

Responding to Lifestyle Arguments

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What does the term “lifestyle choice” mean? It is a popular term today that often is used to describe living in a manner that might be contrary to the Bible. It is usually associated with sexual matters; fornication, adultery, homosexuality and gender changes are characterized in the Bible as sinful but by the world as “lifestyle choices”. When we are confronted with these matters, often people declare “it does not hurt anyone” as their defense. Is that so? It might seem difficult to refute this claim at first, yet the Bible provides us with ample examples of how “lifestyle choices” can create great harm.

DAVID: In 2 Samuel 11 we see the story of David and Bathsheba. Perhaps David might have characterized this record as a love affair, and at first someone might say that no one was hurt. But we know that when the matter became known, Uriah (Bathsheba’s husband) was ultimately murdered. God brought consequences on David that included the death of his child, rebellion (murder and rape) among his adult children, and ultimately a civil war in his nation. David’s choices about whom he loved might have seemed “unharmful” at first, but ultimately led to the deaths of thousands.

JACOB: In Genesis 30 we read of Jacob and his wives (four if we count his concubines). Many would claim that polygamy or other non-conforming marriages (i.e. Genesis 2/Matthew 19) do not hurt anyone, and thus ought not to be viewed negatively. Yet the polygamous marriage of Jacob reveals that even for a godly person this situation wreaks havoc in the home. Strife between wives led to strife and rebellion among children; ultimately, an attempted murder (Joseph) took place from this situation.

It has long been a tactic of our adversary to tell us that something is not wrong if we cannot see the consequences. Satan said this to Eve in the Garden (Genesis 2), and he continues to tell us today that if the consequences of sin are not obvious or easily seen, they are not present. Yet we who are spiritual know that sin ALWAYS has consequences, often here in this life, but always in the next (Romans 6:23).

God made rules about sexuality for good reasons. First, God created us as sexual beings because sexuality was meant to consummate the marriage covenant (Genesis 2:23-24, Hebrews 13:4). Sexuality was a power meant to bind a husband and wife in marriage. What happens when that power is removed from the place of its purpose? The emotional power of sexuality is completely unstable and uncontrollable outside marriage (Song of Solomon 8:4-7). It brings destruction to those who carelessly participate in sexual behavior apart from marriage (Proverbs 6:27). The consequences of sexuality outside of its place are extreme (1 Corinthians 6:18-19); just as it has the power to consummate the marriage covenant, it (alone) also has the power to destroy it (Matthew 19:9).

The world’s problem is that it is trying to create a morality based on lies and distortions of truth. We believe in God; HE dictates morality, HE controls the totality of reality, HE brings the fate of people, and HE judges all at the end. Such a belief means that the “lifestyle choices” of others destroy them and hurt us. Actions have consequences: it hurts us all if it angers God; it hurts us all if it is against God’s design; it hurts those who seek righteousness.