

Sister Sodom and Her Daughters

June 25th, 2017

Introduction

In the United States, the homosexual community has done a terrific job of discipling the nation and gaining the favor of the avenues of influence (e.g. the media, politicians, and education). They have also done a good job of swaying the Church to become sympathetic to their behavior and negligent in their discerning of the Scriptures. However, if God sees fit to grant the Church repentance, we believe that it will manifest itself in a return to the authoritative declaration of the Word of God. We are to determine what is sin by that which God has revealed to us as sin, not by what we as a society determine.

Ezekiel 16:46-50

⁴⁶ “Your elder sister is Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, is Sodom and her daughters.⁴⁷ “You did not walk in their ways nor act according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you became more corrupt than they in all your ways.⁴⁸ “As I live,” says the Lord God, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done.⁴⁹ “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.⁵⁰ “And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit. NKJV

- ♦ It is commonly thought that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their sexual immorality. While it is true in part, it should be noted that the sexual immorality did not exist alone. At least in the city of Sodom, it would appear that they had a thriving economy where, generally speaking, there was much to be proud about and plenty of food for everyone. Yet leisure, arrogance, and neglect of the poor were rampant and the city committed abominations before the Lord. From the accounts in Genesis we know that at least some of these abominations were of a homosexual nature.

Sins Versus Crimes

- ♦ Not all sins are crimes and, in most cases, all crimes are sins (except in extremely ungodly societies)—and this is a good thing. The civil magistrate has been given by God the power of punishment, even lethal punishment, over the wrongdoers, but He has not given it the ability to discern hearts which means that it is in no position to be enforcing punishment upon sins that do not manifest themselves in visible ways. When considering homosexuality, we need to go to the Scriptures to determine if it is a sin or not and then it is an additional question about whether it should be a crime or not. We believe that the Scriptures teach us very plainly that homosexuality is both a sin and crime.

Genesis 2:18-25; Leviticus 18:22-25; 20:13

- ♦ When God created Adam and Eve and the institution of marriage, He did so because it made the man complete and the two together were very good. From the beginning, God has made us to be given in marriage and the pattern He establishes for us is a union of a man and a woman surrounded by a covenant.
- ♦ Later, in the days of Moses, (after the destruction of Sodom) we see that God codifies the behaviors and principles by which His nation of people will be governed. Here we see that God instructs Moses that homosexual behavior is an abomination to Him and worthy of the highest earthly penalty.

Romans 1:26-32

- ♦ A common objection to the previous verses is that they come from the OT, were part of a ceremonial law, and were abolished in Christ. A quick read easily obviates this. But here in Romans we get even more instruction on the nature of the sins of homosexuality and lesbianism. Notice here that these are the sins *to which* God gave them over, that is, abandoned them. He was not threatening to turn them over if they continued in those sins, it was to those sins that He turned them over. Those sins are the fruits of *having been* turned over to their vile passions. We must realize that God is not threatening His wrath upon unrighteousness, He is pouring it out, and the presence of these kinds of abominations are His judgments.
- ♦ Sinners love to protect other sinners because it empowers both of them in their positions. Our temptation is to be easy on those who are tempted by our temptations and to be hard on those who are tempted by things we aren't.

Sin or Orientation?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

- ◆ This is an extremely important passage because it teaches us much about the nature of depravity. First, notice that Paul warns the Corinthians about being deceived into believing that those who continue in sin will still inherit the kingdom of God. Just like today, there apparently was a strong contingent trying to persuade the Church that it was too harsh and unloving to think that these sinners would not be in the kingdom of God. We don't know what the arguments were, but I would bet that the arguments we hear today are really nothing new at all.
- ◆ It is important to note that this persuasion of the church is accomplished with deception. To persuade the immature, deception must only seem plausible. But, to persuade the mature, the deception must become very subtle and deceivers must be very patient as they attempt to gain ground in small advances.
- ◆ Pertinent to this study, Paul uses four words to describe the sexually immoral. Fornicators are those who are sexually immoral without violating of a marriage covenant. Adultery is sexual immorality that does violate a marriage covenant. The word translated in the NKJV as homosexual is better translated as a catamite, that is, a male who plays the role of a female with a homosexual man. And finally, the word for sodomite correspond to homosexual or even lesbian in our modern vernacular.
- ◆ Paul is not teaching us that anyone who has practiced these sins cannot be saved. He is saying that continuing in these sins is not consistent with a person professing to be in Christ. There is no such thing as "Gays for Jesus" because if they are continuing unrepentantly in their rebellion, they only reveal that they are actually against Him. Romans 6:1-4
- ◆ Equally important is the fact that some of the recipients of this letter, to whom Paul was writing, were formerly those who partook in this list of sins. But now, Paul says, they were washed, justified and set apart by their inclusion in Christ. It does not matter if scientists find a gene that corresponds to homosexual tendencies, those who are truly converted can be made clean and free from the bondage of this sin.
- ◆ A current objection to these passages is that if God has made someone with a predisposition to this kind of sin, certainly, he cannot be held accountable nor would it be loving for us to tell him to stop expressing himself in this way. After all, who is God to demand such behavior of him whom He created with these temptations? This sin is no different than any other where our bodies have strong desires, and we are told to bring them under the control of the Spirit. We are to be led by the Spirit in putting to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8:1-17). We do not determine what sin is by whether someone can refrain from committing the sin or not. We know that something is a sin because the Word of God teaches us it is so.

Distortion of the Now-Revealed Mystery

Ephesians 5:25-33

- ◆ One of the greatest abominations of the sin of homosexuality is that from the very beginning the marriage of a man and a woman was designed to be a prophetic vision of what the Father would do for His Church through His Son. The institution of marriage was intended to teach the world about how God would mercifully provide the redemption of the world through the sacrificial love and obedience of His son. Homosexual and lesbian relationships defile this prophetic picture and teach lies about the nature of the relationship between Christ and the Church. There are not two heads in a marriage nor are there two churches without a head.

What Should We Do?

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

- ◆ The job of the leadership of the church is to equip the Saints. We are to teach the body to obey everything that Jesus taught. Jesus Himself embraces the design of marriage between one man and one woman in Matthew 19. We must teach a high view of marriage that must be honored and kept honorable by all.
- ◆ To those who are outside of Christ and continuing in these sins, we must take the gospel to them in love, teaching them to flee from the wrath of God by calling on Him for mercy. To those who name themselves as Christians but are continuing in these sins, we must warn them of their situation that if they are unrepentant, they face further judgment of God. In either case, we must approach them with humility and love, considering ourselves first so that we are not judged.