

Homosexuality

I don't particularly like the idea of singling out one particular group, but because of the Western acceptance of the gay lifestyle and the current push for gay marriage, this has become a growing issue in the church.

So let's make sure we're on the same page right from the start. God loves homosexuals.

Unlike us, God loves everyone. God loves straight people, thieves, murderers, gossips, the greedy rich, the poor, even paedophiles.

So let's make a clear distinction between homosexuals and homosexuality.

There is no doubt whatsoever that God loves homosexuals. His son died to save their souls just like he did for everyone else. And churches around the world should be reaching out to help and love homosexuals just as they would any other person.

But this article is about homosexuality, the actual act of homosexual sex and it's associated lifestyle. What does God say about that?

Oh, and before I get into it. This is about what God says about homosexuality. It is about how Christians should behave. It has nothing to do with legal issues within the society. Obviously I believe society would be better off if it lived the way God says we should live, but if my only argument is that "God says such and such" then no-one who doesn't believe in God will accept that, any more than I would accept your argument against my lifestyle if you said, "Buddha says such and such".

This is an article for Christians who want to know what God's point of view is. Not a general article for non-Christians.

Now, to start, I feel it is important to remind you that Christians are not under the Law. Yeshua removed those fences when he died on the cross. We are free to do anything. So just because some old Jewish law says something, that doesn't mean that it necessarily applies to us. Whether it is about eating pork or about our sexual preference.

But with that freedom comes the responsibility to use it wisely and to choose our actions carefully to reflect God's holiness. So we do need to keep that in mind as we make our conclusions.

So what does that old Jewish law say?

In Leviticus 18 Moses records what God said to him...

"Do not lie with a man the way one lies with a woman."

In the same section God tells us not to have sex with animals, or our sister, or our father's wife, or any close relative.

Why? Because these things defile you. They have defiled the nations around you and they will defile Israel if you tolerate them. And if you defile the land, God will throw you out of it.

Later in Leviticus 20 God defines the punishment for doing these things - death.

That's pretty heavy if it still applies. The punishment for the person should be death, and God will kick us all out of our country if we allow these things. He did then. (Israel came in and took over, and the nations behaving that way were expelled). He will now. It's serious stuff.

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are a prime example in the Old Testament of God's tolerance reaching a limit and him unleashing judgement on them. When God sent angels, (in the form of men), to Sodom to rescue Abraham's nephew Lot, (Genesis 19), the men of that city were so far depraved that they wanted them brought out so they could have sex with them. Because of their depravity God completely destroyed these two cities.

The Old Testament is pretty clear. Men having sex with men is a sin. A very serious sin.

But, we are not under the law. Paulus tells us that all things are permissible for Christians.

But he also warns us that not all things are beneficial. And he asks, (in Romans 6), "Shall we sin because we are not under the law?" His answer is a resounding, "NO". Yeshua removed the fences of the law. But we still have the responsibility to live good, righteous lives. Lives as untainted by sin as we can possibly make them.

Our aim should be to be blameless. Not in a legalistic, obey some kind of law way, but by going beyond that to always be trying to do the right thing - regardless if it used to be outside some legal fence or not.

In the sermon on the Mount Yeshua made it clear that God's standard was way above the rules laid out in "The Law". The Law said, "Do not murder", but Yeshua said that God wants us to not even hate our brother. The Law said, "Do not commit adultery", but Yeshua said that God wants us to not even think lustful thoughts. These things are clearly inside the old fence, but they are also clearly beyond God's standard of righteousness.

We cannot ever earn our own righteousness, (we couldn't even do it when all we had to do was keep The Law). And praise God we don't have to. We have our righteousness for free, a gift from Yeshua. But we have a responsibility not to use our freedom to indulge our sinful desires. We have freedom... but it is freedom to become blameless.

In Romans 1 Paulus also tells us that if people reject God then he will hand them over to their own sinful desires. He even mentions homosexuality specifically.

So homosexuality was still clearly regarded by Paulus as a wrong choice. A wrong use of our freedom.

And it is also part of that spiral in Romans 1 which starts with the rejection of the knowledge of God and ends in total depravity.

The rise of homosexuality in the West is, to me, a clear indication that we are in that spiral. That the western world has rejected God and is rapidly working it's way towards total depravity, (and the destruction which will follow).

Clearly the Bible tells us that while loving homosexuals, we must not tolerate the sin of homosexuality among us.

The biggest non-Biblical arguments for accepting homosexuality seem to be, "We were born this way", and, "We love each other".

Both of those may well be true.

But as we have seen, homosexuality is a sin. And over the years I have talked with many people about their sin, and faced some issues with my own. One thing I have found is that each of us seems to have a predisposition to a particular type of sin. For some it is lust, coming out in pornography or affairs, for some it's greed, often coming out in risky business deals that are shady at best, and just plain gambling, or even dishonest at worst. But each one of us has a particular sin toward which we just seem predisposed.

Being "born that way", just means to me that homosexuality is your predisposition. The sin you are most attracted to. And whether or not it is fair for me to tell you that you should not indulge it... You should not indulge it. Any more than I should indulge mine.

The other argument I have against the "born that way/we love each other" argument is that paedophiles can say the same thing. They can also claim that they were born this way. That their love is natural and beautiful. And the children, (in their innocence), might also say that they love the paedophile.

I don't think I have met any normal, sane adult who wants to legalise paedophilia. Certainly none that would entertain the idea that their pre-pubescent child could be "dating" an adult paedophile. That is a horrendous thought.

But he was born that way. His love is pure. ...

Allowing this as an argument for homosexual marriage opens a very ugly box.

So, to summarise. God loves homosexuals, but homosexuality is a sin.

So the church should be loving and accepting towards them but without compromising our position that their behaviour is sinful. Just as we should be towards those addicted to pornography, or thieves, or murderers, or even those who seem squeaky clean on the outside, but who are steaming inside with greed and pride.

We need to love homosexuals, but we should make it clear to Christians that homosexual behaviour is sinful and not to be tolerated among the people of God.

We very definitely should not be accepting of gay marriage within the church.

I doubt that we have the political power to stop gay marriage in our society, but if we don't then our nation will continue down the spiral until we are finally removed from our land.

We should also not accept gay clergy. (One who is actively gay, not someone who is trying like all of us to fight against his predisposition). The Bible has high standards for our leaders, (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1). And our leaders should be shining examples of the Christian life. But if they are openly flaunting their sin instead of trying to deal with it then they do not qualify. Whether that sin is homosexuality, or addiction to drugs or alcohol, or even if it is that they are given to violence and anger, or even greed.

We, (the church), need to be known for our love, not for our judgement. We need to find ways to stand strongly for our position, but in a loving way.

The way out of the spiral is to turn back to God.

More than, "You must not allow gay marriage because some god you don't believe in says so", they need to hear, "Even though you don't believe in him, God loves you. And his own son died so that you could receive forgiveness for all your sins".

As the church, as God's people, let us show his love to the world. But let us do it without compromising his high standards for his children.

PS:

If homosexuality is your predisposition, do not lose hope. God loves you deeply.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 says that homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God. (It says the same for alcoholics, and the greedy too, to name a couple of others). But read on. Verse 11 says, "That is what some of you were".

Were.

Past tense.

Becoming a Christian wipes all that away.

Unfortunately becoming a Christian doesn't remove our predispositions, but it does give us the power to choose not to follow them. But we are no longer defined by that old behaviour - now we are Christians. Our identity is now with Yeshua. We have been adopted into a new family, with a new beginning. Now we are children of God.

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