

## **Anthropology: The Doctrine of Humanity**

First Baptist Church Dandridge – Fall 2020

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### **Session Four: The Problem of Homosexuality and Transgenderism**

#### **A. Introduction**

1. **LGBT:** It seems like in today’s world we can’t turn on the television or read the newspaper or scan the Internet or Social Media without seeing or hearing the acronym, LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender. While these lifestyles and feelings have existed for centuries, we have never seen them so popularized and politicized, and even militarized like in today’s culture.
  - a. **Gay/Lesbian:** Most of us remember the ruling in the 2015 Supreme Court case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, where the court decided 5-4 that each state must issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples and give same-sex couples the equal protections, rights, and privileges as heterosexual couples.
  - b. **Transgender:** And most recently, on June 15, 2020, in the Supreme Court case, *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, the court ruled that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects transgender employees from discrimination against sexual orientation or gender identity, giving transgender people equal rights under the law.
  - c. **Problem:** Therefore, the Supreme Court essentially legalized so-called “homosexual marriages,” and has given serious protections and support to transgender people, fundamentally legitimizing these lifestyles in our culture. And while such movements have been legalized and protected, activists and supporters are even trying to take it a step farther by making American’s accept and celebrate such groups, otherwise it could be considered a hate crime to have a negative view. And let’s not put all of this on the Supreme Court. There are millions of Americans, especially those in mainstream media and Hollywood, who fully support these causes. There are many “so-called” churches and religious institutions that feel LGBT rights are in order. So, it’s clear that our culture as a nation is shifting in this direction.
  - d. **Point:** But for us as followers of Jesus Christ, what are we to make of these issues? What does God teach us in the Bible about LGBT lifestyles? That’s what I want us to look at night.

#### **2. Noetic Effects of the Fall**

- a. **Fall:** In our previous discussions about the theological consequences of the fall, we mentioned how our sinful condition created a broken relationship between us and God, between us and other people (marriage, family, neighbors, nations), and between us and creation. But there is another theological consequence of the fall that we need to understand, especially as we think about LGBT issues, and that’s what theologians call the “*Noetic Effects of the Fall*,” or the “*Noetic Effects of Sin*.”

- b. **Noetic Effects:** The “*Noetic Effects of the Fall*” concern the sinful effects upon our minds, how we think and reason, primarily why we think and reasons against the will of God.
- **Romans 1:21-22** – “*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...claiming to be wise, they became fools...*”
  - **Colossians 1:21** – “*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds.*”
  - **Effects:** According to Albert Mohler, our fallen nature affects our minds with ignorance, confusion, distraction, forgetfulness, faulty perception, intellectual fatigue, failure to draw the right conclusions, closemindedness (allowing emotion to override truth), pride, and others.
  - **Quote:** “*The fall brought out the perversion of human faculties, but did not destroy those faculties. Human reasoning abilities are affected but not eliminated.*” – J.P. Moreland and William Lane Craig
- c. **Point:** Like being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, our minds do not operate clearly or consistently, we make wrong decisions and miscalculations, we allow our feelings and emotions to overrule reason and truth, and ultimately our minds are not in sync with the mind of God. And I believe these noetic effects are the driving force behind the LGBT worldview.
- **Questions:** So, what does the Bible teach on these issues? How should we as believers respond to these realities?

## B. Homosexuality

### 1. The Bible strictly prohibits all forms of sexual immorality, including homosexuality.

- a. **Theological Argument:** God designed human marriage to be between one man and one woman. Since men and women are both made in the image of God and maintain the same worth and dignity, God created men and women to be different in a number of ways. These differences are designed to complement the other. God’s design is corrupted and lost if men unite with men, or women unite with women. Think of a tractor and a plow: only when they are joined and work together do they accomplish their purpose.
- **Genesis 2:24** – “*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*”
  - **Mark 10:6–9** – “*But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.*”

- **Point:** Jesus, nor any other biblical writer, gives positive examples or makes a case for homosexual unions – the opposite is true. The argument is strengthened by the fact that same-sex relationships existed during biblical times.
- b. **Biblical Argument:** Scripture not only lacks any positive affirmation for same-sex relationships, but it clearly denounces it in both the New and Old Testaments.
- **Leviticus 18:22** – *“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.”*
  - **Leviticus 20:13** – *“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.”*
  - **Romans 1:26-27** – *“For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 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.”*
  - **1 Corinthians 6:9-10** – *“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”*
  - **1 Timothy 1:9-11** – *“The lawless and disobedient... [include] the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality.”*
- c. **Biological Argument:** While Scripture is our ultimate authority, biology makes no sense for homosexual relationships. Men and women are not designed to have normal sexual relations with those of the same sex. Procreation isn’t possible, which is one of the main purposes God created men and women to begin with.
2. **Question:** So, why do people engage in homosexuality and why are more people finding the lifestyle acceptable?
- a. **Unnatural Desire:** In our fallen condition, some people have unnatural desires for people of the same sex. This is not God’s design, but a result of the fall. However, even though humans struggle with same-sex attraction (SSA), it only becomes sin when those desires are followed with action. John Piper writes, *“Same-sex intercourse, not same-sex desire is the focus on Paul’s condemnation.”*
- b. **Emotional Sympathy:** In our fallen condition, some who may not practice homosexuality, but are closely related to those who do, may witness what appears to be love and happiness, and develop sympathetic feelings for homosexual relationships. Some develop these sympathies because of cultural influence and oppression. However, God’s Word overrules our emotions or what culture finds acceptable.

### 3. Hope for those Engaged in Homosexuality

- a. **Gospel:** While the New Testament directly speaks against and condemns homosexuality (Romans, 1 Corinthians, 1 Timothy, etc.), these passages come in the context of gospel hope. Scripture doesn't teach that homosexuality is the unpardonable sin, but truly a sin that leads to eternal death (along with every other sin). However, because of God's grace and Christ's sacrifice and the Holy Spirit's power to restore, God can save anyone from a life of homosexuality. God not only has the heart to forgive, but the ability to change the mind and heart and overcome the power of sin. Therefore, a person who confesses any sin to God and asks for forgiveness can be changed.
  - **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** – *“The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God...nor men who practice homosexuality...and such were some of you...but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”*
- b. **Church:** As we as a church engage a culture that affirms homosexual lifestyles, we should always approach such people with love and grace. We should remember that everyone is created in the image of God, and God wants us to share the hope of Christ with everyone, regardless of their sin.