

say, the complicated issue of government legislation and same-sex marriage is beyond the scope of this message. But feel free to text or email Wayne if you have questions about that issue.

²Some pro-gay advocates would say that the story about Lot & Sodom & Gomorrah, as well as Judges 19 were not about homosexuality, but rather about the inhospitality towards strangers. They would also interpret David's close friendship with Jonathan as an indication that David had a homosexual relationship with Jonathan. In both of these cases, most Biblical scholars would say that this is reading into the text more than what the text seems to be stating.

³Some pro-gay advocates would object, saying that if we accept these verses as applicable for today, should we then put all gay people to death? They would argue, "Doesn't this show that these verses no longer apply to us?" In Leviticus, God does say to put them to death, but it is because at the time Israel was a theocracy. We are no longer living in a theocracy. This may affect the penalty of this behavior, but it does not affect the morality. Similarly, during that time, God also commanded that any Israelite who worshipped a foreign god should also be put to death. But in the New Testament, Israel was no longer a theocracy. So in the New Testament, Jesus did not advocate the death penalty for the worship of foreign gods. However, that does not mean Jesus accepted the worship of foreign gods as an acceptable moral behavior. On the contrary, Jesus spoke out against it. All to say, one cannot say that just because these verses prescribe the death penalty, that we can ignore the moral commands against homosexuality in these verses as if they no longer have any relevance to our lives.

⁴It is interesting to note that Deuteronomy 23:17-18 specifically addresses male and female prostitution. Thus, these verses in Leviticus probably refer to general homosexuality, not just homosexual prostitution.

⁵If you look at the NIV footnote, it says this: "1 Corinthians 6:9 The words *men who have sex with men* translate two Greek words that refer to the passive and active participants in homosexual acts." Those who deny that the Bible speaks against homosexuality say that these verses are too vague to be used against homosexuality. The NIV includes this footnote to help us understand the meaning of the text. The first Greek word is "malakos" which is actually an adjective that can mean "weak" or "soft." In the ancient world, the word was often used negatively to denote men who others considered "effeminate." So this is probably a reference to the more passive male in same-sex relationships and to adolescent boys who sold themselves for sex with older men. The second word is used in this verse is "arsenokoitai." It is difficult to translate mainly because it is the first appearance in preserved literature and it is seldom used in later literature. It is a word compound made of two words: "male" and "intercourse." The latter word is a crude word for intercourse, so not surprisingly, subsequent authors seemed to be reluctant to use this term. So this word probably refers to the one who takes the active genital role in male-to-male intercourse. So the two words put together most likely are referring to the passive and active participants in homosexual acts. However, it would be a weak argument to say that these words only refer to male prostitution and/or only to adult/child homosexual behavior and not to homosexuality in general.

⁶The word translated as "those practicing homosexuality" is the same word as the 2nd word in 1 Corinthians 6:9

⁷I should mention that not all Christians would agree with this. For example, I might be mistaken, but I think Leanne Payne would have said that homosexuality is a neurosis that God wants to heal in all people in this life. But then again, there are also Christians who believe that God promises to heal all medical diseases in this lifetime. Most evangelical scholars would say that is not true.

What's the big deal about homosexuality

Tough Questions (part 4)

May 19, 2019

What is truth?

☞ **Traditional View:** _____ truth

☞ **Post-modern View:** _____ truth

☞ **Jesus' View:** _____ Truth (and Grace)

Approaching homosexuality with truth

☞ **An important distinction:**

- homosexuality as an inclination (homosexual attractions)
- homosexuality as same-sex activity (actual sexual acts, not just attraction)
- homosexuality as a lifestyle
- homosexuality as same-sex marriage¹
(In this section in which we will be looking at Scripture, we will be referring only to the latter three)

☞ **What Scripture says about homosexuality**

- **Old Testament**²

Genesis 2:24

Leviticus 18:22

Leviticus 20:13^{3,4}

▪ New Testament

Romans 1:26-27

1 Corinthians 6:9-11⁵

1 Timothy 1:9-11⁶

Recommended reading for further study:

Same-Sex Marriage by Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet

Welcoming but not Affirming by Stanley Grenz. (The chapter on “The Bible and Homosexuality: The Exegetical Debate” is very good.)

Approaching homosexuality with grace

☞ Remember that we are all _____ saved by grace

☞ Be careful to _____ between homosexuality as an inclination, as an action, as a lifestyle, and as same-sex marriage

▪ Dealing with the questions: a) Is it a sin to be gay?

▪ b) Can a person be gay and still be a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ?

☞ Be careful not to be too _____ about homosexuality

▪ Don't communicate that homosexuality is a simple _____

▪ Don't communicate that if a person becomes a devoted follower of Christ, Jesus _____ to eventually transform them into a heterosexual

Remember, Jesus promised to forgive us & to give us victory over sin. He didn't promise to make everyone heterosexual.⁷

☞ Be intentional to _____ someone who is gay & love him/her into the Kingdom. By so doing, you will also help to change the reputation of the church!

Conclusion

We must love those in the LGBT community with truth and grace

¹Even if we conclude that God would say that homosexuality is morally wrong, that does not address the complicated issue of homosexuality and government legislation (note: Christians believe that premarital sex is morally wrong, but that does not automatically mean that we should be in favor of government legislation banning pre-marital sex). All to