

The Question of Homosexuality

The question often arises: “What does the Bible say about homosexuality?” The following pages have been put together to answer that question.

Old Testament: Read...

Genesis 18 & 19

Genesis 18:20

²⁰ Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous

Genesis 19

Read *entire* story of Sodom

Leviticus 18:22

²² "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable."

Leviticus 20:13

¹³ "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads."

Judges 19

Read entire chapter: An occurrence very similar to Genesis 19.

New Testament: Read...

Romans 1:19-27

¹⁸The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁶Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

I Cor. 6:9-10

⁹Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

I Tim. 1:8-11

⁸We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. ⁹We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰for adulterers and perverts*, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine ¹¹that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

*-perverts is a term that is sufficient in and of itself. However, it is noteworthy that the *NIV* is actually an incomplete and inconsistent translation from the original Greek texts. In other New Testament passages, including I Cor. 6:9 (see above), and other Greek writings of the same time period, this same word, αρσενικοιτησ, is used for a “male who engages in sexual activity with a person of the same sex.”¹ The new *ESV* Bible better translates this as “men who practice homosexuality”.

¹ Bauer & Danker's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, p. 135

Jude 5-7

⁵Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. ⁷In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. *

* This passage has been included with *great* emphasis for this reason: there is much false teaching that is very popular, particularly on pro-homosexuality websites, that claims that God's wrath burned against Sodom (& Gomorrah) because of general rebellion and for violating ancient near-eastern rules of hospitality, *not* because the people engaged in sexual immorality. Any argument in a limited, Old Testament context that condemns all Sodom's behaviors yet gives them a pass on their sexual immorality is ridiculous and baseless in and of itself (see the other O. T. references above.). However, if any doubt remains after looking only at the O. T. references, this New Testament passage obliterates any argument that God's destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah, "had nothing to do with homosexuality."

Some thoughts in conclusion...

There is a lot of propaganda and many myths regarding what God tells us about homosexuality in the Scriptures. For just one example, "The New Testament doesn't say anything about homosexuality." This is a statement made out of ignorance of the Scriptures as illustrated above. The New Testament actually speaks of homosexuality as a sin against God with *more* frequency than the Old Testament does. As a pastor, as a church, we do not do anyone any good by pretending that something is "ok with God" when it *clearly* is not. We must "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) for the sake of those who are deceived. It is our calling as Christians...

II Timothy 4:1-5

¹In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ²Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ³For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ⁵But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

This passage is very relevant for us as a church today. There are several churches and church leaders who have abandoned "sound doctrine" and have followed their "own desires" to legitimize homosexuality. Homosexuals and gay activists have gathered, "around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear." But we as a church, as pastors, as Christians, must "endure this hardship" and continue to believe the truth as God has proclaimed it to us: homosexual behavior *is* sin.

We also proclaim God's forgiveness in Christ for the repentant person who struggles with Homosexual sin.

Luke 15:7

"I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

While it is right that we as Christians speak out against the attempted legitimization of homosexual behavior, our main goal in doing so should not be to condemn anyone—that is God's place alone. Our aim instead should be to bring people who engage in homosexual behavior to see their sin, repent and then comfort them with the Gospel: Jesus died and rose for their forgiveness, to rescue them from the consequences of their sins. We then walk with them as brothers and sisters in Christ, reminding them of the rescue they have in baptism and Christ's death and resurrection, helping each other as we continue to struggle against Satan's many temptations.

As Jesus says after he forgives the sins of the woman caught in adultery... "Go, and from now on, sin no more."
(John 8:11)

Pastor Timothy A. Sims
Oklahoma Avenue Lutheran Church—Milwaukee, WI