

Most of us have seen pictures of so-called Christians holding up signs that say, "God hates fags." Of course, the Bible does not condone this idea. Romans 5:8 says that "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us." That means God loves sinners, and of course, all of us are sinners. The Bible says, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The fact is, the heterosexual who is looking at pornography is just as sinful as the homosexual. No one can deny that. Jesus said, "whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). So in a sense, we are all in the same boat.

You see, all of us were born sinners. We are all born with sinful desires. David says, "in sin my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5). The fact is, once sin entered the world, it was passed down through the gene pool to you and me. As a result, all of us are born with a sinful nature. That means we are born with sinful temptations. Like a baby born addicted to drugs, we are all born addicted to different sins. One may be born with a greater temptation to overeat, while another may be born with sexual temptations, either heterosexual or homosexual. These different temptations are passed down to us through our genes from generation to generation (Ex. 34:7). As a result, these sinful desires tempt us. Some temptations are so strong that they are impossible to resist on our own, and when we give in to these temptations, they take control of us and become engrained in our nature.

James says, "each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin" (Jas. 1:14, 15). Like a fish lured to the hook, the pleasures of sin lure us until we bite, or commit sin. Then, when we sin, our sinful desire is "conceived" and "gives birth" to the sin. Notice the maternal language James uses. When we give in to temptation, the seed of sin is conceived like a baby in a womb, and sin is born inside us. That means that as long as we resist our sinful desires, they do not become part of our nature, but once

we give in to temptation, sin is born within us and becomes part of us.

As we continue to sin, exchanging "the natural use for what is against nature," sin grows and becomes incorporated into our nature (Rom. 1:26). If sin becomes incorporated into our nature, how can we change? This has been the argument all along. Of course, we know that it is impossible to change our nature. The Bible even admits this. It asks, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23). The implication is that it's impossible to change our nature.

So the problem has been identified. Everyone alive is born with this disease called sin. The reason for this is because we have a sinful heart. According to the Bible, our "heart is deceitful" (Jer. 17:9). This verse not only addresses homosexuals, but everyone. All have sinful desires and temptations. All of us, heterosexuals alike, have a sinful nature that we cannot change on our own. It is impossible. So the heterosexual is in the same boat as the homosexual. Everyone has a sinful nature, or heart.

Since we are all born with a sinful heart, we need a spiritual heart transplant, so God says, "get yourselves a new heart" (Eze. 18:31). We are all like patients waiting for a heart transplant. The tragedy is, for a patient to receive a heart transplant, they must wait for someone with a good heart to die before they can receive the new heart. In the same way, we must wait for someone with a good heart to die in order to get a new heart. The good news is, Someone has died, and the heart is available!

God says, "I will give them a heart" (Jer. 24:7). You see, Jesus came down from heaven to die so that we could have His heart, mind, or nature. The cross was the greatest exchange ever offered to humans. Jesus offered to take our sinful heart and crucify it on the cross and, in exchange, give us His heart. Of course, the term "heart" actually refers to the mind. That's why Paul says,

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Jesus is offering us a new mind.

When Jesus offers to give us His mind, He is offering to give us a new nature. If we will just give our heart to Christ, He will crucify our sinful nature on the cross and give us a new nature, so that "you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:4). That means we do not have to be slaves of our nature. God has offered "the way of escape" from our sinful nature (1 Cor. 10:13). Many have read the verse that says, "homosexuals" will not "inherit the kingdom of God," but few read the following part that says, "and such were some of you" (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Paul is saying that some were in the gay lifestyle, but they asked Jesus into their heart and were changed.

The bad news is that all of us are sinners, but what most don't realize is that, when it comes to being saved, we are all in the same boat. It is no easier for heterosexuals to be "born again" than homosexuals because this is a supernatural experience we cannot get by trying (John 3:7). All of us have a corrupt, sinful nature that loves sin, and as long as we love sin, we cannot get into heaven. In order to stop loving sin, we must be given a new nature. This requires a miracle from God to change our nature, but when God gives us a new heart, we are born again, and we become a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). God changes our nature, and we are given the power to turn from our life of sin.

The good news of the gospel is not that Jesus died so that you can keep sinning, but that Jesus died to give us the power to defeat sin, and yet I am troubled by the attitude among both homosexuals and heterosexuals alike who say, "Since no one is perfect, God will just have to accept me as I am, sins and all." Just because we are not perfect does not mean God will accept our sins. That would be like telling your spouse, "Since I am not perfect, I'm going to have an affair." Try that and see how long your marriage lasts. The fact that we are not perfect does not excuse our sin. This idea that we can keep sinning

and still make it to heaven is a deception. The point of salvation is to offer us the power to overcome sin through Christ.

Pastors who say, "You are okay like you are and God does not expect you to change," are like doctors who know you have cancer and say, "You are okay. There is no intervention needed." It may make you feel good for a while, but it will hurt you in the long run because the diagnosis does not address your true condition. As a result, you are not able to get the problem fixed. The good thing about the Bible is that it is honest enough to diagnose our true condition, even when it is not politically correct.

The Bible tells us that God loves all sinners so much that He does not want any to perish, including homosexuals, but the choice is ours. God diagnosed our condition. While you may not understand why God calls homosexuals to turn from this lifestyle, He has good reasons. The One who made us knows what is best for us and He is calling you to turn from this lifestyle to receive eternal life. Whether you are heterosexual or homosexual, your hope of gaining eternal life rests in turning from sin and accepting Christ. The good news is, Jesus gives you the power.

While it is impossible to change your own heart, you can choose to follow Jesus. Pray and say, "I want freedom from my sin," then get up and strive to obey, asking for His power. Even if you fall, get up and keep fighting. As you continue to resist, you will be amazed as Jesus begins to make the changes inside you. He will give you power, and you will become a new person. While this is impossible on your own, "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). God is in the business of saving sinners and giving them a new life. I know this personally.

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