

Is Homosexuality *Really Wrong?*



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This booklet is a developing component in a forthcoming series titled “*Good Answers to Great Questions.*” Since this booklet is a developing work, it has not been professionally edited. Consequently, please send your questions, criticisms, suggestions, and corrections to the following email address: awerner@aaronjwerner.com

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Is Homosexuality *Really* Wrong?

Few issues in the church today are as controversial as the issue of homosexuality. While some Christians believe that there is nothing morally wrong with homosexuality, others believe it is an ultimate sin—perhaps an unpardonable sin. Although both groups cannot be right, they could both be wrong. So, is homosexuality *really* wrong? Before we discuss this question, we must first address the importance of discussing this issue.

Why Isolate Homosexuality?

Why take the time to write about homosexuality? Has not the gay community received enough condemnation from the church? Many Christians believe the answer to this question is yes. For instance, former David Fillingim bemoaned, “*Given that the Bible contains no mention at all of abortion and only eight possible references to homosexual acts, one wonders where American Christianity is getting its ethical priorities.*”¹ In other words, Fillingim believes there are far greater sins requiring the church’s attention. For example, the sins of pride, greed, injustice, and selfishness are eroding the moral fabric of our churches and our culture. According to C. S. Lewis, pride is the deadliest sin. He claimed, “*It was through pride that the devil became the devil. Pride leads to every other vice. It is the complete anti-God state of*

¹David Fillingim, *Extreme Virtues* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 2003), 45. Although Fillingim is wrong concerning the Bible’s silence concerning the topic of abortion, he makes a valid point concerning our ethical priorities. Nevertheless, claiming that the Bible is silent regarding abortion is like claiming that the Bible is silent concerning the trinity. Although Bible does not contain the word “Trinity,” the scriptures are replete with the doctrine. One example of a verse regarding abortion is Exodus 21:22-24, which reads, “*If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life.*” In other words, taking the life of an unborn child is a capital crime—even if unintentional.

mind.”² Compared to pride, “*unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere fleabites.*”³ In other words, sexual sin, including homosexual sin, is a relatively minor sin compared to pride. Lewis reasoned,

*Pride can often be used to beat down the simpler vices. Teachers, in fact, often appeal to a boy’s pride, or, so they call it, his self-respect, to make him behave decently: many a man has overcome cowardice, or lust, or ill-temper, by learning to think that they are beneath his dignity—that is, by pride. The devil laughs. He is perfectly content to see you becoming chaste and brave and self-controlled, provided, all the time, he is setting up in you the dictatorship of pride—just as he would be quite content to see your chilblains cured if he was allowed, in return, to give you cancer. For pride is a spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense.*⁴

In other words, pride is a far greater sin than homosexuality.

So, why am I address the moral nature of homosexuality when more severe sins permeate churches? There are at least four reasons why am I not dealing with pride, greed, gluttony, lying, injustice, selfishness, and the like. **First**, although very few people are claiming that greed, gluttony, and selfishness are morally right, many are arguing that homosexuality is morally acceptable and good. **Second**, I am writing to initiate a discussion to encourage a more Christ-like attitude toward both homosexuals *and* homosexuality. **Third**, I am writing to help me understand my own position concerning this divisive topic. **Fourth**, I am writing to stimulate friendly dialogue between those who believe homosexuality is an alternatively healthy lifestyle, and those who think homosexuality is an unpardonable sin. However, before we proceed, we must first clarify what I mean (and what I do not mean) by homosexuality.

²C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 2001), 122.

³Lewis, 122.

⁴Lewis, 125. Chilblains is a minor disease similar to athlete’s-foot.

What is Homosexuality?

Although many define homosexuality in terms of same-sex attraction, I believe that it is better to define homosexuality in terms of homosexual activity—albeit both physical and mental. Here is my rationale: If we define homosexuality in terms of same-sex attraction (or homosexual temptations), then homosexuality cannot be wrong because temptations, themselves, are not sins. Since the Bible says that Jesus was “*tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin*” (Hebrews 4:15), a temptation itself cannot be a sin.⁵ Nevertheless, temptations may become sin before physically acting upon the temptation. For instance, Jesus said, “*You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart*” (Matthew 5:27-28). Hence, the temptation to commit adultery becomes sin at some point before the physical act of adultery.

Although the point at which a particular temptation becomes sin is somewhat unclear, most agree that temptation becomes sin once it is mentally “entertained.” James explained, “*Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death*” (James 1:14-15). In other words, a temptation becomes sin at some point “*after desire has conceived.*” For this reason, I often tell college students that they cannot avoid temptation—especially when encountering a provocatively dressed person. While the first glance (the

⁵Although I don't think this verse means that Jesus experienced every temptation that every human has ever experienced, I do believe this verse claims that Jesus experienced the full range of human temptation. In fact, I believe that Jesus is the only person to know the full force of human temptation. Here is why: Consider two persons attempting to lift 400 pounds. The first person attempts, but fails. However, the second person is successful. Which athlete has experienced the full resistance of the weight? The obvious answer is the only second person.

temptation) is not necessarily a sin, gazing is a different story.⁶ For this reason, Job maintained, “I made a covenant with my eyes not to look with lust at a young woman.”⁷

According to this definition of homosexuality, a person experiencing same-sex attraction would not necessarily be guilty of sin. Hence, if “being” homosexual means merely experiencing same-sex attraction (or same-sex temptation), then there is nothing inherently sinful with “being” homosexual. Just as there is nothing inherently sinful regarding a married person experiencing heterosexual temptation, there is nothing inherently sinful with any temptation—not even homosexual temptation.

Some Christians disagree with the idea that same-sex attraction (or temptation) is not inherently sinful. They argue that homosexual attraction (or desire) is not natural or not part of God’s original design, and is therefore sinful. For instance, Southern Baptist Seminary President Albert Mohler wrote, “*Homosexual acts and homosexual desire, states Paul, are a rebellion against God’s sovereign intention in creation and a gross perversion of God’s good and perfect plan for His created order.*”⁸ In other words, even homosexual desire is sinful.

Although homosexual attraction (desire) is a perversion of God’s natural order, all temptations are a perversion of God’s intention. For instance, my inborn selfishness desires are perversions of God’s good creation and natural order. However, my daily selfish predispositions are not inherently sinful.

⁶One smart-aleck college student responded to me, saying, “*If that is the case, then I’m going to make the first one count.*” He missed the point.

⁷Job 31:1 (New Living Translation).

⁸Albert Mohler, *Homosexuality and the Bible* (Louisville, KY: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 10. I have employed the word “desire” as something synonymous with “attraction” or “temptation.” Mohler, though, may be using the word “desire” to mean something akin to “lust,” or “fantasizing with intention.” If so, then I fully agree with him.

Although these temptations will evolve into sin if I “*entertain*” them, the temptations themselves are not a sin.

Before we discuss the actual moral nature of homosexual activity, we must address yet another preliminary question: Is it hateful or judgmental to speak against homosexuality?

Is Speaking against Homosexuality Hateful and Judgmental?

Due to my interaction with the LGBT⁹ activist group called “Soul Force,” my experience at the 2002 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis was memorable. Since members of Soul Force were protesting the convention, an official told the audience not to use the primary exit. Growing up in Maine, I had never seen any kind of demonstration, let alone one of this kind. So, I did what any naïve seminary student would do—I engaged the demonstrators in friendly dialogue. One of the activists, a Yale divinity student, was generous enough to speak with me. When I asked him what they were protesting, he explained that Southern Baptists were “murdering” homosexuals by maintaining that homosexuality is immoral. According to this student, the guilt engendered by this hateful idea caused many of his friends to commit suicide. In his mind, Southern Baptists were directly guilty of hate crimes and, indirectly, guilty of murder.

Spam and morality. After listening to his case with genuine care and compassion, I eventually earned enough “conversational credit” for him to listen to my “*apologia*.” Initially, I planned on asking why those with a propensity for heterosexual pornography, adultery, and fornication do not make similar accusations against

⁹I’m using the terms LGBT, gay, and homosexual somewhat interchangeably.

the SBC.¹⁰ However, for the sake of clarity, I decided to answer with the following illustration involving the mysterious meat product called Spam.

Suppose that I believe eating “Spam” is a sin.¹¹ In fact, imagine that I truly believe that eating Spam is such a vile and heinous sin that if a person continues in his “Spam” eating ways, he will spend eternity in Hell. If I sincerely believe that the Spam-despising deity will eternally punish all who willfully, deliberately continue to eat Spam, what is the most loving action I can do for my Spam-eating friends?¹² If I truly care for them, then I cannot be silent about their dietary practices. If I truly loved them, then I would lovingly try to convince them of the danger. I would *lovingly* show them any scientific evidence concerning the hazards of Spam-eating.

Moreover, I would *lovingly* attempt to reason with them, persuading them to renounce their consumption of Spam. If my Spam-eating friends attempted to justify their position, I would *lovingly* refute their objections. For instance, suppose they justified their Spam-eating lifestyle by arguing that they were born with a gene that causes them to have an affinity for Spam. If so, then I would explain that we cannot determine morality by genetic predispositions. Suppose, for example, that I was born with a gene causing me to consume Spam-eaters. That inborn desire could not justify me eating a Spam-eater.

In short, if I believed that eating Spam was morally wrong, then I would *lovingly* employ philosophical arguments and

¹⁰The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 states, “*In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography.*”

¹¹Spam is a canned pork product. It has a cult-like following in certain parts of the United States—particularly Hawaii, where Hawaiians utilize as a sushi substitute. Though I do not care for Spam, I do not believe eating spam is a sin.

¹²Remember, whether or not my belief is true is not the issue.

scientific evidence. Moreover, I would continue to befriend and embrace those who refuse my efforts. I would pray for them, and, most importantly, I would love them all-the-more.

Conversely, if I sincerely believe that my Spam-eating friends will spend eternity in hell and I do not speak out to warn them, then “hatred” is a better word to describe my relationship with them. If I sincerely hold my belief, then the most *hateful* thing I could do to my friends is to remain silent and accept their eating habits as an alternatively healthy diet. Furthermore, if my belief concerning Spam is true, then their blood is on my hands.¹³

Although the Yale student followed this illustration, it did not convince him to abandon the protest. So, if I could talk with him today, I would probably add another example—the illustration of the I-40 bridge incident.

Oklahoma bridge. Disaster struck Webbers Falls Oklahoma on May 26, 2002, when Joe Dedmon—captain of the tugboat *Robert Y. Love*—unintentionally rammed his barge into the interstate 40 bridge. As a result, a 180-meter section of the highway fell into the river.¹⁴ In all, fourteen people died when their vehicles plummeted into the river. Many more would have died if courageous citizens had not risked their lives to warn motorists headed for certain destruction. According to CNN,

A fisherman who helped pull a survivor from the river said he watched helplessly as vehicle after vehicle drove off the edge and dove 60 feet into the water. “That went on for almost five minutes. Just one car after another,” said Norman Barton, who witnessed the disaster from his boat, where he was participating in a bass fishing tournament. “It was just one car after another hitting the end of the bridge at 70 miles an hour. Nobody could see that the bridge was gone.” At one point, Barton said fishermen along the river shot a flare at a tractor-trailer driving toward the gaping hole. “That truck locked up, and stopped with his

¹³Acts 20:26.

¹⁴Interstate 40 is one of two highways that connect the east coast of the United States with the west coast.

*front wheels hanging over the bridge. Then he slammed it in reverse and backed up,” he said.*¹⁵

Hearing such vivid descriptions of this event is especially chilling to me because just twenty-four hours before this catastrophe, my wife and I drove our vehicle across this very bridge. I could have been driving one of those cars “*hitting the end of the bridge at 70 miles an hour.*”

Undeniably, the quick-thinking bystanders saved many lives. Instead of warning the cars, however, suppose that these bystanders sat down with a beer to watch the carnage. If they could have helped, then their inexcusable inaction would have been morally deficient or criminally hateful.

In contrast, let us suppose that the bystanders executed extremely severe measures to warn the speeding cars. For instance, imagine that a bystander took his pickup truck and rammed it into the side of one of the oncoming vehicles to prevent it from going off the bridge. Most would agree that the measure was justifiable and, ultimately, a demonstration of *love*.

So, here is my point. If a Christian sincerely believes that those who do not repent of homosexuality will spend eternity in hell, then the most *hateful* thing a Christian can do is to say nothing. Conversely, the most loving thing a Christian can do is to warn homosexuals to repent.¹⁶ Therefore, Christians who warn homosexuals to repent should not be condemned as hateful. Instead, they should be praised as loving—especially if their beliefs are true—but even if they are not. On the other hand, Christians who believe that homosexuality is morally wrong, yet say nothing, should be accused of “hate crimes.” Consequently,

¹⁵<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/US/05/28/bridge.collapse/index.html>

¹⁶ Remember, whether or not my belief is true is irrelevant

the issue boils down to the question, “Is homosexuality *really* wrong?”

Is Morality Objective or Subjective?

Before addressing the question of homosexuality’s morality, we must wrestle, briefly, with one last preliminary question: Is morality objectivity? In other words, before we can say that homosexuality is morally wrong (or right), we must first establish whether an objective standard of morality exists. If morality is relative (or subjective) then there is no point in discussing homosexuality’s morality—for right and wrong do not exist. If objective morality exists, then we can discuss homosexuality’s moral status. So is morality objective or subjective? I think there are at least five good reasons for believing that morality is objective.¹⁷

First: Human moral progress not possible. My first reason for believing that morality must be objective involves the impossibility of moral improvement if morality is subjective. In other words, if morality is subjective, then moral progress is not possible. For instance, liberal theologians claim that Christian fundamentalism is a step backward. Such an objection, however, requires a standard of comparison. For example, if I’m able to say that a particular culture has morally improved, then I must have some sort of standard to which I can compare the cultures. If one culture corresponds more closely to that standard, then I can say it is a better culture. However, if there is no standard, then I cannot claim that moral progress has occurred.

In order to visualize my point, consider the following maps of

¹⁷My booklet titled, “Does God Exist: An Argument from Morality” expands upon this contention. In addition, the first few Chapters of C. S. Lewis’ “Mere Christianity,” as well as Paul Chamberlain’s “Can We Be Good without God?” address this issue at length.

you shouldn't do that," or, "Give that back, I had it first,"¹⁸ and "That's just wrong." They also say things such as, "How would you like it if someone did that to you?"¹⁹ They might even say things like, "but you promised," or "leave him alone, he isn't hurting anyone." Chamberlain observed,

Think carefully about what each of these statements is saying. They are not merely saying that we don't like what the other person is doing. Of course, that is included, but they are saying much more than that. They are appealing to a standard of conduct, which we are saying the other person has violated. What's more, we expect the other person already to know about this standard, don't we? Never do we ask, 'By the way, have you heard of fairness?' ...Never does the other person ...say 'But who cares about fairness' ...Rather, she usually tries to show that their conduct really did somehow conform to the standard...[and that] if you really understood the whole situation ...you would know that."²⁰

In short, if people do not believe in an objective moral standard, then they cannot argue as they do. But they do argue and bicker. Therefore, they do believe in an objective moral standard.

Third, human judgments not possible. I obtain my third reason for believing in an objective moral law from the notion of human judgments. If there is no objective moral standard, then no action, no matter how vile, can be judged as immoral. For instance, if there is no moral standard, then there is nothing wrong with selfish behavior, greed, slavery, torturing children, gay-bashing, or killing Jews. Deep down, though, most people know that these things are morally wrong. The fact that some humans do not think all of these actions are wrong is not a good argument against the idea of an objective moral standard. Just as some

¹⁸Chamberlain, 58.

¹⁹Chamberlain, 58.

²⁰Chamberlain, 59. Here Chamberlain is following C. S. Lewis' argument in *Mere Christianity*.

humans are born with various degrees of colorblindness, some humans are unable to recognize the moral standard. Nevertheless, most humans acknowledge that specific actions are always wrong.

Fourth, one cannot live subjectivism consistently. I base my fourth reason for objective morality on the fact that subjectivism is not livable. In other words, even moral subjectivists become moral objectivists when wronged. For instance, consider the way professing moral relativists respond when mistreated or harmed without reason. According to Chamberlain, *“The same person who denies there is any objective moral standard one moment goes back on her word the next. She will immediately accuse you of acting unfairly or indecently or dishonestly toward her.”*²¹ The only way a moral relativist can act consistently with moral relativism is to say nothing when wronged. Yet, the fact that moral relativists respond as if there was an objective moral standard when they wronged suggests that relativism is false. For an amusing illustration of this point, consider the account of a student who wrote a paper arguing for moral relativism.

A professor at a major university in Indiana ... told the students to write on any ethical topic of their choice, requiring each student only to properly back up his or her thesis with reasons and documentation. One student, an atheist, wrote eloquently on the topic of moral relativism. He argued, “All morals are relative; there is no absolute standard of justice or rightness; it’s all a matter of opinion; you like chocolate, I like vanilla,” and so on. His paper provided both his reasons and documentation. It was the right length, on time, and stylishly presented in a handsome blue folder. After the professor read the entire paper, he wrote on the front cover, “F, I don’t like blue folders!” When the student got the paper back he was enraged. He stormed into the professor’s office and protested, “‘F! I don’t like blue folders!’ That’s not fair! That’s not right! That’s not just! You didn’t grade the paper on its merits!” Raising his hand to quiet the bombastic student, the professor calmly retorted, “Wait a minute. Hold

²¹Chamberlain, 61. California Starbucks illustration.

on. I read a lot of papers. Let me see . . . wasn't your paper the one that said there is no such thing as fairness, rightness, and justice?" "Yes," the student answered. "Then what's this you say about me not being fair, right, and just?" the professor asked. "Didn't your paper argue that it's all a matter of taste? You like chocolate, I like vanilla?" The student replied, "Yes, that's my view." "Fine, then," the professor responded. "I don't like blue. You get an F!" Suddenly the light bulb went on in the student's head. He realized he really did believe in moral absolutes. He at least believed in justice. After all, he was charging his professor with injustice for giving him an F simply because of the color of the folder. That simple fact defeated his entire case for relativism.²²

In short, the actions of most relativists betray their commitment to relativism. In other words, when wronged, most relativists become objectivists.

Fifth, the ubiquitous human consensus. I ground my fifth reason for objective morality on ubiquitous agreement concerning morality. For instance, nearly every culture believes that selfish behavior is wrong and that altruistic behavior is good. Moreover, the civilized world considers cultures that do not value selflessness, as immoral cultures. A good example of this universal human agreement concerning morality is the UN declaration of human rights.²³ This inescapable pattern of thought caused a young C. S. Lewis eventually to question his atheism. He explained, *"My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line."*²⁴ Lewis continued, *"If there were no light in the universe and therefore no creature with eyes, we should never know it was dark. Dark would be a word without meaning."*²⁵ In other words, Lewis realized terms like *evil* and

²²Geisler 173-74.

²³<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>

²⁴C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 2001), 38.

²⁵Lewis, 39.

wrong are meaningless unless there is an objective moral law. He went on to argue that there cannot be a moral law without a moral lawgiver, which he called God.

In short, if morality is not objective, then homosexuality is not morally wrong, for wrongness does not exist. However, if morality is subjective, then actions such as gay-bashing, mistreating women, and torturing children for entertainment cannot be wrong. Therefore, anyone embracing moral relativism has no objective basis on which to address homosexuality. Since we know that torturing children for fun is wrong, there must be an objective moral standard. That means homosexuality is either morally right or morally wrong.

Are Some People Born Gay?

Much of the debate concerning homosexuality's morality focuses on the idea of an inborn homosexual orientation. If an inborn orientation exists, then LGBT activists maintain that homosexuality is not immoral. According to them, blaming a man for his "orientation" is like condemning a man for the color of his skin. Some homosexual opponents seem to buy this argument. Therefore, they spend considerable effort attempting to argue against the idea of an inborn homosexual orientation. For instance, Albert Mohler asserts,

The modern—and highly political— notion of homosexual "orientation" as a natural human condition cannot be squared with the Bible. The only orientation indicated by Scripture is the universal human orientation to sin.²⁶

²⁶Mohler, *Homosexuality and the Bible*, 14.

While some research indicates that nurture causes homosexual orientation,²⁷ other research suggests that some people are born with a homosexual “orientation.”²⁸ Furthermore, some studies point to the *same* research to support their position. For example, one study of homosexuals having an identical twin revealed that approximately 50 percent of the siblings are also gay.²⁹ Since homosexuality in the general population is far less than 50 percent, some claim that this data proves a genetic link to same-sex attraction.

However, others suggest that the *same* evidence indicates the opposite—that homosexuality cannot be genetically linked. If there were a gay gene, then both of the identical twins with the gay gene would be gay. The fact that half of the siblings are gay suggests that *nurture* plays a significant role in sexual orientation. Think of it this way: Suppose a group of researchers hypothesize that certain persons are genetically predisposed to play college basketball. Then this research team studies college basketball players that have an identical twin. Most likely, there will be a high probability that the other twin will also be a college basketball player. If true, would it follow that there a gene that causes certain people to become college basketball players? I don’t think anyone would be willing to make such a connection. While it’s true that most basketball players will have similar genes, for height, coordination, and quick reflexes, the presence of such similarities does not cause one to choose to become a college basketball player. Moreover, even if there was a gene that caused persons to

²⁷For example, see Stanton Jones and Mark Yarhouse’s book, *Homosexuality*, (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), 47-92

²⁸For instance, see Anastasia Toufexis’ article, "New Evidence of a 'Gay Gene,'" *Time* 146, no. 20 (November 13 1995): 95.

²⁹P. Billings and J. Beckwith, "Born Gay?" *Technology Review* July 1993: 60.

have a predisposition towards basketball, does it follow that these persons have no choice in the matter.

Since many homosexual advocates claim that some are born with a homosexual orientation, let's presume, for the sake of discussion, that this claim true. If scientists discovered a gene that made a person possessing it more likely to choose a homosexual lifestyle, would this discovery justify homosexuality? Not necessarily. We cannot, and should not, determine morality by genetic predispositions. For example, suppose scientists isolated and identify a gene that makes a person more likely to become an alcoholic. Would the possession of such a gene morally justify alcoholism? Since alcoholism is self-destructive and harmful to others, an inborn predisposition to addiction could not justify a life of drunkenness.

The same would follow for many other moral issues and social maladies. If a person was born with a genetic propensity to abuse children, to beat their spouse, to lie, to lose their temper, to rob banks, to gay-bash, or commit murder, would this natural-born propensity justify these actions? Of course not.

As confessed earlier, I was born with at least one sinful predisposition—selfishness. Moreover, all four of my daughters seem to have inherited the same trait. This hypothesis became increasingly clear as they learned to speak. In each case, one of the first words they spoke was the word “mine!” This inborn affinity, however, is no excuse to act selfishly. Even though God allowed me to be born selfish, I'm still obligated to renounce my selfish ways and act altruistically.

Likewise, one cannot determine homosexuality's morality by genetic or inborn propensity or affinity. Hence, the debate concerning whether some are born gay or not is irrelevant—for there are many inherent desires that are morally wrong. We must,

therefore, employ criteria other than inborn propensity to differentiate between right and wrong.

If inborn desire cannot determine morality, what can? In short, nothing can *determine* morality—for morality is not determined. Instead, we must discover morality. In a sense, morality is a lot like math. We did not invent math—we discovered it. For instance, the mathematical truth that three times four equals twelve was true long before anyone discovered that truth. This truth would be true even if no human ever discovered it.

Likewise, certain actions were morally wrong long before anyone discovered those truths. Just as God did not invent the laws of logic or the rules of mathematics, God did not invent morality. However, God is not subordinate to the moral standard. Instead, he *is* the standard. In other words, God is morality. The laws of logic, math, beauty, and the laws of morality are attributes of God—extensions of his nature. Just as certain mathematical sums are always wrong, certain actions are wrong because they violate the nature of God. Moreover, just as some mathematical truths are hard to recognize, some moral laws are harder to see than others. Although God designed humans with an innate knowledge of right and wrong, that knowledge has been suppressed and understood imperfectly. Therefore, full knowledge of right and wrong requires special (or biblical) revelation.

What Does The Bible Say about Homosexuality?

If God exists, then it is probably a good idea to find out if he has said anything concerning homosexuality. If the Bible is a

reliable source of God's revelation to humankind, then we must consider what it says concerning homosexuality.³⁰

The teachings of Jesus. Some homosexual advocates suggest that Jesus never condemned homosexuality and that Christians should follow his silence regarding the matter. The problems with this position are numerous. **First**, we don't know that Jesus never condemned homosexuality. He may have done so. All we know is that the Bible does not record any direct reference to this issue by Jesus. However, Jesus said and did many things, which were not recorded. Moreover, according to John 20:30-31,

*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*³¹

In other words, John did not write for the purpose of providing us with the complete ethical teachings of Jesus. Instead, he wrote so that we would believe that Jesus is the Christ.

Second, even if Jesus never mentioned homosexuality, that truth alone would not justify homosexual actions. For instance, Jesus never condemned bestiality, pedophilia, or slavery. Yet few people appeal to his silence to justify those actions. **Third**, Jesus did argue that sexual unions are confined to marriage³² and that marriage is a union between a male and a female.³³ **Fourth**, since the religious leaders of Christ's day rejected homosexuality, and since Jesus habitually corrected their theological and ethical views,

³⁰To find out why I believe the Bible is a reliable source of God's thoughts, see my booklet titled, "Is The Bible the Reliable?" or my Ph.D. dissertation addressing Timothy Dwight's case for the Bible's authenticity.

³¹John 20:30-31.

³²Mathew 5:27-28.

³³Matthew 19:3-4.

his silence concerning this issue favors the understanding that he agreed with their belief that homosexuality is morally wrong. **Fifth**, the rest of the Bible, which Jesus affirmed, teaches that homosexuality is morally wrong. What, then, does the rest of the Bible say about homosexuality?

The Old Testament. In the Old Testament, homosexual actions are described as *detestable*, *wicked*, *vile*, and *disgraceful*. For instance, Leviticus 18:22 says, “*Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.*” Likewise, Leviticus 20:13 says, “*If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.*” Furthermore, Genesis 19:5-7 claims, “*They called to Lot, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.’ Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, ‘No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing.’*” Additionally, Judges 19:22-23 contends,

While they were enjoying themselves, some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house. Pounding on the door, they shouted to the old man who owned the house, “Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him.” The owner of the house went outside and said to them, “No, my friends, don’t be so vile. Since this man is my guest, don’t do this disgraceful thing.”

Some people reject these Old Testament prohibitions of homosexuality by pointing out that that are listed alongside many Old Testament commands, which we feel no obligation to keep today. For example, Leviticus 19:19 says, “*Do not mate different kinds of animals. Do not plant your field with two kinds of seed. Do not wear clothing woven of two kinds of material.*”³⁴ Since few

³⁴Leviticus 19:19

Christians feel obligated to wear 100 percent cotton or to plant only one crop per garden, homosexual advocates accuse fundamentalist Christians of “a la carte” morality.

Although homosexual activists are right when they claim we are no longer obligated to keep these agricultural and apparel commands, there are at least two reasons why they are wrong to suggest that homosexual prohibitions fall into the same category.

First, while these Old Testament commands are not necessarily binding upon New Testament Christians, the principle behind the law is required. For instance, the Bible says,

*When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God.*³⁵

The principle behind this command is to take care of the poor. Today, therefore, we are still obligated to help the poor—even though we are free to harvest the edges of our fields. **Second**, the New Testament directly reiterates the Old Testament’s prohibition of homosexuality. Consequently, the Old Testament prohibition of homosexuality still applies.

The New Testament. In the New Testament, homosexual actions are described as *shameful, unnatural, indecent, a perversion, wicked*, and as an offense that will preclude those who

³⁵Leviticus 19:9-NLT

practice homosexuality from heaven. For instance, Romans 1:26-27 asserts,

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Likewise, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 maintains,

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Additionally, 1 Tim 1:9-10 declares,

The law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.

If these verses have been translated accurately, then one must conclude that the Bible views homosexuality as wrong as greed, lying, slandering, and murder. So, were these passages translated correctly? Albert Mohler, in his work *Homosexuality and the Bible*, explains two types of objections to these verses. The **first** argues, although the Bible does indeed condemn homosexuality, those parts of the Bible are not valid today. The **second** argues that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. According to Mohler, the revisionists who make this second case “*must deny the*

obvious—and argue the ridiculous.”³⁶ Consequently, Mohler believes the first approach is the view of the most honest revisionists. Mohler explained,

*These persons do not deny that the Bible expressly forbids homosexual practices—they acknowledge that the Bible does just that. Their answer straightforward; we must abandon the Bible in light of modern knowledge and sensitivities.*³⁷

In short, God’s Word prohibits homosexual behavior. Nevertheless, the Bible does not classify same-sex attraction as sin if those temptations that are not acted upon physically or mentally.

The Science of Homosexuality’s Morality

Although the Bible teaches that homosexuality is immoral, many do not accept those parts of the Bible. Can Bible-believing Christians show homosexuality's immorality without the Bible? Yes—there are many ways to do so. One approach is to demonstrate how science confirms the Bible’s position concerning homosexuality. If one will grant the truth of two generally accepted moral principles, then science confirms the Bible’s position concerning homosexuality. The **first** premise is the idea that harming others, without sufficient reason, is morally wrong. The **second** is a similar proposition that harming oneself, without a justifiable reason, is also morally wrong.

In an attempt to follow my argument, consider the following syllogism:

³⁶Mohler, *Homosexuality and the Bible*, 9.

³⁷Mohler, *Homosexuality and the Bible*, 7.

- (1) If homosexuality is harmful to oneself or others, then homosexuality is morally wrong.
- (2) Homosexuality is harmful to oneself and others.
- (3) Therefore, homosexuality is morally wrong.

Since this is a logically valid argument, *modus ponens*, if the premises are true, then the conclusion is *necessarily* true. The argument's strength, therefore, depends on the truth of its premises. Since many homosexual activists are not comfortable with the conclusion, they must show that one of the two premises is flawed. Let us, then, attempt to demonstrate the truth of these premises.

Defending the first premise. Although this premise cannot be proven, most people willingly accept it. If one does not grant the truth of this premise, then there is nothing morally wrong with torturing children for fun, smoking in a pediatric critical care hospital room, or injecting heroin into one's own body. The fact that we strictly regulate the use of certain drugs proves that most of us believe it is wrong to let people harm themselves. Although some people think we have the right to harm ourselves, nearly everyone agrees that it is wrong to engage in behavior that hurts other people. For instance, many airports restrict smoking to designated areas and ban smoking on flights to protect non-smokers from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

Similarly, most states pass laws against operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol to protect sober drivers from intoxicated drivers. Hence, very few are willing to argue against premise (1). If they do, they have no right to argue that gay-bashing is wrong. Consequently, if homosexual advocates want to avoid the conclusion of my syllogism, they must reject the second premise.

Defending the second premise. The second premise of my argument claims, “Homosexuality is harmful to oneself and to others.” Although I base my defense of this premise on science, I believe there are two serious dangers involved in making a science-based argument. The **first** hazard is the fact that science is constantly changing its conclusions. Hence, scientific evidence for a particular case today may become superfluous in the future. The **second** danger involves what philosophers call a fact-value fallacy. Science deals with facts, not values.³⁸ For instance, science can say, “If you don’t give bone marrow to your grandmother, then she will die.” However, science cannot say that you *ought* to donate your bone marrow to your grandmother. When people use science to say that we *ought* to do something (or ought not to do something), they have left science for philosophy. Nevertheless, science can tell us what is the case—namely, whether homosexuality is harmful or not.

However, even if the scientific evidence suggested that a homosexual lifestyle is healthier than a heterosexual one, we could not necessarily conclude that homosexuality is morally good.³⁹ For instance, some dangerous lifestyles are morally superior to safer ones. Consider, for example, the dangerous life of Mother Teresa or St. Paul. Clearly, their lifestyles were morally superior to many less dangerous lifestyles.

Despite the shortcomings of science-based arguments, science effectively confirms the Bible’s concern for the lifestyle. At the very least, the following *seven* scientific truths demonstrate that homosexuality is harmful to oneself and others.

³⁸For more information regarding scientifically derived morality, see www.aaronjwerner.com/a-moral-argument, pages 25-27.

³⁹For instance, one study showed that homosexual adolescent males had a lower risk for tobacco use than heterosexual adolescents (S. Bryn Austin, "Sexual Orientation and Tobacco Use in a Cohort Study of US Adolescent Girls and Boys," *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine* 158 (2004): 317.).

First, decreased lifespan. The scientific research suggests that a lifestyle involving homosexual activity is associated with a lifespan decreased by twenty to thirty years.⁴⁰ Additional research discovered that the median age of death for homosexual men was forty-five.⁴¹ Further research has confirmed these discoveries. For instance, researchers discovered that the life expectancy of practicing male homosexuals *without* AIDS is about 45 years.⁴² However, if one includes those with AIDS, the life expectancy drops to 39 years.”⁴³

If these claims are accurate, homosexuality is clearly self-destructive and dangerous to others. Since many homosexual activists did not like this conclusion, they questioned the research and conducted their own research to “*to address recent claims of markedly shorter life spans among homosexual persons.*”⁴⁴ Published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, the Danish researchers claimed,

*Despite dramatic reductions in AIDS-associated mortality over the last decade, our study shows that same-sex marrying Danish men and women have overall mortality rates that are currently 33% to 34% higher than those of the general population.*⁴⁵

Ironically, this research ended up confirming the very thing that its researchers doubted—homosexuality is dangerous. For those who

⁴⁰Paul Cameron, "Does Homosexual Activity Shorten Life?" *Psychological Report* 83 (1998): 847-66.

⁴¹Paul Cameron, "Homosexual Partnerships and Homosexual Longevity," *Psychological Reports* 91 (2002): 671-78.

⁴²William Lane Craig, *Hard Questions, Real Answers* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 142.

⁴³Craig, 142.

⁴⁴Morten Frisch, "Mortality among Men and Women in Same-Sex Marriage," *American Journal of Public Health* 99 (2009): 135.

⁴⁵Morten Frisch, "Mortality among Men and Women in Same-Sex Marriage," *American Journal of Public Health* 99 (2009): 135.

dismiss these facts, consider the unbiased studies accepted by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Although the CDC praises gay organizations and activists for developing guidelines for the prevention of AIDS, the CDC claims, “*This educational effort has not slowed the disease’s progress.*”⁴⁶ For instance, the CDC reported that the number of new HIV infections among young MSM increased by 34% between 2006 and 2009.⁴⁷ Moreover, in a recent study of five US cities, 46% of the homosexuals studied were HIV-positive.⁴⁸ As of April 10, 2020 the CDC maintains, “*Men who have sex with men (MSM) have higher rates of STDs such as syphilis and HIV.*”⁴⁹ The CDC laments, “*For complex reasons, HIV/AIDS continues to take a high toll on the MSM population.*”⁵⁰

Since these claims are scientifically accurate, homosexuality is self-destructive and dangerous to others. If homosexuality activity is as at least as dangerous as smoking, then we must warn our youth about the dangers of living a homosexual lifestyle with the same fervor that we warn them concerning the dangers of smoking and drug use.⁵¹

Second, increased drug abuse. In addition to having reduced life spans, those who participate in homosexual behavior are more likely to have drug and alcohol problems. In fact, homosexuals are “*three times more likely than the general population to be problem drinkers.*”⁵² Furthermore, “*fifty-one percent have a history of drug abuse.*”⁵³ According to the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent*

⁴⁶www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/ Accessed January 21, 2013

⁴⁷www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/ brochure published May 2012.

⁴⁸www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/ Accessed January 21, 2013.

⁴⁹www.cdc.gov/std/life-stages-populations/msm.htm. Accessed April 10, 2020.

⁵⁰www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/ Accessed January 21, 2013.

⁵¹Paul Cameron, "Homosexual Sex as Harmful as Drug Abuse, Prostitution, or Smoking," *Psychological Reports* 96 (2005): 915-61.

⁵²Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 113.

⁵³Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 113.

Medicine, “A substantial body of research has documented an association between the use of recreational drugs and high-risk sex among gay and bisexual men.”⁵⁴ In short, there is a correlation between homosexuality and dangerous drug use.

Three, increased disease. Eighty percent of male homosexual activity is physically dangerous to the human body causing problems such as “prostate damage, ulcers and ruptures, chronic incontinence and diarrhea.”⁵⁵ In addition, seventy-five percent of homosexual men “carry one or more sexually transmitted diseases *wholly apart* from AIDS.”⁵⁶ These include non-viral infections such as “gonorrhea, syphilis, bacterial infections, and parasites”⁵⁷ as well as incurable viral infections such as herpes and hepatitis B which effects 65 percent of homosexual men.⁵⁸

Since HIV/AIDS “was first diagnosed 1981, gay and bisexual men have been leaders in dealing with the challenges of the epidemic. Gay organizations and activists, through their work, have contributed greatly to many of the guidelines for prevention, treatment, and the care of people living with HIV/AIDS.”⁵⁹ Unfortunately, this educational effort has not slowed the spread of these diseases. For instance, the US Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports, “Whatever the reasons, in 2005, MSM still accounted for about 53% of all new HIV/AIDS cases and 71% of cases in male adults and adolescents.”⁶⁰ Yet, “MSM [men who have sex with men]

⁵⁴Miles McNall and Gary Remafedi, "Relationship of Amphetamine and Other Substance Use to Unprotected Intercourse Among Young Men Who Have Sex With Men," *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 153 (1999): 1130.

⁵⁵Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 117-18.

⁵⁶Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 118.

⁵⁷Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 119.

⁵⁸Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 121.

⁵⁹<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/>

⁶⁰<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/>

made up more than two thirds (68%) of all men living with HIV in 2005, even though only about 5% to 7% of men in the United States reported having sex with other men.⁶¹ In addition, a 2005 study of 5 large US cities, 46% MSM were HIV-positive.⁶² The CDC laments, “For complex reasons, HIV/AIDS continues to take a high toll on the MSM population. For example, the number of new HIV infections between 2006 and 2009 among young MSM increased 34%”⁶³

One explanation for the high occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases affecting homosexual men is the *highly* promiscuous lifestyle of most homosexuals. For instance, seventy-five percent of homosexuals claim to have had more than 100 different sexual partners in their lives—over half of which are complete strangers.⁶⁴ In fact, only eight percent of homosexuals report having had a relationship lasting longer than three years.⁶⁵ In addition, the average male homosexual reports having more than twenty different partners per year.⁶⁶ Contrary to rare cases, “lifelong faithfulness is almost non-existent in the homosexual experience.”⁶⁷

Four, financial strains. In addition to homosexuality self-destructive properties, it is also destructive to society. The financial cost of treating diseases engendered by the homosexual lifestyle is exorbitant. If society restrained homosexuality, rather than encouraged it, more funds and more doctors could be invested into finding cures for diseases. In addition, some AIDS researchers believe that there is a danger in prolonging the life of

⁶¹<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/>

⁶²<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/>

⁶³ <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/> brochure published May 2012.

⁶⁴ Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 106.

⁶⁵ Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 106.

⁶⁶ Thomas E. Smidt, *Straight and Narrow* (IVP, 1995), 106.

⁶⁷ Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow?* (Downer’s Grove: InterVarsity, 1995), 108.

AIDS victims with experimental treatments rather than cures. Their fear is that under such conditions the AIDS virus could mutate with something like the tuberculosis virus and become an airborne variant of the disease. I'm not suggesting that we neglect treating victims of aids. On the contrary, if God exists, and if the Bible is the Word of God, then humans are compelled to treat AIDS patients with the best care possible. I am arguing, however, that we should not promote homosexuality as a healthy alternate lifestyle to our schoolchildren.

Five, increased mental health disorders. There is a link between many serious psychological disorders and homosexuality. According to the Center for Disease Control, "*Research has shown that they [gay and bisexual men] are at greater risk for mental health problems.*"⁶⁸ More specifically, "compared to other men, gay and bisexual men have higher chances of having: Major depression, Bipolar disorder, and Generalized anxiety disorder."⁶⁹ In addition,

*Gay and bisexual men may also face other health threats that usually happen along with mental health problems. These include more use of illegal drugs and a greater risk for suicide. Gay and bisexual men are more likely than other men to have tried to commit suicide as well as to have succeeded at suicide.*⁷⁰

The CDC is not alone in its conclusions. For instance, The Journal of Adolescent Health claimed that homosexuals, "*reported a range of health and mental health problems, and involvement in health-*

⁶⁸<https://www.cdc.gov/msmhealth/mental-health.htm> Accessed April 10, 2020.

⁶⁹<https://www.cdc.gov/msmhealth/mental-health.htm> Accessed April 10, 2020.

⁷⁰<https://www.cdc.gov/msmhealth/mental-health.htm> Accessed April 10, 2020.

compromising behaviors, such as overweight/obesity, depression, and suicidal thoughts/attempts, and many were found to have high rates of sexually transmitted infections.”⁷¹ Likewise, the *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners* reports, “There are unique health disparities that exist for MSM related to social, emotional, and mental health factors, in addition to physical issues such as STDs.”⁷² Other research indicated that forty percent of male homosexuals have a history of major depression while the heterosexual population is three percent.⁷³ According to one medical journal, homosexuals are 3.41 times more likely than the general population to attempt suicide.⁷⁴ In fact, homosexual men attempt suicide six times more often than heterosexual men.⁷⁵ According to the *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, “21% had made a suicide plan, whereas 12% had previously attempted suicide.”⁷⁶ Although the numbers are lower, homosexual women attempt suicide twice as often as heterosexual women.⁷⁷ In short, there is a correlation between homosexuality and many mental disorders.

Six, more likely to abuse children. According to recent scientific research, homosexual practitioners are more likely to sexually abuse foster or adoptive children than heterosexual parents.⁷⁸ Furthermore, homosexual men are significantly more

⁷¹Michele D. Kipke et al., "The Health and Health Behaviors of Young Men Who Have Sex with Men," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 40 (2007): 342-50.

⁷²Royal Gee, "Primary Care Health Issues Among Men Who Have Sex with Men," *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners* 18 (2006): 144-53.

⁷³Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow?* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1995), 113.

⁷⁴Robert Garofalo, R. Cameron Wolf, and Lawrence S. Wissow, "Sexual Orientation and Risk of Suicide Attempts Among a Representative Sample of Youth," *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine* 153 (1999): 487-93.

⁷⁵Craig, 141.

⁷⁶Royal Gee, "Primary Care Health Issues Among Men Who Have Sex with Men," *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners* 18 (2006):149.

⁷⁷Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow?* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1995), 114.

⁷⁸Paul Cameron, "Child Molestations by Homosexual Foster Parents," *Psychological Report* 96 (2005): 227-30.

likely to be pedophiles than heterosexual men.⁷⁹ If this data is accurate, social workers should use additional precautions when considering placing children in the care of homosexual parents.

Seven, more likely to abuse partner. According to the *New York Academy of Medicine*, MSM are significantly more likely to abuse their partners than heterosexual couples.⁸⁰ This abuse involves, but is not limited to, physical, verbal, and emotional abuse.⁸¹

The Conclusion of Science. Since science clearly establishes homosexual behavior is harmful to oneself and others, our conclusion appears true—homosexuality is immoral. At the very least, public educators should not portray homosexuality as an alternate healthy lifestyle. On the contrary, we must warn children of the physical dangers associated with the lifestyle employing no less vehemence than we exercise concerning the risks associated with smoking or drug use. According to William Lane Craig,

*A good case can be made on the basis of generally accepted moral principles that homosexual behavior is wrong. It is horribly self-destructive and injurious to other persons. Thus, wholly apart from the Bible's prohibition, there are sound, sensible reasons to regard homosexuality as wrong.*⁸²

Consequently, we ought to restrict the liberties of homosexuals similar to the way that we restrict other liberties such as gun owners, smokers, and automobile drivers. Human liberty is not a

⁷⁹Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow?* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1995), 115.

⁸⁰Eric Houston and David J. McKirnan, "Intimate Partner Abuse among Gay and Bisexual Men," *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, Vol. 84, No. 5 (2007): 681-90.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Craig, 142. Although much of this case considers male homosexuality, I believe that the dangers of female homosexuality also—albeit, to a lesser degree—warrant this conclusion.

*“license to engage in actions that hurt other people.”*⁸³ If homosexuality is harmful to others, then perhaps homosexual couples should not be allowed to marry, and certainly should not be allowed to adopt children. If homosexuality is harmful and dangerous to others, then we should not allow public schools to teach a curriculum portraying homosexuality as an alternative and healthy lifestyle. On the contrary, if homosexuality is as self-destructive and dangerous as smoking, then society should regulate homosexuality for similar reasons in a similar way. At the very least, we must not promote homosexuality should not be promoted as an alternatively healthy lifestyle.

Are Homosexuals Bad People?

In many ways, many of the gay men and women that I know act more Christ-like than Christians. Unfortunately, I don't think my experience is unique. For instance, I have often heard restaurant servers complain about their Sunday afternoon clientele—Christians. These servers tell me that churchgoers are their worst clients of the week. According to these servers, Christians are rude, demanding, nearly impossible to please, and (more often than not) do not tip well. On the contrary, these servers tell me that openly gay couples are generally gracious, kind, patient, loving, and often leave generous tips. In these ways, homosexuals often act more Christ-like than church-going Christians.

I am not sure why this is the case. Perhaps many homosexuals come from highly educated and relatively wealthy and refined families.⁸⁴ If so, many homosexuals would, perhaps, begin

⁸³Craig, 143.

⁸⁴Although homosexuals can be found in every socioeconomic group, it seems to me that a large percent of homosexuals come from relatively affluent families.

adulthood with more polished manners than an ordinary citizen. C.S. Lewis, before his conversion, thought that if Christianity is true, then Christians should be nicer than non-Christians. Later on, however, he changed his position. He explained,

If Christianity is true then it ought to follow that (a) any Christian will be nicer than the same person would be if he were not a Christian and (b) that any man who becomes a Christian will be nicer than he was before. Just in the same way, if the advertisements of Whitesmile's toothpaste are true, it ought to follow (a) that anyone who uses it will have better teeth than the same person would have if he did not use it and (b) that if anyone begins to use it then his teeth will improve. But to point out that I, who use Whitesmile's (and have also inherited bad teeth from both my parents) have not got as fine a set as some healthy young negro who never used any toothpaste at all, does not, by itself, prove that the advertisements are untrue: Christian Miss Bates may have an unkindler tongue than unbelieving Dick Firkin. That, by itself does not tell us whether Christianity works. The question is what Miss Bates's tongue would be like if she were not a Christian and what Dick's would be like if he became one. Miss Bates and Dick, as a result of natural causes and early upbringing, have certain temperaments: Christianity professes to put both temperaments under new management if they will allow it to do so. . . . Everyone knows what is being managed in Dick Firkin's case is much 'nicer' than what is being managed in Miss Bates's. That's not the point. To judge the management of a factory, you must consider not only the output but the plant. Considering the plant at factory A, it may be a wonder that it turns out anything at all; considering the first-class outfit at factory B, its output, though high, may be a great deal lower than it ought to be. No doubt, the good manager at factory A is going to put in new machinery as soon as he can, but that takes time. In the meantime, low output does not prove that he is a failure.⁸⁵

In other words, not everyone is raised or endowed with the same amount of social grace. Perhaps many who become Christians start their Christian life a little lower on the social grace scale than non-Christian homosexuals.

⁸⁵Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 210-11.

Will Homosexuals Be In Heaven?

Can a homosexual get into heaven? The answer to this question, I think, depends on what we mean by “homosexual.” Earlier I maintained that merely having same-sex attraction does not make one homosexual. Instead, I defined homosexuality as action—both mental and physical. Consequently, there is nothing morally wrong with having same-sex temptation. Therefore, just as those who experience heterosexual temptation can enter heaven if they receive Christ by faith and repentance, so can those who experience homosexual attraction—if they receive Christ by faith and repentance.⁸⁶

But, what about practicing homosexuals? Will God allow practicing homosexuals to enter heaven? If we define “practicing” homosexuals as those who act upon (mentally or physically) their same-sex attraction, then the Bible is clear that practicing homosexuals will not enter the kingdom of God. The Bible, however, is just as clear that neither will liars, or the greedy, or many others, enter the kingdom of heaven. The Bible says,

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Does this mean that a person struggling with something like alcoholism will not enter heaven? I do not think so.

Consequently, I must make a distinction between two types of alcoholics. The first believes that drunkenness is morally wrong,

⁸⁶For more about my soteriology, see www.aaronjwerner.com/what-is-the-gospel.

yet struggles, perhaps daily, to stay sober. The second alcoholic says, “*I don’t care what the Bible says about getting drunk, I am going to do it anyway.*” So, what is the difference? The first could be a heaven-bound born-again Christian, while the second gives every indication that God’s grace has never regenerated or transformed his heart. Consequently, I believe that a person could be struggling with homosexual temptation, and possibly give into those temptations during moments of weakness and yet could also be a heaven-bound born-again Christian. However, those who say, “*I don’t care what God thinks about homosexuality, I’m going to do things my way*” indicate that their hearts have not yet been born again. If you are in the latter category, then cry out to God in prayer and ask him to change your heart. Continue to call on the name of the Lord until you have the assurance from the Holy Spirit that he has transformed you into a child of God.⁸⁷

What Should I Do If I Experience Same-sex Desires?

Suppose that a woman who has “*called upon the name of the Lord*”⁸⁸ and received assurance of her salvation from the Holy Spirit still struggles with same-sex attraction. How should she respond to these temptations? I offer the following five suggestions. **First**, those with same-sex attraction must determine whether homosexuality is morally wrong. If one does not resolve this question, then the following suggestions are irrelevant. **Second**, those who are struggling with same-sex attraction should pray for God to deliver them from this temptation. However, they must not blame God if the desire does not go away. Just as a man who struggles with anger management must not blame God for not

⁸⁷For more information concerning this topic, read my booklet titled “*What Must I Do to Get to Heaven?*”

⁸⁸Romans 10:13

taking away the anger, so the person struggling with same-sex attraction must not blame God if the desires continue.

Third, those who are struggling with homosexual temptation should respond to those temptations the same way that those undergoing heterosexual temptation deal with them. Just as heterosexual singles should practice abstinence from all sexual immorality, so should those struggling with homosexual temptations. In the same way that heterosexual individuals should avoid pornography and fantasizing, so should Christians with homosexual struggles.

Fourth, I those who experience homosexual temptations should, when they experience such a temptation, thank God for an opportunity to glorify him by resisting the particular temptation. Since this concept may sound strange, I'll explain it in terms of something less controversial. Suppose that a specific person has recently overcome an addiction to compulsive gambling. Since I have never had any desire to gamble, I have no opportunity to glorify God by overcoming a temptation to gamble because I have no such desire. However, the person who has recently overcome a gambling addiction may have many opportunities to glorify God by resisting temptations to gamble. Consequently, when tempted to gamble, the person tempted should thank God for the opportunity and pray for strength to endure the trial. Likewise, those experiencing same-sex temptations should thank God for the opportunity to glorify him by overcoming the trial.

Fifth, those struggling with same-sex attraction should seek out professional help from a qualified Christian counselor. My brother in law, Phil Mitchell, is one such counselor. Phil was a youth pastor at a 16,000-member mega-church in Northwest Arkansas. The youth ministry grew tremendously under his leadership. At one point, Phil was leading the Southern Baptist

Convention in youth baptisms by baptizing over 200 per year. However, all along, Phil was harboring a secret—same-sex attraction. For years, he suppressed this temptation by discipline and self-restraint. Eventually, however, he gave our adversary a foothold, and this temptation gave birth to sin. In due course, his sin “found him out.”⁸⁹ Consequently, he lost from his job, and his wife left him. Although Phil always believed homosexuality was morally wrong, he did not know how to deal with his temptations. Fortunately, a ministry of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Georgia, specialized in helping people like Phil.⁹⁰ Today he is free from the bondage that once held him captive.

How Should the Church Respond?

In general, Christians, both liberal and conservative, have failed the homosexual community. Conservative Christians have failed homosexuals by refusing to pursue them with the same grace offered to heterosexuals. In many ways, conservative Christians have viewed homosexuals similar to the way Jonah viewed the people of Nineveh—as those unworthy of God’s grace. Since God was displeased with Jonah, we can be sure that he is equally displeased with those who develop a similar attitude toward homosexuals. Liberal Christians, on the other hand, have also failed the homosexual community by affirming the lifestyle as an alternative, God-honoring, way of living. Since Jesus requires all people to repent or perish, this is equally damning to the homosexual.⁹¹ How then, should a loving Christian relate to homosexuals? I think the answer to this question involves a dynamic conversation in which both groups seek to understand

⁸⁹Numbers 32:23.

⁹⁰More information about this program can be found at www.hopequestgroup.org.

⁹¹Luke 13:3

each other more fully. In the meantime, however, Christians can apply the following seven principles to their interactions with homosexuals.

First, Christians must realize that most homosexuals claim that they did not choose their orientation. Many also report that they would like to change their orientation if they could.⁹²

Second, Christians need to love and support those who are struggling with this problem in the same way that they help those struggling with any life-dominating issue such as alcoholism, destructive gambling, or heterosexual sexual addiction. **Third**,

Christians should avoid crass language or jokes concerning homosexuals. For years, I joked about homosexuality around my brother-in-law. This seemingly innocuous humor probably kept him from sharing his struggle with me earlier. Had I been more sensitive, perhaps he could have received help before he gave “the devil a foothold.”⁹³

Fourth, Christians must find ways to extend the love of Christ to the homosexual community and individual homosexuals. By this I mean finding ways to evangelizing and serving homosexuals.

Fifth, Christians must continue to speak the truth, but, as

Ephesians 4:15 commands, express it in love. **Sixth**, Christians must remember that Jesus, when asked why he spent time with notorious sinners, said, “*It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick*” (Matthew 9:12). If Jesus spent time with those that society rejected, then we should as well, for the Bible says,

“*Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did*” (1 John 2:6). Consequently, churches must find ways to open their doors

⁹²Today, growing numbers of homosexuals seem to be proud of their orientation. Yet, most still claim that they did not choose their orientation. I don't claim to know what causes one's orientation—it's probably a mixture of nurture and nature. However, all humans have an orientation for sin—regardless of its particular manifestation.

⁹³Ephesians 4:27

and affirm homosexuals without affirming homosexuality. **Seven**, Christians must be willing to talk about homosexuality with their children and their youth groups. Despite the fact that Paul said, “*it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret*” (Ephesians 5:12), we dare not avoid this discussion any longer. Christians must lovingly and openly initiate discussions concerning homosexuality.

What about Gay Marriage?

Although Jesus stated that Christian marriage is between a man and a woman, most Christians have functionally abandoned the concept of Christian marriage. The institution we presently call marriage today is no longer Christian marriage. Given the divorce rate among professing Christians, I think today’s institution is closer to “serial monogamy.” Perhaps we should start a new kind of marriage—a truly Christian marriage—enforced in the church, not in the courts. In the 1940’s C. S. Lewis wrote,

There ought to be two distinct kinds of marriage: one governed by the state with rules enforced on all citizens, the other governed by the church with rules enforced by her on her own members. The distinction ought to be quite sharp, so that a man knows which couples are married in a Christian sense, and which are not.⁹⁴

Perhaps Lewis was right. Maybe Christians lost marriage a long time ago. Perhaps the only way to save it is to give civil union away and start over with a truly Christian marriage—a union that exemplifies the relationship between Christ and his church. A union made by God that no man can dissolve.⁹⁵

⁹⁴Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 112. For more information concerning Lewis’ idea of a Christian marriage, see chapter six in *Mere Christianity*.

⁹⁵Matthew 19:6 says, “Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

I do realize that I have not actually answered the question concerning gay marriage. Instead, I have argued that the civil institution we call marriage today is not Christian marriage. Before we worry about “gay” marriage, we need to reclaim Christian marriage. I’m not sure if that means we need to coin a new term such as “Christian Union,” or salvage the original. Either way, I believe that we need to reclaim Christian marriage and enforce it within the church, not with a secular government. Perhaps one way to remove Christian marriage from the secular sphere of influence is to cut all secular benefits (such as tax breaks and medical benefits) to all married couples. Then homosexual couples would have not as many financial incentives for marriage. In short, although I do not support gay marriage, neither do I support what Christian marriage has become.

What about Hermaphrodites?

Some people are born as hermaphrodites—having both male and female sexual organs. How should these people choose their sexual orientation? This is a very good question. Since we live in a sin-stained world, all sorts of detrimental genetic disorders have emerged and will probably continue to do so.⁹⁶ For instance, Down Syndrome—a genetic disorder involving an extra chromosome—entails, among other things, significant cognitive impairment.⁹⁷ I believe that Christian researchers should attempt to find genetic cures, not mere treatments, to these kinds of diseases. If we develop the ability to correct genetic disorders like Down’s syndrome, then we should. Likewise, if we can employ some sort of recombinant DNA technology to “splice in” the

⁹⁶If you would like to know why and all-powerful, all loving God might allow evil, see my booklet “*If God Exists, Why Is There So Much Evil in The World?*”

⁹⁷This genetic disease is also called Trisomy 21.

proper genes into those with disordered hermaphroditic genes, then we should.

Conclusion

My goal for this booklet was to stimulate dialogue between the homosexual community and various Christian communities—particularly conservative Christianity. In short, I have argued that same-sex attraction (or temptation) is not morally wrong. I have, however, argued that acting upon same-sex attraction is immoral. I have also maintained that both liberal Christians and conservative Christians have “dammed” gays—albeit in opposite ways. Liberals have failed gays by affirming their lifestyle and refusing to warn them of the coming judgment. Conservatives, on the other hand, have failed homosexuals by refusing to share the love of Christ and his good news with them. By viewing homosexuality as the ultimate sin, many conservative Christians have adopted an attitude similar to the one Jonah had toward the people of Nineveh. Since God was not pleased with Jonah’s stance, we can safely presume that he is equally unhappy with many conservative Christians.

I do not claim to have the final word on this topic. On the contrary, my contentions could be wrong. If I have misunderstood the Bible, then I am willing to change my theology to fit the Bible. If I have reasoned wrongly, I will change my conclusions to better correspond to logic. If I have misapplied scientific evidence, then I am willing to apply it correctly. Consequently, I am asking incredulous readers to respond to this article by emailing me at the address included at the beginning of this document. In other

words, I am willing to change my position if given compelling intellectual reasons to do so.⁹⁸

In closing, I want to reemphasize the truth that we are all born with an inclination to sin. Despite the fact that some of us have sinful predispositions toward heterosexual sin and others (perhaps) toward homosexual sin, God demonstrated his own love for us in this way: “*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8). If we will turn from our sin, and turn to Christ, he will “*forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9).

⁹⁸I said “intellectual reasons,” to distinguish between the physical threats that I often received from those who disagree with my conclusions.