

1019 - What does the Bible really say about homosexuality?

The Bible teaches in Romans 1:21-31 that homosexuality is the result of people making themselves the final authority, and denying and disobeying God. Men did not want to keep thoughts of a holy God, and so they escaped feelings of conviction by honoring images. God then gave them over to their sinful desires in order to show them the emptiness of a life without Him. That means that homosexuality is not the cause of a society's decline, but it is only one of the symptoms of a society that has rejected God's authority.

The Bible consistently tells us that homosexual activity is a sin. The Old Testament says:

Leviticus 18:22 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

Leviticus 20:13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination:

The book of Ezekiel 16:49-50 mentions that Sodom also practiced an abomination:

Eze 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

Eze 16:50 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw *good*.

Reading this together with what we read in Leviticus and also what we read in Genesis 19:1-13 shows us that homosexuality was a sin in Sodom, and one of the reasons they were destroyed.

Some believe that the New Testament has a different view about homosexuality, but that is not true:

Jude 1:7 in the New Testament also refers to the homosexual practice of Sodom as "going after strange flesh". It says, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

Romans 1:26-27 in the New Testament says that homosexuality is a vile affection and not natural:

Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Rom 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Something is natural, not because of the way we feel, but because of the way God designed it, and the Bible is clear in Genesis 1-2 that monogamous heterosexual activity was created in Eden as God's plan for mankind. The couple's joint worship of their Creator fulfilled their purpose of being spiritually

complementary to each other. They were also physically complementary to each other. A man is not physically complementary to another man.

Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-5

Mat 19:4 Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

Mat 19:5 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?

Paul also tells Timothy that homosexuality is contrary to sound doctrine.

1Ti 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

The New Testament also makes it abundantly clear that those who practice homosexuality will not enter the kingdom of God.

1Co 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind (nor men who practice homosexuality ESV)

Despite the attempts of some to downplay these verses, the Bible could not be clearer that homosexuality is a sin against God.

But many have claimed that they cannot help it, because they were born that way.

A person may be born with a greater susceptibility to homosexuality, just as some people are born with a tendency to violence and other sins. But the tendency and the temptation is not a sin. Being drawn toward a morally forbidden relationship is not sin; it is temptation. We know that temptation is not sin because Jesus was tempted in Matthew 4, yet the Bible tells us that He never sinned in Hebrews 4:15. We are all tempted in many ways and will be until we take our last breath. A temptation is simply the opportunity to do wrong, but we still have to choose. To be tempted is to be tested. To fall is to sin. These two thoughts express the difference between sinful urges and sinful practice. A gay man may live a holy life. Though tempted, he may live victoriously. He must forsake entertaining both the thoughts and actions of same-sex urges.

Isa 55:7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

So a person may be born with a greater susceptibility to homosexuality, just as some people are born with a tendency to violence and other sins. That does not excuse the person's choosing to sin by giving

in to sinful desires. If a person is born with a greater susceptibility to anger/rage, does that make it right for him to give into those desires? Of course not! The same is true with homosexuality.

Even though we are all born with different inclinations towards different sins, Jesus made it clear that we need to be born again.

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

Here is some great counsel from a Christian author on how to overcome our tendencies towards certain evils:

“All are free moral agents, and as such they must bring their thoughts to run in the right channel. Here is a wide field in which the mind can safely range. If Satan seeks to divert the mind to low and sensual things, bring it back again and place it on eternal things; and when the Lord sees the determined effort made to retain only pure thoughts, He will attract the mind, like the magnet, purify the thoughts, and enable them to cleanse themselves from every secret sin. “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).” Ellen White, *Mind, Character and Personality*, Volume 2, page 595

All sin is offensive to God. Homosexuality is just one of the many things listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that will keep a person from the kingdom of God. According to the Bible, God’s forgiveness is just as available to a homosexual as it is to an adulterer, idol worshipper, murderer, thief, etc. God also promises the strength for victory over sin, including homosexuality, to all those who will believe in Jesus Christ for their salvation

1Co 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

1Co 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1Co 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

In verse 11 Paul mentions, “and such were some of you”, that is that in Corinth some of them were practicing homosexuals, but God gave them the power to have victory over sin and live a holy life. The New Testament offers good news for everyone struggling with sexual identity. Jesus wants to replace our sinful lifestyles with His own righteousness so that we become more like Him.

God has provided proper social satisfaction to gay men and to lesbian women in celibate living, and in some cases, in heterosexual love.

Mat 19:12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

Some persons born with cerebral palsy, and others born as “eunuchs,” are handicapped. But we understand that they may have hope of a fulfilling and unhandicapped afterlife. Likewise, some gay and lesbian persons may have to look to heaven for their ultimate fulfillment and satisfaction. Being born with a weakness never has been a legitimate excuse for a Christian to misbehave. It is just a reason to cherish hope for a better tomorrow.

So what does the Bible really say about homosexuality?

Sexual evils are pointed out and condemned in both the Old and New Testaments. Among those described are homosexual activities. While the gospel gives power to all to overcome sin, it does not condone or allow sin. Practicing homosexuals who continue to practice sin cannot be a member of the church, and will not enter God's kingdom.

In our day, Christians have no reason to be confused regarding God's view of same-sex attraction. It is unnatural. And Christians have no reason to doubt how God regards homosexual fantasizing and practice. It is evil. And Christians have no reason to hate or despise those who sin sexually. Those who practice open sexual sin, including homosexuality, cannot be members of the church because the moral values of the church will be misrepresented and God's Word is clear that they cannot enter His kingdom. But Christians are called to pray for those who do not know Christ, to serve others in love, and to share the message of Jesus with all people, including those involved in homosexuality.

And it will be seen that those that turn from their sin, no matter how precious it has been held, never have cause to regret it. God's holy plan at Creation is the only true way to everlasting joy and peace.