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# Homosexuality and the Bible -Trusting the Truth

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At every point the confessing and believing Church runs counter to the cultural tidal wave. Even to raise the issue of gender is to offend those who wish to eradicate any gender distinctions, arguing that these are merely “socially constructed realities” and vestiges of an ancient past.

Scripture will not allow this attempt to deny the structures of creation. Romans 1 must be read in light of Genesis 1 and 2. As Genesis 1:27 makes apparent, God intended from the beginning to create human beings in two genders or sexes—“male and female He created them.” Both man and woman were created in the image of God. They were and are distinct, and yet inseparably linked by God’s design. The genders really are different, and the distinction goes far beyond mere physical differences, but the man recognized the woman as “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.”

The bond between man and woman is marriage, which is not an historical accident or the result of socialization and cultural evolution. To the contrary, marriage and the establishment of the heterosexual covenant union is central to God’s intention—before and after the Fall. Immediately following the creation of man and woman come the instructive words: “For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

Evangelical Christians have often failed to present this biblical truth straightforwardly, and thus many of our churches and members are unarmed for the ideological, political, and cultural conflicts which mark the modern landscape. The fundamental axiom upon which evangelical Christians must base any response to homosexuality is this: God alone is sovereign, and He has created the universe and all within by His own design and to His own good pleasure. Furthermore, He has revealed to us His creative intention through Holy Scripture—and that intention was clearly to create and establish two distinct but complementary genders or sexes. The Genesis narratives demonstrate that this distinction of genders is neither accidental nor inconsequential to the divine design. “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make for him a helper suitable for him,” determined God. And God created woman.

God’s creative intention is further revealed in the cleaving of man to the woman [“his wife”] and their new identity as “one flesh.” This biblical assertion—which no contorted interpretation can escape—clearly places marriage and sexual relations within God’s creative act and design.

The sexual union of a man and a woman united in covenant marriage is thus not only allowed, but is commanded as God’s intention and decree. Sexual expression is limited to this heterosexual covenant, which in its clearest biblical expression is one man and one woman united for as long as they both shall live.

Therefore, any sexual expression outside of that heterosexual marriage relationship is illicit, immoral, and outlawed by God’s explicit command and law. That fundamental truth runs counter, not only to the homosexual agenda, but to the

rampant sexual immorality of the age. Indeed, the Bible has much more to say about illicit heterosexual activity than about homosexual acts. Adultery, rape, bestiality, pornography, and fornication, for example, are expressly forbidden.

As E. Michael Jones argues, most modern ideologies are, at base, efforts to rationalize sexual behavior. In fact, he identifies modernity itself as “rationalized lust.” We should expect the secular world, which is at war with God’s truth, to be eager in its efforts to rationalize lust, and to seek legitimacy and social sanction for its sexual sins. We should be shocked, however, that many within the Church now seek to accomplish the same purpose, and to join in common cause with those openly at war with God’s truth.

Paul’s classic statement in Romans 1 sets the issues squarely before us. Homosexuality is linked directly to idolatry, for it is on the basis of their idolatry that God gave them up to their own lusts. Their hearts were committed to impurity, and they were degrading their own bodies by their illicit lusts.

Their idolatry—exchanging the truth of God for a lie, and worshipping the creature rather than the Creator—led God to give them over to their degrading passions. From here, those given over to their degraded passions exchanged the natural use of sexual intercourse for that which God declared to be unnatural [literally, against nature]. At this point Paul explicitly deals with female homosexuality or lesbianism, as well as male homosexuality. This is one of the very few references in all ancient literature to female homosexuality, and Paul’s message is clear: All forms of homosexual eroticism and sexual behavior fall short of God’s glory, violate God’s revealed law, and are inherently unnatural.

But the women involved in lesbianism were not and are not alone. Men, too, have given up natural intercourse with women and have been consumed with passion for other men. The acts they commit, they commit without shame. As a result, they have received within their own bodies the penalty of their error.

Beyond this, God has given them up to their own depraved minds, and they do those things which are not proper. The message could not be more candid and clear, but there are those who seek to deny the obvious. Some have claimed that Paul is here dealing only with those heterosexual persons who commit homosexual acts. The imaginative folly of this approach is undone by Scripture, which allows no understanding that any human beings are born anything other than heterosexual. 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.

In other letters, Paul indicates that homosexuals—along with those who persist in other sins—will not inherit the Kingdom of God. The word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:10 is *arsenokoites*, a word with a graphic etymology. Some modern revisionists have attempted to suggest that this refers only to homosexual rapists or child abusers. This argument will not stand even the slightest scholarly consideration. The word does not appear in any Greek literature of the period. As New Testament scholar David Wright has demonstrated, the word was taken by Paul directly from Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and its meaning is homosexuality itself.

The biblical witness is clear: Homosexuality is a grievous sin against God and is a direct rejection of God’s intention and command in creation. All sin is a matter of eternal consequence, and the only hope for any sinner is the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, who on the cross paid the price for our sin, serving as the substitute for the redeemed.

Our response to persons involved in homosexuality must be marked by genuine compassion. But a central task of genuine compassion is telling the truth, and the Bible reveals a true message we must convey. Those seeking to contort and subvert the Bible’s message are not responding to homosexuals with compassion. To lie is never compassionate—and their lie leads unto death.

In the end, the Church will either declare the truth of God’s Word, or find a way to run away from it. It really comes down to trust. Do we trust the Bible to tell us truthfully what God desires and commands about our sexuality? If so, we really do know where we stand, and we really do know what to say. If not, let’s just admit to the world that we really haven’t a clue.

