

Q: Why are we focusing on homosexuality? Are Christians obsessed with that sin or treating it unfairly as opposed to other sins?

A: No other sin is being forced upon American culture like homosexuality.

Al Mohler urges, “We must not be silent where the Bible speaks... Love requires us to tell the truth.”¹

Avoid the false dichotomy of “If you don’t agree with the homosexual lifestyle then, therefore, you hate homosexuals.” You can still disagree with what someone does and still not hate them.

Driving Thought: The colder Christians grow the more sin grows.

1) Homosexuality: what does the Bible actually teach?

Q: What is biblical sexuality?

A: One man and one woman for life – Gen. 1:27, 2:24-25.

We must first understand the intent and purpose behind God’s creation of human sexuality before we can assess whether homosexuality is a sin or simply an alternative preference. Simply put, the biblical bounds of sexuality are one man and one woman within the bounds of marriage for life.

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

Gen. 2:24-25 *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.* ²⁵ *And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

C.S. Lewis writes, “And there must be something good first before it can be spoiled. We called sadism a sexual perversion; *but you must first have the idea of a normal sexuality before you can talk of its being perverted*; and you can see which is the perversion, because you can explain the perverted from the normal, and cannot explain the normal from the perverted.”²

John Piper, “By creating a person like Adam, yet very unlike Adam, God provided the possibility of a profound unity that otherwise would have been impossible. A different kind of unity is enjoyed by the joining of diverse counterparts than is enjoyed by joining two things just alike. When we all sing the same melody line, it is called unison, which means “one sound.” But when we unite diverse lines of soprano and alto and tenor and bass, we call it harmony; and everyone who has an ear to hear knows that something deeper in us is touched by great harmony than by mere unison. So God made a woman, and not another man. He created heterosexuality, not homosexuality.”³

Q: Is homosexuality a sin?

A. Temptation is not a sin; homosexual acts are sinful and heterosexual acts outside of marriage are also sinful. You cannot be a practicing homosexual and be saved...neither can you be a practicing adulterer, fornicator, child molester, murderer, thief, liar, blasphemer, idolater, swindler, covetous, BUT can you be a Christian with temptations to sin? Yes! You can be a Christian and be tempted to lie, steal, look at porn, commit adultery or fornication, be

wrathful in an ungodly way. – 1 Cor. 10:13; Gen. 19:1-13; Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9.

- 1 Cor. 6:11 *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*
Set free from what? = 1 Cor. 6:9-10 *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*
- Gen. 19:1-13 Sodom & Gomorrah
- Lev. 18:22 *“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.”*
- Lev. 20:13 *“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.”*
- Rom. 1:26-27 *“For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.”*
- 1 Cor. 6:9 *“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,”*

Objection: Jesus never spoke about homosexuality.

Response: Jesus spoke to Jews who believed the teaching of the Hebrew Bible on sexuality.

Q: Are Christians inconsistent in their interpretation of the Old Testament?

A: The NT reaffirms the OT sexual ethic (Matt. 5:27-30; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Acts 15). Tim Keller argues, “In short, ***the coming of Christ changed how we worship but not how we live.*** The moral law is an outline of God’s own character—his integrity, love, and faithfulness. And so all the Old Testament says about loving our neighbor, caring for the poor, generosity with our possessions, social relationships, and commitment to our family is still in force. The New Testament continues to forbid killing or committing adultery, and all the sex ethic of the Old Testament is re-stated throughout the New Testament (Matthew 5:27-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; 1 Timothy 1:8-11.) If the New Testament has reaffirmed a commandment, then it is still in force for us today. Further, the New Testament explains another change between the Testaments. Sins continue to be sins—but the penalties change. In the Old Testament things like adultery or incest were punishable with civil sanctions like execution. This is because at that time God’s people existed in the form of a nation-state and so all sins had civil penalties. But in the New Testament the people of God are an assembly of churches all over the world, living under many different governments. The church is not a civil government, and so sins are dealt with by

exhortation and, at worst, exclusion from membership. This is how a case of incest in the Corinthian church is dealt with by Paul (1 Corinthians 5:1 ff. and 2 Corinthians 2:7-11.) Why this change? Under Christ, the gospel is not confined to a single nation—it has been released to go into all cultures and peoples. Once you grant the main premise of the Bible—about the surpassing significance of Christ and his salvation—then all the various parts of the Bible make sense... *So where does this leave us? There are only two possibilities. If Christ is God, then this way of reading the Bible makes sense and is perfectly consistent with its premise. The other possibility is that you reject Christianity's basic thesis—you don't believe Jesus was the resurrected Son of God—and then the Bible is no sure guide for you about much of anything. But the one thing you can't really say in fairness is that Christians are being inconsistent with their beliefs to accept the moral statements in the Old Testament while not practicing other ones.*"⁴

Q: Are persons born as homosexuals?

A: Proclivity is not determinism.

"A person may be born with a greater susceptibility to homosexuality, just as some people are born with a tendency to violence and other sins. That does not excuse the person's choosing to sin by giving in to sinful desires. If a person is born with a greater susceptibility to anger/rage, does that make it right for him to give into those desires? Of course not! The same is true with homosexuality."⁵

The logic of determinism

A. No one can ever change

B. No one is responsible for his or her actions

Even if it is genetic, why would we trust our genetics given the fall and human frailty?

John Cloud, *Epigenetics, DNA: How You Can Change Your Genes, Destiny*. You are not your DNA⁶

*Barney's point about how your DNA can be altered depending upon your actions. Actions can cultivate a gene that has proclivity towards something. "The Epi Phenomenon/Epi Gene." They found that often the gene jumps several generations. The Epi Genome has to do with your lifestyle and the toxins you come into contact with can "turn on/turn off" certain genes that can actually carry to your progeny (it often jumps to 2 or 3 generations). Even if it is genetic, why would we trust our genetics given the corruption of the human heart, the fall, & human frailty?

William Lane Craig states, "The important thing is not how you *got* your orientation, but what you *do* with it."⁷ Paige Patterson writes, "Feelings are the worst guide to action. They should be indicators, not dictators."⁸ Robert A.J. Gagnon concurs, "The bottom line for biblical authors: it did not matter why people willingly engaged in same-sex intercourse, just as it was unnecessary to parse the motivation of those who participated willingly in incest, bestiality, adultery, fornication, or heterosexual prostitution."⁹

Fallacy: Happiness is found by pursuing one's desires 'natural' desires.

Truth: Death is found by pursuing one's natural, fallen, sinful desires by doing what 'feels good.' James 1:14-15 "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he

is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”

Proverbs 14:12 “*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*”

Rather, joy is found in putting one’s ‘natural desires’ to death and receiving the power of God via God’s grace through faith.

Q: Is homosexuality worse than other sins?

A: All sins are immoral. Yet certain sins are more destructive to the human person than other sins.

- Self-destruction: health risks¹⁰

Encouraging someone to pursue homosexuality carries the same health consequences as having someone straight-line heroin or other hard drugs in terms of the life expectancy.

- Self-destruction: psychological damage¹¹
- Self-destruction: past of sexual abuse
- Self-destruction: Absent and/or abusive father

B. Homosexuality is not the unpardonable sin.

C. The colder Christians grow the more sin grows; sin grows in society when Christians grow cold towards God and lost people – Matt. 24:12

D. Christians are the preservative in society – Matt. 5:13-16

E. The Great Commission applies to the LGBT community – Matt. 28:18-20

Logs in the eyes of American Christians:

1. Turning church into a country club where we value musical tradition and fancy dress rather than a focused determined to reach out to our community, no matter their ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.
2. Lashing out at a blind world stumbling in the darkness while minimalizing our sins and refusing to obey God even though we know better.
3. Arrogance, idolatry, & cowardice: being more concerned about what people think of us than where they will spend eternity.

¹ R. Albert Mohler, “My Take: The Bible condemns a lot, but here’s why we focus on homosexuality,” *CNN*, May 21, 2012.

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- ² C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 44.
- ³ John Piper, *Desiring God* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003), 211.
- ⁴ Tim Keller, *Old Testament Law and the Charge of Inconsistency*, June 2012.
http://redeemer.com/news_and_events/newsletter/?aid=363
- ⁵ <http://www.gotquestions.org/homosexuality-Bible.html>
- ⁶ John Cloud, “Epigenetics, DNA: How You Can Change Your Genes, Destiny,”
<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1952313,00.html> January 06, 2010.
- ⁷ <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/a-christian-perspective-on-homosexuality>
- ⁸ Paige Patterson, Tweet 09.07.12.
- ⁹ Robert A.J. Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 110.
- ¹⁰ <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/homosexuality/ho0075.html#17>
- ¹¹ <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/can-a-christian-be-homosexual>