

contentious ISSUES

A Biblical Perspective on Tough Topics

SERMON NOTES

Week 5 February 2, 2025

"Human Sexuality"

Exodus 21:20-21; John 1:1-3, 14; Leviticus 18:22, 20:13;
Romans 1:26-27; Micah 6:8

I. Wrestling with the Bible

- A. The _____ is a document that was written by human beings who were inspired by God.
- B. The Bible has time-bound truths and _____ truths.
- C. The unmitigated Word of God was _____ Christ.

II. The Bible and Homosexuality

- A. The Bible seems to _____ the practice of polygamy and concubines.
- B. The question about homosexuality is not about the authority of the Bible; the question is how we _____ scripture.
- C. There are generally _____ Biblical passages specifically mentioning some form of same-sex practice:
 - 1. **Genesis 19:1-29, Judges 19, and Jude 1:7** are passages about people who performed same sex acts but did not generally consider themselves homosexuals.
 - 2. **Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13** are part of the 'holiness code' which required homosexuals, disobedient children, adulterers, and people who worked on the Sabbath to be put to death.
 - 3. **1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:10** include Greek words that could denote a kind of homosexual practice common in the Greco-Roman world in which adult men were in relationship with boys.
 - 4. **Romans 1:26-27** is the subject of debate. The question is "was Paul talking about two people living as a family together for the rest of their lives and loving each other or was he referring to deplorable sex acts he saw in his culture?"

III. Moving Forward

- A. Many Christians see the homosexuality debate as a civil rights and _____ issue.
- B. Scripture tells us that Christians are to bear one another's burdens and _____ our neighbor as ourselves.
- C. Christians are to see others through the _____ of Jesus.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *February 3-8, 2025*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of whether the United Methodist Church should marry and ordain gay and lesbian individuals has been extremely divisive for decades. And in 2024, the General Conference changed the official Methodist stance of this issue. This resulted in a quarter of United Methodist Churches leaving the denomination. Why did this happen? The issue is not one of scriptural authority, as some would say; the issue is over scriptural interpretation.

Monday: Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-23, Leviticus 12:1-5

Ancient cultures valued men more than women. How did the creation stories seem to value women? What has shaped your views on your own gender and the other gender?

Tuesday: Genesis 2:24-25, Song of Solomon 1:15–2:4, 8:5-7, Genesis 29:31-30:24

Rachel had Jacob's love, but ached for children. Leah had children, but longed for Jacob's love. Both wives had Jacob sleep with their maidservants as pawns in their struggle for family status. We'd never do THAT - but in what ways does our culture separate sex from love and commitment? When have you seen that separation produce the same levels of pain and dysfunction that it did in Jacob's family?

Wednesday: Romans 1:26-27

Paul is drawing upon Leviticus here. He is saying there is "normal" and there is "abnormal." He is illustrating what's natural and what's unnatural. Do you think Paul is talking about two people living as a family together for the rest of their lives and loving each other over was he referring to deplorable sex acts he saw in his culture?

Thursday: Matthew 9:9-13, James 2:8-13

How would you describe Jesus' intent when he said, "I desire mercy..."? Have Christian churches always been merciful in welcoming in those they judged as "sinners"? If we are perfectly honest, do you feel less in need of God's forgiveness and mercy than anyone else who's sins are different from your areas of struggle?

Friday: Luke 10:25-37

Regardless of where you come out on the debate about homosexual practice, among the questions we must answer is: "how do we, as Christians, respond to homosexuals?" One answer may be found in Luke 10:25-37. Reflect upon this passage and its meaning as it relates to our church's ministry with homosexuals, and your own personal response.

MOVING FORWARD

There are generally eight scripture passages that mention some sort of same sex relationship, although three of those are generally not viewed as being about homosexuality. The question comes down to whether the other 5 passages reflect God's timeless and eternal will or do they reflect the culture in which the writer lived? Christians may not agree on how to interpret these passages, but when it comes to how we treat homosexual individuals, scripture is very clear: we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and we are to see others through the eyes of Jesus.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) Bible, B) timeless, C) Jesus. IIA) affirm, B) interpret, IIC) eight. IIIA) justice, B) love, C) eyes.