

# Pastoral REFLECTIONS

Gentle Reprove

August 6, 2023



We live in a time when the politics of the day controls the culture we are supposed to adopt. If we do not succumb to the culture, then we are defined as homophobic, closed-minded, and hateful. This is partly true. Some Christians have become hateful, downright angry, so nothing about how they approach this subject represents the attitude and character of Christ. At Living Word Fellowship Church, we are first committed to loving each other, which is the greatest of all the commandments (Matthew 22:36-40), and without it, the scriptures state we have nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). Without love, Christ is so displeased. He would rather leave our presence (Revelation 2:1-5). The issue is that love has been defined by those who write love novels and Hollywood, so when God defines love, it appears to be emotionless and therefore insensitive to feelings and thoughts.

When my parents instructed me to eat vegetables, I could not stand the vegetables or them. I tried the dog, my little brother, and the trash when they were not looking. So, my parents had to go to different means like belts, stern warnings, and even punishment; like, who takes desert from a kid; mean huh? None of this did I like, but all of it I needed. This is because love is not defined by the receiver; the giver defines love. When the Giver's very nature is love, like water is wet, He becomes the person who defines it. As a result, love is defined by God, not our feelings.

The LGBTQIA+ community lifestyle goes against the scriptures, but how about how we treat them? When we address subjects like homosexuality or the LGBTQIA+ community from a Biblical perspective, the scriptures define the attitude and the mindset we must have. We must serve with a spirit of gentleness for the purpose of restoration (Matthew 18:15-18; Galatians 6:1-5). We cannot demonstrate this kind of attitude without the Holy Spirit dominating our words, the wisdom we provide, and the character we display (Philippians 2:1-5). It is not about us. First, it is about His purposes for His children. When we serve based on His purposes, first, we should remove biases, and hate because His nature in us displaces those attitudes shaped by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25), which includes love and kindness.

When we address this issue from the scriptures with the attitude of Christ, it then serves to build up a believer, not tear them down. This is the purpose of love, and it is for this purpose we strive as we address this very sensitive issue this month. Let us remain in the Word, keep growing, and trusting because the Lord is our salvation. This way, our feelings do not become our God; it becomes our point of growth as we pick up this cross, committed to following Christ and Christ alone (Luke 14:25-33).

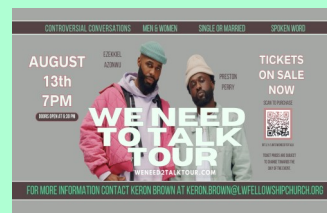
## UPCOMING Events



**GARAGE SALE — SAT. AUG. 19 8AM-12PM**  
Join us Living Word Family to donate, volunteer and attend a Garage Sale at The Reach. All ministries are encouraged to be a part. All proceeds will benefit Joshua Williams and his recovery. 4333 W. Little York Rd. Houston, TX 77091. For more information contact Jeffrey Allen at [Jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:Jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org).



**NACA HOMEOWNERSHIP EVENT**  
Join us Living Word Family and learn about credit restoration and the best ways to save for buying a home. This event will give advice from the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) specialist on information about purchasing a home whether you are a first-time home buyer or repeat home buyer. Also there will be information on restructuring your mortgage. For more information contact Jeff Allen at [jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org)



**WE NEED TO TALK TOUR — SUN. AUG. 13 7PM**  
There are so many toxic ideas floating around these days, it's hard to avoid. Instead of ignoring them, "We Need To Talk," provides a night of intimate discussions about real issues and spoken word. Men, women, single, or married, you don't want to miss this! Buy your tickets today at [bit.ly/LWFCWeNeedToTalk](http://bit.ly/LWFCWeNeedToTalk). For more information contact Keron Brown at [keron.brown@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:keron.brown@lwfellowshipchurch.org).



**FREE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT CODING CAMP**  
Attention all youth 7th - 12th grades and all L.E.G.I.T. Young Adults, we are offering a FREE CODING CAMP August 11th 6-8 p.m. and Saturday, August 12th 9 am - 1 p.m. You will learn valuable computer science skills : how to code a website and a blog. Sign up on the events page of our website and for more information contact Shani Smothers at [shani.smothers@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:shani.smothers@lwfellowshipchurch.org)



**LWCA BACK TO SCHOOL SPECIAL**  
Back to School is almost here! Sign up for our LWCA S.T.E.A.M. (science - technology - engineering - arts & math) before and after care for ages 5-12. students will learn chess, robotics, arts and crafts, cooking classes, outdoor sports including tennis, and godly principles. Special lock-in price of \$85 if you register by August 15, 2023! \$120 per week after that date. Register at [www.lwcacademy.org](http://www.lwcacademy.org) or by calling (713) 686-5538



## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

"Willful"  
Romans 1:21-24

Click "Sermon Notes" on the Website

Call to Discipleship  
Please remain seated at this time

Benediction

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

**Infants—6th grade**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL**

**LEGACY 3:30 4:00 & TUESDAY NIGHTS**

**EFFECTING TODAY FOR TOMMOROW'S**

**YOUTH MINISTRY OF LIVING WORD FELLOWSHIP**

**WEDNESDAY**

**6:30 PM**



Willful  
Romans 1:21-24

A. Suppressed the Truth (v. 21):

- 1.The main subject of this passage of scripture is that no one with an intellect and an understanding of nature can look at it and not see that an intelligent being had to have a design. “The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.” (Psalm 14:1; NASU)
- 2. When people willfully deny God, they purposefully choose not to provide God credit for all He continuously does.
- 3. These individuals who refuse to acknowledge the excellent manifestation of God in all His power and glory also willfully choose not to worship Him.
- 4. Our decisions, without God being our frame of reference, trend down the wrong path and eventually become worthless. Our inward thoughts, when exposed, even lead to arguments or empty conversations.
- 5. The main point of not having God as a point of reference means these individuals have a lack of understanding and discernment, which causes them to live senselessly and aimlessly.
- 6. These individuals' lack of understanding and discernment would stir their inner affections, their entire mental capacity, and their passions to have no reference to who God is.

B. Became Wise in Their Own Eyes (vs. 22-23):

- 1. These individuals continuously claim to be skillful experts with a special understanding of the matters at hand.
- 2. Instead of embracing God's excellent divine nature, they choose to put their hope in man’s ability because of their foolishness.
- 3. Because mankind indirectly demonstrates similar characteristics to God (man is made in the likeness of God; Genesis 1:26-29), the foolishness of those who believe they are wise causes them to place their confidence in the likeness of God rather than in God Himself; the things of the world (Psalm 103:14; 1 John 2:15-17).

C. Darkened (v. 24):

- 1. Because of the willful, purposeful persistence of those who choose to live foolishly, God no longer seeks to convince them to follow Him or to live under His authority. He releases them to be whatever they want to be.
- 2. God releases these individuals from any conviction He may have provided to them so they can now freely follow any strong, obsessive sexual craving they may have.
- 3. Some people who are not LGBTQIA+ may have wanted to flirt or toy with these identities, but because of their commitment to the knowledge of God, to not just know, but to apply it, they could not conform to the world (Romans 12:2). Therefore God did not turn them over to what could be in their hearts. They would rather say like Paul, “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24; NASU)
- 4. By saying lust of the heart, Paul indicates that these individuals possess passions in the deepest crevices of their hearts. This means they are forcefully operating within them so that they feel that this is psychologically who they are. By saying “heart”, Paul is also implying the mindset and will of the person . This is why many LGBTQIA+ individuals believe what they are saying.
- 5. This lust that is fully released and therefore exposed takes place because foolish hearts were darkened. When a heart gets dark (Ephesians 4:17-18), it is because those individuals “walk, in the futility of their mind.” This leads them to no longer be able to accept the conviction of God (excluded from the life of God; Ephesians 4:18), which then leads to the foolishness of the heart (ignorance that is in them; Ephesians 4:18) so that it becomes near impossible to convince them to change (“hardness of heart”; Ephesians 4:18) and they become “callous” (Ephesians 4:19), and then immorality is exposed completely.
- 6. The lust of the hearts, for those who willfully neglect the knowledge of God so that their hearts darken, which in turn causes them to become activity obsessed with all forms of sensuality, evil doctrines, and filthiness. This is why the letters representing the LGBTQIA+ community continue to grow (L-Lesbian, G-Gay, B-Bisexual, T-Transgender, Q-Queer, I-Intersex, A-Asexual; LGBTQIA+).
- 7. God made man’s body in a specific manner to execute His purposes (Genesis 1:26-chapter 2). When a person uses their body outside of this purpose, the scripture teaches that it is being used unnaturally (Romans 1:26-27; Jude 7). At salvation, God says He owns our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20), and it is His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:15-16). The only time someone owns our body is in marriage (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). So, when the body is being used outside of God’s purposes; those who do so willfully reject His Word. God teaches that they behave shamefully, way outside of God’s intent.

IDENTITY DISCUSSION

Live Panel Conversation

TUESDAY  
AUGUST 29TH 7PM

Join Dr. Paul Cannings, Dr. Pierre Cannings, and Pastor Jordan Washington for a formal discussion centered around modern gender identity issues and common questions that effect our youth & children.

SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS  
NOW UNTIL AUG. 25TH

To maintain organization and anonymity throughout the discussion, please submit your questions to Keron Brown by text or email 281-507-0102 or keron.brown@lwfellowshipchurch.org

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DONATIONS FOR GUYANA

AUGUST 13TH - 18TH

Drop off socks & flip-flops  
to your deacon family

NOW UNTIL AUG. 12TH BY NOON

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT  
VALARIE MILLER AT LWFCMISSIONS@LWFELLOWSHIPCHURCH.ORG

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PRAYER REQUESTS

**Grieving:** Robert Horn & family, Ruth Cranford & family, the family of Lakeesha Davis, Leatrice Sam & family, Jackie Jordan & family, Vivian Phillips& family, Melinda Myres & family, Lula Hayes & family, and Beverly Pilson & family.

**Health and Healing:** Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Betty Goode, Latifah Brown, Tanisha Collins, Eric Prichett, Rufus Hadnot, Pat James, Kevin Carey, Lori Lee, Nikisha Doyle, Jessie Austin, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clark, Clara Williams, Betty Cunningham, Wanda Turk, Deborah Smith, Dorothy Price, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter,

WILLFUL

Romans 1:21-24

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