

Homosexuality

"Is Homosexuality Condemned or Condoned by the Holy Scriptures?"

Part 3 – Homosexuality and its Implications for the Church

Thus far we have approached Homosexuality from the Divine Perspective by looking at the:

1. **The Divine Biblical Institution for proper human sexuality (Gen 1-2, Matt 19, Eph 5)**
2. **The Divine Illustration for God's wrath against any form of sexual perversion (Gen 19, Jude 1:7, 2 Peter 2)**
3. **The Divine Instruction directly forbidding homosexuality (Lev 18, Lev 20, Rom 1)**
4. **The Divine Invitation of Redemption to any and all who will lay aside their sin and call upon Jesus as Lord and Saviour (Isaiah 56 and 1 Corinthians 6)**

Our aim in this study is to ¹see what God says on this vital matter, to ²see how the Church ought to respond to this matter, to ³discover what implications homosexuality has on the Church and to ⁴restate and affirm the Biblical perspective on Biblical marriage portraying a heterosexual relationship between natural man and a natural women.

Right at the outset it needs to be stated that Scripture both condemns homosexuality and gives homosexuals a plan for freedom and forgiveness. It is from this basic premise that I will be approaching this topic as I teach you God's perspective on this in the next 4 weeks.

With that then as backdrop we also turned our thoughts to the question as to how the Church ought to respond to the Issue of Homosexuality. Effectively we saw that the Church of Jesus Christ ought to respond to the Issue of Homosexuality in three ways:

1. **The Church must expose Homosexuality as a Sin against God.**
2. **The Church must extend the Grace of God to Homosexuals.**
3. **The Church must expel practicing Homosexuals from its fellowship.**

In a study such as this it is difficult not to repeat some of the important truths. Yet sometimes it is important for those vital truths simply to be stated again, yet just in a different way. It now is our aim to see what implications the sin of homosexuality has on the Church of Jesus Christ.

Every debate on Christian ethics must end with the implications for the Church. When truth is made known it must lead to moral action; i.e. doctrine must always lead to duty. And therefore the discussion of homosexuality has some very serious and challenging implications for the evangelical church. Four implications are presented in this document:

1. The Church must condemn the Sin of Homosexuality.

We are living in an age of pluralism and moral compromise. The Church may not fall into this trap. It must stand its guard; it has to guard the Good Deposit it has been entrusted by our Lord.

The Church cannot behave as though it did not possess a blueprint for life, as though it too was subject to the changing winds and waves of ideas. The Church has a sure word of truth which is not only able to save, but also to equip for every facet of life (cf 1 Tim 4:15-17; 2 Tim 3:16-17)¹.

¹ Alex D. Montoya *Homosexuality and the Church* {TMSJ 11/2 (Fall 2000)} 155-168

- The Church must take a stand on the Divine Order as stated in the opening chapters of Genesis.
- Jesus referred back to the Divine Order, not only to emphasize its permanence but also for its sexual nature: a man for a woman (Matt 19:4-5).
- The Scriptures clearly condemn any violation of the Divine Order: divorce (Matt 19:6-9), immoralities (1 Cor 6:16-20; 1 Thess 4:1-8; Heb 13:4), violation of ordained roles (Eph 5:21-33), perversion of sexuality (Rom 1:18-32; Lev 18:27; Lev 20:13).

Hence to stand and condemn homosexuality in all its forms as a perversion of the Divine Order is not a symptom of homophobia, heartless prejudice, or narrow-minded bigotry. It is to stand on the side of righteousness and truth and to obey the One who said, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). For the Church, God is the only One to please.²

2. The Church must convert the Homosexual.

The role of the Church is not only to condemn sin, but also to help facilitate change. The Church is that vehicle God has chosen for His love, mercy and grace to be shown through. The Church's mandate is the Great Commission, and the Church needs to do so with the confidence that the Gospel is for all those who will believe (Rom 1:16).

Evangelism involves a number of steps:

- Evangelism implies preaching repentance from sin, including admission of guilt and an awareness of the need to be forgiven.
- Homosexuals need to be warned just like any other sinners; homosexuality damns just as any other sin.
- The Church does no homosexual a favour when it condones his behaviour.
- The Gospel alone has the power to transform lives; not psychology or any other means. Inability to change does not condone such behaviour. Inability to change drives the sinner to his knees humbly before a God who **CAN** save.
- The Church needs to disciple those who come out of the homosexual lifestyle.

3. The Church must confront error.

The Church is God's primary instrument in evangelism, yet it also has to serve as salt of the earth to preserve the truth of God and defend it against error (Matt 5:13; 1 Tim 3:15)

- Error will come from within the Church (Matt 13:37-43; Acts 20:29-30)
- The Church is not a passive institution floating along the river of history. The Church is a militant church, in the sense of confronting human error and sinful speculations (2 Cor 10:3-5; Col 2:8-10)
- We are called to contend earnestly for the faith that was handed down to the saints (Jude 3)
- Deviant behaviour is mostly the result of deviant doctrine
- The Church does not become heretical by itself, it is deliberately led astray by Satan and his evil forces (Gen 3:1; 2 Cor 11:13-15)

² Alex D. Montoya *Homosexuality and the Church* {TMSJ 11/2 (Fall 2000)} 155-168

- The Church is the guardian and defender of truth, and therefore has to confront the error of homosexuality (1 Tim 3:15)

4. The Church must cleanse itself.

The interesting thing about Paul's teaching on homosexuality in 1 Corinthians 6:9 is that it is found in a section dealing with the Corinthian Church's problem with immorality in its ranks, as well as the relationships Christians should have with the professing believer who is indulging in sins, and with pagan unbelievers.³

- The Church in Corinth is told to rid from its midst fornicators through church discipline and excommunication (1 Cor 5:1-8, 13)
- The Church has strict biblical instructions not to be in fellowship with **professing believers** whose lifestyles are anything but Christian (1 Cor 5:9-13). We may not even have a meal with them.
- The solution to the problem of homosexuality **in the Church** is not dialogue or toleration, but excommunication and separation.
- The Church's unwillingness to clean up its moral ranks will lead to its rapid moral decline, for "a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough" (1 Cor 5:6). This obviously implies not having fellowship with churches that endorse homosexual living and priests.
- The Church must be careful not to adopt the customs of the world. We are living in an age of accommodation and compromise, and the greatest danger the Church faces in this regard is that it would rather desire large congregations instead of focusing on genuine conversions and biblical discipleship. When doing so the Church is in great danger of ceasing to make **holiness** and **truth** the motivation for its existence.

WHAT THE CHURCH TOLERATES TODAY, ITS CHILDREN WILL PRACTICE TOMORROW.

A fitting conclusion to this section: Ephesians 5:6-12

⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, **for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.** ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light** ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹**Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.** ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret."

³ Alex D. Montoya *Homosexuality and the Church* {TMSJ 11/2 (Fall 2000)} 155-168