

Love & Hate Part 12: "In His Image" (8-13-2017)

Series Review

- **Love & Hate defined:** (Story of the Loving Father) (What & How does God hate)
- **Walking in Church Unity:** Maintaining Relational Unity & Resolving Conflict
- **Now the final 3 weeks:** Culture & Community – Money, Sex, and Power

1) Gender & Sex – a reflection of the Image of God

Genesis 1:26-27 (ESV)

(26) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Note: vs. 28-31 go on to elevate us above all else on the earth – We are a reflection of God (male & female)

Genesis 2:21-25 (ESV)

(21) So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. (22) And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. (23) Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (24) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (25) And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Note: There is a special relationship between man & woman, and there is a deep sense of connection & belonging

Ephesians 5:22-33 (Biblical Marriage: relationship advice, and a powerful reflection of another relationship)

Ephesians 5:31-32 (ESV)

(31) "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (32) This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Note: So, God's view of gender, marriage, and sex is that it **Reflects God's Image & Our relationship w/ Jesus.**

- Male & Female reflect God's image
- God's view on sex is not prudish and out dated, but much higher & deeper than ours, it dignifies and celebrates us and Him!
- A Picture of God's Love Relationship with us . . .
- 1st - Selfless (am I taking care of you, and am I enjoying you, or just focused on myself)
- Acceptance, Beauty, Commitment, Vulnerability & Trust, Joy, Intimacy

Therefore, God's views on **Sexual Immorality** aren't about control, lack of freedom, or a stealing of our fun. It is a breakdown of what we are made for, what we long for, and a lowering of ourselves.

We have to establish - What do I believe? Then we can appropriately tackle . . . How I interact with Culture, Community, and the Individual.

2) Sexual Immorality

1 Corinthians 6:17-20 (ESV)

(17) But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (18) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. (19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Note: This makes sense when we understand sex, how we are made, and what we are designed for!

Some of the arguments for Homosexuality: Jesus didn't talk about it, It's an OT thing, It's like being unclean – ceremonial law not moral law, The bible didn't know about monogamous homosexual marriage, etc.

Sexual Immorality in Scripture . . . including but not limited to:

- OT passages specific to homosexuality: Genesis 19, Judges 19, & in the law Leviticus 18 & 20
- NT passages homosexuality & sexual Immorality in general: Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, Matt 15 & 19

Matthew 15:19-20 (ESV)

(19) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (20) These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.

Note: Nowhere in scripture is homosexuality condoned. An honest reading of scripture gives no other alternative, homosexuality is among the realm of sexual immorality and it is wrong.

Romans 1 is important – it is NT, it is written not to a Jewish audience, but to Gentiles . . .

Romans 1:18-32 (vs. 18-25 set the tone . . . We stop looking to God 1st to define truth & we devolve)

Romans 1:21 (ESV)

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Note: When we don't look to God first & always for guidance, we get foolish & our thoughts & views get distorted.

Romans 1:26-27 (ESV)

(26) For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; (27) and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Note: This is clearly referencing homosexual behavior as wrong.

Romans 1:28 (ESV)

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Note: Sexual behavior inside God's design elevates, outside of his design it lowers & debases us!!!

Romans 1:29-31 (ESV)

(29) They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, (30) slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, (31) foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Note: God is not just "attacking" homosexuals, our lowering of standards of holy living has opened up a whole host of problems that are so destructive to society.

We are so confused on one hand at all the hate we see & the bizarre things people do, and yet we are rejecting moral standards & absolutes – we are rejecting God. And this is the result!

Romans 1:32 (ESV)

(32) Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Note: It's not just that we do these things listed, but we sit in approval of them

Our problem in the church: divorce, adultery, fornication before & outside of marriage, pornography, etc.

The danger of hypocrisy & compromise - we lose our voice & our conviction!

There is a difference between compassion & compromise.

Also as Christians, we should be able to share failures & offer hope of mercy & grace for those in need. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God – we all need forgiveness & grace!

3) Confronting with Compassion**John 8:2-6 (ESV)**

(2) Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. (3) The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst (4) they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. (5) Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" (6) This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.

Note: We have to be willing to risk being misunderstood. And it's risky on all fronts!! Notice, why did they test him? He hangs with sinners!! Therefore he must be ok with their lifestyle – wrong!

John 8:7-11 (ESV)

(7) And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." (8) And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. (9) But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. (10) Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" (11) She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

Note: Notice everyone left, but Jesus didn't! The one who had every right to stone her remained. What would happen next?

Jesus isn't condemning but he also isn't condoning. Condemning is about punishment, but she is forgiven. Great, so that she can be free to keep sinning? No he instructs her to change! This is what true repentance & forgiveness produces – change!

A radical thought – we don't have to be slaves to our desires, in fact we are more than our desires!

What do we do about Sinful Desires & Temptation that don't go away:

- Proclivity, inclination, leaning towards certain behaviors, desires, sins.
- Past experiences – desired or not, shape how we feel & respond to stimulus.
- I'm born this way – yes & no – we are all born sinners & we have certain sins we struggle with

Desires don't make us wicked or evil – they make us human & flawed – in need of Grace! However, we aren't enslaved to sinful acts, we can resist and we can change. By the power of Jesus in our lives!

Conclusion:

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (ESV)

(17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Note: Read quote from "The Good & Beautiful God" pg. 162

Some additional resources . . .

Dr. David Foster - www.masteringlife.org

Dr. Robert Gagnon - www.robagnon.net

Dr. Foster and Pastor Steve had a 2 week teaching/discussion a few years ago regarding homosexuality:

Part 1: <http://www.gracechapel.net/sermon-detail/homosexuality-a-biblical-discussion-homosexuality-a-biblical-discussion--part-1>

Part 2: <http://www.gracechapel.net/sermon-detail/homosexuality-a-biblical-discussion-homosexuality-a-biblical-discussion--part-2>