



The Gospel, the Homosexual and the Church

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LECTURE #1
The Bible: A Framework for Understanding Same-Sex Attraction

Why this; why now?

Psalm 36

A Sinful Man (1-4)

1. He _____ to himself (1).

“Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart.”

* My biggest problem is not my _____ identity, but my _____ identity.

2. He _____ himself (2).

flatters =

3. He _____ himself (3).

- words -
- actions -

4. He _____ himself (4).

“He sets himself in a way”

A Faithful God (5-9)

1. God is _____ (5-6).

- His love is inexhaustible.
- His righteousness is _____.
- His judgments are unsearchable.

2. God is _____ (7-9).

- He is precious (7a).
- He is safe (7b).
- He is satisfying (8).
- He is enlightening (9).

“In your light do we see light”

“My one delight was to love and to be loved. But in this I did not keep the measure of mind to mind, which is the luminous line of friendship; but from the mighty concupiscence of the flesh and the hot imagination of puberty mists steamed up to becloud and darken my heart so that I could not distinguish the white light of love from the fog of lust. Both love and lust boiled within me, and swept my youthful immaturity over the precipice of evil desires to leave me half drowned in a whirlpool of abominable sins.”

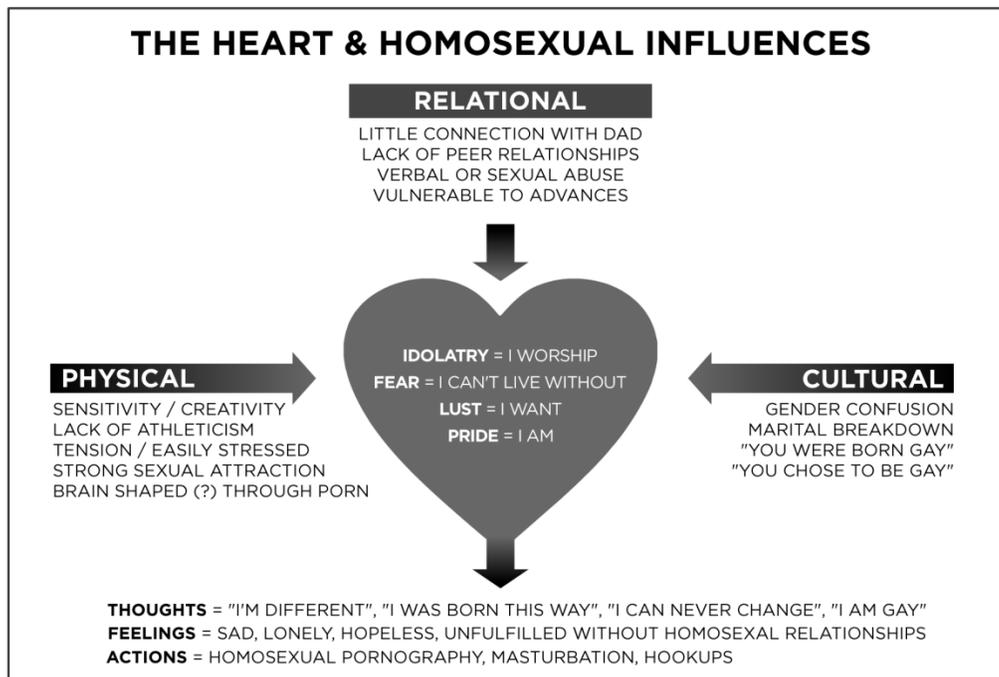
Augustine

A Plea for Help (10-12)

SUMMARY

- The Bible goes for the _____.

“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.” Proverbs 4:23



- The Bible refuses to divorce _____ and _____.

Psalm 36 – His love is inexhaustible.
His righteousness is immovable.

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Ephesians 5:1-2

“for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).”

Ephesians 5:8-9

LECTURE #2
The Gospel: A Message of Hope for SSA Strugglers

"But they've been given over" –

Romans 1

paradidomi – 119 times in the New Testament

- 67 x – Jesus is handed over to be crucified

"that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."
Luke 24:7

- 22x – Others are handed over for judgment, prison or death

"After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, 'Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.'"
Acts 28:17

- 3x – Personal property entrusted to someone
- 4x – Authority entrusted to someone
- 2x – Someone being handed over to Satan

"You are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."
1 Corinthians 5:5

- 2x – Someone being commended to God's grace for ministry
- 1x each – Someone dying, entrusting, risking, harvesting
- 5x – People being given over or giving themselves over to sin
 - Acts 7:42 -
 - Romans 1:24 -
 - Romans 1:26 -
 - Romans 1:28 -
 - Ephesians 4:19 -

* Entrusting to another's _____ or _____

- Context determines the duration and purpose.

Ephesians 4:19

- your futile minds became enlightened (1:17)
- your ignorance was replaced with knowledge (1:18)
- your alienation was replaced by family (2:12)
- your death became life (2:1-3)

*“So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he **gave them over** to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Then the LORD raised up judges, **who saved them out** of the hand of those who plundered them.”*

Judges 2:14, 16

SUMMARY

- **God's wrath has given _____ over to sin.**
 - the heathen – Romans 1

Three Steps in the Exchange

Romans 1:21-32

<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">step 1</div>	We exchange Creator for creation	God's glory for images (23) Truth for lie (25) Acknowledge God for debased mind (28)
<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">step 2</div>	Creator gives us over to our cravings	God gave them up in the lust of their hearts (24) God gave them up to dishonorable passions (26) God gave them up to a debased mind (28)
<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">step 3</div>	Our sexual deviation depicts our spiritual perversion	Dishonoring of the bodies among themselves (24) Gave up natural relations with women (26-27) To do what ought not to be done (28)

- the hypocrites – Romans 2

- all of us – Romans 3:9-20

- **God's grace _____ who believe.**

*"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ **for all who believe**. For there is no distinction: **for all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."*

Romans 3:21-26

- **God's church includes all manner of saved sinners.**

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

“Homosexuality is just not talked about in the church, so it made me think that I was the only one struggling through this. This is a horrible place to be – thinking that you are the only one. Please, help my other brothers and sisters who may be struggling with the same things. Jesus has saved my soul and has taken my burdens away! I have peace and contentment in Christ. They need to know that they, too, can have this, and the way they can know this is through the body of Christ.”

Young lady in church

LECTURE #3
The Church: A Place Full of Grace and Truth

The Island of Crete is the largest of the Greek Islands. In the early 60s AD, the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to his co-worker, Titus, who remained on Crete in order to strengthen the newly-planted churches. Titus' task was to connect the eternal gospel the believers had received with the daily lifestyle God was calling them to live. How should their new life in Jesus reshape their view of sexuality, marriage, family, etc.?

The "Cretans ritualized homosexuality and incorporated it into their culture."

Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*

pederasty = man-boy love

Paul tells Titus to do three things:

1. Appoint _____ in every town (chapter 1).

- Who the elders are to _____ (6-8)
- What the elders are to _____ (9)

Reason – There are many empty talkers (10-16)

People who oppose the truth are:

Paul is telling Titus to designate godly men as models and messengers of sound doctrine. This is the greatest need of our churches today.

2. Apply _____ to every believer (chapter 2)

“what accords with sound doctrine”

Reasons:

- So that what God says and the way we live are not in _____ (5b, 8b, 10b).
- For the grace of God has appeared... training us (11-14).

If the grace of God is not a training grace, it is a _____ grace.

3. Affirm _____ in every controversy (chapter 3).

This is not natural for Christians living in a hostile context.

We typically become too _____ or _____.

“courtesy” = a humble friendliness or gentle consideration

“perfect” = shown fully

toward all people = shown universally

Reason:

- Because of _____ (3)
e.g. “slaves to various passions” -
- Because of _____ (4-7)

A man-centered gospel will lead to a man-centered response.
A God-centered gospel will lead to a God-centered response.

- Because of _____ (8-10)

As we devote ourselves to good deeds and respond with perfect courtesy, this is excellent (praise-worthy) and profitable (useful, beneficial for people).

“The sooner we understand that every worldview has a sexual expression, and that every sexual act is a disrobed and embodied worldview, the closer we are to a return to sexual sanity.”

Douglas Wilson

SUMMARY

- **Appoint elders in every town –**

This is a call to raise up qualified leaders.

- **Apply doctrine to every believer –**

This is a call to work out the gospel in every area of our lives.

- **Affirm courtesy in every controversy –**

This is a call to interact with the culture with humility and gentleness.

“And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.”

Titus 3:14

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics by Robert Gagnon

The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

Is God Anti-Gay? by Sam Allberry

Homosexuality and the Christian by Mark A. Yarhouse

What Is the Meaning of Sex by Denny Burk

What is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense by Sherif Girgis, Ryan T. Anderson, and Robert P. George

Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth by Jeffrey Satinover

Sexual Authenticity: An Intimate Reflection on Homosexuality and Catholicism by Melinda Selmys

Homosexuality: Contemporary Claims Examined in Light of the Bible and other Ancient Literature and Law by James B. DeYoung

Bethlehem's Position on Homosexuality

August 6, 2003 by John Piper

In view of the recent actions of the Supreme Court in regard to Sodomy laws, and the controversy over actively homosexual bishops in the Episcopalian and Anglican denominations, it is important to bring forward again the position of Bethlehem Baptist Church which the Elders established in the fall of 1992. I drafted this statement with the help of Joe Hallet who came out of the homosexual life by the power of Christ and lived faithfully with AIDS, and eventually with his wife, until his death in 1997.

Beliefs about Homosexual Behavior and Ministering to Homosexual Persons

Our affirmation that the Bible is the infallible Word of God with "supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct," and our affirmation that "a Christian should live for the glory of God" include the following six beliefs about heterosexuality and homosexuality:

1. We believe that heterosexuality is God's revealed will for humankind and that, since God is loving, a chaste and faithful expression of this orientation (whether in singleness or in marriage) is the ideal to which God calls all people.
2. We believe that a homosexual orientation is a result of the fall of humanity into a sinful condition that pervades every person. Whatever biological or familial roots of homosexuality may be discovered, we do not believe that these would sanction or excuse homosexual behavior, though they would deepen our compassion and patience for those who are struggling to be free from sexual temptations.
3. We believe there is hope for the person with a homosexual orientation and that Jesus Christ offers a healing alternative in which the power of sin is broken and the person is freed to know and experience his or her true identity in Christ and in the fellowship of his Church.
4. We believe that this freedom is attained through a process which includes recognizing homosexual behavior as sin, renouncing the practice of homosexual behavior, rediscovering healthy, non-erotic friendships with people of the same sex, embracing a moral sexual lifestyle, and in the age to come, rising from the dead with a new body free from every sinful impulse. This process parallels the similar process of sanctification needed in dealing with heterosexual

temptations as well. We believe that this freedom comes through faith in Jesus Christ, by the power of his Spirit.

5. We believe that all persons have been created in the image of God and should be accorded human dignity. We believe therefore that hateful, fearful, unconcerned harassment of persons with a homosexual orientation should be repudiated. We believe that respect for persons with a homosexual orientation involves honest, reasoned, nonviolent sharing of facts concerning the immorality and liability of homosexual behavior. On the other hand, endorsing behavior which the Bible disapproves endangers persons and dishonors God.

6. We believe that Christian churches should reach out in love and truth to minister to people touched by homosexuality, and that those who contend Biblically against their own sexual temptation should be patiently assisted in their battle, not ostracized or disdained. However, the more prominent a leadership role or modeling role a person holds in a church or institution of the Conference, the higher will be the expectations for God's ideal of sexual obedience and wholeness. We affirm that both heterosexual and homosexual persons should find help in the church to engage in the Biblical battle against all improper sexual thoughts and behaviors.

Pastor John

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