

The St. Peter Option: To Everyone an Answer
Living as Exiles in a Foreign Land
1 Peter, 2 Peter, Christian Vocation, and the Table of Duties

12 Perversion and the Four Loves
Gift-Love and Need-Love
Affection, Friendship, Eros, Charity (C.S. Lewis)

Introduction—

How do we minister to those who sincerely believe that their fulfillment will be found outside of God's order?

- A daughter or wife who seeks fulfillment in a lesbian relationship.
 - A son or husband who gives himself over to a homosexual lifestyle.
 - A person who despises their biological identity and seeks to identify as a different gender or to undergo hormone therapy and surgeries to “change” their gender.
1. It is not enough simply to condemn the sin. (The Law must be preached with the Gospel in view. Example of Nathan ministering to David, or Jesus with the woman caught in adultery).
 2. Pastoral care (and care within the body of Christ and the Christian family) calls us to understand the origins of disordered desire, self-loathing, and emasculation.
 3. Satan most often tempts us by perverting what is good in God's order (such as the legitimate need to be loved and accepted for who we are within the relationships God has ordered).
 4. We must never underestimate the damage that the problem of sin can do to God's good order. (Perversion of the order is one of the evidences that the order is good).

What is love?

“Gift-love” and “Need-love” (C.S. Lewis)

- **Divine Love is Gift-love** (in the Holy Trinity and in God's relationship to us which we, in spite of sin, share in in our God-given relationships with one another)
- **Need-love** is something we are designed to receive within God's ordered relationships, but because of sin it can be perverted.

Examples of “Gift-love” and “Need-love” within our God-given relationships

- A mother toward her child
- A husband toward his wife
- A friend toward his friend in need

How we give and receive love in these relationships affects our spiritual, emotional, psychological, and physical health and well-being.

- Faithfulness or unfaithfulness within our offices in the loves that we give and receive can either reinforce and promote the good of God's order, or it can damage God's good-order and lay the groundwork for the devil to pervert what is good and tempt us to “seek the good”—what God has created us to receive—from sources from which it will not bring fulfillment, but destruction and disorder.

The Four Loves

Affection is the love, care, and compassion of a parents to their children or children to their parents. It may be seen in other relationships of a teacher to her pupils or students to their teacher. Almost anyone can become the object of one's affection. (C.S. Lewis p. 53-54)

Friendship is the love of mutual regard, respect, trust, and belief that binds people together in a relationship of shared commitments and reciprocal support for each other.

Eros is "being in love" (as C.S. Lewis defines it) which desires to give of itself entirely to the beloved without withholding anything of oneself and to do so for the benefit of the other. For us as Christians it is wrong to think of Eros simply as "animalistic sexual passion" which are so often sinful and self-centered, but a kind of self-giving love that does, in fact, desire to live for the other in such a way that life is created (the procreation of children)—it is the love seen before the fall in Adam who confessed of Eve, "this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh."

Charity is the love of God (1 Corinthians 13) which is His nature: to give as the source of goodness; and to reject that which is the source of evil and destruction. God's love—charity—is anchored in grace. "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10) Or, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8).

The Apostle Peter was a recipient of this charity in the Lord's call to him, and in the Lord's forgiving grace that forgave him and reinstated him to an office that called him to love the Lord by loving others more than he loved himself.

We typically use one word for "love" in English, even though the word has different meanings depending upon the context, and those meanings are often very different.

Examples:

- "I love the Cubs" / "I love God"
- "I love my wife" / "I love my children"
- "I'm in love with you" (spoken to a spouse) / "I love you" (spoken to a friend, or parishioner)
- What would happen if these loves were confused? (Idolatry, adultery, fornication, perversion).

The Christian Pastor and the Church need to know and understand that we have, in God's design, a legitimate need to "Give love" and "Receive love"

We also need to be aware of how Satan takes what is legitimate and twists it into what is disordered and illegitimate, especially when we do not receive the love we are designed to receive.

Satan uses our sinful abuses of proper love, to tempt, corrupt, and pervert love into something that is not love, but a departure from what is good.

Examples of Perverted Love that Can Lead to Disordered Sexual Lives:

- **The “Soft Abuse” of a child emotionally:** Foster mother who did not give love in the way God called her to love her child, but made demands upon her child that taught her that the mother’s love had to be earned, it was conditioned upon the basis of merit, and it resulted in a disordered view of femininity and the office of a wife in marriage (I am there to please my husband, to do what he wants, to earn his love).
- **A sexually abused child:** May grow up hating who they are as a little boy or a little girl. The sin committed against them defiles them physically and spiritually. It may cause self-loathing and a desire to completely “change” who and what they are to flee from what the abuse has done to them and their sense of value or self-worth. Or, the abuse may become self-corrupting to the degree that they act out what was done to them in relationships with others that are disordered.
- **A boy exposed to pornography at a young age:** Is stimulated to see women and the gift of sexuality as objects for his own self-gratification and pleasure rather than growing into adulthood with the sense of the sanctity of marriage and the gift of human sexuality within marriage for the spiritual, emotional, and physical giving and receiving of love.
- **The Temptation to Lesbianism:** Women who do not see Christ’s love and compassion in the men in their lives, seek this love from the tenderness and compassion of other women.
- **The Power of Lust:** The lie that one’s biological identity is merely a personal instrument by which one should indulge his or her self-centered desires—an insatiable “need-love” that is disordered and leads to loneliness and a lack of fulfillment in all human relationships.
- **The Power of Peer Pressure in a Society** that has completely rejected God’s good order in favor of “mental and emotional health” that rejects the objective goodness of God’s order.

Pastoral Care for Those Tempted to a Disordered Lifestyle:

1. The need to accurately diagnose the origins of the disordered desires or temptations.
2. The need for patient conversation to learn the truth of what has happened to a person.
3. Our diagnosis as pastors is a theological, Law/Gospel, Creation/Salvation spiritual diagnosis that is anchored in Christ. (Who are we in Christ as our Creator and Redeemer? What is His Gift-love for us? What does it mean? What does the forgiveness of Christ mean for us? How does Christ’s absolution not only forgive my sin and make me whole, but also cleanse and sanctify me from the sins that others have committed against me? What does Christ’s acceptance mean? What does Christ’s acceptance not mean? How do we “suffer” the failures and sin of those who have desecrated their God-given office?)
4. The importance of Pastoral Care involving counsel from God’s Word, confession and absolution, and prayer. (Confession and Absolution is one of the most profoundly intimate moments wherein we are **Given** the love of Christ that we **Need** to recreate us and make us whole. It is also the strength to “give” and “receive” love as God has so ordered it for our lives).
5. The importance of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, the feast of love, to cleanse, sanctify, and renew us body and soul within our God-given calling.

