

The Bible's teaching on homosexuality

To start with, just two overriding comments. Firstly, every single comment about homosexuality in the Bible is entirely negative but, and this is vitally important, the Bible only ever refers to the homosexual *act*, never the *inclination*. Secondly, any sex outside of marriage is condemned equally, whether Gay or straight, but sexual sins are not worse than any others such as jealousy or malicious gossip.

Start in Genesis 2 with the creation of mankind, male and female, and God's original purpose for them, especially v24 which Jesus quotes in Matthew 19:5 as being the Creator's original intention. Notice that in Jesus' day God's intention had not changed, even though people were hardhearted.

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis chapter 19 is not relevant as it appears to be about Gay gang-rape, which few disagree is always unacceptable.

Next look at Leviticus 18. The moral laws relating to sex can be summed up as excluding adultery (sex that breaks a marital vow of faithfulness), incest (between close family members), sodomy (male Gay sex) and bestiality (with animals). Note God's reason for these laws in v24. These practices brought God's judgement. It's like Jesus' teaching about being letting your light shine and not being like the pagans (in the 'Sermon on the Mount' in Matthew 5v16 and 6v7&8).

Some say "the OT laws about not eating pork and prawns or wearing clothes of mixed fibres are no longer applied, so why those about Gay sex?" The answer is that the Old Testament laws were broadly in three categories:-

- The first were about the priests and sacrifices in the Temple - Jesus has fulfilled these by being sacrificed once and for all and is our great High Priest, so they no longer apply (see Hebrews 10:10 and 4:14).
- The second group were national laws relating to Israel only. These laws include the food and clothing laws mentioned above, which were intended to set the Jews apart as different from their pagan neighbours. Jesus said the food laws were no longer applicable (Mark 7:19) and His death broke down the Jew/Gentile separation (see Ephesians 2:11-16.)

The final group were the moral laws, and Jesus never once indicated that they no longer applied. In the Sermon on the Mount he upheld and even strengthened some. He said that murder or adultery in your thoughts was as sinful as the act (see Matthew 5v22).

Some say that Jesus never condemned Gay sex. True, but he never condemned sacrificing your children alive to pagan gods either, which is alongside Gay sex in Leviticus chapter 18. No-one claims that Jesus' silence means he approved of infanticide! He constantly reaffirmed the eternal applicability of the Old Testament moral laws, and attacked the Pharisees when they tried to overrule them with their own rules (e.g. Mark 7v9-13).

In Romans 1 v18-32, male *and female* Gay sex is just one example of the ways that people who have rejected God's authority tend to live. And God lets them get on with it, not as a sign of His approval, but as a sign of washing His hands of them.

The phrase 'homosexual offenders' IN 1 Corinthians 6:9 is used as one example of how the Corinthian Christians used to live before becoming Christians. Not a great translation by the NIV, as it sounds like someone doing unpleasant things in a public toilet! The original Greek word used is just the ordinary word for the *passive* partner in male Gay sexual intercourse. But notice that the Bible says people who do such things "will not inherit the Kingdom of God" and that thinking otherwise is being deceived. This is very serious!

There is a similar list in 1 Timothy 1:10 where the NIV uses the word "perverts". Again, not very helpful. It actually means the *active* partner in male Gay sex.

Pro-Gay activists in the church say that faithful, committed, lifelong Gay relationships were unknown in Bible days, so its teaching cannot be referring to such. However, marriage in the early Bible days (think of Isaac and Rebecca for example) was when a couple laid together for the first time. The act of intercourse meant they were married, not that having got married they could then legitimately have sex. A couple who lived together were assumed to be married and assumed to have a sexual relationship. So when the Bible says that a man must not lie with a man (not a woman with woman) surely that is what is meant - no same-sex unions.