

The Moral Dilemma
IN, part 2
11/21/20
Newport News

Opening

-as our kids are being dismissed (shout out to our Kid's ministries!)

-if you are visiting with us tonight...

- online, facebook, youtube, our live stream
- or in the room...we are glad you are here
- could I ask a favor of you...the number on the screen...

-I've asked for the service a little early tonight because there is a lot of ground I want to cover, this message may feel disjointed...(explain)

1. talk about the premise of this series
2. share some things God is showing me about myself
3. teach on one of the most important keys to our pursuit of unity
4. I want to build on Sharon's message from last week
5. I'm going to risk vulnerability...
6. close with some thoughts on how we keep the unity we already have and build upon it.
7. Pray

The Moral Dilemma

-Swann's text...

-Compassion & Conviction (doesn't take sides...it creates a side!)

It's intellectually lazy to agree with the same political party on every single issue. That's a clear indication that we've been indoctrinated, which should never be an option for Christians.

-My intention with this series has been to challenge us all, myself included, that whatever political party we lean toward, it does not mirror Christianity. You might feel yours mirrors Christianity more than the other, but there is the rub, the conflict...Christians on both sides equally feel the same way, hence this series.

-Make room for one another's minds while staying relationally connected at the heart.

Vulnerability (Brene [Bre-neigh] Brown)

-don't get nervous, I'm not setting you up for some big confession of moral failing...

-I like to think of myself as being vulnerable...but I'm not.

-Transparency: being open about personal things that don't make me feel uncomfortable to share, sharing things that I don't think risk me being hurt.

-Vulnerability: being open about personal things that make me feel uncomfortable to share, sharing things that I think do risk me being hurt.

-(talk about why vulnerability is hard for lots of pastors)

- people and their secrets
- our reaction, step towards or away (trust for healing)
- pastors find this isn't reciprocal, wounds created

-So my commitment to you is that I'm going to work on being better at vulnerability...and later in this message I'm going to practice some.

My God, My God

-Look at these three phrases with me...

- **My God, My God (Matthew 27:46)**
- **Come and See (Luke 24:9-12)**
- **Go and Tell (Acts 1:8)**

- These last two are Hallelujah moments...the first one is a Heck No moment! (we like being in the story for those two, but not the first one!)

-(story of worship ministry the early years...make me want to dance!)

-Psalm 27:13...heaven now...Heaven forever!

-I've forgotten that every Hallelujah begins with a Heck No!

-Galatians 2:20 (dying to self...the valley of Psalm 23!!!!)

- Marriages
- Parenting
- Salvation
- Family
- Church Family

-**Genesis 32:22-31** (recount the story)

- Prophetic picture of the incarnation
- Fully God and Fully Man
- Hebrews 4:15
 - Wrestling of Genesis 32 = Gethsemane of Matthew 26
- Wounding of Genesis 32 = Crucifixion of Matthew 27

-Recently... (being vulnerable here)

- Feeling sorry for myself...(used the word "hard")
- Opened up my Bible reading plan
- Hebrews 11
- The Holy Spirit says to me, "You don't even know what hard is."
- Hebrews 11:35b-38

-John 17 is my dream for this church...because I believe this is the key to us reaching our city with the soul saving Gospel of Jesus...this is what the Holy Spirit said to me this week...

The oneness We share comes from our shared divinity. All 3 of Us are perfect. None of you are. That's why Jesus prayed for your oneness, because We all know you will never attain it without our help to overcome your humanity. Dying to self is hard.

-My reflection...

And that's when I realized it...the work of oneness isn't hard, it's all of us who are hard. We run from the My God, My God moments in life, chasing after the next Hallelujah...not realizing that every Hallelujah always begins with a Heck No.

IN Continued

-Pride tries to figure out how many people I can keep out of God's family, the Gospel tries to figure out how many people I can get in

-Romans 8:1-2, 31-35

-Condemnation (last weeks message inspired me to study)

- Katakrima (kat-ak-ree-mah)
- A damnatory sentence (explain, court illustration)
- Romans 5:16
- Romans 5:18

-This is why Sharon's warning to us all last week was so profound...from the moment we allow ill feelings to grow in our hearts toward others, they become the seeds of condemnation, posturing us in a place of writing people off.

-(read slide on screen)

-(talk about Paul's other letters: he criticizes, makes discerning judgments, corrects, complains, disciplines...often with harsh tones and harsh language and publicly...but always for the purpose of bringing people to repentance!)

-correction vs. condemnation (explain...Hebrews 10:24!!!!)

My Confessions

-competing ideas and competing points of view (c's above not only options)

-Philippians 2:1-4 (KJV)

- KJV gets it right! Supposed to be generic, the whole person
- we believe in making room for competing ideas...that's a healthy church...(people aren't used to this...)

-(time for some more vulnerability...I also ask that you refrain from any "amens" or "that's good" at this point)

-My confession: I've been guilty of condemnation toward Trump and Biden.

- I'm not convinced Trump is a Christian.
- For me, I want to see some steps, some evidence that your life reflects your profession of faith.
- Matthew 3:8
- Titus 1:16
- James 3:9-15 (he demeans people, mocks people, flippantly uses the Lord's Name in vain...)
- It is difficult for me to reconcile both narcissism and racism with genuine Christian faith. (just my own observation)

- Proverbs 6:16-19 (when are we going to stop telling God what to believe)
- *So I have forgiveness to ask tonight from all of you. Forgive me for my acts and feelings of condemnation toward our President. I realize now the time I spent in condemnation could have been better spent bringing a Biblical criticism of his conduct and more frequently calling us all to a place of prayer on his behalf for a heart change, for him to yield to Christ more fully.*
- I do believe Biden is a Christian.
- Catholicism and Protestantism are BOTH forms of Christianity.
- He has probably been to church more than the rest of us!
- If we are fans of Jesus, we better be fans of His bride!
- I believe him to be a man of compassion, empathy, and sincerity. (just my own observation)
- But I struggle with Biden too, equally so.
- *It is difficult for me to reconcile his support of abortion laws, support of LGBTQ lifestyles, support of what I believe to be the dismantling of the Biblical nuclear family, a lack of support of Israel who I believe the Bible clearly says has a special place in God's plan for this world, and support of what I believe is an inevitable dismantling of religious freedom...it is difficult for me to reconcile those positions with genuine Christian faith.*
- *So I have forgiveness to ask tonight from all of you, again. Forgive me for my acts and feelings of condemnation toward our President elect. I realize now the time I spent in condemnation could have been better spent bringing a Biblical criticism of his policies and more frequently calling us all to a place of prayer on his behalf for a heart change, to yield to Christ more fully.*

Where Do We Go From Here (the responsive listening moratorium is over)

-(read quote from page 34 Compassion & Conviction)

-Confident Pluralism...*this is part of who we are at City Life Church...we will never negotiate Biblical morality or what we believe to be orthodox doctrinal positions...but we will never reach those who are far from Christ if we aren't willing to listen to their beliefs and points of view...and we will never sharpen one another if we aren't willing to walk in disagreement instead of standing in conflict!*

-The Great Commandment... (read form page 9)

-Acts 15:8-9...these verses have given me such a great sense of pause personally...if God has accepted someone (by giving His Holy Spirit) then I should be willing to work with and attend church with them!

Close/Stand

-Hebrews 11:2...I want this church to have the reputation of being a people of faith who lived to see the impossible.

-Hebrews 13:21...but I know the only way that reputation will come is if we relentlessly pursue His will and painfully admit to everything that is missing in us that without it, we can never be fully pleasing to Him.

-I'm asking tonight, will you stay in this fight for unity and oneness with me? I believe this is not a time to pull back...but a time to press in!!!!