

Confronting Christianity

Week #6

Small Group Notes

Introduction:

If you could only learn about sex from pop culture, what would you learn?

This week we are going to look at a very controversial topic. Currently, almost everyone is talking about this issue in some way or another but the criticism against Christianity often asks, “Isn’t God anti-gay? What about LGBTQ?” Homosexuality and the question on gender identity/fluidity are often viewed as two separate issues according to the culture, but the bible deals with them in the same way. Let’s see what God’s word has to say on it.

Discuss:

1. Genesis 1 -2

Explain: In Genesis 1-2, we read about the God’s creation of the earth and everything in it. In chapter 1:26 God created Adam and Eve in the image of the triune God...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Man, male and female were created to have dominion over all the rest of creation and to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Chapter 2 gives us more detail on the creation of man and woman and their respective roles.

Ask: 2-3 Discussion questions related to the content.

- ❖ **Have you ever been criticized for having traditional views on sex, gender, and marriage? Tell us about it.**
- ❖ **Do you personally know someone who struggles with same-sex attraction? If so, talk about that relationship. Is it friendly? Why or why not?**
- ❖ **According to Genesis 1-2 What are at least 2 purposes of sex and gender?**
 - *Hint – biological procreation (e.g., “be fruitful and multiply”)*
 - *Hint – complementary marriages that image the gospel. (e.g., Gen 2:23-25) (e.g., Helper fit for him) (e.g., Ephesians 5:32) There is no marriage without gender.*

- ❖ **What would you say to someone who feels that they are a different gender than their biological one?**
 - *Have someone read Romans 1:18-32: In Romans 1 we see that cosmology (the created universe) is designed by God to reveal truth about God's identity (as powerful and divine creator); on the other hand, biology (anatomy) is designed by God to reveal truth about our identity (as male and female). This truth is so plain, Paul says, that we are "without excuse" if we don't see it and agree with it.*
 - *God created sex. He is the one who invented it and knows what is good for us.*
- ❖ **Leviticus contains two prohibitions against homosexual activity. (Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13). What would you say to the criticism that these prohibitions are irrelevant because of similar commands to not eat shellfish?**
 - *Because Old Testament morality is still upheld in the rest of the New Testament. (Unlike dietary laws). See Jude 7: "Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire."*
 - *Also revisit Romans 1:18-32. It is God that reveals our identity as He created us for the purpose and purpose as laid out in Genesis 1:28 to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it" Genesis 1:31 tells us that God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was **very good!***

2. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Explain: Homosexuality is not a new phenomenon. Nor is scripture only prohibitive of it in the Old Testament. It also speaks against it in the New Testament too. The Bible is not more controversial now than it was then. The ancient world was full of homosexuality (and other sexual sin). In fact, fourteen out of the first fifteen Roman Emperors practiced it. In first Corinthians, Paul is writing to the church in Corinth. Corinth was in the heart of an important trade route and with this thriving city was fa reputation for sexual sin, religious diversity, and corruption. The church that Paul planted there was struggling and floundering under these influences. Paul addresses these issues in this letter and urges the

Corinthians to be unified and to give themselves fully to “work of the Lord” (15:58).

- ❖ **Is there a difference between same-sex attraction and homosexual behavior?**
 - *Same-sex attraction is a temptation to be overcome. Homosexual behavior is a lifestyle (sin) that must be repented of.*
- ❖ **Why is it important for us to address the entire list in 1 Cor 6:9-11 and not isolate homosexuality as a sin?**
 - *Paul is writing to believers*
 - *Paul clearly lists other sins in the list.*
 - *Jesus also taught on ALL sexual sin Mark 7:20-23*
- ❖ **Is homosexuality greater than any other sin? Is homosexuality an unforgivable sin?**
 - *According to this text, no sin is unforgivable. Paul is very clear that people who are characterized by these behaviors—homosexuality, reviling, swindling, greed, and all the rest in the list—will not enter the kingdom of God. That means that if your life is marked by continual, unrepentant sin, you won’t spend eternity with Jesus.*
- ❖ **Why is it still loving to teach that the Bible condemns same-sex practice? Why should we continue despite the claim that it is harmful?**
 - *(See 6:10)*
- ❖ **What is the good news for all of us in this passage?**
 - *(See v. 6:11) The good news for all believers, regardless of the sins we have struggled with in the past, is that in Christ we are made new. Our sins, and all the shame that accompanies them, have been washed away.*
- ❖ **APPLICATION: How should these verses influence your treatment of others in today’s world?**
 - *Because of Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins, because we have been made righteous, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can offer the same to those we encounter.*
- ❖ **How can we deliver the truth of the gospel in a loving way to our LGBTQ friends?**

- ❖ **If we are going to reach all people with the gospel, what are a few simple steps we need to take in order to better serve and love our LGBTQ friends and neighbors?**
- ❖ **(Consider the criticism: “God is anti-gay.”: Could you give an “elevator speech” (a concise speech deliverable in a short time on the essence of a matter) answer to this question of gender and homosexuality in the bible now that you’ve studied it as a group? (As time allows, ask each of your group members to practice their “elevator speech” on homosexuality and the bible.**

**Close: How can we be praying for one another?
How can we encourage one another this week?**