

Homosexuality

Background:

The issue of homosexuality has traditionally been dealt with poorly by the church universal. Typically there are two extremes found in churches dealing with this issue. A lack of discernment, misunderstanding of discipleship, and low regard for Scripture seem to be several reasons for these failings. **Dangerous issue because people make their minds up based on experience. You end up with two extremes.**

Homosexuality Defined:

“Homosexuality is a broad term typically applied in reference to both sexual orientation and sexual behavior. It identifies either sexual attraction to a person or people of the same gender or sexual behavior with a person or people of the same gender or some combination of the two. From a biblical perspective, homosexuality refers to an entire spectrum of thought and action, ranging from heart desires to outward behavioral expression.” -John Henderson-

Where the roads converge:

Although there are different roads that might contribute to homosexuality (i.e. nurturing, cultural, gender confusion, sexual indulgence, purposeful progression, sexual trauma/confusion, cultural norm, etc.) there are several biblical consistencies that are present regardless of contributing factors.

- There is a danger in focusing on potential contributing factors (semantics), because of the bigger biblical picture.

Romans 1: 18-25

1. Sinful Passions (choosing of creation over the Creator), vs. 23-25
 - a. Heart desires and expressions viewed the same (Matthew 5:27-28, adultery in the physical form and in the heart condemned).
2. The suppression of Truth, vs. 18-23
3. Given over by God, vs. 24-27
 - a. (Matthew 26:33, Luke 22:31-32, Mark 14:66-72 all show Peter briefly being handed over)
 - b. It is no different for homosexuality or any pattern of sin.
(our passions are given to creation rather than the Creator)
4. Sin is natural (Genesis 3, Psalm 51:5, Jeremiah 17:9) to mankind.

What does this mean for the church?

I have never struggled with same sex attraction, but if I take my life (sin struggles, habitual sins, etc.) and lay it over this descent into sin spelled out in Scripture....it is not different at all. I was created in such a way for my affections to terminate on God. When they terminate on anything besides him then chaos ensues.

Elements Need: safe place, gospel preached (sin is sin and Christ exalted), struggle well (it's ok to not be ok, but it is not ok to stay there)

- **Love as Christ Would Love**

Titus 3:3-7, "For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Hebrews 5:1-4, "For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'."

- **Pray for Patience and Perseverance** as the Gospel is preached and we trust His Word to penetrate and change hearts.

a. Sanctification is a long, worthwhile road (2 Cor. 4:17, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.")

b. Made possible through the Holy Spirit working in our lives (Galatians 3).

- **Be a safe place** where people can come and struggle well.

Hebrews 12:1-4, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood."