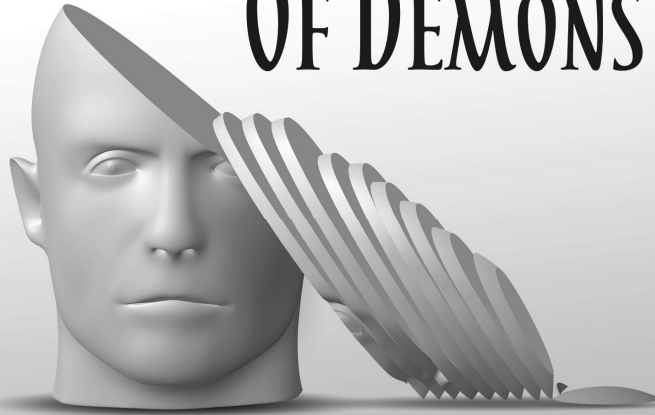


DISMANTLING DOCTRINES OF DEMONS



~ VOLUME TWO ~
DEFINING THE DOCTRINES

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Dismantling Doctrines of Demons
Defining the Doctrines (Volume Two)

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THE DOCTRINE OF DEVIATION

We were an average middle-class family growing up along the Memphis Mississippi River Delta during the late 50s and 60s. Dad worked while mom stayed home and cared for us kids and the house. We rarely went out to eat. Sometimes Dad would pick up burgers, KFC, or Bar-B-Q sandwiches and bring supper home, but mostly mom cooked. When I was a teenager, my maternal grandmother moved into our home so my mom could take better care of her aging needs. Now we had two master chefs in the house!

Even though they prepared various foods, they had their favorite dishes and cooked them often. One was turnip or collard greens. I hated the thought of those mushy leaves entering my mouth, so I made sure there was plenty of peanut butter and jelly around for me while they indulged in their greens and cornbread. Then a miracle happened. I came in one Saturday starving, and mom & grandmother had those collard greens on the stove. That day, those greens had the best aroma, and I found myself dishing some onto a saucer for a “taste test.” The first bite was a pleasant surprise. I remember thinking, “a little salt and pepper would make this really good.” With a few

dashes, I was hooked. To this day, I love some good fresh turnip greens.

Christmas at our house was filled with many memorable traditions. One was grandmother's cocoanut-pineapple cake. She made this monster totally from scratch. There was not one single box of store-shelf cake mix in it! Its creation became something of a family project. My dad would make the runs to the grocery stores to buy all the ingredients, including real pineapples and real cocoanuts, which was not always an easy task in Memphis during December. Dad would take those drained cocoanuts (they even used the natural milk as part of the cake mix), break them open with a hammer, and my brother and I would use knives to pry the fruit away from the hard shells. I cannot tell you how many times the sharp edges of those cocoanut shells scratched and pierced my little hands & fingers while trying to separate them from the fruit. Mom and grandmother would grind the cocoanut by hand, slice and dice the pineapple, and mix up all the cake batter.

At some point in the past, my granddaddy had picked up a stainless-steel serving tray from a local tavern. It was one of those big, round trays that would hold a dozen large mugs of beer. It had a high lip around the edge, and grandmother looked at it one day and decided it would make an excellent cake pan. That became the utensil for making each layer of this Christmas cocoanut pineapple cake. She made the thing six layers high! It was so big that it took 2-3 boxes of toothpicks just to hold it together, which meant you had to fish them out of your portion before taking a bite. That didn't hinder anyone; usually, by the

day after Christmas, nothing was left of that enormous cake but the crumbs.

By the time my grandmother passed away, my mother's health had declined over the years, and she didn't have the energy to carry on the Christmas cake tradition. Unfortunately, the recipe for that enormous and delicious cake went to the graves with them both. However, that was not the case with their potato salad and chicken-n-dumplin recipes! Mom and grandmother both believed in teaching children and grandchildren how to cook, so we all learned! To this day, my brother has invested a large part of his career in food preparation. He is quite the chef, currently the General Manager for Abbay's Restaurant in Cordova, Tennessee. I enjoy doing a lot of the cooking in our home as well.

By pure osmosis, I mastered the potato salad recipe while my brother mastered the chicken-n-dumplin' recipe. We have both slid over to attempt the other on occasion, but with nothing near the success. On one such occasion, I called Larry to review the chicken-n-dumplin' recipe. He carefully repeated it to me, I wrote it down, and he emphasized the importance of following those detailed instructions and not deviating from them to any degree. No problem!

I rolled up my sleeves, got everything ready, and dove in. If you have ever made dumplings from scratch, rolled them out, and cut them up for cooking, you understand what a task it really is. It takes a lot of time and a tiring process, not to mention that you are cleaning-up flour from the kitchen for days. So, I had my broth simmering; I carefully dropped the

dumplings into the pot, stirring them periodically to assure they didn't stick (if you've ever scorched dumplings, you understand why) and letting them slow cook for a while.

I went to stir them later and noticed how peculiar the spoon moved so easily through the broth. I dug down to scoop some of the dumplings out of the broth, and to my shock, there were none! I'm like, "What?!" Like a frantic maniac, I was stirring through that broth, and there was not a single dumpling to retrieve. All that work, and it appeared they had just disintegrated in the pot! I was confused and incensed all at the same time.

I called my brother and anxiously exclaimed, "I can't find them! They are all gone!" He calmed me down and had me explain what was going on. Then to add insult to injury, he chuckled and said, "Let me guess, you used self-rising flour instead of all-purpose flour." Gazing over to the bag still sitting on the kitchen counter, I mumbled, "Uhhh." Then he explained how you cannot use self-rising flour to make dumplings, or you will get the disastrous, humiliating result I had just suffered. Once again, he emphasized how important it was to follow his instructions very carefully and not deviate from them to any degree. I hung the phone up, turned the burner off, and drove to KFC for some take-home!

Undesirable results often come each time we deviate from a set course, whether a recipe, a travel route, a sports competition, performing a musical score, working through assembly or replacement instructions, completing & submitting official documents, and many other step-by-step procedures. When we

come into the family of faith through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as our Savior & Lord, we commit our lives to walk according to God's Word, will, and ways. We are warned about the importance of that course and especially not to deviate from it – *be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go* (Joshua 1:7). Success, prosperity, fulfillment, stability, and happiness in life are the promised by-products of staying the course.

Imagine the grief and regret you might feel if you learned your surgeon deviated from the intricate procedures of the surgery he learned in training and left you in a permanent, disabling condition. Imagine the crippling mutilation that might come to you and your family if the driver in the oncoming lane deviated from his course, crossed the center line, and plummeted head-on into your vehicle. The Bible has a word for that kind of grief, regret, and despair; it is the word *woe*. It characterizes the type of grief associated with the consequences & judgment of deviating choices. We find the word in two verses that relate to Satan's motive and mode of operation.

Satan's Motive

Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time (Revelation 12:12). The fate of Satan and his diabolical network of evil has already been decreed in Heaven (stated, certain and absolutely irrevocable) – *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone,*

where the beast and the false prophet are also, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10). That is why Satan is so full of wrath, and why he is so aggressively working to kill, steal and destroy. He knows his fate and knows he is running out of time! By the way, the next time Satan reminds you of your past, just remind him of his future!

Satan's Mode of Operation

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter (Isaiah 5:20). We identified one of the basic strategies of Satan's network of evil as reformation and cited this passage in volume one of this series. Satan is at work reforming good into evil and evil into good. Here we see clearly the "Doctrine of Deviation." Deviation refers to the departure from or the reversal of an established course or standard, specifically God's Word, will, and ways.

Woe precedes both verses. Tremendous grief is settling over our land today because of Satan's increasing activity of sinister evil & wickedness. The deviations we witness every day show a reversal of things God has established as good, while Satan strives to reform the things that are evil into a deceptive presentation of good. Rest assured, God's standard has not changed. The integrity and authority of God and His Word *is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)*. In God's holy & righteous standard, good is still good, and evil is

still evil, no matter how Satan wants to reform and package them in his works of darkness.

Woe is associated with great pain, suffering, loss, and hopelessness. The consequences & judgment associated with deviation bring devastating *woe* to those who buy into Satan's reforms. No one would sign-up for any form of "kill, steal and destroy," so those results have to be packaged into something that looks "good, light and sweet." Disguising himself and his strategies & schemes as "angels of light" in "sheep's clothing" is the expertise of Satan, and many foolish victims have swallowed his bait hook, line, and sinker.

The creation of man & woman in the Garden was a crowning act of God. In all the other elements in His creation process, God reflected on His work and said *it was good* (Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25). But after God created man and woman and looked back on that completed work, for the first time, He used an adjective; He said *it was VERY good* (Genesis 1:31). Humankind is the only part of God's creation in which He *breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul* (Genesis 2:7). We are also the only part of God's creation that is made in God's *image, according to (His) likeness* (Genesis 1:26-27). Those two things set humankind apart as distinct and unique from any other aspect of creation and make us a target of Satan's jealousy and rage.

The fact that we became a *living soul* is significant. The Hebrew word carries various meanings that present the *soul* as composed of our mind, will, and emotions. Paul placed this unique part of our being into a trilogy that defines our

completeness – *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* (I Thessalonians 5:23). Mankind can partake of the sanctification Paul mentions because of our relational capacities. God is a relational God, and because He made us in His image and likeness, we are also relational. We can relate to Him, He can relate to us, and we can relate to one another. Those relationships touch each part of our body, soul, and spirit in various ways. That sets us apart as very different from all the rest of creation.

Understanding some of the dynamics of these three aspects of our lives is helpful. As believers, our spirit is the place where God abides in us through the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit. It is a place where Satan cannot touch us. Our body and soul, however, remain vulnerable to his observations and interactions with us. In his book *Real Faith* (2009, SWEA Publishing), my friend Shad Williams reminds us that God always works from the inside (our spirit) outward, whereas Satan always works from the outside to the inside. He can only get through in limited ways to our body and soul (mind, will & emotions) but can never reach our spirit. That is where he hits a wall of protection he cannot breach. This is why a genuine believer can never be possessed by a demon. We can certainly be oppressed (attacked, assaulted, entangled), but never possessed simply because we are already possessed by the Holy Spirit who indwells within our spirit (John 14:17).

Shad says, ¹⁶“Satan...can threaten you or entice you in your emotions, and he can oppose you or tempt you through circumstances and physical environment, but he cannot speak to you in your spirit...Satan operates...always from the outside to the inside, and always in the form of a temptation to think, feel, decide, and act contrary to and irrespective of God’s will.” Satan is always striving to entice you and me to deviate from the righteous standard of God’s Word.

Since our body & soul have a particular vulnerability to Satan’s influence and interaction, we need to further define the three parts of our soul. Then we will focus on how those dynamics play out in our bodies.

The Soul’s Mind

Solomon wrote, *wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul* (Proverbs 2:10). He also wrote, *wisdom is thus for your soul; if you find it, then there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off* (Proverbs 24:14). In describing the miraculous ways in which God formed us in the womb and intricately fashioned our inward parts, David said, *my soul knows it very well* (Psalm 139:14). Because knowledge & wisdom are products of learning, logic and rational thought processes, Scripture provides insight that the functions of our mind are an integral part of our soul.

¹⁶ Shad Williams, *Real Faith: Knowing the Will of God, Believing for the Impossible*, SWEA Publishing, 2009, pages 214-215.

The Soul's Will

In trying to process his anguish of great suffering and loss, Job said, *my soul would choose suffocation (and) death rather than my pains* (Job 7:15). Although Job would agree that his suffering was worse than death, we must not assume he was expressing any suicidal intent. Amid his grief, he kept his faith and hope in God for healing and recovery. His suffering was so great that he had no appetite or desire for food – *my soul refuses to touch them; they are like loathsome food to me* (Job 6:7). Job chose not to eat. To choose something or to refuse to choose something is an act of our will, so Scripture teaches that our will is another active dynamic of our soul.

The Soul's Emotion

The young bride Shulamite, seeking and anticipating the arrival of her husband (King Solomon), penned, *Tell me, O you whom my soul loves* (Song of Solomon 1:7). Love is among the strongest of human emotions. Desire is closely related, and David poetically expressed *as the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God* (Psalm 42:1). To *pant* in the Hebrew means to long for with a deep, driving desire. We could cite numerous other Scriptures that associate the emotions of anger, hate, joy, bitterness, grief, and many other feelings with our souls. Our soul serves as the seat of our human emotions.

The number three in Scripture represents completeness. With God, there are three parts (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). With mankind, there are three parts (body,

soul & spirit). Within our soul, there are three parts (mind, will & emotion). God's redemptive work was completed in three days and in three phases (death, burial & resurrection). The Tabernacle (and later the Temple) had three parts (outer court, Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies). Even Satan has an unholy trinity (Satan, the Antichrist & the False Prophet). The trilogy of components completes each one, and the interaction between those parts serves to affect their completion.

Deviation occurs when one component acts incongruently or inconsistently with the others. Imagine the confusion, grief, and woe that would come to all of us if God the Father worked incongruently with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Understanding that any *kingdom divided against itself will fall* (Luke 11:17), even Satan will assure that his Antichrist and False Prophet will act in perfect accord with each other and him in their diabolical plan during the Tribulation Period. So, Satan understands how the dynamics of the triune system work, and he uses that to his advantage when interacting with humanity.

Often you will hear people say, "How could any person who calls himself a Christian do such a thing?" The answer is simple. His soul and body are acting incongruently and inconsistently with his spirit. Unfortunately, that is one of the challenges we believers face in our present bodily existence. Although saved, we still embody our old sinful nature, which still plays with our minds, will, and emotions. When we allow it to overcome the nature of our soul, we often engage its sinful actions in our body. The insight of James graphically applies – *each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin;*

and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death (James 1:14-15).

The Apostle Paul described the reality of that struggle in a brave, honest confession we cited earlier - *For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do...no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me...I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.* (Romans 7:14-25). Now, let me warn you; you won't have to search long before you find a Bible commentator who will insist Paul is writing here about himself before becoming a believer in Christ and certainly not afterward. One such commentator insists it would be blasphemy even to suggest Paul was describing his life as a genuine believer. It seems to me that they wish to play it safe because to concede that the great Apostle Paul would struggle with sin to any degree in his life somehow diminishes his spiritual authenticity and authority as a contributor to inspired Scripture. If that were a valid application, think of the large volume of Psalms we would have to rip out of the Bible written by the fornicator, adulterer, and murderer, King David – the *man after God's own heart* (I Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

Even a grammatical study of the Greek tense indicates a present reference throughout most of this text. Paul is talking in the context of his “here and now.” But one of the most revealing

statements in this text is, *I joyfully concur with the law of God in my inner man* (7:22). To *joyfully concur* means to take great delight in and to rejoice with one's inward self. No unbeliever holds that kind of desire, attitude, or such a spiritual state in his *inner* being (spirit). In fact, Paul said of the lost man, *a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised* (I Corinthians 2:14). The Greek word *foolishness* refers to things that are silly and absurd. A lost person typically doesn't joyfully concur with God's ways. He generally thinks those things are stupid, ridiculous, and crazy; and joyfully lives in many ways contrary to them.

The real litmus test is you and me. Can you relate to Paul's description and experience as a true believer in Christ? I sure can! If we didn't hold the propensity to follow the desires of our fleshly nature, then why would we be the target of Satan and his demonic force in tempting us to violate God's commands and expectations as His children? You and I allow the fleshly thoughts of our mind and the fleshly desires of our emotions to overpower our will and carry out some sinful actions in our bodies daily. If you deny that, you are just *deceiving yourself and the truth is not in you* (I John 1:8).

However, there is a danger here that we must admit and heed to. We cannot allow the reality of this Scriptural claim and Paul's admission of it in his own life to somehow serve as an excuse or justification for our disobedience. The soul has three parts (mind, will & emotions). We cannot eliminate the will because of the weaknesses of our minds and emotions. Our will still chooses obedience or disobedience. Paul helps us

understand, *we are under obligation not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh; for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live* (Romans 8:12-13). Later, Paul instructs us to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts* (Romans 13:14). Our fleshly nature is still a force in our lives that must be reckoned with. Still, as believers, we are under no *obligation* whatsoever to follow its evil path. The best way to avoid that possibility is to *make no provision* for sinful thoughts and desires to be activated in our soul, and they will be less likely carried out in the *deeds of our body*.

How much of this dynamic Satan is aware of and understands is hard to determine. He thought Jesus had the propensity to choose sin, or why else did Satan take his shot at Him in the wilderness of temptation? We know that Jesus was 100% God (deity) while at the same time being 100% man (human). Yes, that is a divine concept our feeble human minds just can't seem to wrap themselves around, but it is nevertheless true. So, in His humanity, was Jesus capable of sin? Was it that side of Jesus that Satan appealed to? Those are questions scholars have wrestled with for centuries!

I know with certainty that Jesus was the perfect Savior who never committed a single sin in His life, neither in thought nor deed. Whether that ability was the nature of His supreme deity, a choice of His human, yet righteous & holy will, or both, depends on your understanding. The bottom line is if Jesus can say "no" to Satan, so can I. If Jesus can exercise His will to choose obedience to His Father over disobedience, then so can

you and me. Therefore, when we stand one day before the Judgment Seat of Christ to account for every deed carried out in our body, whether good or bad (II Corinthians 5:10), we stand without excuse.

In our foundational verse, *falling away* results from paying attention to deviations (*doctrines of demons*) promoted and perpetuated by *deceitful spirits*. One of the ways Paul further illustrates this phenomenon is with *men who forbid marriage* (I Timothy 4:3). The Essenes, a religious sect among the Jews, regarded marriage as far less desirable than a life of celibacy & virginity. They taught that a person was far holier in his life by refraining from marriage because sexual intimacy was regarded as debilitating to holiness. Some married persons persuaded by this teaching even refrained from sexual relations with their spouse for that reason. By the time Paul was writing to the church at Corinth, this teaching had invaded parts of Gnostic heresy which influenced the Corinthian idea that it was *good for a man not to touch a woman* (I Corinthians 7:1). Paul challenged this teaching by emphasizing the sanctity of marriage and affirming the divine plan that *the husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another...*(7:2-5). Those principles countered the Gnostic mindset.

If we scale this heretical idea to a more fundamental level, we can see it as a Satanic assault on God's institution of marriage. That would reveal it as a manifestation of Satan's

doctrine of deviation, suggesting that what God created as *good* (sexual intimacy in marriage) is an *evil* indulgence to be avoided (I know, it sounds contradictory, but contradiction for the purpose of deviation is Satan's specialty). It goes to a far greater extent than that in Satan's broader scope of sinister strategies & schemes. One of the most effective deviations Satan has managed to influence across generations and one that carries some of the most devastating and destructive woes is sexual deviation. At no other time in human history has it been more rampant and radical than in our nation and world today.

In 2011, the Obama Administration led the fight in striking the definition of marriage as "only between a man and woman" from the Defense of Marriage Act of 1996, resulting in the Supreme Court ruling in 2015 that this traditional (and Biblical) definition is unconstitutional. President Barack Obama instructed his Democratic Cabinet to review over 1,000 federal statutes and regulations to ensure the court's decision was implemented swiftly and smoothly by the federal government to recognize the rights of same-sex couples. He joyfully celebrated the court's decision by lighting the White House in "Gay Pride" rainbow colors that evening.

Few other issues have divided our nation and caused such trauma and destruction in American life than the LGBT lifestyle & agenda, now ridiculously expanded to LGBTQQIP2SAA – yes, Google it! The rationale behind such deviated thought has unfortunately reached *even the elect* (Matthew 24:24), as various churches have begun to defend and accommodate the gay lifestyle in the name of love, grace, compassion, and mercy, a manifestation of angel light & sheep's clothing.

At the time of this writing, the ¹⁷United Methodist Church, the second largest Christian denomination in America with some 13 million members, is anticipating a major split over this issue. Their statements affirm sexuality as “God’s gift to all persons,” with all people holding sacred worth and valuable equality in the sight of God. Declaring that their membership will not be encumbered in any way with respect to a person’s sexual orientation or practice, the denomination “implores families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends.” The same thought is emerging in other Christian denominations nationwide, including some Southern Baptist churches. There are some denominations with gay men & women leading as pastors, some even in a same-sex marriage.

To gain a proper perspective of this issue, we cannot rely on the vacillating culture, warring politics, or even the religious communities of the land to be decisive. Our only accurate, reliable source is the authoritative Word of God and what it clearly teaches on this subject. I want to challenge this politically charged and morally controversial issue from three Bible perspectives.

The Institutional Design

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28)...God saw all that He had made,

¹⁷ Ask the UMC, A Ministry of United Methodist Communications, *What Is the Church's Position of Homosexuality?* 2022, www.umc.org.

and behold, it was very good (1:31). As we mentioned earlier, at each stage of his creative work, God looked back and noted it was *good*. After God had created man and woman in His image, it was such a crowning glory to His creation that God declared it was *VERY good*. The distinctions between male and female and the relational qualities those genders experience together are, to God, *very good*. The following section from the Genesis story shows the starting place for marriage.

The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed (Genesis 2:20-25). Note with me several applicable points.

First, God is the Creator; humankind is the creation. There is a distinction that must be noted here. The creature is not the same as the Creator. The Creator is supreme. The creature is subordinate to the Creator. The creature did not create himself or herself; the creature was created by the Creator, who did so without any input by the creature physically, psychologically, or spiritually.

The second thing to note is that male & female distinctions are inherent in God's image. God's image has to do with relationships. In the way God can have a personal relationship with humanity, we can personally relate to one other. In this context, just as a man & woman can have a personal relationship with God, a man & woman can have a personal relationship with each other. More importantly, in the context of marriage, male to female intimacy is that which follows the pattern of God's image and likeness.

A third principle Scripture affirms is that only males & females can procreate. God uniquely created males & females with reproductive capabilities and instructed them with the command to *be fruitful & multiply* or procreate. Only a man (sperm) and a woman (the egg) together (relationship) can physically procreate. That is the way the Creator designed it to be.

Another important affirmation is that the union for relational procreation is marriage. Over the years, I have often posed an essential question to couples: "Who is the inventor of marriage?" Don't be surprised when I tell you that many of them looked at me "like a deer in headlights" as we say down here in the south. One even said, "What do you mean, who invented marriage? No one invented it; it just is." Well, someone came up with the idea of a man and a woman having an attraction to one another, falling in love with each other, and wanting to spend the rest of their lives together; who was that ingenious person?

The answer is God. God is the “Inventor” of marriage. God has created only two divine institutions – marriage and the church. They both belong to Him; He holds the “patent,” and His Word (Bible) is their respective instruction manual. No person(s), government, culture, or society has any right to redefine or reform the marriage relationship. It is a divine institution created by the supreme divine being (God) and is to operate by His divine design and according to His divine plan with no deviations!

Next, see that the marital union is the only relationship where sexual intimacy is good. God’s design provided the moral freedom necessary for a man and his wife to be *one flesh* (sexually intimate) and to do so without guilt or *shame*. Accordingly, the writer of Hebrews affirmed – *Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge* (Hebrews 13:4). The specific Greek language of this verse dictates that marriage between a man and a woman is the ONLY marriage that is *honorable* and *good* in God’s sight, and the sexual intimacy engaged in by that married husband & wife is the ONLY sexual expression & experience that is *undefiled*. In any other relationship and expression or experience, it is deviated, defiled, and dishonorable and will be *judged* accordingly by God.

These are Biblical absolutes that cannot be argued or denied, even though a segment of our society has no respect for God and no regard for His Word. They have rejected the Creator, and their focus is exclusively on the creature and his/her uninhibited & unrestricted feelings, desires, and needs. With

this better understanding of the institutional design let's move on to clarify the indiscriminate deviation.

The Indiscriminate Deviation

There are three primary references when we address the issue of homosexuality in Scripture.

*You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination (Leviticus 18:22). The Hebrew word translated *lie* refers to sexual relations.*

If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act (Leviticus 20:13).

A portion of Paul's New Testament reference - *For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper (Romans 1:26-28).*

The Bible identifies many different sins (idolatry, pride, deceit, thievery, fornication, adultery, slander, profanity, assault, murder, rape), and the list goes on. All of these are qualified as evil, but I have never found a reference in Scripture

to any specific sin with as many condemning adjectives as the sin of homosexuality. There are at least eight such words Scripture uses in these three verses (underlined) to qualify homosexuality as a perversion and deviation that God condemns:

ABOMINATION – abhorring, morally disgusting, and something to be loathed.

DETESTABLE – the same Hebrew word generally defined as an abominable act.

DEGRADING – behavior that is dishonorable, shameful, and disgraceful.

UNNATURAL – behavior against the natural design and order of nature for which God created it.

INDECENT – behavior that is shameful and unseemly, and improper.

ERROR – behavior that strays from the truth, departs from righteousness, and follows a way of deception and delusion.

DEPRAVED – disqualified, rejected, unapproved, and worthless.

NOT PROPER – that which is not allowable, not fitting, or unbecoming of godliness.

Paul further places the act of homosexuality into a more general category of persons who are *filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful* (Romans 1:29-31). That brings the list to 29! Show me another single sin in Scripture with that many adjectives to condemn its practice. How can anyone even remotely imply that the homosexual lifestyle is acceptable to God when this much Scripture clearly condemns its practice?!

Homosexuality is a deviation of Satanic doctrine that seeks to reform Godly sexuality into ungodly sensuality, promiscuity, and perversion; to take that which God created as good and make it evil, not only the expression & experience of sexual intimacy but the divine institution of marriage which appropriates it. Then, Satan presents that deviation in an acceptable form of *good, light, and sweet* so that culture & society will accept, embrace & accommodate the practice as *good* rather than *evil, dark, and bitter*. And there is where we are! We now have laws to protect it, policies to officiate it, and pressure on all of us to accommodate it. We live in a day when whatever culture legitimizes, government legalizes!

Why is the gay lifestyle a passionate playground for Satan's diabolical evil network?

First, it serves his compulsion for deity and dominion. Satan wanted to *make himself like the Most High* (Isaiah 14:14); and declared, *I am a god* (Ezekiel 28:9). That effort was to place

himself (the creature) on the same level as God (the Creator). He wanted the deity necessary to create his own human relationships and establish his own institution to accommodate those relationships. Since he exists as the enemy of God, working in hostility against God, he seeks to defy God by undoing what God has done (if he can) or deviating from that which God has designed. His targets are the two divine institutions God has established – marriage and the church.

So, Satan facilitates the deviation from natural man-woman relationships to man-man and woman-woman relationships. Then he solidifies those deviations by influencing government & policymaking to accommodate his institution – same-sex marriage, which deviates from God’s divine design.

Paul describes how this process unfolds - *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man...therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator* (Romans 1:21-25). If you are still counting, therein lie seven more condemning adjectives, bringing the total to 36!

Secondly, it serves his regret over his lost qualities. God’s verdict against Satan included – *your heart was lifted up because of your beauty* (Ezekiel 28:17); because it was said of

Satan – *you had the seal of perfection...perfect in beauty* (28:28,12). When he was *cast down as profane* (28:16), *destroyed* (28:16), and rendered as *terrifying and no more* (28:19), I think we might assume that he lost his beauty. Natural sexual expression, as God created it, is associated with physical & emotional attraction, and such attraction is associated with beauty. Since Satan may have lost his beauty, he desires to take the beauty out of God's natural expression, deviate from it, and enslave men & women in evil strongholds to the illicit passions of its perversion.

With a darkened & foolish heart, having exchanged the truth of God for a lie and now focused on serving the desires, passions, and needs of their bodies (creature), men could now see the beauty in other men, become attracted to that beauty, and begin sharing sexual expressions of that attraction with one another, even to the point of committing themselves to each other in same-sex marriage; women the same accordingly. Satan's corrupted beauty is symbolically regained as reflected in this distorted, perverted, and deviated exchange of same-sex attraction.

Let me stretch your thinking to consider another possibility. This kind of moral deviation also serves Satan's resistance to the advancement of God's Kingdom. Follow me a moment. As part of the curse that came from Adam & Eve's disobedience in the Garden, God said – *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel* (Genesis 3:15-16). In John's Revelation vision, he describes a *woman* (Israel) giving birth to a *child* (Christ Jesus) – *And the dragon*

(Satan) *was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus* (12:17). It is an expression of ultimate grace and mercy that God already had a plan in place from the beginning to reverse the penalty of sin (death) and make way for rebellious humanity to be reconciled back to God in proper fellowship. The *seed* of the woman who would *bruise* the serpent's heel (Satan) is a prophetic reference to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan has waged war against God's *offspring* ever since the Fall! In labeling Satan as the *father of lies*, Jesus said *he was a murderer from the beginning* (John 8:44). No sooner had Adam & Eve had their two sons, Cain and Abel, that Satan went into action with his aggressive efforts to stop the seed. Welling up with anger and resentment over his brother presenting a more worthy offering before the Lord than his own, Cain found *sin crouching at his door with its desire for him* (Genesis 4:7). Failing to overcome that hatred, *Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him* (4:8). Certainly, Cain exercised his own free will to carry out the act of murder. Still, it was the first demonstration of the evil that was now inherent in human nature, which Satan gleefully facilitated.

The covenants that God made with the Patriarchs of the Jewish people (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) affirmed that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through each of them. When the covenant was renewed with King David, it was stipulated that from his *seed* would come the Messiah, and from David's dynasty, a king would rule forever and forever. Satan tried every way he could to kill David and stop the *seed* because

Christ would carry out a plan of redemption that would save mankind from the death penalty of Satan's victory in the Garden. That Child would also do what Satan has always wanted; to rule and reign for all eternity.

Satan thought he had accomplished this ultimate goal when they nailed Jesus to the cross and buried Him in a tomb. But three days later, something happened that Satan wasn't counting on – Jesus rose from the dead, completing ultimate victory over death and making eternal life possible for all men and women who believe in Him as Savior & Lord. When God's people share the Gospel with lost persons, and they respond by trusting Christ as their Savior, the Kingdom of God on earth grows and expands – a spiritual procreation of believers birthing believers.

That is madness to Satan and his demonic force! The last thing they want is for God's Kingdom on earth to grow and flourish. How can they stop that apart from *blinding the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ* (II Corinthians 4:4)? Well, it might sound like a trivial effort, but if there are fewer people in the world, there are fewer people to evangelize. How could God's command to man and wife to *be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth* (Genesis 1:28) be thwarted and subdued? Men with men and women with women cannot *multiply* (procreate); it is biologically impossible even with transgender people. Same-sex attraction serves a dual purpose with Satan not only to defile, corrupt, and pervert God's divine institution of marriage but also to subdue the offspring that the divine institution is blessed to provide. Satan will stop at nothing to get the job done! Realizing their deviation cannot naturally authenticate a

“family,” there is a growing practice among same-sex couples to adopt a child or birth one through surrogate procedures. This, too, is a deviation from God’s divine plan, but many in society praise it because of their blind perception that those precious children are being loved and cared for in a home they deserve. No concern is given to the deviate influences that will likely shape those children's value systems and morals, leading to a replication of Satan’s diabolical alternate plan.

Allow me to stretch your thinking a bit further. In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul quoted from Genesis 2:24, where God established the divine institution of marriage, then he added this insightful statement – *This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church* (Ephesians 5:32). Being created in the image of God (relational), the relationship between God and His people is often characterized in Scripture as a husband and wife in marriage – *for your husband is your Maker* (Isaiah 54:5). The church is the Bride of Christ, and Jesus is the Bridegroom. One glorious event that awaits us in Heaven is *the marriage supper of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:9). I expanded this analogy in more detail in volume one.

The concept of same-sex marriage blatantly distorts this symbolism. For such a concept to be spiritually personified, the church would have to be the same as Christ, picturing a same-Christ marriage (even sounds distorted, doesn’t it?). But the church can no more be Christ than a bride can be a groom, or a groom can be a bride. The church cannot die to redeem itself. The church cannot prepare for itself a place in heaven. Only Christ can be the Bridegroom of the Church (Bride of Christ).

Same-sex marriage corrupts the image of Christ and His Church and distorts its divine presentation as God instituted it.

God designed that two persons who *corresponded* to each other would constitute a marriage relationship. That Hebrew term refers to opposite genders (male and female) that serve as counterparts to naturally engage in every way physically, emotionally, and spiritually to *become one flesh*. Same-sex marriage can never fulfill that divine order. Same-sex marriage can never mirror the relationship between Christ and the Church; therefore, it represents a deviation of Satan's strategy to distort and destroy God's naturally created order.

Some vehemently defy the things I am teaching. They would render these thoughts homophobic, bigotry, hate language, judging, unloving, no compassion, etc. So, let's look at the lines of defense they often use to justify that criticism and the LGBT lifestyle.

The Illegitimate Defense

There are primarily two lines of defense used to justify the homosexual lifestyle and same-sex marriage.

First is the birth defense. Most of those who practice the "gay" lifestyle insist they were born that way and have no choice but to engage in what they are naturally inclined or oriented to be and do. The gay world leaped for joy when an American genetic scientist named Dean H. Hamer announced in 1993 that he and his team had discovered a "gay gene" (Xq28) linking men toward a natural tendency for homosexuality. Various mainstream media agencies reported that Hamer

demonstrated strong evidence to support X-linked inheritance of homosexuality and that a genetic component existed to sexual orientation.¹⁸ A later study that precisely duplicated Hamer's research found no X-linked gene contributing to male sexual orientation.

In reporting the find,¹⁹ *The New York Times* emphasized that “the results have yet to be confirmed by other laboratories and the chromosomal region implicated.” They further “warned against over-interpreting the work, or in taking it to mean anything as simplistic as the ‘gay gene’ had been found. The researchers emphasized that they do not yet have a gene isolated but merely know the rough location of where the gene or genes may sit amid the vast welter of human DNA. Until they have the gene proper, scientists said they have no way of knowing how it contributes to sexual orientation, how many people carry it, or how often carriers are likely to become gay due to bearing the gene.” The article quoted Dr. Hamer himself saying, “Sexual orientation is too complex to be determined by a single gene.”

In its documentary,²⁰ “The ‘Gay Gene’ Debate,” PBS showed Dr. Hamer saying, “Rarely before have so many reacted so loudly to so little.”²¹ A subsequent report by PBS concludes, “There is no single gene responsible for a person being gay or a

¹⁸ Christina Nguyen, *The Embryo Project Encyclopedia: A Linkage Between DNA Markers on the X Chromosome and Male Sexual Orientation (1993)*, by Dean H. Hamer and Charles A. Thomas, April 12, 2017, www.embryo.asu.edu.

¹⁹ Natalie Angier, *Report Suggests Homosexuality Is Linked to Genes*, July 16, 1993, www.nytimes.com.

²⁰ Frontline, *The “Gay Gene” Debate*, 1995, www.pbs.org.

²¹ Nskiam Akpan, PBS News Hour, *There Is No “Gay Gene.” There is no “Straight Gene.” Sexuality Is Just Complex, Study Confirms*, August 29, 2019, www.pbs.org.

lesbian.” The article cited the results of the largest genetic investigation of sexuality ever conducted on nearly a half-million subjects by ²²*Science Journal*. It said, “the report finds that human DNA cannot predict who is gay or heterosexual. Sexuality cannot be pinned down by biology, psychology, or life experiences because human sexual attraction is decided by all these factors.”

According to a report by the ²³Independent, “Paradoxically, Dr. Hamer does not himself believe in a gay gene despite trying more than any other scientist to prove the existence of a genetic, and therefore inherited, component to sexual orientation.” They quote Dr. Hamer saying, “This does not mean we have found a gay gene.” Yet, mainstream media proclaimed the news in 1993 as a revolutionary breakthrough to discredit homosexuality as a learned (behavioral), environmental lifestyle of choice.

Information gleaned from these various studies reveals several essential factors that fundamentally debunk the claims of the famous “Gay Gene.” (1) the same gene is not found in most all other homosexual men; (2) no such gene is found in lesbian and bisexual persons; (3) the same gene is found in many heterosexual persons; and (4) other researchers surprisingly isolated the same gene in fruit flies...yes, it said, “fruit flies!” So, the gay gene appears, for the most part, to be wishful fantasy!

²² Science Journal, *Large-Scale GWAS Reveals Insights into the Genetic Architecture of Same-Sex Sexual Behavior*, August 30, 2019, www.science.org.

²³ Steve Connor, Independent News, *The “Gay Gene” Is Back on the Scene*, November 1, 1995, www.independent.co.uk.

The greatest challenge to the birth defense is the divine one. We have cited several Biblical references that strongly and clearly condemn the homosexual lifestyle. That begs the question, “Is it consistent with the holy standard and righteous character of God to create someone from birth with an innate sexual orientation toward a lifestyle He so strongly condemns in His Word?” To insist that a gay person is born that way is to maintain the answer to that question as, “Yes!” That answer accuses God of being inconsistent with His infallible Word, incongruent with His holy character, and incapable of justly rendering His sovereign governance over creation. To the contrary, God is perfect, and it is impossible for Him to make such a blatant error or enact such a careless infraction. The answer to the question is an absolute “No!” God would never create a person from birth with an innate sexual orientation toward a lifestyle that He so strongly condemns because He is incapable of such blatant inconsistency.

Having said that, an accurate perspective is worth noting - all of us are born homosexuals! I’ll give you a moment to get over that shocking statement. Consider that just like all of us are born fornicators, adulterers, murderers, thieves, liars, bullies, etc., we are all born homosexual because – *just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned* (Romans 5:12). The sin nature of Adam is inherent in all human beings across the generations of time. Therefore, all of us are born with a sinful nature with all the potential and propensity for any sinful perversion and deviation you can think of. You may not like it or be willing to admit it, but the “old man” of sin every believer still wrestles with every moment of every day holds the

potential to commit any sin you can name. If it weren't for the indwelling presence & power of the Holy Spirit in your life and the grace of God leading & guiding you in all truth & righteousness, it is no telling the depths of sin you or any of us might otherwise sink to.

So, yes, people are born that way; that is why Jesus declared, *you must be born again* (John 3:3). The first and natural birth is inherent with sin, and the penalty of sin - death. Just because we are born a thief doesn't dictate that we have no choice and must live as a thief. Just because we are born liars doesn't mean we have to live as liars. Just because we are born a murderer doesn't mean we have to live as serial killers. Jesus declared *that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, so do not marvel when I say to you that you must be born again* (John 3:6-7). The spiritual birth remedies the sinful propensities of our fleshly birth and all its sinful natures, including all sexual deviations (homosexuality, transgenderism, fornication, adultery, bestiality, rape, incest). When we are born again, we are given a new nature that enables us to choose God's Word, will, and ways over the will & nature of our sinful flesh. That means all sin is a choice, period!

²⁴Gabriel Pagan, once a practicing homosexual, shares his testimony – *"I accepted Jesus Christ in my driveway and the Holy Spirit fell on me like fire which brought me through a series of encounters...I told the Lord that I would never sleep with another man if I had His presence like that forever. Seven years later and I'm free from being bound to same-sex attractions. I'm happy and living a wild life of adventure*

²⁴ Gabriel Pagan, Changed Movement, www.changedmovement.com.

following Jesus Christ. Today I live knowing that what once brought me the most shame is completely taken away by a God who didn't avoid my pain or questions. I serve as a pastor at my local church and lead people through inner healing sessions. My greatest joy is seeing Jesus crush unbelief by stepping into people's pain and watching them encounter the God that kept me from ending my own life. I was addicted and now I'm free. I was depressed and now I'm full of joy. I was full of hate and now I'm moved by love." Gabriel's testimony reflected his addictive condition when God gave him over to a depraved mind to be enslaved by those deviated passions. But once coming to an end to himself and surrendering to Christ, Jesus broke those chains and freed Gabriel to be the man God created him to be. His story is just one of the thousands whose broken lives have been changed by the power of God at the foot of the cross, where each has been born again.

The Biblical Disclaimer

Men & women who practice the gay lifestyle are among those who Paul qualified as – *professing to be wise, they became fools...exchanging the truth of God for a lie* (Romans 1:22,25). Their “scholarly” disclaimer to challenge condemning Scripture follows several erroneous paths.

One follows along the line of what they deem non-applicable Old Testament law. Pro-gay activists insist that the verses we cited earlier from Leviticus are tenants of the “old law” that no longer apply in today's world and culture. Their reason being that Jesus came to change the old law and replace it with a new law that is void of condemnation & judgment, and rich in grace,

mercy, love, and acceptance. Accordingly, everyone should simply love the way Jesus loves, leave the judging to God, and accept everyone just like they are with no reservations.

Persons who insist on this line of defense fail to note the obvious statement & warning of Jesus - *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."* (Matthew 5:17-19). So, Jesus clearly declares that He did not abolish the old law, not even a single letter or stroke of it! He also warned that anyone who attempts to *annul* (disregard, disprove, or diminish) any part of God's commands in the old law, and teaches others to do the same, will be least in the kingdom. The *least* a person can be in the kingdom of God is not to be there at all – *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals* (I Corinthians 6:9).

Does that mean everyone who has ever committed fornication, adultery, or even an act of homosexuality will spend eternity in hell? The answer is a qualified, "No." The blood of Jesus shed on the cross covered any & all sin, and the grace of God to forgive covers any & all sin that is genuinely repented of (confessed and abandoned). The nature of these acts

denotes a general lifestyle, not necessarily a single instance or even a short, limited period of sinful rebellion in a person's life.

In volume one of this series I discussed the unique meanings of the Greek word, PISTEWO (to faith), and its three components: belief, commitment & lifestyle. A commitment is made based on a belief, and a lifestyle demonstrates (lives out) that commitment. We practice (lifestyle) whatever we believe (doctrine). We either believe & practice the ways of God's Word, or we believe & practice the doctrines of demons. Lifestyle demonstrates a determined belief, a personal commitment, and a consistent practice of those things. So, Paul is referring to those who openly practice a consistent & continuing lifestyle of fornication, adultery, or homosexuality, disregarding God's condemnation of those sinful practices. Such persons bear no fruit of genuine salvation. They will therefore *not inherit the kingdom of God* unless they repent and abandon their sinful lifestyle in favor of God's Word, will, and ways trusting Christ as their Savior & Lord.

Pro-gay defenders also fail to acknowledge & understand the three categorical applications of the old law. The Judicial Law regulated the civil practices of the ancient Jews and was applied exclusively to them. Many of its tenants, however, still influence our laws today, such as those regarding lawsuits, business practices, and financial interactions. The Sacrificial Law regulated the practices & protocol of the Levitical priesthood in the worship and sacrificial system of the ancient Tabernacle and Temple. The Sacrificial Law ended when Jesus *died once for all* (Romans 6:10; I Peter 3:18), becoming the ultimate and final sacrifice for all sin, for all people, for all time.

There is no longer a need to sacrifice animals at the altar because Jesus shed His blood on the cross. That act of redemption finalized the atonement of sin for all mankind. Its benefit, however, is based on a person's willingness to accept it by choice through a personal commitment of their life to Christ.

Left remaining is the Moral Law. Although God's redemptive work has altered the penalties of death associated with the Moral Law through Christ (that is what Jesus came to *fulfill*; He paid the death penalty on the cross), the Moral Law otherwise remains and still applies. *You shall not kill* still applies. *You shall not commit adultery* still applies. *You shall not bear false witness* still applies. And *you shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female* still applies, whether the gay community likes that truth or not! What God determined was an abomination and detestable act thousands of years ago is still an abomination and detestable act today.

If one is to insist the moral code of the old law is no longer applicable today, they encounter several insurmountable problems. In Leviticus 18, where homosexuality is condemned, incest, adultery, and bestiality are also condemned. In Leviticus 20, where homosexuality is condemned, witchcraft, slander, robbery, and profaning the name of God are also condemned. Based on their argument, all these prohibitions would also have to be discarded as equally non-applicable and that suggestion is obviously absurd!

So much for Old Testament disclaimers. What about the New Testament? References to homosexuality are made in various places in the New Testament, but none as direct as

Paul's handling of the issue in Romans 1:18-32. Since it is the most pointed treatment of the subject in Scripture, it is no surprise that it is also the one most challenged.

Various pro-gay "scholars" insist that Paul's writing was directed at the pagan practices of idol worship common in the Roman culture during the mid-50s A.D., some of which involved various sexual rituals, including widespread homosexual practices. They insist Paul was not referring to two men or two women who were genuinely engaged in a committed, monogamous relationship of true love & companionship. Instead, Paul was addressing the promiscuous and flagrant homosexual behavior that was lustful, lewd, uninhibited, and unrestrained such as what might be seen among temple prostitutes flaunting their trade even in various public arenas.

While it is essential to consider all the contextual information surrounding a Biblical passage, we must be careful we don't allow the context to discredit the divine truth inherent in a passage which doctrines of demons and deceitful spirits strive feverishly to do.

In this case, sexuality in Roman culture had less to do with gender & orientation and more to do with social and political male dominance. If a man conquered another person sexually, whether a woman or a man (and in many acts, a young boy), he was considered superior in dominance and therefore more respected in that pagan culture as a strong leader. Although far less prominent, if a woman so conquered another woman, she

was also seen as superior despite the denigrated role women held in many ancient cultures.

So, the argument goes, since Paul was addressing a religiously idolatrous, socio-economic, and political practice that was widely respected & accepted in the ancient culture and not tied in any way to true romantic love & affection; modern same-sex attraction is not something Paul could have even had in mind, much less condemn as immoral & sinful. Therefore, the modern gay lifestyle is not the focus of Romans 1 and is perfectly honorable. Accordingly, the church and society should embrace this lifestyle with complete acceptance and accommodation. It is a normal expression of human love covered and enriched by God's grace, mercy, and blessing.

You won't have to surf long or far before finding numerous activists, writers, educators, medical professionals, psychologists, even preachers, pastors, and theologians who will *tickle your ears* (II Timothy 4:3) with this kind of corrupt narrative and erroneous exegetical teaching on homosexuality. You will especially find them among practicing homosexuals who need this interpretation to justify their behaviors and lifestyles. Others need this interpretive application to justify their openness and accommodation to the LGBT community, especially churches. The judiciary and legislative bodies of our government need it to justify laws & policies in forcing compliance within the religious institutions of the land. Putting a non-condemning spin on Romans 1 serves tremendously in promoting & perpetuating the whole LGBT agenda in many ways across our nation and world.

Let me see if I can break this process down systematically. It starts with an obvious condemnation of a particular behavior or lifestyle in the Scripture, in this case, homosexuality. As the pro-gay activists quickly point out, an observable context is part of the historical background of the passage. Stubbornly determined to go to any means possible to justify the behavior or lifestyle, a phase of obstinate conjecture is applied to the context until some sensible-sounding ornate compromise is fashioned. The result is an obscene corruption of divine truth.

Since the litmus test focuses on the context of the passage, it must be consistently applied across the board to be valid, and that is where this interpretation and application get into big trouble. Let's take the same systematic sequence and play it out with other prominent condemnations identified in Romans 1. Paul provides a list - *being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful* (Romans 1:29-31). We could illustrate with any item from this list, but let's focus on just murder.

Religious idolatry and male sex dominance weren't the only cultural practices in ancient Rome. The ruling emperor during the period in which Paul penned the book of Romans was Nero, ruling from A.D. 37-68. ²⁵History reveals that this ruthless, power-hungry leader murdered his stepbrother, his mother, his first wife, and allegedly his second wife by kicking her in her

²⁵ Owen Jarus & Jonathan Gordon, *Emperor Nero: Facts & Biography*, April 28, 2022, www.livescience.com.

pregnant abdomen. He slaughtered many Christians, accusing them of starting the Great Fire of Rome in A.D. 64, which some historians believe he started himself to rebuild Rome according to his wishes, including an elaborate presidential palace complex. His reign ended with his suicide in June A.D. 68.²⁶ Reports circulated that he seduced married women and young boys, castrated & married a male slave, and enjoyed wandering the streets mutilating & murdering innocent people at random during the night.

So, we have the obvious condemnation and the observable context established. Suppose you are a murderer or believe the practice of murder is acceptable to some people in some situations, and you need to justify that position. In that case, you must enter a phase of obstinate conjecture which would similarly follow. When Paul mentions murder in his list of condemnations, he wasn't referring to someone who had a legitimate reason to kill someone; instead, he was writing against the historical background of the serial killer Nero and his ruthless slaughter of innocent people. The ornate beauty of that fashioned compromise puts murder in a whole different light so that now it should be understood that if someone has genuinely offended you, mistreated you, or is engaged in some way you don't agree with, it is acceptable for you to murder them, and society should agree and accommodate it. Government should even enact laws and policies to protect cold-blooded murder as legal for those reasons. I know what you are thinking; that is the most ludicrous, absurd thing anyone has ever come up with, and you are right. That systematic

²⁶ PBS, *The Roman Empire in the First Century: Nero*, www.pbs.org

process results in an obscene corruption of divine truth that makes no sense to anyone except those who need it to.

If you insist on using this flawed rationale to justify homosexuality, you must also consistently apply it to the rest of Paul's Romans 1 list. When you do, murder becomes acceptable if you have a good reason for it, as would being deceitful, slandering someone, or children disobeying their parents. With this line of reasoning, hating God is acceptable if you have a good reason to hate God. The process and the conclusion are radical insanities, yet it is being carried out in our modern culture every day, and millions are buying into this deviating logic.

Satan has made more inroads to "kill, steal & destroy" people's lives through sexual deviation & perversion than any other kind of stronghold, even alcohol & substance abuse and addiction. We even have a psychological designation now referred to as "sexual addiction," currently estimated to describe up to 30 million people in the United States. Sexuality is one of the most basic physical functions of human life. Satan works overtime to distort, pervert, and deviate from its God-instituted arena for experience & expression – a man and a woman in a marriage with each other. Sexual experience & expression in any different relational arena is outside the bounds of God's institutional design and is clearly identified in Scripture as sin.

While we have focused on homosexuality so far in this chapter, ²⁷Gallup's latest update on lesbian, gay, bisexual, or

²⁷ Jeffrey M. Jones, *Gallup News, LGBT Identification Rises to 5.6% in Latest U.S. Estimate*, February 24, 2021, www.news.gallup.com.

transgender identification finds only 5.6% of U.S. adults identifying as LGBT. Out of the nearly 337 million people currently reported by the U.S. Census population assessment for 2021, that only accounts for some 18.9 million. We see then that culture and policy are pressured to bow to the demands of the militant minority.

Those are not the only sexual sins God's Word identifies. Scripture also includes these other common practices in American and world culture:

FORNICATION – sex with anyone to whom you are not married. Numerous studies indicate up to 95% of Americans have engaged in pre-marital sex.

ADULTERY – a married person having sex with anyone single or married to someone else, upwards to 40% of the U.S. married population depending on results from multiple studies & research.

CO-HABITATION – living with someone as if you were married to them, engaging in sexual relations with that person, but never entering the commitment of institutional marriage. Again, depending on numerous studies, this now represents 48% of all U.S. couples; 78% of those 18-29 see “living together” as perfectly acceptable in today's changing culture.

All three of these behaviors are sexual deviations because they violate God's institutional standard - *For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own*

vessel (body) in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). They also distort the image Scripture paints of the marriage relationship as reflecting our relationship with God. Not holding to the one and only true God and going after other gods, as the ancient Hebrews were notably guilty, is equivalent to spiritual adultery. Pretending to be in a relationship with Christ or going through the motions associated with that relationship without making a personal commitment of life to Him is symbolically equivalent to “living together” without being married. The diabolical twists these deviations create are quite apparent when we step back and take an honest perspective from the Biblical view.

The Greek word Paul uses in this text that is translated as *sexual immorality* is PORNEIA, where we get our English word “pornography.” It refers to any form of sexual deviation from God’s institutional design. That includes fornication, adultery, cohabitation, homosexuality, transgenderism, and other sexual deviations and perversions. These things constitute *impurity*, which means morally unclean, corrupt, and defiled.

I heard a pastor & preacher on television recently declare that nowhere in the New Testament did Jesus ever mention homosexuality despite it being an assumed practice in the ancient culture in which He lived and ministered. This implies that it must not have been a sin or Jesus would have confronted

and condemned it as such. In fact, Jesus did mention it in a Greek catch-all word for all forms of sexual immorality – *And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery* (Matthew 19:9). Jesus used two Greek words in this verse. The first one is *immorality* which translates the Greek word – PORNEIA as just defined. It is a word that characterizes a broad range of sexually deviant behaviors, including homosexuality. The other word Jesus uses is MOICHAO, which in this context refers to *adultery*. Do you think Jesus would apply any less exception if a married woman discovered her husband was committing adultery with another man as his bisexual partner? It would be ludicrous to suggest so!

The point is mute and invalid. Jesus also didn't specifically reference bestiality, pedophilia, or incest. Does that mean Jesus approved of these deviations and they are acceptable to indulge in? Of course not! Jesus would never condone anything His Father included in the Law as an abomination and detestable act. Since Jesus is the third Person of the God-head Trinity, He is part of the "breath" that inspired *ALL* of Scripture (II Timothy 3:16), which certainly mentions homosexuality as addressed by Paul and John in their New Testament writings.

In another passage, Paul wrote - *the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body...Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "the two shall become one flesh." But the one who*

joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body (1 Corinthians 6:12-20). In the previous passage, Paul admonishes us to control our bodies with sanctification & honor; here he further admonishes us to glorify God in our bodies. We cannot do either when we experience & express sexual relations outside God's institutional design. As such, we are practicing *sexual immorality, impurity and lustful passions*, to which God will bring chastisement and judgment – *for fornicators and adulterers God will judge* (Hebrews 13:4).

Another form of rising deviation in our culture is the current raging phenomenon called transgender identity. It is broadly defined as a person who “identifies” with the opposite gender from that they were “assigned at birth.” These individuals dress and behave as the gender they identify with, even to the point of subjecting their bodies to hormone therapy and transitional surgery (essentially genital mutilation). Nearly every aspect of American culture, from the government to the corporate world, seems to have gone radically insane to accept and accommodate this deviation as part of today's “woke culture.”

Gender-related pronouns have been banned in the communication of various corporate entities. As a mere example, a friend who works for a nationwide and well-known grocery chain shared with me recently that his company just released a 26-page memo requiring their store employers to no

longer address customers as “Ma’am” or “Sir.” Many retail establishments now allow men who identify as a woman to use a public woman’s bathroom and vice-versa. Target stores were among the first to declare their public restrooms as “gender-inclusive” in 2016, allowing a person to use the designated restroom of their chosen “identity.”

²⁸On May 19, 2021, Judge Roseann Ketchmark, U.S. District Judge of the Western District Court of Missouri, ruled against the College of the Ozarks, a Christian college in Point Lookout, Missouri, that had sued President Joe Biden’s administration over its transgender policies declaring that students have free and unrestricted access to the restrooms & locker rooms of their choosing, placing persons of one gender in the other gender’s designated dormitory. The Christian college asserted such policies violated their religious freedom rights. In rendering the decision, the Judge basically declared that the school’s religious freedom rights no longer apply to specific policies regardless of their clear connection to Scriptural principles. So much for the Constitution!

From three spiritual perspectives, let’s take a closer look at this additional morally explosive and politically charged issue.

God’s Standard

One obvious and precise verse addresses this practice – *A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an*

²⁸ Mike Cullinan, SBJ Your Business Authority, *Judge Denies C of O’s Injunction Request in Federal Lawsuit*, May 20, 2021, www.sbj.net.

abomination to the Lord your God (Deuteronomy 22:5). Those who refute the applicable validity of this verse use the same argument as those we discussed earlier in this chapter who discount Old Testament teaching concerning the deviation of homosexuality; that is, Jesus came to eradicate the old Law making it no longer applicable.

God's Supremacy

God is higher than any man, thought, standard, or level of consciousness. Not only is God supreme, but His ways are supreme – *My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts* (Isaiah 55:9). We cannot act in any manner bigger than God; we cannot think in any way bigger than God. God is supreme.

Moses told us – *God's work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and upright is He* (Deuteronomy 32:4)...*God has said, and will He not do it? God has spoken, and will He not fulfill it?* (Numbers 23:19). Paul tells us that God's will is *good and acceptable and perfect* (Romans 12:2). The Psalmist proclaimed – *God's way is perfect* (18:30). John declared – *God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all* (I John 1:5). Jesus affirmed to us – *the heavenly Father is perfect* (Matthew 5:48). God Himself stated – *I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me...My counsel shall stand* (Isaiah 46:9-10). These passages affirm to us the simple fact that God is perfect in every way, always, and is absolutely incapable of error or mistake.

God's Sovereignty

The sovereignty of God has been defined to mean that God has total control to do whatever He pleases, whenever He pleases, in whatever way He pleases, involving whoever He pleases. He doesn't need anyone's permission, nor does He owe anyone an explanation for it! In other words, God is in complete control!

That means God has complete control over creation – *He made them male and female* (Genesis 1:31). God has complete control over the miracle of birth. Biology may explain the process of human fertilization & reproduction, but it cannot explain the miraculous dynamic at work that makes those things happen. Some secular scientists concede it is by the power of a "higher or intelligent design" (a humanistic shortfall of calling that power "God.").

The Psalmist clarified it quite simply - *For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them* (Psalms 139:13-16). God is the sovereign Creator; His supreme power alone provides the miracle of human life, and He intricately designed the sole male and female genders as a representative symbol of His relational image – *For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth*

through the woman; and all things originate from God (I Corinthians 11:12).

Why is transgender identity a deviation and perversion from this created design? I would suggest three reasons.

First, it assaults God's divine character as being imperfect. It alleges God of having error. It accuses God of making a mistake in the miracle of birth. God created male and female. God did not create quasi-male or quasi-female. God did not create "gender neutral" or some "binary" form. God is holy, righteous, and perfect. God is incapable of error. God cannot make a mistake, and when His miracle power is demonstrated & manifested in conception and birth results in a boy child or a girl child, it is no mistake. It is precisely what God intended for that child to be, and He has a specific will, plan, and purpose for that child, which their physical gender specifically serves to fulfill.

God spoke through the prophet Isaiah saying, *Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker...will the clay say to the potter, "What are you doing?" or the thing you are making say, "He has no hands?"* (Isaiah 45:9). Those who are guilty of such assault God declares – *You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, that what is made should say to its maker, "He did not make me;" or what is formed say to him who formed it, "He has no understanding?"* (Isaiah 29:16). Did you catch the part which stated, *turn things around?* Reforming evil into good and good into evil! Did you also notice the part about the *clay* being *equal* to the *potter*? The

doctrine of deity & dominion, to be like the Most High God. See how it all plays out?

“But that’s Old Testament. The old law doesn’t apply anymore!” insists the argument. What does the New Testament say, then? – *For who resists God’s will? On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, “Why did you make me like this,” will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay...?* (Romans 9:19-21). A person who claims their transgender identity (in opposition to their actual birth gender) is the making of God is assaulting God’s holy & righteous character and accusing God of imperfection and error. *Woe* is used again to describe the consequences of judgment and chastisement that follow such rebellion. Destitution, destruction, and death (kill, steal & destroy) typically follow the lives of those determined to live this deviate path.

Secondly, it acclaims man’s deviated creation. It establishes a man or a woman as his or her own creator (doctrine of deity & dominion). It insists, “I am my own creator; I will decide what gender I am; I will decide my own maleness or femaleness according to my own desires.” To say, “I was assigned the male gender at birth, but now I identify as female,” is the same as saying God made me be born a boy, but I have decided God made a mistake; I am actually a woman trapped inside a man’s body, so I will correct God’s error.”

This acclaim hints at the same argument homosexuals give; that a person is born this way and has no choice but to live and behave accordingly. As we noted earlier, it is against the holy &

righteous character of God to create someone from birth with a pre-determined orientation that would force them to live in opposition to the commands of His Word and in a way His Word condemns.

Finally, it asserts Satan's diabolical commission. It serves the fundamental strategy of Satan to reverse & reform good into evil and evil into good; to bring about the results of his efforts to kill, steal and destroy the people of God's creation; and to cast the lives of people into the suffering woes of sinful strongholds and God's judgment & wrath against sexual sin.

This transgender phenomenon was practically unheard of in our country just 50 years ago. The "female impersonators" and "drag queens" of Vegas and Bourbon Street were about the extent of it. Even then, their displays were discrete and restricted to venues protected from the general public. Today, discretion is lifted, and people decide to "come out" and flaunt their new identity in grand display everywhere. What has facilitated this radical cultural shift? I think four things are worth mentioning.

Pornography

²⁹A Duke University study in 2019 revealed that pornography is the first point of contact with trans identities, communities, and subcultures. Many in the LGBT community confess their transition into their deviated lifestyle began with a curiosity and fascination with pornography that depicted their

²⁹ Duke University Press, *Trans Pornography: An Issue of TSQ, Transgender Studies Quarterly*, May 2020, www.dukepress.edu.

chosen orientation, and it continues to fuel their sexual appetites and activities.

Accordingly, transgender porn has become one of the most popular genres of pornography.³⁰ One porn industry site reported that as of 2017, based on the frequency of online searches, trans porn was most popular in a list of the Top 25 Countries, with the United States in the ranks.³¹ Gamelink, an online porn provider, reported that its sales of transgender porn increased 14% in a single year, accounting for 10% of its overall revenue.

The fast & free internet pages of hardcore pornography accessible through every domestic & commercial electronic device have shaped the culture's acceptance and promotion of sexual deviation and perversion. It is one of the most influential portals through which demonic strongholds of sexual addiction are obtained in people's homes and lives.

Psychology

The Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders used by the American Psychiatric Association included Gender Disorder as an official mental disorder until it was renamed Gender Dysphoria beginning with the³² Fifth Edition (DSM-5) in 2013 because of the stigma associated with the term

³⁰ Porn Hub Insights, *Transgender Porn Searches*, September 13, 2017, www.pornhub.com (caution sexual content accessible).

³¹ Chris Morris, CNBC Adult Entertainment, *Transgender Porn Quickly Growing in Popularity*, August 27, 2015, www.cnbc.com.

³² American Psychiatric Association, *Gender Dysphoria Diagnosis*, 2013, www.psychiatry.org.

“disorder.” It is rare to find treatment in secular psychology for gender dysphoria as a mental disorder. For the most part, counseling and therapy now involve supporting the person through a “normal transition” to their chosen identity, including hormone therapy and sex-change surgery. Only in cases with underlying psychological conditions like bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, etc., is psychotherapy even considered. Essentially, secular psychology mostly sees transsexualism as a normal choice of human behavior for some that simply need guidance and transitional support for the best possible mental health & stability.

Performance

The entertainment industry has promoted the cultural acceptance and promotion of sexually alternative lifestyles, including transgender identity, using Hollywood movies and television to present the LGBT lifestyles as normal, acceptable, and even preferred behavior for decades. The mainstream news media in our nation proliferates the LGBT agenda. Every form of performance and entertainment media presents the LGBT lifestyle as normal and acceptable.

Unfortunately, we are accustomed to seeing gay couples on prime-time television engaged in affectionate and sexual exchanges in movies, television series, and commercial advertising. We are now beginning to see the same push for transsexualism. The Netflix docu-movie, ³³“I Am Woman,” about the life & career of Helen Reddy, features a transsexual Australian actor named Jordan Raskopoulos as the transgender

³³ IMDb, *I Am Woman*, 2019, www.imdb.com

nanny for Reddy's children. There is no evidence that Helen Reddy actually had such a caretaker for her children in real life, but it was Hollywood's way of "sneaking in" their cultural crusade antics. We failed to notice when even the innocent and humorous "Mrs. Doubtfire" subtly interjected the cross-dressing deviation in an entertaining way.

The documentary ³⁴"Out of the Shadows" provides a historical perspective of how Hollywood and the entertainment industry have used their powerful persuasions to brainwash American minds into acceptance of those values and principles that violate God's expectations in cultural life. It is a medium through which Satan has gained massive success!

Politics

Integrated into our nation's society and political partisanship is a growing radical segment that supports & promotes sexually alternative lifestyles. It is actively involved in enacting laws & policies that legalize the LGBT agenda at both state & federal levels, including the channeling of your tax dollars to fund it.

³⁵Initially, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act prohibited discrimination on various grounds for any "health program or activity" that receives any federal financial assistance. Section 1557 is only a few paragraphs in length and very general, leaving its interpretation open and vague. How the section is interpreted and enforced has been assigned to the

³⁴ IMDb, *Out of the Shadows*, 2020, www.imbd.com.

³⁵ Louise Norris, *Does Health Insurance Cover Transgender Health Care?* June 23, 2021, www.verywellhealth.com.

Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). The Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations have wrestled with these agencies and the courts to clarify those protections. Still, in May of 2021, the Biden administration issued a notice explaining that the OCR would again prohibit discrimination by health care entities based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Don't miss the gravity of this measure – civil rights czars committed to radical diversity & inclusivity will determine what your tax dollars will go to support!

These changes have led to a broad range of coverage under approved plans for transgender treatments and surgery for more than an estimated 1.4 million transgender Americans. When those covered are provided health insurance through federally funded premiums, your tax dollars under the ACA pay for these surgeries and related treatments.³⁶ By 2018, more than 4,000 “gender affirmation” (sex-change) surgeries were performed in America since 2000, with almost 1,300 between 2012-2014.³⁷ According to the 2019 Plastic Surgery Statistics by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, around 11,000 gender confirmation or sex reassignment surgeries have been performed in the United States, creating an expected compound annual growth rate in the market of 14.4% through 2027.

³⁶ Tim Mullaney, CNBC Modern Medicine, *Employee Health Insurance, Obamacare Make Sex Change A New Reality for 1.4 Million Americans*, March 27, 2018, www.cnbc.com.

³⁷ Grand View Research, *U.S. Sex Reassignment Surgery Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report by Gender Transition (Male to Female, Female to Male), and Segment Forecasts, 2020-2027*, www.grandviewresearch.com.

Democratic President Joe Biden promised on the campaign trail to make passing the LGBTQ rights legislation known as the H.R.5 Equality Act a top priority, hoping to sign what would be a landmark civil rights law within 100 days of his presidency. ³⁸The act passed the 117th Congress in February 2021, mainly along party lines with a 224-206 Democratic majority. The bill prohibits an individual from being denied access to a shared facility, including a restroom, a locker room, and a dressing room, per the individual's gender identity. At the time of this writing, the Bill was still under consideration and debate in the Senate.

As Vice President under Barack Obama, Biden was a leading voice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer rights. His position echoes that of his Vice President, Kamala Harris, and the Democrat platform at large. In a town hall meeting during his 2020 Presidential campaign, Biden responded to a question from the mother of an 8-year-old transgender girl about how he would protect her child's rights. In the response, Biden stated - "The idea that an eight-year-old, a 10-year-old, decides, you know, I decide I want to be transgender. That's what I think I'd like to be; it would make my life a lot easier—there should be zero discrimination." Pause a moment and let this sobering reality sink in - this kind of radical thinking is part of what can get a person elected to the American presidency these days!

It doesn't take a degree in psychology to understand that an 8-year-old pre-adolescent child does not have the rational &

³⁸ Congress, *Summary: H.R.5 – Equality Act – 117th Congress (2021-2022)*, www.congress.gov.

emotional capacity to understand the psychological complexities of their sexuality or sexual preferences (nor does a Supreme Court Justice have to be a biologist to know the difference between a man and a woman). This is nothing but radical evil assaulting our children and overtaking our nation's political spectrum, for which the Democratic Party applauds and fuels. They are literally "hell-bent" on pushing through these satanic ideologies and agendas.

³⁹The White House released a statement on June 15, 2022, announcing that President Biden would sign a historic executive order advancing LGBTQI+ Equality during the annual Pride Month (June). It appears to be the strategy of modern presidents that if they can't get the legislative bodies to pass their agendas, a swift stroke of the pen on an executive order serves as the power tool to force their demands. This executive order protects the right of young children and teenagers to "come out" without restriction or discrimination regarding their sexual urges, desires & demands. It is radical evil promoted by deceitful spirits through the doctrine of deviation permeating our government and culture.

That alarming revelation demands that before we leave this dark chapter, we must focus on one more sexual deviation that is tightening its grip on our nation and world. As we have generally defined it, deviation is any move away from God's Word, will, and ways regarding any behavior, choice, or lifestyle. Why has our focus centered on sexual deviation? The

³⁹ The White House Briefing Room, *FACT SHEET: President Biden to Sign Historic Executive Order Advancing LGBTQI+ Equality During Pride Month*, June 15, 2022, www.whitehouse.gov.

reason is not only because of its overwhelming presence & influence in our modern culture but for another more sinister factor.

Paul tells us that in God's Heaven there are – *things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him* (I Corinthians 2:9). That is because God is so much more than our human, finite minds can even begin to comprehend. But Paul tells us further – *God reveals (these things to us) through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God* (2:10). The Greek word translated *depths* refers to extensive depths or very deep caverns. Scientists tell us that the deepest fathoms of the sea lie in the Pacific Ocean between Guam and the Philippines, where the Mariana Trench sets 35,814 feet below sea level and is believed to be the deepest point on earth. Paul used the same Greek word when he wrote – *Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!* (Romans 11:33). We have no problem understanding this revelation because we hear God say - *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, declares the LORD; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts* (Isaiah 55:8-9). Even though the Holy Spirit enables us to reach so far into the deep thoughts of God, there are depths of God and heights of God that we will never know this side of heaven.

The first section of John's Revelation vision describes the watchful eye of God over His church and her activities on Earth

as we strive to share the Gospel and minister to people with the same care and compassion which Jesus did before ascending into Heaven. The seven letters to the ancient churches in Asia Minor serve as assessments of our strengths and weaknesses in accomplishing that mission. The letter to the Church at Thyatira reveals something very sinister and disturbing - *But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality* (Revelation 2:20-21). A few verses later, the teaching & practice of this prophetess is qualified as – *the deep things of Satan* (2:24). That word *deep* is the same Greek word Paul used to describe the deep things of God, but here it is assigned to the deep things of Satan. It is a sinister presence showing itself even in the modern church, and the warning God issued to ancient Thyatira applies even still today!

The deeper one goes into God; the deeper one moves into the vast knowledge & wisdom of God. The deeper one goes into Satan, the more removed from righteousness one becomes, and the more radical one is to the sinister things of debauchery, perversion, and deviation. The Holy Spirit reveals the deep things of God, while deceitful spirits reveal the deep things of Satan.

We are more accustomed to thinking that black magic, the occult, and witchcraft are the things that reach into the dark depths of Satan, and they certainly do. According to what is revealed in this letter to the Church at Thyatira, a sure path to

the deeper things of Satan is *sexual immorality*. The Greek word is PORNEIA, the word we defined earlier in this chapter referring to any form of sexual expression experienced outside God's instituted design. This would include prostitution, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, transsexualism, incest, rape, bestiality, and co-habitation. Our culture has been desensitized and programmed to accept & accommodate several forms of these sexual deviations through their prolific promotion in internet pornography and the entertainment industry. As a result, our government has enacted laws to protect certain forms of sexual deviation, assuring tax-funded support for their free and unhindered expression. Again we see that whatever our modern culture legitimizes our government legalizes.

Another form of PORNEIA is gripping our world at an alarming rate and threatening the very fabric of our families – the deep, dark deviation of pedophilia or sex with children. It is another manifestation of Satan's evil effort to kill the seed. We can find Satan's war on children traced far back into ancient Hebrew idolatry. Molech is the Biblical name of the Canaanite deity associated with child sacrifice. God expressly prohibited the Jews from doing what the Canaanites did – *Neither shall you give any of your offspring to offer them to Molech* (Leviticus 18:21), a verse, by the way immediately preceding the verse condemning homosexuality. If the ludicrous argument that Leviticus 18:22 no longer applies because it is the Old Testament Law, then verse 21 about sacrificing your children to a demon god must also be covered under the same argument! God forbid! The argument is ridiculous and illegitimate.

Wicked kings over God's people, such as Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon, were influenced by the Assyrians and reportedly worshipped Molech at the hillside altar of Topheth. King Josiah, however, did what was right in the eyes of God, and – *he also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hades), that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire for Molech* (II Kings 23:10). The ancient scene was horrid and horrific! A metal statue of Molech was erected in Hinnom and heated with fire until it glowed with intense heat. Then an infant or small child was placed in the statue's searing hands. The parents and pagan worshippers would yell chants loud enough in hopes of covering up the terrible screams and cries of children as they were tortured and burned to death at that pagan altar!

Associated with this detestable practice were other forms of pagan atrocities – *If the people of the land, however, should ever disregard that man when he gives any of his offspring to Molech, so as not to put him to death, then I Myself will set My face against that man and against his family, and I will cut off from among their people both him and all those who play the harlot after him, by playing the harlot after Molech* (Leviticus 20:4-5). Along with spiritual adultery and sacrificing innocent children, sexually immoral practices were also likely included in Molech's worship, as was typical in many pagan ceremonies. These combinations of evil practices are some of the deepest things of Satan! As hard as it is to hear, sexual deviation is a form of demon & Satan worship!

Molech was a demon god and the demonic spirits of Molech still permeate the American culture and world today. Pedophilia

and human sex trafficking (sex slavery of children & teens) are rampant in our nation and across the international landscape. This is among the most sinister practices of evil! We have seen it come to light in recent years with names like Jeffrey Epstein, Ghislaine Maxwell, and Harvey Weinstein, implicating prominent names of the rich & powerful in politics, government, corporate life, and the entertainment industry. This diabolical evil reaches far beyond the rich and famous, however. Almost every day, a news headline reveals this shocking reality in our world.

⁴⁰In 2007, British police busted a global Internet pedophile ring, rescuing 31 children and arresting more than 700 suspects worldwide. The ring was traced to an internet chat room called “Kids, the Light of Our Lives” featuring images of children subjected to horrific sexual abuse. Some were as young as a few months old.

⁴¹In June 2020, German officials launched an investigation into some 30,000 suspects involved in an online pedophile network. It started with the arrest of a 43-year-old man charged with raping his daughter and posting a video online sharing the abuse. Families were discovered to be swapping images of their own children being abused. The children involved ranged in ages from 3 to 14.

⁴⁰ Wave3, *British Police Smash Global Pedophile Ring, Arrest 700 People; 31 Children Rescued*, June 25, 2007, www.wave3.com

⁴¹ BBC News, *Germany Investigates 30,000 Suspects Over Pedophile Network*, June 29, 2020, www.bbc.com

⁴²In 2011, an internet pedophile ring with up to 70,000 members – thought to be the world’s largest – was uncovered by police officials. “Operation Rescue” identified 670 suspects that sexually abused 230 children in 30 different countries. The suspects included teachers, police officers, and scout leaders. A summer youth camp worker was suspected of abusing some 100 children over a period of 5 years. Five of those arrested were in the U.S.

⁴³In May of last year, international police arrested nine people in Thailand, Australia, and the United States associated with a “dark web” pedophile ring site of 63,000 users across 60 countries. The operation rescued 50 children and is seeking to identify more than 100 more in images that had been posted on the site.

⁴⁴“Operation Screen Capture” conducted in New Jersey in 2020 netted 21 arrests, including one 34-year-old man who traveled from Oklahoma to Atlantic City to have sex with two pre-teen girls, 11 and 12 years old. A 21-year-old babysitter was among those arrested for videotaping herself sexually abusing a young child, then posting the video online. The investigation revealed that opportunities for predators to contact children had increased dramatically with the unmonitored internet activity associated with remote home learning implemented with the coronavirus pandemic.

⁴² Staff & News Service Reports, *Massive Online Pedophile Ring Busted by Cops*, March 16, 2022, www.nbcnews.com.

⁴³ Interpol, *50 Children Rescued, 9 Sex Offenders Arrested in International Operation*, May 23, 2019, www.interpol.int.

⁴⁴ Greg Norman, Fox News, *Operation Screen Capture Leads to Arrests of 21 Alleged Child Sexual Predators, NJ Authorities Say*, August 27, 2020, www.foxnews.com.

⁴⁵Since 2003, the FBI has recovered or identified more than 6,600 child sex-trafficking victims and arrested nearly 3,000 across the United States. One operation in August of last year rescued more than 100 children and netted 67 arrests in Las Vegas, Atlanta, and Seattle. The sweep also consisted of 161 operations nationwide utilizing 400 law enforcement agencies.

These are just a Google Search sampling of hundreds of stories and statistics that paint this diabolical scheme of evil against the children of our nation and world. As with the other sexual deviations that Satan promotes, the internet facilitates this evil in massive & significant ways. ⁴⁶Over 25 million images are reviewed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children annually. That amounts to over 480,000 images per week!

While “child pornography” remains the legal term for this material, the subject matter is one of the most violent, horrific forms of child abuse imaginable. Child sexual abuse images and videos found online involve boys and girls from 0-18 years of age; 78% are under age 12; 64% are under age 8. Data from their reporting in 2013 shows that 18% of the abusers are parents or guardians of the child; 25% are a neighbor or friend of the family, and 18% stem from online enticement (chat rooms and social media apps). ⁴⁷In 2006, the New York Times reported internet child pornography was a \$20 billion-dollar annual industry!

⁴⁵ Karma Allen, *More Than 100 Sex Trafficking Victims Rescued Across US Amid Busts, FBI Says*, August 7, 2019, www.abcnews.go.com.

⁴⁶ CyberTipline Data, www.missingkids.org

⁴⁷ Joshua Brockman, *Child Sex As Internet Fare, through Eyes of A Victim*, April 5, 2006, www.nytimes.com.

We were shocked once again when California Democrats passed legislation to end blatant discrimination against LGBT young people regarding the state's sex offender registry in 2021. ⁴⁸Under SB145, offenders would not have to automatically register if those predators are within ten years of age of the minors they abuse! This opens the door for more laxities from prosecution when "consensual" sexual relations occur between adults and teenagers.

So, why is Satan and the diabolical forces of evil focused so intently on the sexual abuse of children in our society? I would suggest four reasons.

First, it defrauds the home. The Levitical Law stipulated – *None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness* (Leviticus 18:6). In the verses that follow, family members are specified – *the nakedness of your father (or) your mother* (18:7); *the nakedness of your sister* (18:9). God calls these deviated sexual relations *lewdness* (18:17), a Hebrew word meaning evil, wicked immorality (the deep things of Satan).

⁴⁹As early as the 1990s, it was estimated that up to one million cases of incest occur in the United States annually, but only about 10% are ever reported. Studies in 1983-1990 estimated that incest is experienced by 10-20% of the children in our general population (1/3 of all girls and 1/5 of all boys).

⁴⁸ California Legislative Information, *SB-145 Sex Offenders: Registration*, September 11, 2020, www.leginfo.ca.gov.

⁴⁹ Marriage & Family Encyclopedia, Family Social Issues, *Prevalence of Incest, Effects on Victims, Profile of Offenders, Treatment*, www.family.jrank.org.

⁵⁰In the 63,000 sexual abuse cases substantiated to Child Protective Services each year, 80% of the perpetrators are a parent, and 6% are other relatives.

Once again, internet pornography plays a significant role in the proliferation of incest and desensitizing our culture to its evil practice. ⁵¹The demand for pornography videos that depict incest has grown 1000% since 2011 and makes up 10% of the titles purchased by Millennials since 2015. ⁵²A report by adult content provider Gamelink uncovered an average increase in the consumption of “family role-play porn” of 178% between 2014-2015, with the highest increases observed in Utah (765%), Michigan (698%), New York (669%), Alaska (524%), and Arkansas (452%).

While state & federal law still prosecutes incest as a felony crime, there is a push among the radical leftist agenda in our nation to decriminalize incest between consenting family members and guarantee their right to marry each other without legal consequences. Since the LGBT agenda has successfully gained protective rights for same-sex marriage, activists in the world of pedophilia are pushing for the same protective rights. Their radical argument is similar. If a 12-year-old girl and a 50-year-old man genuinely love each other and their relationship is monogamous and consensual, they should have the right to express love and marry as they wish. Brace yourselves, my friends. It is terrifying how deep these deeper things of Satan

⁵⁰ Child Welfare, *Child Maltreatment 2019: Summary of Key Findings*, www.childwelfare.gov.

⁵¹ Barbara Roland, Evie Magazine, *Disturbing Trends: Incest Becoming Most Popular Porn Category For Millennials*, July 1, 2019, www.eviemagazine.com.

⁵² Gareth May, *Why Is Incest Porn So Popular?* February 25, 2015, www.vice.com.

will reach in our culture before God issues the command for Gabriel to sound the trumpet and judgment is executed!

Secondly, it defiles the heritage. God's Word affirms – *children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them* (Psalm 127:3-5). God gave clear instructions in the Law of Moses - *Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up* (Deuteronomy 6:4-7). Children are a gift of God and should be loved, protected, and raised accordingly – *train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6). The spiritual heritage inherent in a godly home is the thing Satan wants most to defile and destroy. The sexual abuse of children in the home quickly accomplishes that scheme and strategy of darkness.

Thirdly, it defies the Heavenly. Matthew records an event with Jesus and some children - *At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one*

such child in My name receives Me (Matthew 18:1-5). Jesus was using the example of a child's pure, innocent faith as the kind through which salvation comes. A child is totally dependent on their mother & father for all the provisions in life. A child's carefree confidence that mommy & daddy will always love, protect, and provide for them is without question or doubt. The example of this pure faith is that which God wants all His children to live under in our relationship with Him.

Satan doesn't want children to be born because until they reach the "age of accountability," their presence with God in heaven is assured. When they are raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, they are far more likely to commit their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ as their personal Savior & Lord at a very early age. Satan works to defeat this citizenship factor in the Kingdom of God by attacking the children of our land. Many teenagers and young adults find it difficult to trust their lives to God, who is often presented as our Heavenly Father because their Earthly father was a predator who only brought them shame, guilt, pain, and immense suffering in the name of "love."

Lastly, it determines the habit. Jesus went on in this text to sternly warn – *but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea* (Matthew 18:6). ⁵³Early studies dating back to the late 1980s indicate that about 1/3 of people who were

⁵³ New York Times, *Sad Legacy of Abuse: the Search for Remedies*, January 24, 1989, www.nytimes.com.

abused in childhood will become abusers themselves. ⁵⁴In a 2012 Canadian study, 75% of the male perpetrators of sexual assault reported their own sexual victimization growing up.

A passage, although misunderstood by many, applies here – *The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children of the third and fourth generations* (Numbers 14:18). Many want to use this passage to justify their own sins, blaming it on their parents. That is not what God is promoting here. Each of us will stand independently before God in judgment to account for our own actions, choices, behaviors, and lifestyles. But a cyclic pattern is clearly seen. When a child is raised in a sinful environment, they will tend to continue the legacy of that sin & evil in their own life, with the cycle of abuse, promiscuity, immorality, perversion, and deviation repeated in subsequent generations until someone breaks the cycle through emotional or spiritual intervention. Satan understands this cyclic pattern and focuses his diabolical efforts to ensure it continues, destroying the lives of innocent children and families.

The doctrine of deviation carried forth by deceitful spirits in these later times is made evident in those who *exchange the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man...to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator* (Romans 1:23,25). When the focus is on the body and the nature of the body rather than the Creator of the body,

⁵⁴ Karine Baril, INSPQ Quebec, Sexual Abuse in the Childhood of Predators, November 2021, www.inspq.ca.

sexual deviation easily becomes the deep, darkened sin of Satan's target.

No one engaged in a lifestyle of sexual deviation is ever without an inner awareness that their choices and behavior are wrong, even if they won't admit it – *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident in them; for God made it evident to them...so that they are without excuse* (Romans 1:18-20). God is loving, full of grace, mercy, and unbelievable patience. He convicts, exposes evil, reveals the truth, and extends every opportunity to men & women living sinful lifestyles to repent of their evil deeds and come to Him.

But God will not challenge man's defiance indefinitely. Paul gives a stern and sobering warning in this passage. Because these whom Paul is describing refused to see the error of their ways, repent of their sin and live righteously – *God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them* (Romans 1:24)...*and just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper* (1:28). That Greek phrase, *gave them over*, refers to delivering up someone to custody, to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, and put to death. It is a somber day when a sinner wakes up in the muck and mire of his sin to realize he has been given over to its darkness, degradation, and destruction.

God will never override our free will. He shows us His Word, will, and ways and promises our best welfare in life if we follow it, but He never forces it upon us. He will respect the decision of anyone to reject Him and follow Satan's strategies and schemes. We must remember, however, that our choice to do so invariably leads to destitution, destruction, and death (kill, steal, destroy).

As King David did when caught in the shame of his sexual sin, a person can cry out to God in repentance, and God will respond - *Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge* (Psalms 51:1-4)...*purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow...create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me* (51:7,10). That same prayer can be the desire & prayer of your heart if you are entangled in sexual sin and want to be free. When you turn from your sin and turn to God, those chains of addiction and deviation can be broken, and their cycle ceases in your life and family.

This has been a long and difficult chapter, perhaps as hard for you to read as it has been for me to write. Sexual deviation and sexual sin have touched many families in our communities, some more directly than others, and even among strong, conservative Christian families. We are challenged to know

how to move beyond our shock, hurt, confusion, and anger to be able to love without compromise, acknowledge without approval, and accept without accommodation. We have found that no amount of begging and pleading works. Asserting individual positions only intensifies hostilities and alienation. Embarrassed by the presence of these conditions among our family members, we feel the pressure to cover up and keep discreet the knowledge about these loved ones because of the public stigma & scrutiny it would bring to the presentation of our home and testimony. Only a parent or spouse whose domestic environment has been thrown this curve can understand the trauma and stress sexual deviation brings to an otherwise Godly home.

Such families need the love and compassion of a supportive Christian community. All too often, however, Christian families are ostracized, alienated, and rejected by fellow believers & the church as somehow responsible for their family member's behavior. Parents suffer too much from that kind of self-induced guilt without insensitive people hurling insults and thoughtless accusations. These hurting and confused parents are often heard to say, "Maybe if we had raised her differently; maybe if we had placed more restrictions on him; maybe if we had spent more time in family devotions; maybe if we had...;" and the list goes on and on. As children grow into adulthood, they become independent and make their own life choices. Unfortunately, those choices don't always align with the values and convictions in which they were raised. That reality doesn't ease the pain, but it lessens the tendency of parents and spouses to feel somehow, they are to blame.

We may not be able to change a person. Still, we can invoke a power that can – *the effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much* (James 5:16). What seems an impossible situation looking as if it will never be any different is akin to that object Jesus mentioned when He said, *whoever says to this mountain, “Be taken up and cast into the sea,” and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him* (Mark 11:23). The power of prayer has successfully lifted millions from the strongholds of demonic doctrines and deceitful spirits into the powerful freedom of Christ to walk joyfully in the Word, will and ways of God. Don’t give up on your loved ones; never quit praying for them. Prayer is not just all you can do; it is the most powerful thing you can do because it transfers the need for change from your meager efforts to the insurmountable power of Heaven. Against that, Satan has no defense, and your loved one has little resistance.

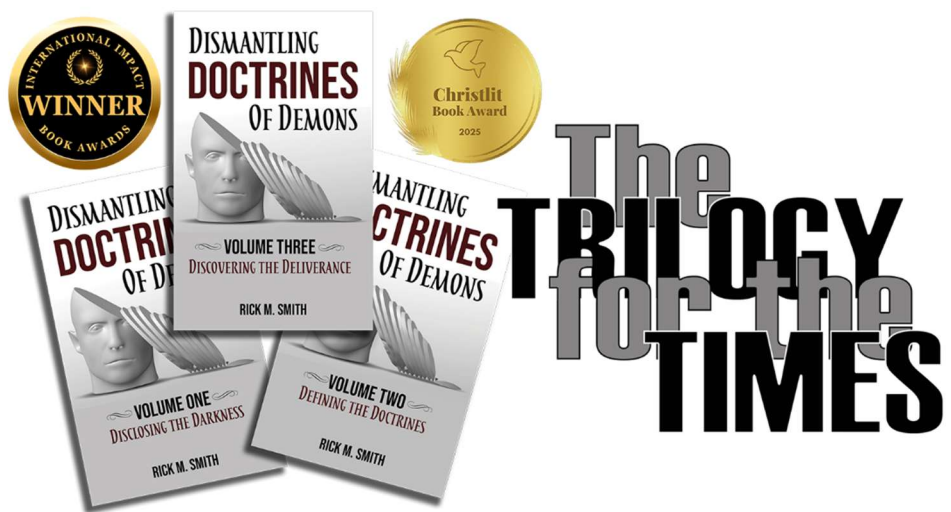
God gave a beautiful promise in Scripture through the prophet Zechariah – *“Return to Me,” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I may return to you.”* (Zechariah 1:3). God is a gracious, loving, and merciful God of second chances. When we return to Him *with all our heart, and with fasting, weeping and mourning* (Joel 2:12) over our sin, He responds to us with His rich mercy and grace. There is no more complete and total forgiveness than what we can experience from God when *He removes our sin as far as the east is from the west* (Psalm 103:12), and *He remembers it no more* (Isaiah 43:25). It is no longer held against us!

The passage we cited earlier from the Apostle Paul where fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, and homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of heaven (I Corinthians 6:9), goes on to say, *such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God* (6:11). The church at ancient Corinth was made up of persons who lived these lifestyles, but through the commitment of their lives to Jesus Christ, the power of sexual deviation was broken, and God forever changed them. The same miracle of transformation can happen to anyone who sincerely desires to abandon such sin and live in accordance with God's Word.

I might inadvertently put too much salt or not enough water in the flour to mix up a nice batch of dumplings, but one thing I will never do again is deviate from the recipe and use self-rising flour. The humiliating woe I experienced from that error made a lasting impression on my effort at mom's & grandmother's chicken-n-dumplin' recipe. I learned my lesson!

That kind of resolve is the purpose of God's loving discipline & chastisement applied in judgment against our waywardness – *All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness* (Hebrews 12:11). If sexual sin is a part of your journey, you can be free of the shame, guilt, and condemnation such deviation brings into a person's life. God promises, *draw near to God and He will draw near to you* (James 4:8). That repentant move also involves *resisting the devil and (so that) he will flee from you* (James 4:7). I pray God will give you the faith & strength you

need to make that life-changing and lifesaving move right away!



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