

BIBLICAL MARRIAGE & SEXUALITY

Genesis 1:26-31, Romans 1:18-32

January 16, 2022

Across Canada, today has been declared “*Biblical Sexuality Sermon Sunday*” in response to the recent passing of Bill C-4 by Trudeau’s Liberal Government. Bill C-4 was rushed through the House of Commons before the Christmas break in December without any debate or public input and came into law on January 8th. For those unfamiliar with Bill C-4, it is the bill that bans “*conversion therapy*,” for those who identify as LGBTQ. This is a big concern for evangelical Christians, because it puts a law on the books that effectively criminalizes Christianity – we can’t minister to those who come for help, wanting to be freed from their gay lifestyle. According to Bill C-4, the Bible’s teaching on sexuality and gender is now being defined as a “*myth*” under Canadian Law, and the promotion and sharing of this biblical teaching will be a jailable offence because it causes harm to society. A group of concerned Evangelical pastors published this letter, “*This bill’s wording is sufficiently broad to allow for the criminal prosecution of Christians who would speak biblical truth into the lives of those in bondage to sexual sins like homosexuality and transgenderism...Even a mother or father who offers their children freedom from sexual sin through repentance and faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) could be threatened with five years in jail.*”

Christian pro-life and pro-family organizations like Campaign Life Coalition have been warning the church about the dangers of Bill C-4 and similar bills for about two years now, and some of us have been writing or politicians claiming that this bill is an attack by the enemy on the very foundation of the family and the Word of God, which gives God’s clear plan for marriage and family. This attack not only puts faithful Bible believing clergy and counsellors at risk for fines and imprisonment; it also puts good Christian parents in jeopardy as well. In response to Bill C-4’s disregard for the authority of the Bible, Christian leaders from all across Canada have encouraged pastors and priests to take a stand and speak out from their pulpits on Sunday, January 16th. The emphasis for this Sunday is to faithfully uphold and proclaim the biblical view of marriage, family, and sexual morality in this time of great confusion and error. Satan is causing such confusion, especially to our children that they don’t know which washroom to use!

The EMCC denomination has a clear stand on Biblical marriage and sexuality. The Articles of Faith of the EMCC denomination states the following about

marriage, *“Marriage is part of God’s design in establishing the family. We believe that marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman. This heterosexual union is the only appropriate relationship within which the joy of sexual intimacy is to be expressed. We affirm such marriage as God’s design for a lifelong loving relationship, sexual intimacy, and the birth and nurture of children. Christian marriage is intended for those who share a common faith in Christ. Such a marriage is blessed by God.”*

As well, to be qualified to pastor here at SCCC a pastor has to agree with the EMCC’s Human Sexuality Affirmation Statement. Here is a sample of some of the statements every pastor must affirm, which goes against bill C-4:

- We agree that there’s no area of our lives that is not in need of Christ’s healing and corrective touch.
- We must reject any attempt to dismiss the Christian biblical worldview as irrelevant or outdated.
- We are to meet and speak on the social issues of our day head-on with courage and compassion.
- We are called to be communities of grace where those who experience same-sex attraction can learn to journey faithfully in submission to Christ and to biblical teaching.
- We must accept the undeniable teaching of Scripture that homosexual acts are sin: there is not a single passage that describes homosexual acts in a positive light. We affirm that Jesus has come to give forgiveness from sins, and to give us the power to live in obedience to His will.
- We must welcome and create opportunities for meaningful interaction with people who identify as LGBTQ, treating them as Jesus has treated us – honestly, graciously, and respectfully. The Lord teaches us gentleness, patience, and respect as we learn to journey together.

Every EMCC pastor will have to break the law to serve according to these statements!

God set the standard for Biblical sexuality for us in the account of creation – **Genesis 1:27-28, “God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it.’”** God created us with a very specific identity – male or female – either “xx” or “xy”

chromosomes in every cell of our body, regardless of what we may believe. God created us male and female to procreate and fill the earth, and to live in peace and harmony with one another as we rule and look after His creation. God's design was for the man and the woman to work alongside of each other, not in competition but as equal partners, as helpmates, carrying out His perfect will, and we can only do that by following God's standard for Biblical sexuality – by cleaving to one another in a heterosexual marriage as husband and wife, becoming one flesh. And then sin entered the world and the perfect standard that God had established fell into abuse, misuse, and ruin, and we have been suffering the consequences ever since!

To address this subject of Biblical Sexuality I would like us to go to **Romans 1:18-32**. As we turn to these verses, I would like to make some observations and comments about secular society. When Paul wrote this letter almost 2000 years ago, first century society was very similar to the time we are living in today. So, the question we need to ask as we look at Paul's letter to the church in Rome is this: *“Have we been transported back to ancient Rome's anything goes culture? Does this letter speak directly to our situation?”* Here in Canada and the US we are seeing signs of decay, a degradation of society, especially in the area of marriage and sexuality – marriage is being redefined, and our children have become victims of the LGBTQ agenda who are in the front lines of Satan's attack against the family. Children are confused about their sexual identity, who God created them to be, and then the most dangerous place for a child is inside their mother's womb. God is being removed from all areas of society and the voice of the church is being silenced by ungodly laws!

As a result we are experiencing the break-up of the family, and a general loss of the cultural stability that our parents and grandparents enjoyed. Christian Journalist Rod Dreher, wrote this in Time Magazine, *“Christians must understand that things are going to get much more difficult for us. We are going to have to learn how to live with at least a mild form of persecution. And we are going to have to change the way we practice our faith and teach it to our children, to build resilient communities.”* He wrote that statement about 10 years ago and things have only gotten worse. God's Word and Christianity as we have known it is definitely under attack here in Canada!

So, what do we do as the church as this assault is intensifying – coming against us and God's Word? Do we fight, do we flee underground, do we conform, do we dig

our heads in the sand and pretend everything will work out? Is it a time to stand up and be vocal about our faith, or do we remain silent as we have in the past, not getting involved in politics, education, and the affairs of our nation; thereby, allowing them to keep disregarding the truth of God's Word from influencing their decisions? I believe that silence is no longer an option for the church; however, we are in for a battle, because society doesn't want the church to be part of their conversations any longer. However, the problem for us is this, what kind of voice should we have on current hot topics such as LGBTQ rights, same sex marriage, and what our children and grandchildren are being taught in school? When we lack unity as the body of Christ, the church is divided on this subject marriage and sexuality. While the church can agree that God has a Biblical design for our lives, for marriage and sexuality, the problem is that not all Christ followers can agree on what God's Biblical design looks like. While we can all agree that Christ is our example; the problem is that not every believer is clear on what Christ taught in His Gospels, or what the Apostle Paul taught in his letters, so there is disunity and disagreement among believers, which further complicates our situation – we can't get our act together!

I believe that Paul was facing the same issues 2000 years ago – when he wrote this letter to the church in Rome that we are facing today. In this letter Paul is making some observations about life – observations about a godly life verses an un-godly life, and Paul is doing that without being judgmental, critical, or condemning. Paul is stating some basic facts about human nature, and then lets his audience come to their own conclusions. Basically, Paul is telling his audience why everyone needs the Gospel message, why Jesus is the answer for both believers and unbelievers! The very first truth that Paul wants to tell his audience is that the Gospel is necessary not simply to help us live with joy, peace, contentment, but there is such a thing as the “*wrath of God.*” Because sin entered the world, all of humanity, apart from the Gospel message, are under God's wrath, because godlessness and wickedness is totally contrary to what Jesus said where the two greatest commandments: “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these*” (Mark 12:30-31). The church shows the world how to love God and love each other!

Paul begins this section – on God’s Wrath Against Sinful Humanity – by giving us his thoughts on those that have never had the opportunity to hear the Gospel message. Have you ever wondered about those living in remote places of the world, or those that live within our community that have never opened a Bible or heard about Jesus except as a swear word, or those of other faiths like Hindus, Buddhists, or Muslims; are they out of luck because they were born in the wrong place, at the wrong time, or to the wrong parents? Is salvation only for the chosen few who have heard the Gospel message or who have read the Bible?

Even though Paul makes it very clear here that God will pour out His wrath on the sinful and wicked; God is still merciful, gracious, loving and just; however, there are no excuses for ignorance about God’s existence. Since the beginning of time, every person can look around and say, *“You know somebody intelligent and powerful is behind all of this.”* As well within every person’s heart they know deep down what is right and wrong because every person was made in God’s image. As Paul tells us in **Romans 1:20**, *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”* As we look at all of the evidence of the complexities of creation that surrounds us (mountains, rivers, trees, plants, animals, fish, birds, insects); as we look up at the night sky at the stars, and with telescopes at the distant galaxies; as we look into microscopes at the invisible world, as we observe the miracle of birth – how can anyone not believe in a Creator! How can anyone believe that it all came as a result of chance out of slime over billions of years? As we have been created in the image of God, there is something deep within each one of us that makes us spiritual, longing for a relationship with our Creator, a longing for purpose and meaning!

And then, we not only have an outward witness of God’s existence, but we also have an inward witness. God created us with a conscience to know right from wrong, without ever hearing or knowing about God’s Laws, and God’s Ten Commandments. We know it is wrong to kill, steal, or take advantage of others. With all this clear evidence of God around us – external evidence, plus internal evidence; unfortunately, despite our wisdom and advances in science, medicine, technology, and knowledge, some will continue to be foolish, reject the light of God’s truth and remain in darkness, passing ungodly laws that degrade us as humans created in the image of God. Paul points out here in these verses that there

are serious consequences of not coming into the light and acknowledging the existence of God, of not worshipping and glorifying God, and of not giving Him our praise and thanks. Paul's conclusion is that a darkened rebellious heart has exchanged God's truth for a lie, so can only produce wicked habits and pass wicked laws, and since everyone is created to worship something – we will change the object of our worship from God to idols, and vile self-centered passions!

Paul tells us that there are consequences to living in darkness – the first consequence is idolatry, choosing to worship the wrong things: **Romans 1:23**, *“they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.”* So, if we reject to worship the Creator, we will worship something else. Today, very few worship statues, but we do build shrines to ourselves and our achievements; in this affluent nation of Canada, we worship our houses, cars, careers, success, athletes, entertainers, and wealth rather than the Creator. The main problem of our heart is not the desires for bad things, but it's our obsession for good things and pleasures, turning them into our gods. This is part of the wrath of God in turning over to our ungodly passions, all because of free choice, God lets us make poor decisions and suffer the consequences. So, God's judgment is to give us what we want, and as a result, we experience the destructive power of idolatry and self-centeredness. Instead of finding blessings, our sinful pursuits cause us to be constantly searching for happiness, pleasure, contentment, and fulfillment in all of the wrong places!

The second consequence is unnatural sinful desires abusing each other. Damage to our vertical relationship with God damages our horizontal relationship with others, in how we love and treat others. **Romans 1:24-28** *“God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts...exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones...and received the due penalty for their error. Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.”* Idolatry results in degrading, deviant, unnatural and immoral behaviour, forsaking God's truths and believing Satan's lies!

Romans 1:26-27 – are one of the more controversial passages in the Scriptures, and the longest passages in the Bible on homosexuality. To understand these two

verses, we need to read them in context with all of Romans. I believe it was not Paul's intent to apply these verses out of context because I believe they are only examples that Paul uses for depravity and immoral behaviour as a result of forsaking God and His Word. They are examples that were appropriate for his audience in making his point. What I want us to understand is that these verses on homosexuality and same sex attractions have nothing to do with true sacrificial love between two humans, regardless: if they are the love between two men, or the love between two women, or the love between a man and woman; instead, these verses have everything to do with abusive self-centered and self-gratifying sexual relations. Self-centered unnatural and degrading acts are an abomination against God's purposes of love and sex – which God created for joy, for procreation, and for stable marriages and families. Paul could have just as effectively used other examples here, such as those that practice adultery, incest, or bestiality to make his point of sinful self-centered sexual behaviour that is against God's perfect order of His creation, but homosexuality was rampant in Roman culture at that time and seen as normal, not as deviant behaviour!

Because of these examples of sinful behaviour – God had no choice but to give them over to their shameful lusts. God gave us free will; therefore, if we choose not to follow Him and His laws, then God has no choice but to let us go and suffer the consequences of our poor choices. And of course, God is upset, and heart-broken over having to let those He loves go and ruin their lives and the lives of those around them, but true sacrificial love can't be bought, forced, or demanded from anyone, it comes only through free choice. We must choose to love God and love others and turn from our wickedness!

Paul's point here is that homosexuality is an example of sin to this church, living in a Roman culture that accepted and celebrated homosexuality as perfectly normal and even celebrated like we do today with our pride parades and rainbow flags. As Paul was calling out the sin of homosexuality, the church would have been shouting, *“Preach it Paul! Tell those sinners about the wrath of God that is coming to them!”* However, this was a clever set up by Paul for these self-righteous judgmental Christians who thought sins were on a scale from the very worst to those that were not-so-bad. This church in Rome, plus the church today forgets that sin-is-sin-is-sin – that God hates all sin! That's why Paul goes on to make his point by describing a godless person in **Romans 1:29-31**, *“They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are*

full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.” Paul is saying that God hates all of these sins as much as He hates sexual sin! If a person chooses to live apart from God in darkness, then the end result is sin, and all sins are equal in God’s eyes and every sin is as destructive as the sin of homosexuality to humanity!

Whenever anyone rejects God – they are on the slippery slope of sin. It all begins innocently with a tempting thought. And if you entertain that thought, hang on to it long enough and fantasize about it, you cross over the line and start down the slippery slope of sin. Sin doesn’t just happen; we choose to sin by not taking our thoughts captive and by continuing to feed that sinful desire so that it grows out-of-control. The root problem of every human is that we have a wicked heart that needs to be kept contained, in-check, and under the control of the Holy Spirit. If not, then a sinful desire can easily turn into an evil wicked deed. At this point a person decides that they are going to do what they want to do; they don’t care what God says, they don’t care who they hurt, and they don’t care what the consequences are. They will carry out that sinful desire no-matter-what, and no one is going to stop them. Now the person is hooked, sin has taken over their entire life – it consumes them. They have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, so as they slide further down that slide, their wicked habit becomes a corrupted character, and they want others to join them to make themselves feel good about themselves!

Now we’re talking about not what a person does, but who they are – their identity. Now, we no longer talk about what people do; now we talk about who they are: *“They are gossips, slanderers, cheaters, thieves, murderers, adulterers, homosexuals.”* Sin has now become their identity to those around them. Lastly, a corrupt character can become a deadly destiny that deserves death, coming under God’s wrath, unless they hear the Good News of the Gospel, the truth of God’s Word to set them free. Here’s Paul’s conclusion in **Romans 1:32**, *“Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”* At the very bottom of the slippery slope, they no longer know right from wrong, they have lost sight of God, wanting others to join them in their deadly destiny. The end result is that they pass laws to protect their way of life and

deviant behaviour. They indoctrinate the youth in our schools to question the absolute truth; question their parent's beliefs, and not to trust Bible believing Christians!

“Those who practice such things are deserving of death,” should be a wake-up call for those living where there is a church in their community, where Bibles are readily available, and where you can hear the Gospel message on your TV, cellphone, or computer. Today, those that have been exposed to the Gospel message are highly privileged. So, to the highly privileged, like those living in Canada, Paul's words, ***“people are without excuse”*** should ring loud and clear in their minds, putting holy fear into every heart. Then the question for me is this: *“Since, I as a believer have been given much, how much have I given much back?”* So, the right question to ask is this: *“How will God judge me, a privileged and blessed Canadian citizen living in Chatham-Kent or Lambton, or wherever, who has heard the Gospel message numerous times, and to whom much has been given? How much do I love others to tell them the truth!”*

The recent passing of Bill C-4 (the ban on *“conversion therapy”*) has been yet another attack on biblical Christianity and the truth of God's Word, and there will be many more attacks against Biblical truths coming in the future. This bill has now opened the door to an all-out attack against our Christian values. So, as believers we need to be constantly aware of the tactics of Satan our enemy and stop being silent because we will end up losing all of our privileges and rights in this nation of Canada. We may not suffer, but our children and grandchildren will be the ones that will suffer in not enjoying the privileges we have had. Our generation here in Canada and the US have been very privileged to live in a time when going to church and sharing the Gospel was not illegal, punishable by prison or death.

I want to conclude this message with Jesus' words found in **John 14:6**, ***“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*** Our message to the world around is that what we do with Jesus matters – He is, ***“the only way to God,”*** there's no middle ground; there aren't a great many different ways to God; there's only one way to God. The unbelievers around us need the Good News of the Gospel – because there's always hope. No one has to live under God's wrath because God has already made provisions for our sins to be forgiven when Jesus died on the cross. Our Saviour Jesus Christ in His atoning death and life-giving Holy Spirit is a perfect and complete Saviour to all those in

sexual sin or any other sin. The church is called to address the sin, as we hate the sin, but love the sinner! The church is called to reach out and give hope and offer reconciliation to those that are suffering in sinful lifestyles, regardless of the sin. We can't allow the government or anyone else to take away our voice and silence the voice of the church!

Let's also consider these challenging words of **Martin Luther**: *“If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at the moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved. And to be steady on all the battlefields besides is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.”* Let's not allow intimidation or fear to silence our proclamation of the Biblical truth about sexual sin at this critical time we are currently living in. God is looking for faithful men and women who will stand in the gap before God on behalf of the land that God should not destroy it! (Ezekiel 22:30).