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## **Sex Against Nature**

### **Series: Divine Design: Sex According to the Bible**

**The Village Church at Shell Point**

**Evening Service**

**April 6, 2025**

- I. **Purpose of the series**
- II. **The Genesis Connection**
- III. First Message
  - A. **Divine Design**
    - 1. Male-female dichotomy established
    - 2. Male and females made in God's image
    - 3. Jesus affirmed the male-female prerequisite for marriage and sexual expression
    - 4. Male-female coupling for sexuality has procreative purpose and cultural mandate
  - B. **Divine Complementarity**
    - 1. **Helper fit for him**
  - C. **Arranged Marriage**
    - 1. **Adam and Eve**
    - 2. **Isaac and Rebekah**
    - 3. **Jacob**
- IV. Second Message
  - A. **Naked and Not Ashamed**
  - B. **The Fall**
    - 1. **Grace After the Fall**
  - C. **Marriage and the Fall**
  - D. **Romance and Marriage**
    - 1. David's son **Amnon** fell in love with his half-sister **Tamar** (**2 Samuel 13.1-15**)
    - 2. Better example – **Isaac and Rebekah**
    - 3. **Dangers of falling in love**

4. **Helping one another**
  - E. **Social Significance of Marriage**
    1. **Take Esau**
    2. **Joseph**
  - F. **The Love Triangle**
    1. **Abraham and Sarah**
    2. **Jacob, Rachel and Leah**
- V. **Third Message**
- A. **Marriage of Believer to an Unbeliever**
    1. **Genesis 6:1–2 (ESV) —**
  - B. **Overriding principle** – if you intermarry with the ungodly, you will be burned
    1. The influence of intermarriage of believer to unbeliever will have devastating consequences
      - a. The very collapse of culture
    2. That principle becomes a core value of both the OT and NT
  - C. **Mismatched Marriage**
    1. Best example in Genesis – Esau’s marriages (**Genesis 26-28**)
      - a. Religious fundamentals
    2. NT parallels
  - D. **Unrequited Love**
    1. Example – Leah
  - E. **Navigating Family Life**
  - F. **Divorce**
    1. No clear parallels
      - a. Abraham sending away Hagar
    2. OT teaching
      - a. God hates divorce
    3. NT teaching on divorce
      - a. Infidelity
      - b. Abandonment
- VI. **Fourth Message**
- A. **The Covenant Family**
  - B. **Sex and Sin**
    1. **Cain**
    2. **Seth**

3. Carelessness
4. Lust
5. Adultery
6. Rape
7. Incest

VII. Sex Against Nature

- A. Title for message – NT
  1. Then we'll see its origins in Genesis
  2. In response to humanity's rejection of the revelation of God in creation
    - a. Suppression of the truth about God in unrighteousness
    - b. Leading to rejection of what can be known about God in creation – i.e., in the natural world
    - c. Leading to idolatry – substitutes for worship of God
    - d. So God “gave them up” – allowed them to go even deeper into sinful rebellion
  3. Romans 1:26–27 (ESV) —
    - a. 26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women **exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;**
    - b. 27 and the men likewise **gave up natural relations with women** and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.
  4. Talking, of course, about Homosexuality
  5. Previous message about Sex and Sin
    - a. A whole host of sins which are serious violations of the Law of God
    - b. Including the Law of God in the heart, like lust
    - c. But those sins are “natural” in the sense that they correspond to some fundamental elements of God's design
    - d. Male-female created constituency and prerequisite for sexual relations
    - e. Those sins are taken outside the boundaries of God's design to be sure
    - f. But they do maintain the male-female prerequisite
  6. Homosexuality is a break from the male-female prerequisite
    - a. Becomes a step further removed from the Divine Design
    - b. Essentially an aggravation of sexual sin
  7. Transsexuality is yet another aggravation of sexual sin, also against nature
    - a. Rejection of God's determination of sex at birth
    - b. And the medical and surgical mutilation of physically healthy organs
    - c. In the case of minors, medically sanctioned child abuse
  8. Don't misunderstand

- a. “Natural” sexual sin in unrepentance can send someone to hell just as fast as sins “against nature”
  - b. But there is a sense in scripture that there are features of some sins that make them more egregious than other sins
  - c. The final remedy for any sin – at any level – is repentance and faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ
  - d. Only Christ is our sanctifier
  - e. Whether my own sins fit the more aggravated categories or not is irrelevant
  - f. There is no basis for self-righteousness for one kind of sinner v. another
  - g. Heterosexual sinner had no greater standing before the holiness of God than the homosexual sinner
  - h. But the Bible indicates that there is something more to sins against nature which is an antagonism toward God, the designer and creator of maleness and femaleness
9. Now we need to recognize the need to have compassion and love for those who struggle with sins against nature
- a. Either in the area of same sex attraction
  - b. Or in the area of gender confusion
  - c. The same compassion and love as we would have for any other category of sinner!
  - d. But to deny the reality of the nature of sin and affirm the sinner in that which is destructive of the Divine Design is not compassion at all
10. Story – Post debate with Muslims
- a. Man made an appointment to meet with me in my office at WVU
  - b. Came because he was impressed with my kindness and manner with which I debated the Muslim cleric
  - c. “Proud gay man”
  - d. My response: “Humble, heterosexual sinner saved only by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ”
  - e. Being a heterosexual sinner is no moral virtue; no more righteous before God than being a homosexual sinner

B. **Homosexuality and Genesis**

- 1. Story of Sodom – Genesis 19
- 2. Following the promise of God to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18 – where the angelic “men” appeared and promised that Sarah would have a child, they went from their to Sodom
  - a. They shared with Abraham their impending judgment of Sodom
  - b. And that they were on their way to assess the magnitude of sin
- 3. That, of course, got Abraham’s attention – his nephew Lot was there with his family
- 4. So Abraham intercedes for Sodom in an ancient version of Let’s Make a Deal

- a. If 50 are righteous...
  - b. If 45 are righteous...
  - c. If 40 are righteous...
  - d. If 30 are righteous...
  - e. If 20 are righteous...
  - f. If 10 are righteous...
- 5. Got them to assure him that if there were 10 righteous, they wouldn't destroy it
- C. The two angels show up in Sodom; Lot at the gate
  - 1. Lot invites them into his home
  - 2. They instead insist on spending the night in the town square
  - 3. Lot is terrified by that prospect – knows how dangerous that would be
  - 4. Insists they come into his house
- D. It's even worse than even Lot would have expected
  - 1. The men of Sodom – young and old – came and surrounded the house
- E. **Genesis 19:5** (ESV) —
  - 1. 5 And they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them.”
  - 2. “Know them” – euphemism for sexual relations
  - 3. **Genesis 4:1** (ESV) —
    - a. 1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain...
- F. **Genesis 19:6–8** (ESV) —
  - 1. 6 Lot went out to the men at the entrance, shut the door after him,
  - 2. 7 and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly.
  - 3. 8 Behold, I have two daughters who have not known any man. Let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please. Only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.”
  - 4. Lot's offer of his betrothed daughters speaks of the moral influence of living in the context of wickedness, that he himself was so compromised in his moral judgment that he was willing to sacrifice his daughters to their depraved sinfulness
- G. The men would not settle for the women, tried to force their way in
  - 1. The angels pulled Lot back inside
  - 2. Struck the men outside with blindness
  - 3. They warned Lot and his family about the impending judgment; urges them to flee
  - 4. Lot tells that to the future sons-in-law who laugh it off
  - 5. The next morning they flee with Lot, daughters and wife; warned them not to look back
  - 6. Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed as they flee; Lot's wife looks back and becomes pillar of salt
- H. Centuries later
  - 1. **Isaiah 3:9** (ESV) —

- a. 9 For the look on their faces bears witness against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves.
- 2. Speaks of the arrogant boldness of those who not only engage in the sin of homosexuality, but proclaim it
  - a. It's not enough in our culture to tolerate sin against nature
  - b. You must celebrate it
  - c. Of you don't, you're a bigot
- I. Sodom is not likely the only reference to homosexuality in Genesis
  - 1. Consider the story of **Noah and his sons** following the flood
    - a. Story is known as the origin for the repopulation of the earth
  - 2. **Genesis 9:20–27** (ESV) —
    - a. 20 Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard.
    - b. 21 He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.
    - c. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside.
    - d. 23 Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness.
    - e. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him,
    - f. 25 he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers."
    - g. 26 He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant.
    - h. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."
  - 3. Fascinating, and sometimes troubling, text
  - 4. First reading you see Noah getting so drunk that he wriggled out of his clothes and lay naked inside his tent
    - a. The youngest son, Ham, happened to walk in and saw his father drunk and naked
    - b. He goes outside and mocks his drunken father to his brothers
    - c. The brothers take the issue more seriously; take a garment, walk backwards into the tent and cover their father
    - d. Maybe that's the way it happened
  - 5. But one of the chief concerns is the nature and extent of the curse that Noah issues
    - a. He issues it to the next generation – Canaan, son of Ham
    - b. And essentially relegates Canaan to perpetual servanthood
    - c. So, was the sin of Ham finding Noah naked and talking about it serious enough to warrant a curse like that?
- J. I'm not inclined to think that was the nature of the sin at all

1. I'm inclined to think that Ham found his father drunk, naked, vulnerable, and took advantage of him in a homosexual act
  2. "And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father..."
  3. **Leviticus 20:17** (ESV) —
    - a. 17 "If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity.
  4. **Leviticus 20:18–19** (ESV) —
    - a. 18 If a man lies with a woman during her menstrual period and uncovers her nakedness, he has made naked her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people.
    - b. 19 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to make naked one's relative; they shall bear their iniquity.
  5. Uncovering one's nakedness is the way the Pentateuch speaks of sexual relations
    - a. This would explain the seriousness of the curse
  6. It also speaks of the generational impact of sin in general, and sexual sin in particular
    - a. Canaan wasn't the only descendant of Ham – he settled in, well, Canaan!
    - b. Also had Cush, Egypt and Put – settled in Egypt and north and east Africa, while Canaan settled in the land to the east of the Mediterranean
    - c. Recall that later it was the descendants of Canaan, the Amorites, whose sin was so egregious when it reached its zenith, that God expelled them from the land
- K. Both the OT and the NT condemn the sin of homosexuality
1. **Leviticus 18:22** (ESV) —
    - a. 22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.
  2. **Leviticus 20:13** (ESV) —
    - a. 13 If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.
  3. The word "abomination" is not coined by bigoted heterosexual puritanicals
    - a. It is used by God for this particular kind of sin
    - b. And not used even for other capital offenses
  4. **Romans 1:26–28** (ESV) —

- a. 26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;
  - b. 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.
  - c. 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
5. **1 Corinthians 6:9–10** (ESV) —
- a. 9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,
  - b. 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
6. **1 Timothy 1:8–11** (ESV) —
- a. 8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,
  - b. 9 understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers,
  - c. 10 the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,
  - d. 11 in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.
7. Not just the act or practice of homosexuality is the issue
- a. Romans 1 – “dishonorable passions”
  - b. Level of desire is sinful
  - c. Cf Jesus’ teaching on the Sermon on the Mount where he intensifies the Law by driving it into the level of internal desires and inclinations (e.g., adultery cf lust)
  - d. The thought life, the inner world, needs to be sanctified
  - e. While that can be extremely difficult, that kind of radical sanctification is what is called for – in scripture!
- L. **Transsexuality**
- 1. Not as much in the scripture or in Genesis about this
    - a. Especially since there was no medical or surgical approaches during the Patriarchal period to do what is being done today
    - b. Doesn’t mean the Bible in general is silent
  - 2. **Deuteronomy 22:5** (ESV) —
    - a. 5 “A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.”



- b. Confusing maleness and femaleness through clothing is thus forbidden
- 3. Issue of Eunuchs is sometimes raised
  - a. Actual surgical castration occurs, certainly altering sexual function
- 4. **Isaiah 56:3–5** (ESV) —
  - a. 3 Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely separate me from his people”; and let not the eunuch say, “Behold, I am a dry tree.”
  - b. 4 For thus says the LORD: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant,
  - c. 5 I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.
- 5. That text is sometimes used to affirm those who have had their sexuality surgically altered to be included with the people of God, even celebrated
  - a. But that is not what is affirmed
  - b. These eunuchs are those who have been castrated against their will, often as slaves to serve in harems
- 6. **Isaiah 39:7** (ESV) —
  - a. 7 “And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”
  - b. Israelites who have been enslaved and castrated
  - c. But through one course of events or another, they have become believers in Yahweh
  - d. As they are freed and returned to Israel, as they seek to be obedient to the covenant, they are to be received and affirmed
- 7. **Matthew 19:10–12** (ESV) —
  - a. 10 The disciples said to him, “If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”
  - b. 11 But he said to them, “Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given.
  - c. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.”
- 8. This follows Jesus’ teaching about divorce in which he severely restricts divorce save for sexual immorality
  - a. In doing so he affirms the male-female prerequisite for sexual engagement in marriage
  - b. Even quotes from Genesis 1 and 2
  - c. The disciples say, “Wow, maybe it’s better never to get married.”
  - d. Jesus responds with the statement about eunuchs

- e. Eunuchs from birth – small number of men born without fully developed sexual organs
  - f. Made eunuchs – those who have been forced in slavery to be castrated
  - g. Those made themselves eunuchs – those who, for the sake of the kingdom, have chosen a life without sexual expression, not because of gender confusion
9. **Acts 8.27-39** – story of the Ethiopian eunuch
- a. Also a slave of Queen Candace who had been castrated to be trusted with the female entourage and no threat to the Queen
10. Bottom line – Bible nowhere affirms changing sex from male to female
- a. Even forbids transvestitism – confusing clothing styles
11. And of course, the idea that if you tried to medically or surgically change sex we know that it simply can't be done
- a. Sexuality is more and deeper than sex organs like breasts and vaginas and penises
  - b. It is also hormones
  - c. But it's also genetics – which affects thinking, affect, emotions, psychology
12. This doesn't deny that due to various psychological influences in our culture, including social contagion, there are people confused about their gender
- a. Trying to change sexes or genders is a fool's errand
  - b. And when it is done to minors – child abuse of the worst kind
  - c. And the claims about it being necessary to prevent suicide has been unequivocally proved false (“I'd rather have a live daughter than a dead son”)
  - d. The opposite is the case, if anything – more mental illness and suicide ideation in those who have been transitioned

M. **Objections and Arguments** (Rob Gagnon)

1. **Jesus said little**, and had no interest, in homosexuality, or in maintaining a male-female prerequisite for sexual relations
- a. Jesus affirmed explicitly male-female creation, male-female prerequisite for sexual relations, quoting from Genesis
  - b. In doing so he affirmed...
    - (1) Only two sexes
    - (2) Only two sexes in sexual activity
    - (3) Only one male and female partner in committed relationship
    - (4) Only one male and female partner at a time (no polygamy)
    - (5) No serial male-female relationships (multiple divorces)
  - c. Jesus accepted the OT Law in its entirety, including those parts that restrict sexual expression, including homosexuality, in addition to adultery, incest, bestiality

- d. John the Baptist, whose ministry was closely connected with Jesus, was beheaded for criticizing Herod Antipas for violating the Levitical sex laws on incest – even when the relationship was committed and consensual
  - e. Jesus affirmed and intensified the OT Law by driving the Law internally in the Sermon on the Mount
2. The Bible's prohibition in **Romans 1 applies to exploitative and hedonistic** forms of homosexual practice – slaves, prostitutes and adolescents
- a. In other words, homosexual practice is ok if it's loving, consensual and committed
  - b. Romans 1.24-27 rejects homosexual practice as a violation of the male-female sexual pair in Genesis; it is an argument from nature and echoes the creation account
    - (1) Genesis echoes: humans, image, likeness, birds, cattle, reptiles, male, female
  - c. The Romans nature argument finds the exploitative v. non-exploitative argument irrelevant
    - (1) Genesis 2.18, 20 specify the sexual complementarity of male-female
  - d. Romans indicts homosexuality that involve mutual, reciprocal affections (“consumed with passion for one another”)
  - e. Romans condemns, not just male-male relationships, but lesbianism as well, making homosexuality universally forbidden
3. **By Analogy**, the Bible seems to support slavery and oppression of women and racial segregation and opposition to divorce – which we now reject; it's opposition to homosexuality is thus also to be reversed
- a. All poor analogies
  - b. Bible shows no interest in preserving slavery, and often sets stage for it's rejection; the biblical community is countercultural compared to ancient near-Eastern cultures in which slavery was acceptable
  - c. Race and ethnicity is entirely heritable, immutable, and non-behavioral
    - (1) Homosexual desire is not 100% heritable – may be congenital influences, but not deterministic (no gay gene)
    - (2) Homosexual desire is open to some degree of change, even if reduction of intensity of impulses
    - (3) Homosexuality is primarily behavioral and not inherently benign
  - d. Women's oppression is a bad analogy for some of the same reasons
    - (1) Being a woman is 100% congenital, immutable, not a desire that is forbidden in scripture
    - (2) Many positive views of women in scripture (Deborah, Ruth, female discipleship, Priscilla's leadership in church, deaconesses); only negative views of homosexual practices

- e. Divorce and remarriage – allowable under certain circumstances (infidelity and abandonment of non-believer); homosexuality is never allowable in scripture
  - (1) Also, the church is to work to end the cycle in both (ethic is against divorce and against homosexuality, need for repentance and restoration)
- 4. **Inclusion of Gentiles** in Acts 10-11, 15 means we should receive those who practice Gentile sexual ethics
  - a. Acts 15 idolatry and dietary commands are not grounded in creation as is sexuality
  - b. Homosexuality is regarded as universally morally proscribed and enjoined for Gentile converts
  - c. Jesus and Paul forbade comparisons between food laws and sexual laws in Mark 7 and 1 Corinthians 6
  - d. Inclusion of Gentiles in 1<sup>st</sup> Century church also included the admonition to “don’t do as the Gentiles do”

## VIII. Summary

- A. Bible’s prohibition against homosexuality is a core value, from beginning to end of the Bible (Genesis-Revelation)
  - 1. **Always negatively portrayed**
  - 2. **Always universally applied**
  - 3. **Rooted in the created order**
  - 4. **Counterculturally applied** in Israel and in the church in Roman pagan contexts
- B. **Truth and Grace**
  - 1. **1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (ESV) —**
    - a. 9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,
    - b. 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
    - c. 11 **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.**
  - 2. Sanctification is possible through the grace of Christ
    - a. It may be terribly difficult – as it is with many other kinds of addictive sins
    - b. And the eradication of the sinful nature doesn’t happen until we see Jesus; so the Romans 7 fight may continue
    - c. But victory over these sins against nature is possible through Christ who is our sanctifier
  - 3. Homosexuality and transgenderism are not unforgivable sins
    - a. So the church’s approach is to be the same as with any other sinner

- b. Preach the gospel
- c. Make disciples
- d. See the growth in sanctification