



What Does the Bible Teach Us To Do When Sin Becomes a Civil Right?

**5/20/21 Thursday Indepth Bible Class
of the Trilacoochee church of Christ**

When Sin Becomes a Civil Right

- Statement by President Barack Obama in defense of gay marriage, June 2012
- Growing approval of US citizens for gay marriage, March 2013
- Defense of Marriage Act declared unconstitutional, June 2013
- Opposing gay marriage now considered “hate speech”

Things That Won't Change

- Ranting does not edify
 - Do not become judgmental or un-Christian; God doesn't like your sin any more than He likes the sins of others.
 - Rom. 1:24-32

Things That Won't Change

- Ignoring or dismissing the facts leads to more ignorance.
- Some people will choose homosexuality regardless; that's not going to change.
- However, not as many as publicized.
 - The Alfred Kinsey Report of 1948-53 said 10%
 - Conventional thinking says 3 - 5%
 - 1.7% - Gary Gates is demographer-in-residence at the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy, University of California, Los Angeles. An additional 6.5% have experimented with it.

Things That Won't Change

- Believers and followers of God are viscerally repulsed by it.
 - Not going to change without abandoning the faith, not with education nor PSAs.
- Homosexuality will never become the majority practice
 - But those who practice it will remain a vocal and influential minority.

Things That Won't Change

- It is not the cause of the fall of a nation; it is a symptom of its decline.
 - When the traditional beliefs of a nation erode, the nation dies. Religion provides the set of standards that govern a nation. Historian Will Durant said, “There is no significant example in history, before our time, of a society successfully maintaining moral life without the aid of religion.”

Things That Won't Change

- In describing the decadence of the Roman Republic, historian Polybius wrote that this preoccupation with luxury led to carnal indulgences. “For some young men indulged in affairs with boys. They paid a talent (roughly a thousand dollars) for a boy bought for sexual pleasure.”
- Marcus Cato was outraged by this and, in a speech to the people, complained that “One might be quite convinced of the decline of the Republic, when pretty boys cost more than fields.”

Things That Won't Change

- “Three important trends demonstrate moral decay. They are the rise in immorality, the decay of religious belief, and the devaluing of human life.” (Kerby Anderson)

Things That Won't Change

- The classic study of Roman civilization, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, written by English historian Edward Gibbon published in 1776. He observed that “The leaders of the empire gave into the vices of strangers, morals collapsed, laws became oppressive, and the abuse of power made the nation vulnerable to the barbarian hordes. Manners and social life fell into debauchery. Under Justinian, entertainment grew bawdier and more bizarre. Homosexuality was openly practiced.”

Things That Won't Change

- Professor Allan Bloom in his book *The Closing of the American Mind*, said, “This is the American moment in world history, the one for which we shall forever be judged.”
- Arnold Toynbee describes the predictable pattern of challenge and response. “We as a nation are challenged in fundamental ways, and our response will either pull us back from the brink or push us over it. Will we follow the path to renewal and reformation or will we follow the path to destruction?”

Things That Won't Change

- It is not the cause of the fall of a nation; it is a symptom of its decline.
- The tragic and historically inevitable fact is this: Once a nation has declined to the point that homosexuality is generally accepted and openly practiced, NO nation has ever reversed its fall. It is only a matter of time.

Things That Won't Change

- You will not solve this at the polls. It will not end until society resets with a fall and rise or a traumatic revolution.
 - Churches becoming political instead of evangelical
 - It can be slowed at the wallet.
- Anger and un-Christ-like responses may feel good, but are ineffective and will damage the cause of the Lord.

Things That Won't Change

- The means of this world will have little impact or effect. Our weapons are spiritual: prayer, teaching, encouragement, et al
 - 2Cor. 10:3-5 - “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”

Things That Won't Change

- Contrary to the belief of some professed Christians, homosexuals can be saved, and are equal to any other citizen in the kingdom of God
 - 1Cor. 6:9-11 - “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 homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

Things That Won't Change

- Foolish and arbitrary distinctions between sins
 - Every temptation can be overcome; every sin can be forgiven
 - 1Cor. 10:13 - “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”
 - God did not make a distinction between the sins because there is no significant difference.

Things That Won't Change

- We had better love them and make it our goal to lead them to salvation.

Things That Won't Change

- What members of the church and their children need to hear is not incessant condemnation of this sin, but how we must do the will of God in a world where this sin exists.
 - Yes, sin is bad, and they shouldn't have done it.
 - But it is in the world; now, how do we deal with it wisely and effectively?

Things That Won't Change

- How is this sin worse than porn, affecting 1 in 5 members of the church under age 50?
- Or gossip, destroying the good names of people who worked a lifetime to build it?
- Not diminishing it; getting our focus on the real issue and looking for an effective solution.
- The Adversary deceives us by using our natural revulsion of the sin to divert our attention away from the solution.

Things That Won't Change

- This is not a new sin. It has been around since the Patriarchs
 - Gen. 6:6, 19:5 - Sodom; Egyptian Pharaohs; Alexander the Great
 - “Greeks had wives for children and men for pleasure”
 - “Julius Caesar was every woman's man and every man's woman”

A Stand We Must Take

- ONE Man and ONE Woman for ONE Lifetime
 - Matt. 19:4-6 - “And He answered and said to them, Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

A Stand We Must Take

- Male and female created He them, and imparted to them His Divine image
 - Gen. 1:27 - “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
- Be fruitful and multiply
 - Gen. 1:28 - “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

A Stand We Must Take

- Husband and wife for life: no divorce, immorality, or homosexual behavior
 - Christians give up their credibility to challenge the culture when their divorce rate is the same as everyone else's, and then they try to tell others to follow Biblical instructions on marriage and home life.

A Stand We Must Take

- God has spoken once and for all time on this matter
 - Lev. 18:22, 26-29 - “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination... 26 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you 27 (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), 28 lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. 29 For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people.”

A Stand We Must Take

- God has spoken once and for all time on this matter
 - Lev. 20:13 - “If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.”
 - Ez. 16:49-50 - “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50 And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.”

A Stand We Must Take

- God has spoken once and for all time on this matter
 - Jude 7 - “As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”
 - Rom. 1:26-27 - “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.”

A Stand We Must Take

- We must stand for what God has said without descending to the world's level of conduct in response, and without abandoning God's will in handling this
 - Joshua 24:15 - "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."
- Accept the fact that this will never be a popular stand

A Stand We Must Take

- Be a Daniel, not a Peter
 - Daniel defied the king's evil command and was cast into the lion's den.
 - Peter was afraid of the crowd and denied the Christ

A Stand We Must Take

- 1Tim. 6:3-5 - “If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.”
- 2Tim. 4:3-4 - “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”

A Stand We Must Take

- 2Cor. 1:8-12 - “For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, 10 who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, 11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many. 12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.”

A Stand We Must Take

- Hope will bring endurance
 - Gal. 6:9 - “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”
- Christians have faced greater hardships in the past; we are not promised any better in this life, only persistent faith will save in the end
 - Heb. 11:32-40

A Stand We Must Take

- We are not unique in suffering a godless generation; the judgment of this generation is in God's hands
 - 1Peter 4:4-5 - "In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. 5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

A Stand We Must Take

- Our goal
 - 1Tim. 1:12 - “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry”
 - 1Cor. 15:58 - “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”