

Command 7: "You shall not commit adultery" (Exod. 20:14)

VI. Homosexuality

A. Heterosexual marriage is God's design in creation and God's plan for the use of our sexuality.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ....Genesis 2:21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

B. Both the OT and the NT view homosexual conduct as a sin, something contrary to God's will.

Leviticus 18:22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

Leviticus 20:13 If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

LXX: και ὅς ἂν κοιμηθῆ μετὰ ἄρσενος κοιτῆν γυναικός, βδέλυγμα ἐποίησαν ἀμφοτέροι, θανατούσθωσαν, ἔνοχοί εἰσιν.

Rom. 1:26-27: For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Greek: 26 Διὰ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας, αἷ τε γὰρ θήλειαι αὐτῶν μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν, 27 ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11: Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,<sup>2</sup> 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

(footnote 2, ESV: The two Greek terms translated by this phrase refer to the passive and active partners in consensual homosexual acts.)

Greek: Ἥ οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ἀδικοὶ θεοῦ βασιλείαν οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν; μὴ πλανᾶσθε· οὔτε πόρνοι οὔτε εἰδωλόλατραι οὔτε μοιχοὶ οὔτε μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἀρσενοκοῖται 10 οὔτε κλέπται οὔτε πλεονέκται, οὐ μέθυσοι, οὐ λοιδοροὶ, οὐχ ἄρπαγες βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομήσουσιν. 11 καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε· ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιασθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν.

1 Timothy 1:10 the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality (Greek *arsenokoitēs*, plural), enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,

C. Objections:

1. Objection #1: Some other kind of homosexual conduct (such as homosexual prostitution or conduct with underage boys) is in view in these Bible passages

Answer: (1) No such distinction is made in the passages.

(2) Several ancient writers view all homosexual conduct as wrong and use language very similar to Paul's.

See quotations of "contrary to nature" (Gk. *para physin*, as in Rom. 1:26,) in Plato, Philo, Josephus, Plutarch, as cited in W. Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible*, p. 218.

2. Objection #2: Rom. 1:26-28 is not about homosexual sin but about Jewish pride (see Romans 2)

Answer: Jewish pride and other sins are in view in Romans 2, but Gentile sins are the topic of Romans 1 (see

Rom. 3:9-10: What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;)

3. Objection #3: "Contrary to nature" in Romans 1:26-27 means "contrary to heterosexual people's nature," so the passage doesn't apply to people who have a *homosexual* nature

(note "natural relations ... unnatural" in NIV, RSV, similarly: NASB: "natural ... unnatural")

Answer: (1) No such restriction is found in the text or context. [a common way of trying to escape from a Bible passage is to say it refers to a situation different from yours]

(2) The larger context (vss. 24-32) contains a focus on several sins against the natural order that God created.

(3) The phrase is more literally translated as "contrary to nature" (ESV), and note that it does not say "contrary to *their* nature" but just "contrary to nature"

4. Objection #4: 1 Cor. 6:9 refers only to a male prostitute (*arsenokoitēs*)

Answer: (1) No such restriction is stated in the text or context

Literal translation: "men who have intercourse with men"

(2) The Greek term used probably is derived from Lev. 20:13 in Septuagint (*arsenos koitēn*), where again no such restriction is in view.

(3) Conclusion: all kinds of homosexual activity are in view in Rom. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10

5. Objection #5: Homosexuality is not mentioned very much in Scripture. Therefore it wasn't a serious concern.

Answer: (1) The Bible does mention homosexual conduct several times (at least 7) with strong and clear language indicating God's strong disapproval of it. Also, there are dozens of additional vss. where sex is to be within marriage betw. one man and one woman. – this is not a matter of a few verses!

(2) How many times does the Bible have to say something in order for it to be true?

(3) Homosexual practice was viewed as immoral by most segments of ancient society, and no lengthy explanation was necessary to persuade people that it is wrong.

6. Objection #6: Argument from experience: some modern homosexual "couples" are faithful and have fulfilling relationships

Answer: (1) The Bible, not experience, must guide our ethical decisions.

(2) Long-term one-partner relationships among homosexuals are uncommon. The widespread pattern is many, many partners.

Various studies cited in Satinover, 53-56:

Only 2% of male homosexuals had 10 or fewer lifetime partners. (98% had more than 10)

43% of male homosexuals estimated having sex with 500 or more different partners.

28% estimated - with 1000 or more partners.

79% said that more than half of those partners were strangers.

Compare heterosexuals in entire US population:

90% women have never been unfaithful (engaged in extra-marital sex)

75% men have never been unfaithful (engaged in extra-marital sex)

(3) If people wish to make an argument from experience, the true result of homosexual "experience" is immense damage to physical health (including something like 25-30 year decrease in life expectancy for male homosexuals, see below); damage to the family structures of society; damage to future generations.

D. What about attitudes and desires?

1. The moral standards of Scripture are very high: God requires moral perfection.

2. Scripture talks not only about actions, but also about heart attitudes

"For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." (1Sam 16:7 ESV)

3. In other areas of sexual morality, the Bible requires purity of heart (Matt. 5:27-28; also 5:8; Exod. 20:17)

4. This also is true regarding homosexual desires – still morally wrong in God's sight, but not as harmful as actions (as we would say of all sins of desires compared to corresponding actions)

Rom. 1:26-27 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions (πάθη ἀτιμίας) For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another (ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους) men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

E. What is the Bible's solution?

→ Trusting in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and for the power to change:

1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- F. What if you are tempted in this area, or what if you have been (or are) involved in homosexual conduct? Or what if you know someone in this situation who asks you for help?
1. Practical advice:
    - a. Show Christian compassion but not approval (similar to someone w/ alcoholism, drug addiction)
    - b. Extend friendship and also hope
    - c. But seldom is there change from homosexual conduct without help from others
 

Several Christian organizations have seen significant positive results:

      - (1) Dr. Joseph Nicolosi: [www.josephnicolosi.com](http://www.josephnicolosi.com) (NARTH organization)
      - (2) Joe Dallas, Genesis Counseling [www.joedallas.com](http://www.joedallas.com)
      - (3) Desert Streams Ministries [www.desertstream.org](http://www.desertstream.org)
      - (4) Harvest USA [www.harvestusa.org](http://www.harvestusa.org) (help in dealing with all types of sexual sin)
      - (5) Satinover, pp. 196-209 (see below), reports significant levels of successful counseling programs run by Christian organizations with emphasis on prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit

See also:

      - (6) P-FOX: Parents and friends of ExGays and Gays [www.pfox.org](http://www.pfox.org) (not a counseling ministry)
  2. For further wise counsel, see:
    - a. "Church Ministry to Persons Tempted by Homosexuality," by Bob Davies, in *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood*, edited by Wayne Grudem and Dennis Rainey (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), pp. 209-229.
    - b. "'Someone I Love is Gay': Church Ministry to Family and Friends," by Bob Davies, pp. 231-246 in *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood* (see above).
- G. Can homosexuals change?
- Yes, we must say this if we believe 1 Cor. 6:11: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."
- See: **Jeffrey Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*** (Baker, 1996): excellent overview of this whole issue. [→ my #1 recommendation of a book on this topic]
- H. Are some people "born gay"?
1. No persuasive scientific evidence of this has ever been found (see Satinover discussion, others in bibliography at end)
  2. There are hereditary and environmental factors that give people *tendencies* toward all sorts of different sins (anger, violence, adultery, alcoholism, etc.), but these never *cause* someone to sin. That is always a personal human choice, for which God holds us responsible. Different people have stronger temptations in different areas.
  3. However, repeated activities associated with sexual activity can develop habits, which then become compulsions, and the end result is an addiction. (See explanation in Satinover, 121-145)
  4. Parental influence: a very high percentage of male homosexuals (80% in one study) had fathers who were either physically or emotionally absent while they were growing up. They then developed a longing for same-sex love and attention which they did not have, and it later found expression in homosexual conduct.
- Application: important for fathers to be present and show care and affection for sons.  
(I think the same application would be true for mothers and daughters.)
- I. The current debate about our laws in the U.S.
1. Homosexuals should be given the same protection from violence, theft, other crimes, as all other citizens (they already are protected by law like the rest of us)
  2. But Christians should oppose attempts to make homosexuals a special class entitled to special protections (as we now give to racial minorities and women – both of which are not the result of a choice or of one's behavior).  
This would define a class of people based only on their choice to engage in certain types of sexual behavior - and immoral behavior at that - and then to give special legal privileges to that class of people.
  3. Freedom of speech: Christians should oppose any attempts to use law or government regulation (or university speech codes, etc.) to restrict our ability to say that homosexual conduct is morally wrong, and to argue for that position in public forums.
- J. What about same-sex "marriage"?
1. Brief statement: government and laws should remain neutral on homosexual conduct.  
Should not prohibit it (as with earlier sodomy laws).  
Should not promote it (by giving it the special status of marriage – with many legal and financial benefits).
  2. Moral objections to same-sex "marriage": it gives government endorsement to a practice that is morally wrong

- a. Biblical reasons: contrary to Biblical teachings and therefore morally wrong (see above: Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:10)  
Endorsing this behavior is the opposite of what government should do: “to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good” (1 Pet. 2:14)
- b. Natural law: Same-sex “marriage” is also contrary to “natural law” (arguments from moral instincts and observable results):
  - (1) people have an instinctive sense this is morally wrong (even if they cannot absolutely prove it in argument with those who reject any higher moral authority than their own opinions)
  - (2) contrary to the way our bodies are designed: for a “one flesh” union of male and female (sexual complementarity) (“contrary to nature” in Rom. 1:26)
  - (3) contrary to the only way the human race can be propagated: children come only from male-female unions
  - (4) contrary to the best way for children to be raised: with a father and a mother (endorsing same-sex “marriage” gives legal approval to obligatory motherlessness or obligatory fatherlessness – saying that it is right for a child to be permanently taken away from either its mother or its father). This is different from single parenthood, which is always open to possibility of opposite-sex partner joining the family.
  - (5) contrary the need for exclusive and faithful marriage relationships: the great majority of homosexual relationships are neither exclusive nor faithful
  - (6) the terribly destructive health consequences of homosexual conduct also suggest it is contrary to the moral fabric of the universe (see below)
- c. But the dominant media, educational, and legal culture in the US at this point is extremely one-sided on this question, and moral arguments against homosexual conduct (whether from Scripture or natural law or people’s instinctive sense of right and wrong) are seldom given appropriate attention, or seriously evaluated.
3. Societal reasons: allowing same-sex marriages will bring several highly destructive results to a society
  - a. Disease: greatly increased probability of serious disease and death (see Jeffrey Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), pp. 49-51, 55-57, 67-68, 79, 133-134  
Including: reduction of 25 to 30 years in life expectancy (!!)) (Satinover, p. 51)  
not only from AIDS, but from many other serious diseases
  - c. Tend toward extinction: homosexual unions do not produce children, and thus they produce no “next generation” of the human race
  - d. Raising children: this would give legal approval to children being raised either without a mother or without a father, permanently
  - e. Laws have a “teaching” function – approval of same-sex “marriage” would encourage more people to conclude that homosexual conduct is morally acceptable
  - f. Same-sex “marriage” laws are quickly being followed by prohibitions against expressing a biblical view in various public forums, penalties for professionals who have objections of conscience to endorsing homosexual conduct, and required promotion of homosexual values in public schools.

For further reading:

Robert A. J. Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001) [a highly technical, academic study of relevant biblical texts and their backgrounds];  
Daniel R. Heimbach, *True Sexual Morality* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004);  
Joseph Nicolosi and Linda Nicolosi, *A Parent’s Guide to Preventing Homosexuality* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002);  
James E. Phelan et al., *What the Research Shows* (Journal of Human Sexuality, 2009). Published by the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH);  
\*\*Jeffrey Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996);  
Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow? Compassion and Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995);  
Alan Sears and Craig Osten, *The Homosexual Agenda: Exposing the Principal Threat to Religious Freedom Today*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003);  
Peter Sprigg and Timothy Dailey, eds., *Getting It Straight: What the Research Shows about Homosexuality* (Washington, D.C.: Family Research Council, 2004);  
Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially* (New York: Doubleday, 2000).

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