



Homosexuality is one of the most dividing issues within our country today. The subject of homosexuality has made its way to the forefront of the political world and we are witnessing this very issue in our own community even as I write these words.

There's no denying that the debate over homosexuality has become one of the defining issues of our day and a major battle in the culture war as it is waged upon the world and specifically Christianity. Consider these recent stories of the impact this sin has had upon the church in other parts of the country,

Presbyterian Church (USA) Changes Denomination's Definition of Marriage to Include Gay Couples

By Michael Gryboski, **Christian Post** March 18, 2015

America's largest Presbyterian denomination has approved an amendment to its constitution that officially changes their definition of marriage to include same-sex couples. Last year Presbyterian Church (USA) approved a vote on an amendment to change their official definition of marriage from "a man and a woman" to "two people, traditionally a man and a woman." Known as Amendment 14-F, the proposed change to PCUSA's Book of Order got the necessary number of presbytery votes on Tuesday.

"We have a lot of students who come into our campus ministry with their story being one of hurt and shame given to them by the church. Our goal is to share with them the love of Jesus Christ and to let them know that they are fully loved, fully welcomed as they are, who they are." – University of Tennessee campus minister Kally Elliott

San Francisco's Largest Evangelical Megachurch to Allow Non-Celibate Homosexuals to Be Members

By Anugrah Kumar, **Christian Post** March 15, 2015

The Elder Board of San Francisco's largest evangelical church, City Church, has announced that the megachurch will end its practice of preventing LGBT people from becoming members if they are unwilling or unable to practice life-long celibacy.

The pastor cites social science research, saying it points to "skyrocketing rates of depression, suicide and addiction" among the LGBT people. "The generally unintended consequence has been to leave many people feeling deeply damaged, distorted, unlovable, unacceptable, and perverted," he says.

Harrell adds that the Board has been asking the central question "What does the gospel require? Who belongs to Christ's body? And how do they belong? We believe the thrust and focus of the gospel is the breaking down of former boundaries of exclusion and the expanding of the welcome of Jesus to all," he goes on to say.

"If Jesus were the pastor of City Church, what would he say to the people who are asking if they can belong?" the pastor asks. "As we consider the life of Christ, his example of love, his call to embrace the outsider and cast down, and his patience with those earnestly seeking him, what is a Christ-like response? Ending the requirement for celibacy for gays "aligns with our existing core vision: the doors of this church are as wide as the arms of the Savior it proclaims," he adds.

We see it all over the headlines and this subject impacts modern day Christians in one way or another because it intersects with all of society's most basic institutions...home, marriage, government, and religion especially when it comes to standing for Biblical truth.

The debate over homosexuality is an emotional one and it hasn't diminished over time. Actually this debate has continued to grow over the last decade and it appears that the majority of Americans now view homosexuality as morally acceptable. A recent Gallup Poll from May 20, 2013 states,

Americans' views toward a number of moral issues have shifted significantly since 2001. Their acceptance of gay and lesbian relations has increased the most, up 19 percentage points in the past 12 years—to a record high of 59% today. Americans' tolerance toward having a baby outside of marriage is also now much greater, up 15 points since 2001, to the current 60%.¹

Over the last decade Americans, both Christian and non-Christian, have begun approving of homosexuality as a morally acceptable lifestyle. Some churches are trying to decide as to how they will respond to the issue of homosexuality, with some already stating that they will side with our culture and proclaim that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle. In attempting to find a pastoral response to the "homosexual question," Brian McLaren, a false teacher in the emergent church movement, tries to appease both sides by suggesting,

Perhaps we need a five-year moratorium on making pronouncements. In the meantime, we'll practice prayerful Christian dialogue, listening respectfully, disagreeing agreeably. When decisions need to be made, they'll be admittedly provisional. We'll keep our ears attuned to scholars in biblical studies, theology, ethics, psychology, genetics, sociology, and related fields. Then in five years, if we have clarity, we'll speak; if not, we'll set another five years for ongoing reflection. After all, many important issues in church history took centuries to figure out. Maybe this moratorium would help us resist the "winds of doctrine" blowing furiously from the left and right, so we can patiently wait for the wind of the Spirit to set our course.²

1 Gallup Research Group. "In U.S., Record-High Say Gay, Lesbian Relations Morally OK" - May 20, 2013.

http://www.gallup.com/poll/162689/record-high-say-gay-lesbian-relations-morally.aspx?utm_source=alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=syndication&utm_content=morelink&utm_term=All%20Gallup%20Headlines

² Brian McLaren, *Out of Ur Blog*, "Brian McLaren on the Homosexual Question: Finding a Pastoral Response," 23 January 2006, http://www.outofur.com/archives/2006/01/brian_mclaren_o.html. McLaren seems not to have followed his

Homosexuality has become a highly charged social issue in our culture but the Bible is clear on the issue of homosexuality and compels Christians to stand on the solid ground of the Word of God in response to this battle of our day. We are living in a time that is not much different from the era of the Apostle Paul as he wrote to Timothy,

2 Timothy 4:3-4 – ³For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

When a Christian faces a time such as this then he must be willing to study and stand for the truth as clearly discovered in the Word of God. The church also has the responsibility to boldly proclaim the truth.

John MacArthur observes,

Fearless preaching is all the more necessary in such dangerous times. When people will not tolerate the truth, that's when courageous, outspoken preachers are most desperately needed to speak it.

Why are people unwilling to endure sound teaching? It is because they love sin. Sound preaching, as we have seen, confronts and rebukes sin, and people in love with sinful lifestyles will not tolerate such teaching. They want to have their ears tickled (v. 3). Paul employs the expression "sound teaching" in 1 Timothy 1 as well. In verses 9 and 10 of that chapter, he speaks of "those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, *and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching*" (emphasis added). A society filled with and influenced by liars, perjurers, murderers, and homosexuals is by no means tolerant of sound teaching.³

There is a clear Biblical response to the issue of homosexuality but it can only be found as a Christian desires to seek out the inspired meaning found in the inspired Word of God. Mankind does not have the right to change the meaning of Scripture in order to make it more palatable for a society ruled by self-gratification and self-glorification. Paul clearly proclaims this truth as he states,

own suggestion of waiting five years to speak on the issue of homosexuality. In his new book, *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions that Are Transforming Faith*, McLaren seems to condone (to some degree) homosexuality as an acceptable practice. Drawing a connection between the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 as the "sexually other" and homosexuals, he states, "As Philip and the Ethiopian disciple climb the stream bank, they represent a new humanity emerging from the water, dripping wet and full of joy, marked by a new and radical reconciliation in the kingdom of God" (Brian McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions that Are Transforming Faith* [New York: HarperOne, 2010], 183).

³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993), 35.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Christians that believe in the inerrancy of Scripture examine this text and we are left with one conclusion, we must seek the authority of the Word of God in defining what is morally acceptable versus what is morally depraved.

Gordon Fee and Doug Stuart correctly assert, “A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his or her readers.”⁴

Mankind has never had the right to legislate morality as in the case with so many that claim that homosexuality is morally acceptable. The reality is simple, the only way to redefine morality as a culture is to explain away the sovereignty of God and the authority of His Word. Richard Taylor, a non-Christian American philosopher, makes this same point as he states,

The idea of moral obligation is clear enough, provided that reference to some higher lawmaker is understood. In other words, our moral obligations can be understood as those that are imposed by God. But what if this higher-than-human lawmaker is no longer taken into account? Does the concept of a moral obligation still make sense?⁵ He says the answer is “No. The concept of moral obligation is unintelligible apart from the idea of God. The words remain, but their meaning is gone.” The modern age, more or less repudiating the idea of a divine lawgiver, has nevertheless tried to retain the ideas of moral right and wrong, without noticing that in casting God aside they have also abolished the meaningfulness of right and wrong as well. Thus, even educated persons sometimes declare that such things as war, or abortion, or the violation of certain human rights are morally wrong, and they imagine that they have said something true and meaningful. Educated people do not need to be told, however, that questions such as these have never been answered outside of religion.⁶

Sadly, what many non-Christian philosophers know to be true and accurate is debated among Christians. The fact is that God has raised Christians up in this generation to stand for His truth and proclaim the Word of God on issues such as that of homosexuality. John MacArthur challenges Christians to no longer be passive in the stance for the Word of God on this issue but to be armed with the truth and share it lovingly with those who attack the Christian point of view regarding homosexuality. He states,

The contemporary church has been so inundated with pro-homosexual literature and advocacy, that it has in many cases lost both the ability to discern such disgraceful iniquity and the resolve to fight against it.⁷

Let us turn our attention to the Biblical response of the issue of homosexuality and respond in Christian love as declared in Colossians,

⁴ Gordon Fee, Doug Stuart. *How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth*. 64.

⁵ Richard Taylor, *Ethics, Faith, and Reason* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 83.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ John MacArthur, “God’s Word on Homosexuality: The Truth about Sin and the Reality of Forgiveness,” *MSJ* 19, no. 2. (Fall 2008). 156.

Colossians 4:5-6 – ⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Christians need to know what the Word of God declares regarding this moral issue. This will help us respond to those who oppose God's Word on this subject.

Definition of Homosexuality

Homosexuality has become accepted among our current culture as a way of life and has redefined morality through the eyes of man. It is difficult to understand how homosexuality is defined today. We will look at both the World's Definition and God's Definition of this sin.

World's Definition of Homosexuality

The world defines homosexuality in a variety of ways. It may define it as an acceptable alternative lifestyle that one chooses to live out. It may define it as a biological trait that one is born with like that of heterosexuality. Webster's dictionary defines a homosexual in these words,

¹**ho•mo•sex•u•al** \ *adjective* – **1:** of, relating to, or characterized by a tendency to direct sexual desire toward another of the same sex **2:** of, relating to, or involving sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex – ⁸

God's Definition of Homosexuality

God's definition regarding homosexuality is clear as he regards it to be a sin. Yet Christianity is growing increasingly more confused regarding God's definition as found in a 2012 LifeWay poll,

Fewer Americans Believe Homosexuality Is a Sin

A November 2012 survey from LifeWay Research, found 37 percent of adults in the United States affirm a belief that homosexual behavior is a sin.

There are a few individuals that claim to be followers of Christ that desire to debate God's intention of His Word regarding this subject. Former pastor Rob Bell is one individual who changed his position regarding homosexuality and homosexual marriage as he states in a 2011 interview at the very liberal "Grace Cathedral" which is the Episcopal Cathedral of the Diocese of California. Rob Bell declared this statement in an interview which can be found at the following link,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-q0iDaW6BnE>

Two misleading statements made by Rob Bell regarding this subject are as follows,

⁸ Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).



Results from:

Sept. 2011 Nov. 2012

Methodology:

Online surveys representing the adult population of the United States. 2,144 completed surveys Sept. 23-26, 2011 and 1,191 completed surveys Nov. 14-16, 2012.

LifeWayResearch.com



I believe God [is] pulling us ahead into greater and greater affirmation and acceptance of our gay brothers and sisters and pastors and friends and neighbors and co-workers...Yes, I am for marriage. I am for fidelity. I am for love, whether it's a man and a woman, a woman and a woman, a man and a man.

I think the ship has sailed and I think that the church needs to just ... this is the world that we are living in and we need to affirm people wherever they are.⁹

The question is simple: **Does God define homosexuality or homosexual marriage in the same manner as Rob Bell and many others?** The answer is NO. God is very clear through Scripture that Biblical marriage is ONLY between a man and woman while "Homosexuality is a Sin that is an Abomination against God." The term used in the New Testament referring to "homosexuality" is defined as "one who is either a passive or active partner in male-to-male sex act or one who desires after another of the same sex."¹⁰ According to Scripture those who commit this sin will face judgment if they are not repentant as clearly stated in 1 Corinthians,

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 – ⁹ Or 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,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Notice in these verses that the term describing homosexuality places these individuals among those who are considered "unrighteous" and "will not inherit the Kingdom of God." Regarding the issue of homosexuality God's Word is neither silent nor unclear. Sadly, the contemporary church has wavered in its stance regarding this issue in order to be more politically correct in the eyes of the culture. Any Christian that proclaims that a homosexual can be a practicing Christian is misled and by proclaiming this view misleads others to an eternal destruction.

This stance of God's Word regarding the issue of homosexuality has its root at the beginning of creation where we find God establish the Biblical relationship regarding marriage and sexuality. Based on this standard established at the foundation of the world, we observe that the entirety of the Word of God forbids any sexual activity or man approved marriage that is not in line with God's Word. As individuals seek to redefine sexuality and marriage then they commit sin against the Lord and carry out acts of (1) fornication (Acts 15:29, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Hebrews 13:4), (2) Adultery (Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 20:10, Mark 19:18), and (3) homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:26-27).

God establishes His standard of marriage and sexuality in Genesis 2:24. It is in these verses that we observe this truth,

Genesis 2:24 – Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

⁹ Nicola Menzie, "Rob Bell on Gay Marriage Support: God is Pulling Us Ahead to Affirm Gay Brothers, Sisters." *Christian Post*, March 22, 2013. Downloaded on February 18, 2014 at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/rob-bell-on-gay-marriage-support-god-pulling-us-ahead-to-affirm-gay-brothers-sisters-92395/>

¹⁰ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

As we examine this text we observe that the core Hebrew understanding of marriage was between a man and a woman. Lloyd R. Bailey summarizes the case for heterosexuality based on the opening chapters of Genesis with these words,

A biblical case for exclusive heterosexual contact can (and has) been made on the basis of the creation stories in Gen 1–3. Part of God’s grand purpose was the creation of “male and female” (1:27) that would “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth . . .” (1:28). Furthermore, the proper complement to the male that God had created, in order to relieve his sense of estrangement from the rest of creation (2:18-20), was the formation of a fitting female sexual partner (2:20-24). Of course, other partners are possible (both lower animals and human males) . . . but such activity falls outside the intended design. Thus a modern commentator has put it succinctly: “Even though an evaluation of same-sex intercourse is not the point of the text, legitimization for homosexuality requires an entirely different kind of creation story.” This is precisely what later Jewish and Christian writers had in mind when they condemned same-sex intercourse as “contrary to nature.”¹¹

This is a bedrock understanding for every Christian to understand. God set the standard from the beginning of creation that (1) Marriage is defined by God not man, and (2) Marriage according to the standard of God is a heterosexual marriage between a man and a woman. Daniel Block confirms this view as found in *The New American Commentary*,

Beginning with Gen 1:27–28, the Scriptures are consistent in affirming only heterosexual marriage. The intimacy described in Gen 2:24–25 is natural, good, and holy, and it remains so even after the fall. Within the context of marriage, through sexual activity a husband and wife express physical intimacy to complement their emotional and spiritual union. Although this form of intimacy is celebrated in Scripture as beautiful and good, according to Lev 18:22 and 20:13, the same kind of intimacy between two males is condemned in the sharpest of terms as...“an abomination,” as on a par with adultery and incest, as a capital crime. Accordingly, homosexual activity is not only “against nature”; it is a crime “against God,” another expression of “doing what is right in one’s own eyes.”¹²

Many have claimed that Jesus does not address the issue of homosexuality in the New Testament and declare that if Jesus has not prohibited homosexuality then it must be acceptable from a New Testament perspective. This claim is not true since Jesus Christ Himself approved the same standard of marriage as found in Genesis when he declares,

Matthew 19:4-6 – ⁴He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? ⁶So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

The words of Christ underscore the fact that God has always intended heterosexual marriage to be the standard even in spite of man’s attempt to redefine marriage. This statement also underscores that any attempt to have relations not consistent with God’s standard is a sin. John MacArthur observes,

Homosexuality is not simply another option for two consenting adults; it is instead a perversion of God’s design for the procreation, pleasure, and preservation of the human race.¹³

¹¹ Lloyd R. Bailey: *Leviticus-Numbers* (Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys 2005) 255. Internal citation from Robert Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001) 61-62.

¹² Daniel Isaac Block, vol. 6, *Judges, Ruth*, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 544.

¹³ John MacArthur, “God’s Word on Homosexuality.” 159.

The Apostle Paul reiterates the fact that homosexuality is sin as he writes to Timothy. Paul denounces the practice of homosexuality as he declares,

1 Timothy 1:8-11 – ⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

Paul denounces “immoral men and homosexuals” as among those who are “lawless and rebellious” and “contrary to sound teaching.” The Greek word used by Paul for homosexuals literally means “males in the marriage bed.” Two commentators reflect on the use of this terminology as found in the Word Biblical Commentary and the NIGTC as they both state,

William Mounce notes of these two words “immoral men and homosexuals” that “the first word refers to male fornicators, and the second to sexual relations with the same sex.” Both were, in Paul’s mind, a violation of the seventh commandment.¹⁴

George W. Knight observes, “The word Paul uses is composed of two components. . . . The former is the specific word for male [arsein] with “strong emphasis on sex” (BAGD). The latter means generally “bed” and is a euphemism for sexual intercourse (BAGD). The word does not refer, as some writers have alleged, only to sex with young boys or to male homosexual prostitutes, but simply to homosexuality itself (so Paul explicitly in Rom. 1:26, 27 . . .). Paul writes elsewhere that the consequence for continued and unrepentant involvement in this, and other sins listed here, is exclusion from the kingdom of God and that deliverance from this, and the other sins, is an integral part of the gospel of Jesus Christ as Lord through the power of the Spirit of God (1 Cor 6:9-11).”¹⁵

We can conclude that God’s Word is clear on the subject of homosexuality. It is a sin against the Lord even if the world seeks to redefine it as an acceptable moral condition.

What does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?

Among Christians there is some debate as to what the Bible directly declares about the subject of homosexuality. Some Christians will take a more liberal interpretation of Scripture in which these individuals will examine a text and ask, “What does this text mean to me?” This approach rejects the original intention of the author of any text, taking Scripture out of context and will declare that homosexuality is acceptable in God’s eyes. Still other Christians will take a more historical grammatical approach to interpreting Scripture and will seek to discover God’s original meaning of a passage of Scripture while seeking to discover how to apply this original meaning in the life of the modern day Christian. These individuals will preserve the integrity of the text and interpret passages regarding homosexuality to declare that this moral choice is a sin against the Lord.

There are several core passages of Scripture that describe God’s view regarding the subject of homosexuality. It is important to understand that these passages do not declare that person is born with the DNA to become a homosexual nor do these passages declare that homosexuality is in anyway ac-

¹⁴ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 38

¹⁵ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 86.

ceptable in God's eyes. Our objective in this section of the booklet is simply present the Biblical evidence helping you take Scripture at face value and observe that God's Word declares that homosexuality is a sin against the Lord. According to the Barna Group we have an entire generation that wants to know the Biblical truth regarding this subject but this group also wants to know how to respond to their homosexual friends.

A recent Barna Group study found that 16-29 years old believe the following: Today, the most common perception is that present-day Christianity is "anti-homosexual." Overall, 91% of young non-Christians and 80% of young churchgoers say this phrase describes Christianity. As the research probed this perception, non-Christians and Christians explained that beyond their recognition that Christians oppose homosexuality, they believe that Christians show excessive contempt and unloving attitudes towards gays and lesbians. One of the most frequent criticisms of young Christians was that they believe the church has made homosexuality a "bigger sin" than anything else. Moreover, they claim that the church has not helped them apply the biblical teaching on homosexuality to their friendships with gays and lesbians.¹⁶

Upon reading and understanding the Biblical passages discussing the issue of homosexuality then Christians should be compelled to share the Gospel regarding repentance, redemption, and salvation through Christ alone. We need to follow in the footsteps of Paul as he taught Timothy,

1 Timothy 1:5 – The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Biblical Truth #1 – Homosexuality is an Abomination

The first Biblical truth that we examine is found in the Old Testament teachings regarding the subject of homosexuality. The Word of God as delivered through Moses gave two clear prohibitions regarding homosexuality.

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.

As we reflect on these passages then we must observe that impurity was seen as a violation of God's Law and His holiness in the Old Testament. The New Testament basis of holiness is found in the moral code stipulated in the Old Testament. Leviticus forms the basis for Peter's instruction for holy living as he states, "You shall be holy for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16, Leviticus 11:41)

Some people will reject the passages in Leviticus because they claim that "If you want to say homosexuality is wrong based on the Old Testament laws, then you must still uphold all of the laws in Leviticus and Deuteronomy." Matt Slick from CARM.org responds to this argument by stating,

The Old Testament laws are categorized in three groups: the civil, the priestly, and the moral. The civil laws must be understood in the context of a theocracy. Though the Jewish nation in the Old Testament was often headed by a king, it was a theocratic system with the Scriptures as a guide to the nation. Those laws that fall under this category are not applicable today because we are not under a theocracy.

¹⁶ Barna Group, "A New Generation Expresses its Skepticism and Frustration with Christianity" – March 10, 2010. <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/94-a-newgeneration-expresses-its-skepticism-and-frustration-withchristianity?q=homosexuality>

The priestly laws dealing with the Levitical and Aaronic priesthoods were representative of the future and true High Priest, Jesus, who offered Himself as a sacrifice on the cross. Since Jesus fulfilled the priestly laws, they are no longer necessary to be followed and are not applicable now.

The moral laws, on the other hand, are not abolished because the moral laws are based upon the character of God. Since God's holy character does not change, the moral laws do not change either. Therefore, the moral laws are still in effect.

In the New Testament we do not see a reestablishment of the civil or priestly laws, but we do see a reestablishment of the moral law. This is why we see New Testament condemnation of homosexuality as a sin, but not with the associated death penalty.¹⁷

Biblical Truth #2 – Homosexual Individuals will not Inherit the Kingdom of God

The second Biblical truth regarding homosexuality states that homosexuals will not be able to inherit the Kingdom of God otherwise known as eternal life through Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:9 – Or 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.

1 Timothy 1:8-10 – ⁸Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.

Jude 7 – Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

These two passages clearly state that homosexuality is a sin that carries the consequence of God's wrath and judgment if the individual chooses to not turn from this way of living. Alex Montoya makes the following observations regarding 1 Corinthians chapter 6,

The Scriptures are unwavering in pronouncing that unconverted homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God (cf. 1 Cor 6:9-10; Rev 21:27; 22:15).¹⁸

Homosexuality was not something new in Paul's day but was prevalent in the ancient world. The rare use of the word may be due to the coining of the word by the apostle Paul himself...Wold states, "When the question of homosexuality came up for him in the church at Corinth, we can accurately suppose that Paul's understanding would be influenced by the Old Testament homosexuality law. And it is on this basis that he uses the term "abomination," because it accurately reflects the Hebrew of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13" Furthermore, Paul's use of "immoral" and "homosexuality" lends credence to the view that Paul had homosexuals in mind when he wrote these words. Paul is condemning sins and vices practiced by the unbelieving world, which should not be practiced by God's people. These are characteristics of the "unrighteous" (1 Cor 6:9) and the "lawless and rebellious" (1 Tim 1:9). In light of what some have done to these texts, the Holy Spirit's warning, "Do not be deceived!" (1 Cor 6:9), is understandable.¹⁹

¹⁷ Matt Slick, *Christianity and Homosexuality*. Accessed May 30, 2013. www.carm.org

¹⁸ Alex D. Montoya, "Homosexuality and the Church," *MSJ* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 165.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 163-164.

Biblical Truth #3 – Homosexuality brings Destruction of Life

The final Biblical truth that we examine is found within Paul's warning as given in Romans 1. It is within this text that Paul helps each Christian understand that without repentance and obedience to the Word of God then every homosexual will not only miss out on inheriting the Kingdom of God but they will also experience the judgment of the Lord that leads to eternal condemnation.

Romans 1:24-32 (ESV) – ²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. ²⁶ 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. ²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

John MacArthur makes the following observation about this text,

For the second time (see v. 24) the apostle mentions God's abandonment of sinful mankind. He abandoned them not only to idolatry, the ultimate sexual expression of man's spiritual degeneracy, but also to degrading passions, which he identifies in these two verses as homosexuality, the ultimate expression of man's moral degeneracy.

To illustrate the degrading passions that rise out of the fallen human heart, Paul uses homosexuality, the most degrading and repulsive of all passions. In their freedom from God's truth men turned to perversion and even inversion of the created order. In the end their humanism resulted in the dehumanization of each of them. Perversion is the illicit and twisted expression of that which is God-given and natural. Homosexuality, on the other hand, is inversion, the expression of that which is neither God-given nor natural. When man forsakes the Author of nature, he inevitably forsakes the order of nature.²⁰

The truth about homosexuality, as evidenced from the Scriptures, is that such behavior is neither natural nor normal; and it is certainly not morally neutral. It is, instead, a distortion of God's created order and a violation of His revealed will—making it as profoundly sinful as it is disgraceful and bizarre. Christians who advocate an attitude of tolerance and acceptance toward the homosexual lifestyle, often in the name of love, are in fact exhibiting anything but true, biblical love. Churches and Christian leaders who, in the name of love, defend homosexuality and affirm gay and lesbian ministers and "marriages" not only degrade God's moral standard but also lead others to sin.²¹

Homosexuality will lead a person to destruction of their relationships as well as their life. The Word of God clearly defines that it is a sin that deserves the judgment of the Lord. But the Lord wants to see the homosexual, just like every other sinner, repent of his sin and turn to the Lord in order to experience the power of His forgiveness as clarified in 1 John 1:9.

²⁰ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Romans*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 104-05.

²¹ John MacArthur, vol. 19, *Master's Seminary Journal Volume 19*, 2 (Sun Valley, CA: The Master's Seminary, 2008), 156.

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

Myths About Homosexuality

There are many myths that are promoted today regarding God's Word on the subject of homosexuality. We will only examine two of these myths and respond with the correct understanding of the Word of God.

Myth #1 – Homosexuality is only a Sin if I Commit the Act

There are some Christians that attempt to redefine homosexuality as only the act itself. The premise behind this view is that if one continually struggles with the homosexual desire to have sexual relations with someone of the same sex but does not act upon this desire then they do not classify themselves as a homosexual.

Biblical Response

The Biblical response comes from Jesus Christ himself. It is important to remember that homosexuality is a sexual sin and ranks in the same category of adultery. Jesus Christ Himself answers the question as He states,

Matthew 5:27-28 – ²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’
²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

The *New American Commentary* is clear on the meaning of this text as it states,

The present tense participle *blepōn* refers to one who continues to look rather than just casting a passing glance, and in either case the mere viewing or mental imagining of a naked body is not under consideration. Instead Jesus is condemning lustful thoughts and actions—those involving an actual *desire* (the most literal translation of the verb *epithymēō*) to have sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse. Yet despite the danger of overapplying this verse, an even greater danger is that of underapplying it. Adultery among Christians today is a scandal, yet it almost never occurs without precipitation. Christians must recognize those thoughts and actions which, long before any overt sexual sin, make the possibility of giving in to temptation more likely, and they must take dramatic action to avoid them.²²

Sin is not based on the action alone nor merely a passing thought regarding a subject rather it is based on the pursuit of the heart. The Apostle Paul points this out as he states,

Galatians 5:16-17 – ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

²² Craig Blomberg, vol. 22, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 109.

Myth #2 – Homosexuality is not a Choice for I was Born this Way

The most popular myth populated today by homosexuals is “I was born this way.” This implies that God specifically made some to be homosexual and others to be heterosexual. This is an outright campaign that Christians hear from homosexual proponents yet according to research John Ankerberg observes,

One campaign gay rights activists have successfully waged is getting the general populace to believe that homosexuality is a genetic trait. In other words, homosexuals are “born that way.” Although there is no scientific basis for this belief, and, in fact, scientific studies seem to be proving that environment, inappropriate relationships, and childhood events are the biggest influences, the outdated gene theory has gained wide acceptance throughout western society. What most scientists are saying now is that homosexual behavior is far too complex to be attributed to a specific gene or even a genetic tendency.²³

This theory is propagated in order to convince the culture that homosexuals do not have any other choice. The implication is that since they were born gay then they have no other choice than to be gay therefore society cannot expect them to stop their behavior or lifestyle rather they must accept it. This theory gained traction in 1993 when NPR reported that science had potentially found the gay gene.

On July 15, 1993, National Public Radio (i.e., NPR) reported a new study that was due to be released the next day. The tenor of the report suggested that someone had finally discovered a gene that causes homosexuality. NPR added a few quiet caveats at the end of their report, ignored by most listeners. The next day, the Wall Street Journal headlined their report: “Research Points toward a Gay Gene.” The subtitle said “Normal Variation,” affirming the opinion of the article’s author that homosexuality was a normal variation of human behavior. At the bottom of the last paragraph on the last page, deep within the paper, a geneticist offered his opinion that this gene might only be associated with homosexuality and not the cause of it.²⁴

Regardless, for most of the world the discovery had been made and now the political wheels began to turn leading to the push for protection of civil rights, laws against discrimination, civil unions, gay marriage, and much more. For the last several decades scientist have sought to discover this “Gay Gene” but have failed to do so. One example of this research was found in the research of Simon LeVay,

LeVay claimed to have found conclusive proof that gay and straight men have distinct differences in brain structure. He discovered that a small area of the hypothalamus (INAH3) was smaller in gay men than in straight men (and was similar in size to that of women). Based on this evidence, LeVay concluded that there was only one reasonable conclusion: these brain differences were the biological causes of sexual orientation.²⁵

In light of his article and the way pro-homosexual activists utilize LeVay’s conclusions, one would think that his research provided very concrete support for this conclusion. However, at the end of the article, LeVay himself wrote that “the results do not allow one to decide if the size of INAH3 in an individual is the cause or consequence of that individual’s sexual orientation” or whether it is the result of or the cause of a totally unrelated issue!²⁶

Various studies have attempted to link a “Gay Gene” to homosexuality but all of these studies have failed due to the fact that this gene does not exist. What does this mean? It means that since there is no

²³ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Facts on Homosexuality* (Chattanooga, TN: ATRI Publishing, 2011).

²⁴ “Research Points toward a Gay Gene,” Wall Street Journal, 16 July 1993.

²⁵ Simon LeVay, “A Difference in Hypothalamic Structure between Heterosexual and Homosexual Men,” *Science* 253/5023 (August 30, 1991):1034-37

²⁶ Ibid, 1036.

evidence that supports homosexuality has a biological basis then it must be a learned behavior. Wainwright Churchill observed in *Homosexual Behavior Among Males*:

"There are no sexual instincts in man....Human sexuality is entirely dependent upon learning and conditioning. The individual's pattern of sexual behavior is *acquired* in the context of his unique experiences and [is] in no sense innate or inherited."²⁷

Biblical Response

There is only one way to respond to this myth. We understand according to Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Each of us are sinners and by human nature we have the propensity to sin. We are told in Scripture that we are called to stay alert toward our enemy who desires to destroy our lives and faith.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT) – ⁸Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters* all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.

Colossians 3:5-6 (ESV) – ⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

Romans 8:13 – For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

We are called to resist the devil and the temptation to sin. But nowhere do we see that God made us with a flawed gene that would lead us to live a life contrary to His will. Rather, God has called us to put to death those desires in our life that lead us to sin against Him before those desire put us to death.

Conclusion: How Now Should You Respond?

Now that you have studied the subject of homosexuality, the question that arises is simple: How now should you respond to this issue? Some Christians desire to ignore this issue in our culture but sadly the issue will not ignore them. Every Christian will be asked at some point in their life this simple question: What does the Bible really say about homosexuality? Your responsibility is to be ready to answer this question. A Christian can respond with this 3 Step Approach...

Step #1 – Pray

The issue of homosexuality is not an issue that we should ignore rather we should pray about this very subject. We need to pray that God would reveal His truth to the hearts of those who practice this lifestyle. We need to pray that government leaders and the judicial system would have their eyes opened to the disastrous consequences of the approval of such a lifestyle. We need to pray for the current and future generations that God would open their eyes to see the truth about homosexuality and instead of approving this lifestyle would choose to stand up for God's Word and share the Gospel to the lost.

²⁷ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Facts on Homosexuality* (Chattanooga, TN: ATRI Publishing, 2011).

Step #2 – Prepare

Christians also need to be prepared to give a reason for the hope they have in Christ and be ready to rightly handle the Word of God when they encounter this subject. Sadly, there are many that desire to take the Bible out of context and warp the Word of God on this subject but the God is clear: Homosexuality is a Sin. Study the Word and know the Word so that you can respond when asked about this issue.

Step #3 – Put Your Faith into Action

Finally, every Christian must be ready to put their faith into action. This means that they need to be ready to stand for the truth of God's Word and share the Gospel when asked about the subject of homosexuality. John is clear when he declares,

1 John 2:6 – Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

The truth is that even if someone has chosen to live a homosexual lifestyle then there is still hope through Jesus Christ if that individual would simply turn away from their sin and repent. The Word of God declares,

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

The time has come for Christians to share the Gospel with those who are seeking answers on the subject of homosexuality. May God bless you as you defend the faith!