

Why Your View of God's Power May Be Too Small

Growing up in the church, I have probably heard maybe a thousand expressions during my lifetime indicating a need to "take yourself off the throne and put God there." Intellectually, that sounds nice, and I suppose it sort of makes some sense. But practically, what does that look like?

Please hold on for a minute as I take a bit of a rabbit trail from the stated topic to establish a recurrent premise you will see throughout. As Christians, we have the availability of unconditional truth—the Bible. Or, that's my estimation anyway.

In our current times, I understand that some people may not hold to that precise estimation, as personal interpretation can create a cloudy influence. But in my old-school mentality, I believe that God's heart and perspectives were made clearly available through what we commonly call the written Word of God.

I know other religions have some of their own extracurricular "sacred" writings, but in my estimation, the Bible, authored by those our Christian forefathers gave credence to, is the exclusive non-error filled offering. I also believe that the Holy Spirit motivated the composing of those books later approved by the aforementioned groups charged with the scrutiny of an abundance of text offerings. I have complete confidence that the Holy Spirit would be strategically involved in any situation where an acceptance of such an important document claiming to be from God would be in question.

He (Holy Spirit) is capable of appropriately motivating any group to agree to accept what He wanted to come forth. If the

ability of humanity to mess that up is in question in your mind, it is my opinion that your estimation of our all-powerful God may be too small.

And the God I see being portrayed throughout those Scriptures would easily be able to guide the evolution of pertinent documents to 2019, allowing us to receive the entirety of what He desires. I do not believe mankind, even in our biblically significant yet fallible state, could mess up what God ordained to deliver to us, its truth intact.

So, it is from my belief in the infallibility of Scripture that I now present my case for what it means practically to allow God to be on the throne.

I know I am going to step on some culturally sensitive toes in using the following example, but it is also my estimation that too often Christianity tiptoes around culturally relevant issues that Jesus would likely have aggressively, yet lovingly stepped directly into. So, let me do my best to put on a Christlike version of myself and wade in.

I was in a training class for my line of work this past weekend and there was a strong emphasis on the acceptance of the LGBTQ lifestyle: Recognition to the degree that we should be willing to accept it as simply an equally viable option to any other preference in life; that there is no right or wrong to the plethora of choices in this arena; there is simply unconditional acceptance and a non-judgmental position of any sort.

Now first let me ask you a question. Has the public's perception of the Christian culture in general ever handled this subject matter like Jesus would have if He was here? Of course, we are not Jesus, but there is a biblical (remember: infallible!) way to lovingly and sensitively approach any issue the Bible characterizes as sin. Now that I have introduced "sin," some of you may be angry: In other words,

there “they” go again, bringing an overt, outdated religiosity into everything.”

For those of you still with me, let me do my best to continue, biblically. There are so many sins that the Christian community essentially winks at: overeating (gluttony), speeding (breaking the law), road rage (hate), over-indulgence of adult beverages (drunkenness) and so forth. These and other similar sins are categorized by us as more acceptable missteps, things we know we really probably should be doing a better job with, but don't really believe they are sins.

It is not at all my intent to put more shame in your game. I simply wish us to position the LGBTQ sin issue into a classification we all can somewhat empathize with. Just because you don't understand how I can sin as I do or vice versa doesn't mean we are not *all* sinners and struggling with our own stuff and not wanting to be labeled into any unpleasant category.

The Bible indicates that sin is sin from God's perspective, and Jesus died for all of it. And regardless of what yours or mine is, we need to come to grips with it and pursue ever-increasing Christ-likeness in that area. We need to see our fellow-man as sinners who are in various degrees of understanding, acceptance, and maturity, with empathy and love for their particular plight.

So, to our LGBTQ fellow travelers in life: I may not understand your struggles, but it is likely you do not understand some of mine, either, and that is not the issue anyway. The issue, as I see it, is that the Bible clearly maps out how He meant for us to live life, and neither of us is hitting that mark. Anybody can discount opinions or Scriptures in the Bible or even the Bible in its entirety.

If you do, I have no objective premise to coach you up from or encourage you with, other than I am sorry for the hate, shame

and condemnation that has come from Bible believers. So many of us have been ridiculously unbiblical in our behaviors and tone toward other fellow imperfect people. And any person, regardless of their particular “misstep,” who that has happened to is owed, at the minimum, an apology. That behavior is categorically unbiblical as well.

How would any of our lives look different if God were on the throne of our lives? Probably much different than any of us want to suppose.

He would actually be in charge of all of our decisions, right? We would do nothing independent of His perspective. So:

When we are driving (here it comes) if someone cut us off in traffic, we would:

- Back off and not tailgate to show our irritation.
- Not try to pass them so we could stare them down to show our displeasure.
- If we do pass them, not mouth any words that we hope they can make out.
- Not make any gestures with any body part.

When His perspective governs our food intake, we would:

- Not continue to eat after sufficient calories have been consumed during a scheduled meal.
- Pay reasonable attention to the quality of foods we consume.
- Be intentional about any food items we consume between meals.

If partaking of an adult beverage, we would likely:

- Predetermine a prescribed amount that will allow for clarity of mind and heart.
- Have a clear sense as to our thoughts regarding the benefits of consuming adult beverages.

- For fear of losing several of you, I will stop there.

If I have the propensity to drive too fast:

- I don't even know for sure how to qualify what would precipitate the biblical changes here, except that if we are breaking any law, we should probably take it before the Lord and His Word (Bible) for all the characteristics surrounding why and proceed in obedience from there.

If you consider yourself a genuine Christian, and you encounter any type of LGBTQ cultural pressure or even an individual living in some form of this lifestyle who disagrees with your perspective, you biblically should:

- Love them. Love is not an expectation of a specific feeling it is a commitment to treat, anyway. Love is willingness to kindly act toward. Love is seeing and treating them as co-human beings who are trying to figure out the meaning and purpose to life with the specific brokenness each of us poses.
- Do not hate them. Even in clear disagreement, there can be reasonable compassion and empathy. Though the Bible plainly endorses only a male-female heterosexual relationship for a marriage or romantic relationship, characterizing any perversion as sin, please remember, every one of us is a sinner and has perverted God's best in our own particular areas. Appropriate biblical compassion and empathy can be utilized in each and every relationship. Degree of aversion to a sin is no justification to find the person themselves overtly objectionable.

Allowing God to take His rightful place on the throne of our lives is a nice-sounding, Christianese proverb to be bandied about. But to actually be willing to live within this maxim requires a seriousness few Christ followers are prepared to offer. It is up to each of us, on a regular basis, to decide

if we will offer ourselves to be one of the few. It's not a "one and done" offering of the throne, but a moment by moment, frequently problematic, intimate enterprise.

Steve Hunt *lives in Clovis, California, and is involved in a number of ministries that deal with marriage, relationship and sexual issues. He can be contacted at stevehunt@.*