

The Painful Truth About Gay Pleasure

I've never hunted ducks, and I've never watched *Duck Dynasty*, so I didn't rush to defend Phil Robertson last month after the bearded reality TV star sparked an uproar with his comments about homosexuality. I do believe everyone is entitled to their opinion about religion, so I was amazed that people were calling for Robertson's head just because he dared to quote a Bible verse that says homosexuals (along with adulterers, fornicators, idolaters and swindlers) won't go to heaven.

The *Duck Dynasty* hullabaloo proved many things: (1) A lot of people in America today love to make fun of conservative Southerners; (2) conservative Southerners might need some coaching on how to express their views in the media; and (3) if you dare to say that gay sex is contrary to God's moral law, you'd better be ready to hide in a Louisiana bayou because people are going to get really, really angry.

Phil Robertson made his remarks in his own backwoods way. He said: "It seems like, to me, a vagina—as a man—would be more desirable than a man's anus. That's just me. I'm just thinking: There's more there! She's got more to offer. I mean, come on, dudes! You know what I'm saying? But hey, sin: It's not logical, my man. It's just not logical."

OK, so maybe it's not the most sensitive way to say that gay sex is not God's plan. But I'm glad Robertson and *GQ* magazine opened this can of worms. We need some honest dialogue about this topic.

I counsel men and women who struggle with same-sex attraction. Most of them are Christians who know homosexuality is not God's will for their lives, and they want the Holy Spirit's help to live in purity. They want to please God, and they

don't want to live in gay relationships. But they crave spiritual guidance and loving acceptance as they learn to resist temptation.

As a minister, I owe them respect and compassion—and if I really love them, I will tell them the truth. When I talk with guys, I always address the gory details about gay sex that many Christians today won't mention. (WARNING: These points are not for the squeamish.) If we don't talk about this stuff in church, more people with same-sex attraction are going to assume we have no answers.

1. Gay sex is against nature. People who believe in God also believe He created human bodies. He designed every part of us, including our genitals. The first chapter of Genesis is clear that God created male and female and that He not only did this for procreation (v. 28) but also for sexual pleasure (Gen. 2:24-25). Even the most amateur biology student knows that a penis was made for a vagina and that the act of heterosexual intercourse is the only form of sexual activity that results in conception. The only way to make a baby is with a sperm and an egg.

When a man has sex with another man, or a woman with another woman, they will experience bonding, deep affection and intense physical pleasure. But nowhere does the Bible say pleasure alone is a sign of God's approval or blessing. Some pleasure is outside God's boundaries. This is why Paul warned Timothy that in the last days, people would be "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:4, NASB). Just because it feels good does not mean you should do it!

2. Anal sex is very unhealthy. Doctors will tell you that the anus is very different from the vagina. Penetration of the anus by a penis can lead to tearing of rectal tissue, bleeding and infection. Because the anus is full of bacteria, anal intercourse spreads the human papillomavirus and can result in anal warts, anal cancer, HIV and other diseases. It can also

result in bowel incontinence. When anal sex is combined with oral contact, disease is even more likely. Yet despite these concerns, about 90 percent of male homosexuals participate in anal intercourse. Condoms can offer some protection, but they aren't foolproof. Anal sex is high-risk behavior.

3. Any form of immorality separates us from God. The apostle Paul was blunt in his description of homosexuality in the first century. He wrote in Romans 1:27, "Men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error" (NIV). God offers mercy, forgiveness and healing to anyone who wants to be free from immorality. But those who continue to live in sexual sin will become slaves to that sin—and in the end they will be eternally separated from God.

God is not homophobic. He understands why people feel confused or broken in their sexuality. He offers the grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to anyone, no matter their sexual history or their sexual inclinations. He invites us to join Him in a journey toward healing. But those who want a relationship with Him must, like all true disciples, deny their own desires, take up their cross and follow Him.

***J. Lee Grady** is the former editor of Charisma and the director of the Mordecai Project (). You can follow him on Twitter at @leegrady. He is the author of 10 Lies Men Believe and other books.*