

## Does God Approve of Same-Sex Marriage?

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The varied opinions of sexuality in America have raised many questions concerning traditional marriage views and laws.

The blessings of same sex unions by ministers in the past, has been controversial to say the least. Now there are major denominations that are approving the high honor of Bishop on practicing homosexuals engaged in current same sex relationships. The question arises; can this lifestyle acceptance be substantiated Biblically?

There are those outside of the religious community, who feel the church has no right to dictate who should or should not be allowed to marry. These individuals believe marriage is strictly a civil ceremony and should be left up to the courts to decide. This commentary would not be applicable to those who adhere to these ideals.

On the other hand, those who seek to align themselves with biblical directives must consider the following scriptures and determine where they will stand in light of God's Holy Word.

We must first establish the basic authority and purpose in this life. According to Genesis 1, God is the Master Creator of ALL things. In the New Testament, Colossians 1:16, reconfirms God as the creator of ALL things and dictates that ALL things were created for Him. This is also confirmed in Revelations 4:11 which describes that the purpose of ALL things is to bring pleasure to God. The great challenge for mankind, is realizing that life is not about self-gratification first. According to Romans 1:25, there will be those who will turn the truth of God into a lie, worshipping and serving the creation more than the Creator, Who is blessed

forever. These are those who believe God's first desire for mankind is to be happy instead of holy.

In the garden, God could have created any combination of humanity. In Genesis 1:27-28, God chose to establish His purpose by creating a man and a woman whom He instructed to "...be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it..." In the New Testament, Jesus reconfirms God's original plan in Mark 10:6-8. In Matthew 19:3-6, He reminds the hearers that God chose the man and the woman, though two, to become one flesh. Jesus did not make allowances for OTHER options, but simply reaffirmed God's original design.

What is the biblical stand on homosexuality? Does the Bible even address the issue? The word "homosexuality" was coined in the 19th century and does not appear in the Bible. The first reference to this lifestyle is found in Genesis 19. Two angels were sent to Sodom to investigate the evil reports and were threatened with sexual assault by a mob of men. The town and surrounding area was destroyed the next day. This is where the term "sodomy" originates.

Later, we find in the book of Leviticus, the "Holiness Code", which were guidelines God instructed Moses to teach the Israelites.

In Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Moses warned the people that sexual activity between two men was an abomination before God and the penalty was death. A basic non-biblical definition of Abomination is that which is VILE, LOATHSOME, AND DISGUSTING. There are no positives to "abomination".

In Ezekiel 16:49-50, the prophet declares the sin of Sodom before it's destruction was pride, fullness of bread, idleness, neglecting the poor and committing abominations.

It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for abomination, tow'ebah, found in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, is the same word used in Ezekiel 16:50 describing the abomination found in Sodom before it was destroyed. With the exception of another mob scene in Judges, chapters 19-20, the remainder of references in the Old Testament concerning this sexual practice, deal with idol worship. Male

prostitutes, known as Sodomites, would serve their gods by participating in sexual activity with other men who came to worship at their temple.

As Christianity began to spread to the Gentiles, the “Holiness Code” was modified. According to Acts 15:20, the requirements for new believers was refusing meats offered to idols, abstaining from sexual immorality, consuming dead animals still containing their blood, and drinking blood.

In the New Testament, there are three references that deal with homosexuality. Romans 1:22-28, describes those who have turned away from the one true God to serve idols. One of the results of this choice is the UNNATURAL sexual relationship between men and women. The Greek word for natural, *phusikos*, means instinctive. It must be pointed out that nowhere in scripture is homosexuality ever considered to be a NATURAL expression of love.

There has been some debate over the reference in 1 Corinthians 6:9 where Paul is describing those who will NOT inherit the kingdom of God. The list includes “...abusers of themselves with mankind...” The Greek word “*arsenokoitai*” clearly describes sexual intercourse between two men. Some feel that because Paul spoke with permission in the next chapter concerning marriage, that this also was his opinion and not a word from God.

In 1 Timothy 1:10, where Paul is describing actions contrary to God’s law, you will find those who “...defile themselves with mankind...” listed. This is the same Greek word used in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and there is no question here that Paul is NOT speaking with permission BUT as the Holy Spirit directed him.

In the Bible’s 66 books, 1189 chapters, 31000 plus verses, there is not one single positive reference concerning homosexuality...NOT ONE. There are many Bible verses found that extol God’s acceptance of the love between a husband and wife. The Song of Solomon details the passionate expression of love between a man and his wife. It is this absence of positive scripture and the abundance of negative scripture that raises the question of how same-sex marriages can be Biblically approved.

Also, there is not a single reference in the Bible that approves of ANY other sexual activity of ANY kind EXCEPT one naturally born man with one naturally born woman in the bonds of marriage.

There are those who will promote the “fact” that some people are “born” with this disposition. In reality, this is true. We are ALL born with a SIN BEND. The reference in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 mentions several unbiblical lifestyles including drunkenness, covetous, extortioners, adulterers, as well as homosexuals. We ALL have to deal with the evil urges within us. This is not talking about those who STRUGGLE with these sins, but those who EMBRACE the sinful lifestyle. These are the ones who are warned NOT to be deceived (believing what is NOT true) who will NOT enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus came to set us free from ALL of the bondages of sin. We must choose to accept or reject this FREEDOM.

It is understood that there will always be those who according to 2 Peter 3:16, will “distort the scriptures unto their own destruction” and according to Isaiah 5:20, “...call good evil and evil good...” Yet for those who TRULY desire God’s truth from God’s word, the obvious is clear. In the garden, God established the basis for the first family, ONE man and ONE woman, though two, they became ONE flesh. Out of this immutable pattern God has set before us HIS plan for mankind. We will all stand before the Lord’s Holy throne and give an account of our lives one day. The standard God will use on that day will not be the opinions of man but His inspired Word... the Holy Bible.