

INTRODUCTION: Review

- Broken People vs. living in sin
 - What was the condition of Adam and Eve after the fall? They were living in sin.
 - What constituted “living in sin” for them?

It wasn't their sexual relationship. They were naked before the fall and naked and *ashamed* after. The thing that changed was their knowledge of good and evil.

What was the remedy? ...the atoning power of the sinless blood of Jesus shed to redeem us. It was even set in motion by the act of sacrifice through Able at God's instruction – a foreshadowing of what would eventually come.

When was the sin of Adam and Eve and their families dealt with? Calvary – over 4000 yrs later.

Their sins were no less dealt with 4000 years before the offering of Christ than ours 2000 years after.

The state, the condition of the world forever changed in that moment of disobedience. We have been living with the result ever since.

But for those who choose to place their faith in the plan God set in motion to redeem us...

- ***2Corinthians 4: ⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this allsurpassing power is from God and not from us.***

So...are we “living in sin” because of our sexual identity? Is the couple in church who divorced without the Biblical license (adultery) to do so “living in sin?” Is the person “living in sin” who hates in his/her heart committing the equivalent of murder as stipulated by Jesus? Are those who look lustfully at a woman/man who are just as guilty as if they were committing the act according to the words of Jesus “living in sin?”

I'll tell you the posture I have taken.

Luke 18: ¹⁰"Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax man. ¹¹The Pharisee posed and prayed like this: "Oh, God, I thank you that I am not like other people--robbers, crooks, adulterers, or, heaven forbid, like this tax man. ¹²I fast twice a week and tithe on all my income.'

¹³ *"Meanwhile the tax man, slumped in the shadows, his face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, "God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner.""*

¹⁴ *Jesus commented, "This tax man, not the other, went home made right with God. If you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face, but if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself."*

I am a sinner. If you want to know *what* my particular sin is you are missing the point. I walk from "slumping in the shadows" to "**made right with God**" because I have asked God for mercy and said, "**forgive me, a sinner.**"

On to this week's subject...

1. The Cause of Homosexuality

a. Inherent (inborn) or Environmental?

Is sexual identity inherent?

"I was **born** this way" is what many have said.

I have been told by several people, "I knew I was different when I was five years old."

ASK: Is it possible to know your sexual identity before you have Sexual feelings?

Three determining factors of sexual identity:

- **Biology** ~ genital and brain resources
 - "hard drive"
 - (Read pg. 89-90 Bonding)
- **Family** and environmental ~ the encouragement of our "sex role"
 - "added programming" software
 - e.g., Growing up Danni
 - mother / father dynamic
 - absent father emotionally
 - molestations
- The **choice** we make (veto power resides here)

When there is question about how we are "hard wired" (more specifically the brain rather than genitalia) does our "software" really even matter? Can "software" override our "hard drive?"

When our "choice" seems like no choice at all...
Consider this:

- Adolescence

- A time in life where being different is a fate worse than death ~ fitting in was *everything!*

In my own experience somehow I knew I couldn't let people know about this horrific reality in my world. Like Adam and Eve I was naked, knew it, and was hiding because I was ashamed and afraid.

What I experienced was no different than Adam and Eve with the common issue being sin not the particular "brand" of sin.

I *was* different, God help me. I didn't really discover it until I entered into adolescence.

~12 years old seeing a Playboy magazine

Continuing with this subject of choice...

- Who shall I be sexually attracted to?
 - Heterosexuals didn't choose their sexual identity, why do heterosexual people think homosexuals do?

There was never a question in my mind about not choosing my sexual identity. I did, however think God to be angry and/or disappointed that I would express my orientation through behavior.

There are simply questions without answers (for now).

i. Bonding Between Parent and Child (Information from Bonding ~ Relationships in the Image of God by Donald M. Joy, Ph.D.)

What was known about animal husbandry was scientifically studied by Konrad Lorenz in the 1930s.

"He found that newly hatched chickens will adopt any moving object as 'mother' in a critical period of time during which the depth and persistence of attachment seems to be greatest."

(Bonding ~ Relationships in the Image of God by Donald M. Joy, Ph.D. p.110)

For many years there was a natural "bonding" experience built in to the birth process for women and their children.

But as technology and knowledge advanced in the 20th century, safe, painless childbirth became the goal.

- The mother was immobilized by drugs, often injected in the spinal column
- The mother was reduced to several hours of semiconscious “shadowland” during which time she would have no memory of delivery or of her child
- Doctors would do everything ~ including dragging the baby down the birth canal with forceps.

It was reported that about 20 years after this “medical wonder” was widely used, violence and turbulence became the reason a generation of young people were labeled “The Alienated.”

1. Birth Bonding

After birth there is a heightened sensitivity to attachment.

a. Vision

- i. A newborn has a heightened visual acuity matching adult vision. This changes a few hours after birth.

b. Hearing

- i. A newborn is especially responsive to the mother’s, father’s “vocalizing” over the infant.

c. Touch

- i. Galvanic connections, skin to skin contact appear to have important effects on attachment at birth.

Is it possible that many of the behavioral “abnormalities” of human beings are cause by a lack of parental-infant bonding at birth? I think so.

Could it be a partial reason people are gay? I think it’s possible (reference my childhood environment).

b. Did God Make Me Gay?

To attempt to answer this question, let’s go back to Eden.

What responsibility does God hold as the omniscient (all knowledge), omnipotent (all powerful) Being Who doesn’t interfere with nature or our choosing?

- God didn’t force an outcome with Adam and Eve
- He doesn’t force an outcome with us

Some people believe because God knows all and seemingly does nothing to avert disaster when He has the power to, that He is responsible for disaster.

We cannot hold God accountable.

To illustrate...let's make an attempt to consider the Asian tsunami from God's perspective.

*Psalm 116:¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his saints. (NIV)*

*¹⁵When they arrive at the gates of death,
GOD welcomes those who love him. (MSG)*

We're agonizing / He's longing!

*Hebrews 9:²⁷...man is destined to die once, and after that to
face judgment,...*

God's knowledge of my personal life...

Psalm 139:¹ GOD, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand.

*²I'm an open book to you;
even from a distance, you know what I'm thinking.*

*³You know when I leave and when I get back;
I'm never out of your sight.*

*⁴You know everything I'm going to say
before I start the first sentence.*

*⁵I look behind me and you're there,
then up ahead and you're there, too--
your reassuring presence, coming and going.*

⁶This is too much, too wonderful-- I can't take it all in!

*¹³Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;
you formed me in my mother's womb.*

*¹⁴I thank you, High God--you're breathtaking!
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!
I worship in adoration--what a creation!*

*¹⁵You know me inside and out,
you know every bone in my body;
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,
how I was sculpted from nothing into something.*

*¹⁶Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;
all the stages of my life were spread out before you,
The days of my life all prepared
before I'd even lived one day.*

²³*Investigate my life, O God,
find out everything about me;
Cross-examine and test me,
get a clear picture of what I'm about;*
²⁴*See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong--
then guide me on the road to eternal life.*

c. Orientation vs. **Behavior**

There is confusion over the issue of orientation compared to the choices we make as a result of our sexual identity.

Personally, I never felt that God was hostile to me concerning my orientation. And while there was never a question in my mind about not choosing my sexual identity, I did think God might be angry and/or disappointed that I would express my orientation through behavior. There will be more on the issue of behavior in the coming weeks.

Many in the religious world make the mistake of excluding gays from any connection with God on the bases of **sexual identity**, either presuming behavior or believing by virtue of orientation alone gays are disqualified from entering into a relationship of intimacy with God.

Romans 10:9 ... if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

"Everyone except gays?" No! Everyone, period!

Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, "Unless you are gay?" through faith "Unless you are gay?" –and this not from yourselves, "Unless you are gay?" it is the gift of God– "Unless, of course, you are gay."

"Unless you are gay?" No!

Acts 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord (except...?) will be saved.'

Did you see any exceptions there?

Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit

(added – not in people’s notes)

Hebrews 9:²⁶...he sacrificed himself once and for all, summing up all the other sacrifices in this sacrifice of himself, the final solution of sin.

²⁷Everyone has to die once, then face the consequences. ²⁸Christ's death was also a one-time event, but it was a sacrifice that took care of sins forever. And so, when he next appears, the outcome for those eager to greet him is, precisely, salvation. (MSG)

²⁸...and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. (NIV)

If Jesus is “bringing salvation” does it mean we don’t have it yet?

We possess our salvation by faith because Jesus has it and we are waiting for Him to complete it which will occur when He brings it to us (when we are united with Him).

Romans 8: ³¹So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? ³²If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? ³³And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? ³⁴Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us--who was raised to life for us!--is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. ³⁵Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture:

IF, as some have suggested, being gay is “*the worst sin listed in Scripture*” even being gay is *not going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us.*

**³⁶They kill us in cold blood because they hate you.
We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one.**

³⁷None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. ³⁸I'm absolutely convinced that nothing--nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, ³⁹high or low, thinkable or unthinkable--absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.