

PP Jude-The Third Example Deserves a Closer Look

Part 6-Jude 7

10/19-20

False teachers have always found their way into the church, and their aim is always the same: to destroy the faith, the body of knowledge of God's redemptive plan to save sinners
Jude is challenging Christians, the *"called, beloved in God, and kept for Jesus Christ"* people to get in the ring and fight for that faith, governed by love and armed with knowledge
His tone is blistering, sparing no mercy for those who've set themselves up against God
And that attitude emerges in 2 examples from the OT: unbelieving Jews and disobedient angels
The first were destroyed by God in the desert, the second locked into chains awaiting judgment
Today and next week, we look at Jude's third example, sexual immorality and homosexuality:

"just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." **Jude 1:7**

The issue was sexual immorality, which evidenced in homosexual actions

What is your belief on homosexuality?

Increasingly, young people in the church are not bothered by it, and see nothing wrong with it
Believing that some are born gay, and that God not only loves but affirms and blesses gay people
The gay movement today is experiencing a momentum it has never before seen in this country
This coming Monday, New Jersey will make the 14th State that allows same-sex marriages
According to one Gallup poll, the *perception* in America is that ¼ of the population is gay
But the majority of studies continue to reveal a gay population of less than 1% to 3.5 %
There is an extremely well-funded gay agenda actively working to insert gay themes in TV shows, to the point you can hardly identify one show without it
The battle moved inside the church and Christian colleges, as lecterns and pulpits are streaming out gay affirming messages and denominations are hiring gay clergy and blessings gay couples

PP Video Jay Bakker speaking about homosexuality to a black church

PP Hot off the press is the new bible for gay people called the Queen James Bible

PP Then we have Brian McLaren, the father of the Emergent Church movement, who just recently led a commitment ceremony for his son who married his male partner

PP Or the evangelical Fuller Seminary which has a Student group for gay and straight students called One Table

Denise and I have a nephew who several years ago came to his parents with the news that he was gay, left the church and continues to insist that he is a Christian and that he is gay
Not long after announcing this to his parents, he shared that he had been molested by another boy when he was in 6th grade

Devastatingly painful to the family, and it continues to be painful

This issue hits close to home for us, and likely does for many of you as well

There is not one instance of Scripture that speaks positively or kindly of homosexual behavior
Liberal scholars know this, so they have set out to re-interpret the Scriptures

But our rule for life in all things is God's Word, so what does the bible say about the subject?

So today, I want to share two thoughts that serve to introduce next week's deeper look

PP 1-We demonstrate the gospel when we love without categorizing people

It is amazing how Jesus viewed those with leprosy, those caught in adultery, tax collectors and drunkards and women and Samaritans and Gentiles

He saw them, and loved them, felt compassion for them!

The religious elite put them in categories, and judgmentally withheld love and mercy

PP Recall the parable Jesus shared in **Luke 18**, ***“The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.’”*** **11**

PP The Pharisees and scribes said, ***“Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”*** And Jesus answered them, ***“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”*** **Luke 5:30-32**

There is a tendency in us to categorize people based on behavior or position, or race, but Jesus saw people in their need for mercy, forgiveness and salvation

He wasn't repulsed by sinners, but by *self-righteousness*

Friends, this is the lens through which a Christian should view a homeless man, or prostitute, a millionaire, or a gay man or woman

So let me ask you to honestly think through these questions:

Do you place people in categories according to their sin?

Liars, thieves, alcoholics, addicts, dropouts, adulterers

To our subject today, when you see an openly gay person, what goes through your heart?

Is it a desire and willingness to show love and mercy?

Or do you place them in a category of 'worst sinner' and justify your judgment?

PP Video Westboro Baptist Church's parody of Eminem

Wearing t-shirts and waving placards of God Hates Fags, and with a song in their hearts, telling them they are going to hell is as absolutely far from love as I know how to be

In the example Jude refers to, Abraham just prior to God's judgment learned of the purpose of the two angels in investigating the situation at Sodom and Gomorrah

PP He began to plead with God for them: ***“Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?”*** **Genesis 18:23**

In the NT, the words were righteous and sinners, in the OT, they were righteous and wicked

Sodom was a city of terrible sinners in need of incredible mercy

Abraham knew the condition of Sodom, and he pled with God that if even 5 righteous people were found there, that God would spare them all

As we step into the ring, and contend for the faith against the onslaught on sexual purity, do we do so with genuine hearts that cry out to God to save sinners, regardless their sin?

Do you, or I, have a greater hatred for sin in our own lives than that in others?

Can a homosexual person come to our church, and find a people who love them?

PP 2-We demonstrate the gospel when we tell gay people biblical truth

PP Video Rob Bell

What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

The Queen James Bible says that the Bible says nothing about it, and that homophobic people twist it to think it does

The argument goes that Jesus never condemned it, but if you ever join a debate team, you'll learn that arguments from silence are unconvincing

There were many things Jesus didn't speak on, including rape, incest, bestiality, and that doesn't mean any of these are permissible or pleasing to Him

On the contrary, He more than once affirmed that marriage was to be between a man and woman, and its only alternative is celibacy (**Matthew 19:12**)

Jesus was sent to Israel, where homosexuality was not a cultural issue

But Paul was sent to the Romans, steeped in Greco Roman culture, where men were commonly bisexual, who married wives for procreation, and where the horrible use of male prostitutes and young boys was commonly accepted

Socrates was a fully immersed in homosexuality we are told, and Plato penned an entire section in his famous symposium exalting homosexual love

Historians say that Alexander the Great had both male and female lovers

Some historians say that 14 out of 15 Caesars were engaged in homosexual behavior

Nero, the Caesar when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, had taken a boy named Sporus and had him castrated and then married him in a full wedding and lived with him as his wife.

Romans historians Gibbon and Toynbee wrote that homosexuality was one of the major contributors to the decline of the Roman Empire and the fall of Rome

Just a few days ago, October 10th, it was announced that Harvey Milk, our first openly gay politician would be on a new postal stamp

Harvey Milk was widely known as a pederast, a man sexually involved with a boy between 15-19, one of them a then 16 year old named Jack McKinley

And he is being lifted up in our country as worthy of honor

The Roman world was not terribly different than ours today

The Bible after all, does speak to the issue, and we begin by looking at **Jude 7**, taking note that he refers back to the first incident of homosexuality in the bible, Genesis 19

Two angels visit Sodom and Gomorrah for an eyewitness account of their wickedness

PP While there, *"the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them."* **Genesis 19:4-5**

Proponents of homosexuality argue that the men just wanted to *'know'*, meaning to meet these visitors to make sure they weren't spies intending harm

The sin of Sodom, they say, was not homosexuality, but the lack of God-honoring hospitality

The other re-interpretation is that these men wanted to have sex with angels, but they clearly thought these were 'men' and named them that as they called out for them

Jude, as if anticipating these arguments, unpacks this incident: *"just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire."*

He uses the phrase *'indulged in'* and the word *'pursued'*

PP *'Indulged in'* means these people gave themselves up to something utterly, completely

PP *'Pursued'* means to leave something behind to go after something else

Jude is saying that the men of these cities gave themselves completely to sexual immorality, and it took the expression of abandoning natural desires for a headlong pursuit of unnatural

PP *'unnatural desire'* is a desire contrary to those God had ordained in creation, which in the context of Sodom and Gomorrah meant desires men had for men rather than women
 God's punishment of them *'serve as an example'*, which was a word, serve, the Greeks used for a table set with food awaiting the arrival of guests, or a corpse laid out for burial, awaiting the pall bearers

These men of these cities would not repent, though Lot asked them to, so they serve as an example by *'undergoing a punishment of eternal fire'*

PP *'Undergoing'* means to be held under something in a sustaining, never-ending way

PP Lot had said to these men: *"I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly...But they said, 'Stand back!' And they said, 'This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.'"* **Genesis 19:7, 9**

This is a form of preaching: *'do not act so wickedly'* but instead of repenting, they accused him of judging, and turned their anger on to him

Friends, if you call homosexuality behavior sin, the charges of homophobia, intolerance and hater will fly your way

Friends, the gospel is good news to homosexuals

PP The Apostle Paul said of idolaters, adulterers, swindlers as well as homosexuals, *"And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."* **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

Paul, gay advocates say, was a repressed homosexual, writing against his own desires

The truth is, Paul viewed himself as the chief of sinners, who had met the King of glory, Jesus, Who died for Paul's sin, and for all sinners who come to Him in faith

All sin renders a person deserving of hell, but thank God, Who made a way that we do not have to experience the *'punishment of eternal fire'*

Through faith in Jesus Christ, Who died for our sins, we can be forgiven and have life

And sinners can live holy lives, thieves no longer steal, and liars become truth-tellers, and gay men and women can live with natural desire

Friends, if you are struggling with gay desires, or have acted on them, we love you

More importantly, God loves you and has freedom, forgiveness for you and He can give you the power to live a holy life of purity

If you have never experienced gay desires, then let me encourage you, do not lift homosexuality out and above other sinful behaviors

Do not categorize and judge and withhold love and mercy from those who are gay

Be loving enough that they will be able to hear you share the truth of the gospel, that homosexuality is never God's design or hope, and maybe, just maybe, they will follow you to freedom

Amen!

Pray