

# Biblical View of Homosexuality

by Ronald Gordon

## INTRODUCTION

Homosexuals are calling for a reformation of the Christian church much like the theological reformation of Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries. They are determined to completely eradicate any aversion among Christians to same-sex lifestyles and achieve nothing less than full acceptance. They view the Church as a major blockade to their endeavors. Some groups are well organized and well-funded. Other voices may represent only determined individuals who are socially influential. But the goal is the same for each whether passive or contentious.

Writers sympathetic to the movement are authoring books that focus on reinterpreting and dismissing all biblical references to same-sex interactions. It is nothing short of a theological cleansing. God is being depicted as a loving God who welcomes everyone to the table. Jesus is presented as the defender of those excluded from the table. The book of Leviticus is generally being dismissed and its abominations are being reformatted to highlight practices that Christians have fully embraced. This includes eating pork, shell-fish, and wearing clothing of mixed fabrics, all of which are depicted as abominations in Leviticus. They want a reformation by a transformation.

## OLD TESTAMENT

At no time does Scripture give an exception to any degree of same-sex behavior as it does in several other cases. *“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery,”* Matthew 5:32. (NKJV) Fornication is the exception. God will not force anyone to remain in a marriage where one spouse engages in sex with someone else.

Righteous anger has an exception. *“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath,”* Ephesians 4:26. (KJV) Righteous anger is not sinful if justifiable and quickly resolved. Jesus was justifiably angry in Mark 3:5 when a man was healed on the Sabbath which provoked some religious authorities.

There is even an exception for manslaughter in Exodus 22:2 where a thief breaks into a house at night and is struck with a fatal blow. No punishment will be forthcoming, the assumption being that in the darkness a man would not fully know the outcome of such a blow. However, if it is daylight (*verse 3*), the defender would know on what part of the body the thief is being struck and most certainly a reasonable estimation of the resulting injury.

In no part of the Bible does God offer the slightest indication that a same-sex union is acceptable under any circumstance. From the very beginning God established marriage as a union between one man and one woman for life. Whenever the Bible mentions adultery it consistently refers to sin between males and females. God is holy and sovereign. He alone establishes the standards for human sexuality among all nations and they are abundantly clear.

Authors sympathetic to homosexuality disregard the book of Leviticus. They say that its lethal penalties as found in chapters eighteen and nineteen (*the holiness codes*) are non-applicable to modern society as also its regulations on animal sacrifice and especially dietary restrictions. But Jesus often cited passages from this book. The second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. Where does this come from? Leviticus. Where do we learn about tithing? Leviticus. Dismissing this book would summarily dismiss a lot more because Jesus is the center piece of Leviticus chapter sixteen dealing with atonement. Jews call it *“Yoma”* (*the day*). The Day of Atonement was the high point of the year. It was the only day on which the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies and make atonement. He would enter the Holy of Holies three times, first to make atonement for himself, second to atone for the priests, and third to atone for the nation.

He was put into seclusion a week before so that he would be free of uncleanness from touching or eating anything that was unclean. The night before he would stay up all night reading Scripture to prepare his heart. On the morning of *the Day* he would bathe from head to toe and then put on clean white linen. This was done in public as the Temple was filled with people cheering him on. He was their representative before God. Three times he would enter the Holy of Holies to make atonement. Each time he would bathe in public behind a screen.

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Christian sermons reference *the Day* and its correlation to the atonement of Jesus. Dismissing this book would dismiss a lot more than dietary restrictions. In this book God reveals a clear and unambiguous standard for morality among all people in all lands. Notice particularly in the following passages how God reminds Israel that He is the sole reason for their freedom and inheritance. He especially directs their attention to the immorality of other nations and the land which they have defiled. God says the land itself will vomit its degenerates.

*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances,”* Leviticus 18:1-3. (KJV)

*“Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth (Rev 3:16) out her inhabitants,”* Leviticus 18:24-25,45. (KJV)

*“That the land spue (Rev 3:16) not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued (Rev 3:16) out the nations that were before you,”* Leviticus 18:28. (KJV)

*“For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy,”* Leviticus 11:45. (KJV)

*Spue? Vomit?* These pronouncements remind us of the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:16. But the real threat comes from verse 28 where God informs Israel that He will also spue them from their own land should they embrace these same lifestyles. Years later they did embrace this immorality and God spued them into captivity at the hands of the Babylonian army. Morality and holiness are paramount to understanding the true nature of God.

Coins have two sides and God has two sides, love and judgement. The greatest demonstration of God’s love would be the atoning work of Jesus, and one severe demonstration of judgement was the swift deaths of twenty-four thousand disobedient Israelites who chose immorality. Before entering the Promised Land, men of Israel were sternly warned not to marry women from immoral nations. They did not heed the warning, so God destroyed them (Numbers 25:1-9). Moral purity is a very serious matter with God and consequences can be severe.

The fiery destruction of Sodom and four neighboring cities is another example of God’s judgement upon immorality. It started when men of Sodom attempted to gang rape two godly men. God’s punishment resulted in a conflagration so immense, their true locations remain uncertain. Reformers insist this incident is not representative of loving monogamous homosexual unions, thus all biblical references to other types of same-sex interactions do not apply to them. Unless the Bible clearly refers to loving unions, then by default, God’s approval is assumed.

But here is the problem with this conclusion. Jude writes, *“And don’t forget Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, which were filled with immorality and every kind of sexual perversion. Those cities were destroyed by fire and serve as a warning of the eternal fire of God’s judgment,”* Jude 1:7 (NLT). Older translations have *“going after strange flesh”* which translates the Greek word *ἕτερος* meaning *different* or *not the same*. The neighboring cities of Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim were not destroyed because of a failed gang rape in Sodom. God’s punishment transpired because *“every kind of sexual perversion”* existed in all four cities. Ezekiel adds pride, idleness, lewdness, wickedness, loveless, haughty spirit, and neglecting the poor (16:49-63).

Here is another example of homosexuals obfuscating the original message of biblical authors. Christians have historically interpreted the Bible to condemn same-sex interactions of any type regardless of intimacy. At no time has God permitted exceptions to the original intention of bonding one male and one female together for life.

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## NEW TESTAMENT

A modern storm of debate has settled on Romans 1:26-27. Modernists contend that this narrow passage deals only with heterosexuals who abandoned their inborn nature and experimented with homosexuality, unlike homosexuals who were born with an innate proclivity to the same sex. Therefore any discussion on this passage must recognize that it is the heterosexuals who have not remained in their native state, and therefore guilty of God's judgement. Whereas homosexuals are the ones who have consistently remained in their native state and therefore should receive God's blessing for their consistency. If anyone is guilty of sin, it is the heterosexual.

But once again the problem lies in the fact that Modernists fail to evaluate the larger context, that being the first three chapters. The main point of Romans chapter one is that Gentiles were not living in accordance with God's expectations. Chapter two speaks to Jews who were not living as God would desire. Chapter three is sort of a catch-all inclusive statement to everyone in all nations as found in the following texts.

*"What then? Are we (Jews) better than they (Gentiles)? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God,"* Romans 3:9-11. (NKJV)

*"Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"* Romans 3:22-23. (NKJV)

At no time does the Holy Spirit inspire words giving unconditional qualifications to loving monogamous homosexual unions under any circumstance. If Paul had wanted his readership to know that there were exceptions to the rule, he did not give us any wiggle room to find it. The Bible does not offer tacit approval or blessings to any type of same-sex encounters, whether inborn or acquired. Each time this issue appears in Scripture it is problematic for the gay community, because they must resort to lengthy reinterpretations to circumvent the original clarity. This is what some call kitchen sink theology. In other words, just throw in whatever is necessary to achieve the desired outcome. God loves homosexuals and so should everyone else, but not to embrace their lifestyle.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

Apostle Paul provides a list of sinful behaviors pertaining to the *unrighteous* (verse 9) who are unwilling to repent and cease from practicing sinful behaviors. These indictments do not pertain to the *righteous* (v 11) because they repent and confess their sinfulness. They are washed, sanctified, and justified by God.

*"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate (μαλακός, *malakós*, meaning soft, Strong's Greek Dictionary, G3120).*

Literally, soft to the touch and usually in reference to clothing (Matthew 11:8; Luke 7:25). Figuratively, it refers to a man who yields himself to be sexually manipulated. This is the male homosexual playing the submissive role. Additionally, this word appears between the word's *adulterers* and *abusers*, so it cannot mean soft in a good sense.

*"... nor abusers (ἀρσενοκοίτης, *arsenokoítēs*, G733) of themselves with mankind..."*

A man who lays in bed with another man. This is the male homosexual playing the dominate role who manipulates his partner at his sole discretion. In the mind of Paul, this union was unrighteous and unworthy of the kingdom of God.

*"And likewise also the men (ἄρσεν, *ársēn*, Strong G730), leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men (ἄρσεν) with men (ἄρσεν) working that which is unseemly..."* Romans 1:27.

Men (ἄρσεν) is a derivative of *arsenokoítēs* G733 and retains the same aberrant mind-set. However, the word for an adult man or husband is ἀνήρ, *anēr*, G435. (See also Matthew 14:21, Mark 10:2, Luke 1:34, John 1:13).

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One key difference of interpretation is that Modernists attempt to defuse the clarity of Paul's words to mean anything but aberrant behavior, yet each word is grouped with the sins of adultery, fornication, and idolatry. Additionally, these words are also listed among the *unrighteous* (verse 9) regardless of reinterpretation.

Homosexuals then contend that no one really understands the true meaning of these words. Once again we have another instance of kitchen sink theology, i.e. throw in what's necessary for the intended outcome. This involves reinterpretation, dismissal, obfuscation, denial, or appealing to foreign cultural practices.

In desperation some Modernists claim that Paul invented the word *arsenokoîtēs* because it appears nowhere else in all of ancient Greek literature. Actually, it does appear in the Septuagint two centuries before Paul. This is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament (200-180 BC). Of the more than 290 Old Testament quotes in the New Testament, about two thirds come from the Septuagint.

Paul may have combined both words found in Leviticus 20:13 of the Septuagint to form *arsenokoîtēs*. *"If a man (ἄρσεν) also lie (κοιμηθῆ, go to bed) with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."*

One more example of kitchen sink theology is the argument that the original Hebrew words refers to male temple prostitutes instead of loving monogamous homosexuals. But the Hebrew word for temple prostitute is different as found in Deuteronomy 23:17: (קדשׁה, qêdêshâh, female temple prostitute) and (קדשׁ, qâdêsh, male temple prostitute). Perhaps we should let the Orthodox Jewish Bible speak for itself in verse 17, *"There shall be no kedeshah (ritual prostitute) of the banot Yisroel, nor a kadesh (sodomite ritual prostitute) of the bnei Yisroel."* The words found in Leviticus 20:13 do not refer to temple prostitutes. See also [Torah View on Homosexuality](http://TorahViewonHomosexuality.torahweb.org/torah/special/2010/homosexuality.html) at [torahweb.org/torah/special/2010/homosexuality.html](http://torahweb.org/torah/special/2010/homosexuality.html)

Eva Cantarella is an Italian classicist. She is professor of Roman law and ancient Greek law at the University of Milan. She is the author of [Bisexuality in the Ancient World](#), Yale University Press, 1992. It is a massive collection of resources about sexuality of that time. Cantarella is respected by her peers as an authoritative voice in her field of study, examining ancient law, cultures, languages, and modern perceptions of those times. Notice of particular interest that what she has written was first published in 1992, almost two decades before the modern controversy of reinterpreting homosexuality among Christians. She writes,

*"Paul then condemns each and every form of homosexuality. But despite the clarity of his language, the text is sometimes interpreted in a much more restricted sense than a simple reading reveals. So that malakos to whom Paul alludes are not boys, they are passive homosexuals whom Paul defines by using a term which in Greek alludes only to adults, but which he obviously uses to indicate all those who take on an effeminate, a female role without distinction of age. And along with those he also condemns the arsenokoîtēs, a term which literally means a man who shares his bed with another man. But which Paul is clearly associating with malakos to include active homosexuals also in his condemnation."*

*"And there is nothing in the text to limit his condemnation to adults who took advantage of boys. If Paul's aim had been to protect little children from exploitation and abuse among other things he would presumably have leveled his condemnation only at the abusers and not at their victims as well. In short, as can clearly be seen, Paul condemned homosexuality on a global basis, whatever its manifestations. This is not an inconsiderable innovation. It immediately shows the Christians attempt to introduce a different sexual ethic which replaced the old contrast between activity and passivity with a new fundamental dichotomy between heterosexuality and homosexuality."*

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Her analysis of Paul's usage of language and the conclusions to be derived from his commentary is persuasive. Cantarella is in full agreement with Paul from a genuinely academic point of view. It must be emphasized that her statements come purely from knowing ancient cultures, their laws, and their orientations.

Another strategy used by pro-homosexual writers is to make the claim that only recent translations have begun using the word homosexual in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10. They point out that ancient translators did not connect the words of Paul with the monogamous homosexual orientations of today. Some of this argument is partially true since the word homosexual was not coined until 1869 by German same-sex advocate Karl Kertbeny in a booklet titled Paragraph 143 of the Prussian Penal Code.

Homosexual author Matthew Vines tries to make this point in his recent book God and the Gay Christian. *"Our key words for the discussion here are the words translated as 'effeminate' and 'abusers of themselves with mankind' . . . This changed halfway through the last century, when some Bible translators began connecting these terms directly to homosexuality. The first occurrence of this shift came in 1946, when a translation of the Bible was published that simply stated that "homosexuals" will not inherit the kingdom of God . . . The concept of sexual orientation, and of same-sex orientation in particular, didn't exist in the ancient world. The English term 'homosexual' was not even coined until the end of the 19th century. And so translations of these words that suggest that Paul was using these distinctly modern concepts and categories are highly suspect."*

*Suspect?* How could one expect older translation committees to utilize terminology from a much later period? *Connecting these terms?* Vines is carefully trying to nullify the existence of a previous connection between language and orientation which was adequately explained by Paul and confirmed by Cantarella. But this assertion fails to nullify that this same-sex instance is listed with the *unrighteous* (verse 9) whatever the terminology.

Let us review the terminology used by early English translators in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 to determine if their choice of words acknowledges ancient sexual activity as now understood and if they deemed it to be sinful.

John Wycliffe, 1382: *"neither lechers against kind, neither they that do lechery with men"*

Wycliffe was the first translator to produce an English translation of the Bible. Lechery was understood then and now to be excessive sexual perversion.

Douay-Rheims Bible, 1582: *"nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind"*

It was commissioned by the Roman Catholic Church and translated from the Latin Vulgate. The immediate clarity is obvious. Men are not to act like women nor lie with other men.

John Darby, 1890: *"nor those who make women of themselves, nor who abuse themselves with men"*

Darby was an Irish Bible teacher and very influential in the Plymouth Brethren movement. How could his selection of words be clearer? Men are not to act like women or engage in abusive behavior with other men.

Vines' assertion that modern translators are suspect because they insert modern words into the mouths of biblical writers such as Paul fails completely because he misunderstands the basic premise for creating newer translations. Recent committees are simply being faithful to their own methodology, which is updating Bibles to reflect changes in the English language which better convey original meanings. Most committees integrate this very element into their promotional literature in order to validate their efforts. His assertion also fails because newer manuscripts and archeological discoveries yield greater light toward understanding ancient writers and their cultures. Vines' assumption also fails to comprehend that modern words more accurately reflect the opinions of what biblical authors were trying to explain. Actually, it is these newer words that refute Vines' assertion.

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## JESUS AND SEXUALITY

Modernistic attempts to cleanse the Scriptures assert that since Jesus never said anything against homosexuality, then by default, He must have approved of all loving monogamous unions. This is a futile attempt to create a universal tenet based on absence. In the Jewish community for centuries before and centuries after the earthly ministry of Jesus, there is not a shred of evidence from any source to indicate that homosexuality was promoted in any such fashion as it is today. Why then would Jesus have addressed a matter that was so irrelevant? There would be no reason. In a similar manner, Jesus never once addressed polytheism which was an integral part of Greek and Roman social life. Does that mean He approved of homage to gods and goddesses by silence? What is of paramount importance is not what Jesus didn't say, but what Jesus did say and with divine authority.

Jesus looked into the heart, mind, and soul of everyone. He knew what they were thinking (Matthew 12:25, Mark 2:8, Luke 6:8, John 2:24-25). Jesus knew the sexual thoughts of everyone. If same-sex loving relationships were acceptable to Him, then why did He not openly advocate on their behalf as He also did for other oppressed social classes? (Matthew 21:31, Mark 2:17, Luke 15:1, 19:1-9). Jesus reserved His severest condemnation for the unoppressed who were hypocritical of the oppressed (Matthew 23:13-34).

One issue that has not been addressed to this point is particularly the only acceptable sexual orientation that Jesus did approve. Two schools of thought on the subject of divorce presided over debates of that day. Followers of rabbi Shammai held that divorce was permissible only under the most serious of transgressions such as adultery. Conversely, followers of rabbi Hillel approved of separation for the most trivial of infractions which included burning a meal (Talmud Bavli, Tractate Gittin, Folio 90a). Both followers vociferously debated in synagogues, in homes, and on street corners. In Matthew 19:3-9 we see possibly the only instance where they agreed when testing Jesus on the issue. What better opportunity could there be to settle the argument and snare Him at the same time? It would force Jesus to take sides. There was no way out of it. At least that is what they thought.

Jesus responded by saying, in the beginning, male and female were created for each other (1:26) to spend a lifetime together. *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,"* Genesis 2:24. No other orientation has the approval of God. This covenanted union is the only biblical prescription for marriage, (Mark 10:9; Luke 20:27-35; 1 Corinthians 6:16, 7:2-5; Ephesians 5:29-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:13; 1 Peter 3:1-7). On a different note, critical methods of study advanced by Eichhorn, Wellhausen, Hupfeld, and Graff has let many theological seminaries to teach that Genesis chapters one and two were written by different authors. Jesus combined both into one singular voice from God.

Homosexuals contend that there are only six verses in the Bible that deal with same-sex interactions, and then challenge Christians by saying, out of 31,102 verses you are going to condemn us over only six verses! Here is but yet another example of kitchen sink reasoning. After carefully studying the entire biblical record and fully understanding the preponderant theme of marriage, without exception it is always male and female.

One more challenge to Christians is the matter of polygamy. A few Old Testament kings did have multiple wives. David had concubines, wives, and even murdered for a wife, yet he was abundantly enriched. First, abuses by a few does not change God's foreordained standards. Second, look at the effect those arrangements had on David and the disastrous outcomes. David was chided by God several times for his sinfulness, and one cowardly example of his disobedience was to take a national census against a clear warning from God. Seventy thousand men needlessly died (1 Chronicles 21:1-18).

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Last of all on his death-bed, David conspired with Solomon to kill a former adversary (2 Samuel 16:5-13, 1 Kings 2:8-9, 36-46). A short time later through careful deception the man was put to death.

What type of moral society will the future hold for our nation? Morals come from religious literature, whether from the Bible, the Torah, the Quran, or the Vedas. Ethical behavior does not originate from governments or corporations. Each have proved to be cauldrons brewing all types of scandalous behavior. The approval rating of the US Congress by registered voters was only 14% for 2017. Washington, D.C. is always a hotbed for scandals.

Investment firms were so greedy over the last decade that many went out of business during the housing collapse of 2008. Why? Because there were no regulations. These firms were bundling home loans together (mortgage backed securities) and selling slices to investors who then pushed lenders to give even more loans, thinking that the housing market would never fail. So, banks started “bottom feeding” which means giving loans to lower income customers. When the housing market collapsed, these lower income home owners defaulted and so did the investment firms and the banks who purchased insurance to cover potential losses. It was greed out of control. Why were there no regulations? Millions of dollars in fees. Investors and lenders fought regulations. They were all making too much money. Greed, scandals, immorality, and the destruction of the family is our inevitable future. And why should this happen? Because the main social advocate for morality will have been removed.

Christianity is one, if not the, leading defender of morality and civility. If the door should completely open to gay and lesbian marriages, then what step is next? The forthcoming downward spiral may follow the same path as the investment firms. No regulations on morality because everyone is having too much fun. Inevitably this nation may degrade itself into legally sanctioned polyamorous and polygamous relationships. Since the divinely ordained family has been the underpinning thread of the Bible and homosexuals are committed to neutering both, what will be left to avert the immoral train wreck to follow?

One may argue this could never happen on a national scale – but it already has. It was German philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche that displaced biblical authority with reason and idealism. Within a generation a few of the larger German cities became cesspools of sexual perversions with Berlin at the top. This was followed by a national-socialist dictator who then one-upped-them with his own cruel perversions. Millions were murdered.

The gay community is strangely quiet on the future after full acceptance. Why? If a two-man relationship is established then what will be the argument against a three or four-man arrangement with legal protection including full healthcare and survivor benefits? What about the unimaginable legal chaos of divorce? No rational person could now predict such an outcome since the only moral guardrails will have been discarded. This doesn't even touch the massive reinvention of every gender-based language. German as one example: *DER* mensch (masculine), *DIE* staude (feminine), *DAS* buch (neuter). Or the French *LA*, *LE*, *LES*, and *L'*. Or the Spanish *EL*, *LA*, *LOS*, *LAS*. Not to mention the entanglement yet of plurals and possessives. Will another dictator step forth to promise an even more appealing utopia? What type of morality will he impose or force? Will this man be the antichrist?

It was Paul who gave us these prophetic words, “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come,*” 2 Timothy 3:1. Perilous translates *χαλεπός* (*khal-ep-os'*, fierce, insane, G5467). Matthew used the same word to describe the ferocity of the Gadarene mad men (8:28). Our last days just may be *insane*.

Hope is always guaranteed by the Holy Spirit in times of trial or persecution. In point of fact, suffering is a doorway to better understand our fullness with Christ. “*The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him,*” Romans 8:16-17. (ESV)