

# Truth and Homosexuality

by  
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*(Author Note: In 1997, my wife moved her membership from one church to another. Someone from the latter suggested that I might like one particular Sunday School class that was being taught by a lawyer. Even though I was a skeptic, I sometimes enjoyed attending classes. So, I went a few times. On August 24, 1997, the teacher started the class by implying that homosexuals were possessed by demons. The more I sat there the more my inner tell-them-what-you-think mentality took over. Soon I was refuting what the teacher was saying. I did not know what to expect in the way of rebuttal from the class. Fortunately, the conversation was very cordial. One lady even commended my courage in speaking out. On the following Saturday the teacher took me to lunch to discuss further my beliefs. Ultimately, he said that I was welcome to come to class whenever I wanted, but I would not be allowed to speak. I told him that was perfectly fine since it was his class and he got to set the ground rules. However, to better clarify my thoughts, I decided to write out in more detail the conclusions I had reached concerning homosexuality. I intended to give a copy to everyone in class, but at the suggestions of a couple of people I let read this first, I decided against it. So, I now present it here on the Web for your consideration.)*

## **Introduction**

I am writing this as a follow-up to the discussion we had about homosexuality in our Sunday School class on August 24, 1997. Since it is difficult to fully express a viewpoint during the limited time of a class, I decided to write this essay to further explain my position. But before I do, let me commend you all on how graciously you listened to my “radical” position. Several commented that they were glad I was in class, commended my courage, and asked me to return to future classes. This is the true stuff of a civil society—people disagreeing, yet conversing in a calm and loving way. I wish everyone could discuss issues in such a way.

Before I discuss why I believe it is wrong to morally censure homosexuality, I must first start with something more basic, divining truth. Since this is a complex topic, I cannot cover all the details in this short essay. If anyone would like to discuss it further, I would be delighted to do so.

## **God’s Greatest Gift**

If I were to ask you what God’s greatest gift to man is, what would you answer? Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, something else? Let me suggest that God’s greatest gift to man is *reason*. Think about it. If man did not have the ability to reason, he would be like an animal. In fact, reason is the characteristic that separates mankind from the animals. Without it, man would not be able to read, learn, or communicate. There would be no way of even learning the Bible and

having the option of accepting its message.

I am sure most of you either know or have seen people with a severe mental illness. These people are dependent on others for their very survival. They cannot learn how to feed themselves let alone understand the concepts of right and wrong. It saddened us to see people in this state, but this is what all of us would be like should our ability to reason suddenly disappear.

Thankfully, God has granted most people the gift of reason. It is our tool of survival. This is why we place such high emphasis on our children's education. Although a child is born with a seed of reason and could probably learn to use it to a limited degree without assistance, the ability to reason at a higher level requires teaching and nurturing. Once this ability takes root in a child, he possesses an irreplaceable tool. The world is then open to him. He can observe it, learn about it, and manipulate it. Isn't it wonderful to see that gleam of excitement in a child's eyes when something clicks and a new insight becomes his possession? The tool of reason must not be squandered. In fact, if there is any such thing as *the* greatest sin against God, I believe it is the shunning of this greatest gift.

If we discard reason, we are apt to be blown about by every wind of doctrine because the tool which God has given us to discern the truth or falsity of a claim is not being used. If you have no basis for accepting or rejecting a claim, then any claim is as equally valid as another.

So what is reason? It is the ability to take facts about our surroundings and draw proper conclusions from them. The process of drawing proper conclusions is called logic, or non-contradictory identification. All of us are familiar with this process. It is used all the time in courtrooms to either prove a person guilty or not guilty. None of us want to be judged on the basis of faith or a gut feeling. We want to be judged based on reasoned conclusions from the facts.

Is proper reasoning infallible? Yes. Is man's ability to reason infallible? Absolutely not. That is why discourse is so vital. In many cases, a single person cannot know all the facts relevant to an issue. Sometimes people use invalid logic. Other times people have an agenda other than truth and thus misrepresent the facts. By bringing an issue to the table and discussing it honestly, a proper consensus based on reason can often be built.

The process of reason must be applied continually for real learning to take place. This is especially true when another person tells us something. We cannot just accept what someone says as truth without first scrutinizing it. This is not always easy to do. How many times have you gotten up in arms about something someone told you only to find out later that the person had left out pertinent information that shed a whole new light on the situation? I have done this many times and am trying hard not to continue doing so. It is a waste of my time and energy.

God has given us the tool we need to determine truth. However, it must be used for it to do us any good. If I tell you something, you should not just accept it as truth. You should think about what I have said, see if it matches the facts, and determine if it is consistent with other truths you

have already determined. The same thing should also be done if our teacher tells us something, or our preacher, and yes, even the writers of the Bible.

I know that most of you believe the Bible to be the inerrant Word of God. But you must examine on what basis you believe this. Is it because you agree with most of what it says and have therefore decided to accept the whole kit and caboodle? Is it because you had some sort of emotional, religious, or ethereal experience that led you to believe it is true? Is it because your parents believed it? Whatever your reason, remember that the *only* tool God has given us for divining truth is reason. Just because there is truth in the Bible (and I believe there is) does not mean that the entire Bible is truth. The Bible was written by men, edited by men, and compiled by men just like all books have been. You may believe that God inspired these men to write, edit, and compile with no errors, but there is absolutely no way that you can know that for sure apart from a direct revelation from God. Therefore, everything the Bible says must pass the test of reason before it can be accepted, just like any other piece of literature, religious or otherwise.

### **Homosexuality in Light of Reason**

Now that I have stated my position on how to correctly divine truth, let's apply it to the issue of homosexuality. I believe that morally censuring a person is *serious business*. We *must* have a valid *reason* for censuring the person. It is not good enough to say that a person whom I do not know said that God said it was okay to censure someone. This is what you do when you use the Bible as the *sole* basis for censuring homosexuals. You are basing your censuring on Paul, or other writers whom you have never met, saying that God said that homosexuality is immoral. This is hearsay and would never stand up in a court of law.

I believe the Golden Rule is one of the best rules by which to live. Since I do not want people to judge me based on hearsay, I refuse to judge others on this basis.

But what if the Biblical writer has actually spoken the truth? It still must be validated by reason. So, can morally censuring homosexuals be justified on the basis of reason? Let's take a look. Here are some of the major arguments I have heard for censuring homosexuals along with my response.

### ***Homosexuality is Unnatural***

To examine this statement, we must know what "unnatural" means. In the broadest sense, unnatural means anything that *cannot* occur in nature. Likewise, *natural* means anything that *can* occur in nature. In this sense, homosexual behavior *is* natural because it *does* occur in nature.

However, I believe most people use the word "unnatural" in the sense of not being in accordance with nature or consistent with a normal course of events. This is discussed next.

### ***Homosexuality is Not Normal***

Let's first define "normal". When talking about people, it means having traits or behaviors that conform to most other people. Using this definition, homosexuality is *not* normal. However, neither is being redheaded or left-handed.

I do not know if redheads have ever been morally censured, but left-handed people have been. In the past, some people considered left-handedness evil and *forced* children to use their right hands. Was this right? The consensus now is that it was wrong. I concur. We as a society now accept that there will *naturally* be a small percentage of people who are left-handed. And although a person can be coerced into becoming right-handed, most people now believe it is best to let that person grow up left-handed. (I am thankful for this change since my son is left-handed.) Could this also be true of homosexuality? Will there just *naturally* be a certain percentage of people born homosexual? Should we just let them grow up that way and not coerce them to change or call them evil? I believe so.

### ***Homosexuals Prey on Our Children***

Some do, but some don't. The ones that do deserve moral censuring because they are now initiating force against another person. Forcing someone to do something against his or her will is a clear area in which moral censuring is permissible. (This is a whole other essay, so I will not spend any more time on it here.) Remember that heterosexuals prey on children, also. So, if the fact that some homosexuals prey on children makes all homosexual acts immoral, then the fact that some heterosexuals prey on children makes all heterosexual acts immoral. Let's make sure we don't mix apples with oranges. It's the *preying* that's immoral, *not* the type of sexual acts perpetrated on the children.

### ***Homosexuals Spread Aids and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases***

This is true, but heterosexuals do the same thing. The culprit is not homosexual acts per se, but rather promiscuous behavior. If two homosexuals, free of any disease, live together in a monogamous relationship, there is no danger of either getting a sexually transmitted disease. The same is true of heterosexuals. You can point to all the statistics you want about the percentage of homosexuals versus heterosexuals that engage in promiscuous behavior or transmit diseases and it means nothing. We are trying to determine if homosexuality per se is immoral. This is a separate issue from that of promiscuity.

### ***Homosexuals Engage in Disgusting Acts***

I am sure you can think of many things that people do that are disgusting, yet not immoral. For instance, when I watched a TV show about slaughter houses, I found the killing and gutting of the cows disgusting. However, I am very happy that there are people who engage in this disgusting activity because I sure do love a good steak. I thought our associate pastor scrapping Ultra Butter from his underarms, spreading it on bread, and then eating it, was quite disgusting. Yet I found it humorous in a perverse sort of way. But I certainly did not consider it immoral.

There are some people who think that any form of sex between a man and a woman other than intercourse is perverse and disgusting. Some even think that anything other than the missionary position is disgusting. Do you and your spouse engage in any sexual activities that someone else would find disgusting? If so, does that make you immoral? Of course not. Therefore, just because you find an act disgusting does not in any way make it immoral.

### ***Homosexuals are Trying to Push Their Agenda on Society***

Some are, but so are many other people. To the degree that the homosexual agenda attempts to gain acceptance and equal status before the law, I have no problem with it. To the extent that the agenda seeks to gain special status and special rights before the law, I disagree with it. Of course, I disagree with anybody's agenda that seeks to do the same. I believe that everyone, except convicted criminals, should be equal before the law and have equal rights.

### ***If Everyone Was Homosexual, the Human Race Would Vanish***

Well, if everyone was a lawyer, the human race would litigate itself out of existence. (Sorry, lawyer friends, I couldn't resist that cheap shot.) But seriously, if a sexual relationship that cannot result in offspring is immoral, then it would be immoral for any impotent man or any barren woman to have any kind of sexual relationship, even with the opposite sex. And besides, everyone is *not* going to be homosexual. The majority of people will always be heterosexual just as the majority of people will always be right-handed.

### **Conclusions**

Well, that's my position on the issue of homosexuality. I can find no *valid* reason for morally censuring homosexuality per se. This is not to say that there are no immoral homosexuals. But the same things that make homosexuals immoral are the same things that make heterosexuals immoral. The sexual acts themselves are not immoral. Therefore, I conclude that it is improper to morally censure homosexuals on the basis of their sexual activity alone. I further conclude that either the writers of the Bible were mistaken about this issue or errors were introduced over the years.