

1What the Bible Teaches About Same Sex Relations

Introduction:

1. Last weekend I had what was for me a series of unusual experiences.
2. First, there was a call for counseling. An individual had announced that he was transgender. The Christians calling were concerned about how they should respond. Should they speak to him with feminine pronouns and a new feminine name?
3. Second, there was a funeral. The names of the four boys of the deceased were identified in the obituary. One's last name was different from the rest. I thought, perhaps he was adopted. I just needed to know how to pronounce the last name and the wife's name. You see, in obituary announcements, the wife's name is usually listed in parenthesis beside the husband's. But this seemed to be a male Spanish name. Should it be pronounced as in Spanish or Anglicized? When I asked how to pronounce the wife's name the voice on the other end of the phone said, "Wife? Oh, my brother is homosexual and that's the name of his partner."
4. Third, I had a conversation with a person asking questions about same sex relations, and the terminology used in the text of Scripture.
5. All these experiences tell me that there are people out there that are confused about who they are at a very fundamental level.
6. I believe that the Bible defines who we are from the outset. Gen. 1:26-27 defines us as created by God and in His image. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them." This week in our studies with Ryan Cummings we have seen something of what this means.
7. In this series of lessons, we will address something of the confusion that characterizes our society. We will look at what the Bible says. We will examine passages and consider the terms that are used in Scripture to define us. Our objective is to try to decide who we are based on what the Bible says.

Discussion:

- I. A preliminary consideration.
 - A. There is a trend I see in our society that is a matter of serious concern, especially for Christians. Organizations that seem to promote such things as equity, justice, protection of the innocent, liberty, freedom and love but advocate sinful practices.
 - B. Christians (generally kind, considerate and loving) want to join right in with such organizations, but the organizations are not advancing the cause of God. Often, they are totally opposed to belief in God and biblical principles.
 - C. Such organizations, much like a gang, give people identity.
 1. Someone might object, "Christianity and the church do the same." That is correct, but I would suggest that a biblical identity is right and good and that identity opposed to that defined in the Bible is diminishing and destructive.

2. The Black Lives Matter organization is an example.
 - a. Let me make it clear. I believe that black lives matter. I believe all humans are created in the image of God and are valuable. I believe that racism, hatred and the like are opposed to God's will. I believe in equity, justice, protection of the innocent, liberty, freedom and love.
 - b. But I am not ready to put a sign in my yard promoting the BLM organization. Here is why. On their website it says, "We affirm the lives of Black, queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum."
 - c. We might reason, "It is good to affirm the lives of all people." But that is not what BLM is advocating. It is advocating for the acceptance of sinful behavior under the idea of protecting lives.
 3. This is not a new tactic.
 - a. Abortion Rights Advocates argue for the freedom of women to choose abortion. (BLM movement does the same.) The argument is, "It is for the well-being of the woman." What about the well-being and equity due the vulnerable life of the innocent? How is it advancing a race of people to abort their babies? The Egyptians thought destroying Israelite babies was a way to control them and reduce their power and influence. Herod thought that destroying babies was a way to maintain his position and control the threat of another king. What do you think the Nazis were doing when they were exterminating Jews and others?
 - b. It is a similar tactic to that used by the serpent in the garden of Eden. "You will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat your eyes will be opened." That which was forbidden was made to appear attractive, even though it was deadly.
 - c. Prov. 14:12: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."
 - d. Isa. 5:20: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!"
 - D. So why are people confused about their identity? They have abandoned the teaching of Scripture and accepted the culture of the world.

II. But perhaps we are getting ahead of ourselves. We are assuming a belief in God and a belief in the Bible as a revelation from Him. This is a critical decision in defining our identity.

 - A. Do you believe in the existence of God and do you believe the Bible is revelation from Him?
 1. If you do not, then you do not find your identity there, but somewhere else.

- 2. Where do you find your identity? By what some society suggests? By what some organization suggests? By trying to “fit in” with some group?
- 3. This decision faced Israel (Lev. 18:1-5). God called on them to “fit in” with Him. We choose our identity by choosing whom we try to “fit in” with.
- B. The approach of many is to read the Bible and make individual judgments about what it says.
 - 1. We are asking ourselves, “Do I agree or disagree with that?”
 - 2. “Do I agree that humans are created in the image of God?” “Do I agree that lying is wrong?” “Do I agree with what the Bible says about marriage?”
 - 3. When we do this, we make ourselves the judge of what is right and wrong.
 - 4. The alternative is to consider what God says as right and conclude that we should submit to what He says even if it seems foreign to us.
 - 5. This is the difference between relativism and absolute truth.
 - 6. Jesus regarded Scripture as authoritative (Matt. 19:4-6). Scripture claims to originate from God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).
- C. The approach we will take in these lessons is that God defines right and wrong and the Bible reveals what He defines and that we should submit to it.

- III. There is a divine pattern revealed in Scripture regarding sexual relations.
 - A. In Gen. 1 and 2 God created man in His own image, male and female He created them.
 - 1. Note Gen. 1:26-27.
 - 2. Note Gen. 2:18-25.
 - 3. Jesus harks back to this in Matt. 19:4-8.
 - 4. The divine pattern sets a precedent of one male and one female married to each other and in sexual union.
 - B. There is male and female united in sexual union in the animal kingdom.
 - C. In the O.T. God portrays Himself as husband and His people as wife.
 - 1. Jer. 3:6-14. Faithless Israel and faithless Judah, both portrayed as females having committed adultery against God.
 - 2. Ezek. 16:8ff. Israel portrayed as an adulterous wife (note v. 34, 38, 46).
 - 3. Ezek. 23:1-4. Oholah and Oholibah, two women, representing Israel and Judah.
 - 3. Hosea 2:19-20; 3:1. “Go and love a woman” (3:1).
 - D. In the N.T. Christ is portrayed as husband/bridegroom and His people as wife/bride.
 - 1. He gave himself up for her (Eph. 5:26).
 - 2. Women and husbands in 1 Pet. 3:5-7.
 - E. Noticeably absent . . .
 - 1. Two males married. Two males involved in sexual union.
 - 2. Two females married. Two females involved in sexual union.

Conclusion:

1. There is a definite pattern of male and female union evidenced in Scripture.
2. Noticeably absent are two males married or involved in a validated sexual union.
3. Noticeably absent are two females married or involved in a validated sexual union.