

WHAT ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY?

The very mention of some topics seems to bring out strong reactions from people. Homosexuality is such a topic. Bringing up homosexuality (combined with lesbianism) is sure to create lively discussions in most circles. Few people are neutral when it comes to the matter of “gay relationships”: they either strongly favor them or adamantly oppose them.

Homosexuality is constantly a hot news item, whether it be “gays in the military,” “gays in the Boy Scouts,” “same-sex marriages,” “same-sex adoptions,” “homosexual preachers,” or simply the general theme of “gay rights.” A number of well-known public figures, including some politicians, athletes, and actors, are crying out for tolerance and open acceptance of all relationships, whether they be gay or otherwise. Other famous individuals have openly spoken out against homosexual and lesbian relationships. There are religious leaders that speak in favor of accepting homosexuality, while other religious spokespeople have condemned it.

The debate over homosexuality is not a new one. It is, though, a subject that receives much more attention and publicity than it did in days gone by. Our concern is with this question: Is homosexuality something that the Lord of heaven endorses, or opposes? Or, could it be that He is totally unconcerned about the whole deal?

For some, this is an emotional topic. However, when it comes to determining right and wrong, emotions are not the standard by which we can set matters straight. Those who discuss this issue need to “*speak as the oracles of God,*” that is, say what the Bible says (1 Peter 4:11).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT IT?

The Old Testament records examples of homosexuality. For instance, in the ancient city of Sodom, some men of the city desired to have physical relations with other males (Genesis 19:4-7). Eventually the cities of Sodom and

Gomorrah were destroyed. Listen to what the Bible says about these two places: “*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*” (Jude 7, NKJV). These cities were destroyed because their inhabitants went “after strange flesh.” This refers to their practice of homosexuality. Did God accept it then? No.

What was God’s original teaching about marriage? Jesus said: “*Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?*” (Matthew 19:4,5). Surely no one can miss these clear terms: “male and female,” “a man . . . and his wife.” It is plain that God’s plan for marriage involves a human male and a human female. That has always been the Lord’s arrangement.

The Old Testament law condemned homosexuality. “*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination*” (Leviticus 18:22). “*If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death . . .*” (Leviticus 20:13). These Bible texts show that God counted homosexuality among the Israelite people to be an abomination, and it was punishable by death.

The New Testament is now the teaching that the Lord wants all people to follow. What does it say about homosexual relations? First of all, the word “fornication” [Greek, πορνεία (porneia)] includes the concept of homosexuality. “Porneia” means all illicit sexual intercourse, that is, sexual relations between two human beings that are not united with one another in marriage as husband and wife in the sight of God. Sexual relations between two people of the same sex constitute one form of fornication. The Bible says that fornicators “*shall not inherit the kingdom of God*” (Galatians 5:19,21). Since fornication

keeps its practitioners out of the kingdom of God, and since homosexuality is a type of fornication, then participating in homosexuality closes the door to the kingdom of the Lord. Simply put, God does not approve of homosexual behavior.

In Romans 1,26,27 we read of homosexual activity: (26) “*For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.* (27) *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*” (NKJV). Please observe the following truths about homosexual conduct that are found in this text:

- (1) It is a demonstration of “vile passions” (26).
- (2) Males being with females is “natural,” but females united with females in sexual union is “against nature” (26,27).
- (3) Homosexual conduct is “shameful” (27).
- (4) Homosexuality is “error” (27).
- (5) Homosexuality has a “penalty,” i.e., it deserves to be punished (27). “*They which commit such things are worthy of death*” (1:32).

What else? 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 is another strong message about homosexuality. There it is written, “*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate [“homosexuals,” NKJV], nor abusers of themselves with mankind [“sodomites,” NKJV] . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God.*” Friends, in God’s sight, homosexuality is sinful.

SOME MODERN IDEAS & DEFENSES

Some have the idea that homosexuality is something new. The example of the homosexuals in ancient Sodom proves that this notion is false (Genesis 19:4-7).

Others seem to think that only those of the younger generation have a homosexual lifestyle. Not so. Those Sodomites that had unnatural

sexual desires for other men were “*both old and young*” (Genesis 19:4).

Many suggest that homosexuality is “an alternative lifestyle – all have the right to choose.” It is true that God grants humans the freedom to make choices in this and other matters, but that does not mean that the Lord is pleased with every choice we make. If homosexuality is not acceptable to God, then it is wrong, regardless of how many advocates it may have. We have already seen plain scriptural proof that homosexuality is sinful. God calls it “an abomination.”

“But people cannot help it. They were born that way (with a built-in attraction for those of the same sex).” What have we seen? Homosexuality is a violation of God’s law. God says that homosexual and lesbian relationships are “against nature” (Romans 1:26,27). God holds homosexuals accountable for their conduct. We know that this is the case because the Bible says that fornicators and homosexuals cannot enter the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9,10). If this were something that was out of a person’s control, then God, our fair Creator and Judge, would never hold such people responsible. “Being gay” is a choice.

“But many religious leaders are endorsing homosexuality and gay marriages. If those kind of people stand behind gay people, then there must not be anything wrong with it.” It is true that some in religious circles are advocating acceptance of homosexual relations. Some denominations now have “ordained” homosexuals serving in some leadership capacity. Human beings, including those that are well respected in religious communities, do not have the authority to decide what is acceptable in the moral realm. That authority belongs to Jesus, because He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). If every religious leader on earth began to proclaim that God accepts homosexuality, their spread of such a falsehood could never change what the Bible says, nor could it turn an abomination into an acceptable form of behavior!

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

What can, and should, Christians be doing about homosexuality? First of all, we must avoid apathy. This *is* a serious matter. It will not get better by God’s people sitting by and remaining silent. We must not compromise what the Bible says on this topic. We must speak out! Those homosexuals that do not repent and obey the gospel will be lost forever (1 Corinthians 6:9,10). We must hate the evil of homosexuality, just as we hate all other unrighteousness (Hebrews 1:9).

Second, we must maintain a proper attitude toward those who are homosexuals. We, like Jesus did, must hate the sin, but love the person that sins (Luke 15:1,2). Admittedly, this is not always easy to do. We must not be silent over gay relationships, but at the same time, we must be courteous and never belligerent (1 Peter 3:8). We must remember that homosexuality does not condemn a person any more than other sins do. Homosexuals need the gospel just like all other sinners do. By God’s grace homosexuals can be saved, if they will repent and obey the gospel. In the first century there were some saints in the church at Corinth who were homosexuals before their conversion (1 Corinthians 6:9,10).

Finally, we must unashamedly teach what the Bible says on this crucial subject. We must teach our children what the Book says (Ephesians 6:4). We must educate members of the church about it, and we must also tell friends, family members, and all society just what the will of God is.

Homosexuality is not a topic that fills us with joy. Yet, it is a subject that needs to be addressed. Homosexuality is causing many people to be lost. Others, who personally have no desire to be involved in gay relationships, ignorantly plead the cause of homosexuals. The Lord’s church must not sit idly by and do nothing. We must kindly, yet forcefully and without apology, sound forth the Bible’s message so that all may know the plain truth about homosexuality.

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WHAT ABOUT HOMO- SEXUALITY?

Same-Sex Marriages

Gay Rights

An Alternative Lifestyle

Ordained Homosexual Ministers

Gay and Lesbian Pride Month

**“I will hear what God the LORD
will speak” (Psalm 85:8).**