

Smoky Mountain Reflections #190

“Consent” has become the new golden standard for our society. If you can establish “consent” between two or any number of adults, then anything they choose to do is thought of as being their business alone, as long as their activities do not negatively affect anyone else. However, this is a very subjective standard for a society. It becomes nearly impossible for anyone to keep themselves clear of the danger of “negatively affecting” others, because the terms are subjective. There are many who like this because it means they can make their own rules to suit their desires, even twisting reality (like attempting to argue that the words “male”, “female”, or “marriage” mean something other than what they always have as defined by scripture, science and common sense). “Consent” can become coercion, derision or some other form of manipulation depending on who defines the word. “Adulthood” is a biological concept which the medical community generally agrees is not reached mentally until the mid-20s or even 30 years old, but even now, there are pedophiles arguing that children can be considered adults, and that as consenting adults, they too can do anything they want.

When we try to establish behavioral norms without God’s word and guidance, we resign ourselves to a whole sea of often contradictory information and to the whims of our sinful desires. God’s word on the other hand, is objective and inerrant, and provides clear guidance for all. If we follow his word, we will never be in danger of offending God or even our neighbor, unless our neighbor seeks to act counter the word (in which case we should side with God and let the chips fall where they may).

Parents, grandparents, and Christian communities have as part of their vocations training up their children in the way they should go. If they are doing that, the children will be taken care of no matter their needs, and whether their brains are fully developed or not. If a child is brought up in God’s word, then the confusion of the opening paragraph is avoided by simply following the 6th commandment. **Marriage is the only fitting form of consent.** When consent is defined as marriage, then rather than there being ambiguity there is an objective reality which binds two individuals together for life. If they are blessed with children, those children have parents who are legally bound to them, and the whole community has a framework to help that union and family succeed. Without these simple pillars holding up the family, history teaches us that society will collapse.

Many things in the adult world can be compared to fire. When used properly, as fire in the fireplace, they provide warmth and comfort for all. When taken out of their proper contexts though, they can be incredibly damaging, like fire climbing up the wall. Heterosexual monogamous marriage is the fireplace God has made for sexual activity. When a different standard is applied, the fire is removed from the fireplace and the house burns down.

Sexual activity in any context, whether it produces children or not, has physical (think oxytocin & STDs) and mental effects on both the individuals involved and the entire community. When it is in one-man, one-woman marriage, consent is solidified with a ring and a verbal and/or written contract to provide support, protection, mutual love, and encouragement. This provides for the needs and concerns of all in the community by supporting what communities are made of: people belonging to families. When “consent” becomes the only standard, our sinful emotions and desires remove the fire from the fire place, and everyone has to endure the pain and suffering that that brings, like depression, loneliness, STDs, abandoned children, poverty, and abuse. The community carries the emotional and financial cost of these things, and in our day we see it perpetuated and sanctioned to support the whims of a society that affirms things which scripture condemns.

Let’s keep the fire in the fireplace so we can all be warmed and comforted by the results of God’s design for intimacy and our families. Let’s acknowledge the biological reality of the clear binary sexual system which God created. Let’s seek to love and serve those who suffer from dysphoric anomalies that are a part of the crosses they bear but do not define who they are. Politics based on race, color, gender, or sexual preference only divide and harm our society. We are all children of the all-powerful and loving God who gave his son to suffer and die for the whole human race (one race). No matter what we struggle with, he invites us to leave it at the foot of the cross and trust in him for eternal salvation.

In Christ,

Pastor Portier