

Tattoos & Piercings

Sermon Series: Taboo Topics & The Gospel

1 Corinthians 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Does it glorify God? Does it bring about worship?

Two views on this issue:

1. All tattoos are ok; I can do what I want.
 2. All tattoos are sin; none are good; all are evil.
- What does the Bible say? Can we come under that authority, instead of making our personal preferences the Gospel?

History of Leviticus:

- Completion of the tabernacle. God comes down to live among the Israelites.
- Israel had been in slavery for 400+ years and had been surrounded by polytheistic worship. Their understanding of holiness and worship of the one true God had been horribly distorted.
- Takes place at the foot of Mt Sinai, where God had called the people to worship Him alone. It is a book of guidelines for worship in that day.
- Similar to instructing an alcoholic to avoid bars and nightclubs, or a sex addict to stay away from certain online activity.
- Called out. Holy. Set apart. His. Walking in the way that God had created them to be. Worshipful of only Him and nothing else.

Leviticus 19:26b-28 You are not to practice divination or sorcery. 27 You are not to cut off the hair at the sides of your head or mar the edge of your beard. 28 You are not to make gashes on your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves; I am Yahweh.

- Divination, sorcery, & witchcraft were specifically condemned.
- Cutting off the hair at the sides of your beard may have been a pagan practice Israelites were not allowed to emulate.
- The pagan practice of cutting and gashing was to worship idols.
- Tattooing was also for this purpose and connected to specific names of idols. God hated this as much as if your spouse were to put the name of another person on their body.
- The issue was not the tattoo, or ear or nose piercing. The issue was worship.
- We say in scripture that even Jesus may have a tattoo:

Revelation 19:11-16 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and He judges and makes war in righteousness. 12 His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on His head. He had a name written that no one knows except Himself. 13 He wore a robe stained with blood, and His name is the Word of God. 14 The armies that were in heaven followed Him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. 15 A sharp sword came from His mouth, so that He might strike the nations with it. He will shepherd them with an iron scepter. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. 16 And He has a name written on His robe and on His thigh: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

- Church, the issue is not tattoos. The issue is Godliness.

1 Peter 3:3-4 Your beauty should not consist of outward things like elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold ornaments or fine clothes. ⁴ Instead, it should consist of what is inside the heart with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very valuable in God's eyes.

- Peter is not saying hairstyles or gold ornaments are wrong.
- If this is what you base your value on, you've missed it!

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord will be praised.

- Fear and love of God lasts forever.

1st Corinthians 9:20-22 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; to those under the law, like one under the law—though I myself am not under the law—to win those under the law.

- Paul assimilated into populations to honor them and meet them where they were comfortable
- Why? To win the right to speak truth.