**Sermon Notes**

**“Choose Your Own Adventure Week 3”**

“If the devil had designed a strategy to discredit the historic Christian position on sexuality, he could not have done much better than what the evangelical community has actually done in the last several decades.” Ron Sider, “Tragedy, Tradition, and Opportunity in the Homosexuality Debate.” Christianity Today.

Priorities:

1. “Speaking the truth in love”

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

2. “…with gentleness and respect…”

1 Peter 3:15–16 (NIV)

15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

3. Upholding Biblical Authority

Matthew 5:17–19

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

***QUESTION 1: How come some denominations fully accept the lifestyles of the LGBTQ population and others don't? How is Scripture used to back both these points of view?***

**Traditional/Biblical Position**

Leviticus 18:22

22 “ ‘Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable.

1 Timothy 1:10

10 for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine

1 Corinthians 6:9

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men

(arsenokoitai)

 “man” “bedding”

 -New, compound word from Lev. 18:22 LXX

Romans 1:26–27

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

“The primary biblical case against homosexual practice is not the few texts that explicitly mention it. Rather, it is the fact that again and again the Bible affirms the goodness and beauty of sexual intercourse—and everywhere, without exception, the norm is sexual intercourse between a man and a woman committed to each other for life.” Ron Sider

**Progressive/Affirming Position Built On Following Principles:**

1. Apples and Oranges. Scriptures don’t deal with mature, non-exploitive, consentual homosexually (oriented) relationships.
2. “Fruit” test of affirming theology. We observe the fruits of the Spirit in same-sex unions, evidences of holiness, fidelity and grace.
3. “Fruit” test of non-affirming theology. Burden of non-affirming theology to LGBT individuals is too great (suicide/depression/alienation,etc.)
4. Love and Liberation. “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Micah 6:8 “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

***QUESTION 2: How do we address the gay/transgender issue as an individual and as a church to unbelievers and gay/transgender people we come across?***

A) Addressing the theological issue.

 -What does Scripture say?

 -Expose ourselves to wise, gospel-centred teaching (e.g. Andrew Wilson video in Summit, Ron Sider, etc.)

 -Avoid public activism.

 -Focus on our own holiness and maturity in Christ. (1 Corinthians 5:9–13)

B) Addressing gay/transgender people we come across.

 Love and Respect! (Genesis 1:26-27)

***QUESTION 3: Is it OK to bless a gay marriage by your participation in the celebration?***

Hebrews 13:18
18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.

***QUESTION 4: A family member or close friend "comes out of the closet." How do you love them and at the same time tell them that a core part of who they are is wrong according to Christianity?***

1. Listen and Learn. “Tell me what has brought you to this point.”
2. Extend Compassion. Telling the truth is never easy.
3. Be honest. “This scares me.” “I’m not comfortable with this.” BUT…
4. Reinforce the relationship. I’m not leaving you. You’re not a freak. You’re loved by God and me!

Whether person is a Christian or not alters next consideration:

* If Christian: remind them that their sexuality is not their core identity and help them move into a pursuit of holiness, not happiness.
* If not Christian: carry on with the relationship as normal

“Christian families should never reject a child, throw her out of their home, or refuse to see him if a child announces that he is gay. One can and should disapprove of unbiblical behavior without refusing to love and cherish a child who engages in it. Christian families should be the most loving places for children—even when they disagree with and act contrary to what parents believe. Please, God, may we never hear another story of evangelical parents rejecting children who “come out of the closet.” Ron Sider