

What I Believe on Moral Issues

Homosexuality: A Biblical Response

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Several weeks ago I started this new series of messages where we as a church would take a look at what our culture is seeking to pawn off on us as normal. I began the series by having us look at Leviticus 18-20, and reminding us that as people of God that we have been called out of the world (Egypt), and away from the culture that our world is seeking to conform us to.

In Leviticus 18:3 we read,

"According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances."

It is very clear that the people of God were NOT to take on the culture or the customs around them.

Part of the culture they came out of, and part of the culture they were going in to was a sex-saturated culture. This is why so much of Leviticus 18 deals with the subject of sex. It is why I spoke on the issue of Sex & STD's last Sunday. We too live in a sex-saturated culture. I provided a couple of television commercials – Carl's Jr., and Jack-in-the-Box as examples.

Open your Bible to Leviticus 18. In way of review I want to remind us that God told His people that they were NOT to have sex with anyone near kin (Lev. 18:6-19). I believe that that was very clear! We also read that man is NOT to commit adultery. Adultery is having sex with someone else after you are married (Lev. 18:20). In verse 21 we read that God's people were not to offer up their children as human sacrifices (today in America we are sacrificing our children so that we can continue to practice an immoral lifestyle). In this message I want us to focus in on verse 22. We read,

"You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination."

What is the Christian response to this verse? How is the Christian suppose to live in a world that promotes homosexuality as a normal behavior? How are we to respond when we see two women passionately kissing and

embracing on television? How do we live above our culture and the customs that our present society is deeming as an alternative lifestyle?

Can I remind us as Believers to keep Leviticus 18:4-5 before us. We read,

"You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD."

From those two verses I presented to you three principles that are foundational to the Christian who wants to live above the culture, and overcome the customs that are being propagated as natural and normal. They are:

1. **Know God** – "I am the LORD your God" (Lev. 18:2)
2. **Live Separated Lives** – "You shall not do..." (Lev. 18:3)
3. **Follow God's Word Explicitly** – "You shall observe and keep..." (Lev. 18:4-5)

These three steps are pivotal for the Believer. If we are unwilling to heed these steps every sermon you hear in this series will be a waste of time.

Now, you and I are very aware that our culture is teaching us to accept homosexuality as normal behavior between two consenting people. We have been told, and continue to be told that homosexuality is an alternative lifestyle, and that that is neither amoral or immoral; that it is just another sexual preference, and who are we to judge the choice of another human being.

I might add that today anyone who stand against the culture of homosexual behavior is labeled - homophobic. It's a scare tactic that is being used to silence those who speak out against the homosexual agenda (and there is an agenda).

Know the Truth

Hear this: Truth sets people free! (And may I add that there is such a thing as absolute truth).

Jesus said,

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

Truth is what we have before us in Leviticus 18:22. It is very clear and very obvious that man was not to have sex with man.

Sodom and Gomorrah

However, we can go back to the time of Abraham and read about the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18-19.

In Genesis 18, God visits Abraham and tells him and Sarah that they were going to become parents (vs. 1-15). Secondly, we discover that God reveals to Abraham what he was going to do with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 16-33). Take a look at Genesis 18:20-21,

"And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

I might add that in this text we discover that Abraham intercedes on behalf of these two cities. He asks the LORD some six times if He would destroy the righteous with the wicked? God answered him and told him that if He could find 10 righteous people in these cities that He would not destroy them. (Note: The LORD talks before hand about destroying them).

In Genesis 19, we discover that two angels appear within the city of Sodom, and that Lot, Abraham's nephew saw them. He encouraged the angels to spend the night at his home, to rest, and in the morning be on their way. The angels however were planning to spend the night in the open square of the city. Lot insisted they NOT do that, and that they come and reside in his home for the night. They finally agreed to turn into Lot's home where Lot cares for their needs. Now, just as they were about to turn in for the night **the men of the city, both young and old** surrounding Lot's house. Take a look at Genesis 19:5,

*"And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may **know them carnally**."*

In my Bible the word, "*carnally*" is italicized, which means that it was added to the text to help clarify the meaning. However, the word, "*know*" is a part of the text. The Hebrew word is, yada' (yaw-dah'), and it carries the idea to have sex. It is the same word used in Genesis 4:1, where "*Adam knew Eve and she bore him Cain.*"

In verse 6 we read that Lot goes out the door, and closes it behind him, and talks to the men of Sodom. He says to them in verse 7, "*Please, my*

brethren, do not do so wickedly." And in verse 8, we read that Lot offers to send out his daughters "***who have known a man***" so that they can do to them what they wished, but do nothing to these men.

The men of Sodom didn't want Lot's daughters – they wanted the men inside Lot's house. They told Lot to "*Stand back!*" And the text tells us that they said to Lot that they were going to deal worse with him than the men in his house. They began to press against the door of Lot's house. The two angels reached out and pulled Lot inside the house. Next, they struck the men of Sodom with blindness.

In verses 12-13 the angels told Lot to gather up his family and to get out of Sodom, for the LORD will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.

Lot went to his sons-in-laws and told them what was about to happen, and they thought he was joking. They paid him no attention. The angels took Lot, his wife, and his two daughters by the hand and brought them outside the city. The angels told Lot to "Escape for your life!" (v. 17). They were not even to look back. The text tells us that Lot escaped to the city of Zoar, and when he saw that God rained fire and brimstone upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

That's Old Testament – How does the New Testament shed light on this biblical account? Allow me to share the following Scripture:

- **2 Peter 2:6**

"and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;"

- **Jude 1:7**

"as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sexual immorality, which in their case was the practice of homosexuality.

I don't have the time to develop all the various Bible passages that speak directly to the issue of homosexuality, but I do want to share a few of them with you. They are:

- **Leviticus 20:13**

"If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."

- **Romans 1:24-27**

"Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due."

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

The truth is that God and God's Word is very clear about homosexual behavior. It is a sin, it is an abomination, it is unnatural – it goes against the laws of nature, and those who practice it will not inherit the kingdom of God. Like every sin, homosexuality must be confessed and forsaken. This is called repentance. Under no circumstances must the Christian ever view homosexual behavior acceptable, normal, or natural.

Christians must KNOW the Truth.

Know the Lies

We must not only know the truth, but we must know the lies that are being perpetrated as truth. The enemy of humanity (Satan) is a “*liar and the father of lies*” (John 8:44). And we must remember what Paul wrote in Romans 1:18,

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,”

So then, what are the lies? I want to share three of the most common lies. They are:

A. Misinterpretation of Scripture

The first lie that I want to address is the lie that we as Christian are reading into the Bible what God never intended. As a matter of fact, there are many that say that the Bible teaches no sexual preference. They purport that the Bible is neutral when it comes to the subject of sex.

Pro-homosexual groups say, you can “study passages from your favorite English version of the Bible, which is filtered by the theological beliefs and homophobia (if any) of the translators. If so, then you will find many passages in the Bible which condemn certain forms of homosexual behavior.” Alternatively, you could “Follow the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek writings and attempt to understand precisely what the writers taught. If so, then you will find that these same passages condemn specific homosexual activities (rape, prostitution, etc.) But the Bible appears to be silent about same-sex, committed, monogamous relationships.”

Do we understand what is being said here? What is being said is that we Christians have allowed others to do our thinking for us, and what they have taught us is wrong. If you really want to understand what God has to say about homosexuality you have to read the original languages in which the Bible was written, however, if you are unable to do that we would be gladly to interpret Leviticus 18, Romans 1, and 1 Corinthians 6 for you without the homophobic filters, and we will tell you what the Bible really says.¹

How then are the passages in the **Know the Truth** section interpreted by the homosexual community? I’m glad you asked. Let’s take them one by one.

- Leviticus 18:22

¹ Keith Bassham, *Objections Overruled*, Baptist Bible Tribune, Dec. 2003, P. 16

"Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."
(KJV)

It is rewritten to state,

"Two men must not engage in sexual activity on a woman's bed; it is ritually unclean."

The National Gay Pentecostal Alliance says that this passage does not prohibit all same-sex behavior – "they merely control where male-male intercourse is allowed."

Okay, so for 3500 years the Christian community has gotten it wrong. Really, why is it that it is only recent that the pro-homosexual community can make charges like this – we can go back thousands of years and discover that all earlier Bible's read the same way! Don't buy the lie.

- Genesis 18-19 – The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

Understand that the lie here is that God never destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their sexual immorality, namely, homosexuality, but because of their lack of hospitality. Did you get that? God destroyed two cities because they "lacked hospitality" toward strangers who entered into their cities.

Yale historian John Boswell offers four possibilities as to why God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, but states that explanation number two is the most obvious of the four. **Explanation number two:** "Lot was violating the custom of Sodom... by entertaining unknown guests within the city walls at night without obtaining the permission of the elders of the city. When the men of Sodom gathered around to demand that the strangers be brought out to them, "that they might know them," they meant no more than to "know" who they were, and the city was consequently destroyed not for sexual immorality, but for the sin of inhospitality to strangers."²

I would hope that we could see through that lie. Just a casual reading of Genesis 18-19 brings one to the conclusion that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah not because of inhospitality, but because of homosexuality.

Listen, as a teenager I had NO Bible school training, and when I read Genesis 18-19 for the very first time I understood clearly what was being

² Gregory Kouki, What was the Sin of Sodom and Gomorrah?, http://www.str.org/cgi-bin/print.pl/commentary_required=comentarios_homosexuality

taught – God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because the men of these two cities were practiced what God calls an abomination – homosexuality.

- **Romans 1:24-27**

²⁴Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. ²⁶For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. (NKJV)

So what is the lie being taught about Paul's clear passage condemning homosexual behavior. Listen carefully to the following two proposals (both are liberal views of sacred Scripture).

View 1 - "Paul didn't write it as a condemnation of homosexuality, but as a criticism of Greek behavior in temple worship. Greeks often incorporated sexual behavior in temple worship." ³

View 2 - Bruce Hahne writes in point form:

- "Verses 26-27 exploit Jewish cultural prejudices.
- Good rhetorical strategy: begin with assumptions of audience, build on them to make your point.
- So Romans 1:26-27 speaks only of heterosexual people who act 'contrary to their nature.'
- The text provides neither ethical nor behavioral guidance to lesbian, gay or bisexual people."⁴

What is the lie being presented here? The lie is that Christians through the centuries have interpreted it all wrong.

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor

³ The Rev. Jill Nelson, pastor of the Sunshine Cathedral Metropolitan Community Church

⁴ Bruce Hane, "Romans conclusion, cont.," at: <http://www.newvisionsproject.org/>

homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (NKJV)

Here is how the liberal reader of this passage interprets it,

- Paul was writing from his own knowledge and experience. During the 1st century CE, even an educated person like Paul would know very little about human sexuality, compared to present-day sexuality researchers.
- Although "homosexual" is a very common translation, it is almost certain to be inaccurate.
- Most of the biblical translations appear to refer to behavior rather than orientation.

Do you hear the lie that is being taught? Paul was dumb when it came to sex – different times for different folks. Homosexual is not the term Paul really meant to use. And here is the icing on the cake – translations focus on the behavior not the orientation.

That brings us to the next lie.

B. People are born homosexuals

That is a lie, and it has been sated in so many different ways that our culture has received it as truth. We are being programmed to believe that homosexuals have no choice. We are told that they were born with a gene that automatically determined for them their sexual orientation.

Before I deal with that lie I want us to see how the media is being used to propagate this lie. Two examples:

Example 1 - Mice Brains – Back in 2004, UCLA College of Medicine did a study on mice brains. They concluded that the brains of males and females are different. (Isn't that interesting!).

Here is how that study was reported by the news media:

"Sexual Identity Hard-wired by Genetics, Study Says – Los Angeles (Reuters) –

Sexual identity is wired into the genes, which discounts the concept that homosexuality and transgender sexuality are a choice, California researchers reported on Monday.”

Is that what the study actually said? Not compared to the lead researcher Eric Valain, “This is not about finding a gay gene,” and the researchers were not looking for factors contributing to sexual orientation. Homosexuality was not even used in the published results of the study.

Example 2 – The study of Blinks – Another research team studied the eye-blink response to a startling noise among 59 “gay and straight men and women.” Fifteen homosexual women blinked at the same rate as 15 straight men. There were no gene studies, or studies of any inherited traits that may not be present in the group (no information regarding parents or children, for instance), yet a headline reporting the results said,

“**Startling Study Says People May Be Born Gay,**” and the lead sentence read, “The origins of sexual orientation may be evident in the blink of an eye.” Could it be that a more accurate inference is that lesbianism might be genetic but male homosexuality is not? After all, the female homosexuals blinked like the straight men, and there is a very small difference among the men, whether homosexual or not.⁵

Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family sent out a newsletter June 2002 where he writes, “There is no evidence to indicate that homosexuality is inherited, despite everything you may have heard or read to the contrary. There are no respected geneticists in the world today who claim to have found the so-called “gay gene” or other indicators of genetic transmission.

Truth doesn’t stop the media:

- Time Magazine ran a cover story entitled: Search for Gay Gene
- Newsweek had a cover story: Does DNA Make Some Men Gay?
- Oprah – Spent several slanted programs on the subject.
- Barbara Walters said, “There is a growing body of opinion that says that people are born homosexual.”⁶

No! People are born sinners with an innate desire for sinful sexual practices.

What’s the third lie?

⁵ Keith Bassham, The Chameleon factor, Baptist Bible Tribune, P. 13-14

⁶ Dr. James Dobson, Family News From Dr. James Dobson, June 2002, P. 3

C. Homosexual orientation is normal

Here is a third lie – that homosexual orientation is normal and natural.

Here me carefully – When I was growing up as a young person anyone who practiced homosexual behavior was considered off their rocker (strange, but surely not gay as in the real meaning of the word).

Are you aware that homosexual orientation at one time was considered a disorder (that's a nice way of saying that there was something wrong with you)? Under political pressure from the National Gays and Lesbian Task Force the American Psychiatric Association "declared homosexuality to be normal." That decision was made back in 1973 in a vote 5,834 to 3,810 to remove this condition from their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM).

Beware when men call "good evil and evil good." This is what happened in 1973. And understand that if you stand for truth that you will be called an intolerant homophobic. Consider the following example:

In November 2001, Portland Police Chief Mark Kroeker came under fire for statements he had made articulating his belief that homosexuality is an immoral lifestyle. The statements were made ten years previous while Kroeker was speaking to an organization of Christian law enforcement officers in California.

In essence, Kroeker espoused traditional biblical values. The Chief, in his address, shared his Christian convictions which included the immorality of homosexuality, the acceptance of corporal punishment, and the husband as the leader in his home.

The chief was branded an intolerant homophobe for his remarks and calls for his resignation were made. It mattered not that kroeker's job performance was stellar. He dared to hold the wrong beliefs; therefore he must be banished.

While homosexual activists did not succeed in ousting Kroeker, they did force an apology.⁷

Hear this: Homosexuality is not normal, and it is not natural – it is a sin, and like any other sin it must be confessed and forsaken.

Extend God's Grace

⁷ Rob Taylor, Homosexuality: How Should the Church Respond?, NW Salt & Light, Winter 2001, P. 4

We as Christians must not only know the truth, and know the lies, but we must respond in a Christ-like manner to those addicted to a homosexual lifestyle. In other words we must always be ready to extend the grace of God to those who want to come to Christ through faith.

In that passage in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, where Paul lists the following sins:

- Fornicators
- Idolaters
- Adulterers
- Homosexuals
- Sodomites
- Thieves
- Covetous
- Drunkards
- Revilers
- Extortioners

Paul also writes,

"And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (NKJV)

I came to faith in Christ by the grace of God. This is how everyone comes to saving faith. The Bible says,

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9 NKJV)

Rob Taylor writes,

At Metanoia Ministries, we believe there are three types of homosexual people within the gay community. They are the militant, moderate and repentant homosexuals.

- Militant – Believes that homosexuality is equal to or better than heterosexuality. He/she desires the complete acceptance of homosexuality in culture, society and religion.
- Moderate – Works a regular job. They are of the opinion to “live and let live” and “whatever works for you.” (Largest group with the gay community).
- Repentant – The one we most likely will meet in the Church. There are three sub-categories of the repentant homosexual:
 1. They have struggled with homosexual temptation but never acted on the impulses.
 2. They have struggled with the temptation and have given in occasionally to the temptation and /or have engaged in homosexual behavior with another.
 3. They have been involved in the homosexual lifestyle and now want to live homosexuality.

The repentant homosexual comes to our church. He/She desires to leave homosexuality yet doesn't know how. It is the body of Christ coming alongside the repentant homosexual that allows leaving homosexuality to take place. As the body of Christ mentors these men and women, they are able to receive His love. For many, it will take three or more years to leave homosexuality. Just as alcoholism and drug addiction takes time to overcome, so does homosexuality. God, through the Body of Christ, comes alongside the homosexual struggler and begins to change his/her life.

My prayer is that the Church would not be so inclusive that the Truth is compromised for desire, or so exclusive that even a repentant homosexual would not be welcomed. Instead, may the Church be the preserver of Truth and giver of Grace to those leaving homosexuality.⁸

It is also my prayer as your pastor that we here at SLBC would seek to live above our culture, and that we would Know the Truth, Know the Lies, and that we would Extend the Grace of God to all those seeking the freedom found in the person of Jesus Christ.

For additional information:

Do you know someone who struggles with homosexual tendencies, or lifestyle that desires to be delivered? Here is a list of several organizations that assist those involved in homosexual sin to be released.

Exodus International
P.O. Box 540119, Orlando, FL 32854

⁸ Rob Taylor, Homosexuality: How Should the Church Respond?, NW Salt & Light Winter 2001, P. 1,5

Phone **407-599-6872**

Metanoia Ministries

160 West Camino Real, PMB #134, Boca Raton, FL 33432

Phone 561-394-3131

The National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality
(NARTH)

1-888-364-4744