

# What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?

## **I. Introduction**

A. We should approach this topic humbly, seeking God's grace to understand his will, peoples' pain, and our current cultural environment

1. It is true that some Christians and churches have treated homosexuals and those who struggle with same-sex attractions as a 'special class' of sinners.
2. They've acted with moral superiority, arrogance, and pride.
3. The gospel itself destroys any notion of this kind of pretention.

B. Homosexuality is one of the preeminent moral issues we face today – there is a constant bombardment of the topic in the media, carefully crafted to cause you to believe a particular way.

1. A number of us in the room have friends and family who are gay
2. Certainly some of us struggle with the issue personally

C. I want to be very clear: I'm approaching the topic not as a republican or a democrat, but as a Christian.

D. Let's pray for wisdom, humility, and courage!

E. There's lots of things we cannot cover tonight due to time constraints but I want to cover the core biblical issues, including:

1. God's view of sexuality
2. The Bible's position on homosexuality
3. Homosexuality's Origin
4. Ministering to People Battling Homosexuality

This will obviously be a brief survey of each issue, as we could spend an entire night on each of those four categories.

## II. God's View of Sexuality

- A. Masculinity and femininity are rooted in our being created in the image of God.

Gen 1:27-28 ESV <sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

- B. God's design is that our sexuality would image his character (Gen 1)
- C. Biblical sexuality expressed in marriage is of utmost importance, since it is to portray something of the relationship between Christ and his Church (Eph 5)

### III. The Bible's Position on Homosexuality

A. The plain teaching of Scripture is that homosexuality is sin.

Rom 1:18-32 <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; <sup>27</sup> and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

<sup>28</sup> And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup> Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

1. The movement of this text is that:

a. God is the Creator who reveals himself in creation

b. All people exchange God for what God has made

-We choose to reject God in favor of the things and people God has made

- c. In judgment, God hands us over to the exchange
- d. People act out in sinful behavior revealing their sinful hearts
  - i. The sins we get involved in are many – endless creativity
  - ii. This is not unique to homosexuality
  - iii. Any sin would fall into this category – we sin because we chose to exchange God for what God has made

2. God tells us that homosexuality is:

- a. Vs 24 – a “dishonoring” of our bodies
- b. Vs 26 – an expression of “dishonorable passions”
- c. Vs 26 – “contrary to nature”
- d. Vs 27 – it even calls homosexual acts “shameless”

3. If we just consider our anatomy – the body parts we are made with – it is astonishing that we would try to justify it

4. At our core, whether heterosexual or homosexual, our deepest problem is not who we have sex with but that we’ve exchanged God for his creation.

- a. Our hope is that with Jesus – through the gospel – we could be saved from the wrath of God

b. And return to enjoying God as the supreme treasure that he is

5. I was told in college many things about this text:

- a. We have no right to say what is right or wrong for others – *this is rooted in idolatrous individualism, not the Bible*
- b. Homosexuality was culturally wrong and isn't today – *this trajectory hermeneutic is something foolish and should be tenaciously avoided. Cover to cover, spanning many cultures, the Bible says homosexuality is wrong (ex: Lev 18:22, 20:13, 1 Tim 1:10).*
- c. Paul would never have written Romans 1 if he knew what we now know, that people are born gay – *God inspired Scripture. He knows all things. He said it is wrong.*
- d. If I want to pastor a church that actually has people in it than I'll have to embrace homosexuality – *this shows you where our culture is headed on the topic, and it appears many 'pastors' would agree with the statement. I/We must humbly stand on God's Word.*

B. Can a practicing homosexual be a Christian?

1. This is obviously a very serious, weighty question
2. We should always approach this kind of thing humbly and cautiously – only God himself definitively knows who is saved
3. But we shouldn't shy away from the issue either – because Scripture speaks to it

4. Paul wrote: 1 Cor 6:9-11 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
  
5. There is a world of difference between the person who confidently flaunts and enjoys their practice of homosexuality and the person who battles same-sex desires
  - a. According to 1 Cor 6 – The person who lives as a practicing homosexual, who feels no conviction over the sin, who believes God condones it, who celebrates this lifestyle for years and years and years – is more than likely not a regenerate person.
    - A Christian – after much struggle – may delude themselves into thinking their homosexual behavior is okay, but over the long-haul they will recognize its sinfulness.
  - b. However, the person who struggles with homosexual desires and temptations and even the person who has acted or is acting on those desires, but is heartbroken, is seeking help, is trying to stop, is repentant – the whole of Scripture would tell us that this person is a believer in need of God-wrought change just like the person who struggles with greed.
  
6. Remember, we should say the exact same things for someone intertwined by the rest of the sins on Paul's list: **sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, swindlers**
  
7. And the beauty of that passage is: <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

#### **IV. Homosexuality's Origin**

A. Homosexuality exists, just like any other sin, due to the fall.

1. We live in a broken world where things are not as they should be.
2. But we have great hope in Jesus Christ!

B. The practical landscape of this issue tells us:

1. Homosexuality often grows out of broken relationships and experiences:
  - a. Abusive roots: Abuse victims sometimes tragically suffer from a confused sexuality
  - b. Familial roots: People neglected or harmed by their family of origin sometimes suffer from a confused sexuality
2. Biological roots: Although little data exists on this, some believe it may be that a segment of people are born with a propensity towards homosexuality
3. Sin roots: Satan uses pornography, discontentment, and unmet needs to promote homosexuality

All of these should cause us to treat this with reckless grace, patience, and love. There is no room for harsh, arrogant condemnation. However, none of these nullify the commands of God.

**V. Suggestions on how to minister to a practicing homosexual**

*A. There is hope for real change in Jesus Christ!*

B. Pray, pray, pray.

C. Make it clear that you struggle with sin

D. Combine compassion with biblical conviction

1. Make it clear you want the very best for them
2. Make it clear you are not coming from a position of moral superiority
3. Live the Christian life in a winsome, attractive way
4. Hold firmly and gently to your biblical convictions (Col 4:5-6)
5. Although no ministry is perfect, become familiar with generally helpful ministries like Exodus International
6. Remember: The goal of all our instruction is love (1 Tim 1:5)

E. Understand that homosexuality and identity are often interrelated

1. For some reason, personhood, value, and identity are often all wrapped up in homosexuality in a way not so with heterosexuality
2. This reality should be in the forefront of our minds as we talk with people about their *behavior*

3. Example: Jewish neighbors – ethnicity and religion intertwined
- F. Finally, see the local church as the arena in which all sin and temptation can be openly discussed and fought against for the glory of God
1. There should be no ostracism, no hatred towards those who are gay
  2. Help should be available here!
  3. We should battle together to walk in purity...and it is surely a battle, whether your temptations are heterosexual or homosexual.