

Brave Church/Hard Topics, 10/6: Sexual Orientation/Identity, continued

The chat log of the discussion. NOTE: Names have been removed for privacy.

Covenant Rules:

- 1) we will accept conflict and commit to the way of kindness
- 2) we will take responsibility for how our own words are received.
- 3) we will ask permission before we challenge someone's views on a subject
- 4) we will show respect for one another and graciously receive feedback if someone feels disrespected.
- 5) we will use 'i' instead of 'you' statements. we will not accuse or attack.
- 6) Give everyone who wants to speak who wants to speak an opportunity to do so (:use raise hand feature::)

Comments on PC(USA)'s Guidance on Biblical Interpretation, Rule of Love

first exposure to it - didn't come into perspective of who someone was - got to know many young people
"golden rule" as related concept

heard argument from others "what they're doing is abomination and our 'love' is to correct them"

some say "hate the sin and love the sinner" but things are not simply black and white in the world. Shows the consequences of being afraid of the world changing

question about "separation of church and state"

struggling with literal interpretations of the Bible vs. taking it within context. I'm definitely not perfect, so it's confusing to get a grasp of whether we'll have a meeting of the minds of how it's defined as a sin.

Discussion: LGBTQIA+ Is Not a Lifestyle Choice or a "Disease" to Cure

men not wanting to hang out with gay men for fear of being accused of being gay

personal questions about how to handle whether acceptance of many LGBTQ aspects is hypocritical if you are wrestling with transgender

Fear could stem from concern about heterosexuality becoming a minority. What group is in majority vs. minority

persecution has led people to lead heterosexual appearing lives to cover up what's not accepted

if making a choice on whether to be trans or not - does it matter, because if they make a choice we should accept it

choice in how someone acts on whether to "transition" but there are things going on in a transgender person where they internally wrestle with not identifying as the sex they were born with

importance of talking and listening to individuals

sexuality as a continuum

what's considered male and female has been fluid and sometimes you're comfortable in that role and sometimes you're not. internal turmoil will exist anytime you don't fit into what society views as the norm reference of Ancient Greeks being comfortable with each other. Political reasons often fueled conflict sexual expression can be complex and vast - just like we are as human beings

What does it mean to be made in God's image?

metaphorical way of being/acting/acceptance/love - that we're supposed to look at everyone in the same way

Bible was written by men for men

original sin is getting knowledge - so feels a bit off

"God created them" - some cultures believe male/female 2 in 1. Believe that men and women are both in God

I always thought God looked like a nun

essence of God is big enough to include male and female

field trip to Mormon temple - Jesus portrayed as very pale/blonde/blue eyed vs. a "spirit representative of all of us"

impact of the word "essence" in describing God.

"its a challenge to be in the majority and to be inclusive; also a challenge to be in the minority"

Where the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) Stands on LGBTQIA+ civil rights, ordination of LGBTQIA+, same-sex marriage

How can we have 'We choose welcome' on our sign and NOT act with inclusivity and embrace?

I think that the Methodists say "Open Doors, Open Minds, Open Hearts."

Confirming - it's United Methodist Church

cross-country cultural differences are approaching these matters differently

current feeling that people do feel welcome at our church

pastors could bring this information up more often

are we talking the talk well but not always taking the actions we speak about?

surprised it's still a decision to be made by congregations

perception that within church of what can you or can you not bring up. how can we really give the sense that someone could really come and lay their burdens down.

challenge to incorporate new people into the life of the church- regardless of their background, we could work on that.

I am always impressed how Ravensworth Baptist Church has a rainbow on their sign and also a reference of their association with Palestine. I wish Grace had that on our sign.

the barrier isn't about once they're there but how to get them there to be welcomed

seeing first hand how our pastors that do a lot in the regard of making sure people know they are loved and welcome.

session and 2 pastors have decided to be welcome.

how can we treat each and every individual who walks through the door?

practicing grace with our own membership and with anyone who visits

people have different comfort levels. If someone who is LGBTQ came to this conversation, would they be comfortable with it?

how do we encourage dialogue like this, but among a broader congregation?

taking the time to learn, equipping them to learn, giving them time to learn

being both a safe and a brave space

are there dissenting opinions that don't feel safe adding to the discussion?

so happy that Grace is on the side of acceptance not on the side of hatred

are we saying something that isn't welcoming? should we be doing something differently?

I wish I could speak to my brother on this subject. He has already attacked me, telling me there was no way a child in the first grade could know they were transgender. I agree this group is rather homogenous in their approach.

someone coming in judges by what they observe (are sermons filled with condemnation or openness/love? are people doing kind things in general to everyone?)

we need to be welcoming regardless

Grace's presence known through participation in marches/etc.

maybe open up doors for groups to meet in church to show they really are welcome (that it's more than just our phrase on a sign)

Check out this method of Welcome: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGt8Lnhgrz8>

I was pleased that my granddaughters went to the LGBTQ Prom in support of their gay friends.

Are there ways we can learn more about how not to be inadvertently unwelcoming