

When It Comes to Homosexuality, Eugene Peterson and Jesus Can't Both Be Right

In a recent article entitled, "Eugene Peterson on Changing His Mind About Same-sex Issues and Marriage," we see again how truth is crumbling under the sledge-hammer of political correctness.

America cannot fall because she has already fallen. We are now picking up the pieces of a broken nation reflected in our laws, lives, families and children. America's moral heartbeat has ceased because we cut off the source of life. We need resuscitation, renewal and revival of the truth.

The truth is often neglected, watered-down or avoided altogether in the hope of not offending members and building a large audience. We want to build a church rather than break a heart, be politically correct rather than biblically correct, coddle and comfort rather than stir and convict. Pastors are to be pillars who support truth, not who oppose it. Truth is not flexible when it comes to absolutes—it's solid and unyielding.

I have nothing but compassion for those trapped in sexual sin. Those who strongly believe in the Bible and God's will regarding sexual behavior also strongly believe in unconditional love and forgiveness. To say that authentic Christians hate or fear those trapped in the homosexual lifestyle demonstrates a gross misunderstanding of the Christian faith. To "confront in love" simply comes from a desire to honor God and to truly love and care for others. The ability to relate to people on their level, show genuine

concern and love them regardless of their lifestyle is the mark of true Christianity.

When people, groups, denominations or movements depart from absolute truth, and thus, quench and grieve the Spirit of God, they become mechanical in their approach to Christianity and lose the ability to guide. The Word of God is not in their hearts “like a burning fire” (Jer. 20:9), but relative, powerless and debatable. This is what we see today.

Unfortunately, those who are sounding the alarm are often categorized as irrational, judgmental, bigoted and intolerant. But how can we warn if we won’t confront, correct if we won’t challenge and contend if we won’t question? We must speak the truth in love. The Bible is crystal-clear on sexual sin, including homosexuality.

Why is there a lack of conviction today? The reason may not be in the pew but in the pulpit. Much depends on the prayer life of the preacher. Pastors, preachers and teachers must spend extended time in prayer to be truly effective—God prepares the messenger before we prepare the message.

Consider the following in light of Jesus’ teachings—in light of the truth:

1. The moral laws in the Old Testament, such as those prohibiting killing, stealing, lying, adultery, sexual immorality and so on, are all valid today. Jesus referred often to the Old Testament and said that He didn’t come to abolish it but to fulfill it. Jesus referred to the Old Testament often in regard to moral behavior.

The consequences of wrong actions may have changed, but the moral implications remain the same. For instance, even though we no longer stone to death those who commit adultery, this does not mean that adultery is acceptable or any less dangerous. Adultery is wrong, even though there aren’t legal consequences.

2. Jesus condemned all sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and woman when He said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immorality ... These are the things which defile a man" (Matt. 15:19-20a). Jesus was implying that all sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman is harmful and immoral. The word "fornication" in the Greek is *porneia*, where the word "pornography" comes from. We cannot use the excuse, "But I was born this way," because we were all born to lie, cheat, lust, and deceive, but this doesn't make it right – it makes us sinful and in need of a Savior.

3. An argument cannot be based solely on silence. To suggest that Jesus approved of homosexuality simply because He did not use the term homosexual is to imply that He approved of necrophilia, pedophilia, incest and bestiality. But, of course, we know better.

4. Other passages in the New Testament are clear on this issue as well. Romans 1:18-32 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-20 are good places to start. In short, mankind did not see fit to acknowledge God, and they suppressed the truth; therefore, God gave them over to a depraved mind—to do those things which are not proper. Homosexual behavior and sexual sin in general are comparable with dishonoring the body and turning from God. John Piper said, "The sexual disordering of the human race is a judgment of God for exchanging Him for the creature."

5. Jesus said that since the beginning of creation, God created them male and female in order that they would be joined together and become one flesh. He adds, "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10:9). Marriage between a man and a woman is God's plan since creation. No matter how many laws are passed in favor of gay marriage, it will not change God's mind. Man often rebels against God; this is nothing new.

In closing, Jesus would often speak out against sin, but His

love and mercy also reached out to those who regretted and hated their condition. Forgiveness is a mark of genuine faith. We should have compassion for those who struggle with same-sex attraction because we all struggle with sin, but at the same time, we should not condone or excuse this type of sin any more than we condone or excuse any other sin. {eo}

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