Board of Elders. 2) Both persons must be members in good standing of The Covenant of Peace Church. 3) Both persons must complete the assigned Pre-Marital Counseling Course prescribed by an Elder/Pastor. The goal here is not to prohibit or even limit Marriage but to assure, as best as we can, that Marriages conducted in The Covenant of Peace Church are to God's Glory and our Good. (For further information- see the Section: “What We Believe and Teach about Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage”)¹

Now both the subjects of Marriage and Human Sexuality are huge and cannot be taught or learned in a single sermon or even a single *series* of sermons. Having a “Biblical Mentality” or acquiring a “Biblical Worldview” or a being “in accord with Scripture” or being “pleasing to the Lord” about a particular subject- which is all saying the same thing- is an *ongoing* effort that takes diligence and study, and the desire to repent and change. And make no mistake about this, dear friends- being pleasing to Jesus Christ, or honoring God the Father, or walking in the Spirit are merely *synonyms* for having and understanding and

¹ For more information about this subject see, “*What We Believe and Teach about Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*” by Blair Bradley

obeying what the 66 Books of the Holy Bible teach. Let me say this another way- It is *impossible* for *anyone* to be pleasing to Jesus Christ, or to be honoring to God the Father, or to walk in the Spirit, and to live in *ongoing* and unrepentant rebellion to the Word of God. Now that is not some clever slogan that I just came up with- that is what the Apostle John taught in **1John 1:5-7**

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Therefore- because we believe this to be true- for *anyone* to be “**cleansed from all sin**” *requires* that they live their daily lives or “walk” in the Light of Scripture, and it also requires that they *not* walk or live their daily lives in darkness- which would mean they *retain* their sin and are *not* forgiven.

So does walking in accord with Scripture forgive our sins and save our souls? No. Christianity teaches that we are justified by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone. So we are justified by what we “believe and trust in”- *not* by what we “do”.

But how does a person know for sure if he has believed and trusted unto Justification? By “walking” or living his daily life in obedience to God’s Word. You see, being saved is more than simply making a choice or walking down an aisle. It means that God *Himself*- all *by Himself*- has taken your old nature that was formed after the similitude of Adam and has *replaced it* with a nature that is after the similitude of Jesus Christ. And the transformation of that nature results in you now loving God and the things of God. And that new, Divine Love gives you both the power and the desire to serve and follow after and obey and worship God.

So being truly saved- in every single case- results in the saved person having both the will and the ability to struggle against the lusts of his flesh- by the Power of the Holy Spirit- to be found humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of Scripture in his daily life- all to the Glory of God. And while that struggle will not be *perfect*- it *will* be

honest. And while it will not result in us being *sinless*- it *will* result in us *sinning less*.

So those who walk in darkness- or those who live their daily lives in ongoing and unrepentant rebellion to God's Word- *prove* by that ongoing and unrepentant rebellion- that they have *not* been born again and are merely deceived about their Salvation. And nowhere is this more true than it is with Human Sexuality and Marriage.

You see, our natural default setting as fallen people is to simply acquiesce to whatever is popular, to take the path of least resistance, to get in line, and be like everybody else. And that takes no thought and that takes no conviction and that takes no courage and that takes no supernatural Power. That kind of life does not require Jesus to die and rise again, and it does not require God the Holy Spirit to live and walk in us and intercede in us to God. Any lost and unsaved person can blindly follow another human leader in ongoing and unrepentant darkness.

But it *does* require being born from above and it *does* require being indwelt by God the Spirit to live *counterintuitively* to this fallen world. It *does* require Jesus Christ to die and rise again, and it *does* require God the Spirit to dwell continually in us for us to live in broken and trembling *obedience* to God and His revealed Word.

And it also requires the Church to be ever diligent and ever alert through ongoing study and prayer, and to have the ongoing desire to repent and change, and to ever be reforming for us to become and to stay Biblical about issues like we are faced with in our day. And then it also requires the leaders of the Church to be upfront and vocal and crystal clear about the issues that we are faced with so there is no doubt and no wiggle room about what God has revealed to Mankind.

So I do not want *anyone* to think that this series is the final word on the subject of Human Sexuality or Marriage or Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. It isn't. I saw the need- many years ago- of teaching what Biblical Manhood and Womanhood looks like so we can know what a Biblical Marriage and Biblical Sexuality looks like. And so I have endeavored to bring this subject to the forefront of this Church way before now. And I intend to have many, many more articles and writings and sermons and Bible Studies on this subject in the years to come. So we have added this Statement #2 to our Doctrinal Statement and By-laws:

We believe and teach that Mankind's primary objective and purpose of existence is: to know God, to love God, and to enjoy God forever through the Person and finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all rebellion and disobedience to God's Revealed Will, as recorded in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible, is sin, and is both dishonoring to God and destructive to Mankind, and is evil in all of its forms- including any unbiblical expression of human sexuality. (1Corinthians 10:31; Psalm 16:11; 37:4; 73:25&26; Proverbs 14:34; Isaiah 43:7; Ezekiel 18:31; John 8:34; Romans 6:23; 1John 3:4; 1John 3:8)

The question of "homosexual marriage" presents the Church with a *monumental* challenge. Advocates for this re-defining of Marriage are pressing their case and with significant legal and political barriers in place- they have framed the issue so that those who hold to a Biblical concept of Marriage are automatically put on the defensive. While advocates of same-sex relationships are portrayed as agents of liberty, progress, and inevitable cultural evolution.

For the Church- the very concept of homosexual marriage strikes at the heart of our Biblical and theological foundation. According to the Holy Bible, Marriage is not merely a social arrangement between two people, but a God ordained Institution through which the Creator's Glory is demonstrated to the world. The Covenant Fidelity at the very center of Marriage is a portrait of God's Divine Purpose in the creation of the world and the redemption of His chosen people.

In essence, the term "homosexual marriage" is an unworkable oxymoron. In any previous era, those two words would have been seen as being mutually exclusive. The fact that homosexual marriage is even an issue for public debate in our day demonstrates that we are truly a civilization in crisis because a great many barriers must have already been broken in order to put this question on the cultural agenda in the first place. Biblical firewalls, tradition, habits, and practices based in Scripture have to have already fallen before Marriage could have been redefined and utterly transformed by nine unelected men and women. And at the root of this development is an attitude of moral rebellion that reflects a suspicion of Divine Authority, a confusion about the Order of Creation, and a blatant rebellion against God's Design for human sexuality.

Now as Christians, we are charged with a difficult task of "Compassionate Truth- Telling". And this has never been easy – just

ask the Apostles – but it is particularly difficult in a time of cultural upheaval and sexual revolution. Compassionate Truth-Telling *requires* the Church to speak from its deepest convictions while at the same time demonstrating the Love of Jesus Christ. It means speaking Truth that will be heard by many as a hard and hateful Message while demonstrating the Love of Jesus Christ through the very act of telling the Truth. Therefore, we have added these two Statements to our Doctrinal Statement and By-laws:

1. **We believe and teach** that all persons have been created in the Image of God and should be accorded full human dignity. We, therefore, reject and denounce hateful, fearful, violent, comments, acts, and/or unconcerned harassment of *persons* with an unbiblical sexual orientation and with those engaged in unbiblical sexual expressions. However, we do *not* believe or teach that Biblical repulsion (rejection/condemnation) of any *sin* from a believer in word or act necessarily constitutes that harassment.
2. **We believe and teach** that genuine Love and Respect for all people includes the honest, reasoned, nonviolent, and clear sharing of Eternal Absolute Truth about all the issues of life- including the immorality and eternal liability of all ungodly sexual orientation, thoughts, and behavior. Therefore, being silent about, celebrating, or endorsing any behavior which the Bible condemns is neither Love nor Respect as it endangers persons and dishonors God. Therefore, we do *not* believe that the faithful and full preaching and teaching of God's Word- including the explicit Divine Condemnation of all sin- including sexual deviation in all of its manifestations- is in any way hateful, ungodly, or unmerciful. On the contrary- **we believe and teach** that the full, right, and unashamed preaching and teaching of the whole Counsel of God from sacred Scripture in love without apology is the epitome of true Love because it is the one single Method by which God has chosen to save them that believe. (**Ezekiel 3:17-21; 2Corinthians 5:11**)

Compassionate Truth- Telling then means, not only the accurate presentation of Biblical Truth, but the prayerful and urgent hope that the individuals to whom we speak will be transformed *by* that Truth and respond to the Grace of God that is *in* that Truth by repenting and trusting in Jesus Christ.

So the challenge of Compassionate Truth- Telling means that we must think strategically and carefully about how these issues should be addressed, both in terms of individual conversations and in the larger context of public debate. We must ensure not only that we *think* rightly

about these things as ordered by Scripture, but that we *speak* rightly and *live* rightly about these controversial issues as well. Therefore- we *cannot* address homosexual marriage as an isolated issue- but we must place it in the larger context of the entire Christian Worldview and of the great Story of God's Purpose in both Creation and Redemption.

The Christian Worldview affirms the unity of three things:

1. The Good
2. The Beautiful
3. The True

And these are known as "the Transcendentals", those eternal qualities that *transcend* the culture, the society, and its people. So the Christian Worldview understands the Good, the Beautiful, and the True as being established in the very Character of God Himself. Therefore, these Transcendentals are, in reality, the same thing. Each is rooted in the Beauty of God, and the reality of His Character, and in the Glory of His Holiness.

In its fallen confusion, the lost world wants to separate the Good from the True, and the True from the Beautiful, and the Beautiful from the Good. And as it isolates and separates these Transcendentals – the secular portrait of the world becomes fractured and disoriented. This confusion produces strange foundations for ridiculous arguments that they make like why the False may actually be Beautiful, why the Ugly may actually be True, and why Evil may, indeed, be Good after all.

But we understand the source of their confusion. The Christian Doctrine of Sin comes from the **Genesis Account** of the Fall and explains clearly that the consequences of sin lead directly to this kind of disorientation and confusion.

Therefore, as believers- we must resist the temptation to speak the Truth in a manner that falls short of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. We do nothing but betray the Truth when we speak it with an ugly spirit. Any attachment that we might have to carnal arguments is nothing but mean-spirited impulses. So we must *reunite* what the secular world has divided and we must present Christian Truth- in all of its Glory and Power and in all of its Beauty and Goodness.

So how should we approach the issue related to homosexual marriage? I am convinced that most of our approaches focus on what

homosexuals would have to rethink in order for *them* to see this issue with clarity and understand the error of their lifestyle and social agenda. We often assume that the real issue is what kind of people *homosexuals* would have to be in order to hear our Message and receive its Truth. And while this is an important consideration- I am convinced, however, that the most important thing is for the Christian Church to clarify *our own* self-identity in *our own* understanding of the Biblical Gospel. So the *real* question is what kind of people *we* must be if *we* are to address the challenge of homosexual marriage with Biblical faithfulness and Christian love?

Therefore, I would suggest seven Principles that could serve as a framework for a Christian response to the challenge of homosexual marriage. Each of these is deeply rooted in Biblical Truth and each is pointed to the challenge of addressing homosexuals, and all those enslaved in various sexual sins with Compassionate Truth- Telling.

1. We must be the kind of people who cannot begin a conversation about homosexual marriage by talking about homosexual marriage.
2. We must be the kind of people who never talk about sex without talking about marriage.
3. We must be the kind of people who cannot talk about anything of significance without acknowledging our absolute dependence upon God's revelation in the 66 books of the holy Bible.
4. We must be the kind of people with a theology that is adequate to explain the deadly deception of all sin- including sexual sin.
5. We must be the kind of people with a theology that is adequate to explain Christ's absolute victory over all sin- including sexual sin.
6. We must be the kind of people who love homosexuals more than homosexuals love homosexuality.
7. We must be the kind of people who tell the truth about homosexual marriage, and, thus, reject even the possibility of its existence because we love and seek the glory of God in marriage for all people

So let's look at these briefly:

1. We must be the kind of people cannot begin a conversation about homosexual marriage by talking about homosexual marriage.

Genesis 1:27

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The first thing we need to realize is that Marriage is *not* the main thing and homosexuality is *not* the main thing and sex is *not* even the main thing. We have to realize that the main thing is God and His Glory and His Will and His Purposes. Moses wrote here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that it is God Who created man. Man did *not* create God. Man did *not* fabricate God; Man did *not* invent God; Man did *not* think about God. God *created* Man. And that makes God to be higher and better and more important than Man. That makes God the Creator and it makes Man to be part of the Creation.

And that puts Man in a *subservient* position to God. And it puts God in a *superior* position to Man. And *that* is the main thing. Therefore, all that we are, and all that we do, and all that we think, and all that we imagine in our heart, and all that we build with our hands, and all that we say should be to God's Glory and to God's Glory alone. And, therefore- anything that does not do that- anything that does not give God glory- is sin.

And we should take note here that the Scripture clearly declares that God made them *uniquely* and *purposefully* male and female. And as we study the Scriptures we find out that God *could* have made them at the same time and in the same way, but He didn't. God made the Man first from the dust of the earth and He made the Woman second from the rib of the Man and **Genesis 2:22-24** says:

22 The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

So we see that Marriage was God's idea and that in the first Marriage- it was God Himself Who gave the bride away.

Now the secular world has been challenging the Divine Order of Male Leadership and Female Support in the Home and in the Church for many years now. Radical feminism, that has its basis in godless Gnosticism, rejects that Biblical Order. And I understand the lost pagan world not believing or accepting the Divine Truth of Scripture concerning Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. What I do *not* understand and what we must *never* understand or accept is God's people not believing or accepting God's Divine Order. That is unacceptable.

So I would suggest to you that *before* we need to talk about homosexual marriage- we need to talk about God and we need to once again realize that God is above only and that we are below. And as we once again acquire a Biblical understanding of the Character and the Nature and the Attributes of the one true living God of the Bible- this magnificent God will rise in importance in our minds and hearts and we will see that it is proper and correct for us to worship this great God by striving to be found obedient to what He said and that it is sin *not* to.

God said that sexual sins will damn your soul into hell for all eternity, and so sexual temptation is not funny, it is not "boys will be boys", and it has nothing to do with "*I was born this way and I just can't help it*". God expects and demands and holds us accountable to struggle against any and all sinful impulses- including sinful sexual impulses- so that we may live our lives to the Glory of God.

So the proper and correct ordering of all things is that which demonstrates God's Glory most profoundly throughout His Creation- not what feels good or that which comes most naturally to us. And *that* should be our beginning point. *That* is where we must begin the discussion. It should be abundantly clear to anybody with a brain that the narcissistic, self-centered, self-absorbed, cultural elites are not qualified and do not have the capacity to dictate the parameters of the discussion.

So because that is true- the natural default setting of fallen humanity about anything of any importance is in direct opposition to what God has said that it should be. Therefore, I tell you that the lost and pagan world is wrong; they are *totally* wrong; they are *categorically*

wrong about *everything* that they teach about *anything* that is of any moral significance- and that includes human sexuality.

God moved upon Moses to write down that Man is *not* the center of the universe, but that God is not only the Center but the Beginning and the End as well. And until we regain that Foundational Knowledge of the God of the Bible to the degree that it transforms our lives- we would do well to just be silent

The perfect Institution of Marriage was revealed when the Lord God declared, **“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)”** And this one flesh relationship is physiological, anatomical, emotional, and absolutely glorious. In the Covenant of Marriage, the Man and the Woman are drawn together so that there is completion – a portrait of God’s Glory painted in miniature. And, therefore, this “one flesh relationship” in the Covenant of Marriage is the very *foundation* of human civilization. This is the nonnegotiable foundation of everything that Christians understand about human life, sex, gender, and the entire complex of issues related to embodiment and sexuality.

So, without Biblical Marriage- no social structure *larger* than Marriage can exist long-term or be sustained. There can be no community, no culture, and no enduring patterns of human life outside the Institution of Marriage.

And even where there have been aberrations throughout history, such as polygamy or other forms of wrongly construed marriage, these have been noteworthy precisely because they *are* aberrations and because they have been culturally small and limited. *None* of these sinful expressions lasted through time. God’s Glory will be demonstrated one way or another, and the persistent and universal endurance of Marriage has been a demonstration of God’s Glory throughout the entirety of Mankind’s existence. But, before there was ever a single Marriage – there is God.

2. We must be the kind of people who never talk about sex without talking about Marriage

Genesis 1:27&28

27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Anytime the Christian accepts that we can talk about sex without talking about Marriage- we abandon the high ground of the Christian Worldview and surrender the question that is at stake. From the very beginning of every conversation about sex- we must *emphasize* that Christians cannot talk about sex without making clear its connection to Marriage. Because God has declared that sexual activity in *any* form with *anybody* in *any way* outside of the Covenant of Marriage- is sin. Therefore, the moral credibility of the Christian Church is very much at stake in the debate over homosexual marriage. If Christians allow a low view of Marriage, and if we accept the breaking of Marital Vows among ourselves and the violation of Marital Covenants- if we indulge the ongoing viewing of pornography as being a "normal male activity", and if we begin to simply shrug our shoulders about the many marriage sins like rampant divorce with an attitude of "*Well, nobody's perfect*", we destroy the very foundation of our moral capital and the debate over homosexual marriage.

Marriage is in the Bible because Marriage matters. So Marriage is a real big deal. And it's *devaluation* by some- even within the Church- does not help our cause.

God has decreed that since sex is so powerful and sexual desire is so dominant in the human experience, that the only way that sex is good and honorable and productive and glorifying to God is when it is very *narrowly* defined. God has declared that sex is to be engaged *only* between one man and one woman within the covering of holy matrimony. And, therefore, all efforts to *expand* the definition of God blessed sexual expression- *dishonors* God and brings great harm to Mankind. And that is an indisputable fact of history.

And so the Christian Church has been given the Authority by God to not only *say* that and *believe* that- but to display that Truth through good, solid, God- honoring Marriages.

Therefore- Christians must discuss Manhood, Womanhood, and Sexual Expression always inside the larger discussion of Marriage itself. And we must always talk about Marriage within the larger framework of the Mystery between Christ and His Church. Therefore, a

truly Christian response to the challenge of homosexual marriage must go back to the issue of Marriage itself, to the Divine Gift of unique genders, which unmistakably demonstrate the rightness and the perfection of God's Order in Creation when He made them instantly, miraculously, and uniquely male and female.

Therefore, every single Marriage is to be a natural, visible, tangible, and earthly manifestation of the glorious and holy and perfect Relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church. And whereas we understand that Marriages struggle in this life- the existence of one single Marriage on this earth demonstrates the utter ridiculousness and futility of any other ordering of human sexuality.

3. We must be the kind of people who cannot talk about anything of significance without acknowledging our absolute dependence upon God's Revelation in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Those who would dispute and rebel against what the Scriptures clearly say about Marriage are the same people who dispute and rebel against what the Scriptures say about everything else. So these are *not* fellow Christians who simply have a different opinion than ours- these are unbelievers posing as fellow sheep for the purposes of deceiving others.

And the net result of their dispute and rebellion against what God has said is their great confusion and the amazing ability to be at odds with the Owner and the Creator of the Universe about almost every important aspect of this life. So these are *not* people who are qualified to teach anybody anything.

The Holy Bible contains not only incredible portraits of Marriage as God's Institution – but teaching Passages that set down very specific Commands and Instructions related to sexual behavior. And we need to ask why that is. The Bible does *not* present humanity with many optional sexual lifestyles- the Bible condemns all but one. Marriage is *not* presented in Scripture as a multiple-choice equation or proposal to be assembled in accord with individual desires. Instead the Bible

imposes a Mandate upon all Humanity as God has the audacity to speak and act as though He owns it all. So receiving God's Revelation about Marriage is not mystical or esoteric; it doesn't require dreams visions or angelic visitations. It isn't any harder than reading.

The frightening reality is that the depth and the breadth of Human Ruination requires that we be Divinely protected from destroying *ourselves*. Therefore, the Commands of Scripture are not given by a God- Who operates as a killjoy- but rather as a kind and merciful, omnipotent Creator- Who is determined to rescue us from self-annihilation.

There is a lake of fire that was created for the devil and his angels into which will go every single person who ongoingly and unrepentantly engages in sexual activity in violation of God's revealed Will in Scripture. And among those who will scream in eternal damnation are unrepentant homosexuals. And even though revisionists have done their very best to turn the Biblical text on its head and to undermine its Authority the Scripture resolutely resists their efforts.

Homosexual advocates have attempted various interpretive maneuvers in order to subvert the plain teaching of the Word of God. Some have gone so far as to argue that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was not homosexuality itself- but rather inhospitality- a claim that the half-brother of Jesus Christ thoroughly discredited when he wrote in Jude 7:

just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Others have argued that the Apostle Paul's clear teaching about homosexuality in **Romans 1** has nothing to do with homosexuality as it is experienced in our day. They insist that Paul, who condemned homosexuality in clear and certain terms, simply had no idea of the so-called "modern discovery" of "sexual orientation" and "committed homosexual partnerships". Others have argued that Paul's warnings in **1Corinthians 6** relate only to those who would commit homosexual rape or who would force nonconsensual sex on others.

And I'm going to get into these issues in detail in next week's sermon- but suffice it to say if the Bible does not speak clearly to the

issue of homosexuality then we have no basis to say that it speaks clearly about *anything*- including Salvation. So Christians must be the kind of people who know what the Bible teaches about this issue and who unashamedly speak this Truth without fear and with compassionate honesty.

Our job as believers is to "take out of" the text- to exegete- what God the Holy Spirit put *into* the text- not only about homosexual behavior, but about *everything*. That is fundamentally what it means to adhere to the concept of "Sola Scriptura".

4&5. We must be the kind of people with a theology that is adequate to explain the deadly deception of all sin and Christ's absolute Victory over all sin- including sexual sin

The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, standing on the Authority of Scripture, must have a theology that is adequate to explain how God's Glory could be so pervasively denied and how God's Design can be so utterly corrupted as it is in the advocacy of homosexual marriage. How is it that so many people in the modern Church can miss this point so entirely?

There can be only one explanation for sexual brokenness, and it is the same explanation for every manifestation of brokenness, and that is that we are fallen creatures. In **Genesis 3**- the Bible presents the insulting and humiliating Truth of the Fall in all of its horrific consequences. Sin is the only explanation of the human problem. And no one, however well-meaning, however well-intentioned, however sincere, is going to be able to correctly diagnose the human condition, and, therefore, provide a workable solution- without getting to the very heart of what sin is and what sin does.

Homosexual behavior, in fact *all* sexual deviations and aberrations- are merely "other manifestations" of Mankind being broken and utterly ruined by the Fall. And Paul made it clear in **Romans 1** that such behavior is the result of *exchanging* the Truth of God for a lie, and worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator.

Therefore, when Christians address homosexuals and homosexual advocates with the reality that the Bible clearly condemns homosexual behavior as sin- it is very important that we acknowledge that we are

sexual sinners speaking to other sexual sinners. Armed with the Bible's profound understanding of human sinfulness- we understand that sin corrupts *every* dimension of human existence. The Doctrine of Total Depravity affirms that the entire human being – including his sexual desires and his emotions – are utterly corrupted and disoriented by sin and its consequences.

So every single heterosexual man- who has at any time in his life burned in his lust at the sight of a beautiful woman- can relate to the statements made by the homosexual that *his* sexual perversion is normal, natural, and practically undefeatable. The Biblical understanding of sin helps us to understand that every individual desire of our fallen flesh, in whatever form, that is *not* delineated in Scripture, *anointed* of the Holy Spirit, and *blessed* by God- is sin. Therefore, the man who is normally and naturally disgusted at the thought of sexual perversion and yet who has not repented and trusted in Christ will burn in the same hell as the unrepentant homosexual. So we must be the kind of people who forthrightly declare that the God of the Bible is not only crystal-clear in His Condemnation of sexual sin in whatever manifestation it occurs- but is also powerful to save!

So I want to speak honestly to those who are struggling with homosexual affections right now. It is very important that you understand that these affections are sinful and you must recognize that all your affections are corrupted by sin. And like all of us, you are a sinner in the midst of a sinful world. But don't let anybody tell you that you cannot change. Merely becoming heterosexual is not the same thing as Salvation. But the miracle of Regeneration and Sanctification will produce- by God's Grace- sexual affections that are God honoring in your heart. But it is so very important that you understand that knowing what God has declared to be objectively right and objectively wrong is *critical* to your Salvation.

So do we want homosexuals to find heterosexuality? Yes, as much as we want liars to become tellers of truth and those who dishonor their parents to treat them with love dignity and respect, and as much as we want the proud to become humble and the disobedient to become broken and trembling followers of Jesus Christ.

Thankfully, God graciously provides *for* us- all that He requires *from* us. So the Grace to be humble is given to the proud- if the proud heart leans only on Christ. And the Grace to fulfill God's Purposes for

human sexuality will be given- even to those who find their hearts full of sinful sexual desires. By the very same Grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ- homosexuals and heterosexuals alike could be gloriously transformed so that we actually began to desire that which glorifies God in all our affections and our loves.

And this is what the Christian Church is all about. We are the kind of people who gather together to exalt in this amazing Grace of God. So, to proclaim the Cross of our Lord Jesus is the answer to all human sinfulness. We come together to hold each other accountable to the Word of God and to rejoice in what God is doing in us and for us- until the very day that we die. We come together in the assurance of the resurrection and glorification that is to come. That is who we are that is who we must always be.

6. We must be the kind of people who love homosexuals more than homosexuals love homosexuality

Now this is a tough challenge. Every sinner loves his sin. But the Church of Jesus must love sinners more than sinners love their sinfulness. So we must be the kind of people who know that it is nonsense to allow the homosexual to reduce his entire identity to his homosexuality. Sex is absolutely a *part* of who we are – a vitally *important* part of who we are – a *powerful* part of who we are. But it is only a part of the total human being. Our sexual desires and sexual practices are genuine pointers to the inner reality of our relationship to God in Christ. Therefore, sexuality is *not* the end of the story. God in Christ Jesus is the end of the story.

So Christians must be the kind of people who refuse to put the period at the end of the sexual sentence. We *cannot* allow homosexuals to be isolated as a class of people who are *beyond* the Grace of God and who exist in some special category of human sinfulness. We must be the kind of people who say to all of those enslaved by sexual sins and sexual perverseness and sexual aberration *"I'm going to love you even more than you love your sin, because this is the way I was loved by Jesus Christ."*

Therefore, our Doctrine of Salvation must be accompanied by a strong Doctrine of the Church. The *Ecclesia*- the purchased people of God – are a Covenant Community gathered in mutual accountability to

the Word of God and the bonds of the Love of Jesus Christ, and we are to love one another even more than we love ourselves. Even in the process of Church Discipline- our purpose is not only to protect the integrity of the people of God- but to love people into obedience and conformity to the Word of God.

Now there is a sense where fatigue is setting in among Christians in America these days- who are becoming weary of arguing, debating, and speaking the Truth about homosexuality in the midst of a fallen and rebellious culture. And while this is an understandable response to the difficulty of our task – it is also evidence of sin.

We are now coming to a point of cultural crisis where the Church is being called upon to be a faithful witness as we declare God's Truth with a boldness that we have never known before. So rather than retreat- it is incumbent upon the Christian Church in America to be more candid, more courageous, and to speak the Truth more boldly in love than ever before.

We are *not* guaranteed to always have a country that is sympathetic to the Christian Church or to Biblical Truth. But what we *are* guaranteed is that the Church of Jesus Christ will be on the earth and will be faithful and will be salt and light when He returns. So the Church *transcends* nations. So as civilizations rise and fall- the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ must remain determined to keep and show the Love of God to sinners while at the same time glorifying her precious Savior- even when doing so will be a great cost to us personally.

7. We must be the kind of people who tell the Truth about homosexual marriage, and, thus, reject even the possibility of its existence because we love and seek the glory of God in Marriage for all people.

Genesis 2:24

For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

As Christians we believe that no one is saved until they hear and believe the Biblical Gospel. And there is nothing in the Biblical Gospel that is false or untrue or hateful. And that is because there is nothing in Scripture that is false or untrue or hateful. And that is why we must love homosexuals so much- that we refuse to accept the very concept of

homosexual marriage. The *normalization* of homosexual behavior and the radical redefinition of marriage will take the sinfulness of homosexuality to a new level of moral rebellion. Not only must Christians not do that – we cannot even agree to it.

You see for the Christian Church- Marriage is far more than a legal contract, much more than a matter of constitutional interpretation, and infinitely more than a political or sociological debate. It is a *theological* and *moral* issue. Therefore, whether or not the culture will disintegrate with the allowance of homosexual marriage is really *not* the issue. The issue is that all rebels will burn in hell forever. And because we love people we don't want *anybody* to enter into hell forever.

So we categorically condemn homosexuality because we realize what is at stake. And we categorically refuse to acknowledge the redefinition of Marriage to include sexual perversion because we realize what is at stake. And how all that will sort itself out as the Grace of God continues to reach out to unworthy sinners to save their souls is going to be left for us to struggle with in the future. But what is *not* debatable is what God has declared concerning human sexuality and Marriage.

Therefore, Christian couples must realize that our Marriages are being examined more than ever before. So it is incumbent that husbands fall before the living God and beg for strength and mercy to love their wives like Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. And it is incumbent that wives fall before the living God and beg for strength and mercy to respect their husbands and honor them and love them. It is incumbent upon the children of such marriages to love respect and honor their parents and obey them.

Normalizing sexual perversity by judicial fiat did not solve the problem. Sexual sinners still transgress against a holy God and that rebellion makes them not only heel-bound- but miserable. Therefore, the Church of Jesus Christ must be there to pick up the pieces of the broken lives of people who have been destroyed by sin and deceived by lies.

So if we love God at all, and if we love lost humanity at all we must be the kind of people who grab the horns of the altar who weep between the porch and the altar and to live for God and speak the Truth

with absolutely no hesitation. For only by the Church being the Church is there hope for broken Mankind. May we *be* that kind of people.

Amen. Let's pray

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.