



December 12, 2021

Lakeland Hills Leader

Religion Of Preference

by Robert F. Turner

"What about homosexuals?" "That is just his sexual preference, and he cannot help his preference." Then we are usually involved in a long and technical investigation into the source of his preference. Is it his genes? Did he learn it from other homosexuals? Is it a reaction to something in his parents' lifestyle? Grant his preference and how he acquired it. His preference poses him a difficult problem, but his preference is not his sin! Assume he can never change that preference; he is still prohibited following its sinful practice (Rom. 1:24-32). Heterosexuals also have preference problems. He may be disposed to chase women. Can he eliminate the inclination? It would be simple if he could push a button and remove the desire. It does not work that way; he will probably have to live with his propensity.

Whatever his disposition, he must not **commit** fornication (1 Cor. 6:18) — fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of God (6:9). Neither can he be **willing** to commit fornication (Mt. 5:28). God judges both practice and heart. A man's preference must be subdued to produce both a godly will and a moral life (Phil. 2:13).

A woman interrupts to justify (?) her abortion. She just prefers not to bear the child that has been conceived in her. Well, that is not such a strange preference. Many people have been surprised and disappointed by an unplanned pregnancy. They did not choose to have a baby. They wish it had not happened — not now. The preference is not wrong, but neither does it justify destroying the child with an abortion. Preference does not establish right; convenience cannot determine life's course; preference is not God.

Another man prefers stealing to working — it is easier. What shall he do? Shall he follow his preference? Not if he wants to please God (Eph. 4:28) — and stay out of jail. A buddy has a real taste for beer. It smells good to him. His mouth waters at the thought of a cold Lone Star. And he really enjoys the way he feels after a few bottles. He centers his life around drinking — and his bumper sticker reads, IF IT FEELS GOOD, DO IT. What shall he do? I doubt he will suddenly detest beer, but he will have to change his practice to go to heaven. You see, good morals are not the product of personal preference.

A "church of your choice" is just another sect of this religion of preference. The defense of this religion is in arguments like "the people are so nice and friendly" and "the preaching makes me feel so good." No matter if it is God's church or if the doctrines and practices agree with truth. Another devotee comments, "I like a piano..." Well, I like an organ better, but what does God want? His preference prevails, does it not?

Preference is a significant part of what Paul calls "will worship" (Col. 2:23). Jeremiah described it by saying people "love to have it so" (Jer. 5:31). But remember: Christians live according to God's preference — even when his will is contrary to our own preference.

Selling Out

by Lance Cordle

There was a song several years ago that had this line in it: When you come close to selling out, consider. The Christian life is not always one of happiness. We face many difficulties in our effort to be faithful to God.

One can look at the life of Joseph to see that a godly life will at times put us in trying circumstances. But through all of Joseph's trials (*family members against him, slavery, false charges by Potiphar's wife, being imprisoned*) he always seemed to stay focused on what was the most important thing in life of obedience to God.

As Christians facing the evil and temptations of this world, we can be presumed to look for an easy way out. It is during these times we need to reconsider and remember God's help is always present; we are not alone (Revelation 2:10), and a reward awaits the faithful that nothing on this earth can match (Psalm 16:11).