

“THE TRAGEDY OF ADAM AND STEVE”

ROMANS 1:26-27

INTRODUCTION

DO YOU KNOW A PERSON WHO IS GAY?

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR RESPONSE TO THEM?

THE QUESTION OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION, DEBATE, AND LEGISLATION FOR MANY YEARS.

WHILE MANY PEOPLE DEBATE THE ISSUE WITH A PASSION ON ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER, THOSE WHO KNOW THE LORD MUST ALWAYS KEEP TWO TRUTHS IN SIGHT, GOD HATES ALL SIN BUT GOD LOVES ALL SINNERS.

GOD HATES THE WRONG THINGS WE DO, BUT HE ALWAYS LOVES US.

GOD IS NOT PLEASED WITH MANY OF THE CHOICES WE MAKE, BUT GOD ALWAYS LOVES US.

WITH THAT IN MIND, EVERY BELIEVER SHOULD APPROACH THE SUBJECT OF HOMOSEXUALITY NOT AS A MATTER OF LEGALITY THAT CAN BE CONTROLLED SIMPLY BY THE PASSING OF LAWS, BUT A MATTER OF MORALITY WHICH IS DETERMINED BY OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH US.

ALTHOUGH MANY PEOPLE MAKE JOKES ABOUT THOSE WHO LIVE THE GAY LIFESTYLE AND FROWN ON THE VERY IDEA OF PEOPLE OF THE SAME SEX LIVING AS A FAMILY; NEARLY EVERYONE KNOWS AT LEAST ONE PERSON WHO OPENLY OR PRIVATELY EMBRACES THE GAY LIFESTYLE.

WE WORK WITH MEN AND WOMEN ON THE JOB WHO DISCUSS THEIR PREFERENCES OPENLY.

IN THE WORK PLACE THEY ARE GENERALLY HONEST, HARDWORKING, LAW ABIDING CITIZENS WHO ARE NOT MONSTERS, SEEKING TO ATTACK EVERY HETEROSEXUAL PERSON THEY SEE.

WHEN IT IS ALL SAID AND DONE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ORIENTATION, THEY ARE PEOPLE, WHO HAVE CHOSEN A LIFESTYLE THAT IS DRAMATICALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE IN THE EYESIGHT OF GOD.

SINCE THE LATE 1960'S WE HAVE SEEN AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE "COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET."

WE HAVE SEEN MOVIES STARS, MINISTERS, MUSICIANS, EDUCATORS AND PLETHORA OF OTHERS THROW BACK THE VEIL OF SECRECY THAT HAS HIDDEN THEIR SECRET LIVES AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THEY HAVE A GAY OR LESBIAN SEXUAL PREFERENCE.

AS MORE TELEVISION PROGRAMS DEPICT THE LIFESTYLE AS AN ACCEPTABLE, IF NOT CURIOUS, ALTERNATIVE AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET, SHOCKING FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND CO-WORKERS.

AFTER THE INITIAL SHOCK WAS OVER WE LEARNED THAT OUR FAMILY IS THE SAME PERSON AND WE LOVE THEM ANYWAY.

WE LEARN THAT OUR COWORKERS ARE DIFFERENT BUT ARE STILL HUMAN BEINGS AND WE LOVE AND WORK WITH THEM DESPITE OUR DIFFERENCES.

THE BLACK COMMUNITY, ALREADY REELING FROM SOCIAL PROBLEMS THAT HAVE ROBBED US OF FATHERS AND STRONG MASCULINE FIGURES IN OUR FAMILIES, HAS BEEN UNUSUALLY HURT BY THE ALARMING NUMBER OF BLACKS IN THE GAY POPULATION.

WE KEEP IT ON THE "DOWN LOW." THE "DOWN LOW" IS A TERM WHICH REFERRED TO OTHERWISE STRAIGHT MEN WHO SECRETLY HAD "ENCOUNTERS" WITH OTHER MEN, BUT OPENLY ENJOYED REPUTATIONS AS LADIES' MEN.

IT WAS NOT TALKED ABOUT.

WE KEPT IT ON THE DOWN LOW.

SO, WE DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE 2001 *USA TODAY* HEADLINE THAT READ. "1 IN 3 YOUNG GAY BLACK MALES ARE HIV POSITIVE" OR THE *BOSTON GLOBE* HEADLINE THAT NOTES, "GAY BLACK MEN HIT HARD BY THE HIV VIRUS."

WE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT IT BUT IT STARTED TO SLIP OUT. IN 1995 BRIAN MC KNIGHT STARTED SIGNING, "ON THE DOWN LOW."

THE NEXT YEAR R. KELLY RELEASED, "KEEP IT ON THE DOWN LOW."

SOMEHOW WE THINK IF WE DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, IT WILL GO AWAY.

SO WHEN HIV TAKES ANOTHER VICTIM, IT IS NEVER MENTIONED AS A CONTRIBUTING CAUSE OF DEATH.

AT THE FUNERAL WE, "KEEP IT ON THE DOWN LOW" REFUSING TO SPEAK A TRUTH THAT IS TOO PAINFUL FOR US TO ADMIT.

THE BLACK CHURCH COMMUNITY, AS A RULE, IGNORES THE PROBLEM.

AT OUR NATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND ASSEMBLIES, THE SUBJECT IS RARELY DISCUSSED, AS IF "KEEPING IT ON THE DOWN LOW" WILL MAKE IT GO AWAY.

YET THE GAY LIFESTYLE IS GROWING IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

WE EXPRESS PRIVATE DISGUST WHEN WE HEAR REPORTS OF MEN IN MOTELS, WOMEN IN THE BACK SEATS OF CARS AND WE ARE PRIVATELY ANGUISHED WHEN WE LEARN SOMETIMES THAT EVEN THOSE WE LEAST SUSPECTED ARE IN THE NUMBER.

YET, WE “KEEP IT ON THE DOWN LOW.”

ONE OUTGROWTH OF THIS GROWING TREND IN OUR COMMUNITY IS A RISE IN HIV / AIDS CASES, PARTICULARLY AMONG BLACK MEN.

“AIDS ACTION” A WASHINGTON D.C. STUDY GROUP SHOWED THAT AS LATE AS 2002 THERE WERE 14,713 CASES OF AIDS IN LOUISIANA WITH 56% OF THAT NUMBER REPRESENTING BLACK MEN.

THESE ARE THE KNOWN TESTED CASES, NOT ALL OF THE THOUSANDS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN TESTED.

IN ONE PARISH, THERE WERE 364 CASES OF AIDS, THE MAJORITY OF WHO WERE BLACK MEN.

THESE STATISTICS ARE REMARKABLY TRANSFERABLE TO THE GENERAL POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE MAJORITY OF THE CASES OF HIV / AIDS CASES INVOLVE BLACK MEN.

THIS IS A GREAT PROBLEM FOR BLACK WOMEN, WHY? BECAUSE WHILE EVE MAY BE LOYAL AND FAITHFUL TO ADAM,

IN TOO MANY INSTANCES ADAM IS SLIPPING AROUND ON THE “DOWN LOW” WITH STEVE, THEN RETURNING HOME AND INFECTING HER WITH AIDS.

BLACK WOMEN ARE COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET TOO.

WHERE MEN HAVE THE PROBLEM OF ADAM AND STEVE, THERE ARE MANY WOMEN WHO ARE NOW JOINING THE GROWING NUMBER OF THOSE WHO ARE BEING CALLED “MADAM AND EVE.”

WHEN BLACK WOMEN LEARN THAT MANY OF THEIR HEROES OF BLACK HISTORY WERE BI-SEXUAL OR LESBIAN, SOME WERE ENCOURAGED.

THEY HAVE LEARNED ABOUT ALICE WALKER, ANGELA DAVIS, LORRAINE HANSBERRY AND HUNDREDS OF OTHERS WHO OPENLY ADMITTED LESBIAN PREFERENCES, PROMPTING MANY BLACK WOMEN TO REACH OUT TO OTHER WOMEN TO RETREAT FROM WHAT THEY FEAR WILL BE ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEN.

THIS POSES A GREAT PROBLEM FOR THE BLACK FAMILY.

AS THE STRONGEST MEMBERS OF OUR FAMILY BEGIN TO REJECT MEN AND TURN TO THEIR OWN, THE FINAL NAIL OF STRENGTH THAT HOLDS BLACK FAMILIES TOGETHER IS WEAKENED AS ALREADY CONFUSED BLACK CHILDREN BECOME COMPLETELY CONFUSED TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHICH OF THEIR TWO MOTHERS IS PLAYING THE DADDY.

WHAT DOES THE WORD OF GOD SAY ABOUT ALL OF THIS?

IS THE BIBLE SILENT? ARE THESE LIFESTYLES A MATTER OF PERSONAL PREFERENCE NOT ADDRESSED BY OUR LORD AND SAVIOR?

AS CHRISTIANS, WE KNOW THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR ON THE SUBJECT OF HOMOSEXUALITY.

ITS WORDS CAN BE TWISTED, TORN APART AND PATCHED TOGETHER TO MAKE IT SAY SOMETHING THAT IT DOES NOT SAY, BUT THE OVERWHELMING TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS THAT HOMOSEXUALITY IN ALL OF ITS FORMS FOR WHATEVER REASON IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

EVEN WHILE THE BIBLE FROWNS ON THE SIN ITSELF, IT ALSO REPEATEDLY MAKES IT KNOWN THAT GOD HATES ALL SIN WITH THE SAME INTENSITY; THERE ARE NO LITTLE ONES AND BIG ONES.

HE HATES ALL SIN BUT HE NEVER STOPS LOVING PEOPLE, WHO IN THEIR OWN WEAKNESS, MAY HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF ONE SIN OR ANOTHER.

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION?

A. **IT BEGINS IN GENESIS CHAPTER 2. IN THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE WE SEE GOD’S PLAN FOR LIVING CREATES, “MALE AND FEMALE: CREATED HE THEM, EACH FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPLENISHING OR POPULATING THE EARTH, NEITHER OF THEM GIVEN ALL THAT WAS NECESSARY TO REPRODUCE WITHIN THEIR OWN GENDER.**

1. WHILE SCIENCE HAS DISCOVERED SOME SPECIES IN WHICH CERTAIN ANIMALS CAN REPRODUCE ASEXUALLY, IT IS NOT THE CASE WITH HUMANS.
2. IT IS INTENDED THAT A MAN AND A WOMAN WOULD CREATE WHAT THE BIBLE CALLS, “ONE FLESH.”
3. GENESIS 2:24 SAYS, “THEREFORE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE UNTO HIS WIFE: AND THEY SHALL BE ONE FLESH.”
4. THUS, THE BIBLE INDICATES THE ORIGINAL INTENT FOR OUR KIND. IT WAS AN “ADAM AND EVE” TYPE ARRANGEMENT.

II. **HOMOSEXUALITY APPEARS IN SCRIPTURE**

A. **THE FIRST REFERENCE TO HOMOSEXUAL ACTS IS FOUND IN GENESIS 19 IN REFERENCE TO SODOM AND GOMORRAH.**

1. LOT AND HIS FAMILY LIVED IN THE CITY OF SODOM WHICH WAS VISITED BY ANGELS.
2. THE MEN OF THE CITY WANTED TO “KNOW” THEM AND THREATENED LOT.

3. **“KNOW” IS A BIBLICAL TERM THAT MEANT TO HAVE INTIMATE RELATIONS WITH THEM.**
4. **IN VERSE 8, LOT EVEN OFFERED HIS TWO VIRGIN DAUGHTERS TO THE MEN TO KEEP THEM FROM MOLESTING THE ANGELS, BUT THEY REFUSED.**
5. **ULTIMATELY THEY WERE BLINDED BY THE ANGELS AND THE CITY WAS DESTROYED.**
6. **BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED IN SODOM ALL UNNATURAL SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE CALLED “SODOMY” AFTER THE CITY SODOM AND ITS HOMOSEXUAL MEN.**

B. IT WAS A SIN THAT WAS IGNORED.

1. **THE OLD TESTAMENT HAD NO TOLERANCE FOR HOMOSEXUALITY AT ALL.**
2. **HOMOSEXUALS, BOTH MALE AND FEMALE WERE PUT TO DEATH.**
3. **LEVITICUS 18:22 SAYS, “THOU SHALT NOT LIE WITH MANKIND, AS WITH WOMANKIND: IT IS ABOMINATION.**
4. **LEVITICUS 20:13 SAYS, “IF A MAN ALSO LIETH WITH MANKIND, AS HE LIETH WITH A WOMAN, BOTH OF THEM HAVE COMMITTED AN ABOMINATION: THEY SHALL SURELY BE PUT TO DEATH; THEIR BLOOD SHALL BE UPON THEM.”**

C. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IT IS EQUALLY CONDEMNED.

1. **ROMANS 1:26-27 SAYS, “FOR THIS CAUSE GOD GAVE THEM UP UNTO VILE AFFECTIONS; FOR EVEN THEIR WOMEN DID EXCHANGE THE NATURAL USE FOR THAT WHICH IS AGAINST NATURE.**
 - a. **AND LIKEWISE ALSO THE MEN, LEAVING THE NATURAL USE OF THE WOMAN, BURNED IN THEIR LUST ONE TOWARD ANOTHER, MEN WITH MEN WORKING THAT WHICH IS UNSEEMLY, AND RECEIVING IN THEMSELVES THAT RECOMPENSE OF THEIR ERROR WHICH WAS FITTING.”**

2. **GOING EVEN FURTHER, I CORINTHIANS 6:9-10 SAYS, “KNOW YE NOT THAT THE UNRIGHTEOUS SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD?**
 - a. **BE NOT DECEIVED: NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATERS, NOR ADULTERERS, NOR EFFEMINATE, NOR ABUSERS OF THEMSELVES WITH MANKIND, NOR THIEVES, NOR COVETOUS, NOR DRUNKARDS, NOR REVILERS, NOR EXTORTIONERS, SHALL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”**

III. HOMOSEXUALITY CANNOT BE SPIRITUALLY JUSTIFIED

- A. **THERE ARE MANY WHO TRY TO EMBRACE THEIR HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE AS WELL AS THEIR CHRISTIAN BELIEFS AT THE SAME TIME.**
 1. **IT IS AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK.**
 2. **THOSE WHO DO, GENERALLY DO NOT BELIEVE IN WHOLE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE, ONLY SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS.**

3. **THEY BELIEVE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE PORTIONS OF THE BIBLE THAT SPEAK ABOUT HOW GOD BLESSES, HEALS, STRENGTHENS, PROTECTS, LOVES AND FORGIVES.**
4. **THEY DON'T ACCEPT THE PARTS OF THE BIBLE THAT CONDEMN THEIR LIFESTYLE AS ACCURATE, AND IF THEY DO THEY TEND TO GIVE DIFFERENT MEANING TO GOD'S WORDS.**

B. MANY CLAIM THAT GOD MADE THEM WITH A HOMOSEXUAL ORIENTATION, THUS IT CANNOT BE A SIN FOR THEM TO ACT ON WHAT HE GAVE THEM.

1. **A SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS AN APPETITE.**
2. **APPETITES PROMPT OPTIONAL ACTIVITY, NOT REQUIRED ACTIVITY.**
3. **HOMOSEXUALITY IS AN APPETITE OR A PREFERENCE, IT DOES NOT REQUIRE A PERSON TO ACT AT ALL.**
4. **IN FACT THERE ARE MILLION OF PEOPLE IN THE NATION WHO LIVE ABSTINENT BY CHOICE, REGARDLESS TO THEIR ORIENTATION.**
5. **OUR INNER DESIRES, WHETHER THEY ARE HETEROSEXUAL OR HOMOSEXUAL, OFTEN PRODUCE GUILT BECAUSE SOMETHING CALL SIN INSIDE OF US KEEPS PUSHING US TO ACT AGAINST THE WILL OF GOD.**
6. **NO MATTER WHAT YOUR ORIENTATION, YOU FACE THE SAME STRUGGLE WHICH IS THE STRUGGLE TO OVERCOME THE URGES OF THE FLESH.**

7. THE FACT THAT WE KEEP HAVING THESE THOUGHTS MAKES US FEEL GUILTY.
8. HOWEVER, ONLY OUR ACTIONS CAN BE JUDGED SINFUL.
9. WE CAN CONTROL OUR ACTIONS.
10. BOTH OUR GUILT AND OUR ACTIONS CAN BE FORGIVEN BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

CONCLUSION

- A. FINALLY, BROTHERS IF YOU HAVE LEARNED ANYTHING FROM TODAY'S THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD WE HAVE TWISTED OUR LIVES AROUND, WE CAN ALWAYS COME HOME TO A LOVING GOD.
1. GOD LOVES US EVEN THOUGH HE HATES WHAT WE DO.
 2. HE DOES NOT ENDORSE HOMOSEXUALITY JUST AS HE REFUSES TO ENDORSE PROMISCUITY AMONG HETEROSEXUALS.
 3. GOD HATES SIN, BUT HE LOVES THE PERSON AFFECTED BY THE SIN.

ILLUSTRATION

IN HIS BOOK, "FRESH FAITH," JIM CYMBALA SHARES THE STORY OF STEVE...A POLISHED, INTELLECTUAL YOUNG MAN WHO GREW UP IN THE HOOD OF SOUTHEAST D.C.

HE SHARED AN APARTMENT WITH THREE HOMOSEXUAL MEN AND OFTEN READ THE BIBLE, DESPITE HIS HOMOSEXUAL TENDENCIES.

SOMETIMES AT NIGHT STEVE WOULD TRY TO DISCUSS WHAT HE READ ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY WITH HIS ROOMMATES AND THEY TOLD HIM, "OH, DON WORRY

ABOUT THAT – YOU’RE READING THE WRONG PARTS...READ THE PSALMS, THE PROVERBS.

GOD IS A GOD OF LOVE AND ANYTHING THAT’S LOVING IS FINE WITH HIM.”

STEVEN BECAME TROUBLED ABOUT HIS LIFESTYLE.

THE WORD OF GOD TUGGED AT HIM.

ONE DAY HE ATTENDED THE LARGE CHURCH ACROSS FROM HIS APARTMENT AND FELT THE LOVE OF GOD SHOWN TO HIM BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THAT CHURCH AS HE WALKED IN THE DOOR.

STEVE FELT THE LOVE OF GOD OVERPOWERING HIM.

HE DIDN’T TELL ANYBODY THAT BUT HE WENT HOME AND DECIDED TO END HIS HOMOSEXUAL ENCOUNTERS WITH HIS ROOMMATES.

NEXT HE MOVED OUT ALTOGETHER, THEN FINALLY CHANGED HIS FRIENDS.

HE HEARD HIS INSIDES OR HIS FLESH SPEAK TO HIM BUT HEARD GOD SPEAKING TO HIM LOUDER.

EVENTUALLY, STEVE MET A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, THEY MARRIED AND RAISED A FAMILY AND BOTH BEGAN TO WITNESS TO OTHERS THAT THE POWER OF GOD CAN CHANGE BOTH OUR ORIENTATION AND OUR ACTIONS IF WE WILL TRUST HIM.

B. GOD’S LOVE IS A POWERFUL LOVE THAT OVERCOMES OUR WEAKNESSES!

- 1. THAT WEAKNESS MAY BE HOMOSEXUALITY, BUT IT COULD ALSO BE DRUNKENNESS, GAMBLING, FORNICATION, ADULTERY, WILD LIVING, DRUGS, CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.**
- 2. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THERE IS NO SIN THAT GOD IS NOT WILLING TO FORGIVE.**

3. **THERE IS NO MISTAKE THAT HE IS NOT WILLING TO FORGET AND GIVE US A NEW CHANCE.**
4. **THERE IS NO ORIENTATION THAT HE IS NOT WILLING TO REDIRECT.**
5. **THERE IS NO LIFE SO BROKEN THAT HE CANNOT FIX IT.**
6. **THERE IS NO LIFE SO LOST THAT HE CAN'T HELP YOU FIND IT AGAIN!**
7. **THERE IS NO LIFESTYLE SO SPIRITUALLY DRAINING THAT HE CAN'T BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO IT!**
8. **GOD'S LOVE IS A SOUL SAVING LOVE THAT OVERLOOKS OUR PAST FAULTS AND ONLY SEES OUR WILLINGNESS TO LIVE FOR HIM.**
9. **THAT'S WHY CHRIST CAME TO THIS EARTH, TO GIVE US ANOTHER CHANCE!**
10. **THAT'S WHY HE DIED ON AN OLD RUGGED CROSS!**
11. **THAT'S WHY HE AROSE AFTER THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS.**
12. **HE DID IT ALL TO GIVE US ONE CHANCE!**
13. **IT WOULD BE TRAGEDY FOR ADAM AND STEVE TO REJECT HIS OFFER AND CHOSE A LIFE WITHOUT GOD.**