

A man in a light blue t-shirt and dark pants is sitting on a stone wall, looking out over a vast valley with rolling hills and a town in the distance. The sky is hazy and overcast.

**Homosexuality: A
brief examination
of the **political,**
historical and
theological**

HOMOSEXUALITY

What you need to know to
love and reach out

Pretoria North Baptist Church

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Introduction and Preface

Let me start by stating that this booklet is written from a heart of love and with the motive of extreme compassion. In no way can this booklet be used to discriminate against any person in the political or church realm. The content of this booklet was composed using the 66-books of the Old and New Testament, which are the inspired, infallible, clearly understandable, and authoritative Word of God and in line with thousands of years of Judeo-Christian orthodoxy and tradition.

GOD LOVES AND SAVES HOMOSEXUALS!

Homosexuality is the hot issue of the day. Even more than abortion, it will confront the church throughout this generation, forcing us to listen, study, and respond wisely.

So get ready. Don't rely on your biblical study on homosexuality from a few years ago. Don't assume that knowing the criticisms of biological research on homosexuality means that you are prepared. Today new interpretations of Scripture and sophisticated medical studies are persuading more people that committed homosexual relationships are biblically permissible.

In response either we must repent and say that we have misinterpreted Scripture or we must offer a position that is compassionate, biblically sound, and able to account for the observations of current research. Also, if we maintain that homosexuality is sin, then we must not only defend that position, but we must develop a strategy to pursue homosexuals and urge them to repentance and faith.

We can defend our views through careful, prayerful study. Pursuit, however is not easy. We as the church must consider not only what we say but how we say it. – Edward T. Welsch

The goal of this booklet is to help equip Christians with the knowledge and skills for counseling those who struggle with the sin of homosexuality. This booklet should simply be viewed as a collection of resources to help Biblical counselors more effectively counsel those who struggle with homosexuality.

This counseling topic is a difficult one because in a sense it is unique. Those who practice homosexuality do not make a distinction between who they are and what they do. They identify themselves by their acts of homosexuality. Their sin to them is more than a behavior it is a culture. **They find their identity in their sexual orientation.** This is why the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer and more) community takes such extreme offense towards the Biblical message. When we urge them to stop with their sinful perversions and turn to Christ, they interpret that as an attack on their character or, as some would say, an attack on their person the way that God has made them. In their worldview, they are not people who participate in homosexual behavior, **they are homosexual.** As Christian counselors, this should cause us to be more sensitive to the topic. This doesn't mean that we compromise the truth of Scripture. We should always seek to please God rather than men. But it does mean that we should earnestly pray for wisdom in our interactions with those who identify as homosexual. We must be loving in our approach, soft in our words, and firm with Scripture while being mindful of the fact, **that their struggle could have been our struggle if not for the grace of God.**

While this counseling topic is unique in the ways mentioned above, it is at the same time also the same as counseling someone who struggles with any other sin. Homosexual behavior is a sin. It is not a disease, or a defect, or a biological predetermination. It is a sin. And that is good news because Jesus came to give his life as a ransom for our sins and deliver us from the penalty of sin and bondage of sin. Jesus says in John 14:6, **"I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"**. Jesus is the standard of truth. Our emotions and desires do not and

cannot dictate reality. Jesus is the revealer of reality and rejection of this is wilful ignorance and self-determined destruction. Jesus also states that He is the life. This means that life originates from Him. He is the creator and designer of life. He designed the blueprint and engineered life all on His own. Life is His and life can't be found anywhere else. As living beings created in the image of God we must submit to our Creator. We must submit to His rule and His standards for life. Only by turning away from our sins, our wicked corruption of life towards Him, can we proceed to have eternal, everlasting life. This also means that we must live our lives as He intended for us to do. The mantra of the Gay-Movement for decades was, "I was born this way", but the Originator of life says that **we must be born-again**.

As we proceed in this booklet, we will touch many different disciplines and fields of study due to the complexity that counsellors face today when attempting to counsel those who struggle with the sin of homosexuality. We will look at the political realm as well as history, biology and of course, the queen of all fields of study, theology. The knowledge, questions and advice given in the booklet is meant to help the Christian Counsellor to be more effective in their interactions with those who label themselves homosexual, but everything given in this booklet is garbage if used apart from the gospel. This booklet is not meant to replace the gospel and definitely not meant to supplement the gospel. This booklet was written with the sole purpose of helping the counsellor preach, teach and share the gospel. If this booklet and all other Christian writings on the topic of homosexuality were to disappear from the face of the earth, there would still be hope for those who struggle with homosexuality, **because the only hope for us all is the gospel**.

So, as we are about to jump into this study, please note that most if not almost all of what is written about counseling those who identify as homosexuals in this booklet can be applied to the rest of the labels within the LGBTQ+ acronym.

History of Homosexuality

In a broad sense, the history of homosexuality is simply the history of sin, which then makes it the whole history of humanity since Genesis chapter 3. My aim with this section is not to merely give you a history lesson on the perversion of mankind but to equip you with knowledge and a mindset that will assist you in your outreach towards those struggling with the sin of homosexuality. We are living and experiencing a turning point in history. If the world is to exist for another thousand years, historians of the future will place a bookmark of importance in our time. Before our own eyes the Western world, which for 1600-years could have been considered 'Christian' and built on top of the values of Judeo-Christianity is being dismantled at a rapid pace. Our civilization is being uproot and every value that has contributed to building the strongest, richest, and freest society in the history of the world is being rejected. But none of this should come as a surprise.

This period of "Christian Civilization" is an anomaly in the history of the world. For most of human history paganism, rampant immorality and even homosexuality was the norm. The ancient Greeks accepted homosexuality as normal and even encouraged it. In the later years of the Roman Republic and almost throughout the whole span of the Roman Empire political elites participates in homosexual orgies and it was normal for rich Romans to have little boys and girls as sexual tools. Although every great civilization in the history of the world shows evidence of accepting the homosexual lifestyle at one stage, it is also important to note that most great civilizations didn't start by embracing it, at least that is what the archaeological evidence and historical literary works seem to indicate. As civilizations rise and begin to prosper and as their enemies eventually are defeated, the need for men and masculine values erode, until a new threat arises to the civilization, in which case, it is too late and the declining civilization is decimated and conquered. An effeminate society

always moves to mainstream embracement of homosexuality and then paedophilia time and time again.

The sin of homosexuality is as much a part of our history as murder and stealing. The reason that homosexuality, for the last millennium was considered taboo is because of the Christian and Biblical influence on society. As our society continues to pivot away from Biblical values a return to pagan and immoral values will take the place.

John MacArthur says on this:

Paul had to face it because it was everywhere in his culture. There's the list of the kind of people who went to the church: ex-homosexuals. Socrates was a homosexual, we are told, a very active one, as were many of the Greek leaders and philosophers. Plato penned an entire section in his famous symposium exalting homosexual love. We are told by some historians that even Alexander the Great had both male and female lovers. Some have said the Greek soldiers were believed to have fought valiantly to protect their fellow soldier lovers.

Julius Caesar, history says, had his own lover. Tiberius Caesar adopted young boys and abused them cruelly – apparently a pedophile. Both Gibbon and no less than Toynbee, Arnold Toynbee, great historians, write that this was one of the major contributors to the decline of the Roman Empire and the fall of Rome. Some say nearly all the Caesars were engaged in homosexual behavior, it was so rampant, at least fourteen out of the first fifteen, according to some historians. Nero, current Caesar at the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, had taken a boy named Sporus and had him castrated, then married him in a full wedding, and lived with him as his wife.

So Paul's world was not very much different than our world. Homosexual behavior, like all the other sins that are listed there, was everywhere. He confronted it for what it is. It is a sinful behavior. It is a sinful act. He was not homophobic. He was not overreacting because he was a repressed homosexual himself. He was true to divine Scripture, and he was true to the sinner to tell him his sin for the sake of repentance. Paul knew what Scripture taught.

What is causing this decline in Judeo-Christian values in our culture and society? We live in the most educated and literate society in the history of the world. More Bibles and books on the Bible exist today than in any other time before. There have never been more churches, more preachers, and more Christian media than what we have today, despite all of that, we find ourselves in a rapidly deteriorating society. Our society is not just becoming un-Christian, it is quickly becoming anti-Christian. *What is going on?* Firstly, we know and acknowledge that God is sovereign. What is happening in the world is not by accident. We see throughout the Scriptures in books like Isaiah, Daniel, and Revelation that things must get worse before they get better, so we admit and rest in the fact that God is working all things towards the perfect outcome. But from a human or pastoral perspective, what has caused the decline? In which areas are we responsible for what is happening? The quick answer is... Weak preachers, weak sermons, weak churches, weak men, and weak families. In a world saturated with churches and Christian content, the vast majority of those churches and content is unbiblical, compromising, world-loving and shallow.

Our Christian forefathers were bold, brave, and uncompromising. They preached the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. They stood for Christ and His kingdom at the cost of their own lives. It is these men and women that changed the world for a thousand years. A million closed bibles are outmatched by one open one. A million milky 'Christians' cannot make the difference that one bold and courageous preacher can.

Our world and society are breaking apart at the seams because the church has retreated and replaced its message. The solution to this? The Bible! We need men and women who are not afraid to stand, who are not afraid to be harassed and who are not afraid to proclaim the Word of God boldly and loudly! The culture war has been lost or a more fitting statement would be to say, the culture war has been forfeited by the church. We are no longer preaching to churched men and women. The fundamentals of the Christian faith are no longer known by those around us. Like the apostles, we find ourselves in a world completely oblivious to Christian truths. Churches all around stand as monuments to a time passed. When we preach, we cannot simply assume that our listeners share our understanding of sin and love and holiness. We must assume, like the apostles, that their whole worldview is wrong and gradually build them up with and through the gospel to think of life and faith in the same way that God does. Statistics show that over time more and more 'Christians' support abortion, state involvement in families, and homosexual behavior. The term 'Christian' has lost all the meaning that it once had. Calling yourself a Christian is no different than calling yourself one of the many made-up genders that we find in the world today. It means something different to everyone because we and those who came a generation or two before us allowed them to hijack our terms and our churches.

But if history proves anything, it proves the power of the gospel. If twelve men throughout 60-years could conquer an empire and eventually the whole Western world by simply preaching Jesus, then so can we. Every church that I know has more than 12-people. **If we boldly profess Christ and engage the world on His terms, God will bless the preaching of his world!**

Much more can be said about the history of Homosexuality and some extra sources will be shared in the bibliography.

Scripture is like a lion. Who ever heard of defending a lion? Just turn it loose; it will defend itself. – Charles Spurgeon

The Devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. Providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. The need is biblical doctrine, so understood and felt that it sets men afire. – Charles Spurgeon

“God is the highest good of the reasonable creature. The enjoyment of him is our proper; and is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends. These are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean.” – Jonathan Edwards

Homosexuality and Politics

One of the reasons that make the sin of homosexuality unique compared to other sins a Biblical Counsellor might have to deal with is the reality that homosexuality is a politically backed sin. Governments do not prohibit counseling for drunkenness or murderers, but more and more they are outlawing the conversion and counseling of those who practice homosexuality.

Almost all Western nations treat homosexuals as special class citizens, making laws that protect them from so-called 'discrimination' that is not afforded to other citizens and especially not to

Christians. Most of these laws are passed under the guise of the government caring for its citizens. Laws titled, "Against Hate Speech" are meant to hold those who participate in violent speech accountable by legal means, at least that is how it is represented, but once these laws are voted into effect, governments and homosexual movements start redefining words. Calling homosexuality a sin is now considered hate speech and attempting to convert a homosexual is tantamount to a violent act and punishable by law.

Governments forbid Christian education in public schools but mandate LGBTQ curriculums. In some states in the US, they go as far as showing children under the age of 15 sexual footage in the name of "Sex-Education".

In some places, if a homosexual accuses a person, who most of the time happens to be a Bible-believing Christian, of a hate crime the media and the state will support the homosexual agenda. In this new world, **Christians are guilty until proven innocent and the only way you can be declared innocent is by compromising God's Word. So, in other words, Christians are guilty until proven compromised.**

The modern LGBTQ movement finds its roots in the Sexual Revolution that occurred in 1960 America. One of the mantras for that movement was, "*Get government out of the bedroom*". What they meant by that was they wanted the government to stop the prohibition of gay and lesbian marriages and sexual relationships. This is a good example of how liberals achieve their political goals. They claimed that they wanted the government removed from the bedroom, but in actuality, they wanted more government in the bedroom, the difference being, they wanted to be the government. If they merely wanted to have the state recognize gay marriage and not legally punish homosexual behavior, they would have stopped once that was achieved. After they got the government and decent society to compromise their values, they pushed even harder to now take over the institutions that once upheld civil morality and values. They claimed that all they wanted was to be treated as equals, and today they are the ones enforcing their morality on others around them by the threat of law. They claimed they wanted government out of the bedroom, but they merely wanted to control the government agenda in the bedroom, they claim they oppose hate speech, yet they redefine basic cultural words and beliefs to fit into their spectrum of hate so that they can legally take action against those who disagree with them. They claim that male and female sexes are social constructs and cannot be forced unto them, yet they proceed to make a list of over 100 made up genders that are truly a social construct and force others around them to live by those genders, legally threatening those who refuse to submit in countries such as Canada.

The fact that homosexuality and political power are so closely coupled should not surprise. Throughout history preachers of righteousness have always been silenced by those who hate their message and refuse to abandon their perverted ways. John the Baptist was imprisoned and put to death because he called out the sexual sins of Herod in Mark chapter 6. They hated John the Baptist for confronting them for sins they knew very well to be wrong, but Jesus calls John the Baptist the greatest man to have lived in Luke 7:28.

Daniel 11:37 tells us that the anti-Christ will **not** have a desire for women. Some translations translate the passage as "not being desired by women", but a better translation would be, "He will not belove women" or "not love women". This makes sense since the anti-Christ is a man who opposes all that Christ stands for. Christ is truth, the anti-Christ propagates lies. Christ saves, the anti-Christ damns, Christ has a specific role for men and women in his church and their marriages, the anti-Christ perverts God's design. The current climate of political obsession with homosexuality

could be the fulfillment and preparation for the coming of the anti-Christ. The book of Revelation teaches us that immorality and perversion will stain the world in the last days.

Satan knows that the unit responsible for holding society together is the family. The family makes up the moral fiber of society. Weak families lead to a weak society. This is why the homosexual agenda focuses on reaching children in schools and through entertainment. They are relentless in their pursuit of normalizing their perversion. **The church and Biblical families are the only ones equipped and ready to take the fight to them. The church must arise from its generation-long slumber and like a giant come down on society and proclaim the word of God.**

As Bible-believing Christians, our main focus should not be in the political realm, it should be towards the culture. Politics is downstream of culture. We must engage our culture with the gospel. We must proclaim Christ to our neighbors, our co-workers, and our families lovingly and firmly. Our politicians are merely giving the people what they want, and only the gospel can change the hearts of sinful and rebellious people.

In the Bibliography I give some sources to videos, articles and sites that confirm what is written above and also elaborate on some of the statements made.

“We can’t protect or expand the cause of Christ by human political and social activism, no matter how great or sincere the efforts. Ours is a spiritual battle against worldly ideologies and dogmas that are arrayed against God, and we achieve victory over them only with the weapon of Scripture.” – John MacArthur

“Rather than demanding our rights and creating for ourselves a world where we feel safe and accepted, we need to see the deep spiritual needs of the world and concern ourselves with offering people hope through Jesus Christ. That’s what being a living sacrifice is all about.” – John MacArthur

“God simply is not calling us to wage a culture war that would seek to transform our countries into “Christian nations.” To devote all, or even most, of our time, energy, money, and strategy to putting a façade of morality on the world or the appearance of “rightness” over our governmental and political institutions is to badly misunderstand our roles as Christians in a spiritually lost world.” – John MacArthur

“We must not be so engulfed in trying to force social behavior to conform to our standards that we become enemies of those our Lord has called us to win to Himself. We must reject sin and never compromise God’s standards of righteousness. But we also must never engage in defamation and denigration of the lost sinners who make up our corrupt culture. When Christians become political, sinners become the enemy instead of the mission field.” – John MacArthur

“I often hear it said, ‘Do not bring religion into politics.’ This is precisely where it ought to be brought, and set there in the face of all men as on a candlestick.” – Charles Spurgeon

Homosexuality and Science

The following is an excerpt from Edward T. Welsch’s book titled: **Homosexuality – Speaking the Truth in Love** under the heading *Biological Causes* and also *A Biblical Model of Homosexuality*.

Biological research has been used to support the theory of a predestined homosexual orientation – The idea that homosexuality is part of our biological make-up, not our sin nature. But since Scripture consistently teaches that homosexuality is an expression of a sinful heart, we should expect certain results in the scientific literature. Negatively, we should expect that science will not be able to establish a biological cause to homosexuality. Positively, we should expect science to be friendly with the biblical position. And this, indeed, is the case: the findings of science support rather than challenge the biblical view.

Perhaps the most well known study on the biology of homosexuality appeared in the periodical Science. The lead researcher, Simon LeVay, conducted post-mortem examinations on the brains of nineteen homosexual men who died from AIDS and sixteen presumed heterosexual men, six of whom died of AIDS.

His results suggested that the brains of the heterosexual men consistently had more brain cells in a specific area of the brain (INAH 3) believed to be involved in sexual behavior. When this data is interpreted with a homosexuality-as-biologically-determined bias, the conclusion is that homosexuality is located in the brain.

But Christians and non-Christians have frequently noted that the results of this study do not establish a causative link between brain activity and homosexual behavior. Even LeVay recognizes the limitations of his study, suggesting that it is little more than an invitation to further research. He knows that his observations are tentative until confirmed by other researchers, and this corroboration has not as yet been forthcoming. He recognizes that AIDS may have confounded the results, that the sample size was too small to draw any clear conclusions, and that his measurements could be prone to error. Furthermore, the brains of three homosexual men in the study were indistinguishable from the analogous brain areas in heterosexual men. Even his assumption that there is a relationship between INAH 3 and sexual behavior has never been clearly established.

The conclusion, therefore, is that we can conclude nothing from this study. Science even published a letter to the editor criticizing the journal for prematurely publishing an article of dubious quality.

Yet let's say that, eventually, research that avoids the weaknesses of this study actually established a connection between the size of INAH 3 and homosexuality. Even then, LeVay acknowledged that "the results do not allow one to decide if the size of INAH 3 in an individual is the cause or the consequence of that individual's sexual orientation." In other words, from his perspective it may be just as likely that the possible brain differences are a result of homosexuality rather than a cause.

Or let's take the most extreme (and currently hypothetical) possibility. Let's suggest that someone could demonstrate that INAH 3 is, indeed, a participant in sexual desire and that INAH 3 is smaller from birth in people who eventually become homosexuals. In other words, the brain is not laying down neuronal patterns that are a result of homosexual experience. Instead, the smaller INAH 3 is apparent before any homosexual activity.

If such research were to exist, Christians and many non-Christians would make at least the following observations. First, there would always be exceptions to the rule. Some heterosexuals would have a smaller INAH 3 and some homosexuals would have a large INAH 3. Second, even the secular writers would be firm in saying, as they are now, that biology is not destiny. Human sexual response is too complex to reduce to a deficit of neurons in the brain. Third, Christians would remain firm in their view that biology can't make us sin. At most, biology is analogous to a friend who tempts us into sin. In such cases the friend might be a trial, but the friend can be rebuked and resisted.

Another area of biological research explores the occurrence of homosexuality in families and twins. It attempts to uncover a genetic tendency to the behavior. A frequently cited example of such research was done by Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard. Their study reported that of fifty-six homosexual men who were identical twins, 52 percent (twenty-nine) had a twin brother who was also homosexual. Among nonidentical twins the rate was 22 percent; among nontwin brothers the rate was 9 percent; and among adopted siblings the rate was 11 percent. The research group also found comparable statistics with females.

This is what you would expect if there was a genetic component to homosexuality: the closer the genetic relationship, the higher the rate of shared homosexuality. To be blunt, while interesting, this study is meaningless. Even if you ignore the sampling biases (subjects were recruited through homosexual publications) and the fact that no other researchers have found such high percentages among identical twins, the study is inconsequential. This is because identical twins typically have a profound influence on each other. If one twin is introduced to something new, it is likely that he will introduce the other twin to that activity. Also, why did genetically unrelated, adopted brothers of homosexuals have such an allegedly high rate of homosexuality? Their 11 percent rate was five times what you would expect. (The incidence rate of active homosexuality is generally believed to be about 2 percent in the general population.) The study would be better used to support the influence of peers in the development of homosexuality. The researchers are aware that the only thing they really proved is that homosexuality is not solely caused by genetics. If genetics were the only contributor to homosexual activity, then the concordance rate in identical twins would be 100 percent. If one twin were homosexual, the other twin would always be homosexual. Since the statistic is much lower than that, homosexuality cannot be a straightforward genetic trait. Apart from this conclusion, the study is not able to prove anything. Along with problems in the way the study was structured, identical twins share an environment that is more similar than that of other siblings. Therefore, it is not unusual for them to share sins. The only way to strengthen this research would be to study twins who were separated at birth.

But let's again suppose that this research were supported by better studies. What if research found that identical twins more frequently share homosexuality even when they have no contact with each other? If this research were to emerge, it would still illustrate biblical truth. First, there would never be a 100-percent concordance rate. Second, a principle of Scripture is that the context for our lives is the physical body, so we should expect that physical body (the brain in this case) would have some way to biologically represent what is happening in the heart. It is even possible that a certain brain type is necessary to express homosexual intent. This brain or genetic hardware is not enough in itself to cause homosexuality (that is, it may not be sufficient), but it may need to be present if homosexuality is to emerge (that is, it may be necessary). To put it another way, a certain genetic predisposition may be necessary (an essential element) for homosexual intent, but it is not determinative - its presence does not force you to be homosexual.

It is important to be precise in making this point. Am I suggesting that it is biblically possible that the body could cause homosexuality? In a way, I am, but I am using the word "cause" to mean "biologically shape or influence," not "irresistibly compel." Used this way, there is nothing shocking about the statement. It is simply saying that the way our sinful hearts are actually expressed in behavior is the result of hundreds of factors, biology being one. A person whose sinful heart is expressed in murder may have been influenced by unjust treatment, parents who allowed him to abuse his siblings, and Satan's encouragements to kill. But none of these influences remove personal responsibility. The ultimate cause of sin is always the sinful heart.

A third type of biological research on homosexuality focuses on genetic data at the microscopic level, on the gene itself. The best known of the research teams doing this work is from the National Institute of Health and is headed by Dean Hamer. This highly technical work is relatively new, but neither its youth nor its sophistication should keep the Christian lay person from asserting the functional authority of Scripture over the data.

Like the two studies previously mentioned, there are methodological flaws in this study. It has not been duplicated, so very little can be said at this point. Also, even if practicing homosexuals were consistently genetically distinct from heterosexuals, this would not make homosexuality a biologically based behavior for which people are not morally responsible.

These three studies are the most recent in a relatively long but fruitless attempt to find a biological cause for homosexuality. A physician who reviewed the literature said, "Recent studies postulate biologic factors as the primary basis for sexual orientation. However, there is no evidence at present to substantiate a biological theory, just as there is no evidence to support any singular psychosocial explanation." The only thing certain is that human sexuality is too complex to be reduced to the workings of the brain.

Since behavior is expressed (not caused) by our biology, we should not be surprised if we hear of future studies that offer better evidence for a biology-and-behavior link. But Scripture is clear: our bodies can never make us sin. The body is weak but is not the cause of sin. This principle, when used accurately, can bring increased clarity to brain research. The brain sciences can offer exciting observations, but they can only be rightly interpreted when Scripture provides the contours.

*The church has been quick to refute the biological research, but it has been slow to apply the same principles to the psychological theories. For various reasons many people tend to be more comfortable with psychological influences than biological ones. Note, for example how well *Homosexuality: A New Christian Ethic* is received by many Christians. In this book Elizabeth Moberly suggests that behind almost all homosexuality, male or female, is a deficit in the relationship with the same-sex parent. The theory is that there is a God-designed need for same sex love, affirmation, acceptance, and bonding. When these allegedly normal attachment needs have been left unmet, the needs become eroticized at puberty. Homosexuality is a drive to make good this relationship.*

When we listen closely to the application of this and other psychological explanations, we find good intent but a flawed understanding of the doctrine of sin. These psychological theories emphasize that homosexuality is learned rather than biologically inbred; and since it is learned, it can be unlearned.

But notice the problem. All this does is suggest that the orientation toward homosexuality starts a little later than birth instead of before birth. We are left at almost the same place as the biological theories: the orientation is still established by forces outside of ourselves, and the orientation precedes sin (figure 1). Therefore, the real problem, the deep problem, is the homosexual orientation. A diagnosis of sin and a cure that included repentance would be considered superficial.

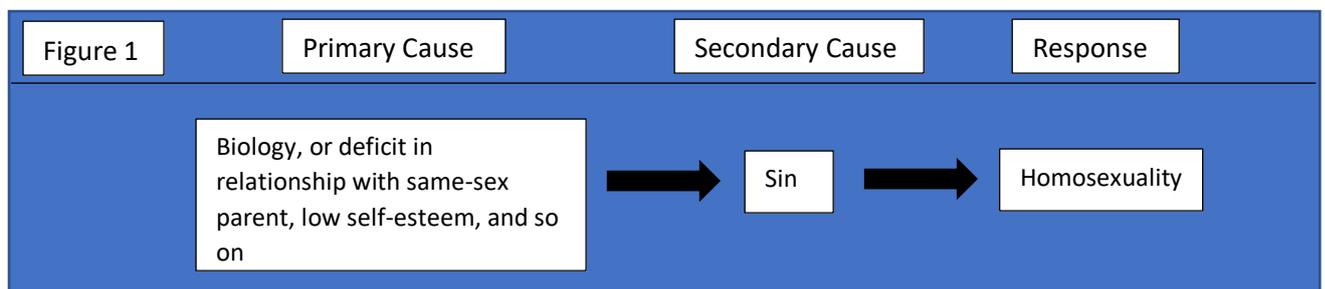


Figure 1. A common, unbiblical Conceptualization of the Development of Homosexuality.

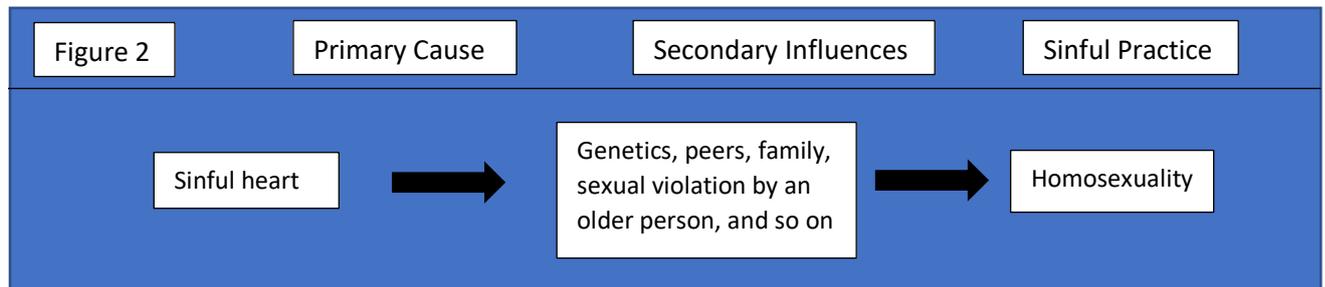


Figure 2. The Development of Homosexuality.

A biblical view acknowledges that there may be psychological and biological influences in the development of homosexuality. In fact, the Bible would warn us not to limit the vast number of possible influences. However, Scripture is adamant that it is not what influences us that makes us “unclean”. Instead, “from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality.... All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean’” (Mark 7:21-23) (figure 2). This means that our sinful orientation has innumerable expressions in our lives. With some it is greed or jealousy, with others it is sinful anger, and with others it can be expressed in homosexual desire.

Only when homosexuality is seen for what it is, a sin, can there be hope. It is for our sin that Jesus died on the cross and it is our sin that we can put off and are renewed by the Holy Spirit and put on deeds of righteousness.

Does science even matter anymore? I remember years ago, the mantra for the Gay-Rights movement was, “I was born this way”. They took great offense when some claimed they could change or that they chose to be homosexual. They firmly established themselves as biologically predetermined homosexuals. Fast forward 20-years to today and these same people now added the label ‘Bi-sexual’ to their pantheon of perversion. Now they claim that they can have sexual intimacy with either sex dependent on how they feel. What the church has been saying for decades, that homosexuality is a choice is now confirmed by them, except this time they don’t care. In the past they tried to justify their behavior by seeking approval from others to ease their consciences, now they openly flaunt their rebellion. They have lost the ability to feel shame. They embrace their lust and hunger for sexual fulfillment and even go as far as calling it pride. They have pride parades and pride movements and in the US they even have a pride month. They openly display their perversion for the whole world to see and they even adopted the rainbow, a sign of God’s covenant to Noah after He judged the whole world for its wickedness, as their emblem of perversion.



Theology of the Scripture

The debate regarding Homosexuality among Christians and churches is a crucial one. Many if not most western churches today approve of homosexuality, which places them in direct contradiction with the Bible. So, either they must argue that the Bible never addresses homosexuality as a sin or that the Bible is merely wrong. This debate is more than just a moral debate, it is an attack on the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture which in turn is an attack on the very authority of God. Spurgeon had to fight this fight, Martin Luther had to fight this fight, Johan Hus, Wycliff, Augustine even the Apostle Paul and Jesus themselves had to fight this fight.

The main reason Christians have such a difficult time reaching out to those who participate in homosexual behaviour is because our worldviews are radically different. We have fundamentally different presuppositions about the most basic elements of life. A “presupposition” being an implicit assumption or truth, or reality being taken for granted. “Homosexual Christian apologists” do their utmost best to muddy the waters and confuse real Christians. The term “Homosexual Christian apologist” refer to those who claim to be Christian and sometimes even claim to be Biblical but refuse to accept what God so clearly has said about homosexuality. They attempt to defend and promote homosexual behaviour as normal and even Christian. They easily accuse those who think of homosexuality as a sin as being unloving and often accuse them of not being Christlike.

Biblical Christians and those who identify as homosexual have different definitions for sin, holiness, love, marriage, sex and more. When you tell a homosexual that God loves them, in your mind you think of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, you think of God’s life saving and sin killing mercy and grace, but the homosexual hears of God’s love and thinks of God’s approval and acceptance and His desire for them to be happy, no matter the lifestyle or choices.

Homosexual apologists either attack the Bible, reinterpret the Bible, or downgrade the Bible. They must get rid of the “Biblical problem” in order to push their perverted agenda in a society that was once firmly rooted in the Judeo-Christian faith. It is because of this that we as Christians must know our Bibles and firmly and uncompromising trust in the **inspiration, infallibility, perspicuity, and authority** of the Bible for all matters of faith and life. We must boldly claim the truth, that the Bible is the revealed Word and will of God and that God expects all men everywhere to repent and trust in Jesus.

Authority of Scripture: “The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.” – Wayne Grudem.

The phrase, “Thus says the Lord”, appears everywhere in the Old Testament and as Grudem indicates, it was the equivalent of saying, “In the name of the king”, meaning that something is said with the approval and authority of the one on who’s behalf it is being said. Some verses are: Num 22:38; Deut 18:18-20; Jer 1:9; 14:14; 23:16-22; 29:31-32; Ezek 2:7; 13:1-6.

In both the Old and New Testament God uses people as His instruments of speaking to the world. Those people are prophets and apostles, and it is their words and writings that the Bible is composed of.

The apostle Paul writes in 2 Timothy 3:16 that “All Scripture is inspired (breathed out) by God”. This means that all the Old Testament writings to which Paul was referring to here came from the mouth of God. In 2 Peter 3:16 the Apostle Peter refers to Paul’s writings as being the same as the Old

Testament in authority. The reason for this is because Paul was an Apostle of Christ and the same is true if not truer for Peter who was a first among equals among the apostles chosen by Christ.

Some might have issue with this, stating that just because the Bible says it is the highest authority doesn't mean it is. They would claim that we are participating in circular reasoning. It is true that the reason is circular, but it cannot be another way. In fact, this contributes to the argument for Biblical authority. If the Bible is the highest and only authority for all matters of faith and life, the Bible cannot reference any other form of authority for validity. The Bible must attest to its own authority because it is the highest and only authority. When God states that He is life and that all life exists because He is the source of life does the circular nature of the statement make it any less true?

The Bible is authoritative because it comes from God through his chosen instruments. Trust in its authority can further be supplemented when we consider the fact that the Bible is composed of 66-different books, written by more than 40-authors over a timespan of 2000-years and stays consistent in its message. It's historical accounts are always proven to be accurate and its prophecies always come to pass.

The Bible is enough for the Biblical counsellor. We preach from it, teach from and instruct from it because when we do, we are uttering the very words of God.

Inspiration of Scripture: The term **inspiration** in the theological sense does not mean the same thing in the way our culture uses the word. The term **inspiration of Scripture** means that God implanted his words or thoughts or both into the minds and hearts of men to write down what He wants them to write down (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:16-21).

Infallibility of Scripture: The Bible must be trusted because it is infallible or inerrant. The Bible is without error because God is without error (Num 23:19; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18). History and archaeology keep proving the reliability of the Bibles in our hands as older and older fragments of manuscripts is constantly being unearthed. If the God who sustains and maintains the whole universe is able to do so without any effort, then we can trust Him to keep His word, the Bible, pure over the ages.

Perspicuity of Scripture: The term perspicuity simply means clear. The perspicuity of Scripture means that the Bible is clear to understand by all who read it. The Holy Spirit is vital in helping us understand passages of scripture for the purpose of applying it into our lives, but even those who are outside of Christ can read and understand God's Ten-Commandments in Exodus 20. They do not need a secret knowledge or a secret decryption key. They can read or hear God's Word and understand it. This also means that passages of Scripture can easily be categorized within literary genres. It is not difficult to read the Bible and realize whether you are reading history, poetry, wisdom, or instruction. The perspicuity of Scripture states that the reader who is reading a passage of the Bible will be able to recognize if a passage is prescriptive or descriptive. Just because the Bible makes mention of the fact that Solomon had many wives, does not justify the reader to follow his example. A descriptive account cannot be altered to be prescriptive. Context is key.

When speaking to unbelievers who defend homosexual practices, the doctrine of the authority of Scripture is most often attacked or downgraded, on the other hand, when engaging with those who claim to be Christian and defend homosexual practices, the doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture is often attacked. As previously mentioned, they attempt to muddy the waters of interpretation. They redefine historical and Biblical established terms and doctrines and attempt to sow doubt on passages of Scripture that plainly deal with the issue.

From the beginning of my Reformation I have asked God to send me neither dreams, nor visions, nor angels, but to give me the right understanding of His Word, the Holy Scriptures; for as long as I have God's Word, I know that I am walking in His way and that I shall not fall into any error or delusion. – Martin Luther

I am much afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, and engraving them in the hearts of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which means are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must be corrupt. – Martin Luther

Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason-I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other-my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen. – Martin Luther

Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years. – Charles Spurgeon

If your creed and Scripture do not agree, cut your creed to pieces, but make it agree with this book. – Charles Spurgeon

Theological Approach to Homosexuality

Please find all the sources for this in the bibliography. Some of these excerpts are slightly altered to make it more readable for the purposes of this booklet. Please visit the original articles for fully accurate reading of the articles.

Developments in the secular society in its acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle have put pressure on the evangelical church to respond in some way. Homosexual spokespersons have advocated varying principles of interpretation to prove from the Bible the legitimacy of their lifestyle. They have resorted to either subjectivism, historic-scientific evolving of society, or cultural biases of the biblical writers to find biblical backing for their position. Scripture condemns homosexuality in such passages as Genesis 19; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10; 2 Pet 2:7; and Jude 7. The true biblical teaching on the subject requires the church to condemn the sin of homosexuality, convert the homosexual, confront erroneous teaching, and cleanse itself. The church must be careful not to adopt the customs of the world. – Alex D. Montoya

Hermeneutics and the Homosexual Movement: *Hermeneutics is the science and art of interpretation. It is “that branch of theology which defines the laws applied by exegesis.” “...as a science, there are rules to be employed, and as an art, those rules are to be observed properly (Zuck 1991:61). Hermeneutics determines the rules which are legitimate in the interpretive process and those which are not. Considerable confusion has been introduced into modern-day discussions of hermeneutics. Any effort to incorporate anything of a subjective nature or to insist that objective interpretation is impossible must be soundly repudiated. One example of such confusion is the ill-founded concept that contemporary application of a passage is integral to an understanding of what the passage meant in its original setting. Another example of corruption in hermeneutics is the policy allowing for reading into a passage a meaning that is derived from another passage...It is sufficient to note here the extreme importance of hermeneutics at the foundational level of theological investigation. – Roy B. Zuck and Joseph Mahlaola.*

When approaching the Bible a consistent hermeneutic must be applied. The Bible must consistently be interpreted using the **literal-historical-grammatical and syntactical approach**. The reason for this approach is because this is the hermeneutic applied to any other form of literature. We approach legal contracts with this hermeneutic and we read our salary slips with the use of this hermeneutic. The Bible is a spiritual book, but it is still a book. The authors had intentions and objectives with their writings. They, like we do today, intends for the reader and recipient to reach the authorial intent when interpreting their writings.

Various forms of interpretation have been used to arrive at conclusions which support the homosexual lifestyle. However, unless a consistent hermeneutic is applied to the interpretation of Scripture, each interpreter will arrive at his own conclusion. The text will say whatever the interpreter wants it to say. Unless the literal, historical-grammatical approach to the interpretation of the Scriptures is held strictly, the Scriptures will cease to speak and thus cease to be authoritative (cf. 2 Tim 3:15-17). – Alex D. Montoya

- 1. Subjectivism:** Homosexual advocates claim that personal experience or “personal truth” is the ultimate source of authority. It doesn’t matter what the writer intended with his writings, the only thing that matters is what the reader experiences or ‘takes’ from the text. This approach does not take a lot of effort to debunk. No one lives like this. If they stayed true to this principle they would allow those who hold to the view that homosexuality is a sin to believe that without objecting in the first place.
- 2. Historic-Scientific:** Homosexual advocates claim that just like the church’s position on slavery changed throughout history, so also the church’s position on homosexuality must also change. This is a false dichotomy. Slavery is not the ancient equivalent of homosexuality. Homosexuality is explicitly mentioned to be a sin, an unnatural desire and there is a lot of evidence to show that the church from the first century had a consistent impact on the decline of slavery. Those who claimed to be Christian and supported slavery were the exception that proved the rule.
- 3. Cultural Biases of the Biblical Writers:** Most pro-homosexual theologians argue that the biblical authors were culturally biased against homosexuality. Such proponents would argue that the apostle Paul was a product of the Judaism of his time, and thus had cultural “blind spots,” most noticeably regarding women and gays. John J. McNeill, in *The Church and the Homosexual*, asserts that “the Scriptures are ‘historically and culturally limited’ so that one cannot merely transpose a text of Scripture to the contemporary circumstances of life.” Hence, because the biblical authors wrote from such a distant and culturally irrelevant setting, gay proponent Robin Scroggs concludes, “The conclusion I have to draw seems inevitable: Biblical judgments against homosexuality are not relevant to today’s debate.” *“Paul’s arguments,” states Marti Nissinen, “are based on certain Hellenistic Jewish moral codes that are culture-specific and that had their own trajectory of tradition.” In fact, Paul may have needed sexual therapy himself. The following statement sums up well the revisionist’s view of the biblical teaching on homosexuality: Sexuality as we understand it today is not addressed in the Bible. It is a modern concept. The Bible treats sexuality only in limited forms of actualization. . . . The terms of Israel’s culturally shaped understanding will not satisfy our present need. In this field we must look to the ongoing revelation of science and of newly emerging voices of experience.* The conclusions reached by gay proponents rely upon hermeneutical rules that do violence to the traditional and historic approach to biblical interpretation. As will be seen below, if interpreted by a consistent, literal hermeneutic, the Bible does not condone homosexuality in any of its forms, but in fact condemns it as a deviant and damning sin. With the prospects of sure damnation, the church must with

compassionate conviction declare such to be sin, **yet a sin which—when repented of—is covered by the grace of God displayed in the propitiatory sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary.** The biblical case comes next.

Homosexuality Condemned by Scripture: When considered contextually and objectively, the Scriptures are not silent concerning homosexuality. They always treat homosexuality as a violation of the divine order. The major references to homosexuality in Scripture are: Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10; Genesis 19; 2 Pet 2:7 and Jude 7. As expected, pro-homosexual scholars have interpreted each of these texts in such a way as to eliminate its applicability to the current ethical debate on the issue. However, a literal, objective approach yields a much different conclusion.

Leviticus 18:22; 20:13: Moses gives two clear prohibitions of homosexuality in the Book of Leviticus: You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination (18:22). If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them (20:13).

Various interpretations are given for the non-applicability of these references to the church today. Some invoke the liberal, multi-source contamination of the passage. Others say that the section is a specific warning against cultic prostitution and the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites. Scroggs suggests that the prohibition may be against the wasting of human semen. Boswell, a popular advocate for homosexuality, argues that the Book of Leviticus is concerned about ceremonial uncleanness, not with moral impurity. He states that

the levitical enactments against homosexual behavior characterizes it unequivocally as ceremonial uncleanness rather than inherently evil. . . . The irrelevance of the verses was further emphasized by the teaching of Jesus and Paul that under the new dispensation it was not the physical violation of the levitical precepts which constituted 'abomination' (bdelugma) but the interior infidelity of the souls.

These arguments receive an adequate answer in asserting that the biblical writers did not divide the prohibitions in Leviticus into ceremonial and moral codes. Impurity in the Old Testament was a violation of God's law and God's holiness. The basis of NT holiness is found in the very moral code stipulated in the OT. The condemnation of incest in 1 Cor 5:1 goes back to Lev 18:18 and 20:11. The list of vices in 1 Cor 6:9-11 and 1 Tim 1:9-11 go back to Leviticus 19–20. The moral separation of the Christian from unbelievers as emphasized in the NT is but an extension of the separation of God's people from the immoral practices of the heathen nations surrounding the nation of Israel. Leviticus forms the basis for Peter's injunction for holy living, "You shall be holy for I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16; cf. Lev 11:41; 19:2; 20:7). The very existence of these prohibitions in Leviticus argues for the existence of these sexual vices in the pagan world which God expressly calls "abominations." Wold concludes that the words used in Leviticus conclusively show *that "all same-gender sexual relations are categorically forbidden by the Hebrew terms. The biblical writer leaves no room for compromise. The language is emphatic."*

Romans 1:18-32: The most extensive treatment of homosexuality is found in Rom 1:18-32 in the context of the apostle Paul's argument that the whole world, Gentile and Jewish, is under sin and thus in need of the righteousness of God provided in Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 3:9-26). In his description of the sin of the Gentile world, Paul shows God's response to mankind's infidelity. Three times Paul states that God "gave them over" (1:24, 26, 28). God judges sin with further sin. Homosexuality is a consequence of mankind's abandonment of the truth, a just punishment for exchanging the truth for

a lie (1:24) and thus a revelation of the wrath of God upon unrighteousness (1:18). The context reveals homosexuality as a further manifestation of the “ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness”(1:18). The matter could not be clearer.

Yet revisionists have found ways to circumvent Paul’s assessment of homosexuality as sin and a violation of the ordinance of God. They have offered numerous arguments to explain away the supposed condemnation of homosexuality. The proponents of homosexuality say that Paul is looking at the Gentile world and judging it by what would not be proper according to Jewish law or custom. McNeill asserts, “Because of his Jewish background Paul obviously found rampant homosexuality in Greece very shocking.” Others argue that “Paul’s description may be intentionally indeterminate. . . . His vague presentations . . . may also be simply a part of Paul’s rhetorical strategy. Therefore, it is wise to refrain from drawing detailed conclusions from Paul’s terminology about the nature of same sex conduct in Romans 1.” Scroggs insists that Paul is not condemning homosexuality, but the infidelity of the Gentile world: “Paul has a major theological goal in mind; ethical concerns or abominations lie far from his purposes.”

Probably the most accepted pro-gay explanation of homosexuality in Romans 1 comes from Boswell who states that Paul is not condemning homosexuality but homosexual acts committed by heterosexual persons. He explains away “against nature” or “unnatural” as not referring to natural law as God’s original purpose for mankind, but as the natural character of the heterosexual pagan. Boswell argues for the existence of inverts (those who are by nature homosexuals) and perverts (heterosexuals who commit homosexual acts). Hence, he concludes that the *Greek word para* does not mean “against,” but rather “more than,” or “in excess of.” Thus “beyond nature” does not mean “immoral.” This leads him to redefine the explicit terms where “dishonoring passions” must have very broad interpretations, where “error” is a mistake and never moral turpitude, and where “indecent” is merely not making a good appearance.

Wold and Hays have made a formidable rebuttal of Boswell’s thesis. Wold shows that the use of *the Greek word physin* in Rom 11:1-14 and 1 Cor 11:4 cannot be imported into Romans 1. The contexts are totally different. Furthermore, *para physin* occurred commonly in Hellenistic Jewish usage to speak of that which was against the divine design. Hays concludes that

though he offers no explicit reflection on the concept of ‘nature,’ it is clear that in this passage Paul identifies ‘nature’ with the created order. The understanding of ‘nature’ in this conventional language does not rest on empirical observation of what actually exists; instead, it appeals to an intuitive conception of what ought to be, of the world as designed by God. Those who indulge in sexual practices para physin are defying the creator and demonstrating their own alienation from him.

Although the main thrust of Romans 1 is the sin of Gentile infidelity, the discussion of homosexuality is not a mere illustration. Rather, it is a symptom of their problem, which is the sin of idolatry. One therefore cannot dismiss this reference to homosexuality as unimportant. Furthermore, the world of Paul knew nothing of classes of people distinguished as “inverts” and “perverts.” Paul is not singling out a particular class of pagans. Rather he is showing the consequences of idolatry upon their persons, even though all do not practice the same sin. Paul is showing that homosexuality is revolting because “it epitomizes in sexual terms the revolt against God. It is sinful because it violates the plan of God, present from creation, for the union of male and female in marriage.”

It is difficult to understand how one can read Romans 1 and not conclude that homosexual behavior is wrong and antithetical to the divine order. Paul, like Moses in Leviticus, clearly uses terms and

expressions which leave no doubt as to what he means. He states that God has given the Gentile world over “in the lusts of their hearts to impurity” (1:24). In this he identifies both lesbianism and the gay lifestyle. The list of expressions used for these vile affections clearly condemns homosexuality:

“dishonored among them” (1:24)

“degrading passions” (1:26)

“exchange the natural function” (1:26)

“unnatural” (1:26)

“burned in their desire” (1:27)

“indecent acts” (1:27)

“penalty of their error” (1:27)

“worthy of death” (1:32)

Perhaps what homosexual advocates do with Romans 1 is what Peter meant when he condemns those who take Paul’s letters and “distort, as they do also the rest of Scripture, to their own destruction” (2 Pet 3:16; cf. Rom 1:32).

1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10: Two other references in the NT make explicit condemnation of homosexuality: 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10. The pro-gay advocates main contention from these two texts lies with the interpretation of the word arsenokoitai, and with the accompanying terms malakoi in 1 Cor 6:9 and pornois in 1 Tim 1:10.

They argue that the term “homosexual” is a modern word coined by Karoly M. Beakert in 1869 for people erotically oriented toward the same sex. As an invention of the nineteenth century, it should not be read into arsenokoitai. The three other main arguments against the condemnation of homosexuals in these texts follow two lines of reasoning. One is that Paul is not condemning all homosexual activity but only that behavior which abuses the body, whether done by homosexuals or heterosexuals. However, that Paul is not speaking of excesses (for how can covetousness be done in moderation?) but of that which is in itself “unrighteous” is obvious.

The other line of reasoning falls in the interpretation of the term itself. Boswell asserts that it should mean “male prostitute,” whereas Scroggs argues for the interpretation “pederasty.” Boswell contends that arsenokoites is never used for homosexuality either before or after Paul. He also argues that arsen is used adjectivally, describing the person engaged in the sexual activity. Hence, a male prostitute.

Scroggs’ reason for translating the word “pederasty” is its close association with malakos, which is an effeminate call boy, and thus the active partner is the arsenokoites. In this interpretation arsen is adverbial. Thus Paul is not against homosexuals but against the abuse of the younger partner. Hence neither text contains a modern-day application of Paul’s warning to homosexuality.

The views put forth that arsenokoites cannot refer to a homosexual fail both historically and linguistically. 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. The reading of the LXX (*Greek Old Testament*) shows the use of arsen and koitai in the prohibitions of Leviticus 18. 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 arsenokoitai, because it accurately reflects the Hebrew of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

Furthermore, Paul's use of pornos and malakos lends credence to the view that Paul had homosexuals in mind when he wrote arsenokoites. 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.

Genesis 19; 2 Peter 2:7; Jude 7: The last set of texts to examine involve the description of homosexual behavior in Genesis 19 with the commentaries given in 2 Pet 2:7 and Jude 7. The revisionist argues that the Sodomites were not punished for their homosexuality but for their inhospitality. The fivefold thesis of Boswell's argument is: (1) "know" in Genesis 19:5 cannot refer to homosexual relations; (2) the offering of Lot's daughter was a bribe with no sexual overtones; (3) the story of Judges 19:22-30 is also inhospitality; (4) the LXX uses an expression without carnal knowledge; and (5) the reference to Sodom in Ezek 16:48-49 does not list the sin of homosexuality. Each of these arguments has been adequately refuted by Wold in Out of Order. He rightly shows that "know" is used in Genesis 19:5 as sexual relations because in 19:8 the same word is used unquestionably for sexual relations. In addition, Ezek 16:50 refers to the abominations of Sodom, which in Ezek 16:27 and 16:58 are clearly sexual sins (cf. Lev 18:22; 20:13). Wold concludes that the LXX rendering of Gen 19:5 does include sexual intercourse.

The comments of 2 Peter 2:7 and Jude 7 refer back to the sin of homosexuality in Genesis 19. There is no doubt that Peter and Jude are referring to the sins much more grievous than pride and inhospitality.

The expression, "in the same way," points to the violation of the divine order by the angels in Jude 6, and so the men of Sodom trespassed their divine order. That sexual sin is at the root of Sodom's condemnation is proven by the expressions, "indulged in gross immoralities," "went after strange flesh," and "the sensual conduct of unprincipled men." Bauckham's conclusion that the Sodomites sin was their desire to have relations with the angels is reading into the text what the Sodomites never knew.

The sin of Sodom is everywhere described as impudent and shameless. According to Gen 13:13, the Sodomites "were wicked exceedingly and sinners before the Lord." In Gen 18:20, the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave." They were by no means "closet homosexuals" (cf. Isa 3:9). Jenkyn aptly writes,

The sin of these miscreants abhorred secrecy; they blushed not, though the sun was a blushing witness of their filthiness. They gloried in their shame because they had outsinned all shame. Their hands were the organs and their tongues the trumpets of wickedness. Would any but a company who had more of monsters than men in them, have made such a demand in the open streets, as is mentioned in Gen. xix. 5, "Bring them out to us, that we may know them"?

The Implications for the Church: Every debate on Christian ethics must end with the implications for the church. All truth must lead to moral action. This discussion on homosexuality has some very serious and challenging implications for the evangelical church which appears to be stalling in the mire of debate. These implications are four in number.

The church must condemn the sin of homosexuality. In an age of religious pluralism and philosophical tolerance, for the church to concede its duty to stand for truth is easy, but then it will be the proverbial trampled spring and polluted well, which symbolizes the righteous who give way before the wicked (cf. Prov 25:26). The church cannot behave as though it did not possess a blueprint for life, as though it too was subject to the changing winds and waves of ideas. The church has a sure word of truth which is not only able to save, but also able to equip for every facet of life (cf. 1 Tim 4:15-17; 2 Tim 3:16-17).

The church must take a stand on the divine order stated in the opening chapters of Genesis and affirmed throughout the rest of the Scriptures whenever the Holy Spirit endeavors to teach on marriage and family. The Lord Jesus Himself referred to the divine order when asked about the legality of divorce and the permanence of marriage: “Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh?’” (Matt 19:4-5). The Lord referred back to the divine order not only for its permanence, but also for its sexual nature: a man for a woman!

The Scriptures clearly condemn any violation of the divine order, whether through divorce (cf. Matt 19:6-9), through immoralities (cf. 1 Cor 6:16-20; 1 Thess 4:1-8; Heb 13:4), through violation of God’s ordained roles (cf. Eph 5:21-33), or through perversion of the sexual roles (cf. Rom 1:18-32; Lev 18:27; 20:13). “Have you not read” is not a mandate for the church to adjust its theology of sex and marriage to the opinion polls of the godless masses or the conflicting and prejudicial scientific conclusions of depraved minds.

Homosexuality is a perversion of the divine order. Period. There is no way biblically or naturally to arrive at a different conclusion. True, man is fallen. Man is depraved and beset with many infirmities, but “from the beginning it has not been this way” (Matt 19:8). It should be the creature’s goal to live life the way the Creator intended it.

Hence, to stand and condemn homosexuality in all its forms as a perversion of the divine order is not a symptom of homophobia, heartless prejudice, or narrowminded bigotry. It is to stand on the side of righteousness and truth and to obey the One who said, “You shall be holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). For the church, God is the only One to please.

The church must convert the homosexual. The church is not an agent of condemnation alone, but it is primarily an agent of change, for it is the vehicle by which God shares His love, mercy, and grace with a sinful world. This is the Great Commission. The church is to preach the gospel to the whole world, including the homosexual. That is what Paul purposed to do in the Book of Romans. He is commissioned to preach the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles because the gospel alone is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Rom 1:15-17).

Evangelism involves a number of steps. First, evangelism implies preaching repentance from sin, which includes an admission of guilt and the awareness of the need to be forgiven. To be saved, one needs to be in danger of perishing (John 3:16). To be found, one must be lost. That is the thrust of Paul’s polemic in Romans 1–3, that “every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God . . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:19, 23). That includes homosexuals.

In evangelizing homosexuals, the church must be careful to warn them, as any other sinners, of the danger they face if they do not repent of their rebellious lifestyle. The Scriptures are very unwavering in pronouncing that unconverted homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God (cf. 1

Cor 6:9-10; Rev 21:27; 22:15). **Although homosexuality is no worse than lying or other sins, it damns just as certainly. The church does the homosexual no favor when it condones his behavior based on some ingenious interpretation or on some sentimental relationship it has with him. Homosexuals do not deserve a weakened spirituality, much less a sentimental pity. They need raw honesty from the church about their doomed state unless they come to repentance and faith in Christ.**

Much rhetoric is wasted on the inverted nature of homosexuals and of their inability to change their lifestyle. The truth is that no sinner can change his or her life apart from the power of God displayed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are all “dead in our trespasses and sins and by nature children of wrath,” and the only solution is to be born again by faith in the provision made at the cross of Christ Jesus (Eph 2:1-6). The gospel alone has the power to transform lives, to transfer a sinner from the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ, and to empower people totally for a life no longer lived for the lust of the flesh but for the glory of God (cf. 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:24). Inability to change behavior is never a reason to condone such behavior. Inability simply humbles the sinner before God, declaring his or her absolute dependence upon God’s grace and power to convert (cf. Matt 22:29).

Such is Paul’s loving reminder to the Corinthians who were redeemed out of the vileness of Gentile unbelief when he states, “Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11). He does not say, “such are some of you,” but “such were some of you”! There is hope, mercy, grace, forgiveness, and a new life for homosexuals. But such is found only in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If homosexuals wish to be forgiven, they can be. If homosexuals wish to be changed, they can be. But they must come by way of the cross.

The church must see in its task of evangelizing the homosexual the importance of helping those who convert to become full and integral disciples of the Lord in the local church. Unfortunately some do make homosexuality an unpardonable sin, or at least a sin forgiven but not forgotten. The church must extend a compassionate hand to those who would be saved by the power of God, and disciple them into the fullness of their inheritance in Christ and in the fellowship of the saints. Conversion to Christ has many attractions which should not be withheld from converting homosexuals. The added scourge of AIDS demands from the church an extra portion of compassion, energy, and wisdom. After all, the church has always been and always will be the vanguard in dealing with humanity’s griefs and sorrows. We dare not do less.

The church must confront error. Although the church is God’s primary instrument in evangelism, it also serves as the salt of the earth, to preserve the truth of God and defend it against error (cf. Matt 5:13; 1 Tim 3:15). The Scriptures teach that error will come from within (cf. Matt 13:37-43; Acts 20:29-30). Some would perceive the church as some passive institution floating along the river of history, awaiting its apocalyptic end. Yet the Scriptures everywhere reveal a militant church, not in the sense of conquering human kingdoms, but of confronting error and destroying human speculations and philosophies (cf. 2 Cor 10:3-5; Col 2:8-10). Jude admonishes, “Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 3). According to Jude, false teachers will distort the truth to promote a licentious lifestyle (Jude 4). Deviant behavior is never far from deviant doctrine. Furthermore, God does not guarantee all will respond to His grace and repent. Many will reject the truth and proceed to further lawlessness, and on these believers should “have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh” (Jude 23). Peter likewise exhorts the church to be on guard so as not to be carried away by the error of unprincipled men and thus fall from its steadfastness (cf. 2 Pet 3:17).

The church does not become heretical by itself. It is deliberately led astray by the devil and his emissaries (cf. Gen 3:1; 2 Cor 11:13-14). Satan's agents dressed as angels of light (i.e., theology professors, pastors, the Metropolitan Community Church, etc.) harass the true character of God through deception (cf. 1 Cor 6:9), through distorting God's Word (cf. 2 Pet 3:16), through perverse and persuasive arguments (cf. Acts 20:30), and through a libertine and licentious lifestyle (cf. 2 Pet 2:2, 4; Jude 4, 8).

Thus, the church of the present is following in the steps of the apostolic church when it contends for truth by opposing those who would teach that homosexuality is a lifestyle fully acceptable to God. The church has always stood against every form of immorality and will continue to do so because it can do no other. It is the guardian and defender of truth. The coming out of homosexuality in America is but one facet of the sexual revolution of the 60s and 70s. Other immoralities are pounding at the church's door, such as pornography, pedophilia, cohabitation, abortion on demand, and rampant divorce (i.e., legalized adultery). Should the church give way before these because the populace approves them?

The church must cleanse itself. The interesting feature about Paul's teaching on homosexuality in 1 Cor 6:9 is that it is found in a section dealing with the Corinthian church's problem with immorality in its ranks, as well as the relationships Christians should have with the professing believer who is indulging in sins, and with pagan unbelievers. The church at Corinth is told to rid itself of fornicators within its ranks with the practice of church discipline or excommunication (cf. 1 Cor 5:1-8, 13). The church is under strict restrictions not to fellowship with professing believers whose lifestyles are anything but Christian (cf. 1 Cor 5:9-13).

The implications for the church are obvious. The solution to the problem of homosexuals in the church is not dialogue or toleration, but excommunication and separation. Granted, there is a need today to educate the rank and file of the evangelical church, but having done this, the church must insist on the biblical mandate of separation from professing Christians who endorse the homosexual lifestyle for themselves. This obviously precludes the inclusion of homosexual churches into denominations or ecumenical unions. The church's unwillingness to clean up its ranks will simply hasten its moral decline, for "a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough" (1 Cor 5:6).

Implied in this text is also the responsibility of the church not to abandon the homosexual community. The Christian needs to befriend and witness to the homosexual with such love, compassion, and wisdom that such will respond to the saving grace of God. Militant homosexuals should be handled with gentleness, praying that God may grant them forgiveness and deliverance from the snare of the devil (cf. 2 Tim 2:24-26).

Finally, the church must be careful not to adopt the customs of the world. What it tolerates today, its children will practice tomorrow. In an age of accommodation and compromise, when churches are more interested in numbers than genuine conversions, the church is in danger of ceasing to make holiness and truth the motivation for its existence. The words of the apostle Paul are a fitting conclusion to this debate on homosexuality:

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are children of light in the Lord; walk as children of light. . . . Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret (Eph 5:6, 8, 11-12).

It is important to also add at this point that the reason homosexuality is a sin is not primarily because of the physical damage that it can cause, but because God disapproves of it. Sin is not something that has a visible damaging factor to it. Sin is breaking of God's law and going against his word. Many homosexuals defend their behavior based on the fact that it is consensual, and they are not hurting anyone. Even if that was true, it wouldn't matter, because God has made it perfectly clear what he expects of us, and refusal to comply is sin.

Pastoral/Counselor's Approach

When attempting to counsel someone who struggles with the sin of homosexuality there are a few things to consider. **Firstly**, you cannot counsel a homosexual who does not want to be counseled. A person who embraces homosexuality as their identity is as unsaved and unregenerate as a rock. **They need the gospel.** Remember, the aim is not to "cure" their homosexuality. What will it help if a person stops engaging in homosexual behavior but does not know Christ, dies, and goes to hell? The goal is to have them submit to Christ. They need to recognize and bow to the Lordship of Jesus, and they will only do that if they understand and accept the gospel's message of life. A person who places their faith in Christ while struggling to conquer homosexual behavior is safe in the loving and compassionate arms of Christ. A person who completely stops all behavior and desire for homosexuality but is outside of Christ has the disdain and wrath of God upon himself. The problem is not *homosexuality*, the problem is sinful rebellion against God.

The GOSPEL: The gospel is not the first step in the Christian journey, the gospel is the whole Christian journey. Christians can never outgrow the gospel and anyone who thinks of the gospel as elementary proves that they do not know and comprehend the gospel. The gospel is for both the unsaved and the saved.

When Paul writes his letter to the Romans, he confirms his confidence of their salvation in Romans 1:7, "To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints...". Paul recognizes that he is writing to Christians. Yet in Romans 1:15 he writes, "So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome." Paul understood that the gospel is meant for the Christian as well as the pagan. He desired to strengthen and encourage the Roman Christians by preaching the gospel to them. This is our mandate. Jesus commands us to take the gospel to the whole world and instruct them with it (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8). **So, what is the gospel?**

The gospel is the message of the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and future return of Jesus Christ.

The Life of Jesus: Jesus, the Son of God, and God Himself traveled an infinite distance from heaven to earth to take on humanity unto himself. He was born of the virgin Mary, being conceived by the Holy Spirit so as to not be a descendent of Adam and inherit his original sin. Jesus had to live a perfect sinless life and actively obey the law of God with his conduct, his thoughts, and his heart. We call this **the active obedience of Christ**. His life of active obedience achieved for us the righteousness that God requires of us and which we could never achieve (1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 5:12-19; Phil 3:9). It is important to note that even while Jesus was alive, He passively obeyed God as well.

The Death of Jesus: Jesus had to achieve the righteousness of obedience to God on our behalf, but even if He gave us his perfect righteousness, we would still have sin that the holy God had to punish us for. Because of the eternal wrath of God upon us that we have collected for ourselves by living lives of rebellion towards God, Jesus had to die in our place. He had no sin of his own to be punished

for, so He was the only one available to take the punishment for our sins unto himself. His suffering and death we can call **the passive obedience of Christ**. In his suffering and death, He absorbed an infinite amount of eternities of hell on behalf of everyone who would ever place their faith and trust in Him. Jesus lived in our place before God, and He died in our place before God (2 Cor 5:19; 2 Cor 5:21). It is important to note that Jesus also willingly and actively gave himself up as a sacrifice, so even his suffering and death on the cross was part of His Active obedience.

The Resurrection of Jesus: After Jesus died and was buried, He arose from the dead three days later. His resurrection accomplishes a few things. **Firstly**, it shows that God the Father has accepted His sacrifice on our behalf. God is completely satisfied with everyone who places their faith and trust in Jesus. He adopts them as His children and delights in them in the same way that He delights in Christ (Ephesians 1; 1 Cor 15). Jesus' resurrection also gives us confidence that God will raise us up from the dead (Rom 8:11; Col 1:15-20).

The Ascension of Jesus: Jesus' ascension is left out by many when they preach the gospel. Please note, that without the ascension, the gospel presentation is not complete. Jesus had to ascend to heaven in order to intercede for us with the Father. It is encouraging to know that a church is praying for you, now just think about the reality that Jesus, the Son of God is praying for you? He is our High Priest. He is in heaven reigning the nations and building His church. He is at this moment in the very throne room of God guiding history and accomplishing His will through His saints (Rom 8:34; Heb 4:14-16)

The Future return of Jesus: Jesus will one day come back. He will establish his dominion and every person will submit to His rule. This is the hope that we have. If we die before He comes we will be with Him in paradise and then join Him when He establishes the new heavens and the new earth, or we will meet Him when He comes back to His church. Jesus is the future, He is our future, and right now He is our life (Acts 1:11; Titus 2:11-15; Rev 19-22)

As Biblical Counselors, we must have a firm grip on the gospel and a clear understanding of it. We must be able to clearly and comprehensively share it and we must fully and completely trust it because **it is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe** (Rom 1:16-17). So as Biblical Counselors, our primary focus is sharing the gospel and helping any sinner, including those who struggle with homosexuality to apply the gospel in their lives.

The gospel calls sinners and saints to turn away from themselves and turn away from their sins and turn to Christ.

Ellen Mary Dykas writes:

"I just don't understand why God won't allow me to have the two things I desire most: to serve Him and to be in a romantic relationship." The college student's pained, confused question gave me pause as I grappled with how to respond. Though attending a conservative Christian university, romance, for this young woman, could only be found in the arms of another woman.

How would you have answered her sincere question that arose from her heartache within? I don't remember what I said, but years later, I discovered that she had embraced a gay identity. Her faith had faded into the gray background of her life while she fully engaged in what felt like vivid-color freedom, following her desires to her "true" self.

Sexual Attractions and Following Jesus: No Private Real Estate

Recently, I have had many conversations about a freeing, gracious aspect of the gospel that isn't popular these days: the lordship of Christ! Jesus explained that life in Him means death to self in

exchange for a glorious, new life lived under His loving care and ownership. Luke 9:23-24 says, “If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.”

To be sure, Christianity isn’t only about denying ourselves. However, what my young friend didn’t want to face is that life in Christ requires humbly surrendering to God as Lord, Creator, and Savior over all areas of our lives. There is no part of our beings on which we can plant a flag that says “Mine!” including our relational desires and sexuality. There is no private real estate for followers of Jesus.

Christians are caving to the worldly pressure to latch onto a false gospel of self-fulfillment, which includes the destructive heresy that sexual and romantic desires do not need the radical redemption of Christ. This is seductive and enticing because it promotes the idea that I can take up my cross and follow Jesus, deny myself here and there, but not in my sexuality and identity; I can love and follow Him on my own terms, having whatever kinds of sexual relationships I desire. However, the loving lordship of Jesus confronts us to die daily to self and also comforts us in the pain of daily surrender.

Jesus’ Holy Lordship Confronts Lovingly

There is no private real estate for the child of God. Being born again means being born into His family, given citizenship into His kingdom and its accompanying commandments, and being bound to a holy, heavenly Bridegroom through an eternal marriage union. In every aspect of belonging to God, devotion is meant to be complete and all-encompassing. The world, our sin nature, and the kingdom of darkness attack any full-orbed devotion with daily onslaughts that are sometimes frontal attacks and sometimes more subtle.

Paul’s awareness of false teachers compelled him to plead with believers, “For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:2-3). The movement among some Christians to affirm LGBTQ+ identities and sex outside of God’s design is, in part, fueled by the idea that Christ’s lordship does not need to change our sexual and romantic desires. He may be holy, but my sexuality doesn’t need His sanctification because it’s mine, and it’s fine just the way it is.

Christ, our Lord, never backs off from confronting the mindset of private real estate that is natural to all of us—but He is also loving! He doesn’t shame or manipulate us into surrender and trust; He invites, compels, and compassionately calls us first to a relationship with Himself and then moves on to transforming our desires. Christ, our incarnate Savior, faithfully changes our priorities, beliefs, and desires while also growing our heart’s willingness to obey Him in all things. Jesus claims lordship over our sexual desires and attractions (or lack thereof) and invites us toward Himself with compassion and compelling love, enabling us to surrender to Him. Romans 12:1-2 offers us the same challenge and encouragement.

Jesus’ Holy Lordship Comforts Personally

The comfort and companionship of Jesus seemed far away and detached from the street-level longings of my young college friend. She wanted to be with a real, live person. Like many Christians, she struggled to reconcile a holy Lord who could tell her what to do and not do with the real, unmet desires for the comfort for which she longed.

Christ’s comfort permeates our hearts when we rest in His care and take on the yoke of obedience, faith, and surrender. His yoke can’t be embraced, nor His comfort received unless we are willing to turn from running our lives as private real estate owners. We aren’t created to own ourselves and

bear the burden of creating a life built independently of God, brick by brick, with our plans, desires, and dreams. That kind of "building"—whether relationships, identity, sexual orientation, or attractions—is built on sand; it will eventually come crashing down to reveal the fractured foundation of selfishness and independence. But Jesus offers us a different way!

Jesus is holy and demands our full allegiance while graciously giving us His complete protection and provision. No matter what form of suffering, temptation, or failure we have personally experienced, we increasingly experience life rightly ordered when we surrender our desires to Him—even desires concerning sexuality and relationships: "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23).

Questions for a counselor to ask those who battle with sinful sexual attractions:

1. Have you planted a "Mine!" sign over your sexuality and desires, leading you to pursue sinful relationships? How can Jesus' holy, abundantly loving lordship help you take steps of obedience?
2. You may not be tempted toward unholy, same-sex relationships, but you most likely have planted "Mine!" flags in some areas of your life, effectively rejecting Christ as Lord. Pray about this, asking God to reveal where this is true and talk about it with a trustworthy friend.

As Counselors we must encourage churches, Christians, and family members of those who struggle with homosexuality to **always act and think in a loving way**. If a person comes to you seeking counsel on how to deal with their sexual inclinations it means that they are battling with their conscience, it means that either they know that God disapproves of their sexual desires outside the scope of His created order, or they know that it is unnatural in the realm of everything normal and good. The counselor must exude love! We must do our best to show the compassion, kindness and love that Christ had for sinners and for us towards them.

Communicating the Gospel to Homosexuals in Counseling

1. Your attitude toward the homosexual (1 Cor 6:9-11)

- The homosexual is created in the image of God just like you.
- The homosexual is a sinner just like you
- The homosexual needs hope just like you
- The homosexual needs the life-transforming power of God's Spirit just like you.

2. Your counsel in the Gospel plea (Col 4:6)

- Help them confess that it is not just their behavior but their natural condition that is in a state of sin.
- Help them to repentant, which involves a change of mind so complete that there is life change.
- Help them to see that they must do a total transfer of trust from themselves to Jesus Christ as the Savior who died for all their sins, not just homosexuality (Rom 5:8).
- Help them acknowledge that it is by the sovereign grace of God that they are saved, not because they intended to make changes in their life (Eph 2:8-9)

3. Your counsel in the sanctification process

- The salvation of a homosexual brings the change of heart while sanctification changes the lifestyle.

- The homosexual must be counseled for total-life restructuring.
- The person with homosexual habituations should be counseled to systematically put aside the old ways of life and adopt new ways that are fashioned after Jesus Christ. Addressing the inner and outer man.
- The person with homosexual habituations needs to be taught the fruits appropriate to repentance which include:
 - Total forsaking of homosexual acts and companions
 - Radical changes in scheduling
 - Radical changes in all of life’s thoughts and acts
 - Teach them that it is sufficient to be content as faithful and obedient servants to Christ.
 - Establish them in the authority of Scripture.
 - Help them to understand that growing in holiness means more than just *not being homosexual*. They are to pursue holiness in every area of their lives. **It is crucial that the counselor emphasizes the grace of God. Even if the homosexual falls back into homosexual behavior, there is still grace for him or her. It is God’s grace that will give them the strength and courage to overcome their sins.**

INVENTORY OF FOUR CATEGORIES OF SIN

(Adapted from Henry Brandt)

Help them to evaluate their heart and their behavior (Ps 139:23-24; Matt 7:1-5). Ask God to help them to identify what in their life is offensive to Him. Help them focus on the current sins and struggles, and then mark all the sins they struggle with. Then pick the five sins that they struggle with the most and then rate each of them using 10 for high and 0 for low:

1. Sins of the heart (mind, will, soul)	Unforgiveness Evil thoughts Covetousness Greed Lust Arrogance Senselessness Spitefulness Pleasure Control	Pride Haughtiness Ingratitude Selfish ambition Deceitfulness Heartlessness Faithlessness Fear of man/pleasing people Comfort Idols
2. Sinful Emotions	Outbursts of anger Unloving attitude Jealousy Malice Rage Fear Anger	Hatred Rebelliousness Bitterness Envy Bad temper Discontentment
3. Sins of the tongue	Gossiping Slandering Disputing Backbiting Quarreling Blaspheming Course joking	Silly talk Bear false witness Lying Complaining Yelling Contentiousness Boasting
4. Sins of behavior	Lack of self-control Lack of love Slothfulness Insolence Stealing	Fornication Adultery Effeminate Drunkenness Ruthlessness

	Disobedience to parents Brawling Favoritism Gluttony Factiousness Swindlers	Revelry Brutality Violence Murder Witchcraft/Sorcery Homosexuality
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Taken from the following passages in the Bible: Exodus 20:1-17; Proverbs 6:6, 16-19; Mark 7:21-23; Rom 1:28-31; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Eph 4:25-31; 5:3-5; Gal 5:19-21, 26; 2 Tim 3:1-5; 1 Cor 13.

They need to see that the struggle they have in life is not a homosexual struggle, but primarily a sin struggle. They are not by nature homosexuals, they are by nature sinners, like the rest of us. Help them to identify entangling sins and help them to put off those sins and put on righteousness.

Below is a document that can help you as a counselor work through the process of counseling a homosexual or any other person for that matter (the image can be copied and pasted from the digital version of this booklet):

EIGHT I's EVALUATION FORM

Evaluation For _____

Eight I's

Date _____

Evaluation by _____

INVOLVEMENT Establishing a change, facilitating relationship	L O V E	
INSPIRATION Inspiring, motivating, influencing a sustained feeling of hope		
INVENTORY Securing enough right kinds of information to understand sins and problems	K N O W	
INTERPRETATION Analyzing/organizing information to biblically identify nature & cause of sins and problems/ explain them to counselee		
INSTRUCTION Giving accurate appropriate biblical instruction on how to solve problems	S P E A K	
INDUCEMENT Motivating, inducing, persuading Counselee to repent of sinful attitudes, words, actions & make decisive commitments to obey the Lord/follow biblical directives		
IMPLEMENTATION Helping Counselee plan how to make biblical directives a reality in daily life & practice biblical directives until new patterns become reality in life	D O	
INTEGRATION Coaching/mentoring Counselee until necessary changes are integrated into life & counselee is really integrated into life of the church		

After identifying key sins within the life of the counselee, help them to be able to put off sin, be renewed and put on righteousness.

Put Off... Put On				
"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." Ephesians 4:22				
"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Romans 13:14				
	"Put Off"	Scriptural Insight		"Put On"
1.	Adultery	Mat 5:27,28	Pro 5:14-19	Marital fidelity

2.	Alcoholism	Pro 20:1	Pro 23:30	Abstinence
3.	Anger	Pro 29:22	Gal 5:22,23	Self-control
4.	Bitterness	Hbr 12:15	Eph 4:32	Tenderhearted and forgiving
5.	Boasting (Conceit)	1Cr 4:7	Phl 2:3	Esteeming others
6.	Bodily harm	1Cr 3:16,17	1Cr 6:19,20	Glorify God in body
7.	Burying talents	Luk 12:48	1Cr 4:2	Developing abilities
8.	Cheating	2Cr 4:2	2Cr 8:21	Honesty
9.	Complacency	Rev 3:15	Rev 3:19	Zeal
10.	Covetousness	Luk 12:15	Hbr 13:5	Contentment
11.	Critical spirit	Gal 5:15	Col 3:12	Kindness
12.	Discontent	Hbr 13:5	1Ti 6:8	Contentment
13.	Disobedience	1Sa 12:15	Deu 11:27	Obedience
14.	Disrespect for authority	Act 23:5	Hbr 13:17	Honor authority
15.	Easily irritated	1Cr 13:5	Pro 19:11	Not easily provoked
16.	Evil speaking	Jam 4:11	Pro 15:30	Good report
17.	Evil thoughts	Mat 5:19,20	Phl 4:8	Pure thoughts
18.	Fleshly music	Eph 4:29,30	Eph 5:19	Edifying music
19.	Flirtation	Pro 7:21	1Pe 3:4	Gentle, quiet spirit
20.	Following the crowd	Pro 1:10	Pro 3:7	God-fearing
21.	Fornication	1Cr 6:18	1Th 4:3	Abstinence
22.	Gambling	Pro 28:20,22	Luk 16:11	Good stewardship
23.	Gluttony	Pro 23:21	1Cr 9:27	Discipline
24.	Gossip	1Ti 5:13	Eph 4:29	Edifying speech
25.	Hatred	Mat 5:21,22	1Cr 13:3	Love
26.	Homosexuality	Lev 18:22	1Th 4:4,5	Moral purity
27.	Hypocrisy	Job 8:13	1Th 2:3	Sincerity
28.	Idle words	Mat 12:36	Pro 21:23	Bridle tongue
29.	Idolatry	Deu 11:16	Col 1:18	Worship God only
30.	Immodest dress	Pro 7:10	1Ti 2:9	Modesty
31.	Impatience	Jam 1:2-4	Hbr 10:36	Patience
32.	Incest	Lev 18:6	1Cr 7:2,5	Moral purity
33.	Inhospitable	1Pe 4:9	Rom 12:13	Hospitable
34.	Irresponsibility (Family/Work)	Luk 16:12	Luk 16:10	Responsibility
35.	Irreverence in church	Ecc 5:1	Psa 89:7	Reverence
36.	Irritation of others	Gal 5:26	Phl 2:3,4	Preferring in love
37.	Jealousy	Gal 5:26	1Cr 13:4	Trust
38.	Judging	Mat 7:1,2	Jhn 8:9; Jhn 15:22	Let God search my heart
39.	Lack of love	1Jo 4:7,8,20	Jhn 15:12	Love
40.	Lack of moderation	Pro 11:1	1Cr 9:25	Temperance
41.	Lack of rejoicing always	Phl 4:4	1Th 5:18	Rejoice
42.	Laziness	Pro 20:4	Pro 6:6-11	Diligence
43.	Left first love	Rev 2:4	Rev 2:5	Fervent devotion
44.	Losing temper	Pro 25:28	Pro 16:32	Self-control
45.	Love of money/Greed	1Ti 6:9,10	Mat 6:33	Love God
46.	Lust	1Pe 2:11	Tts 2:12	Pure desires
47.	Lying	Eph 4:25	Zec 8:16	Speak truth
48.	Moral impurity	1Th 4:7	1Th 4:4	Moral purity
49.	Murder	Exd 20:13	Rom 13:10	Love
50.	Murmuring/ Complaining	Phl 2:14	Hbr 13:15	Praise
51.	Neglect of Bible study	2Ti 3:14-17	Psa 1:2	Bible study/Meditation
52.	No burden for the lost	Mat 9:36-38	Act 1:8	Compassion/Witnessing
53.	Pornography	Psa 101:3	Phl 4:8	Pure thoughts
54.	Prayerlessness	Luk 18:1	Mat 26:41	Praying
55.	Preferential treatment	Jam 2:1-9	Luk 6:31	Love neighbor as self
56.	Presumption on the future	Pro 27:1	Jam 4:14-16	Trust God's will

57.	Pride	Pro 16:5	Jam 4:6	Humility
58.	Procrastination	Pro 10:5	Pro 27:1	Diligence
59.	Profanity	Pro 4:24	Pro 15:4	Pure speech
60.	Rebellion	1Sa 15:23	Hbr 13:17	Submission
61.	Retaliation (Getting even)	Pro 24:29	Rom 12:19,20	Return good for evil
62.	Selfishness	Phl 2:21	Jhn 12:24	Self denial
63.	Slothfulness (Not doing best)	Pro 18:9	Col 3:23	Wholeheartedness
64.	Stealing	Pro 29:24	Eph 4:28	Working/Giving
65.	Stinginess	1Jo 3:17	Pro 11:24,25	Generosity
66.	Strife/Contention	Pro 13:10	Jam 3:17	Peace
67.	Stubbornness	1Sa 15:23	Rom 6:13	Brokenness
68.	Temporal values	Mat 6:19-21	2Cr 4:18	Eternal value
69.	Unbelief	Hbr 3:12	Hbr 11:1,6	Faith
70.	Unfaithfulness	Pro 25:19	Luk 16:10-12	Faithfulness
71.	Unforgiving Sprit	Mar 11:26	Col 3:13	Forgiving spirit
72.	Ungratefulness	Rom 1:21	Eph 5:20	Gratefulness
73.	Witchcraft/ Astrology/ Horoscopes	Deu 18:10,11	Deu 6:5	Worship of God
74.	Worldly entertainment	Pro 21:17	Gal 5:16	Spiritual pursuits
75.	Worry/Fear	Mat 6:25-32	1Pe 5:7	Trust
76.	Wrath	Jam 1:19,20	Pro 15:1	Soft answer
77.	Wrong friends	Psa 1:1	Pro 13:20	Godly friends
78.	Wrong motives	1Sa 16:7	1Cr 10:31	Spiritual motives
"But there is forgiveness with Thee..." Psalm 130:4				

Help them think rightly about the counseling process - It's all about Worship

We were made to be worshipers of the true and living God.

We were created as image-bearers. This means to be godly just like God and in this way God gets glory. We know that Jesus didn't just come to get us to Heaven. Jesus came to restore the very image that was damaged by the Fall and to make us like Christ. He came to restore the image in man. This is not just for you; this is for God's sake. Growing in godliness is not just something that Christians ought to do, but it is reflecting the glory of God. He is the Creator (Ps 24), so He can do to and with us whatever He wants.

Romans 11:36 (cf. also I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16)

Help the counselee recognize that they are designed to live for him, and through him and for him. How do you find time for a hobby? There is a difference between a hobby you live for or you have time for. If you have a hobby which you do for the glory of God, then you find true enjoyment in the hobbies you do. Any other stuff like family, money, sports, job, food, friendships are from God and for God and through God. So God will remove some stuff in our lives to show us how much it has become an idol for us. – Andrew Isiaho

Homosexuality to most are their idol. They live by, decide by it and identify by it.

Andy Farmer writes:

I find myself increasingly in conversations about sexuality and gender. These can be some of the most heartbreaking counseling experiences I know. In my particular role as a pastor, I'm usually dealing with parents, siblings, or friends of someone who is going through some kind of change in

gender/sexual orientation. Often, the person they're concerned about has been raised in the church or had at one time made a profession of faith. In some cases, it has been an adult, perhaps a marriage partner, who, after years of living in traditional gender and sexuality, suddenly announces the change, throwing years of family stability into chaos in the process. But more and more, it is late adolescents or college-aged people through whom this difficult trial comes.

The initial experience of hearing this kind of news tends to bring shock, anger, and disbelief, often resulting in emotional clashes and hurtful words coming from both directions. Once arguing is exhausted, other deeper pain begins to settle in the hearts of loved ones having to adjust—shame, fear, and regret, just to name a few shades of heartache. These can persist and lead to bitterness, judgment, and creeping unbelief that can begin to turn cold toward God and His Word.

I've seen up close how families and friends have walked through this minefield of temptations, and I've witnessed their courageous commitment to finding relational footing with a loved one who has seemingly rejected their most cherished values.

Leaning Across the Unbridgeable Gap

Even if you handle the initial response well, you will inevitably be faced with a question that seems to have no right answer: how do I love my transitioned loved one in a way that is meaningful to them but is consistent with what I believe? In a world where “binary” is considered an oppressive term, on this question, your transitioned family member will probably expect and even demand a binary response from you.

“Affirm (not just accept) me for who I am and what I do, and you love me. Anything less is rejection, if not outright hate.”

It may not be expressed in such stark terms (though often it is), but this is the choice family and friends will almost always confront. Frankly, I don't know a response that will bridge the divide at this point. Jesus-worshipping Christians know that love cannot mean abandoning the truth of the Bible, nor can it mean withholding love to take a biblical stand.

So, what can a loving Christian do? Maybe the best thing is what I call a posture of “relentless leaning.” One time in a class discussion, Ed Welch used the analogy of “leaning toward” someone difficult to love. Leaning toward something or someone requires us to place our feet and our balance on firm ground, and then from that place of balance, look for ways to connect across the divide. Someone who defines for you what it means to love them and then dismisses anything short of that as rejection will find it hard to acknowledge anything you do as love. Yet we dare not move away from the truth, and we must not lean away, expecting the other person to lean toward us. We accept that leaning toward a loved one across this gap will make us vulnerable to hurtful things, that we will be presumed upon and treated as part of the problem. It will seem thankless; it will likely leave scars. It will require us to press into God to deal with our broken-heartedness. As we engage our Savior, we accept that He is working in His time and in His way to close divides we don't even see. And we trust by faith that our leaning toward that wayward loved one aligns with His redemptive plans. That's a relentless lean. It isn't easy—but it is real love.

The Stabilizing Effect of Biblical Love

The ability to find balance for relentless leaning can be found in Paul's exposition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but

rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends (1 Cor. 13:4-8a).

This passage can provide profound stability for anyone seeking to have an enduring presence with a person whose love demands are beyond our ability to meet. Let's briefly apply it for consideration.

A relentless lean is patient and kind. It is willing to accept the pain of estrangement and even accusation, responding with words, actions, and a posture that seeks to be a blessing wherever possible.

A relentless lean pursues humility. It will not assume a position of self-righteous moral superiority that often plays out in envy, boasting, arrogance, and rudeness.

A relentless lean does not insist on its own way. It may have limits in what it can do in good conscience, but it will look to do all that can be done to move toward another person when opportunities present themselves.

A relentless lean is not irritable or resentful. Leaning people won't be baited into debates at the expense of personal conversation and won't be offended when the trending language of gender/sexual politics is used against them.

A relentless lean rejoices with the truth. It stands on biblical truth and will not compromise to be accepted. But it keeps in mind that the truth which brings life is broader than biblical teaching on gender, ethics, and morality. The biblical truth reveals the unfolding glory of humans created in the image of God, rescued and redeemed from fallenness in sin and given new life in Christ. It is gospel truth.

A relentless lean bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. In short, a relentless lean does not depend on what we can do but on what God is doing even when we can't see it. When a relentless lean is balanced by firm footing on the rock of Christ, we will be able to bear things we never thought we could endure, believe things that seem impossible, hope against all hopelessness, and endure with abiding peace in our souls.

A relentless lean never fails. It will not attempt to produce change in the life of a person who has rejected God's good design for sexuality and gender. But it will ensure over time that a person who has taken that course will always encounter the relentless love of Christ in the relentless love of people.

Question for Reflection to the counselor or the family or friends of the homosexual:

If you are facing the dilemma of loving someone who has announced or is transitioning in gender/sexuality, what does beginning a relentless lean look like for you?

Conclusion

Counseling those who struggle with homosexuality is the same as counseling someone who struggles with any other sin. They need the gospel, they need love, they need patience, and they need compassionate care, they need the church, and they need Jesus.

What sets counseling homosexuals apart from other cases is that they find their identity in their sexual orientation. There is an innumerable number of gay-apologists who defend homosexuality either by ignoring parts of the Bible or twisting sections of the Bible. The Bible counselor must be equipped and ready for those arguments. The Biblical counselor must firmly establish the Bible as the highest and sole source of authority and the homosexual needs to understand that their sin is

not their identity. **They are either in Adam or in Christ. There is more grace in God than there is the capacity for sin in us.**

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