

Timothy Zebell



LAID BARE

Uncovering the Relationship
Between Homosexuality and
the Gospel

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Forward

This book is the result of thousands of hours of research. Entire volumes could be written regarding this topic, and the temptation to chase rabbit trails and side arguments is perilously tempting. Instead, this book will attempt to focus only upon a handful of the most common challenges that arise when addressing the subject of homosexuality. By no means is this intended to be an exhaustive study.

Originally written in 2015 before *Obergefell v. Hodges*, this revised edition of *Laid Bare* has been slightly modified to reflect the June 26, 2015 Supreme Court ruling. The primary change to the original is the addition of the appendix “Hasn’t the Issue Been Settled by the Supreme Court?”

It is important to note that three authors have proven to be especially helpful, and to whom I am deeply indebted:

Bill Muehlenberg

- *Strained Relations: The Challenge of Homosexuality*
- *Dangerous Relations: The Threat of Homosexuality*

Dr. Michael Brown

- *A Queer Thing Happened to America*
- *Can You Be Gay and Christian?: Responding with Love and Truth to Questions About Homosexuality*
- *Outlasting the Gay Revolution: Where Homosexual Activism Is Really Going and How to Turn the Tide*

Dr. Robert Gagnon

- *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics*

Why Focus on Homosexuality?

“Standing atop a giant wedding cake float, Aubrey Loots and Danny Leclair exchanged vows New Year’s Day in the first same-sex marriage during the Tournament of Roses Parade. Throngs of spectators cheered as the men, dressed in dark suits, faced each other and held hands before the Rev. Alfreda Lanoix, who officiated the ceremony aboard the AIDS Healthcare Foundation float.”¹ This was a 2014 report by *The Associated Press*. It is now clear that the year 2014 ushered in a new era of homosexual acceptance within the United States of America.

Only weeks after the Rose Parade, the nation was again exposed to a live same-sex wedding ceremony on national television. According to *The Washington Post*, “Thirty-three gay and straight couples got married at the Grammy Awards on Sunday in a public ceremony officiated by Queen Latifah and soundtracked, appropriately, by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis’ same-sex marriage anthem ‘Same Love.’”²

Today it is nearly impossible to avoid the issue of homosexuality. It is continually paraded before every stratum of society. In fact, according to a 2008 *World Net Daily* article titled “Decision to Teach Kids to be ‘Gay’ Allowed to Stand”:³

“A federal court decision approving mandatory public school instruction for children as young as kindergarten in how to be homosexual is being allowed to stand, ... The U.S. Supreme Court without comment has refused to intervene in a case prompted by the actions of officials at Eastbrook Elementary school in Lexington, Mass., who not only were teaching homosexuality to young children, but specifically refused to allow Christian

¹ “125th Rose Parade Hosts its First Same-sex Wedding,” *Associated Press*, Jan. 1, 2014, Source: “125th Rose Parade Hosts Its First Same-sex Wedding.”

² Dewey, “Love Stories from the Couples Who Got Married at the Grammys.”

³ Unruh, “Decision to Teach Kids to be ‘Gay’ Allowed to Stand.”

parents to opt their children out of the indoctrination. ... The dispute grabbed headlines when Parker, on April 27, 2005, “was arrested and thrown in jail by school officials over his insistence on being notified regarding his son in kindergarten being taught about homosexual relationships by adults,” Mass Resistance reported. ... “The [Supreme] court did not even bother to notify the Parkers or their attorneys,” said Mass Resistance, which said what now will be enforced in the judicial district will be the lower bench rulings that the state has not only the right but “even the obligation ... to promote homosexual relationships to young children.”

Shocking as it may be that a father would be arrested for insisting that he be notified regarding his son in kindergarten being taught about homosexual relationships, it is perhaps even more shocking to realize that we have a President of the United States of America who has declared that homosexual sex-education for kindergarteners is “just the right thing to do.”⁴ Something which would have been unimaginable a few decades ago is somehow now “just the right thing to do” and is supported by the highest government official in our country. Certainly, we have crossed a threshold into a paradigm shift for our country as relates to the issue of homosexuality.

Today children as young as six can attend cross-dressing camps that teach them to embrace their “gender variation,”⁵ and a 2006 *New York Times* article reports, “Children as young as 5 who display predispositions to dress like the opposite sex are being supported by a growing number of young parents, educators and mental health professionals.”⁶ In fact, a 2008 *World Net Daily* headline reads, “3rd-graders Asked to Help Classmate in Gender Change: Parents Given 1-day Notice of Presentation Explaining Boy Would Now Wear Girl Clothes.”⁷ Not surprisingly with headlines like this, a transvestite superhero cartoon is targeting children between the ages of two and 11,⁸ and the election of transvestite prom kings and queens is proving to be a growing trend in American high schools.^{9, 10} Even the Boy Scouts of America have succumbed to the pressure of embracing homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle that may be flaunted before young children.¹¹

The pressure to embrace homosexuality is enormous and widespread. In 2013, Pope Francis shocked the world when he referenced a “gay lobby” in the Vatican and implied that active unrepentant homosexuals can be Christians accepted by God.¹² Likewise, United States President

⁴ Starnes, “Obama Supports Kindergarten Sex Ed.”

⁵ Andersen, “Crossdressing Camp for Boys as Young as Six Draws Criticism from Christian Leaders.”

⁶ Brown, “Supporting Boys or Girls when the Line Isn’t Clear.”

⁷ “3rd-Graders Asked to Help Classmate in Gender Change.”

⁸ Hall, “Transvestite Superhero Cartoon to Debut on Children’s Network The Hub.”

⁹ “Transgender Student in Huntington Beach Named Homecoming Queen.”

¹⁰ Cassidy Campbell is only one example within a growing trend of transgender prom queens: Andrew Viveros (Rothaus, “Transgender McFatter Senior Crowned Prom Queen.”); Cody Tubman (Leamanczyk, “Transgender Teen Voted Prom Queen at Middleboro High.”); Destiny Hartis (Rector, “Transgender Student Named Prom Queen at Baltimore High School.”); Nasir Fleming (Wong, “Nasir Fleming, Gay Connecticut Teen, Wins Prom Queen at Danbury High School (VIDEO).”)

¹¹ “Boy Scouts Approve Plan to Accept Openly Gay Members.”

¹² Corvino, “A Papal Surprise: Humility.”

Barack Obama has publicly supported homosexuality, not only in America but also internationally.¹³
¹⁴ And a growing number of Christian denominations are embracing homosexuality.¹⁵

Most recently, the homosexual debate has focused on the definition of “marriage” and “family.” The Internal Revenue Service began recognizing same-sex marriages from all 50 states even before the Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.¹⁶ The U.S. Department of Education has replaced “father” and “mother” on the FAFSA form with “parent 1” and “parent 2,”¹⁷ and the U.S. State Department has made similar gender neutral changes on passport application forms.¹⁸ In 2013, the majority of the U.S. Senate endorsed same-sex marriage, and Barack Obama became the first sitting U.S. President to publicly endorse same-sex marriage.^{19, 20} Most importantly, in a 5-4 ruling on *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court declared on June 26, 2015 that the U.S. Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage.²¹ Therefore, despite the fact that only eight states permitted same-sex marriages at the beginning of 2013, today same-sex marriages are legal in all 50 states of the Union.

In a sense it is as if America is in the process of coming out of the closet. Graphic homosexual relationships are openly portrayed on popular television shows,²² and songs such as Katy Perry’s “I Kissed A Girl” top the music chart.²³ Even in the world of hip-hop rap homosexuality is beginning to be accepted.²⁴ According to a 2011 Pew Research Center publication, Americans are becoming progressively supportive of homosexual marriages with an 8–9% rise in approval for each successive generation.²⁵ With our nation becoming increasingly accepting of homosexuality and moving ever-

¹³ President Barack Obama speaking: “At a certain point, I’ve just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married.” (Calms, “Obama Says Same-sex Marriage Should be Legal.”)

¹⁴ President Barack Obama speaking: “Well, first of all, I think the Supreme Court ruling yesterday was not simply a victory for the LGBT community, it’s a victory for American democracy. I believe at the root of who we are as a people, who we are as Americans is the basic precept that we are all equal under the law. We believe in basic fairness. And what I think yesterday’s ruling signifies is one more step towards ensuring that those basic principles apply to everybody. ... Now, this topic did not come up in the conversation that I had with President Sall in a bilateral meeting. But let me just make a general statement. The issue of gays and lesbians, and how they’re treated, has come up and has been controversial in many parts of Africa. So I want the African people just to hear what I believe, and that is that every country, every group of people, every religion have different customs, different traditions. And when it comes to people’s personal views and their religious faith, et cetera, I think we have to respect the diversity of views that are there. But when it comes to how the state treats people, how the law treats people, I believe that everybody has to be treated equally. I don’t believe in discrimination of any sort. That’s my personal view. And I speak as somebody who obviously comes from a country in which there were times when people were not treated equally under the law, and we had to fight long and hard through a civil rights struggle to make sure that happens. So my basic view is that regardless of race, regardless of religion, regardless of gender, regardless of sexual orientation, when it comes to how the law treats you, how the state treats you — the benefits, the rights and the responsibilities under the law — people should be treated equally. And that’s a principle that I think applies universally, and the good news is it’s an easy principle to remember. Every world religion has this basic notion that is embodied in the Golden Rule — treat people the way you want to be treated. And I think that applies here as well.” (Capehart, “Obama Comes Out for Gays in Africa.”)

¹⁵ Wikipedia, “LGBT-affirming Christian Denominations.”

¹⁶ “Treasury and IRS Announce that All Legal Same-sex Marriages Will be Recognized for Federal Tax Purposes; Ruling Provides Certainty, Benefits and Protections Under Federal Tax Law for Same-sex Married Couples.”

¹⁷ Chasmar, “Education Dept. Eliminates ‘Father,’ ‘Mother’ from Student Aid Forms.”

¹⁸ Starnes, “‘Mother,’ ‘Father’ Changing to ‘Parent One,’ ‘Parent Two’ on Passport Applications.”

¹⁹ Miller, “Majority of Senate Supports Same-sex Marriage.”

²⁰ Mason, “Same-sex Couples Should be Able to Marry: Obama.”

²¹ Liptak, “Supreme Court Ruling Makes Same-sex Marriage a Right Nationwide.”

²² Examples: *House*, *Smash*, *The Tudors*, *Game of Thrones*, *Spartacus*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, etc.

²³ Official Charts Company, “Katy Perry.”

²⁴ Zimmerman, “The World’s First Pro-Gay Rap Song is Actually Not Half Bad.”

²⁵ “Angry Silents, Disengaged Millennials: The Generation Gap and the 2012 Election.”

closer to embracing the legal judgment that same-sex marriages are both legal and a human right, it is imperative that Christians know what the Bible has to say regarding this issue.

Of course, some will challenge, “This is an issue of love between two private individuals. This is not our business”; or, “What difference does it make how other people act in private?” Popular as these challenges may be, they simply are not grounded in reality. The fact of the matter is homosexual lovers are no longer acting in private. Instead, they are parading their lifestyle before the public in Gay Pride events; they are dominating the media; and they are “out and proud” in the workplace. When families cannot watch on television live events such as the Parade of Roses or attend public parks without the fear of being exposed to homosexual practices, then homosexuality is no longer a private matter. It ceased to be a private matter when the homosexual community began lobbying for special rights and privileges. The most notable example of this is the demand for same-sex marriages. Such requests transform this issue into a public matter, and it is unreasonable to expect that the public will not discuss, critique, debate, and at times oppose an issue and a movement that is altering fundamental issues of society and government, such as the nature of marriage.

Further, when parents no longer have the right to opt their kindergarten-aged children out of sex-education in the public school system because same-sex marriage is legal in their state of residence, and because the courts deem it more important to support sexual diversity than to support parents’ religious and moral convictions, it is no longer a private issue. It is one thing to tolerate an issue; it is entirely something else to celebrate that issue. It is one thing when consenting adults wish to behave in a particular fashion behind closed doors; it is wholly different when the public’s children are not only exposed to these practices but are obligated to understand them. When homosexuality begins to limit the public’s freedom of speech and freedom to hold religious and moral convictions, it not only ceases to be a private matter, it becomes an important and personal matter for the public. And make no mistake, the freedom to hold personal religious and moral convictions is at risk. If this were not evident enough by the arrest of David Parker for insisting that his kindergarten-aged child opt out of homosexual education in the public school, then consider the words of Georgetown Law Professor Chai Feldblum who was appointed by President Obama to serve on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Speaking about when religious liberty conflicts with sexual liberty, she said, “I’m having a hard time coming up with any case in which religious liberty should win.”²⁶ She also expressed this in more technical terms, saying, “Protecting one group’s identity liberty may, at times, require that we burden other’s belief liberties.”²⁷

This sacrifice of religious liberty and freedom of speech atop the altar of sexual liberation has been born out in testimonies from around the world. Numerous examples could be provided such as the Catholic fire fighters in Glasgow, Scotland who were disciplined by the fire department for refusing to march in the gay pride parade after being ordered to do so by the city. Because the gay pride parade had a history of attacking the Roman Catholic Church, the fire fighters chose to hand out fire safety leaflets on a nearby street rather than join the march. For this, they were given written warnings, were told that the incident would be placed on their personal record file, and were required to attend diversity training.²⁸ More recently, Fire Chief of the Atlanta Fire Department, Kelvin Cochran, was fired for providing three co-workers whom he believed to be Christian with a copy of a book that he

²⁶ Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, 502.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 538.

had authored. The book included his belief that homosexuality is a sin. Despite the fact that an internal investigation found no evidence that Chief Cochran had mistreated homosexuals, it was determined that he could not be trusted to fairly manage the department because of his religious beliefs.²⁹

Another example might be Dr. Yeruham Leavitt who taught a class on medical ethics at Ben Gurion University in Israel. He was fired for his response to a disagreement between two students during class over whether children raised by homosexual couples might be hindered in their development. Dr. Leavitt affirmed this possibility and expressed his opinion that sexual inclinations can be both restrained and chosen.³⁰ Perhaps most shocking of all is the testimony of Kenneth Howell who had taught in the University of Illinois the classes “Introduction to Catholicism” and “Modern Catholic Thought.” He was fired for writing an e-mail that explained what the Catholic position is regarding homosexual practices.³¹

Certainly, the issue of homosexuality is proving to be a relevant subject for every person. Nobody is exempt from the implications and effects of the rampant pro-homosexual legislation, education, and public exposure. Few issues touch upon as many facets of life for so many people—both gay and straight—as the homosexual issue. As such, it certainly merits further attention by Christians and a careful evaluation of the subject in light of Scripture.

By no means is this book seeking to single out and “pick on” homosexuality to the neglect of so many other sins. Every sin is equally evil in the sight of God in that every sin is a rebellion against God that results in eternal separation from having a right relationship with Him. The Bible refers to this as a second death in [Revelation 20:12-15](#). In the first death, the body dies; in the second death, the spirit essentially dies as it is eternally separated from both a right relationship with its Creator and its purpose for existence. According to [James 2:10](#), “[W]hoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.” In other words, any sin—whether it be homosexuality, murder, theft, lying, anger, pride, hypocrisy, or a host of additional sins—is enough to outweigh every good deed. A single sin is enough to transgress the holiness of God and to condemn a person to this second death in Hell.

Realizing this, homosexuality cannot be singled out as a more egregious transgression of God’s holiness than any other sin. Those sins that have unfortunately found refuge among many Christians—sins such as gossip, envy, greed, pride, hypocrisy, etc.—would justifiably condemn any one of us to Hell just as quickly as the sin of homosexual intercourse.

Instead, the reason why homosexuality is the focus of this book is because of the effects of this particular sin. Every sin is equally damnable in the sight of God, but not every sin produces the same effects. There is a reason why murder is judged more harshly than theft in our legal system. The effects of murder are more severe and permanent than are the effects of theft. Whereas the stolen item may be replaced, the extinguished life cannot. Likewise, when Israel was governed in the Old Testament by a theocracy, some sins were judged more severely by their legal system than others. Ceremonial infractions of the Law resulted in such penalties as burning one’s crops or quarantining

²⁹ Leslie, “Reed’s Office Releases Internal Report into Fire Chief’s Management.”

³⁰ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 530.

³¹ *Ibid*, 531.

an individual from the public for a time; whereas, moral infractions of the Law could result in death. Even post Israel's theocratic government, the Bible warns that certain sins still have a greater effect than others, revealing that this is not merely the judgment of society but is an immutable fact.

In [1 Corinthians 6:18](#) the Apostle Paul warns, *“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”* The prevalent nature of sexually transmitted diseases among our “sexually-liberated” culture today testifies to the validity of Paul’s warning to the Corinthians. The homosexual community is certainly experiencing the consequences of ignoring this warning. As an illustration, consider syphilis. Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease that, if left untreated, can cause extensive damage to the brain and internal organs and can even result in death. Based on data from a National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System report in April 2014, there were 9,000 cases of syphilis in America in 2012, and 84% of these were among men who had sex with men. To provide perspective, it is estimated that homosexuals—both male and female—comprise only about 3.5% of the American population.³² In 2013 the reported number of syphilis cases nearly doubled, rising to 16,000 cases. According to the Center for Disease Control, the vast majority of new reported syphilis cases come from men who have sex with men.³³ This in-and-of-itself merits that direct attention be given to the sin of homosexuality—just as Jesus and the Apostles addressed specific sins that were particularly hazardous in their time to individuals or to the society.

In a perfect world, the church would never need to address sinful behavior but could focus its full attention on how to better serve God and strengthen a personal relationship with Him, but we do not live in a perfect world. Instead, we live in a fallen world where sinful behavior continually threatens the ability of God’s people to serve Him and to strengthen their relationship with Him. Therefore, sin must be addressed, and Jesus provided an example of how this ought to be accomplished. He did not spend His teaching ministry avoiding particular sins and social debates. Rather, He specifically identified and spoke into such sins as self-righteousness, hypocrisy, hatred, lying, adultery, divorce, etc. Many of these were incredibly controversial topics in Jesus’ time, and his words caused widespread offense. Likewise, we as the church ought not to be afraid of addressing specific sins and possibly even causing offense by speaking the truth in love, as is taught in [Ephesians 4:11-16](#). In fact, the Apostle Paul referred to the gospel as “the offense of the cross” in [Galatians 5:11](#), and he warned the church in Corinth that this gospel message—which is the very foundation of the Church—is offensive when properly presented. [Second Corinthians 2:14-16](#) says, *“[T]hanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.”*

The truth that every person is separated from God by his sinful behavior and is destined to a second death in Hell must cause offense. This offense leads some to embrace the truth that they can never have a right relationship with God on their own apart from the forgiveness that Jesus Christ offers through His death, burial, and resurrection. For these, the offense of this gospel becomes the fragrance of life. But others are repulsed by this dependency upon Jesus Christ for forgiveness, and

³² Gates, “How Many People are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender?”

³³ Reinberg, “Syphilis Cases Climbing Among Gay Men: CDC.”

for them, this offense is the pungent smell of death. They reject the gospel and seek to either separate themselves from the speaker or to silence him.

Certainly, we have witnessed this truth time and again. But the homosexual issue is perhaps one of the more extreme examples of this in today's culture. There is a concerted effort to silence any who would express disapproval of homosexuality, and this is being accomplished in two ways. The first is through intimidation, and the second is through judicial force. Today it seems that no person can express disapproval of homosexuality without being personally assaulted. At the very least, he will be accused of hate speech, regardless of the spirit in which it is said, regardless of any qualifications which may be included, and regardless of the context. In contrast to this, those who support homosexuality can verbally assault these individuals with seeming immunity regardless of how abusive and slanderous their language may be. As an illustration, consider the testimony of Dr. Michael Brown who was interviewed by Thom Hartmann on his nationally syndicated radio program. Dr. Brown is an individual full of compassion and love who regularly talks into the issue of homosexuality, but who never does so with a mean or proud spirit. During this interview, Thom Hartmann asked Dr. Brown for his views on homosexuality. The question having been asked, Dr. Brown grouped it together with other forbidden practices in Scripture, including adultery, drunkenness, and religious hypocrisy. He did not elevate homosexuality above these other sins, and he told Thom that only the day before he had encouraged a woman to treat with unconditional love her twenty-one-year-old son who had just come out of the closet. Despite the context and the spirit with which this was said, a listener to the program wrote to Dr. Brown's website:³⁴

“

Having just heard you on Thom Hartmann, (5/12/09), all you've done is convey to the public at large that you are an ignorant [sic], who no more warrants the moniker of "Doctor" than an earthworm. ... What is it you don't get, you stupid [expletive]!? Your "Holy Holy Holy" hypocrisy [sic] doesn't fool me. You're either a very sick individual, or evil to the core. Which is it? ... People like you are bigots, hate mongers, dare I say racist, and more lunatic than lunatic. You are clearly a dangerous, mean-spirited [sic] madman—and a CHARLATAN, SNAKE-OIL SALESMAN, and a hypocrite of the first order. If there is a hell - which, of course there isn't,—I hope there's a special place for wicked, nasty people like you.

Unfortunately, this is not an exceptional response. Those who speak against homosexuality are rarely given the benefit of the doubt, are rarely quoted in context, and are rarely treated with civility. It is common for such to be accused of being hateful, racist, homophobic, and Nazis. Moreover, because any disapproval of homosexual practice is considered to be hateful and mean-spirited, there is an effort to use judicial force to categorize such dissent as a hate-crime. Already this has been accomplished in Canada where the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that quoting the Bible

³⁴ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 63-64.

regarding the sin of homosexual behavior is considered to be hate-speech.³⁵ Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Association of Chief Police Officers define a homophobic incident as “any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person.”³⁶ In other words, apart from reality, if the victim or any onlooker imagines that something homophobic was said, then a hate-crime was committed.

In analyzing this it should not be surprising that Christians are persecuted, slandered, and falsely accused for holding to their religious convictions and for speaking the truth in love because this is precisely how our Savior was treated. In fact, Jesus warned His disciples in [John 15:18-21](#) that this would be the Christian’s reality, *“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.”*

Fear of persecution is no excuse for avoiding the issue of homosexuality. Fear of offending someone with the truth when spoken in love is no excuse for avoiding the issue of homosexuality. Fear of being accused of inflating and unfairly “picking on” the sin of homosexuality is no excuse for avoiding the issue. Rather, this is a sin that is causing severe physical, mental, and emotional harm to many individuals in addition to being the catalyst for attacking fundamental social and moral issues. As such, we are compelled to speak into this issue. However, as we do, let us continually keep in mind that were it not for the grace of God, any one of us could find ourselves suffering from the same sin. Were it not for the grace of God, every one of us would experience the same second death in Hell as a punishment for our sins as the homosexual. By no means are we superior to people with same-sex attractions, nor are we more righteous apart from Jesus Christ. Rather, because we have been shown mercy and forgiven of so much sin, we ought to be filled with love and compassion for others who find themselves ensnared by sin. But this is a love that directs sinners to a Savior who can free them from their bondage to sin. This is why the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church in [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#), *“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, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 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.”*

Homosexuality is not the unpardonable sin. What the homosexual needs is not to become a heterosexual but to become a Christian whose identity is found in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and who has experienced a transformation within his spirit. As for those of us who have already experienced this transformation, we need to be talking about this issue and taking this gospel—this good news—to those who are enslaved by the sin of homosexuality. To accomplish this, the Christian must be both capable and willing to speak into the issue of homosexuality.

³⁵ Mephibosheth, “Supremes Rule Bible as ‘Hate Speech’ in Canada.”

³⁶ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 534.

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. AMERICA IS COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET

A. Many Americans have been unwillingly exposed to homosexual activity. Some examples include:

- A gay wedding which took place atop a float during the Tournament of Roses Parade
- A wedding ceremony which included gay couples during the broadcast of the Grammy Awards
- The election of transgendered prom kings and queens in high schools across America
- Gay scouts joining the Boy Scouts of America

Have you personally been unwillingly exposed to homosexual activity? If so, how?

B. Do you believe that you and your family should have the right to be protected from being unwillingly exposed to homosexual activity? Why?

C. What are some things that we can do to safeguard ourselves and our families from being unwillingly exposed to homosexual activity?

D. How might we turn unexpected exposure to homosexual activity into a teaching opportunity for our children?

II. THE ISSUE OF HOMOSEXUALITY IS A RELEVANT SUBJECT FOR EVERY PERSON

A. Do you agree with the statement, "This is an issue of love between two private individuals; this is not our business." Explain.

B. How does the fact that the homosexual community is lobbying for special rights and privileges affect the way you approach and think about the subject?

C. How would you as a parent respond if the government required your child to participate in same-sex education at school?

- D. Georgetown Law Professor, Chai Feldblum said, “Protecting one group’s identity liberty may, at times, require that we burden other’s belief liberties.” Do you agree with this statement? Why?
- E. Is sexual liberation more important than religious liberty? Why?
- F. The statement was made, “Nobody is exempt from the implications and effects of the rampant pro-homosexual legislation, education, and public exposure.” Do you agree with this statement? Why?
- G. If you were given 2 minutes to defend the statement, “Christians should speak into the issue of homosexuality and its effect on our society,” what would you say?

III. HOMOSEXUALITY IS NOT THE WORST SIN

- A. Why does a single sin outweigh every good deed and is sufficient to condemn a person to Hell?
- B. Every sin is equally damnable in the sight of God, but not every sin produces the same effects. How should this understanding affect the way we deal with and confront specific sins?
- C. Consider the following passages:
- [John 19:11](#)
 - [Matthew 23:23](#)
 - [Matthew 11:20-22](#)
 - [Luke 12:47-48](#)
 - [Hebrews 10:29](#)

Does the Bible teach that we should not treat some sins and their effects as more serious than other sins when we teach and preach?

- D. What do you think the Apostle Paul meant when he warned that the sexually immoral person sins against his own body?
- E. Should the church be talking into the issue of homosexuality? If so, should this be confined to the morality of the issue, or should the church also speak into the social and legal discussions? Why?

IV. SPEAK TRUTH IN LOVE

- A. Why do you think Jesus specifically identified and spoke into specific sins such as self-righteousness, hypocrisy, hatred, lying, adultery, divorce, etc.?
- B. What does it mean to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:11-16)?
- C. Is refusing to agree with someone the same as being intolerant toward that person? Explain.
- D. Should society refuse to tolerate the intolerant? Why?
- E. Many people go to great lengths to preface their statements about homosexuality with assurances of how much they love homosexuals, how many homosexual friends they have, how reluctant they are to speak into the issue, etc. However, speaking against homosexuality almost always causes offense regardless of any qualifications which may be included, regardless of the context, and regardless of the spirit in which it is said. Knowing that this is the case, do you think that these lengthy prefaces are helpful, or do they reduce the impact of what the speaker is about to say? Explain.

V. THE OFFENSE OF THE CROSS

- A. The statement was made, “Fear of persecution is no excuse for avoiding the issue of homosexuality.” Does this statement remain true if speaking against homosexuality becomes illegal? Why?
- B. The statement was made, “Were it not for the grace of God, every one of us would experience the same second death in Hell as a punishment for our sins as the homosexual.” How should this realization affect the way we minister to those who are tempted by same-sex attraction?
- C. The statement was made, “What the homosexual needs is not to become a heterosexual, but to become a Christian whose identity is found in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and who has experienced a transformation within his spirit.” When speaking with someone who self-identifies as homosexual, do you find that you are most interested in changing his/her sexual orientation, or are you most interested in leading him/her to Jesus Christ?
- D. The statement was made, “Because we have been shown mercy and forgiven of so much sin, we ought to be filled with love and compassion for others who find themselves ensnared by sin. But this is a love which directs sinners to a Savior who can free them from their bondage to sin.” Are we truly loving the individual if we accept their sinful behavior and refuse to address it? Explain.
- E. Has your thinking changed in any way as a result of this lesson? Explain.

F. How do you plan to apply this lesson to your life? Explain.

How Does Theology Determine Sexuality?

Considered by former president and Founding Father John Adams to be one of America's three most notable Founding Fathers, Dr. Benjamin Rush was an advocate for free public schools for all youth. In fact, he can rightly be called the father of public schools under the Constitution.³⁷ Dr. Rush once wrote that “the only means of establishing and perpetuating our republican forms of government is the universal education of our youth in the principles of Christianity by means of the Bible.”³⁸ He also wrote, “The Bible, when not read in schools, is seldom read in any subsequent period of life... [T]he Bible... should be read in our schools in preference to all other books because it contains the greatest portion of that kind of knowledge which is calculated to produce private and public happiness.”³⁹ In other words, the father of public schools would be appalled to learn that the Bible is no longer welcome in the American public school system. What was once considered to be the foundation for our educational system is today verging on illegal. This is because societies change; cultures change; principals, morals, and convictions change when given enough time. Recognizing this, we cannot allow social preference and cultural agreement to determine our morality. Specifically, we cannot allow social preference and cultural agreement to determine the morality of same-sex relationships.

As Christians, we serve an all-knowing and sovereign God who has spoken the end from the beginning according to [Isaiah 46:9-10](#), “*I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.*” Furthermore, [2 Timothy 3:16](#) teaches that all Scripture is God-breathed, and [2 Peter 1:20-21](#) teaches that no Scripture is the interpretation or understanding of man but is rather the result of God's inspiration—these men having been “carried along” in their writing by the Holy Spirit. In other words, these Scriptures—instructions and teachings that we today refer to as “the Bible”—come from a God who knows in advance every philosophy and cultural shift that mankind will ever experience, and He has produced

³⁷ Barton, “Dr. Benjamin Rush.”

³⁸ Barton, “The Founding Fathers on Jesus, Christianity and the Bible.”

³⁹ Barton, “The Founding Fathers on Jesus, Christianity and the Bible.”

the Bible for His people in a manner that is uncorrupted by man’s understanding and prejudices. Because of this, we hold the Bible as our inerrant and eternal standard for truth. Regardless of the latest scientific study or theory, regardless of the political temperature of our nation, regardless of our emotions and circumstances, we hold the Bible to be our only reliable standard for determining truth and morality.

Unfortunately, there is not space to review the plethora of internal and external evidences that substantiate the authenticity and reliability of the Bible. This is a book that was penned by more than 40 different authors in all walks of life and in multiple civilizations stretching over 1,500 years. Despite this and the fact that the Bible addresses history’s most controversial political, social, and spiritual issues, there is never a contradiction that is not discovered to be in harmony with the remainder of Scripture when adequately studied in context. Moreover, the testimony of Scripture is continually reaffirmed through archaeological discoveries of locations and customs that have been forgotten by all other known records. Suffice it to say that there is vastly more reason to trust the reliability of Scripture than any other historical record. If one were to dismiss the reliability of Scripture, then one would be compelled to dismiss the credibility of all known history. For a far more thorough examination of the subject, read Josh McDowell’s book *New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*.

Simply put in relation to this study: Our theology determines our sexuality. According to the Bible, we as human beings are unique from the animals in that we have been created in the image of God. Precisely what is involved in serving as imagers of God has been greatly debated by theologians throughout the centuries, but one thing that has not been debated is the fact that mankind is created in God’s image. This is the clear teaching of [Genesis 1:26–28](#):

“

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 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.”

The Hebrew word translated as “man” is “*adam*” and means “human being” or “mankind.” Thus, [Genesis 1:27](#) reveals that God made mankind in His own image, and mankind was created as consisting of male and female genders. Somehow, our sexuality—the fact that we are gender-based creatures—is an integral part of our being created in God’s image.

Clearly our sexuality is not the only aspect of being imagers of God because most animals are also created as sexual creatures, being male and female, but they are not created in the image of God. It is precisely because of the similarities between human and animal that so many understandings exist regarding the image of God. Some have argued that just as God consists of three distinct Persons, so also, we are comprised of three—being body, soul, and spirit—and yet we are one. There are several

other interpretations, but every one of them is based upon deductive reasoning. The one and only aspect of being created in God's image that can be absolutely derived from the Genesis creation account is the fact that mankind has been created as sexual beings. In other words, God's only explanation of what being created in His image constitutes is that He created mankind as male and female. Interestingly enough, because God Himself is neither male nor female, and because male and female are quite different from one another both physically and emotionally, the image of God must be most complete in the combination of the two. In this sense, the image of God is greatest when male and female complement one another in unity. This unity is described in [Genesis 2:23-24](#), *"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.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."* This union is known as "marriage." Regardless of whether we fully understand how this can all be true, we are compelled to accept that our being created in God's image includes our sexuality because it is the clear teaching of God's Word.

The implications of this are significant. If the sexual design of our bodies is created by God as at least a partial reflection of Himself, then our sexuality is sacred. This too is evidenced within the text in [Genesis 2:21-22](#), *"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. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man."* The sacred design of man in this text is obscured by the translation. The Hebrew word translated as "rib" is *"tsela"* which, in the 40 other occurrences of this word in the Old Testament, always refers to the side of something. In nearly every instance, it refers to the side of sacral architecture, such as the Ark of the Covenant, or the temple.⁴⁰ Thus, [Genesis 2:21-22](#) references Adam's body as sacral architecture in its account of how gender was established.

Until this point, the Genesis account has referred to the character named Adam as an *"adam,"* which means a "human being."⁴¹ The very word *"adam"* is a genderless term. However, God declares in [Genesis 2:18](#) that it is not good for the human being to be alone, and He determines to create a counterpart for Adam. This word *"neged"* is usually translated as "fit," "meet," or "suitable"; but it means "counterpart" or "one who corresponds to but is opposite from."⁴² In other words, God determined to make a helper for Adam who corresponded with Adam—one who was a human being—but who was also opposite from Adam—one who did not have the same tendencies, strengths, or physical features as Adam. To accomplish this, God removed a piece of Adam's sacred architecture—part of his side, or rib—and from this sacred piece, God created Adam's counterpart. It is only after this act that the Genesis account begins to refer to Adam in terms of gender.⁴³

In [Genesis 2:23-25](#), Adam declares himself to be an *"iysh"*—a man—and his counterpart to be "woman," *"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.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."* At this point, gender is

⁴⁰ The Hebrew word *"tsela"* (*Strong's*, #H6763), occurs 41 times in 33 verses: [Genesis 2:21-22](#); [Exodus 25:12 and 14](#); [Exodus 26:20, 26-27 and 35](#); [Exodus 27:7](#); [Exodus 30:4](#); [Exodus 36:25 and 31-32](#); [Exodus 37:3, 5 and 27](#); [Exodus 38:7](#); [2 Samuel 16:13](#); [1 Kings 6:5, 8, 15-16 and 34](#); [1 Kings 7:3](#); [Job 18:12](#); [Jeremiah 20:10](#); [Ezekiel 41:5-9, 11 and 26](#).

⁴¹ Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, #H120, 9.

⁴² Ibid, #H5048, #H5049.

⁴³ Jim Garlow, "Robert Gagnon."

established, and because gender is established, marriage is also established. Adam declares that because God created woman out of man, the two can be united together to become one flesh.⁴⁴

The union of man and woman is natural because they are of the same flesh. It is possible for the two to become one flesh because they originally emerged out of the same flesh. They began as one, but God separated the two. It took a divine act to separate the two, and according to [Matthew 19:4-6](#), it requires a divine act to once again unite the two. God separated the two when God took the rib from Adam and transformed it into a separate entity, and God united the two in [Genesis 2:24](#) in the act of marriage. This is affirmed in [Matthew 19:4-6](#) where Jesus answered a question regarding marriage and divorce by referring back to [Genesis 2:24](#), saying, *“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”* According to Jesus, marriage exists because God chose to make separate genders—male and female—and it is an act that is made possible only through divine intervention.

Jesus’ teaching in [Matthew 19](#) regarding marriage is important because this is the Creator God Himself expressing His original intent for marriage. According to Jesus, the creation account reveals that marriage is not merely a social contract; it is a sacred act in which the two—man and woman—are made one flesh in a lifelong union.

In addition to providing the purpose and nature of marriage, the Genesis account also provides definitions for the terms “husband” and “wife.” [Genesis 2:23-25](#) defines “wife” as being a woman united to a man through a marriage relationship, *“[S]he shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”* Likewise, [Genesis 3:6](#) defines “husband” as being a man united to a woman through a marriage relationship, *“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”* Throughout all of Scripture, there is never an exception to these definitions. Instead, these definitions are affirmed by the Apostle Paul in [1 Corinthians 7:2](#), *“But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.”* They are further affirmed by the gender-specific language associated with the terms “husband” and “wife” in [1 Corinthians 7:2-3 and 10-17](#).

Thus, every instance of the terms “husband” and “wife” in Scripture refers to a man or a woman in a heterosexual marriage relationship. There is never an exception. Moreover, the very definition of marriage is established in the creation account as being exclusively heterosexual based upon God’s decision to create mankind as consisting of male and female genders designed to satisfy each other’s needs. This is testified to by both the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul. Because of these clearly defined definitions, there can be no such thing as homosexual marriages. It is a self-contradicting title. Also Scripture is clear in passages such as [1 Corinthians 7:2](#) and [Galatians 5:19-21](#) that sexual intercourse is only acceptable within the confines of marriage. Therefore, if all Biblical marriages are heterosexual unions, and if all acceptable sexual intercourse must be performed within the confines of marriage, then homosexual intercourse is necessarily prohibited without exception.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

It can never occur within the acceptable parameters established by God, thus making it sexual immorality. As such, one can firmly declare all homosexual intercourse to be a sin before God. Indeed, God has already done this on our behalf.

Throughout the Bible, God declares the practice of homosexuality to be sin. As such, it should be no surprise to learn that every reference to homosexuality in Scripture is negative:

- [Leviticus 18:22](#), *“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.”*
- [Leviticus 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.”*
- [Romans 1:24-27](#), *“Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 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.”*

As a side note, Dr. John Corvino is well known for his lecture titled “What’s Morally Wrong with Homosexuality” in which he concludes with the challenge that people ought not to question whom someone loves but whether someone loves. Similarly, gay activists such as Matthew Vines present heart-rending appeals to their opponents asking that homosexuals simply be permitted and encouraged to love the person of their choice. It would appear that God strongly disagrees with these appeals because [Romans chapter one](#) teaches that God views homosexual love as “dishonorable passions” and “shameless acts.” The King James Version of the Bible translates this as “vile affections.” According to God, homosexual love is not true Biblical love.

- [1 Corinthians 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, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- [1 Timothy 1:9-10](#), *“[U]nderstanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,”*
- [Jude 1:7](#), *“[J]ust 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.”*

Because of the clear teaching of these passages, they have come under assault by those who support homosexuality. Largely, these prohibitions are touted as irrelevant vestiges of the Law of Moses. However, we need not fall into these semantic quagmires. Instead, most of such arguments against

these passages can be avoided by recognizing that the immoral nature of homosexuality transcends the Law of Moses. Homosexuality was considered to be a sin by God before the giving of the Law, and it remained a sin after the Law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ.

In the giving of the Law in Leviticus, homosexuality was grouped with a number of sins, including:

- Incest, which is a sexual relationship with a close relative ([Leviticus 18:6-18](#))
- Adultery ([Leviticus 18:20](#))
- Infanticide ([Leviticus 18:21](#))
- Homosexuality ([Leviticus 18:22](#))
- Bestiality ([Leviticus 18:23](#))

God declares homosexuality to be one of the sins that caused God to abhor the nations who inhabited the land before Israel and to cast those nations out of the land. [Leviticus 18:22 and 24-30](#) says:

“

“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.” ... “Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you (for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean), lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. For everyone who does any of these abominations, the persons who do them shall be cut off from among their people. So keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that were practiced before you, and never to make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God.”

Also, [Leviticus 20:13 and 23](#) says, *“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. ... And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them.”*

Not only was homosexuality a sin prior to the issuing of the Law, but God judged entire nations for this sin, among others. However, these nations did not have God’s Law to know what is right and wrong in the eyes of God. How then could a righteous God judge entire nations for a sin against which there was no commandment? According to [Romans 2:14-16](#), God has placed His Law within the hearts of men, *“For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts*

accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.”

This is often termed “natural law.” This is why every civilization has had laws against such things as murder, stealing, adultery, etc. Written within man’s heart is an inherent understanding that the acts listed in [Leviticus chapter 18](#) are immoral. According to [Romans chapter one](#), homosexuality defies what mankind innately knows to be natural and right. This is why God could justly abhor the nations who practiced these activities and could justly judge them.

[Leviticus chapters 18](#) and [20](#) are important passages because they reveal that the immoral nature of these acts are universal in scope and eternal in time. Their sinfulness preceded the giving of the Law, and they have remained sinful acts since Christ’s fulfillment of the Law. As such, these particular acts cannot be compared against other portions of the Law of Moses which were given only for a time and primarily for the purpose of illustration, such as the dietary laws.

Scripture is clear: the practice of homosexuality is sinful. Homosexual activity is a moral sin just as incest, bestiality, adultery, and infanticide are moral sins. Within our culture, adultery is becoming socially acceptable—particularly with the celebration of adultery in popular media programs, such as the award-winning television show, *Scandal*. Similarly, infanticide is now socially acceptable thanks to *Roe v. Wade* and “pro-choice” political platforms. Therefore, it should not be surprising to witness our culture embrace homosexuality. Cultures, principals, morals, and convictions change in societies over time. However, God’s Word remains consistent. This is why it is imperative that we as Christians determine our sexual morals based upon the Bible. As Christians, our theology determines our sexuality, and we must be careful that we not forget this amid the social debate that surrounds us.

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. THE BIBLE IS GOD'S ETERNAL STANDARD OF TRUTH

- A. Societies change; cultures change; principals, morals, and convictions change when given enough time. What are some examples of how these have changed in America over the years?
- B. Why are social preference and cultural agreement unreliable standards for determining the morality of same-sex relationships?
- C. How does our belief in the omniscience of God affect the statement, "The Bible is God's inerrant and eternal standard for truth."
- D. Is it foolish and naive to place trust in the Bible above the latest scientific study, the political temperature of the nation, popular consent, and our emotions and circumstances? Why?
- E. It is difficult to get 10 close friends to completely agree on issues of politics, religion, and the purpose and meaning of life. This becomes exponentially more difficult when time and cultural barriers are crossed. Imagine if our politicians today had to work with our Founding Fathers who lived less than 250 years earlier to create the Constitution of the United States of America. How similar a document do you think they would create to our current Constitution? Realizing this, how strong an evidence for the supernatural origin of Scripture is the argument that the Bible was written by more than 40 different authors, in all walks of life, living in multiple civilizations stretching over 1,500 years, and yet there is harmony of purpose and thought throughout the entire Bible?
- F. There is more internal and external evidence to support the authenticity of Scripture than any other historical book known to man. What should the implications of this truth be for those who reject the testimony and validity of Scripture?

II. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY IN THE CREATION ACCOUNT

- A. Why do you think the creation account's only explanation of what being created in God's image includes is that mankind was created as sexual creatures—that they were created male and female?

- B. What is the significance of God choosing to create a counterpart for Adam in the creation account?
- C. Sex is a huge part of American culture, whether it be in music, in literature, on TV, in our educational system, in our political system, etc. If our sexuality is sacred, should we change the way we treat sexuality in our culture? If so, in what ways?
- D. If human sexuality is sacred, then those who wish to be identified through appearance or behavior as members of the opposite sex are committing a form of blasphemy. Realizing this, how should we respond to someone who, through his/her appearance or behavior identifies as a member of the opposite sex? Similarly, how should we respond to someone who suffers from gender dysphoria but has not yet acted upon these feelings?
- E. Marriage requires a divine act to accomplish. It is not merely a social construct. If this is true, then are homosexual couples who are legally married under State law considered to be married by God? If not, then how should we respond to married homosexual couples?
- F. Should a Christian attend a homosexual wedding? Why?
- G. It is often said that Jesus never said anything about homosexuality. Jesus may not have specifically addressed the issue of homosexuality, but Jesus did not specifically address many issues. Nevertheless, Jesus' teachings do provide principles for how to view these other issues. Apply the principles of [Matthew 19:4-6](#) to the issue of homosexuality. Does Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce in [Matthew 19:4-6](#) reveal Jesus' view of homosexuality? Explain.
- H. Is there any room for acceptable homosexual marriages in [1 Corinthians 7:1-17](#)? If not, and if the Bible is God's eternal standard for truth and practice throughout eternity, then why is the possibility of homosexual marriages not included in this passage?

III. HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITY IS SEXUAL IMMORALITY

- A. Why is "homosexual marriage" an oxymoron?
- B. It is often said that the Bible only specifically addresses homosexuality six times. Ordinarily, this is said to prove that the issue of homosexuality must not be particularly important to God. How many times must God say something is sinful in order for it to be sinful? Can you think of any other issues which are sinful but are only addressed six or less times in Scripture?
- C. If we as a society were to adopt the Biblical definition of homosexual activity in [Romans 1](#) as "dishonorable passions" and "shameful acts" instead of "love," how would this change the way we handle the issue of homosexuality?

- D. Do you agree with [Romans 1](#) which says that homosexual activity is not true, Biblical love; it is “dishonorable passions” and “shameful acts.” Why?
- E. How does what we as a society call love differ from the Bible’s definition of love in [1 Corinthians 13:4-8](#)?
- F. How does the realization that homosexuality was considered to be a sin by God before the giving of the Law of Moses help to protect against the charge that the prohibition against homosexuality is merely an irrelevant vestige of the Law of Moses?
- G. If [Leviticus 18](#) and [20](#) teaches that the immoral nature of homosexual activity is universal in scope and eternal in time, then is it fair to compare the acceptability of homosexuality with eating shell fish, wearing clothes of mixed fibers, and touching pig skin? Based on [Leviticus 18](#) and [20](#), what would be some more accurate comparisons?

Is There Really a Gay Agenda?

In a 1996 speech on behalf of same-sex marriages delivered to the House of Representatives, Iowa Republican Ed Fallon declared:⁴⁵

“

Heterosexual unions are and will continue to be predominant, regardless of what gay and lesbian couples do. To suggest that homosexual couples in any way, shape or form threaten to undermine the stability of heterosexual unions is patently absurd.

And I know, you'll say: "What about the gay agenda?" Well, just as there turned out to be no Bolsheviks in the bathroom back in the 1950s, there is no gay-agenda in the 1990s. There is, however, a strong, well-funded anti-gay agenda ...

Few things seem to rile homosexual activists more than an allusion to a gay agenda. Charles Bouley II has written a representative response on Advocate.com, which is a leading gay website, "Actually, let me flat out say it: There is no gay agenda. I hate to break it to all those antigay organizations out there that have made such a myth the bedrock of their bigotry campaigns, but really, it just doesn't exist."⁴⁶ Similarly, in 2006, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, commonly known as GLAAD, listed "gay agenda" and "homosexual agenda" among their list of offensive terminology to avoid. They wrote, "Notions of a 'homosexual agenda' are rhetorical inventions of anti-gay extremists seeking to portray as sinister the lesbian and gay civil rights movement." Not surprisingly, they

⁴⁵ Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, 26.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

recommended replacing the offensive “gay agenda” with the preferred title, “lesbian and gay civil rights movement.”⁴⁷

The question must be asked, “Why is there such an aversion to linking homosexuality with an agenda?” As is implied by GLAAD’s comments, could it be that “agenda” indicates sinister intent, and it would be more accurate to speak of the gay civil rights movement? Setting aside for the moment the question of whether the requests of gay activists are, in fact, civil rights requests, surely history does not support the suggestion that “agenda” implies something sinister. Indeed, the civil rights movement frequently refers to their efforts as a “civil rights agenda.” Articles can be found such as “The Unfinished Civil Rights Agenda” and “A New Civil Rights Agenda: A New Leadership is Making a Difference.” Even the Citizen’s Commission on Civil Rights refers to their efforts as an agenda on their website, saying that “Its work is grounded in the belief that the civil rights agenda benefits the entire country, not just particular interest groups.”⁴⁸ Likewise, the feminist movement freely refers to the “feminist agenda.” On the National Organization for Women’s website, articles can be found such as “NOW’s Progressive Feminist Agenda for Peace,” and in Australia, the feminist movement even sports the website FeministAgenda.org.au.⁴⁹ Clearly the use of the term “agenda” for a political movement is nothing new, and the term is not inherently sinister.

Make no mistake about it, the gay movement is a political movement. If there is any doubt, then consider just two prominent gay organizations. With an annual budget in 2014 of nearly \$45 million,⁵⁰ The Human Rights Campaign once described itself on its website as “America’s largest gay and lesbian organization” which “[E]ffectively lobbies Congress; mobilizes grassroots action in diverse communities; invests strategically to elect a fair-minded Congress; and increases public understanding through innovative education and communication strategies.”⁵¹ Likewise, according to their website, the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce “works to build the grassroots political power of the LGBT community to win complete equality. We do this through direct and grassroots lobbying to defeat anti-LGBT ballot initiatives and legislation and pass pro-LGBT legislation and other measures. We also analyze and report on the positions of candidates for public office on issues of importance to the LGBT community.”⁵² Certainly, a movement that includes multiple well-funded organizations that build grassroots political efforts and lobby Congress can be considered a political movement. And every political movement has an agenda. After all, it would be a waste of time to lobby Congress for an unknown benefit.

Yet even beyond this, there is another reason why people reference a gay agenda. In 1990 Harvard-trained gay authors Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen wrote the book *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 1990’s*, in which they presented a six-point comprehensive strategy for changing America’s attitude toward homosexuality. According to the authors, the purpose of this book was to expand and detail an already existing four-point agenda into what they called “a practical agenda” for homosexuals. Recounting the origins of this agenda, they wrote, “In February 1988 ... a ‘war conference’ of 175 leading gay activists, representing organizations from across the land, convened in Warrenton, Virginia, to establish a four-point agenda for the gay

⁴⁷ Ibid, 25-26.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 41.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 41-42.

⁵⁰ Brown, “Human Rights Campaign Accuses Christian Conservatives of Inciting Fear and Hate.”

⁵¹ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 36.

⁵² “About Us.”

movement.”⁵³ Certainly, when 175 leading gay activists representing organizations from across the country convene for a “war conference” to establish an “agenda for the gay movement,” it is fair to view the gay movement as an organized political movement that is following an agenda.

After the Ball is filled with specific tactics for accomplishing this “practical agenda.” Regarding these, they willingly admit, “The campaign we outline in this book, though complex, depends centrally upon a program of unabashed propaganda, firmly grounded in long-established principles of psychology and advertising.”⁵⁴ Most notable among these tactics are those of desensitization, jamming, and conversion. Regarding desensitization, the authors wrote, “[T]o desensitize straights to gays and gayness, inundate them in a continuous flood of gay-related advertising, presented in the least offensive fashion possible. If straights can’t shut off the shower, they may at least eventually get used to being wet.”⁵⁵ They also wrote:⁵⁶

“

Gays must launch a large-scale campaign ... to reach straights through the mainstream media. We’re talking about propaganda. ... [C]arefully crafted, repeatedly displayed mass-media images of gays could conceivably do even more to reverse negative stereotypes than could the incremental coming-out of one person to another. ... One of the special advantages of a media campaign is that it can—and should—portray only the most favorable sides of gays ... When this is done, the picture labeled “queer” is aggressively painted over; prior images of dirty old queens or coarsened dykes are overlaid with pleasing new images of all-American and Miss American types. (emphasis in the original)

Equally important as the strategy of desensitization is something they referred to as “jamming.” According to the authors of *After the Ball*, “Jamming makes use of the rules of Associative Conditioning (the psychological process whereby, when two things are repeatedly juxtaposed, one’s feelings about one thing are transferred to the other) and Direct Emotional Modeling (the inborn tendency of human beings to feel what they perceive others to be feeling.)”⁵⁷

One means of accomplishing this is to unfairly associate everyone who opposes homosexuality with the radical beliefs and actions of fringe extremists. They wrote:⁵⁸

“

In TV and print, images of victimizers can be combined with those of their gay victims by

⁵³ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 32–33.

⁵⁴ Kirk, *After the Ball*, xxvi.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 149.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 161, 169.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 151.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 189–190.

a method propagandists call the “bracket technique.” For example, for several seconds an unctuous beady-eyed Southern preacher is shown pounding the pulpit in rage against “those perverted, abominable creatures.” While his tirade continues over the soundtrack, the picture switches to heart-rending photos of badly beaten persons, or of gays who look decent, harmless, and likeable; and then we cut back to the poisonous face of the preacher. The contrast speaks for itself. The effect is devastating.

The viewer will ordinarily recoil from these images of victimizers, thinking automatically: “I don’t like those maniacs, don’t want to be like them, and would be ashamed if others thought I was like them. Surely I’m more compassionate and sophisticated, because I don’t share their irrational hatred of gays.” Every time a viewer runs through this comparative self-appraisal, he reinforces a self-definition that consciously rejects homohatred and validates sympathy for gay victims. Exactly what we want.

A particularly effective means of jamming has been to redefine the homosexual as a victim. The authors wrote, “In any campaign to win over the public, gays must be portrayed as victims in need of protection so that straights will be inclined by reflex to adopt the role of protector. ... The purpose of victim imagery is to make straights feel very uncomfortable; that is, to jam with shame the self-righteous pride that would ordinarily accompany and reward their antigay belligerence, and to lay groundwork for the process of conversion by helping straights identify with gays and sympathize with their underdog status.”⁵⁹

The final tactic presented in the book *After the Ball* for accomplishing this “practical agenda” for homosexuality is that of conversion. The authors wrote:⁶⁰

“

Desensitization aims at lowering the intensity of antigay emotional reactions to a level approximating sheer indifference; Jamming attempts to blockade or counteract the rewarding “pride in prejudice” ... by attaching to homohatred a pre-existing, and punishing, sense of shame in being a bigot, a horse’s [expletive], and a beater and murderer. Both Desensitization and Jamming, though extremely useful, are mere preludes to our highest—though necessarily very long-range—goal, which is Conversion. It isn’t enough that antigay bigots should become confused about us, or even indifferent to us—we are safest, in the long run, if we can actually make them like us. Conversion aims at just this.

In case there remains any doubt as to what is meant by “conversion,” the authors clarify, “We mean conversion of the average American’s emotions, mind, and will through a planned psychological attack, in the form of propaganda fed to the nation via the media. We mean “subverting” the

⁵⁹ Ibid, 183.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 153.

mechanism of prejudice to our own ends—using the very processes that made America hate us to turn their hatred into warm regard—whether they like it or not.”⁶¹

Without question, these authors were absolutely correct when they defined their book as a “practical agenda.”⁶² These tactics offered in the book *After the Ball* have proven to be incredibly successful. Nevertheless, gay activists often seek to disassociate themselves from this landmark book and dismiss it as an obscure fringe work. Most likely, this is because the book is a raw and honest exposure of the gay movement’s tactics, goals, and intentional deception. Regardless, nearly every suggested tactic in the book has been utilized by the gay movement.

Were this not enough, there remains still more reason to believe that a gay agenda exists. Even beyond the admission by these gay authors of a war conference and a gay agenda, and beyond their use of the term “agenda” to describe their own work, an organized gay agenda can be clearly seen as early as 1972 in the Gay Rights Platform. The Gay Rights Platform, which was formulated in Chicago, Illinois, demanded:

- The repeal of all laws prohibiting private sexual acts involving consenting persons
- The repeal of all laws prohibiting prostitution, both male and female
- The repeal of all laws governing the age of sexual consent
- The repeal of all legislative provisions that restrict the sex or number of persons entering into a marriage unit; and the extension of legal benefits to all persons who cohabit, regardless of sex or numbers
- The enactment of legislation that child custody, adoption, visitation rights, foster parenting and the like shall not be denied because of sexual orientation or marital status
- The encouragement and support for sex education courses, prepared and taught by gay women and men, presenting homosexuality as a valid, healthy preference and a lifestyle that is a viable alternative to heterosexuality⁶³

Certainly, this qualifies as an agenda, and this agenda was carefully followed by gay activists. These demands were an important part of the literature distributed at the 1987 March on Washington as well as the 1993 March on Washington—except that by 1993, several of these demands had already been met. Still, a list of the remaining demands was presented to Congress. This list included demands for:

- The recognition of same-sex marriages and domestic partnerships
- Adoption of children by homosexual couples
- The implementation of homosexual, bisexual and transgendered curricula at all levels of education
- The repeal of all sodomy laws
- The passage and implementation of graduated age-of-consent laws for sexual relations⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ibid, 153–154.

⁶² Ibid, *i*.

⁶³ Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 85.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 84.

Today many of these 1993 demands have been met. In fact, as a nation, we are on the verge of consenting to every one of the Gay Rights Platform’s original list of demands. But this consent is not the result of a national epiphany. It is the result of persistent gay lobbying in the media, and everywhere between the halls of government and the halls of our local public schools.⁶⁵ Surely it is both fair and accurate to refer to a “gay agenda.”

A considerable amount of time could be spent further detailing the goals and tactics of this gay agenda. Such a careful examination of this agenda would be an enlightening experience, but it would also risk encouraging us to view the homosexual as our adversary. Of course, on a political level, this is true. On a political level, we must stand firmly opposed to legislation that would allow such immoral behavior to transform our society and needlessly expose our children to lifestyles that they have no ability to understand or evaluate. But for most of us, the political nature of this subject is secondary to its personal nature. There are some who are strong political activists, and we need such people. If truth be told, we could use far more activists, and we ought to encourage and champion the efforts of such individuals. But the vast majority of Christians are not politically active. Instead, for them this issue revolves around people—friends, relatives, neighbors, and co-workers; and people must be treated differently than political platforms and legislative proposals.

It is very difficult to truly love and reach out to people when they are seen as the enemy. It is very difficult to come alongside someone who is viewed as a threat. Yet for many of our friends and family members who come out of the closet, and for many of the homosexuals whom we may encounter in the workforce, this gay agenda is larger than their personal aspirations. For many of these people, all they care about is being loved and accepted for whom they believe themselves to be. Many of these homosexuals are not interested in eliminating age of sexual consent laws and securing homosexual adoption rights. They just want to have relationships and a lifestyle that are considered to be normal and acceptable by society. Just as not every one of us is fairly represented by our politicians and political party affiliations, so too not every homosexual is fairly represented by gay activists. Therefore, we will not pursue an extensive understanding of the gay agenda. It is important to recognize that it does exist, and it is greatly influencing our society, but for those of us who are not well informed regarding the homosexual community, it might be a better use of our time to remember that we too have an agenda.

As Christians, we serve as Christ’s ambassadors according to [2 Corinthians 5:20](#), “[W]e are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” An ambassador is one who represents and speaks on behalf of another. When an ambassador of the United States of America speaks to the leadership of another country, he is speaking with full authority as if he were the President of the United States of America. Likewise, when we share the gospel of salvation with others, we speak with full authority as if we were Jesus Christ reaching out to that individual. Therefore, when we ignore, belittle, mock, and reject another—such as a person with same-sex attractions—to that individual, it is as if Jesus Christ Himself were ignoring, belittling, mocking, and rejecting him.

Jesus would never ignore or reject a person who was lost and separated from God simply because he was acting out his sinful nature. It should be expected that sinners will sin. Apart from the forgiveness of Jesus and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, every person is a slave to sin. In [John 8:34-](#)

⁶⁵ “Who We Are.”

36, we read, *“Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.’”* Likewise, Jesus presented an analogy in [Matthew 7:17-18](#), saying, *“So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.”* In other words, a person’s consistent behavior is the result of a spirit that has either been renewed by God and is healthy, or a spirit that is sick and is enslaved to sin.

When we read the Gospels, we do not find Jesus cloistered away with the righteous. Instead, Jesus actively sought out sinners and built relationships with them. [Mark 2:15-17](#) recalls, *“And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, ‘Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.’”*

It is important to realize that the use of the term “sinners” in this passage is not a generic reference to the common people. Rather, it refers to those who through the habitual practice of unlawful behavior had been separated from God’s covenant with Israel. These were the “reprobate” who were destined for eternal damnation. As such, they were often ostracized by society, and certainly by the religious community. The parallels between these sinners and the homosexual community should be obvious. Through repeated sexually immoral behavior, homosexuals often find themselves ostracized by the religious community as reprobates who are destined for an eternity in Hell. And yet we discover that it was precisely these kinds of individuals to whom Jesus actively ministered.

Jesus did not minister to the rejected reprobates of society because He had nobody better to teach. Rather, Jesus had a heart for those whom society had rejected. Jesus reached out to those who were in the greatest danger of experiencing God’s judgment because they had chosen a lifestyle that had divorced them from exposure to the truth. Realizing this, Jesus brought the truth to them. But He did not do this by shouting at them from a distance. Rather, He entered their homes and fellowshiped with them. Jesus built relationships with them in order that He might have opportunity to share the truth.

Likewise, we have been commissioned by Jesus in [Matthew 28:19-20](#) to follow Jesus’ example and to seek out the lost in order that we might share with them the truth of God’s Word, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* This requires that we not allow ourselves to construct a wall of separation between ourselves and those whose practices are different, sinful, destructive, or even disgusting to us. Rather, if we are to follow Jesus’ example, then these are precisely the individuals whom we should most love and reach out to.

So, the first part of our Christian agenda is to identify the sinners—those who through the habitual practice of sinful behavior have been ostracized and rejected by society and by the religious community—such as homosexuals. Second, we are called to reach out to these individuals in love.

This involves building relationships with them in order that we might have opportunity to share the truth of God's Word. Third, we must speak the truth to them.

Jesus did not build relationships with sinners just to make them feel loved. Jesus was not afraid to offend sinners with the truth after first demonstrating to them his genuine concern for their wellbeing. There was never a question regarding whether Jesus condoned or affirmed the lifestyle of these sinners. Once again, in [Mark 2:15-17](#), Jesus referred to these people as being spiritually sick sinners in need of a cure in order that they might live in righteousness, *“And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, ‘Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.’”*

All too often, Christians develop relationships with unbelievers only to discover that they do not have the strength to speak the truth when given the opportunity. Sometimes this is because they fear offending the individual, and sometimes it is because they begin to question what they believe to be true. Being ambassadors for Christ, it is as if Jesus Christ were communicating to these unbelievers that it is more important that they feel affirmed, supported, and loved than it is that they know the truth and fix their relationship with God. In so doing, the Christian offends Jesus Christ rather than offend his new friend. Jesus never placed an individual's feelings above his need for salvation, but Jesus also did not minister to such individuals before first developing a firm personal conviction and understanding of the truth. [Luke 2:52](#) teaches that Jesus first grew in His understanding before ministering to those who would challenge the foundations of His belief. In other words, Jesus equipped Himself for this kind of ministry.

So, we might add another element in our agenda which really ought to be the first step. First, we grow in our understanding of the truth of God's Word and in wisdom. Second, we identify those who through the habitual practice of sinful behavior have been ostracized and rejected by society and by the religious community—such as homosexuals. Third, we reach out to these individuals in love. This involves building relationships with them in order that we might have opportunity to share the truth of God's Word. And fourth, we speak the truth to them. This should be the agenda of every Christian in order that we, like the Apostle Paul in [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#), can say to our friends, *“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, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 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.”* (emphasis added)

Every group has an agenda, but not every agenda is equally as effective. Despite the incredible influence of the homosexual agenda over the past few decades, the Christian agenda, when properly followed, has an unchallenged history of being the most influential agenda known to man. Unlike the gay agenda, we have no need to deny the existence of our agenda. Moreover, we have no reason to fear the gay agenda and its influence if we as the church would simply be faithful to execute our own divinely mandated agenda.

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TERM “AGENDA”

- A. Why do you think the term “gay agenda” invokes such resistance?
- B. What does the word “agenda” mean? Is this inherently sinister?
- C. Were you surprised to learn that just one of many pro-gay organizations—The Human Rights Campaign—had an annual budget in 2014 of \$45 million and uses this money to lobby Congress? Does this change how you consider the term “gay agenda”? Explain.
- D. The statement was made “Every political movement has an agenda.” How effective would a political movement be if it had no agenda?

II. TACTICS OF THE AGENDA

- A. When speaking about desensitization, the statement was made in the book *After the Ball*, “Gays must launch a large-scale campaign ... to reach straights through the mainstream media. We’re talking about propaganda.” How do we see this being accomplished today?
- B. Has the tactic of desensitization been an effective tactic? Explain.
- C. When speaking about jamming, the statement was made in the book *After the Ball*, “One means of accomplishing this is to unfairly associate everyone who opposes homosexuality with the radical beliefs and actions of fringe extremists.” How do we see this being accomplished today?
- D. An intentional jamming tactic of the gay community has been to redefine the homosexual as a victim. Has this tactic changed the way the Christian community handles the homosexual issue? Explain.
- E. Has the tactic of jamming been an effective tactic? Explain.
- F. When speaking about conversion, the statement was made in the book *After the Ball*, “We mean conversion of the average American’s emotions, mind, and will through a planned

psychological attack, in the form of propaganda fed to the nation via the media.” How do we see this being accomplished today?

G. Given what the authors of *After the Ball* said regarding the tactic of conversion, do you believe the homosexual community will ever be satisfied with being tolerated but not celebrated? How should this influence our approach to dealing with the issue of homosexuality?

H. Has the tactic of conversion been an effective tactic? Explain.

III. GOALS OF THE AGENDA

A. The statement was made, “As a nation, we are on the verge of consenting to every one of the Gay Rights Platform’s original list of demands.” How effective has this been at reconciling the relationship between homosexuals and heterosexuals in our nation? Explain.

IV. THE CHRISTIAN AGENDA

A. Should Christians be politically active? Why?

B. The statement was made, “It is very difficult to truly love and reach out to people when they are seen as the enemy.” Do you agree with this statement? How can one stand opposed to the lifestyle and efforts of homosexuals without viewing them as the enemy?

C. The statement was made, “Just as not every one of us is fairly represented by our politicians and political party affiliations, so too not every homosexual is fairly represented by gay activists.” How should this influence the way we view and interact with homosexuals?

D. What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20)?

E. Christians serve as ambassadors for Christ. Based upon your actions and words, what message is Jesus communicating to homosexuals?

F. Why do you think Jesus spent so much time with the “reprobate” sinners?

G. If Jesus had a heart for those whom society had rejected, and if we are supposed to have the same heart as Jesus, then we as Christians ought to have a heart for those whom society has rejected. Does something need to change in your life in order to make this statement true in your life? Explain.

- H. Compare how Jesus ministered to those whom society had rejected with your own ministry. How similar are the two? If they are not similar, then what needs to change?
- I. The statement was made, “Jesus did not build relationships with sinners just to make them feel loved.” Why did Jesus build relationships with sinners? Are you following Jesus’ example in your relationships with the lost?
- J. The statement was made, “[Luke 2:52](#) teaches that Jesus first grew in His understanding before ministering to those who would challenge the foundations of His belief.” Why is this important? Are you intentionally growing in your understanding in order to minister to the lost? How?
- K. How would you define the Christian agenda?

A Homosexual Lifestyle?

With increasing frequency, one can turn on the television and witness advertisements that, at first, appear to depict the classic American family, showing two parents, a couple children, and a dog enjoying life together. However, upon closer examination, this classic American family now has two men as the parents, or two women as the parents. Everything in the advertisement is as one might expect from an ordinary American family except that the parents are the same gender. Similarly, gay activists for same-sex marriage like to stress that homosexual marriages are just as monotonous and uneventful as heterosexual marriages. In short, anymore, we are being encouraged to ignore the gay pride parades and consider the homosexual lifestyle to be virtually indistinguishable from the heterosexual lifestyle ... but is this true? Generally speaking, is the homosexual lifestyle different from the heterosexual lifestyle simply in the gender of one's partner?

Given that some activists have taken issue with the term “lifestyle,” it should be quickly noted that everyone has a lifestyle. Even if that lifestyle is as boring as waking up, brushing one's teeth, going to work, coming home to watch the news, and then going to bed. Despite the absence of anything provocative or extravagant, this is a lifestyle, and it is not demeaning or inappropriate to recognize that people's lifestyles differ from one another—often based largely upon demographics and religious affiliations.

In the last chapter, we considered the book *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 1990's*. This is a book that was written by Harvard-trained gay activists as a “practical agenda” to change Americans' thinking toward homosexuals.⁶⁶ A key strategy presented in this book is convincing heterosexuals that the homosexual lifestyle is nearly indistinguishable from that of heterosexuals. However, numerous scientific studies have proven this to be demonstrably

⁶⁶ Kirk, *After the Ball*, i.

false. Generally speaking, the homosexual lifestyle is considerably more risky and dangerous than the heterosexual lifestyle.

One reason for this is the promiscuous nature of the homosexual lifestyle. This is not to say that heterosexuals are not promiscuous, but rather that the homosexual community elevates promiscuity to a whole different level. In his book *Strained Relations*, researcher Bill Muehlenberg reported the findings of, arguably, the most well-known pro-homosexual institute:⁶⁷

“

An exhaustive 1978 Kinsey Institute study of homosexuality showed that 28 per cent of homosexual males had sexual encounters with 1,000 or more males over a lifetime. And 79 per cent said more than half of their sex partners were strangers. Only one per cent of sexually active men had fewer than five lifetime partners.

The study concludes: “Little credence can be given to the supposition that homosexual men’s ‘promiscuity’ has been overestimated. ... Almost half of the white homosexual males said that they had at least 500 different sexual partners during the course of their homosexual careers.”

Similarly, a study by Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg “found that the average homosexual had 550 different sexual partners.”⁶⁸

This promiscuity generally occurs whether or not an individual is involved in a committed relationship with another person. Muehlenberg wrote, “In a study of 156 males in homosexual relationships, only seven couples claimed to have a totally exclusive sexual relationship. But these seven were in relationships lasting less than five years. The author’s comment: ‘Stated another way, all couples with a relationship lasting more than five years have incorporated some provision for outside sexual activity in their relationship.’”⁶⁹ Likewise, Australian homosexual activist Dennis Altman wrote in his book *The Homosexualization of America*, “[I]t does seem clear that among gay men a long-lasting *monogamous* relationship is almost unknown. Indeed both gay women and gay men tend to be involved in what might be called multiple relationships, though of somewhat different kinds. ... A large scale study of gay male couples in San Diego concluded that every couple together more than five years had outside sexual contacts as a recognized part of the relationship.”⁷⁰

This is also the conclusion of Thomas Schmidt who, after studying all of the available data on the subject, concluded, “Promiscuity among homosexual men is not a mere stereotype, and it is not merely the majority experience – it is virtually the *only* experience. ... Tragically, lifelong faithfulness is almost nonexistent in the homosexual experience.”⁷¹ Realizing this, it is not surprising that Charles

⁶⁷ Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 10.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 11.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 12-13.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 11.

Silverstein and Edmund White wrote in their book, *The Joy of Gay Sex*, “Sexual promiscuity is one of the most striking distinguishing features of gay life in America.”⁷²

Aside from its moral deficiency, this sexual promiscuity has led to a greatly elevated risk of sexual disease among homosexuals. Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen wrote in their book, *After the Ball*, “Alas, it turns out that, on this point, public myth is supported by fact. There *is* more promiscuity among gays (or at least among gay men) than among straights; ... Correspondingly, the snail trail of promiscuity—sexually transmitted disease—also occurs among gay men at a rate five to ten times higher than average.”⁷³

Some of these sexually transmitted diseases are very serious and life-threatening. Based on data from a National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System report in April 2014, there were 9,000 cases of syphilis in America in 2012, and 84% of these were among men who had sex with men. To provide perspective, it is estimated that homosexuals—both male and female—comprise only about 3.5% of the American population, yet homosexual men comprised 84% of syphilis cases in 2012.⁷⁴ In 2013 the reported number of syphilis cases nearly doubled, rising to 16,000 cases. According to the Center for Disease Control, the vast majority of new reported syphilis cases come from men who have sex with men.⁷⁵ And according to an article in *Current Concepts in Gastroenterology*, male homosexuals are 14 times more likely to suffer from syphilis than male heterosexuals, and they are also eight times more likely to have hepatitis.⁷⁶ Furthermore, homosexuals are at great risk of contracting HIV and AIDS—a virtually non-existent threat to heterosexuals. Michael Fumento writes in his book, *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, “[A]s rare as male breast cancer is, more native-born American males are diagnosed with the disease *each year* than the total number who have contracted AIDS through heterosexual intercourse since the AIDS epidemic began.”⁷⁷

HIV and AIDS in North America and Europe is not only an almost exclusively homosexual problem, it is an epidemic within the homosexual community. In 2010 *The Washington Post* reported, “One in five gay men in the United States has HIV, and almost half of those who carry the virus are unaware that they are infected, according to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study. The study tested more than 8,000 men in 21 cities in 2008, making it the most comprehensive such research by the CDC.”⁷⁸ Despite these figures, as many as half of all homosexual young men engage in unprotected sex according to some studies. Moreover, Bill Muehlenberg reported that “a recent Health in Men study by the National Centre in HIV Social Research found that 55 per cent of homosexual men did not disclose their HIV status to casual partners at any stage during the six months prior to the survey.”⁷⁹

In addition to the health risks of the homosexual lifestyle, there is a high degree of sexual deviancy. It is important to realize that not all homosexuals practice or approve of these acts. Nevertheless, within the homosexual community, there is an abnormally high percentage of those who do as

⁷² Ibid, 9.

⁷³ Kirk, *After the Ball*, 47-48.

⁷⁴ Gates, “How Many People are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender?”

⁷⁵ Reinberg, “Syphilis Cases Climbing Among Gay Men: CDC.”

⁷⁶ Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 20.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 39.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 35-36.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 37-38.

compared against the heterosexual community. Muehlenberg wrote that according to the 1992 book, *The Gay Report*—a book that is greatly praised within the homosexual community—“15 per cent of male homosexuals and 19 per cent of male bisexuals had sex with animals, compared with three per cent of male heterosexuals.”⁸⁰ Likewise, there is a significantly greater proportion of homosexuals who practice sado-masochism, and a host of sexual practices that are too extreme and perverted to even mention. A 1992 study found that 42% of male homosexuals practice something called “fisting,” as opposed to 2% of male heterosexuals; 29% of male homosexuals practice “golden showers” as opposed to 4% of male heterosexuals; and 37% of male homosexuals engaged in sado-masochism, as opposed to 5% of heterosexuals.⁸¹

The sexual deviancies that are tolerated among the homosexual community are abundant. Perhaps the most troubling of these is the practice of pedophilia. For the most part, the homosexual community accepts groups such as the North American Man-Boy Love Association. Moreover, there is a disturbingly high incidence of homosexuality in reported child molestations.⁸² This is not to say that homosexuals are more likely to be pedophiles, but rather that the homosexual community is generally more tolerant of such practices, refusing to denounce and separate itself from such organizations as NAMBLA.

Beyond all this, the homosexual lifestyle lends itself to a higher rate of non-sexually related harmful behavior. According to David Island and Patrick Letellier in their book *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence*, “[T]he incidence of domestic violence among gay men is nearly double that in the heterosexual population.”⁸³ Likewise, a study published in *The Journal of Interpersonal Violence* found that a third of the lesbians surveyed reported physical abuse from their partners.⁸⁴

Regarding other areas of harmful behavior, Muehlenberg wrote:⁸⁵

“

American research has found that 47 per cent of male homosexuals have a history of alcohol abuse (compared to 24 per cent of males generally), and 51 per cent have a history of drug abuse (compared to seven [per] cent of males generally). Thirty per cent of homosexuals—both male and female—are problem drinkers, as compared to 10 percent of the general population.

... Also, a study of 16,000 adolescents in America, as reported in the *Archives of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, found that lesbian and bi-sexual teenagers are more likely to smoke and are more vulnerable to cigarette marketing than their straight sisters. Almost 40 per cent of lesbians and bisexuals smoked, compared to just six per cent of heterosexual teenage girls. This finding is in keeping with previous studies on the subject.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 18-19.

⁸¹ Ibid, 18-19.

⁸² Ibid, 28-30.

⁸³ Ibid, 26.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 26.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 20-22.

In addition, according to the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, homosexual men are at a greater risk of developing eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia, than heterosexual men.

Also, researchers using data from the California Quality of Life Survey of 2,272 adults found that “gay men and bisexual and homosexually experienced heterosexual individuals had higher levels of psychological distress compared with exclusively heterosexual individuals.”

And a major recent study by the Center for Health Policy Research at the University of California, Los Angeles, found that older homosexual men and women “in California are more likely to suffer from chronic physical and mental health problems than their heterosexual counterparts.”

As a report in the *New York Times* put it:

“Older gay and bisexual men—ages 50 to 70—reported higher rates of blood pressure, diabetes and physical disability than similar heterosexual men. Older gay and bisexual men also were 45 percent more likely to report psychological distress and 50 percent more likely to rate their health as fair or poor. In addition, one in five gay men in California was living with HIV infection, the researchers found.”

And a recent study reported in the journal *Cancer* reported that homosexual men were twice as likely to have cancer as non-homosexual men. The study of more than 120,000 people in the state of California found that homosexual men were 1.9 times more likely to have cancer and were diagnosed with cancer 10 years earlier than other men. Said the study: “The greater cancer prevalence among gay men may be caused by a higher rate of anal cancer, as suggested by earlier studies that point to an excess risk of anal cancer.”

These harmful behaviors combined with the risk of sexually transmitted disease have significantly lowered the life expectancy of the average homosexual. According to a study in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*, “In a major Canadian centre, life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men. If the same pattern of mortality were to continue, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged 20 years will not reach their 65th birthday. Under even the most liberal assumptions, gay and bisexual men in this urban centre are now experiencing a life expectancy similar to that experienced by all men in Canada in the year 1871.”⁸⁶

Certainly, it is appropriate to consider the homosexual lifestyle as something that is unique from the heterosexual lifestyle. Of course, these statistics are not true of every homosexual individual, just as not every heterosexual individual fits into the average heterosexual lifestyle. Moreover, these statistics

⁸⁶ Ibid, 22.

will soon morph with the influx of many in the younger generation who are seizing upon the cultural acceptance of homosexuality to classify themselves as homosexual when they are merely curious, confused, following a trend, or seeking an identity. Nevertheless, this has historically been true of the homosexual community as a whole. As such, this is a lifestyle that is not only morally deficient, but is also physically dangerous. It is important that we realize this because the health and safety of our family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers is at stake. Even if we do not personally know anyone who self-identifies as homosexual, we ought to be troubled with the realization that the health and safety of other human beings is at stake. There is nothing loving or understanding about ignoring these facts when discussing the subject. When we as a society ignore these statistics, we turn our backs on the well-being of homosexuals. Likewise, on a personal level, when we ignore these statistics, we show our loved ones who are ensnared by this lifestyle that we do not adequately love them. Instead, it would seem that the most loving thing that one could do is to strongly discourage anyone from joining this community and from adopting this lifestyle.

How is it that our nation runs national campaigns to dissuade people from choosing unhealthy and dangerous behaviors such as smoking, drunk driving, and even texting while driving, but nothing is said about the dangers of homosexual behavior? The estimated number of deaths due to drunk driving⁸⁷ each year in America is comparable to the annual number of AIDS deaths in America.⁸⁸ To focus on one while not only ignoring the dangers of the other, but lauding its virtues, is hypocritical.

Not surprisingly, Scripture is in perfect harmony with this observed reality. When the Apostle Paul wrote about homosexuality in [Romans chapter one](#), he associated it with sexually transmitted disease and depravity. [Romans 1:18, 21, 24 and 26–28](#) says:

“

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ... For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ... Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ... For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 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. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Certainly, when a substantial portion of the homosexual community participates in such sexual deviances as golden showers, fisting, and practices that are too perverted to even mention, it can be said that they have received a debased mind which encourages them to do things that ought not to be done. Moreover, the HIV and AIDS epidemic—which in its sexual transmission is unique to same-sex relationships—can be considered a penalty within their own bodies for their error.

⁸⁷ “Impaired Driving: Get the Facts.”

⁸⁸ “HIV in the United States: *At a Glance*.”

According to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, this dangerous and unhealthy lifestyle is the consequence of suppressing God's truth and refusing to honor God and to be thankful to Him for those truths. In light of the Genesis creation account, it is reasonable to conclude that one of these suppressed truths is God's design of marriage as consisting of a male and female united together in marriage to become one flesh. So long as this truth is accepted, homosexuality is never an option. It is only when this truth is suppressed that homosexual relationships are made possible, and with it, the dangerous consequences.

Whether or not society wishes to admit it, the evidence is overwhelming that the debate regarding the acceptability of homosexuality encompasses far more than the question of whether homosexuals and heterosexuals are being treated fairly. This debate is truly a clash of two lifestyles. More importantly for us Christians, it is a clash of two spiritual worldviews.

As horrifying as the physical consequences of this lifestyle may be, it pales in comparison to the spiritual consequences of suppressing God's truth. In [Romans 2:2](#), the Holy Spirit uses the Apostle Paul to remind his readers, *"We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things."* And in [Revelation 20:8](#), we are told that those who are defined by their sexual immorality will suffer judgment in Hell, *"But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."*

This is a sober thought, but for those of us who may be nodding our heads in agreement with the justice of God, let us not be too quick to point the finger. Just as [Romans 2:2](#) warns the unrighteous of God's judgment, so also the very next verse is a warning to the self-righteous. [Romans 2:3](#) says, *"Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God?"* There are many ways to suppress the truth of God. Just because we do not suppress God's purpose and design for sex and marriage does not mean that we are not suppressing God's truth and commandments. Consider for example Jesus' teaching in [Matthew 22:37-39](#), *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."* Are we obeying Christ's command? Are we loving our neighbors? Are we loving our homosexual family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers? Are we telling them the truth that could spare them a lifetime of disease and an eternity in Hell? Every one of us should fear the consequences of suppressing God's truth—whether it takes the form of homosexual immorality, or of fear to adequately love those ensnared by homosexual immorality. And who are we to say that one form of suppressing God's truth is less evil than another?

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. LIFESTYLE AS A TACTIC

- A. Why do you think homosexual activists have chosen the tactic of equating the homosexual lifestyle with the heterosexual lifestyle?

II. THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE IS MORE PROMISCUOUS

- A. Christians have a tendency to over-exaggerate the promiscuous nature of the homosexual lifestyle. Sometimes the socially acceptable promiscuity of heterosexuals is ignored or forgotten, and it is imagined that every homosexual has 1,000 sexual partners within his lifetime. Why do we exaggerate? How can we acknowledge the decidedly promiscuous nature of homosexuality without exaggerating?
- B. If it is true that most homosexual men are promiscuous even when involved in a committed relationship, then how should this factor into the pressure being placed on the church to change its doctrine in order to cater to monogamous homosexual marriages?
- C. The statement was made, “According to an article in *Current Concepts In Gastroenterology*, male homosexuals are 14 times more likely to suffer from syphilis than male heterosexuals, and they are also eight times more likely to have hepatitis.” Faced with statistics like this, is it fair to say that ignoring the health risks associated with homosexuality is immoral? Explain.

III. THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE IS MORE SEXUALLY DEVIANT

- A. Is sexual deviancy limited to homosexuals? In other words, are some heterosexuals sexually deviant? Why then talk about the sexual deviancy of the homosexual lifestyle?
- B. As Christians, do we help or hinder our cause when we default to associating homosexuality with bestiality and pedophilia? Explain.

IV. THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE IS GENERALLY HARMFUL

- A. Those involved in the homosexual lifestyle are at greater risk of suffering from spousal abuse, substance abuse, eating disorders, psychological distress, chronic physical and mental health problems, cancer, and a lower life expectancy. Would it be more effective to highlight these risks than the sexual risks involved in homosexuality when trying to convince someone of the dangerous nature of the homosexual lifestyle? Why?
- B. Now that you know how risky the homosexual lifestyle is, does this change your view of homosexuality? Does this change how you hope to address the issue of homosexuality in society and with practicing homosexuals? How?

V. MATCHING THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE WITH REALITY (pages 83-87)

- A. The statement was made, “There is nothing loving or understanding about ignoring these facts when discussing the subject.” Do you agree with this statement? Why?
- B. The statement was made, “According to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in [Romans 1](#), this dangerous and unhealthy lifestyle is the consequence of suppressing God’s truth and refusing to honor God and be thankful to Him for those truths.” Does the suppression of God’s truths always lead to homosexuality? Why?
- C. What are ways that we as Christians suppress God’s truths?
- D. Which sin is worse, practicing homosexuality or failing to love homosexuals according to God’s standard in Scripture? Why?
- E. Given the teaching of this lesson, are you loving your homosexual family member, friend, or co-worker? Explain.

Nature vs. Nurture: Which one Determines Sexuality?

““**T**he phone rang off the hook with calls from reporters; there were TV cameramen lined up outside the lab; the mailbox and e-mail overflowed,’ Dean Hamer later remembered the reaction to his July, 1993 paper in the journal *Science*. ‘Rarely before have so many reacted so loudly to so little.’ Hamer’s paper—‘A Linkage Between DNA Markers on the X Chromosome and Male Sexual Orientation’—had the modest ring of science, where change is often slow and incremental. But the underlying idea seemed to carry enormous implications: Homosexuality was not a choice—‘the wrong choice,’ as many religious and political leaders have demagogued on the issue. Instead, homosexuality was as much a biological fact as eye color.”⁸⁹ This was part of a Public Broadcasting Service report on the gay gene debate, and it is representative of the mainstream media’s coverage of what has been erroneously called “the gay gene.” For years, scientists have sought to discover a genetic cause for homosexuality that would substantiate the oft heard claim that homosexuals are born gay, and as such, have no choice regarding their behavior.

Certainly, the most renowned of these studies is that of Dr. Dean Hamer who, while with the National Cancer Institute, claimed to have found a genetic link to homosexuality. After studying 40 pairs of homosexual brothers, he found that 33 of them shared the same set of DNA sequences in the Xq28 region of the X chromosome. However, in 1995 Dr. Dean Hamer was accused by one of the study’s collaborators of selectively reporting his research and data. He was charged with research improprieties and was investigated by the National Institute of Health’s Federal Office of Research Integrity. The results of this study were never released, but Dr. Hamer was shortly thereafter transferred to another section, and it is believed by many that his study amounts to little more than pseudo-science.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ “The ‘Gay Gene’ Debate.”

⁹⁰ Sorba, “The ‘Gay Gene’ Hoax.”

More importantly, Dr. Hamer's results have never been reproduced. Rather, a 1999 study by the University of Western Ontario of 52 pairs of homosexual brothers found the genetic markers cited by Dr. Hamer in exactly half of the brother pairs, which is consistent with the laws of chance. It concluded that the results of Dr. Hamer's study "did not support an X-linked gene underlying male homosexuality."⁹¹ Nevertheless, the media and gay activists continue to cite Dr. Hamer's study as proof of a gay gene.

Interestingly enough, even Dr. Dean Hamer has admitted that his study did not prove that homosexuality is the result of genetic determinism, saying, "[T]here is a lot more than just genes going on."⁹² He believes that genes are a factor in determining homosexuality, but environmental influences are also an important factor.⁹³ This is necessarily true when one considers instances where one identical twin is gay, and the other is straight. Because they share identical DNA, if homosexuality were entirely determined by one's genes, then both twins would be either gay or straight in every instance. There could never be a case where one identical twin is gay and the other is straight. The mere fact that this is not uncommon disproves any notion that homosexuality might be entirely the result of a person's genetic composition.

This was also the conclusion of a 2014 study by Dr. J. Michael Bailey at Northwestern University. Despite the fact that many media reports touted this study as evidence of a gay gene that compels a person to exhibit homosexual behavior, Dr. Bailey announced, "Our findings suggest there may be genes at play—we found evidence for two sets that affect whether a man is gay or straight. But it is not completely determinative; there are certainly other environmental factors involved." He even admitted that environmental factors were likely to have the biggest impact on homosexuality.⁹⁴

In all fairness, Dr. Bailey appears to have desired a different outcome from his study because he prefaced his findings with the contradictory declaration, "Sexual orientation has nothing to do with choice." This declaration was then followed by the admission, "But it is not completely determinative."⁹⁵ In other words, Dr. Bailey believes that sexual orientation is determinative—that it has nothing to do with choice—but the results of his study have proven that homosexuality is *not* completely determinative—that it is the result of both genetic and environmental factors.

A careful consideration of each scientific study supposedly proving the existence of a gay gene would result in a stack of scientifically disqualified studies and a general consensus that there is no genetic determinative cause for homosexuality. Even the decidedly pro-gay American Psychological Association stated in 2009:⁹⁶

“

There are numerous theories about the origins of a person's sexual orientation; most scientists today agree that sexual orientation is most likely the result of a complex

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Diggs Jr., "The Health Risks of Gay Sex."

⁹³ Marlboro College, "Dean Hamer - Gays, God and Genes."

⁹⁴ Knapton, "Being Homosexual is Only Partly Due to Gay Gene, Research Finds."

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, 201.

interaction of environmental, cognitive and biological factors. In most people, sexual orientation is shaped at an early age. There is also considerable recent evidence to suggest that biology, including genetic or inborn hormonal factors, play a significant role in a person's sexuality. In summary, it is important to recognize that there are probably many reasons for a person's sexual orientation and the reasons may be different for different people.

Likewise, the pro-gay American Psychiatric Association has said, "[T]o date there are no replicated scientific studies supporting any specific biological etiology for homosexuality."⁹⁷ Also, Dr. Neil Whitehead, after examining more than 10,000 scholarly papers and publications on the subject, concluded, "Geneticists, anthropologists, sociologists, endocrinologists, neuroanatomists, medical researchers into gender, and twin study researchers are in broad agreement about the role of genetics in homosexuality. Genes don't make you do it. There is no genetic determinism, and genetic influence at most is minor."⁹⁸

Regarding the degree of influence that genetics may have compared to environmental factors, scientists vary in their assessments, crediting genes for 10-60% of the equation.⁹⁹ But this simply places homosexual orientation in the same category as many other orientations. Professor Warren Throckmorton explains:¹⁰⁰

“

Putting the questionable figure in perspective lets *[sic]* look at other traits and the estimated percent of difference attributable to genetic factors according to existing research found on the American Psychological Association web site.

- * Attitudes toward reading books - 55%
- * Feelings about abortion on demand - 54%
- * Feelings about roller coaster rides - 50%
- * Attitudes towards the death penalty for murder - 50%
- * Humility - 58%
- * Likelihood to engage in casual sex - 49%
- * Attitudes toward equality - 55%

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 202.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 215.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Interestingly enough, every one of these things can be changed. A person can learn to enjoy reading books. A person can change his opinion regarding abortion. A person can become more or less humble over time. So why would we assume that homosexuality, which is no more genetically predetermined than these other things, cannot be changed? How is it that a person is born gay—end of story?

The reasons why the born gay argument remains so pervasive today despite the overwhelming evidence against it is because it is a well-calculated strategy designed to absolve homosexuals of all responsibility for their actions. This is not my opinion. Rather, it is a stated objective in the book *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 1990's*. If you will recall, we have already discussed how this book was written by homosexual activists as a “practical agenda” which has proven to be incredibly successful.¹⁰¹ These authors wrote that an important part of this agenda should be presenting homosexuals as having been born gay. They wrote, “We argue that, for all practical purposes, gays should be considered to have been born gay—even though sexual orientation, for most humans, seems to be the products of a complex interaction between innate predispositions and environmental factors during childhood and early adolescence. And since no choice is involved, gayness can be no more blameworthy than straightness.”¹⁰²

In other words, these homosexual activists proposed intentionally misrepresenting the science and purposefully deceiving Americans in order to absolve homosexuals of their responsibility. But even if it could one day be proven that homosexuals are born with a gay gene, does being born with a genetic pre-disposition truly absolve someone of responsibility for his behavior?

Virtually every human behavior, orientation, or tendency involves some genetic component, and yet this does not justify or normalize these behaviors, orientations, and tendencies, nor does it mean that people with these genetic components should not try to change their behavior, orientations, and tendencies. As the pro-gay psychologists, Dr. J. Michael Bailey of Northwest University and Dr. Brian Mustanski of Indiana University rightly observed, “[N]o clear conclusions about the morality of a behavior can be made from the mere fact of biological causation, because all behavior is biologically caused.”¹⁰³ Likewise, Dr. Dean Hamer and Peter Copeland wrote in their book *The Science of Desire: The Gay Gene and the Biology of Behavior*, “In short, biology is amoral; it offers no help distinguishing between right and wrong. Only people, guided by their values and beliefs, can decide what is moral and what is not.”¹⁰⁴

According to a 2010 *Nature* article, “Selfish dictators may owe their behavior partly to their genes, according to a study that claims to have found a genetic link to ruthlessness.”¹⁰⁵ Would we absolve Hitler of responsibility for his ruthless behavior if we discovered that he had a genetic pre-disposition to being ruthless? Of course not! But if Hitler’s behavior could not be condoned as normal and acceptable despite a genetic pre-disposition, then homosexual behavior also cannot be condoned as normal and acceptable simply because individuals may have a genetic pre-disposition.

¹⁰¹ Kirk, *After the Ball*, i.

¹⁰² Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 204.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 208-209.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 224.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 209.

Similarly, scientists have discovered possible genetic pre-dispositions to adultery, rape, violence, obesity, and even to being politically liberal.¹⁰⁶ Is anybody willing to accept adultery and rape as normal and acceptable simply because some people might be genetically pre-disposed to these behaviors? Or what about obesity? Should we celebrate and encourage over-eating because of a genetic pre-disposition to being obese? But if we do not accept and celebrate adultery, rape, and over-eating despite the genetic contribution to these behaviors, then why should we accept and celebrate homosexual behavior on the basis of a genetic component? When the gay activist's logic is applied to other behaviors, it becomes evident that a person's biology cannot be our basis for determining the morality of any behavior. Instead, our morality is determined by our Creator.

Those behaviors and actions which are immoral or sinful are so because they fail to align themselves with the character and behavior of God. Our standard for all behavior is determined by our Creator. In [Leviticus 11:44](#), God commanded His people Israel, *"For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy."* Also, in [verse 45](#) He said, *"For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."* Still again in [Leviticus 19:2](#), God commanded His people, *"Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy."* These commands are then repeated to God's people the church, in [1 Peter 1:14-16](#), *"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"*

God originally created mankind as holy creatures. Adam and Eve were without sin until they chose to rebel against God and to place their will above God's will. At that point, their nature was broken. No longer did their nature tend towards God. Now it was bent away from God, and this sinful nature was passed along to their offspring. This is the teaching of [Romans 5:12](#) which says, *"[S]in came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men."* Nevertheless, despite the fact that man was now born with a pre-disposition to sin, God continued to demand holiness. Never does God condone sinful behavior on the basis of biology. Instead, He calls man to overcome his temptations and to align his behavior with God's will. God's standard has never changed. When mankind possessed a sinless nature, God's standard was holiness, and when mankind rebelled and received a sinful nature, God's standard remained holiness.

With such a lofty standard, no person can succeed on his own. [James 2:10](#) teaches, *"[W]hoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it."* There is no room for error. A single sin permanently prevents a person from being holy through his own deeds, and [Romans 3:23](#) teaches that every person has sinned, *"[F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Moreover, failure to be holy results in death. [Romans 6:23](#) says, *"For the wages of sin is death."* Not only will we die physically, we will also die spiritually. [Revelation 20:12-15](#) describes this spiritual death as a second death in which a person is eternally separated from having a right relationship with God and from fulfilling his purpose for existing:

“

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 211-214.

Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Fortunately, [Romans 6:23](#) doesn't conclude with the statement, *"For the wages of sin is death."* If it did, we could have no hope but only despair because every one of us has sinned. But there is hope. [Romans 6:23](#) says, *"For the wages of sin is death, **but** the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (emphasis added). This free gift is forgiveness from our sins, and it is made possible through the ministry of Jesus Christ who, having lived a sinless life, paid the penalty of our sin with His own life. [John 3:16-18](#) says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."*

Jesus is God's means of fixing our broken relationship with Him and forgiving our sin. Because Jesus lived a sinless life, He did not have to die, yet His love for man was so great that He chose to die a horrific death on a cross for any who would accept His sacrifice. However, being God, death could not hold Him, and He rose from the dead three days later. As such, He stands before God as an advocate for any who are willing to repent—which is a turning away from sinful behavior—and accept God's charge to live holy lives. Of course, until God redeems His creation and removes the curse of sin, we will struggle with our sinful natures, but God promises to give us the strength to overcome any and every temptation, and He promises to continue to forgive our failures if we seek His forgiveness.

Understanding this, [Romans 10:9-13](#) teaches us how to accept this free gift of God, *"[I]f you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"* Anyone who believes that Jesus is God, that He died as a substitute for our sins, and that He rose again from the dead can ask God for forgiveness and commit to living a life that aligns itself with God's holy character and behavior. Anyone who does this will receive God's forgiveness and salvation from sin. As [Romans 3:23-25](#) says, *"[F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."*

Having received the free gift of salvation from God, the Christian is empowered by the Holy Spirit to overcome all temptations—regardless of whether or not he may have a genetic pre-disposition toward it. [First Corinthians 10:13](#) says, *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to*

man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." This is God's promise to every Christian. Whether it be homosexual inclinations, heterosexual temptations, anger, pride, gossip, bitterness, worry, or any other temptation, we are promised enough strength to overcome it if we so choose and if we will stand strong. As [James 4:7](#) says, "*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*"

Perhaps we would do well to question whether we have embraced our own form of the born gay argument. Do we excuse our own sinful behavior because it runs in the family? Some of us may come from broken and very troubled families with obvious sins. Others of us may come from families with secret sins. In any case, a family heritage of anger issues, substance abuse, arrogance, violence, unfaithfulness, divorce, worry, etc. does not condone such behavior. Do we excuse our sin because it was such a strong part of our identity before becoming a Christian—it was our nature, and we reveled in it, but now we are finding it difficult to embrace a new nature and a new identity? Do we excuse our sin because it is common to our nationality or our ethnic group? Every group of people has its deficiencies which are embraced by those people and tolerated by the rest of the world. So, do we blame our faults on our Irish temper, our Dutch stinginess, our German stubbornness, our American independence, or any number of other national or ethnic proclivities?

Whatever form it may assume, we must guard ourselves against falling prey to the very arguments and excuses we are so quick to condemn in others. Born gay is merely one side of a multifaceted excuse that is common to all mankind. From the very beginning, man has sought to absolve himself of responsibility for his actions, but the brutal truth is that we alone are responsible for our behavior. Therefore, we would do well to heed the charge of [1 Timothy 6:11-15](#):

“

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time.

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. THERE IS NO GAY GENE

- A. Are all “scientific truths” correct? What are some examples of history’s widely accepted scientific truths which were later proven to be false?
- B. How should the realization that science is not infallible influence the way we as Christians apply the Bible to the world around us?
- C. Dr. Hamer believes that genes are a factor in determining homosexuality, but environmental influences are also an important factor. Is this understanding compatible with the Christian belief that homosexuality is not determinative—that people are not born gay with no hope of change? Explain.
- D. Dr. Michael Bailey declared, “Sexual orientation has nothing to do with choice. ... But it is not completely determinative; there are certainly other environmental factors involved.” How is this a self-contradicting statement? What does this reveal about how one’s preconceived ideas influence the way one interprets the data? Do we as Christians make this same mistake? If so, how?
- E. Homosexuality is not predetermined by one’s genes, but it may be affected by unwanted and unpreventable circumstances or environmental influences. For these individuals, is it then fair to say that homosexuality is a choice? Explain. Can something be a choice even if there is no conscious decision to make it so? Explain.
- F. If science were able to prove the existence of a gene which caused homosexuality, would this change the truth of God’s Word which declares homosexual activity to be sinful? Why?

II. OUR GENES ARE NO EXCUSE

- A. The statement was made, “The reasons why the born gay argument remains so pervasive today despite the overwhelming evidence against it is because it is a well-calculated strategy designed to absolve homosexuals of all responsibility for their actions.” Do we as Christians employ this same tactic by using our biology to excuse sinful behavior? If so, how?

- B. The statement was made, “When the gay activist’s logic is applied to other behaviors, it becomes evident that a person’s biology cannot be our basis for determining the morality of any behavior.” Do you agree with this statement? Why?

III. GOD CALLS US TO HOLINESS

- A. What should be our standard for determining morality? What are the consequences of using a different standard?
- B. Has God’s standard of morality before the fall of mankind into sin changed since the fall? How can God hold sinful people to the same standard as He held sinless people?
- C. What are some examples of how the Holy Spirit empowers Christians to overcome temptation?

IV. MODIFYING THE BORN GAY ARGUMENT

- A. Are you excusing sinful behavior because it runs in your family, or because it is part of your heritage? If so, is this any different from the born gay argument for excusing sin? Explain.
- B. Why is it acceptable as Christians to ruthlessly condemn the homosexual excuse that they are born gay, but we sympathize with alcoholics who have a family history of drinking? Is this a double standard? Should Christians change their approach to one or the other? Why?
- C. The statement was made, “We alone are responsible for our behavior.” Do you agree with this statement? If this is true, then why do we make so many excuses for our behavior? Will God accept these excuses?

Once Gay, Always Gay?

“**F**ACT: Sexual orientation is neither a choice, nor is it something that can be changed through prayer or therapy. All attempts to do so are rooted in shame, religious bigotry, political propaganda and ignorance.” This was the declaration of Wayne Besen, an American homosexual rights advocate who is the founder and executive director of Truth Wins Out, the Center Against Religious Extremism; and author of the book *Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth*. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the homosexual debate is the question of whether homosexuals can change their sexual orientation. Many ministries and organizations exist to help those who wish to change their orientation away from homosexuality, such as:¹⁰⁷

- The National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH)
- Jews Offering New Alternatives to Healing (JONAH)
- The Presbyterian organization, OneByOne
- The African-American Christian organization, Powerful Ministry Change Group
- The Mormon organization, Evergreen International
- The non-religious organizations, Gender Menders, People Can Change, and German Institute for Youth and Society

Of course, organizations also exist which help those who wish to change their sexual orientation away from heterosexuality, although they would never describe their efforts in this way. Organizations such as the GLBT National Help Center and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network provide literature designed to encourage the heterosexual to question his sexual orientation, and they are happy to assist and provide those questioning with support, advice, and resources. There also exists a pool of gay-affirming therapists. An advertisement for psychotherapist Dr. Fran Brown

¹⁰⁷ Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, 451.

on the website Gaylife read, “Quick therapy tips for gay men struggling with heterosexual to gay transitions, same gender parenting and coming out.”¹⁰⁸

Despite the fact that there is a concerted effort on both sides to change people’s sexual orientation, the standard mantra is, “Once gay, always gay.” This stems from the belief that people are born gay; therefore, they have no choice in the matter. However, we have already discussed the scientific and theological errors of the born gay argument. Therefore, the once gay, always gay argument is the practical application of an unsubstantiated theory that people are born gay. Nevertheless, it is common to hear dogmatic declarations such as in Kevin Naff’s *Washington Blade* editorial “Lock Up the ‘Ex-gays,’” “[T]here is no such thing as ‘ex-gay.’ There is ‘repress-my-innate-immutable-characteristics-and-deny-their existence,’ but no such condition as ‘ex-gay.’ ... Right-handed people can’t choose to be lefties, those with brown skin can’t choose white and gays can’t choose to be straight.”¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Eric Marcus wrote in his book *Is It a Choice?*, “[N]o matter what anyone claims, you cannot change a person’s sexual orientation.”¹¹⁰ And Robert Goss wrote in his book *Jesus Acted Up*, “All ecclesial attempts to change gay/lesbian sexual identities to heterosexual or demand that queers practice celibacy disembody them as human beings.”¹¹¹

Homosexual activists afford absolutely no possibility of change in one’s sexual orientation provided that the change is from homosexuality to heterosexuality. Beyond this, they are determined to silence all talk regarding such a possibility. To bolster their position, these activists frequently call upon the mental health community for support. A representative example comes from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network’s publication *Just the Facts*:¹¹²

“

The most important fact about “reparative therapy,” also sometimes known as “conversion” therapy, is that it is based on an understanding of homosexuality that has been rejected by all major health and mental health professions. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, the American Psychiatric Association, The American Psychological Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the National Association of Social Workers, together representing more than 447,000 health and mental health professionals, have all taken the position that homosexuality is not a mental disorder and thus there is no need for a “cure.”

Impressive as this list of authorities may be, it is negated by the history of their decision in 1973 to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, which is considered to be the Bible of psychiatry and psychology. Dr. Simon LeVay summarized this history in his book *Queer Science*, “Gay activism was clearly the force that propelled the APA to declassify

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 424.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 420-421.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 421.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 418.

¹¹² Ibid, 422-423.

homosexuality.”¹¹³ Through militant, but non-violent, confrontations and threats, homosexual activists pressured the American Psychiatric Association into capitulating to their demands, and this in turn led to the other mental health organizations accepting this diagnosis in order to maintain unity. Professor Ronald Bayer, author of the definitive work on the events surrounding the APA’s 1973 ruling, explains:¹¹⁴

“

In 1973, after several years of bitter dispute, the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association decided to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric [sic] Disorders*, its official list of mental diseases. Infuriated by that action, dissident psychiatrists charged the leadership of their association with an unseemly capitulation to the threats and pressures of Gay Liberation groups, and forced the board to submit its decision to a referendum of the full APA membership. And so America’s psychiatrists were called to vote upon the question of whether homosexuality ought to be considered a mental disease. The entire process, from the first confrontation organized by gay demonstrators at psychiatric conventions to the referendum demanded by orthodox psychiatrists, seemed to violate the most basic expectations about how questions of science should be resolved. Instead of being engaged in a sober consideration of data, psychiatrists were swept up in a political controversy. The American Psychiatric Association had fallen victim to the disorder of a tumultuous era, when disruptive conflicts threatened to politicize every aspect of American social life. A furious egalitarianism that challenged every instance of authority had compelled psychiatric experts to negotiate the pathological status of homosexuality with homosexuals themselves. The result was not a conclusion based on an approximation of the scientific truth as dictated by reason, but was instead an action demanded by the ideological temper of the times.

Professor Bayer concludes, “It now seems that if groups of people march and raise enough hell, they can change anything in time.”¹¹⁵

For the first time, a mental health diagnosis was determined by popular vote rather than by the empirical data. To make matters worse, even this referendum is tainted by a scandal. Dr. Michael Brown explains in his book *A Queer Thing Happened to America*:¹¹⁶

“

Understandably, gay activists were alarmed by the call for a vote, and behind the scenes, the National Gay Task Force (NGTF) helped compose and fund a letter to be sent out to all APA members, urging them to back the Board’s decision. But the NGTF was

¹¹³ Ibid, 454.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 459-460.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 460.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 461.

careful not to let the APA members know that it had anything to do with the letter since to do so would have been suicidal.

The letter stated that

“It would be a serious and potentially embarrassing step for our profession to vote down a decision which was taken after serious and extended consideration by the bodies within our organization designated to consider such matters.”

And so, a critically important letter ostensibly conceived and mailed by its signers (all of whom were key members of the APA’s Board of Trustees) was in fact the brainchild of gay activists.

Beyond all this, an editorial published in the peer-reviewed journal *Marriage & Family Review* detailed how the key scientific study used by the APA during this process was, in fact, fraudulent. Known as the Hooker study, this study has been used in textbooks and court proceedings to prove that homosexuality could not be detected using standard psychological tests. In reality, Hooker’s test subjects “were unable to stop talking about homosexuality during the testing—a clear indication of obsessive compulsion!”¹¹⁷ According to a report by the Family Research Council:¹¹⁸

“

“This may be the first fraud committed by a scientific organization. As the Hooker study is so central to the ‘homosexuals are normal’ argument, its exposure reopens the question of whether homosexuals are mentally disturbed,” said Dr. Paul Cameron, one of the study’s authors. “The American Psychiatric Association defines a mental disorder as ‘associated with... a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, [or] disability....’ Given that homosexuals are at significantly greater risk of suffering mental and physical diseases—and this apparently leads to their shortened average lifespan—homosexuality would appear to qualify as a mental disorder.”

Regardless of whether homosexuality ought to be classified as a mental disorder, it is clear that citing the authority of the mental health community as evidence that homosexuality is normal and that individual sexual orientation can never be altered is, at best, misleading. If anything, the mental health community has provided ample reason to believe that sexual orientation can be changed. In 2009, the American Psychological Association released a two-year study that concluded there is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not conversion therapy works. Significant is the fact

¹¹⁷ “APA Fraud - Hooker Study did Not Prove Homosexuals are Normal.”

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

that the task force was comprised entirely of activists in gay causes—most of whom were themselves gay.¹¹⁹ Reporting on this shocking reality, Kathleen Melonakos warned, “Active homosexuals can hardly be objective about an addictive behavior they engage in themselves.”¹²⁰ Dr. Joseph Nicolosi explains:¹²¹

“

The fact that the Task Force was composed entirely of activists in gay causes, most of whom are also personally gay, goes a long way toward explaining their failure to be scientifically objective.

To be “gay-identified” means to have undergone a counter-cultural rite of passage. According to the coming out literature, when a person accepts and integrates a gay identity, he must give up the hope of ever changing his feelings and fantasies. The process is as follows: the adolescent discovers his same-sex attraction; this causes him confusion, shame and guilt. He desperately hopes that he will somehow become straight so that he will fit in with his friends and family. However, he eventually comes to believe that he is gay, and in fact can never be otherwise. Therefore, he must accept his homosexuality in the face of social rejection, and find pride in his homoerotic desires as something good, desirable, natural, and (if he is a person of faith) a gift from his creator.

The majority of the Task Force members clearly underwent this same process of abandoning the hope that they could diminish their homosexuality and develop their heterosexual potential. Coming to the Task Force from this perspective, they would be strongly invested in discouraging others from having the opportunity to change—i.e., *“If it did not work for me, then it cannot work for you.”*

Despite the inherent bias in favor of the homosexual position regarding whether sexual orientation can be changed, the best that this task force could do was cite insufficient evidence to determine the effectiveness of conversion therapy. In other words, if there were any evidence at all to suggest that conversion therapy does not work, we can be certain that this study would have concluded such. Of course, this is how the media attempted to spin the results of this study with headlines such as “APA Exposes Ex-gay Myth,” and “Psychologist Group Rejects So-called ‘Gay Therapy.’” Nevertheless, the very fact that this decidedly pro-gay study could not disprove conversion therapy essentially disproves dogmatic assertions that there can be no such thing as an ex-gay. Put another way, this study concluded that it may be possible for a person to change his sexual orientation—there simply is not enough evidence to be certain.

Once again, we discover that the findings of recent scientific studies are in harmony with the Word of God. Long before scientific task forces and psychological associations, the Holy Spirit used the

¹¹⁹ Brown, *A Queer Thing*, 479–480.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 478.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 478.

Apostle Paul to teach that no person must remain enslaved by homosexual passions. [First Corinthians 6:9-11](#) says, “[D]o 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, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 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.” (emphasis added)

This Corinthian congregation sounds like something we might find in any given prison, not within the walls of a church. Yet the Apostle Paul reminded this congregation that they were no longer identified by their past sins. In God’s eyes, the sexually immoral person is no longer identified by his illegitimate child, his sexually transmitted disease, or his tally of one-night stands. In God’s eyes, the idolater is no longer identified by his obsessions which consumed his time and attention. In God’s eyes, the adulterer is no longer identified by the relationships he destroyed through his infidelity. In God’s eyes, the thief is no longer identified by the objects of which he has deprived others. In God’s eyes, the greedy person is no longer identified as a workaholic, or by his stinginess. In God’s eyes, the drunkard is no longer identified by his foolish and shameful acts while under the influence of alcohol. In God’s eyes, the reviler is no longer identified by his tirades and by those he has verbally abused. In God’s eyes, the swindler is no longer identified by his victims and by ruined lives. Regardless of the sin, and regardless of the effect of that sin on the life of the individual and the lives of others, God is both capable and willing to offer forgiveness. Therefore, it is not surprising to find within this list the sin of homosexuality. In God’s mind, the homosexual is no longer identified by his sexual orientation. He, like the others in this church, had been forgiven of his sins. By applying the ministry of Jesus Christ on the cross to his own heart in belief and repentance, his spirit had been washed by the Holy Spirit, as [Titus 3:4-7](#) says, “*But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*”

Because of passages like [1 Corinthians chapter 6](#), some people accuse the Apostle Paul of being homophobic. The Apostle Paul was not homophobic. Rather, he recognized the enslaving power of homosexuality and its ultimate reward of death and destruction. Having been personally enslaved by sins that haunted him throughout his life, the Apostle Paul was intimately familiar with the guilt and despair that can come from one’s past. Yet he was also intimately familiar with the forgiveness and hope that can come from Jesus Christ, and he devoted his life to sharing this truth with others. It is precisely because the Apostle Paul had himself sinned beyond measure that he spoke so boldly about the sins of others—not to condemn them but to point the way to forgiveness. In [1 Timothy 3:12-17](#), the Apostle Paul wrote:

“

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ

Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

It is precisely because the Apostle Paul had himself sinned beyond measure that he spoke so boldly about the sins of others—not to condemn them, but to point the way to forgiveness.

Scripture is filled with examples of God not only forgiving people, but of God transforming lives. The Apostle Paul is quite possibly the best example of this. God took Paul—a blasphemer and one of the most ardent persecutors of the Christian church—and transformed him into one of history’s greatest Christian missionaries who could instruct the church at Corinth in [1 Corinthians 11:1](#), “*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*” Moreover, God used the Apostle Paul to pen 13 books of the Bible. Similarly, God took Jacob—a liar and a cheat who deceived his father into giving him his brother’s birthright—and transformed him into a man of faith who fathered the 12 tribes of Israel. Throughout Scripture, God refers to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Another example would be David who not only committed adultery, but engineered the death of the woman’s husband in order to hide his sin, and yet God promised David that his lineage would reign eternally in the Millennial Kingdom and that Jesus the Messiah would come from his line. We could continue and look at Moses, a murder whom God used to free His people from slavery and lead them to the Promised Land; Gideon, a coward whom God used to defeat an oppressive army as numerous as the sand on the sea shore; Peter, a man who denied Jesus, and yet Jesus gave him the keys to the Kingdom; or any number of other examples in Scripture.

God is in the business of transforming lives. The church is filled with ex-sinners. There are ex-liars, ex-cheats, ex-addicts, ex-adulterers, ex-gays, ex-you-fill-in-the-blank. Given that man is naturally bent toward doing evil, it is probably true that none of these would have overcome their temptation in their own strength. It is only through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit that anyone is capable of overcoming his greatest temptations. It is only when a person relinquishes his sinful identity and turns to Jesus Christ in humble repentance that the power of sin is truly broken in an individual’s life. No longer must he be identified by his sin. Instead, he is identified as a child of God. This is the good news of Jesus Christ! [Galatians 4:4-7](#) says, “*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.*”

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. IS SEXUAL ORIENTATION IMMUTABLE?

- A. Fundamentally, what is the difference between a Christian helping a homosexual to develop heterosexual desires and a homosexual helping heterosexuals to discover their homosexuality?
- B. There are gay-affirming therapists who believe that some heterosexuals may be mistaken in their sexual identification—that they may truly be homosexual but identify as heterosexual. If this is true, then would it be reasonable to believe that some homosexuals may be mistaken in their sexual identification—that they may truly be heterosexual but identify as homosexual? Explain.
- C. Robert Goss wrote in his book *Jesus Acted Up*, “All ecclesial attempts to change gay/lesbian sexual identities to heterosexual or demand that queers practice celibacy disembodied them as human beings.” Is a person’s sexuality what defines his humanity? If so, then what are the implications for those who are incapable of sexual relations? Explain.
- D. If it is true that a homosexual cannot change his sexual orientation, then is it also true that a pedophile cannot change his sexual orientation? Why?

II. THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY

- A. Dr. Simon LeVay wrote in his book *Queer Science*, “Gay activism was clearly the force that propelled the APA [American Psychiatric Association] to declassify homosexuality.” Is true science influenced by political activism? Why?
- B. Regarding the American Psychiatric Association’s decision to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the statement was made, “For the first time, a mental health diagnosis was determined by popular vote rather than by empirical data.” What are the implications of this?
- C. The first fraud committed by a scientific organization was an attempt to normalize homosexuality. Should this influence the way homosexuality is considered and discussed? Explain.

- D. If the 2009 study by the American Psychological Association concluded that there is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not conversion therapy works, then why is there such violent resistance to the suggestion that homosexuals can change their sexual orientation?

III. GOD CAN TRANSFORM ANY ORIENTATION

- A. Relying upon influential people and scientific studies, society teaches, “Once gay, always gay.” The Bible teaches in [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#) that people can be freed from the control of homosexuality. How is a Christian supposed to determine which teaching is true? Can both be true? Why? What are the implications of this in the life of a Christian?
- B. In [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#), does the Apostle Paul elevate the sin of homosexuality above other sins? How should this influence the way we as Christians deal with the sin of homosexuality?
- C. What does it mean to be identified by a particular sin? What does it mean to be identified by one’s relationship to Jesus Christ?
- D. If God is capable and willing to offer forgiveness to a repentant homosexual, then should we too be willing to offer forgiveness? What would this look like?
- E. [1 Corinthians 6:10-11](#) says that those who practice homosexuality will not inherit the kingdom of God. How is this not a homophobic passage of Scripture?
- F. Why is it significant that God does not only forgive people of their sins, but He also transforms their lives?

Is Love Sufficient?

“There’s nowhere you can be that isn’t where you’re meant to be. It’s easy. All you need is love.”¹²² These lyrics by John Lennon and Paul McCartney were sung in the world’s first live global television link in 1967. Initially watched by over 400 million people in 25 countries, the song “All You Need is Love” has become a global slogan and even a philosophy of life for many.¹²³ Combine this slogan with Walt Disney’s influential themes of “follow your heart” and “true love,” and the result is entire generations that have adopted a skewed understanding of love and its limitations. This is born out in the way people on both sides of the aisle have approached the issue of homosexuality. Many who oppose the lifestyle refuse to voice their concerns because it would surely be unloving to interfere in the love-life of another. After all, it really isn’t their business anyway. Others who have adopted the homosexual lifestyle challenge, “Isn’t the important thing that I love? Whose business is it anyway if I love this person?”

The simple answer to these questions is that anybody who cares about someone will necessarily care about who and what that person loves. This is an integral part of being in a relationship. In a relationship, when someone fears that the other person’s love may cause harm, there is concern. This is true whether that love is directed toward an inanimate object, an activity, or a person. When someone develops an unhealthy love—whether it be for junk food, online gaming, excessive shopping, addictive substances, or another person—those in relationship with that person will necessarily become concerned. Similarly, when the person’s love is believed to be healthy and beneficial, those in relationship with that person will be happy for him. It is ridiculous to believe that the people who care the most for a person should not care about what and whom he loves.

The same individual who questions whether his love is anyone else’s business would likely be offended if his relationship were treated with complete indifference by his family and friends. This is because he does not truly believe that others should not invest themselves into his relationship.

¹²² “All You Need is Love Lyrics.”

¹²³ Wikipedia, “All You Need is Love.”

Neither is this what he most wants. What he truly means is that those who disagree with his relationship should not express their disagreement, but this defies the nature of relationship, and it defies the nature of genuine love. According to [1 Corinthians 13:6](#), “[Love] does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.” True love can never rejoice in a decision which is believed to be immoral. Any effort to do so is not genuine love.

Likewise, the general public who is not in close relationship with the individual is entitled to make his relationship their business. This is because the homosexual community has made this a public issue. Once the appeal has been made to redefine marriage in order to accommodate this love, this relationship becomes everybody’s business. When marriage is redefined legally, those who disagree with it are codified as bigots. They are subject to punishment for disagreeing and speaking against this new definition of marriage and for refusing to facilitate or celebrate it. Not only are they subject to punishment, but the punishment can be intensified because it can be classified as a hate crime. Already this has been foreshadowed by the city of Houston subpoenaing the sermons of pastors who opposed the city’s equal rights ordinance,¹²⁴ and by lawsuits such as the baker¹²⁵ and the florist who refused to provide their services to a gay wedding.¹²⁶

When marriage is redefined legally, it changes dozens of aspects of society. It affects legal codes, educational curriculum, religious institutions, etc. This has already been demonstrated in other countries. In Denmark clergy are now required to facilitate same-sex wedding ceremonies in their churches. Individual priests can refuse, but the local bishop must arrange a replacement for their church.¹²⁷ In England pastors are being arrested and threatened with arrest for passing out literature opposed to homosexuality.¹²⁸ And parents in Canada cannot opt their children out of same-sex education in the public schools.¹²⁹ Moreover, those in Canada were told by a judge that they have no right even to know what a homosexual advocate taught their children in the classroom.¹³⁰

Beyond this, it simply is not true that the love experienced between individuals is the only thing that matters. Every society establishes acceptable boundaries for sexual relationships. These are requirements in addition to love which must be met if the couple is to marry—or even to have sexual intercourse. To illustrate this, consider the case of incest. In Indiana, a 72-year-old grandmother fell madly in love with her 26-year-old grandson.¹³¹ Likewise, in Germany a brother and sister who were estranged at birth eventually met and fell in love. However, the law in both countries prohibits these couples from marrying one another. In fact, in Germany it is illegal for close relatives to have any sexual relationship. According to Professor Kunze in a *BBC News* article, “[T]he law is here for a good reason. Medical research has shown that there is a higher risk of genetic abnormalities when close relatives have a child together. When siblings have children, there is a 50% chance that the child will be disabled.”¹³² This couple, which had lived together for six years and had given birth to four children, appears to have substantiated this claim as two of their children are disabled.

¹²⁴ Sanburn, “Houston’s Pastors Outraged after City Subpoenas Sermons over Transgender Bill.”

¹²⁵ Fields, “Judge Orders Colorado Bakery to Cater for Same-sex Weddings.”

¹²⁶ “Washington State Judge Rules Against Florist Who Refused Gay Wedding.”

¹²⁷ Orange, “Gay Danish Couples Win Right to Marry in Church.”

¹²⁸ Blake, “Christian Preacher Arrested for Saying Homosexuality is a Sin.”

¹²⁹ Craine, “Toronto School Board: Parent’s Can’t Opt Kids Out of Pro-homosexual Curriculum.”

¹³⁰ Baklinski, “Judge: Parents have No Right to Know what Homosexual Activist Taught Their Children in School.”

¹³¹ Nikkhah, “Grandmother and Grandson to have Child Together.”

¹³² Moore, “Couple Stand by Forbidden Love.”

Nevertheless, they claimed discrimination when the brother was jailed, and they presented many of the same heart-rending appeals as are frequently offered by homosexuals. At one point the sister said, “I just want to live with my family, and be left alone by the authorities and by the courts.”¹³³ Nevertheless, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Germany is entitled to ban incest. This is just one example of the many boundaries that society places around sexual relationships.

Another example is polygamy. Not only are polygamous marriages forbidden, but in many places a person can be imprisoned for such an arrangement.¹³⁴ Still another example is that of under-age relationships. In many countries, it is a criminal offense to engage in sexual activity with an under-age child—even if that child desires the relationship. Outrage is a common reaction to stories such as India’s child brides as young as five years of age,¹³⁵ or Britain’s barrister who advocated lowering the legal age of consent to 13 in order to stop the “persecution of old men.”¹³⁶ This is because it is innately understood that when it comes to sexual relationships, there must be boundaries.

Governments and individuals alike draw lines at some point defining when love is no longer sufficient to condone a sexual relationship. Some of these lines are drawn because of moral reasons. Some are drawn because of genetic reasons. Others are drawn because of psychological reasons. Still other lines are drawn because of social reasons. Whatever the reason, anytime a line is drawn, it will necessarily make some people feel upset, misunderstood, and mistreated. However, this does not mean that it is unloving to draw such a line, and these are not sufficient reasons to remove these boundary lines. If the argument is accepted in the case of homosexuality that love alone is enough to excuse a sexual relationship, then there remains no consistent reason to uphold these other protective sexual boundary lines, and this would genuinely be an unloving act.

Already other sexual minority groups are using the reasoning and legal appeals of the homosexual community to secure legal protection and public acceptance. In Utah a provision of the law used to prosecute polygamy was struck down by a federal judge.¹³⁷ Moreover, polyamorous relationships are now favorably portrayed in popular movies and television shows such as *Her*, *Savages*, *Sister Wives*, *Big Love*, *Utopia*, and *Wife Swap*. Even extreme sexual preferences such as bestiality is gaining public favor with *New York Magazine* publishing a 62,000 word interview with a bisexual man who is married to a woman but has regular sex with horses.¹³⁸ If how a person feels toward another is sufficient to condone a sexual relationship, then there can be no consistent argument against these other practices.

Perhaps most significant of all is the fact that the Bible does not teach that God is unconcerned about whom a person loves, but simply that a person loves. [First Corinthians 5:1–5](#) condemns incest:

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ “Is Polygamy Illegal?”

¹³⁵ Daily Mail Reporter, “The Secret World of the Child Bride: Heartbreaking Pictures of the Girls as Young as FIVE Who are Married Off to Middle-aged Men.”

¹³⁶ Meredith, “Age of Consent Should be Lowered to 13 to Stop Persecution of Old Men, Says Top Barrister.”

¹³⁷ Wetzstein, “Judge Strikes Down Part of Anti-bigamy Law in Utah.”

¹³⁸ Tsoulis-Reay, “What It’s Like to Date a Horse.”

“

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

First Corinthians 6:15–18 condemns prostitution, “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, ‘The two will become one flesh.’ But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.” And Galatians 5:19 condemns adultery, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, ...” (KJV).

God cares very much whom and how a person loves. Not all love is acceptable to God; therefore, we too should not be willing to accept all forms of love. Contrary to the words of John Lennon and Paul McCartney, it would appear that love is not all that we need, and it is possible to find ourselves in places God never intended us to be.

Continuing in the theme of “love conquers all,” a common challenge presented by practicing homosexuals who claim the title “Christian” is, “I’m gay, and Jesus loves me, so what’s wrong with that?” At the core of this challenge is the belief that Jesus’ love is all we need. Jesus loves us because we are His creation whom He created to have a relationship with, but He didn’t die for us so that we can remain in our sins. Our sin is what separates us from God and breaks that relationship. Romans 3:23 and 6:23 says, “[A]ll have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ... [T]he wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Jesus is our Savior because He sets us free from our sin according to Matthew 1:21, “[Y]ou shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” Jesus died to free us from our sins and to transform us into a new creation. Second Corinthians 5:15–17 says, “[H]e died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” No longer is the Christian identified by his fleshly passions. Jesus died in order that we might no longer live according to our sinful passions but according to the lifestyle that Jesus has called us to.

The first word in the gospel is “repent,” which means “to change one’s mind or purpose.”¹³⁹ This is seen in Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:7; Mark 1:15; Mark 6:12; Luke 13:3–5; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts

¹³⁹ Vine, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary*, 525.

8:22; Acts 17:30; and Acts 26:19–20. Salvation is conditioned upon our willingness to turn away from our sins and align our passions and actions with what the Bible says. Our salvation is not dependent upon how much God loves us. According to John 3:16, God loves everyone enough to have died for us in order to offer us a way of salvation, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”* Certainly, God has a passionate love for all men; however, not all men will be saved. Second Peter 3:9 teaches that if the decision of who should be saved were entirely up to how God feels, then everyone would be saved, *“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”* Not all men receive salvation because God’s love and desire to see all men saved is limited by His justice.

Certainly, Jesus loves us, but Scripture teaches that this is not sufficient to secure our salvation. Matthew 7:21–23 teaches that we must have a relationship with Jesus in order to receive salvation, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”* The word “know” in this passage means more than “to be aware of.” Clearly an omniscient God is aware of these people. Instead, this is a word that can mean “to understand completely” and “implies an active relation between the one who ‘knows’ and the person or thing ‘known.’”¹⁴⁰ Jesus says to these people that they may have thought that they loved Him, but there was no intimacy—there was no relationship. Because of this, they do not receive salvation.

It is not enough that Jesus loves us; we must also love Him. Jesus said in John 14:15 that if we truly love Him, then we will keep His commandments, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”* According to John 15:10, it is through obeying Jesus’ commandments that we abide in His love, *“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”* Jesus was not so soft and sentimental that He had no standards. In Matthew 7:21–23, Jesus said that not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who *do* the will of God.

Certainly, this is an impossible task on our own, but Ephesians 5:25–27 teaches that Jesus is actively sanctifying those who belong to Him, *“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”* Additionally, 1 Corinthians 10:13 teaches that God empowers His people to overcome temptation, *“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*

Of course, some will challenge that Jesus never specifically forbid homosexuality. This perspective fails to recognize that Jesus’ commandments are contained in the entire Bible, not just the Gospels. Second Peter 1:20–21 and 2 Timothy 3:16 teach that all of Scripture is the result of God’s inspiration. Moreover, the argument that Jesus did not consider homosexuality to be a sin because He never specifically addressed the issue of homosexuality is an argument from silence which is

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 347.

never a particularly strong argument. Jesus failed to specifically address many issues that we believe to be sin based upon the testimony of Scripture, or are we to believe that because Jesus never specifically addressed spousal abuse, substance abuse, bestiality, rape, or incest that these are somehow not important to Jesus and unmeriting of the title “sin?”

Jesus was called Rabbi because of His deep understanding of the Law of Moses and the acceptable application of that Law ([John 3:1-2](#)). During the time of Christ, homosexuality was commonly practiced within the Roman Empire, but the Jews considered it to be immoral, sinful, and against the Law of Moses. At the very least, Jesus would have been aware that the common interpretation of the Law of Moses was that homosexuality is a sin. The fact that He did not speak against this understanding should not lead a person to assume that He disagreed with it. Rather, the assumption should be made that Jesus accepted this interpretation of the Law unless evidence can be presented to the contrary. Jesus taught in [Matthew 15:18-19](#) that sexual immorality defiles a man, *“But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.”* Given that it was generally understood among the Jews at that time that homosexuality should be included under the title “sexual immorality,” and given that Jesus did not offer homosexuality as an exception to this sexual immorality, it is reasonable to believe that Jesus had no varying views on the issue of homosexuality from the other religious leaders of His time.

Furthermore, this argument that Jesus did not consider homosexuality to be a sin because He never specifically addressed it assumes that Jesus never presented a principle that applies to the specific question of homosexuality. However, in [Matthew 19:4-6](#), Jesus answered a question about divorce by affirming that God’s pattern for marriage has always been the union of a man and a woman, *“He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’”*

This principle answered the question of divorce which was asked in Jesus’ time, and this principle answers the question of homosexuality which is being asked in our time. In this sense, Jesus did address the issue of homosexuality, indirectly.

Keep in mind that Jesus Himself declared in [Matthew 5:17](#) that He came not to destroy the Law and the prophets, but to fulfill them. The Old Testament Law consisted of redemption laws and moral laws. Jesus fulfilled the redemption laws—the dietary matters, rituals, cleansings, sacrifices, and priestly duties—by dying on the cross. As for the moral laws, Jesus raised the standard ([Matthew 5:21-22 and 27-28](#)). Never did Jesus teach against or remove any of the moral laws in the Old Testament. Rather, He affirmed them by referring to such sins as murder and sexual immorality which were defined as sinful in the Old Testament Law. None of the moral laws were removed in Christ’s advent. Instead, they are reaffirmed throughout the New Testament.

Those who truly love Jesus will follow His commandments to reject the practice of homosexuality in [Leviticus chapters 18 and 20](#); [Romans chapter one](#); [1 Corinthians chapter 6](#); [1 Timothy chapter one](#); and [Jude chapter one](#). Certainly, Jesus loves homosexuals, but Jesus does not save homosexuals—just as Jesus does not save thieves, drunkards, adulterers, idolaters, and anyone else whose identity continues to rest in an act that God has declared to be sinful. Instead, Jesus saves

people who have repented of these actions and have assumed their identity as a child of God through Jesus Christ. Certainly, this includes individuals who continue to struggle with the temptation of same-sex attraction, just as there are children of God who continue to struggle with the temptation of drunkenness, adultery, and idolatry, but their identity rests in God, and they strive to submit themselves to His commandments.

It would appear that John Lennon and Paul McCartney over-simplified with their slogan “all you need is love,” and Walt Disney’s theme “follow your heart” is suitable only for fairy tales. “Isn’t the important thing that I love?” is a challenge that falls desperately short of truth, and “Jesus loves me, and I’m gay, so it must be OK” reveals an ignorance of the true gospel. Yet this ignorance is not unique to homosexuals. Far too often we ourselves depend upon this very same excuse for any number of other sins. We convince ourselves that God will overlook our sinful behavior because He loves us. Subconsciously, we ourselves declare, “Jesus loves me and I’m a liar, proud, greedy, spiteful, unreliable, a gossip, or any number of other sins; but it must be OK.” Somehow we convince ourselves that Jesus loves us, and we are flawed creatures; therefore, Jesus must accept us just the way we are. Certainly, Jesus loves each and every one of us, but Jesus is not content to overlook our sin. Just as it was before we were saved, our sin breaks our intimacy with God. It drives a wedge of separation between us and God. [Isaiah 59:2](#) says, “[Y]our iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.” Fortunately, [1 John 1:9](#) teaches, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The good news of the gospel is that we can be freed from our sins and experience an intimacy with God if we will place our trust in Him and simply give up our sinful habits, choosing instead to obey God’s commandments.

Not every sin is as obvious, risky, or influential as that of practicing homosexuality. Nevertheless, every sin is rooted in the very same mistake: the refusal to submit ourselves to God’s commandments. Fortunately, we have a God who loves us enough to refuse to ignore our rebellion. We have a God who stands ready to rescue us from any sin in which we find ourselves ensnared and to bestow upon us a new identity: child of God.

Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. They are particularly designed for use in Sunday school and small group settings.

I. LOVE IS NOT ALWAYS PRIVATE

- A. Read [Jeremiah 17:9](#). How should this verse influence our understanding of Walt Disney's theme "follow your heart"?
- B. How healthy is a relationship where the individuals involved do not invest themselves in the cares and passions of the other? Explain.
- C. Has a friend or a family member ever hurt you by telling you a truth you did not want to hear at the time? Looking back, are you grateful for their honesty? Explain.
- D. According to [1 Corinthians 13:6](#), true love can never rejoice in a decision which is believed to be immoral. What are the implications of this truth in our relationships with those who self-identify as homosexual?
- E. Do you agree that the homosexual community has invited the public to speak into their lifestyle by petitioning for the redefinition of marriage? Explain.
- F. How would you respond if faced with the dilemma of some Canadians who believe the practice of homosexuality is a sin but are not allowed to opt their children out of same-sex education classes in the public schools?

II. THERE IS MORE TO SEX THAN LOVE

- A. The statement was made, "Every society establishes acceptable boundaries for sexual relationships." Is this a good thing? Why?
- B. The statement was made, "Governments and individuals alike draw lines at some point defining when love is no longer sufficient to condone a sexual relationship." What are some of the lines that you have drawn? Why?
- C. The nature of drawing boundary lines for acceptable behavior is that some people will feel excluded, misunderstood, and hurt. Should we then conclude that drawing boundary lines is an unloving act? Why?

- D. If you were given 2 minutes to defend the statement, “Not all love is acceptable to God,” what would you say?

III. IS JESUS’ LOVE ALL WE NEED?

- A. It sounds spiritual to say, “All I need is Jesus’ love.” If this were true, what would be the implications on the gospel?
- B. What is the significance of the fact that “repent” is the first word of the gospel?
- C. What does it mean to be transformed into a new creation ([2 Cor. 5:15-17](#))?
- D. What does it mean to be identified by a behavior?
- E. Why is Jesus’ love insufficient to secure our salvation? Can you prove this with Scripture?
- F. Sometimes we think of Jesus as resembling a Hippie—anything goes so long as you have love. How does this view of Jesus compare to the Bible’s portrayal of Jesus?
- G. What does it mean to love Jesus? How much do you love Jesus?

IV. JESUS NEVER COMMANDED AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY

- A. What is an argument from silence? Why is this not a particularly strong method of arguing?
- B. What are some other issues Jesus never specifically addressed, and yet we know them to be sinful based upon the testimony of Scripture?
- C. In [Matthew 15:18-19](#), Jesus taught that sexual immorality defiles a man. What do you believe Jesus meant by the phrase “sexual immorality”? Where do you think Jesus acquired His definition of “sexual immorality”?
- D. How does the principle that Jesus established that God’s pattern for marriage has always been a union between a man and a woman apply to the question of homosexuality?
- E. What is the difference between redemption laws and moral laws in the Law of Moses? Why is this important to understand?
- F. What is at the root of every sin?

Conclusion

At the risk of sounding intolerant, we are compelled to admit that the practice of homosexuality is sinful behavior. For some it may feel as though it is the most natural thing in the world, but this is because it is a practice belonging to our sinful nature. As such, the practice of homosexuality constitutes a rebellion against God's commandments and created order. Like any other sin, it breaks our relationship with God and condemns a person to judgment in Hell. As such, this is not an issue that Christians are free to ignore. Wonderful people created in the image of God are in need of the transformative power of the gospel applied to their lives. As such they depend upon Christians who are willing and able to speak the truth in love.

My goal in writing this book has been to bring Biblical clarity to a important social issue that has been distorted through good intentions, fear, and a failure to stand firmly upon the Word of God. It is my hope that this book will supply a foundation for any Christian to intelligently speak into this subject with sensitivity and conviction. Hopefully this book has challenged us to set aside our self-righteous piety long enough to recognize that we Christians struggle with the very same under-girding principles as the homosexual. Our sins may not manifest themselves as homosexual inclinations, but they are rooted in the very same spiritual lies. Lest we be too quick to point the finger of condemnation, every one of us ought to take time to examine our own lives and to ensure that we are practicing what we preach ([Luke 6:41-42](#)). Ultimately, this book is intended to emphasize the paramount role of the gospel when dealing with the issue of homosexuality.

Appendix A: Hasn't the Issue been Settled by the Supreme Court?

“Just who do we think we are?”¹⁴¹ This was Chief Justice Roberts’ response to the June 26, 2015 Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, declaring that “The Fourteenth Amendment requires a State to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-State.”¹⁴² The reason for Chief Justice Robert’s incredulity is that this ruling has officially changed the definition of marriage which, as Justice Kennedy noted during oral arguments, “has been with us for millennia.”¹⁴³ If there remains any doubt that this is what has happened, then consider the words of Chief Justice Roberts to the petitioners during the Supreme Court oral arguments, “You’re not seeking to join this institution but [to] change what this institution is.”¹⁴⁴

Make no mistake about it; marriage as it has always been understood and defined in every civilization and at all points in history until 15 years ago is now fundamentally altered in the eyes of the law. Nevertheless, we as Christians understand that marriage is a sacred act that is divinely defined and accomplished. As such, we have neither the right, nor the ability to redefine this institution in reality. Just because a father has the ability to require and enforce that his children refer to him as the President of the United States does not make him the president in reality. Likewise, just because the

¹⁴¹ Wax, “Top 10 Quotes from the Dissenting Justices on Same-sex Marriage.”

¹⁴² “Supreme Court of the United States October Term 2014 Syllabus: OBERGEFELL ET AL. v. HODGES, DIRECTOR, OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ET AL.”

¹⁴³ Barbash, “Supreme Court Hears Same-sex Marriage Case: Who Said what (with Audio).”

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Supreme Court has redefined marriage and can enforce this definition does not make it legitimate in the eyes of the Creator God.

Jesus, as the Creator God, declared the purpose and nature of marriage to be the supernatural uniting together of a male and a female. [Matthew 19:4-7](#) says, “*He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’*”

It is in circumstances such as this Supreme Court ruling that we as Christians need to be reminded of from where it is that we draw our definitions. We do not derive our definition of marriage from *Black’s Law Dictionary*. Rather, the Bible is our infallible and eternal standard for truth, and it is from the Bible that we derive our morality and our definition of marriage.

So, what exactly happened on June 26, 2015, and why did it divide the nation? To understand this, we must first understand what the Supreme Court was asked to decide upon. For some time, various states had voted upon constitutional amendments designed to either open or close marriage to members of the same sex. In many of the instances where the people voted to protect the definition of marriage as being restricted to a man and a woman, the federal courts intervened. In the Fall of 2014, most of the states where same-sex marriage was legal were so as a result of judicial activism.

Prior to *Obergefell v. Hodges*, it was rarely reported that same-sex marriage had been voted into law by the will of the people. Instead, the news media consistently announced that same-sex marriage had been “legalized” in yet another state. The reason for this is that in nearly every state where same-sex marriage was legal before the Supreme Court’s ruling, it was so as the result of judicial activism. In fact, it was not until November 6, 2012 that the first state approved same-sex marriage through a constitutionally approved vote of the people. In other words, it was not until nearly the year 2013 that the very first state in America legalized same-sex marriage by popular vote rather than through judicial activism. Understanding this, it is amazing that only two years later the Supreme Court “discovered” that same-sex marriage has always been a fundamental right protected by the Constitution of the United States of America. In any event, consider some excerpts from the November 7, 2012 *CNN* article titled “Voters Approve Same-sex Marriage for the First Time”:¹⁴⁵

“

In a historic turnaround, the ballot box is showing America’s shifting attitudes about same-sex marriage. After gay marriage rights died at the polls dozens of times in the past, on Tuesday they passed in at least two states.

Rarely do popular votes reflect such dramatic social changes.

The result: Maryland and Maine will now allow couples like Chyrino Patane and James Trinidad to tie the knot. ... But the win was hard fought and the margin of victory was small.

¹⁴⁵ Brumfield, “Voters Approve Same-sex Marriage for the First Time.”

“We’ve lost at the ballot box 32 times,” said Paul Guequierre of Human Rights Campaign. ... In Maryland, where just 51.9% of voters approved gay marriage rights, “It was a little bit pins and needles,” said Human Rights Campaign’s Kevin Nix. “It was going to be a close call all along.” ... In 2009, a similar referendum in Maine failed when voters rejected the governor’s decision to allow same-sex marriage. Tuesday’s results represent a remarkable turnaround. ... Thirty-eight states have passed bans on marriages between people of the same gender, mostly by amending their constitutions to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

In the six states – Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire and New York – and the District of Columbia where gays and lesbians have previously won marriage rights, it was because of actions taken by judges or legislators, not voters.

Because of this judicial activism which repeatedly overturned the democratic process and state constitutional amendments, those opposed to same-sex marriage wanted the Supreme Court to overrule these federal courts of appeals. Interestingly enough, supporters of same-sex marriage also wanted the Supreme Court to decide the issue because they saw an opportunity to forcibly legalize same-sex marriage in every state via one court ruling rather than continue the drawn out appeals process. Despite the fact that both parties wanted the Supreme Court to hear the case, the Supreme Court refused to hear cases from three federal courts of appeals on the matter of same-sex marriage. Because of this, on October 6, 2014, *The Atlantic* ran the headline “The Same-sex Marriage Fight Is Over: By Refusing to Take a Stand on Lower-court Decisions, the Justices have Effectively Settled the Fight—in favor of gays and lesbians who want to marry.”¹⁴⁶

Since every federal court of appeals ruling prior to this point had been in favor of same-sex marriage, the Supreme Court had essentially legalized same-sex marriage in 2014 with a *de facto* ruling. Because of this failure to rule—which was little less than a ruling in-and-of-itself—all pending appeals were essentially considered to be concluded in favor of same-sex marriage. Within a single day, our nation jumped from same-sex marriage being legal in 19 states to it being essentially legal in 30 states. As for the remaining states, the Supreme Court had issued a virtual directive ordering them to follow suit, or the federal courts of appeals would forcibly overturn their laws. For all practical purposes, *The Atlantic* was correct when it declared “The Same-sex Marriage Fight is Over.”¹⁴⁷

Of such significance were the implications of the Supreme Court’s decision not to rule on this issue that journalist Brit Hume declared the issue of same-sex marriage to be politically dead,¹⁴⁸ and president of Southern Theological Seminary Albert Mohler warned that we would soon witness attempts by the Republican Party to synthesize their “values” with this new reality. Overnight, advocates of traditional marriage lost their voice, and a new reality was quickly forming ... and then the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals shocked the nation.

¹⁴⁶ Epps, “The Same-sex Marriage Fight is Over.”

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ “Brit Hume: The Issue of Gay Marriage is Now Politically Dead.”

Months earlier, the states of Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee appealed to the Sixth Circuit Court their right to ban same-sex marriage in their respective states.¹⁴⁹ In November of 2014, the Sixth Circuit Court upheld these states' right to ban same-sex marriage. Of course, this was a federal court decision in direct contradiction to the other federal court decisions. As such, our nation now had an official Constitutional crisis which necessitated the involvement of the Supreme Court. Therefore, the Supreme Court agreed to consider two questions:

- Does the 14th Amendment to the Constitution require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?
- Does the 14th Amendment to the Constitution require a state to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state?¹⁵⁰

In answer to these two questions, the Supreme Court has ruled, “The Fourteenth Amendment requires a State to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-State.”¹⁵¹ They ruled in favor of same-sex marriage on both counts, and this ruling was nearly the worst-case scenario for those who supported a traditional definition of marriage. According to the Supreme Court, the U.S. Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage. Consider one excerpt from the Supreme Court majority opinion, “The right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty. Same-sex couples may exercise the fundamental right to marry.”¹⁵²

So, what does this mean for Christians? The implications of this ruling are enormous and widespread, so we will focus our attention on only a few of them. In the first place, this was a deeply divided decision by the Supreme Court with five Justices ruling in favor of the petitioners and four Justices opposed. It may have been the Court's intention to settle this issue and to put an end to the debate, but this decision will not end the dispute.¹⁵³ More than 40 years ago, the Supreme Court attempted to settle the issue of abortion in the case of *Roe v. Wade*. Instead, the issue of abortion has been a key debate in nearly every subsequent campaign for political high office. In the same way, the debate over whether same-sex marriage is morally acceptable will continue regardless of this ruling.

President of Southern Theological Seminary Albert Mohler in his daily podcast *The Briefing* noted that at the heart of this appeal by the homosexual community was not a desire to legalize same-sex

¹⁴⁹ Myers, “Gay Marriage Arguments are Flooding Federal Courts.”

¹⁵⁰ Barbash, “Supreme Court Hears Same-sex Marriage Case: Who Said what (with Audio).”

¹⁵¹ “Supreme Court of the United States October Term 2014 Syllabus: OBERGEFELL ET AL. v. HODGES, DIRECTOR, OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ET AL.”

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ According to *Religion News Service*, “Alabama’s probate courts may not issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court has ordered. Chief Justice Roy Moore ruled Wednesday (Jan. 6) that Alabama’s Marriage Protection Act, which bars such unions, remains ‘in full force and effect’ despite a June ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that struck down similar laws banning same-sex marriage in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee, according to USA Today.” (Grossman, “Alabama Chief Justice Defies Supreme Court Gay Marriage Ruling, Forbids Clerks to Issue Licenses.”)

marriage. At the heart of this appeal was a desire to be morally affirmed and accepted. But this, of course, is not something the Supreme Court is capable of accomplishing.¹⁵⁴ As such, both parties are almost certain to be disappointed by this ruling. However, in the process, the Supreme Court has fundamentally altered the fabric of our society and has redefined how the Constitution is to be interpreted, and how the law is to be upheld. In the words of Justice Antonin Scalia:¹⁵⁵

“

This is a naked judicial claim to legislative—indeed, super-legislative—power; a claim fundamentally at odds with our system of government. Except as limited by a constitutional prohibition agreed to by the People, the States are free to adopt whatever laws they like, even those that offend the esteemed Justices’ “reasoned judgment.” A system of government that makes the People subordinate to a committee of nine unelected lawyers does not deserve to be called a democracy.

In his dissent, Chief Justice John Roberts declared, “The majority’s decision is an act of will, not legal judgment... The Court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the States and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia, for the Kalahari Bushmen and the Han Chinese, the Carthaginians and the Aztecs. Just who do we think we are?”¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Justice Scalia wrote:¹⁵⁷

“

But what really astounds is the hubris reflected in today’s judicial Putsch. The five Justices who compose today’s majority are entirely comfortable concluding that every State violated the Constitution for all of the 135 years between the Fourteenth Amendment’s ratification and Massachusetts’ permitting of same-sex marriages in 2003. They have discovered in the Fourteenth Amendment a “fundamental right” overlooked person alive at the time of ratification, and almost everyone else in the time since... These Justices know that limiting marriage to one man and one woman is contrary to reason; they know that an institution as old as government itself, and accepted by every nation in history until 15 years ago, cannot possibly be supported by anything other than ignorance or bigotry. And they are willing to say that any citizen who does not agree with that, who adheres to what was, until 15 years ago, the unanimous judgment of all generations and all societies, stands against the Constitution.

¹⁵⁴ Mohler, “The Briefing Special Edition: Supreme Court Ruling on Same Sex Marriage.”

¹⁵⁵ Soave, “Scalia’s Angry, Incoherent Gay Marriage Dissent.”

¹⁵⁶ Wax, “Top 10 Quotes from the Dissenting Justices on Same-sex Marriage.”

¹⁵⁷ Wax, “Top 10 Quotes from the Dissenting Justices on Same-sex Marriage.”

Another implication of this ruling is that it opens the door to a host of additional legal and moral questions. One such example is the issue of polyamory, which is defined on Merriam-Webster.com as “The state or practice of having more than one open romantic relationship at a time.”¹⁵⁸ Polygamy is a sub-set of polyamory. For years, the mainstream media has run stories on the issue of polyamory, and shows such as *Oprah* have interviewed people in polyamorous relationships. Today polyamory is making appearances in gay pride parades, is a popular theatre theme, and is becoming increasingly popular in both movies and television shows. It has appeared in movies such as *Her*, *Breaking Upwards*, and Oliver Stone’s *Savages*. Fox’s reality TV show *Utopia* includes a cast member who is both bisexual and polyamorous. Outside of the show, she lives with her two boyfriends and girlfriend. TLC’s *Sister Wives* has proven to be so popular that TLC is now producing *My Five Wives*. Similarly, Showtime airs *Polyamory: Married and Dating*; HBO airs *Big Love*; and ABC airs *Wife Swap* and *Celebrity Wife Swap*. Even non-poly-themed shows such as *The Glades* are introducing polyamory education into their shows. Of course, this is the natural progression of shows which have long introduced viewers to open relationships, threesomes, and other poly-like relationships. With this in mind, consider the words of Chief Justice Roberts in his dissent:¹⁵⁹

“

It is striking how much of the majority’s reasoning would apply with equal force to the claim of a fundamental right to plural marriage. If “[t]here is dignity in the bond between two men or two women who seek to marry and in their autonomy to make such profound choices,” why would there be any less dignity in the bond between three people who, in exercising their autonomy, seek to make the profound choice to marry? If a same-sex couple has the constitutional right to marry because their children would otherwise “suffer the stigma of knowing their families are somehow lesser,” why wouldn’t the same reasoning apply to a family of three or more persons raising children? If not having the opportunity to marry “serves to disrespect and subordinate” gay and lesbian couples, why wouldn’t the same “imposition of this disability,” serve to disrespect and subordinate people who find fulfillment in polyamorous relationships?

The subject of homosexuality is merely a catalyst ushering in numerous other issues. Some of these other issues will soon vie for the same recognition afforded to same-sex couples, and the Supreme Court’s ruling almost ensures that they will eventually be granted the same rights and privileges.

Perhaps the most disturbing of all the implications of *Obergefell v. Hodges* relates to religious liberty. Responding to this decision, Justice Thomas said there are “potentially ruinous consequences for religious liberty.”¹⁶⁰ In part, this is because the language of the ruling itself indicates that religious liberties may not find legal refuge in the near future. According to Chief Justice Roberts:¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ “Polyamory.”

¹⁵⁹ Wax, “Top 10 Quotes from the Dissenting Justices on Same-sex Marriage.”

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

“

The majority graciously suggests that religious believers may continue to “advocate” and “teach” their views of marriage. The First Amendment guarantees, however, the freedom to “exercise” religion. Ominously, that is not a word the majority uses. Hard questions arise when people of faith exercise religion in ways that may be seen to conflict with the new right to same-sex marriage—when, for example, a religious college provides married student housing only to opposite-sex married couples, or a religious adoption agency declines to place children with same-sex married couples... Unfortunately, people of faith can take no comfort in the treatment they receive from the majority today.

The threat to religious liberties was even admitted to during the Supreme Court oral arguments. Justice Samuel Alito asked if religious schools could have their tax-exempt status revoked for refusing housing to same-sex couples. In response, the President’s lawyer answered, “You know, I don’t think I can answer that question without knowing more specifics but it’s certainly going to be an issue. I, I don’t deny that. I don’t deny that, Justice Alito. It is, it is going to be an issue.”¹⁶²

If there is any doubt what-so-ever whether religious liberties will come under assault as a result of this ruling, then one need look no further than the Fall of 2014 when it was widely believed that the advocates of same-sex marriage had won the debate. Within weeks of the Supreme Court’s *de facto* ruling, there was an attempt to force ministers in Idaho to perform a same-sex wedding ceremony,¹⁶³ there was an effort to bully Christian colleges into accepting homosexual behavior or risk losing government funding,¹⁶⁴ and the sermons of pastors who opposed a transgender bill in Houston, Texas were subpoenaed by the city for evaluation.¹⁶⁵ These affronts to religious liberty were somewhat curtailed by the ruling of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Nevertheless, when the gay activists believed themselves to be the victors we may have been granted a glimpse into our future.

Subsequent to the Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, a county clerk in Rowan, Kentucky named Kim Davis was jailed for refusing to defy her religious convictions by issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. *The New York Times* reported, “A Kentucky county clerk who has become a symbol of religious opposition to same-sex marriage was jailed Thursday after defying a federal court order to issue marriage licenses to gay couples.”¹⁶⁶ Senator Ted Cruz responded by declaring, “Today, judicial lawlessness crossed into judicial tyranny. Today, for the first time ever, the government arrested a Christian woman for living according to her faith. ... Those who are persecuting Kim Davis believe that Christians should not serve in public office. That is the consequence of their position. Or, if Christians do serve in public office, they must disregard their

¹⁶² Smith, “Supreme Court Gay Marriage Ruling Could Create Religious Liberty Issues for Christian Schools, Charities, Obama’s Lawyer Admits.”

¹⁶³ “Govt Tells Christian Ministers: Perform Same-sex Weddings or Face Jail, Fines.”

¹⁶⁴ Haverluck, “Christian College’s ‘Gay’ Dilemma in a Post-Christian Society.”

¹⁶⁵ Sanburn, “Houston’s Pastors Outraged after City Subpoenas Sermons over Transgender Bill.”

¹⁶⁶ Blinder, “Clerk in Kentucky Chooses Jail over Deal on Same-sex Marriage.”

religious faith—or be sent to jail.”¹⁶⁷ In contrast, President Barak Obama responded by placing homosexual rights above religious liberty. In an article titled “Obama Warns Christians: Gay Rights More Important than Religious Freedom,” *Breitbart* reported:¹⁶⁸

“

As Pope Francis flew back to Rome, President Obama issued a stern warning to Christians, warning them their attempts to assert their religious liberty to oppose gay rights would fail. “We affirm that we cherish our religious freedom and are profoundly respectful of religious traditions,” he insisted during a dramatic speech at a LGTB fundraiser in New York City on Sunday night, praising the progress made on gay rights under his administration. “But we also have to say clearly that our religious freedom doesn’t grant us the freedom to deny our fellow Americans their constitutional rights.”

So, what can we learn from all this? As Georgetown Law Professor Chai Feldblum said, “Protecting one group’s identity liberty may, at times, require that we burden other’s belief liberties.”¹⁶⁹ As Christians, we should expect that the window of opportunity to openly speak into the issue of homosexuality from a Biblical perspective will begin closing in the near future. If anything, this should motivate us to educate ourselves on this subject, to share with our loved ones, and to be an influence within our communities while we still have religious liberty. All-the-while, we ought to be gearing up for persecution.

As an illustration of this, consider the country of Canada. Today in Canada, pastors can be arrested and charged with a hate crime merely for reading from the Bible those passages that condemn homosexuality. Surely Canadian pastors wish today that they had seized the opportunity to teach into this issue in their churches when they still had the freedom to do so. Surely Canadian families wish that they had availed themselves of the literature that declared the truth of this lifestyle when they had the opportunity. We can learn from the experience of the Canadians, among others, and maximize the time that we have to educate ourselves on this subject, to share with our loved ones, and to be an influence in our communities while we still have religious liberty.

As Christians, we should anticipate that our voice in society will become increasingly unacceptable. In the opinion of many, our time for deliberation and debate over the issue of same-sex marriage—and with it, homosexuality in general—ended on June 26, 2015. It is now expected that we will get on board with the “majority” and accept their arguments as valid. As such, we should be determining today where we will personally draw the line. The ruling on June 26, 2015 will influence school curriculum, employment policies, health care, public events, and many other areas of everyday life. Knowing that things are not likely to get any easier, we should determine today how we will respond

¹⁶⁷ Cruz, “Statement on Arrest of Kentucky Clerk Kim Davis.”

¹⁶⁸ Spierling, “Obama Warns Christians: Gay Rights More Important than Religious Freedom.”

¹⁶⁹ Brown, *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, 502.

when we are faced with choosing between our moral convictions and our job, our moral convictions and our child's education, our moral convictions and ... (fill in the blank).

Finally, we should recognize that the Supreme Court's ruling begins a new chapter in our resistance of accepting the practice of homosexuality. It did not finish the fight. As mentioned earlier, the ruling of *Roe v. Wade* did not finish the dispute over abortion. It certainly changed the dynamics of the debate, but it did not settle the debate. Instead, Americans remain divided on the issue, and recent legislation is making it nearly impossible for abortion clinics to remain open in some states.¹⁷⁰ The fight over abortion has changed, but it continues. Similarly, our fight against accepting homosexuality as an acceptable practice will necessarily change, but it also continues. As Dr. Albert Mohler wrote in his response to the Supreme Court's ruling:¹⁷¹

“

Everything has changed and nothing has changed. ... We must contend for marriage as God's gift to humanity - a gift central and essential to human flourishing and a gift that is limited to the conjugal union of a man and a woman. We must contend for religious liberty for all, and focus our energies on protecting the rights of Christian citizens and Christian institutions to teach and operate on the basis of Christian conviction.

We cannot be silent, and we cannot join the moral revolution that stands in direct opposition to what we believe the Creator has designed, given, and intended for us. We cannot be silent, and we cannot fail to contend for marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

In one sense, everything has changed. And yet, nothing has changed. The cultural and legal landscape has changed, as we believe this will lead to very real harms to our neighbors. But our Christian responsibility has not changed. We are charged to uphold marriage as the union of a man and a woman and to speak the truth in love. We are also commanded to uphold the truth about marriage in our own lives, in our own marriages, in our own families, and in our own churches.

We are called to be the people of the truth, even when the truth is not popular and even when the truth is denied by the culture around us. Christians have found themselves in this position before, and we will again. God's truth has not changed. The Holy Scriptures have not changed. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has not changed. The church's mission has not changed. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

¹⁷⁰ Lipka, "5 Facts about Abortion."

¹⁷¹ Mohler, "Everything has Changed and Nothing has Changed - The Supreme Court Legalizes Same-sex Marriage."

Appendix B: Common Challenges

Challenge 1: Homosexual promiscuity would decrease if homosexuals were allowed to marry.

Data indicates that the majority of homosexuals do not desire marriage. Sociologist Kathleen Hull of the University of Minnesota was quoted by *USA Today* as saying:¹⁷²

“

Some gays and lesbians clearly want to get married, but others are unsure or reject marriage for themselves. And many LGBT people seem to have mixed views on whether marriage is a good model for same-sex relationships. ... We asked people whether they thought marriage was a good relationship model for same-sex couples. About half were ambivalent, about a third said it was a good model, and less than a fifth said it was a bad model. Those who were ambivalent talked about marriage not being right for everybody or not being desired by everybody, about the fact that other relationship models can also work, that marriage is not necessary for happiness. Some said they just didn't see the point of marriage, but if others want it, they should have that option.

Similarly, researcher Bill Muehlenberg reported in his book *Strained Relations* that Australian studies have found that only about 20% of homosexual couples have shown an interest in marriage.¹⁷³ He references the Netherlands, where same-sex marriage has been legal since 2001.

¹⁷² Jayson, “Not All Gays and Lesbians Want to Marry, Research Shows.”

¹⁷³ Sotirios, “Same-sex Marriage,” 82, Source: Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 98.

Within the first five years of legalization, only about 4% of Dutch homosexuals married.¹⁷⁴ Ten years after legalization, another study revealed that 9 out of ten homosexual couples opted not to marry.¹⁷⁵ Even in Massachusetts—which was the first U.S. state to legalize same-sex marriage, and only the Sixth jurisdiction in the world to do so—merely 16% of the state’s homosexual couples took advantage of the new law.^{176, 177}

The inability to marry is not the primary culprit in homosexual promiscuity. Many homosexuals readily admit this. After declaring the wayward impulse to be “inevitable in man-to-man affairs,” Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, wrote in their book *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 1990’s*, “If, as statistics have often shown, at least two-thirds of married men are, at one time or another, unfaithful to their wives, then surely the cheating ratio of ‘married’ gay males, given enough time, approaches 100%. Men are, after all, as said earlier, more easily aroused than women, who tend to act as a relatively stabilizing influence; a restless gay man is more apt to be led astray by a cute face in the subway or the supermarket. Two gay men are double trouble, arithmetically squaring the probability of the fatal affairette.”¹⁷⁸ Likewise, former homosexual William Aaron said, “In the gay life, fidelity is almost impossible. Since part of the compulsion of homosexuality seems to be a need on the part of the homophile to ‘absorb’ masculinity from his sexual partners, he must be constantly on the lookout for [new partners]. Consequently the most successful homophile ‘marriages’ are those where there is an arrangement between the two to have affairs on the side while maintaining the semblance of permanence in their living arrangement.”¹⁷⁹

Given the available data, it appears as though homosexual promiscuity is not the consequence of being denied marriage. Rather, it is a defining element of the homosexual lifestyle, just as gay authors Charles Silverstein and Edmund White wrote in their book, *The Joy of Gay Sex*, “Sexual promiscuity is one of the most striking distinguishing features of gay life in America.”¹⁸⁰ This is not to say that every homosexual is promiscuous, but according to the data, the vast majority have been, and this is not likely to change with the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Challenge 2: Homosexuality is natural and acceptable because it is found within the animal kingdom.

True homosexuality within the animal kingdom is very rare. It is certainly not a strong argument for proving that homosexuality is normal. If anything, it affirms that homosexuality is not typical, being an aberration of the norm. Consider, for example, penguins. Because of their habit of mating for life, and because of some high profile “gay penguins” at zoos, penguins have often been cited in support of true homosexuality within the animal kingdom. However, this claim has been proven false. According to *The Daily Mail*, “Penguins do not form long-term homosexual relationships

¹⁷⁴ Gallagher, “Demand for Same-sex Marriage,” 2, Source: Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 98.

¹⁷⁵ Duncan, “The Tenth Anniversary,” 3, Source: Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 99.

¹⁷⁶ Wikipedia, “Same-sex Marriage”.

¹⁷⁷ Gallagher, “Demand for Same-sex Marriage,” 6, Source: Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 99.

¹⁷⁸ Kirk, *After the Ball*, 330.

¹⁷⁹ Aaron, *Straight*, 208, Source: Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 104–105.

¹⁸⁰ Muehlenberg, *Strained Relations*, 9.

despite same-sex flirting, a new study has found. ... Experts believe that the penguins might indulge in some same-sex flirting because they are 'lonely' due to a lack of female penguins in the colony. Gay 'flirting' could also be due to high levels of testosterone within the colony among males."¹⁸¹

More importantly, we are not animals. We are created in the image of God. Unlike us, animals are controlled by their passions and instincts. One need only observe a dog clinging to its owner's leg to realize that animals may relieve their sexual passion on anything and everything. Were we to determine moral behavior based upon practices within the animal kingdom, then we could murder and maim others to acquire their position because they are weak; we could eat fellow humans; and we could abandon, or even murder, our spouses after procreation. Certainly, behavior within the animal kingdom is not sufficient to condone human behavior.

Challenge 3: What about a person with a same-sex orientation who never finds members of the opposite sex attractive?

Sex has a context. It cannot be separated from that context, which is marriage between a man and a woman. What about the man who can't have sex because his wife won't have sex with him? Is he then free to have sex with other women? Of course not, and yet this is essentially the same argument. This argument maintains that if a person cannot experience sex within the acceptable parameters of God, then he must be free to seek sex outside of those parameters.

Sometimes we mistakenly assume that sexual relations is a right to which everyone is entitled. However, as Jesus noted in [Matthew 19:12](#), some people are born eunuchs, and some are made so by other men. Is it fair that the man who was born a eunuch or made so by other men does not get to experience sex? No ... but life is not entirely fair because of the curse of sin.

God is fully capable of granting a person a new sexual orientation. Certainly, there are many testimonies to this effect. However, it is possible that some may never experience this. Instead, God may be calling them to demonstrate God's grace and provision through life-long celibacy. After all, Jesus also noted in [Matthew 19:12](#) that some have made themselves eunuchs—meaning that some have chosen celibacy—for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

Challenge 4: Jesus overturned the Law. It is hypocritical for anyone who does not continue to offer sacrifices to say that homosexuality is still a sin.

Jesus declared in [Matthew 5:17](#), *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* Jesus did not nullify the Law. If Jesus did away with everything in the Law, then it must be permissible to murder, steal, lie, covet, *et cetera*; however, these are reaffirmed as sins throughout the New Testament. The redemption laws—dietary matters,

¹⁸¹ Daily Mail Reporter, "Penguins have 'Gay Flings' because they are Lonely - but End Up in a Heterosexual Couple."

rituals, cleansings, sacrifices, and priestly duties—were fulfilled when Jesus died on the cross, but Jesus never removed the moral law. (This is expounded upon in the answer to the next challenges.)

Challenges 5 & 6:

- **God called eating shell fish and other things that we do today an abomination. If these are no longer abominations then why is homosexuality still considered an abomination?**
- **In the Old Testament, God commanded the Jews to kill those who practiced homosexuality. Are we supposed to kill homosexuals today?**

The Old Testament Law consisted of three categories:

- **Ceremonial law:** This included such things as dietary matters, rituals, cleansings, sacrifices, and priestly duties.
- **Civil law:** Israel was a Theocracy, so God established laws for social order. These laws were for Israel's government, not the governments of all nations.
- **Moral law:** These laws were based upon God's eternal character.

The ceremonial and civil laws were rescinded in the New Testament, but not the moral law ([Acts 10:9-15](#); [Romans 13:1-9](#)). Instead, the moral law was taken to a higher level ([Matthew 5:20-48](#)). Jesus never contradicted or negated the moral law. When Jesus spoke of such things as sexual immorality, murder, theft, etc., He was affirming the common understanding and practice of the moral law found in the Old Testament ([Matthew 5:19-20](#)). However, Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial law in His ministry on the cross ([Matthew 5:17](#)). Thus, what was considered abominable based upon ceremonial law—such as eating shell fish, wearing clothes of mixed fibers, and touching pig skin—was only abominable to the Jewish people, and that only for a set period of time. These are not considered by God to be abominable practices for us today.

Laws such as killing those who participated in homosexual practices, or the stoning of rebellious children were limited to the Jewish nation when they were governed by a Theocracy. This is not how God expects His people to handle these civil matters today. Instead, we are commanded to follow the civil laws of our nation's particular government regarding these matters ([Romans chapter 13](#)).

In contrast to ceremonial and civil laws which were given for a time, God's moral law preceded the giving of the Old Testament Law, and it has remained in effect subsequent to the fulfilling of the Old Testament Law ([Leviticus chapter 18](#); [Leviticus 20:13 and 23](#); [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#)). For more information on this, read *Laid Bare* chapter two, "How Does Theology Determine Sexuality?"

Challenge #7: Society has evolved its understanding of what is socially acceptable. The taboo against same-sex marriage is the modern equivalent of America's former taboo against inter-racial marriages.

Same-sex marriages and inter-racial marriages cannot be equated. This is a clear case of comparing apples to oranges. Although homosexuals have been—and in too many cases are still being—mistreated and abused, their experiences cannot be compared to the history of enslavement, segregation, and abuse of other races. There are no gay-only drinking fountains, bathrooms, or seating. In many ways, the homosexual community has attempted to hijack the black civil rights efforts, but behavior cannot be compared to skin color and ethnicity. Behavior can be voluntarily controlled and altered—even if it were true that some people are born gay—but a person has no ability to voluntarily control or alter his skin color and ethnicity. Furthermore, these are morally neutral characteristics; whereas, behavior is not morally neutral.

The only things that prevented inter-racial marriages was bigotry and bias. The nature and definition of marriage did not have to change in order to facilitate a heterosexual union between members of two races. However, same-sex marriages would require a fundamental change in the nature and definition of marriage as well as a whole series of other civil laws. Moreover, there is nothing irregular about the sexual union and reproductive nature of an inter-racial, heterosexual union. This is not true of homosexual unions. Similarly, there is nothing in Scripture which would preclude inter-racial marriages, but Scripture does forbid the practice of homosexuality.

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