

# **THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE**

**SHILIN - BREAD OF LIFE**

**JULY 13, 2017**

**— BRIAN BEESON**

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## **Session 2: Being a Faithful Witness in a Culture that Endorses the Homosexual Lifestyle**

### **I. THE NECESSITY OF OUR FAITHFUL WITNESSES ON SAME-SEX ATTRACTION / MARRIAGE**

- A. Jesus was a *faithful witness* to the Father in all things (Rev. 1:5; 3:7, 14; 19:11; John 1:18; John 14:9). He told the truth about God, man, Israel, culture, the end times, etc. Jesus embodied truth in His life and courageously spoke truth out of loyal love to His Father. This is Jesus' first title in the book of Revelation.

*<sup>4</sup> Grace to you and peace...<sup>5</sup> ... from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness [of the Father]... (Rev. 1:4-5)*

1. Jesus was the faithful witness in His earthly ministry (John 1:18; John 14:9). He revealed the truth and took a stand for it, regardless of the cost. It resulted in His death.

*<sup>8</sup> No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. (John 1:18)*

2. Jesus did not exaggerate the positive (affirmations or promises) or hold back the negative (rebukes or declarations of judgment). He spoke without regard for criticism or loss.

- B. Imitating Jesus as the Faithful Witness is one of our greatest challenges. The Church should address this issue with *clarity, boldness and tenderness*, reflecting the Father's heart. (Mat. 5:14–16)

*<sup>14</sup> You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden... (Mat. 5:14)*

### **II. COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS**

#### **A. Lack of Consequence Argument**

1. *Objection:* My sexual choices aren't hurting anyone else. (we both consent and it isn't "hurting" anyone).
2. *Response:* Sexual sin is a harm done against one's own body (1 Cor. 6:18; Lev. 18:22; 20:13), also defiling the community and the land (Lev. 18:24–25).

#### **B. Judgmental Argument**

1. *Objection:* Doesn't Christianity teach not to judge? Who are you to expose homosexuality as a sin?
2. *Response:* We all sin and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23). Jesus and others told us to distinguish what is sin and what is not (Mark 7:20–23; 1 Corinthians 6:9–10; 1 Timothy 1:8–11; Romans 1:18–32), warning us against looking at other's faults in contempt (Mat. 7:1–6). Christians are to speak the truth with a right spirit (with no ill intent, but in kindness).

#### **C. Jesus Acceptance Argument**

1. *Objection:* Didn't Jesus hang-out with sinners and tolerate them so why can't we "tolerate" homosexuality?
2. *Response:* Jesus did spend time with prostitutes and tax collectors, but He did not endorse them to prostitute themselves or extort others further. He was involved with them to transform them, showing them God's heart, not withholding the truth about prostitution and extortion (John 8:4–6, 11; Luke 19:1–10)

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## D. Hypocritical Argument

1. Objection: Aren't there lots of heterosexuals sinning in adultery, divorcing and remarrying (Mat. 5:32; 1 Cor. 7:10–16), so why should we have to keep the Bible's commands about homosexuality?
2. Response: Christian divorce rates are as bad as those in secular society. That is a travesty and as the Church we have failed to reflect God's faithfulness and holiness in the marriage covenant. However, no matter how people respond to the moral law, we are all subject to what God has said (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Mark 7:20–23; 1 Corinthians 6:9–10; 1 Timothy 1:8–11).

## E. Argument from Silence

1. Objection: Jesus never talked about homosexuality or was against it.
2. Response: When Jesus mentioned "sexual immoralities" in Matthew 15:18–19 and Mark 7:20–23, He referred back to Leviticus chapter 18 and 20 that mentions four specific sexual sins, homosexuality being one of them. Paul reiterates Jesus commands for sexual purity in reference to homosexuality three times (1 Corinthians 6:9–10; 1 Timothy 1:8–11; Romans 1:18–32).

## F. Argument of God's Goodness

1. Objection: The God of the Bible hates homosexuals (or Christians who believe the Bible hate homosexuals)
2. Response: God loves all people and died for them to be reconciled to Him (John 3:16; Eph. 2:4–7; 1 Timothy 1:8–11). He feels the weight of sin and also mourns for its pain caused on humanity (Isa. 57:16–20). He provides opportunities to repent and return to Him (Luke 15:18–20; Isa. 55:6–7). He does not like the sin that steals, kills and destroys people and His image in them so He wants them to turn from sin.

## G. Argument of Original Design

1. Objection: God made people with homosexual tendencies.
2. Response: God did not originally design any one with sin and made everything perfect (Gen. 1:26–28, 31). However, people are born in sin, including those with homosexual tendencies (Psalm 51:5). This answer is complicated but generational, biological, spiritual, emotional and other factors cause same-sex attraction.

## H. Argument Against the Nature of God

1. Objection: The gospel according to the traditional Church interpretation is not good news for homosexuals. Among many things, they will be unfulfilled sexually and cannot express their desires.
2. Response: This message is good news because sin brings death, ending in eternal separation from God and torment in the Lake of Fire (Rom. 6:23; James 1:15; Romans 1:18–32; Isa. 66:24; Mt. 18:8; 25:41; Mk. 9:43–44, 45–46, 47–48; Rev. 14:9–11; 20:10). Secondly, God will bring fulfillment as we come to Him on His terms (2 Cor. 5:17; Mat. 16:24–25). He will also give us *peace with God* (Rom. 5:1; 15:13; Phil 4:9), *further healing unto restoration* (Isa. 25:8; Isa. 57:16–20; Rev. 21:4) *enjoyment of Him* (Psalm 37:4; 27:4; Isa. 58:14), *receiving His love* (John 15:7–9; Rom. 5:5), *drawing near Him in confidence* (John 4:21–24; John 17:24; Heb. 4:16) and *pure, authentic relationships in the Body of Christ* (1 John 1:3–4). These far outweigh the short, but defiling pleasures of sexual sin (Heb. 11:25; Rom. 6:23; 7:5; James 1:15).

## I. Argument from Nobility (Human Sentiment)

1. Objection: Homosexuals should be admired as they have had to stand against discrimination and oppressive institutions, some times at great relational, emotional and economic cost.

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2. Response: It is noble to stand up for one's personal convictions amidst persecution or great loss. It is also tragic that many homosexuals have been mistreated by disrespect and devaluation of their worth, yet it does not change the fact that the homosexual lifestyle is damaging and sinful.

## **J. Redefining “Acceptance” in Church**

1. Objection: *Gay people are not accepted in traditional, Bible-believing Churches.*
2. Response: It depends on how one defines “accepted”. If one refers to “acceptance” as condoning the practice of a homosexual lifestyle, then that is correct. However, if it means that those with same-sex attraction sincerely desires to follow Jesus and His teachings on sexuality, but are still tempted and need support, then Church “accepts” them in their journey. God’s gospel is about His love, acceptance, non-judging, and forgiveness for all who trust God and agree with Him about what is sin and turn in repentance.