

On Oct. 13, 2002, I debated a Harvard theologian named John Rankin. The debate was held in a large church in Casper, Wyoming, and the point in dispute was:

"Does God Hate Homosexuals?"

The event was truly historic, having eternal promise which now is, and that which is to come. With modesty, we say, the whole world should listen to that debate, the entirety of which was transcribed and is available at no charge through Westboro Baptist Church and the Mars Hill Forum. Without hesitation we say that debate was a Game Changer, as they say. Herewith is the Opening Statement by Fred Phelps: to wit:

It is a privilege to appear before this distinguished congregation. The question is, "Does God hate homosexuals?" We lay it down, as an axiom, first off, that the hatred of God is not an evil passion, as it is with men, but is rather an attribute of the Almighty that nobody can deny exists, and is talked about in the Scriptures, whereby He has a fixed determination to punish the impenitent wicked forever, in a place called Hell. And I have to tell you, my friends, that it goes way past hate if you credit the Bible with full authority. It goes to abhor, and it goes to despise. Worse forms of the attitudinal approach of Almighty God to a certain class of people.

In the spring of 1947, as a young ministerial student at Bob Jones in Cleveland, Tenn., I hitchhiked to Chattanooga to preach my first sermon on the street, and in preparation for it, I memorized the **first chapter of Romans**, and that's a good place to start. I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome also, said the apostle. So I stood there on that street corner in Chattanooga, and said: I'm ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Chattanooga also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation for everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek. For therein is revealed the righteousness of God, from faith to faith: as it is written, *"The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."* (Rom. 1:17-18) The word "hold" there means choke it. Throttle it. That string of "fors," that string of subordinating conjunctions -- you can't understand anything about this subject until you connect the string of "fors" in **Romans, Chapter 1**. *"For the wrath of God is revealed"* -- you're not preaching the gospel, for the gospel, -- I'm not ashamed of it, it is the manifestation of the way whereby sinners can be saved, for therein is revealed God Almighty's only plan for salvation from faith to faith. For the just shall live by faith. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed, and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold -- choke the truth -- in unrighteousness. For that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto them, so that they are without excuse. For the invisible things of him - see that string of "fors"?

"For the invisible thing of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood." (Rom. 1:20) Being understood! Seen and *"understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. For when they knew God,"* or at least had that knowledge of him, *"they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. And they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is God blessed forever. Amen."* (Rom. 1:20-25.) And for this cause God gave them up. I'm telling you, my friends, when you start out preaching the Gospel at **verse 15**, and declare you're not ashamed of it, and track that right straight down, you come to *"for this cause God gave them up"* to uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves,

through the lusts of their own minds. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to vile affections, for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind (the expression means that sodomites cannot think straight about anything).

Now, Beloved, please carefully follow the sovereign, five-fold abandonment of God Almighty for every sodomite who ever lived, as outlined in **Romans 1:24,26,28,30,32**. It spells doom for these filthy creatures and their vile enablers; to wit: God gave them up to uncleanness (**Rom. 1:24**); God gave them up to vile affections (**Rom. 1:26**); God gave them over to a reprobate mind (**Rom. 1:28**); God aggressively hates all sodomites (**Rom. 1:30**); and, God hates sodomite enablers, and some expositors say He hates enablers more than sodomites themselves; because they engage in sodomy although they are not driven by sodomite lusts, and encourage others to experiment.

"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."(Rom. 1:32)

I'm here to tell you that homosexuals are described there though not named. They're not called sodomites, they're not called anything, but who can deny that that chapter deals, starting with I am preaching the gospel to you, says Paul, at **verse 15**, and I'm not ashamed of it, for this, for this, for this, right down to **verse 32**, the last verse, where it says, that these creatures that God says He's given up three times (plus 2) – and I'll put it to you: If God Almighty says he's given them up, where is the power in the moral universe that can draw them to Christ? To wit:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day."(John 6:44)

"And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."(John 6:65)

Where is the power in the moral universe that can draw them to Christ? The Lord Jesus says in **John 6** that no man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him. And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, but you're not coming to me unless the Father which sent me draw you. And I have loved them with an everlasting love, (talking of the others), and with everlasting cords of kindness have I drawn them. But these who, when they had some knowledge of God, glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, their foolish hearts were darkened, professing themselves to be wise they became fools, changed the glory of the incorruptible God into corruptible man, birds, four-footed beasts and creeping things; and worshipped and served the creature. They worshipped themselves, my friends, these beasts, whatever you call 'em! Hated of God, **verse 30**, points to an extant and well familiar Hebraism or phrase, look at **Proverbs 22:14**. Look at that ! There it is, expressed concisely, that Hebrew phrase of an extant, and everybody knew it: **Prov. 22:14** – ***"The mouth of strange women"*** (mouth, singular; women, plural); the substantial equivalent of the mouth of strange flesh.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities round about, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh."(Jude 7)

The mouth, **Proverbs 22:14**, of strange women, i.e., strange flesh, is a deep pit. ***"He that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein."***

Don't tell me that the Bible doesn't teach that there are some people that God hates, and goes way past hate, and goes to abhor. And I'll tell you that this debate was had, in 1520. Martin Luther debating Erasmus of Rotterdam. And it raged and went on with a flourish for almost a year. And Martin Luther's side of it was transcribed and printed, the printing press having only just been discovered. They said, We're going to print all your stuff up, Bro. Luther. He said, Nothing I've ever written of the hundreds of books, and sermons, and pamphlets, and tracts, deserves to be printed up, deserves to survive to posterity. But, "The Bondage of the Will" deserves to survive to posterity. And we're going to spend just a little time here today, but I'm telling you that that book has now been reprinted, and you can buy it. That's my part of this debate, what Martin Luther said to Erasmus in 1520, and now it's reprinted. In our mother tongue. Sharp, ringing, clarion, Anglo-Saxon English.

Of course God hates people, and not just their sins! And that is a diabolical doctrine of devils to preach otherwise, and it had no traffic at all 35 or 40 years ago; certainly, when I started preaching it had no traffic; this nonsense, that God loves the sinner, and only hates the sin. And in no other area of life would that silliness be tolerated for a minute. Who does a judge send to the penitentiary? The criminal, or the crime? Who does God send to Hell? The sinner, or just his sins? I tell you it's a metaphysical impossibility to separate the sinner from his sins. And the Lord Jesus on an occasion said, I will forewarn you, my friends, whom you should fear. Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, Fear him who, after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast both soul and body into Hell. Yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

In every high school literature book in Kansas, and probably in Wyoming, and in most states, they've got a little section, and I blew it up to make the point here today. It's an exemplar of how all the preachers, or virtually all, the preachers in this country, preached on this subject since the founding of this nation. I've got their sermons; hundreds of them. You can get many of these wonderful sermons off the Web: Jonathan Edwards.com. "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God." I say, it sets forth in all the High School literature books as an example of early American literature, and how the preachers used to preach it, in those days. Don't tell me God only hates the sin and not the sinner! There's not one iota of Scripture for that.

"The God who holds you over the pit of Hell, much as one holds the spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you! Abhors you! And is dreadfully provoked, His wrath towards you burns like fire, He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire. And He has purer eyes than to behold your iniquity with any kind of tolerance."

Pluck that down off the Web and read that, and your argument is with God Almighty, and not with Fred Phelps; if you insist that God doesn't hate people. I say it's gone way past hate, way past abhors, and into despise. **Deut. 32**, where Moses is lambasting these people for having become now a perverted, perverse, and crooked people. Having departed from the Lord, having forgotten God. **Verse 19**. And for this cause God abhorred them.

You can't manufacture things like that; those are the solid pronouncements of the Word of God Almighty. And the metaphors, the similes, and the tropes, and the similitudes. **Hosea 12:10** says that the Lord teaches things through His prophets by similitudes. I use similitudes, and John Bunyan, as a preface of his classic work, "The Pilgrim's Progress," plucked that verse forth and says, I am teaching you, in Pilgrim's Progress, by the use of similitudes. And I say to you that the favorite similitude of God Almighty, and all the Book of God, is that these sodomites, these homosexuals, are dogs. Dogs because they're filthy; dogs because they're

disease-ridden; dogs because they're libidinous to the nth degree; and dogs because they're impudent and impertinent, and are proud of their sins.

Everybody in the world knows you can't go to heaven without repenting of your sins. And everybody in the world knows you can't repent of something that you're proud of. It's an axiomatic matter of fact. You are the only creatures in God Almighty's universe that brag about their sin! You never heard about an adulterers' pride parade. You never heard of a bank-robbers' pride parade; even a pedophile pride parade. It's unthinkable! They're proud of their sins! **Jer. 6:15** says, "*Were they ashamed when they had committed these abominations? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush. Therefore they shall fall with them that fall,*" referring to the final sentence of condemnation from God Almighty, consigning these creatures to the fires of Hell. And the dog, set forth in **Deut. 23:17**, there shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. And thou shall not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, a sodomite, into the house of the Lord thy God. Dogs – sodomites – it is expressly said in the great Messianic **Psalm 22**, crucified the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everybody knows that Caesar, who was in charge when John the Baptist got his head cut off – Tiberius Caesar – and who was in charge when they crucified the Lord Jesus, was a sodomite. And when Pilate would have let the Lord Jesus go, and the Jews said, If you let him go, you are not Caesar's friend, and Tiberius Caesar is living over there on the Isle of Capri in the beautiful harbor of Naples, shipping wave after wave of sodomites out so that he might have sex with them, and his specialty being little boys. A historical fact. **Psalm 22:16** – "*The dogs compass me about. They pierced my hands and my feet.*" And three verses down the Lord Jesus, prophetically in that **Psalm** says, "*Deliver my soul from the sword and my darling from the power of the dog.*" And the Lord Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, Give not that which is holy to the dogs. You know He said that. You tell sodomites that God loves them, and I say, you are giving that which is holy to the dogs. And the Lord Jesus Christ never died for a dog, nor a hog, nor a goat. He died only for His Sheep; and metaphors and similitudes have powerful sway when God Almighty says, I will teach my people through the prophets, by the use of similitudes. **Phil. 3:2** said Beware of dogs. And when you come to the end of the Book of God, **chapter 22 of the Revelation**, talking about the glories of Heaven, and blessed is he who keeps His commandments, or rather does, blessed are they that DO His commandments, that they may have right to enter into the city through the gate. **Verse 15**. But without, outside the City, no hope of going to Heaven, are six categories of people, and the first category is the sodomites, the dogs.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ, **Luke 17**, talking about this weighty matter, said as it was in the days of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. A brief, 6-clause description of a vibrant, prosperous, thriving society of people: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from God out of Heaven and destroyed them all; and even thus shall it be when the Son of man is revealed. That is a situation obtaining today. The next verse: the second-shortest verse in the English Bible: "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Jonathan Edwards has a great sermon on that also, and I recommend it: "The End of the Wicked as Contemplated By the Righteous." If you want to know what all the preachers were preaching in the 1600s, 1700s, and 1800s, pluck down Jonathan Edwards.com; then go to any Bible Bookstore and get and read The Bondage of the Will, by Martin Luther. And oft times in chapel when old Dr. Bob Jones would be speaking to us, he would say, "*What this country needs is 50 Jonathan Edwardses turned loose in it.*"

I love you. Amen.