

A FIRM FOUNDATION IN SHIFTING SAND

Quick Review

- We're in the midst of a series:
 - "A Firm Foundation in Shifting Sand"
- I received a respectful challenge:
 - Help the next generation know...
 - What we believe,
 - Why we believe,
 - How to effectively communicate this with others who may disagree.
- Today I want to focus on the greatest key to relating well with those who may see things very differently from me or us.

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Quick Review

A crucial statement by Jesus as a foundation for this message:

“If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.” - Jesus, in John 7:17 (NIV1984)

1. Jesus’ statement above indicates that it was possible to know if the teaching was really of God or not.
2. Lack of willingness to do God’s will hinders understanding.
3. A person’s willingness – actually their choice – to **DO** God’s will would open up their ability to discern and understand.

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The Greatest Key to Relating Well

Obey the two greatest commandments ever given. Matt. 22:36-40

“Love the Lord your God with all...” FIRST AND GREATEST

“Love your neighbor as yourself.” THE SECOND

1. Jesus was asked for “THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT.”
2. Jesus responded by giving two commandments.
3. Jesus placed an order on these...he declared a PRIORITY.
4. Jesus didn't stop at one...he gave TWO. (I John 4:20)
5. It's the blend of these two that is the greatest key.

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A Key Theme of this Series

1. God designed our sexuality...and it was very good.
2. We distorted our sexuality...and it can be very confusing.
3. God gives second chances.
 - a. God's second chances can be very good!
 - b. To benefit from the second chances God gives us we need to let go of our distortions.
 - c. We'll function best with both love and lines (boundaries).
 - d. Jesus loves us and gives us the power to live this out.

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An Essential Biblical Foundation

1. Loving God is the first and greatest commandment.
2. Honoring God is more important than pleasing humanity.
3. Loving my neighbor is a way of loving and honoring God.
4. The two core sins of distrust and disobedience need to be replaced with these acts of repentance: trust and obedience.
5. In God's plan, resurrection life is preceded by death.
6. Luke 9:23-26: *Deny self...take up cross daily...follow Jesus*
7. Foundational: Isaiah 55:8-9 – God's thoughts are way better!

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Crucial Comments to Those Who May Be Listening

8. To those who may be listening with fear as a very real part of your experience right now, this message is from God for you:
 - a. God loves you. God cares.
 - b. I – and we – love you, too.
 - c. God has a way forward. Jesus makes it possible.
 - d. If you so desire, we will do our best to walk with you in experiencing God's love, care, and way forward.
 - e. It was for you and me Jesus came to love, forgive, renew.

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A Confession

1. I want to share a confession. For me personally, and as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I confess that way too often I – and we as a church – have failed to offer what Jesus so clearly offered: both grace and truth, all interwoven. “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” John 1:17 (NIV1984)
2. Grace accepts and empowers us; truth set us free.
3. In Jesus Christ grace and truth thrive together. That’s how I would like to live...full of love, focused with truth.

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The distortions to God's design for marriage and sexuality are so very many...

For every one of God's intentions,
there have been many distortions.

Yet for every distortion,
God has offered second chances.