

Sermon Outline

“Such Were Some of You,” Same-Sex “Marriage” Message 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – Joshua Harris – June 10, 2012

Introduction

1. What is not motivating this message:
 - a. We’re not talking about this issue because we want to single out homosexuality as the worst form of sin. In fact, the Bible talks a lot more about the sin of greed and the oppression of the poor than it does homosexuality. We believe that the Bible forbids homosexuality, but it also forbids adultery and other kinds of sexual immorality.
 - b. We’re not talking about this today because this topic is central to the Christian faith. Our central message as a church is that all men and women can find salvation, forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. As a church, the gospel is our *preoccupation*.
2. What is motivating this message:
 - a. We are talking about this because homosexuality has particular relevance to our culture. It is important for a church to stand for righteousness and speak God’s truth to our lost and dying culture.
 - b. We are also talking about this because of the strong push being made to redefine marriage. We believe that same-sex “marriage” has profound negative implications for the family, the church and for society. So the issue at stake is preserving marriage and society.
3. Why is this a difficult subject to address?
 - a. For those who find their identity in their homosexuality, our disagreement with their lifestyle and opposition to redefining marriage can feel like a personal attack. That is not our heart. For our brothers and sisters in Christ who wrestle with same sex desires, you are not alone, and you are not on the outside. You are surrounded by fellow redeemed-sinners who all need the same Savior.
 - b. The Bible’s position on homosexuality isn’t popular. In the eyes of our culture, it is a backwards position. We need to grapple with the question of whether we’re willing to suffer and be mocked to honor God and truly love our fellow man. We must be the salt and light of our world.

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Marriage is God's Idea – Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-25

1. God's Word teaches us that God created us in the image of God as male and female. In other words, there is a design and purpose in our sexuality. From the very beginning of creation, marriage was God's idea that one man and one woman would join together for life for companionship and for the bearing and raising of children. It is through this one-flesh union that we fulfill God's command to be fruitful and multiply.
 - a. Jesus affirmed God's design for marriage to be between a man and woman and the God-given establishment of unique genders in Mark 10:6-9 when he answered a question on divorce, "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 they shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."
2. Because marriage is rooted in creation before sin entered the world, and God established marriage as the one-flesh union of one man and one woman for life, marriage between two men or two women is an impossibility. Only one man and one woman can have a marriage.
3. We live in a world that is in rebellion against its maker. We rebel when we break our marriage vows and commit adultery or engage in any other sexually immoral sins. We also rebel when we cast off God's authority and deny our God-given gender. This is why homosexuality is such a grieving form of rebellion against God. In Romans 1, the Apostle Paul uses homosexual relationships as an example of what happens when we exchange the truth about God for a lie. So how are we to engage our culture that is in rebellion and confusion? In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul shares three things that we need to hear:

1.) He reminds us of the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9a)

1. Sin shuts us out of God's presence. When we continue in sin and choose sin over the rule of Jesus Christ, we forfeit eternal life. The kingdom of God is the blessing and joy of living in God's presence forever. This is what we were created for—to know and enjoy God forever. However, we can't live for this world and its pleasures and know the eternal joy of heaven.
2. Paul is saying to these Christians, "You've got to live with Jesus as your King." People who know salvation and the hope of the kingdom are people who have submitted everything – even their sexual preferences to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
 - a. Contrary to the perspective of the culture, you are not defined by your sexual desire. Your desires don't own you. Jesus owns you. You've been bought with a price. God

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created you and Jesus has redeemed you by his blood so submit your desires to the rule of Jesus.

2.) He roots us in the gospel power (1 Corinthians 6:11)

1. The work of Christ for us is more powerful than our sin. The good news that Jesus has died to pay for our sins and bring us back to God is not just a nice message. It is the power of God for salvation. The gospel changes people. It transforms them. That is why, after Paul list a series of sins –immorality, adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness, greed, thievery, swindling – Paul says to the church “such were some of you.” Those believers in Corinth are living proof of the gospel’s transforming power.
2. The gospel is the only power that is able to rescue and redeem people trapped in all kinds and manner of sexual sin, including those who struggle with same-sex attraction. Only the hope of a crucified and resurrected Savior can save people. And we have this saving message!

3.) He warns us not to be deceived (1 Corinthians 6:9b)

1. The deception Paul warns us of is the lie that says we can live for sin and still be welcomed into God’s kingdom. Paul says it’s not true. If you give yourself to sins like these, if you refuse to turn, you will not inherit the kingdom. You will be shut out of God’s presence.
 - a. Satan’s greatest deception is to convince us that sin is normal and harmless, that we shouldn’t be afraid of it, and that we shouldn’t run from it and hate it.
2. Are you growing in your pursuit of holiness or are you flirting with more sin and compromise? Here’s why this is so vital. If we don’t live lives of holiness transformed by the gospel how can we call the lost world around us out of sin? We will be like salt that has lost its saltiness.

Conclusion: Redefining Marriage

1. We think preserving marriage is much more than merely a political issue. This is a vital moral issue that has significant implications for our culture, the next generation and the church. This is so important we feel compelled to strongly encourage you to carefully study God’s Word and to use your voice as citizens to influence the process. This is a crucial moment for the people of God to be salt and light and to love others enough to oppose the sinful values of our age.
2. The central reason this is so important is because God’s plan for marriage is best for the common good of society. When we follow the Creator’s plan, we experience blessing. Whether or not people are Christians, when marriage between one man and one woman

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is honored and protected by the state, it leads to the ideal environment for children and the flourishing of mankind.

3. This is the defining issue of our generation. It is on this ground that our willingness to stand for the truth of God's word and even suffer for our allegiance to his Kingship will be sorely tested. May God give us courage ... and love for those he came to save.

Fellowship Starters

1. Take time as a Care Group to read Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-25 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.
2. What are your thoughts about Josh's message? Do you agree or disagree with what he shared?
3. Why is it important as believers to take a stand for righteousness on a biblical definition of marriage? What will be lost in the family, the church and society if God's definition of marriage is redefined by the state?
4. How has the gospel transformed your life so you can say "such were some of you" to the list of sins Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 6:11?
5. Josh shared that sin is deceptive, making us believe we can partake of the world without consequences. Where are you making room for sin in your life? Are you striving after holiness or flirting with immoral images, entertainment and fantasies?
6. What would it look like for you to both love your neighbor and to take a righteous stand on the issues of homosexuality and same-sex marriage?