

BUILDING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

The Bible and Homosexuality, Part 1

The Key Question:

Is homosexual activity a sin that must be repented of, forsaken, and forgiven, or, given the right context and commitment, can we consider same-sex sexual intimacy a blessing worth celebrating and solemnizing?

Note: This study is not ...

4 Presuppositions:

- 1) Our conclusions must be rooted in ...
- 2) Our application of our ethical position must be ...
- 3) The focus will be on ...
- 4) The Gospel offers ...

The Primary Texts*

Genesis 1-2: One Man, One Woman, One Flesh

Genesis 1:27-28 (ESV)

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 2:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Genesis 2:21-24 (ESV)

²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The **straightforward** reading of the text suggests ...

5 reasons Genesis 1-2 establishes God's design for marriage and human sexuality:

- 1) The way in which the woman was created indicates that she is the man's divinely designed _____.
- 2) The nature of the one-flesh union presupposes two persons of the _____ sex.
- 3) Only 2 persons of the opposite sex can fulfill the _____ purposes of marriage.
- 4) _____ himself reinforces the normativity of the Genesis account. (Mt.19, Mk.10)
- 5) The redemptive-historical significance of marriage as a divine symbol in the Bible only works if the marital couple is a complementary pair.

Genesis 19: Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 19:1-11 (ESV)

¹ The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed himself with his face to the earth ² and said, "My lords, please turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night and wash your feet. Then you may rise up early and go on your way." They said, "No; we will spend the night in the town square." ³ But he pressed them strongly; so they turned aside to him and entered his house. And he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. ⁴ But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. ⁵ And they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them." ⁶ Lot went out to the men at the entrance, shut the door after him, ⁷ and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. ⁸ Behold, I have two daughters who have not known any man. Let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please. Only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." ⁹ But they said, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and drew near to break the door down. ¹⁰ But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door. ¹¹ And they struck with blindness the men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great, so that they wore themselves out groping for the door.

What was the **sin** of these two cities?

- 1) The reference to Sodom in Ezekiel 16 supports the traditional notion that Sodom's sin— at least one aspect of it— was _____ in nature. (Ezekiel 16:47-50)
- 2) Literature from Second Temple Judaism (the time between the reconstruction of the temple in 516 BC and the final destruction of the temple in AD 70) shows that Sodom's had a reputation for same-sex behavior.

But you, my children, shall not be like that: In the firmament, in the earth, in the sea, in all the products of his workmanship discern the Lord who made all things, so that you do not become like Sodom, which departed from the order of nature. Likewise the Watchers departed from nature's order; the Lord pronounced a curse on them at the Flood. (T. Naph. 3: 4– 5)

And in that month the Lord executed the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah and Zeboim and all of the district of the Jordan. And he burned them with fire and sulphur and he annihilated them till this day just (as he said), "Behold, I have made known to you all of their deeds that (they were) cruel and great sinners and they were polluting themselves and they were fornicating in their flesh and they were causing pollution upon the earth." And thus the Lord will execute judgment like the judgment of Sodom on places where they act according to the pollution of Sodom. (Jub. 16: 5)

- 3) Sodom and Gomorrah are associated with homosexual practice in the _____.

Jude 1:7 (ESV)

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

Leviticus: Old Testament Law

Leviticus 18:22 (ESV)

²² You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

Leviticus 20:13 (ESV)

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.

What is the theme of Leviticus? (The word _____ (or holiness) appears 87x!)

Several observations:

- 1) All other sexual prohibitions in Leviticus are not _____.
- 2) The texts mention nothing of _____, only _____.
- 3) The texts are not about _____, because both parties are prescribed the same punishment.

6 reasons why this passage is still relevant today:

- 1) No follower of Jesus should begin with the assumption that Mosaic law is irrelevant.
- 2) The New Testament does not treat Leviticus as obscure or _____.
- 3) The term Paul uses for “men who practice homosexuality” (1 Cor. 6: 9; 1 Tim. 1: 10) was derived from two words— *arsēn* (man) and *koitē* (bed)— found in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.
- 4) Leviticus uses strong language in denouncing homosexual behavior, calling it “an _____.”
- 5) The sexual offenses in Leviticus are _____ - each moving further from God’s design (from sex with your neighbor’s wife, to sex with a family member, to sex with a family member of a younger generation, to sex with another man, to sex with more than one partner, to sex with an animal, to a woman taking the role of a man in approaching an animal to have sex with it)
- 6) Apart from the question of sex during menstruation, the sexual ethic in Leviticus 18 and 20 is squarely _____ in the New Testament.
 - a. Adultery is still a sin (Matt. 5: 27– 30).
 - b. Incest is still a sin (1 Cor. 5: 1– 13).
 - c. Even polygamy is more clearly rejected (1 Cor. 7: 2; 1 Tim. 3: 2).

It would be strange for the prohibition against homosexual practice to be set aside when the rest of the sexual ethic is not, especially considering how the rejection of same-sex behavior is rooted in the created order.

NEXT WEEK:

Romans 1: The Falleness of Man

1st Corinthians 6 and 1st Timothy 1: Paul’s Challenges to Sin-saturated People

*Some of tonight’s notes are drawn from *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* By Kevin DeYoung