

Elephants in the Church

"Homosexuality"

(Hebrews 13:4)



- Introduction:
1. It's time we had a frank discussion homosexuality because everyone else has (the media, the military, legislatures, local school boards...).
 2. Why would the most valuable voice on this issue, God's voice, be silent?
 3. Chances are that if you have not already had to deal with questions regarding homosexuality, you soon will.
 4. We need to prepare ourselves to offer a biblical, balanced, and loving response to this issue.
 5. And as we do this, we must remember that our goal is not to get "someone told," but to help a person to conform their life into the image of Jesus.
 6. In this lesson, we will identify the challenge of homosexuality, what God says about it, and how we should interact with homosexuals.

I. The Challenge Of Homosexuality

- A. It is hard to imagine how quickly the cultural shift has taken place with respect to public thinking concerning homosexuality.
- B. The practice of homosexuality has been picked up and touted as a civil rights issue.
- C. Not only has this movement made inroads into our society, but it has made inroads into churches.
 1. There are presently 50 denominations in North America that support homosexuality.
 2. Some findings of a special committee (by a major religious denomination) on human sexuality:
 - a. That all persons, whether heterosexual or homosexual, whether single or partnered, have a moral right to experience justice-love in their lives and to be sexual persons.
 - b. That worship resources be designed to celebrate same sex relationships.
 - c. That the problem before the church is not sexual sin but the prevailing social, cultural, and ecclesial arrangements...and conformity to the unjust norm of compulsory heterosexuality.
 3. In Robert Williams' book, *"Just As I Am: A Practical Guide to Being Out, Proud and Christian,"* he states that the Bible has many positive images of "queer" love. These images supposedly include David and Jonathan, Ruth and Naomi, the centurion's slave, Paul, and even Jesus.
 - a. "It cannot be believed unless it rings true to our deepest capacity for truth and goodness. If it contradicts this, it cannot be believed. If it falsifies this, it cannot be accepted."
 - b. Read the Bible through "queer-colored" glasses.

- D. After all is said and done, the homosexual movement has been very successful at normalizing itself as just an normal, yes, even biblical alternative lifestyle.

II. The Solution To Homosexuality

- A. According to the Bible, the practice of homosexuality is sinful.
 - 1. (Genesis 19; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10).
 - 2. Rather than arguing about the context and word definitions in the above passages, I have found the following to be the best way to approach this subject.
 - a. (Hebrews 13:4) All sex outside of marriage is sinful.
 - b. (Genesis 2:24) Marriage is between a man and a woman.
 - c. Therefore, any expression of homosexuality would be sinful.
- B. Did Jesus have anything to say about homosexuality?
 - 1. Yes, in two ways.
 - 2. (Mark 7:20-23) Fornication is condemned by Jesus.
 - 3. (John 16:12-14).
- C. We didn't choose this for ourselves.
 - 1. I don't know all the factors that come into play in why homosexuals are homosexuals.
 - 2. But here's the bottom line - God intends for our passions to be subject to our spirit (1 Corinthians 6:13).
 - 3. Singleness/celebrity is not the depth of human anguish.

III. How To Respond To Homosexuals

- A. Make a distinction between "orientation" and "practice."
- B. Make a distinction between a brother and a non-Christian (1 Corinthians 5:9-11).
- C. Go easy on your expectations of the world and lead them to the light (Philippians 2:15).
- D. Conduct yourself in such a way that people cannot legitimately claim that we don't love homosexuals.
- E. Don't run from them, run to them! They need the gospel (Mark 16:15-16).
- F. Focus more on the gospel and less on political action and agendas (including angry Facebook posts and memes).

- Conclusion:
- 1. We need to remember that we're not at war with people, we're at war with the Devil who has taken people hostage.
 - 2. These souls need rescued and redeemed, or to say it in a more familiar way, "we need to love the sinner and hate the sin."
 - 3. The gospel of Christ is offensive! It calls us sinners. But we don't have to be.