

HOMOSEXUALITY

A person is silhouetted against a dramatic, orange-hued sunset sky. The person's arms are raised in a 'V' shape, reaching towards the top of the frame. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds, and a bright light source, presumably the sun, is visible on the left side, creating a strong glow and lens flare effects. The overall mood is one of triumph, freedom, or hope.

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Re-Thinking Series

- God's Purpose & Design For Sex
- The Principles For Godly Sex In Marriage
- The Life In Grace
- Battling Continued Lust Thoughts
- Unplugging From the Matrix (For Students)
- Love & Lust
- A Fast From Intimacy
- Homosexuality (A Position Paper)



Porn and a Pastor

The Influence of Porn on a Gen Xer
by Beau-James Ouellette

Published by Tate Publishing

"Born in the San Fernando Valley, author Beau James Ouellette was surrounded by porn and its effects. From friends to family members, his childhood was saturated with the ideas and lingo of porn culture. *Porn and a Pastor* is the fact-based assessment of the pornographic industry and its effects on individuals and our culture. *Porn and a Pastor* extends a loving hand to those in need, both to those involved and entrapped in the lifestyle of the industry and to those who are addicted to its product. With a heart for both the believer and the non-believer, Beau James Ouellette unequivocally expresses how Christ's love and sacrifice can overcome any obstacle, even the bondage of pornographic addiction. If knowledge is power, and if the truth will set us free, then Beau's book is precisely the tool that the church needs to be free of the porn industry's devastation. The church simply needs to come to the realization that salvation in Christ is more pleasurable than porn."

116 pages – (paperback)

Homosexuality

In today's society the topic of homosexuality comes up often and has a lot of controversy both inside and outside of the church. Most of the controversy inside the church however has to do with people not really understanding what the bible actually says about homosexuality and why, so we hope that going through this pamphlet will help you understand these things.

The first thing we would like to say before we get in to this, is that the bible is really clear that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory, and every one of us falls short of God's call for right sexuality. We are all in desperate need of the grace of God, whether we are heterosexual or homosexual. That being said though, the reason why there is so much confusion in modern society has nothing to do with the Bible being silent on this issue or ambiguous, in fact, throughout church history (and even Jewish history) there was a very solid consensus on this issue with almost no argument. From the beginning of the Bible to the end, the only positive relationships described are heterosexual, the bible always assumes male and female relationships in all of its commands of marriage, (examples Ephesians 5:22-32, 1 Peter 3:1-7, and Colossians 3:18-19). Beyond that there are explicit statements made about this in Leviticus 18:22, and in all the sexual sins mentioned in Leviticus 18, God makes it clear in verse 24 that these are not just moral standards for the Israelites only, like the kosher laws, but it is for all mankind; (Paul also has specific mentions in Romans 1:24-27 and in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

So if the bible really is clear, why is there so much confusion today in the church? The confusion today actually has nothing to do with new biblical understanding, but it has everything to do with people, rightfully, overturning false arguments of why we shouldn't practice this particular lifestyle. The first argument is that God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply, so that means that a homosexual couple could never fulfill God's design for marriage in procreation, so they shouldn't be married. With modern innovations, this argument is no longer valid, through surrogacy, artificial insemination, and adoption, a homosexual couple can have children and create a loving environment for them. The second one that I have heard is that

homosexuality is a choice that people make, most often after something sexually traumatic has happened to them at a young age. This is a false statement, while there are a number of homosexuals who have been abused, there are also many who weren't, and have had same sex attraction their whole lives; plus there are also quite a few heterosexual people who were sexually abused as well. The next one is a bit more emotional, and through a lot of bad logic and worse examples, essentially what people say is that a homosexual couple can never have a long term, stable, and caring relationship. This again is simply untrue, a homosexual couple can be just as caring and affectionate as a heterosexual couple, by worldly standards. And because of this fact, I have heard, very understandable and heart wrenching pleas from men and women who only have same sex attractions and have no desire for the opposite sex, so by accepting the biblical teaching, they would deny themselves the possibility of ever having a loving romantic relationship.

So if all of this is true, why would God not allow for homosexual couples in His word? Is this really an outdated commandment and we should just get with the times? In order to understand this, we have to understand the reason why God created us in the first place. It says in the bible that we were made in the image and likeness of God, this certainly doesn't mean that we are little gods, or that God necessarily looks like us. The easiest way to understand this is to think of images that we make in our own "image and likeness", things like paintings or statues. Now, if I make a statue in my image and likeness, that doesn't make that statue human, even though I am a human, it just means that the purpose of that statue is to reflect my attributes and bring "glory" to me. Now think about that, God made us in His image and likeness, meaning that our ultimate purpose in life is to reflect His attributes and bring Him glory. To deny that purpose however, would be to bring pain and misery upon ourselves because we would be denying our very reason for existence. You see, that is why the biblical authors are always calling us to bring glory to God in all that we do (whether we eat or drink, do all to the glory of God, 1st Cor 10:31) it isn't because God is insecure and needs us to glorify Him, it is because when we are glorifying God we are entering in to the fullness of joy that is in fulfilling our ultimate purpose and reason for existence. That means that every commandment that God has given us, isn't to be mean or

withholding, but it is an expression of His love for us, trying to bring us into the fullness of joy with Him. John 15:10 "If You obey my commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love. **I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.**"

And so, when God created marriage and sex, His intent was to create a union that would reflect Him and bring us intense joy in glorifying Him. And what kind of union is God trying to reflect in marriage? A unity within a diversity. Think about it, God is one being, yet He exists in three separate and distinct persons, the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, and the Father and the Son are not the Holy Spirit. All three are distinct, diverse, and unique, yet they are one. In marriage, God has joined two different beings, a woman and a man, and made them one, we now understand, and reflect, unity inside of diversity. It would have certainly been easy for God to just make another man in the garden and give men the ability to procreate without the existence of females, or visa versa, but instead, in a move to bring glory to Himself, and joy to His people, He created Eve out of Adam. Distinct, diverse, and unique, yet ultimately one with her husband in more ways than one. And don't take my word for it, when the apostle Paul was addressing the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 11, he is specifically addressing them on the topic of gender confusion, the men were dressing as women and the women as men. And here is his reasoning for why they shouldn't do this, 1 Corinthians 11:3 "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, **and the head of Christ is God.**" You see there, before Paul moves into the specifics of their attire, he gives his reasoning first, the Corinthians were not glorifying the nature of God in how their specific gender roles reflect and glorify the submission of the Son to the Father, yet both are God!

So what about those who don't have heterosexual attractions, does this mean that they will have to subject themselves to a lifetime of loneliness? No it doesn't, as great as marriage is, it is merely a picture of the greater and more beautiful relationship that we have with Jesus Himself. Remember, that our greatest joy comes through bringing glory to God, some of us will glorify God in marriage, others, both heterosexual and homosexual alike, will be

called to glorify God in your singleness. Paul is a great example of this, and gives a great encouragement in 1 Corinthians 7:7-9 about the beauty of singleness for Christ. For some, singleness is just a season that will eventually end, and for those with same sex attraction this could mean that God will give you a right attraction, and there are many examples of this, but for some, this won't happen, and you will continue to bring glory to your creator and show His value in denying yourself in singleness.

There can be no Christian Love in homosexuality.

Love can be defined as ‘my joy, in God, **in** the godly benefit of others.’ God has complete joy within Himself (Psalm 135:6). In addition to this, it is God’s joy to transform us to the image and likeness of His Son (Romans 12:2), and that for our joy and godly benefit. Therefore, we see that Godly Love, is God’s joy in our godly benefit. This is what we are to mimic. For anyone (homosexual or heterosexual) this means that to walk in the Love of God means we choose to lay down our own desires for the godly benefit of another (Heb. 12:1-3). In contrast, causing someone to sin is to be avoided at all costs (Rom. 14:13-20). In the referenced scripture, Paul spoke merely of what you eat, but the application certainly reaches to being in a homosexual relationship (or having sex outside of marriage, or any other distortion of God's intent in Genesis 2). If a person were in a homosexual relationship he or she is not acting in Godly Love, but self-seeking behavior. God designed the gender specificity and the details surrounding sexual/relational union. To value God's design of it is to move in Godly Love.

To sum up: God is love (1 John 4:8). And His purpose in our lives is to make us more like Him. Love is selfless and Godly Love is my joy coming from the godly benefit of another.

Another factor to consider in this discussion is that Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15). He stated clearly that if we love Him we will do as He says, even if it goes against what we think. This kind of love can be seen in Christ Himself as He laid down His life for us. He would have

rather had the cup pass from Him (Matthew 26:39), but chose to submit to the Father's will, thus showing Love to God and to us. He calls us to do the same. We can't do it, but we can surrender our lives to Him, and He promises to do it in us!

Again, to walk in the Love of God means to lay down our own desires for the godly benefit of the other (Heb. 12:1-3). This is the picking up of your cross (Matthew 16:24). This is dying to self (or the seed dying parable Jesus spoke of in John 12:24-26). This is the pattern of Love as seen in Jesus (Philippians 2-He gave up His prerogatives for our godly benefit).

The call then in all of our lives is to choose whether we live in Godly Love or selfish lust. Will we die to ourselves and our desires, pursuing instead the godly benefit of another, or will we merely pursue what we want?

Practically, moving in agape (Godly Love) would look like this: If a person were in a homosexual relationship, to love would be to give up that relationship for the sake of Jesus and the glory of the Father. Through this act he/she would show the value of God's Word in Genesis 2, which shows God's intention. In so doing, they would actually be acting in love toward their partner. This sacrificing of self-desires would be done to show the worth and excellence of God in there partners eyes. The motivation in the heart of the one sacrificing the relationship would be to show God's truth to the other, ultimately for their godly benefit (your obedience showing God's intention).

To me this is letting our light shine so that others may see. It is evangelism through obedience. We are to reflect Christ. We do this by beholding Him, renewing our minds & throwing off the old man (2 Cor 3:18, Rom 12:1-2, Col 3:5-10). To all Christians *this is the cost* of following Jesus.

Therefore, though the road may be hard, we must be ready to *suffer* for making these decisions even if our flesh is screaming against them (1 Peter 4:1-2). Not our will be done, but God's will be done. This is true Christian behavior (Christian means little Christ).

1st Corinthians 6:20 tells us that we were bought with a price and we are to glorify God with our bodies. Our bodies are not our own to do with whatever we would like. As a Christian we recognize this valuable truth. Making decisions about our sexuality, or anything else, is not for us to judge anymore. Whether someone claims preference, or genetics, we are to forfeit our own desires in these judgments and wholly lean into what God has revealed in His Word. Those that are Christ's belong to Him. We are His Bride, and He is the Groom. It is not our right to make these decisions on our own anymore. To be a follower of Christ is to lay down our old lives, crucifying our flesh and its desires. We no longer have the right to choose, for we have given ourselves to our Beloved, who knows what is best for us. We desire to trust Him now.

The Christian Church should treat homosexuality as a sin against God just like other sexual sins. It misses the mark of God's intention and is, therefore, porneia.

Sin is missing God's mark of perfect holiness in our lives. He died that we would be set free from the penalty of missing the mark of God's perfection and enable us to pursue that perfection in, and through, Him. Any sin is to be purposefully moved away from in our lives. In other words, we are to move toward holiness with great intention. Accordingly, we should show that this sin along with other similar sins is not the love of God (Agape). It is up to us, Christians, to prove it Biblically.

So what do we do? First, and foremost, love. It is all too easy to take a stance without remembering that while we were sinners, "Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). Let us move in love as we pursue relationship with folks in the homosexual community. Encouraging those that are homosexual to attend C.C.F. to learn the Bible should be encouraged!

There are many types of situations that we deal with in regards to homosexuality. Discernment is needed and counsel is to be sought out. A first step with a family member who claims to be a Christian and is living a homosexual lifestyle is found in 1 Corinthians 5. Read the chapter. Always ask this question before you get into a spiritual conversation with someone, "Do

you claim Jesus as your Lord and Savior?"

- If they say yes, it is important that you go over what this really means biblically by discussing Doctrine. Discern if they understand what it means to know Christ. Always be gentle to all (2 Tim. 2:24)! If the understanding of biblical doctrine is clear, and there is still no repentance in their heart, then all you can do is constant admonishment (2 Thes. 3:13-15). Through prayer and seeking counsel, you will eventually remove yourself from fellowship with them (1 Cor. 5:11). If we choose not to do these things, we will be showing a mixed message: - we agree with their claim for Jesus yet are not willing to deal with volitional sinful behavior. (See also the last verse of the book of James).
- If they say no, then you are to pray unceasingly for opportunities to bring them to salvation with God as their judge. Familiarize yourself with 1 Corinthians 5 to see Paul's argument that relates to this (it's toward the end of the chapter). Remember that the person who is not born again is dead to the life of God and evangelism becomes what is needed from us! (See Eph. 2:5, Col 2:13).

Just a quick note - in both of these situations these responses are acts of obedience to Christ and should be pursued with joy in Him. It is God that we serve, whether in admonishing (warning) a brother or in contending for the faith. Both are acts of winning people to Christ! It is my belief that whether the person claims Christ as Lord and Savior (yet is remaining in his sin) or stubbornly rejects Jesus, both are in need of truth and to grow in the grace and knowledge of God (2nd Peter 3:18). Love toward a homosexual should be on our hearts to help us discern what to do. For us the task is to always be asking - what is the best course of action I can take to pursue the spiritual benefit of this person?

**“But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue
righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience,
gentleness.”
(1 Timothy 6:11)**

A Word from Pastor Scott Richards of Calvary Christian Fellowship of Tucson, AZ:

One Purpose (in Marriage)

“Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” (Mark 10:9)

The most important Scriptural aspect of the one flesh marital relationship is not physical or psychological but spiritual. It is a joining that is accomplished by God as a way to reveal His glory and character to man. In Ephesians 5, Paul described the sacrificial love and loving submission of a man and wife as having incredibly profound spiritual implications.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

One of the most important truths we must grasp about our sexuality as expressed in marriage is that its primary purpose isn’t to provide intimacy or personal fulfillment, but to bring glory to God.

Our Problem With Sexuality

Although we see God designing and dedicating marriage in Genesis chapter two, one of the first tangible effects of the fall in Genesis three is the distortion of this relationship. Openness had been replaced by fear. A supportive relationship had been supplanted by finger pointing and blaming. And most devastatingly, the focus on the glory of God had been replaced by rebellion. This de-evolution of man is powerfully expressed in the first chapter of the book of Romans.

“Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image...

Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men,

leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting..”

Man’s rebellion against God’s one-man-one-woman-committed-for-life definition of marriage as the safe place for the practice of our sexuality is manifested in three main ways:

- Adultery – a sexually intimate relationship outside of marriage
- Fornication – a sexually intimate relationship prior to marriage
- Homosexual practice – a sexually intimate relationship with a person of the same sex incompatible with God’s one man/one woman definition of marriage

Each of these actions has one thing in common – all are a rejection and reinvention of God’s standard for the practice of our sexuality. The glory of God is no longer seen in relationship. As such, acting out on heterosexual lust is just as destructive as acting out of homosexual lust. The Bible tells us that such rebellion against God’s design for marriage will have far reaching consequences.

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.” (I Thessalonians 4:3-8)

