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- Audio Sermons
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Please Join us for Worship

Sundays

9:30am - Bible Study

10:20am & 5pm - Worship

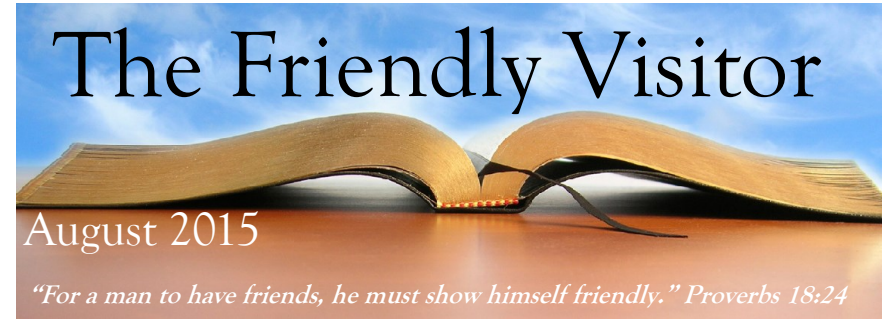
Wednesdays

7pm - Bible Study

Jones Road Church of Christ

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"In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother." 1 John 3:10



No One Can Make Us Sin

John R. Gibson

There has been a dramatic cultural shift in this country and same-sex marriage is now a legal and widely accepted part of our culture, yet those who take seriously the teachings of Scriptures have to be concerned. This is conduct that will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10) and lead to the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:6-7). And though some would say it's no different than any other sin, Rom. 1:20-28 calls it uncleanness that dishonors the body because it is unnatural and the result of vile passions. It is there depicted, not as "a sin that's no worse than any other," but as the result of a mind that has refused to glorify God, become unthankful, and darkened. When homosexuality becomes commonplace in a society, it is about more than the ever-present prevalence of the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:15-17); it is a clear reflection of a cultural rejection of God.



While Christians should be concerned about the increasing degradation of our society, I want this article to be a note of optimism, an encouragement to realize we can be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10). That our nation chooses to legalize and glamorize this sin undoubtedly will lead to more sin, but that doesn't mean we, our children, grandchildren, or anyone else cannot go against the trend and be strong in the face of cultural corruption. That "the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of tempta-

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tions” (2 Pet. 2:9) should be of great encouragement, for this reassuring promise is found in the context of Noah being a preacher of righteousness in a world so ungodly it had to be destroyed and Lot living as a righteous man despite being surrounded by “the filthy conduct of the wicked” (2 Pet. 3:4-9). If Noah and Lot, living in two of the most corrupt times ever, could practice righteousness, so can we.

It will not be easy, but may I remind you that this is not the first time America has rejected God’s marriage plan. Divorce has been legal, easy to obtain, and very affordable (when uncontested) my entire adult life, yet I am not unique among Christians in never having been divorced. In a culture that long ago moved past the previous stigma and a religious environment which is generally accepting of divorce, many remain faithfully married all their days as God has instructed (Matt. 19:3-9). I readily acknowledge and lament the fact that the cultural corruption of easy divorce has claimed far too many Christians, but let’s understand and appreciate the fact that countless thousands (or is it millions?) have refused to go along with this and we can do the same when it comes to homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

We can rise above the corruption, but to do so we must have strong convictions based on the word of God. The armor of God which enables us to stand against the spiritual hosts of wickedness includes a waist girded with truth, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith (which comes from God’s word—Rom. 10:17), and the Spirit’s sword, i.e. the word of God (Eph. 6:10-17). To be properly equipped in this battle, you must study the Scriptures diligently and carefully; then teach them to your children and all who will listen.

My next suggestion is inseparably linked to the first—keep your heart with all diligence (Prov. 4:23). The endorsement of homosexual behavior as the new normal will be found in news reports, sports commentary, social media, and our nation’s entertainment, including movies, television, and music. The pervasiveness of this will make it difficult to avoid all exposure to it, but we can guard our minds by filling them with Scripture and then doing what we can to limit exposure to those things which would corrupt our minds and the minds of our children. Though we can’t avoid all the immoral propaganda, we don’t have to continually put ourselves in front of shows that portray immorality as normal. But if we and our children choose to do so, our thinking will eventually begin to be compromised. “Do not be deceived! Evil company corrupts good habits.” 1 Cor. 15:33

As you feed on the Scriptures and seek to guard your mind, never

lose sight of the consequences of this sin. Rom. 1:27 speaks of receiving “the penalty of their error which was due,” and 1 Cor. 6:9-10 says this unrighteousness action will keep us from the kingdom of God. Heb. 13:4 tells us that God will judge the sexually immoral and Jude 1:7 talks of “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” I’m not suggesting we should avoid this or any other sin only out of fear, but to understand the eternal consequences of this sin should help any who might be tempted to begin “exploring” their feelings or “experimenting” with new things. Don’t miss the warning of 1 Cor. 6:9—do not be deceived!

While I lament the increasing pace of degradation in our country, we can rise above it. Let’s resolve to “take up the whole armor of God, that [we] may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” Eph. 6:13

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Wise or Foolish?

Are we wise or foolish? Proverbs suggests many differences between the two, but a fundamental one may be found in 9:7-9.

“He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself,
And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.
Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;
Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

Does our response to correction, rebuke, instruction, and teaching reflect wisdom or folly?

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Ephesians 6:13