

The Bible and Homosex

Sexual truths for a modern society

Expanded Edition

DR PEET H. BOTHA

THE BIBLE AND HOMOSEX

SEXUAL TRUTHS FOR A MODERN SOCIETY

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XPLANATORY

This book is presented as a fusion of two books by Dr Botha: *The Bible and Homosex – Sexual truths for a modern society* and *The Empty Testament – Four Arguments Against Gay Theology*. Every effort was made to eliminate repetitions and some parts were exchanged between the two books in order to present a flowing order with some revision where it was deemed necessary. The first eight chapters explore the Bible hermeneutically and exegetically for its views on homosexuality, while the later chapters are mainly concerned with the four arguments against gay theology. The two appendices are written by André Bekker, founder of [New Living Way Ministry](#).

The reader is also encouraged to read the *Notes* on each chapter, which contain valuable information aiding in a better understanding of the subject discussed. These notes were expanded extensively with relevant information and over thirty references to applicable articles written by Dr Robert Gagnon.

Dr Botha's video presentations on the material covered in this book, can be viewed online under the following topics:

- [Ancient Cultures and Homosexuality](#).
- [The Bible, Early Church and Homosexuality](#).
- [Contemporary Times and Homosexuality](#).
- [Science and Homosexuality](#).

Complementary to this book, I highly recommend the reader to obtain Dr Robert Gagnon's book: *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* and to read his numerous valuable [ONLINE ARTICLES](#). The reader can also view his [VIDEO PRESENTATIONS](#) under the heading *Dr Robert Gagnon*.

Another must read book for our day and age is Dr Michael Brown's *Can You Be Gay and Christian?: Responding with Love and Truth to Questions about Homosexuality*.

Making Gay OK: How Rationalizing Homosexual Behavior Is Changing Everything by Dr Robert Reilly, will help the reader understand the dynamics of the rationalization of sexual misbehaviour.

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FOREWORD 1

We live in times of change, especially in South Africa, but then also the world. Change brings with it uncertainty, particularly when the foundations of our world view and beliefs are challenged.

As Christians, we have experienced the relentless attacks on the original, God-inspired and unfailing source of truth, the Bible. Few things bring about more emotion to believers than assaults undermining and eroding the foundations of our belief. The challenge on the question of homosexuality is one such tremor, shaking the foundation of our belief.

The theological flood of re-interpretation and re-evaluation to place the words in the Bible within a new context is evident everywhere. We are also on the homosexual issue challenged to accept a re-interpretation of the biblical injunctions. This is based on modern time insights and experiences. The fact is that homosexual practices are not new and have been around for a very long time.

The challenge to take a stand, reminds one of the question regarding the authority of Jesus in Mark 11:28. Jesus did not respond directly to the question asked, but tested the motives of the challengers by asking a question directed at the root motivation of their challenge. The outcome affects the choice every man and woman has to make regarding either inspiration by God or influence by humans. The challengers to Jesus were not prepared to give an answer and therefore elected to say, “We don’t know.” This they did because they were in two minds between obedience to God and the fear of the people. May we not at this critical point of time and on this critical issue, the issue of homosexuality, refrain from taking a clear biblical position.

André van Niekerk (PhD)

FOREWORD 2

“Did God say...?” The question that was asked in the Garden of Eden has haunted generations of Adam’s race. In a way, Dr Botha’s “Bible and Homosex” seeks to answer the question, “Did God say that homosexual conduct is a sin?”

These are indeed extraordinary times, with secularisation of society advancing like a desert onto what was once well-watered fertile grassland. How often don’t we get told: “Come on, keep religion out of this debate?” In reality, is there anything worthwhile in any discussion on moral issues that excludes religion?

However, the crisis gets worse when professors of the Christian faith with Bibles in their hands fail to speak out clearly on matters where God has left us in no doubt as to what His mind is. The terrible irony is that when the Church succumbs to the temptation of adjusting its message to suit the world’s changing tastes, thereby hoping to remain relevant; it ends up losing its authority and relevance. Regardless of all the noises made in the media and other platforms there remains a deep yearning for the truth – and nothing but the truth.

After a thorough study of the key passages in relation to homosexuality in the old and the New Testaments, Dr Botha leaves an honest inquirer with no other option but to accept that God definitely condemns homosexual conduct. The sooner churches understand that no amount of theological revisionism will alter that fact, the better it is for them, the parishioners, society at large and governments of countries where they operate.

A church that submits to God’s view on homosexuality is also in a better position to understand and proclaim the message of hope and freedom to those in bondage to the perversion. There are numerous witnesses to the fact that Christ has come to set captives free in this regard too.

May Dr Botha’s “Bible and Homosex” dispels the confusion about this critical issue for this generation and coming ones, stabilise wavering hearts, strengthen weak knees and reinvigorate our faith in God and His Word.

PREFACE

I don't think that anyone would choose to write a book on the topic of homosex¹ unless some sort of impetus to do so exists. In my case the impetus came when the 2004 Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in South Africa acknowledged that theological confusion on the issue of *homosexuality and the Bible* reigns among their ranks. This did not come as a surprise as the DRC had been drifting towards a pro-homosex stance since 1998 when they first undertook a new theological and anthropological study into sexuality in general. The results of that study culminated in the pro-homosex decisions taken at the DRC's Hartenbos Synod (2004) meeting.

The warning lights came on; the DRC was in the grips of a paradigm shift in line with the other mainline denominations in South Africa with regard to their theology on sin, the family, marriage and sexuality. Self-affirming active (practising) homosexual ministers from the gay-churches were co-opted as advisors onto some of the committees of the various Regional Synods and active homosexual people were invited to share their stories at the General Synod Meeting, the committee meetings and with congregations of the DRC. After the 2004 Synod meeting two members of the Executive Council of the General Synod apologised in person to a predominantly gay congregation in Pretoria on behalf of the DRC, this apology was symbolically meant for all homosexual people and their family members within and outside of the DRC who had been spiritually and emotionally hurt in the past by the DRC.

The above situation gave me enough reason to speak out against what I believed to be a fatal theological error on the part of the DRC Synod. My first book (in Afrikaans), *Die sinode en homoseks: 'n Kritiese evaluering van die homoseksualiteit-debat in die NG Kerk in Suid Afrika* (*The Synod and Homosex: A critical evaluation of the homosexuality debate in the DRC in South Africa*), directly addresses the situation in the DRC but is also meant to be a resource for the other Reformed denominations in South Africa.

Issues relating to homosexuality are hotly debated in all the denominations and in the secular media. There are indeed fierce disagreements on whether homosexual conduct is sin or not, the status of active homosexual Christians² in the church, their relationships and their ordination as office bearers in the church.³ Speaking (and writing) one's mind can be perilous especially when one not only questions the morality of same-sex intercourse but accuses a meeting of the stature of the DRC Synod as being theologically unsound. Yet, I put forward my convictions as best I can, fully knowledgeable of the risks involved.

Within the politics of *character assassination*, the first risk is to be labelled a *heterosexist*. This carries with it the additional labels of being *misogynistic* and *homophobic*. These are labels which convey the impression of a psychiatric disorder. Within academic circles today these personal tags are meant to ensure personal destruction as is the case when someone is labelled a *Bible fundamentalist*. It is meant to take one out of the debate or at least make one's voice conditional to the tag applied. Further to the above there is the risk of being regarded as *intolerant*, *exclusive* and *holding onto outmoded sexual mores*.

It is neither pleasant being involved in the homosexual debate nor inwardly satisfying to speak out publicly against homosexual conduct because it positions one against the prevailing secular cultural norms in most of the media, academic and secular establishments. This leaves one in quite a vulnerable situation especially when one's own church denomination is inclined to revisionism and relativism and very few other ordained ministers in the church are taking a similar public stand.

The debate forces one to uphold standards of holiness and righteousness which are no longer regarded as such by the majority of people inside and outside of the church. Proclaiming these

standards leaves one with an acute awareness of one's own imperfections and need for grace and forgiveness. However, it compels one to proclaim and defend the boundaries explicitly implied by such standards and sometimes forces one to unintentionally bring personal pain to people attracted to the same sex who are already struggling with guilt feelings and who are also prone to feelings of self-loathing. I want to state it publicly that I am neither against nor do I hate homosexual people. I am, however, very much against their theology which, as far as I am concerned, brings false teachings into the church. Gay theology is to be resisted and exposed for what it is, namely a false theology.

Of particular concern to me is the manner in which the biblical witness is minimised in the debate. This is done when arguments focus erroneously on the supposed exploitative nature of misogynistic and patriarchal attitude of the Bible; the perceived absence of any knowledge about an innate homosexual orientation in antiquity; the assumed lack of direct references to homosexuality or homosexual orientation in antiquity and the Bible. It is done when arguments focus on the superior scientific knowledge of our own time. It seems to me that slowly but surely the Bible as the primary revelatory source of authority in the debate is being replaced by a secular humanist theological manifesto in which non-negotiable principles have already been secured at the cost of the biblical standards.

An empty testament!

That is all that would remain of the Old and New Testaments in the Bible when pro-homosexual liberal theologians, revisionists and activists are finished with it. An empty testament, "detoxified" from condemnation of the unrepentant sinner and sin. Indeed, an "empty testament," written for our time and deliberately cleansed of all that could keep us from heaven or the coming wrath of God.

Our culture is saturated with the idea that homosexuality is a normal, proper and accepted expression of love between persons. This notion is strengthened by the affirmation of homosexual marriages in courts of law as well as by constitutional legalization of such marriages, for example the constitutional laws of the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, Spain and South Africa.

Today we are witnessing a desperate and insistent effort to reinterpret the Bible's proscription on homosex as a culturally imbedded, non-applicable and time-biased prescript not meant for our time, which is known for long-lasting, committed, loving and caring homosexual relationships. We are told in no uncertain terms by the media and so-called progressive churches that homosexuality – in either deed or orientation – is something approved by an ever loving and gracious God and is therefore consistent with biblical morality. Thus, for them, the Bible rightly interpreted, understood or translated, does not condemn homosexuality. The loving relationships of Jesus and John, David and Jonathan, as well as Ruth and Naomi are cited as examples of loving, caring long-lasting and committed homosexual relationships within the pages of the Bible.

The diabolical call to receive homosexuality as a gift from God and therefore as a morally acceptable belief and behaviour, is now being heard in magazines, bookstores, legislation, TV programs, in the church and by the church. Not only are many members of the church confused but even the highest policy making bodies or church councils are undecided. The floodgates are open and the proliferation of literature teaching this new revisionist morality under the guise of correct understanding of the relevant biblical portions is resulting in the twisting of the Bible truths, enhancing the confusion of many and the weakening of the mainline church.

Today, homosexuality and homosex, which at one time were regarded as morally unthinkable, are on parade before a cheering and applauding post-Christian world and church as normal, acceptable and unquestionable good. The morally unthinkable has become thinkable and the morally

unacceptable of previous times has become the certainty of contemporary time. Thus the social and moral acceptance of homosexuality in both orientation and conduct, in both desire and act, is presented as quite thinkable and certain.

God has been relegated to the periphery of man's existence and man's theology of experience has taken the place of God's theology of grace. Instead of man becoming more and more like the image of God, God is recreated in the image of man, designed and moulded by the experiences, wants and longings of the deceitful and sinful heart of man. The authoritative and absolute standard of God is redefined into a new morality, contextualised by our own time so that God's eternal pronouncements become temporal and optional, void of biblical authority and Holy Spirit inspiration. Strangely the people making this claim appeal to the very Bible they break down to assert that a homosexual lifestyle is perfectly compatible with its teaching as well as with the character of a loving and caring God.

What is good for the goose must also be good to the gander. The heterosexual marriage and family are under fierce attack by homosexual activists. In many countries homosexual partnerships have almost the same legal rights as married heterosexual marriages, although not the title marriage. Homosexuals want the title because the title would not only mean that the same rights have been granted, but that their homosexual lifestyle is affirmed by society and the church. Speaking of a homosexual partnership (Norway), civil solidarity pact (France), legal partnership (Germany) or domestic partnerships (USA) is not what the homosexual fraternity wants. It must be marriage because marriage presupposes family recognition. Thus marriage must be redefined to make provision for basically any possible constitution thereof. Veith summarised the envisaged consequences if marriage continues to be redefined when he writes:

Under the emerging framework, there will be no difference between a married couple, a homosexual couple, or a couple in a temporary sexual relationship. As many advocates are putting it. 'What difference does it make to the government or an employer who you are having sex with?' This sort of reductionism – a spouse is nothing more than a sex partner, so a sex partner is the same as a spouse – misses the point of what marriage is and what its role in society amounts to.... So far, governments are resisting same-sex marriages. But instead marriage is being defined down. As marriage becomes unnecessary – not just for job benefits but for adopting children, inheriting property, and being socially acceptable – the whole nation will be 'living in sin.'⁴

One does not need to be a prophet to realise that we are on the verge of the destruction of marriage as we know it. The redefinition of marriage would impact concepts like sexuality, marriage and the family and change the kind of future we currently envisage to leave for our children and grandchildren. It also has vast implications for the church. The theologies of sin, marriage, sexuality and the family will be severely impacted.

The revisionist approach to reinterpret these theologies from a same-sex perspective will destroy what we are familiar with and put in its place monstrosities which are the creation of sinful man and not the pure and holy God. It is widely recognised by radical homosexual activists, pro-family supporters, pro-marriage supporters and conservative Bible scholars that same-sex marriage will eventually destroy the institution of male-female marriage. It should be realised that the redefinition of marriage is a means to eventually realise a much more sought-after outcome, the reordering of society.

I have written this book with the following objectives in mind: First, I hope to communicate anew to the church the biblical witness regarding homosex. Second, I hope to resist the spirit of revisionism in the church that reinterprets the biblical truths to suit 21st century liberal theology. Third, I want to reiterate the biblical sexual standard proclaimed by Scripture. Fourth, I want to

defend the biblical views of sin, marriage, sexuality, and the family. Fifth, I want to support and strengthen those who believe and feel as I do.

It is my prayer that this book will furthermore give much needed information about same-sex marriage to those who desire to stand in the gap and defend the biblical concept of marriage. This book is not only meant to give information but also to encourage all those who are fighting for the status quo of the traditional marriage, not to give up and not to compromise but to prevail against the continuous pressure from the same-sex activists to compromise and accept a dubious sexual lifestyle. Same-sex marriage is not God's will for mankind; it is and always will remain a sin, notwithstanding its legalisation by secular governments. May we never forget this biblical truth.

The Bible has been tried, judged and sentenced to silence by secular humanism. Will the strong arm of secular governments stretch right into the pulpit of God's church? Will secular humanist constitutions and humanist bills of right override the Bible's authoritative prerogative to state what human conduct God regards as sin? Will the kingdom of God be required to bend the knee before the kingdom of the prince of this world? To my mind it is clear: *the Bible will not compromise its standard and not shift its boundaries. It will remain a stumbling block to those who intend to pass it by or revise its message.*

In Part One, *Theological Hermeneutics and Exegesis*, chapter one to eight the Bible is explored for its views on homosexuality.

In Part Two, *Changing Theology*, I will highlight the contemporary situation with reference to the same-sex controversy. We need to take note of the role-players in the debate as well as the agenda informing their efforts. Same-sex marriage will impact four very specific theologies and in chapter nine I will discuss the changes brought about and envisaged for the theology of sexuality. There is a concerted effort to change the church's attitude towards homosex; it is in actual fact an effort to change the traditional definition of sexual sin. In chapter ten the impact of same-sex marriage on the theology of sin will be considered at length. An in-depth look at same-sex marriage and the implications thereof for heterosexual marriage follows in chapter eleven whilst the logical effects on the traditional family will be discussed in chapter twelve.

Part Three, *Frequently Asked Questions* answers 14 frequently asked questions.

Peet Botha (PhD)

PART ONE

THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS AND EXIGESIS

CHAPTER 1

HOMOSEXUALITY IN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

Introduction

This study emerges from concern about a theology of human sexuality. The aim of this chapter is to bring together some of the multitude of sources regarding human sexuality in general but then especially those concerned with homosexuality. The debate on homosexuality has challenged the church and indeed also the Bible to give credible answers to questions regarding same-sex relationships.

The problem of homosexuality is no longer just the problem of the world¹ outside of the church; it has become the church's problem. The state of theological research on homosexuality reveals confusion in the use of the Bible in Christian and secular debates about the acceptance of homosexuals into the Christian faith community. It is clear that there is no longer only a conservative view on homosexuality within the church. Gagnon makes us aware of the state of affairs when he mentions pro-homosexual arguments attempting to justify homosexual practice in the church:²

There are three main arguments for endorsing homosexual behavior.

(1) *The "Love-Tolerance-Unity" Argument.* This argument is usually used as a preemptive first strike to cut off an appeal to Scripture. It simply asserts: "Look, I know what love is; I know what tolerance is; and I know what unity demands: the affirmation of consensual, loving same-sex erotic unions. Case closed, no matter what some Scripture texts espouse on same-sex intercourse" (for a response see pp. 33-35, 210-27, 241-43, 282-84 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

(2) *The "Non-Essential Issue" Argument.* This argument contends that sex, and certainly "homosex," do not really matter a great deal. To be sure, one can find a rejection of same-sex intercourse in Scripture, but it is not a core issue or does not address the phenomenon of loving homosexual relationships. This argument can take many specific forms:

a. Only a few isolated texts speak against homosexual intercourse, and nothing from Jesus (for a response see pp. 432-41, 185-228 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

b. The Bible disapproves of only exploitative forms of homosexual behavior (see the discussion of individual Bible texts in my book).

c. Homosexual intercourse is regarded as sin but a sin no worse than any other sin, indeed less of a sin than judging others (see pp. 69-70, 74-78, 94-97, 113, 117-20, 264-69, 273-84, 305-308, 331 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

d. The church over the centuries has departed from Scripture's position on a number of issues. Given these analogous cases, what's the big deal about circumventing the Bible's opposition to homosexual behavior (see pp. 442-51, 460-69 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*)?

(3) *The "New Knowledge" Argument.* The claim here is that we have acquired some new insight recently that the biblical authors did not have, which puts at jeopardy their viewpoint. This allegedly new knowledge has in view one or more of the following claims:

a. The Levitical prohibitions of male same-sex intercourse are no more relevant today than a host of other discarded purity regulations in the Holiness Code (for a response see pp. 113-28 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

b. The Bible rejects homosexual practice because it sees the purpose of sex as procreation, not sexual intimacy (pp. 132-34, 270-73 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

c. The Bible's opposition is based on misogynistic biases: homoerotic relationships threaten the heterosexual paradigm of male dominance (pp. 138-42, 361-80 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

d. Biblical authors were ignorant of the genetic immutability of homosexual orientation, basing their opposition on the misunderstanding that homoerotic desires arise from overheated or excessive heterosexual passions (pp. 384-432 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).

This confusion is enhanced by the presuppositions, theological points of departure, emotional experiences, superficial reading of Bible portions, inadequate hermeneutical methodology,³ *et cetera*. There have been a number of studies of the Bible portions usually quoted with regard to homosexuality. Whilst most studies are exegetical they do not explore the wider societal contexts.⁴ This study therefore views the exegetical process as unfinished until the construction of the context within which the texts originated, has been done as well.

I agree with Van Unnik⁵ that one should first research the meaning of words and phrases from the New Testament in their contemporary context for their most probable meaning before one could understand their meaningfulness within the New Testament. The contemporary context represents a dynamic society and not just décor against which early Christianity is presented.⁶ Early Christianity had a Jewish history and found itself being influenced by contemporary society which was non-Christian in thought, religion and politics. Thus it can be assumed without contradiction that the New Testament not only originated in cultural and social circumstances different to ours, but that it also shows the influences of these cultures and societies. I further agree with Malherbe⁷ that the main sources for the social construction of early Christianity are literary sources.⁸

I am writing with a specific theological perspective⁹ in mind. The New Testament is much more than a product of man alone or a product of evolving global social circumstances.¹⁰ God uses (*inter alia*) the social phenomena to reveal his perfect will for mankind. Codes of conduct thus established may supersede time and culture, to be authoritative also in contemporary situations, such as the post-modern age in which we are living.

I view the text of the New Testament as not merely a product of human endeavour or manipulation, but as the product of organic divine inspiration.¹¹ The relevant Bible portions are therefore studied - not only to determine the meanings of the Bible portions, but also what the Bible portions (as used by the Holy Spirit) actually do or are supposed to do (as intended by God) in the lives of the first Christians as well as Christians today.

My interpretation of the message of the relevant portions concerning *homosexual conduct* will be shaped by a couple of factors which will impact the application of the message for believers today. In the first place there are factors concerning my own personality, my general and scientific background, theological tradition, philosophy of life and worldview, my *Sitz im Leben*, my relationship with God and personal experience thereof, the authority of the Scriptures¹² as the Word of God – all of these factors will fundamentally influence my interpretation and what I understand the outcome or message to be. Secondly, the intended readers of this study will in some ways influence the process of interpretation.

Ancient social conditions should be taken into consideration when doing biblical interpretation. This is important for the study of the Bible portions on homosexuality because of the relation between the social background of the Bible and the theology of the biblical authors. The Bible portions did not originate within a vacuum, and the social-historical construction of the biblical milieu¹³ is vital for grasping the meaning of a portion or even a word, idiom or phrase.

Old Testament sexual morality

The Bible reflects an exotic and fascinating world. A world far removed from the contemporary world we are living in and yet our world is to some extent directly under its influence. Matthews & Benjamin¹⁴ introduce the reader to this world in a rather comprehensive work and unlock the time and culture of ancient Israel to the understanding of the modern reader.¹⁵ Culture, society and religion were coextensive in the biblical world.¹⁶ The religion of the ancient world inspired its culture, and handed it on from generation to generation.

Stories involving sex and violence in the Bible were, in opposition to the stories within the surrounding pagan religions, not fundamentally romantic.¹⁷ Irregular sexual practices went counter to the inherent decency and good sense of God's people, and violated the national conscience of Israel. They were *deeds that ought not to be done* (Gn. 20:9). The high sexual standards in Israel stood in marked contrast to those of the nations around it.¹⁸

The Torah (Written Law/First 5 books of the Old Testament) and the Talmud (Oral Law surviving today in written form) are the primary sources for defining sexual morality.¹⁹ The Oral Tradition is the authoritative source for decoding the written Torah.²⁰ With regard to homosexuality we find that only the male form is directly addressed in the Old Testament.²¹ Same-sex intercourse as a sexual misuse has earned itself the name *sodomy* through association with Gn. 19:5-7.²² The Old Testament does not appear to harbour an express prohibition of lesbianism, which the gay-affirmative literature seize on for its own purposes. However, Goldberg observes:²³

A prohibited behavior need not be explicitly stated in the Torah: an implied prohibition would be just as authoritative.... Weighty authorities hold that there is indeed a Torah prohibition against lesbianism.... This authoritative view is based on Leviticus 18:3.

Leviticus 18:3 reads:

Do not perform the practice of the land of Egypt in which you dwelled; and do not perform the practice of the land of Canaan to which I bring you, and do not follow their traditions

Goldberg explains:²⁴

The Torah is clearly telling us that we are forbidden to follow the 'practices' and 'traditions' of ancient Egypt and Canaan. To follow their 'practices' or their 'traditions' would indisputably violate a Torah prohibition. The question is, what 'practices and 'traditions,' specifically, does the text have in mind? The Torah is telling us to refrain from doing something, but the text itself leaves us pretty much in the dark as to what that something might be. To find out, we must turn to the Oral Law."

This is what the *Sifra* (9:8) says regarding Leviticus 18:3:²⁵

Could it be that you are not to build buildings or plant crops as they do? Rather, the Torah writes, '*do not follow their traditions.*' This must refer to practices that are long established amongst them, their fathers, and grandfathers. And what would they do? A male would 'marry' [*noseh*] a male, a female a female, a man a woman and her daughter, and a woman two males. That is why it says, '*their traditions.*'

Rabbi Rapoport writes:²⁶

Whilst the above-mentioned quotation refers to women who 'marry' each other, the Talmud and subsequent Codes declare (on the basis of the verse in Leviticus) that the prohibition includes all lesbian activity. Maimonides, followed by the *Schulchan Aruch* states:

It is forbidden for women to enmesh (play around) with one another and this belongs to the 'practices of the Egyptians' concerning which we have been warned: 'you should not copy the practices of the Land of Egypt ... although such conduct is forbidden, it is not punishable with lashes since there is no specific prohibition against it and no sexual intercourse takes place at all. Consequently, such women are not forbidden to marry Cohanim on account of promiscuity, nor is woman prohibited to her husband because of it, since this does not constitute adultery. It is, however, appropriate to subject such woman to *makat mardut* (disciplinary lashes) since they committed a prohibited act. A man should be particular with his wife concerning this matter and he should prevent woman who are known for their lesbian practices from visiting her or from having her visit them.

Rapoport acknowledges that halachic authorities disagree about the status of this prohibition and mentions several interpretations, where after he concludes:²⁷

Since rabbinical injunctions must be adhered to with the same commitment as biblical law, this dispute does not give rise to much practical difference. However, there is a substantial difference between female and male homosexuality. As mentioned, the prohibition of the latter is subsumed under the class of illicit sexual relations known as *arayot*, hence its violation is subject to the grave stricture of *yehareg ve'al ya-avor*; namely that in most circumstances one must choose death over any alternative which involves committing homosexual acts. In contrast, female homosexuality is described as *peritzuta* (obscenity) rather than *arayot* and as such would not ordinarily warrant the same degree of sacrifice as would abstention from male homosexual intercourse.

Goldberg states that gay-affirmative proponents “would like to show that the prohibition against lesbianism was ‘made up’ by the Sages. However, even if that were true, it would still make no difference in terms of actual practice: *halachah* and Talmudic interpretations are unanimous that lesbianism is forbidden.”²⁸

Any attempt to uncover the roots of the Old Testament’s view of sex must take into account the question regarding the nature of humanity. The distinction between the sexes is a *creation* by God since there is no such distinction on the divine level; the polarity of the sexes belongs to the created order and not to God. It exists because of the creative initiative of God and not because of the request of man (Gn. 2:18). Sexuality is, therefore, an element in human life over which man does not have control.

Not only is dominium granted to humanity over the rest of creation but also over the *personal* world of man, which includes sexuality. Sexuality must be seen as an intended part of human creation in the image²⁹ of God and, because God intended it from the beginning, it is an essential part of human existence. From the beginning mankind was created only as male and female, a fact that will be important for our interpretation of the New Testament understanding of sexuality.³⁰ It is also clear from Gen.2:18b that man by himself is less than human and that he needs an *other* in order to reflect the totality of God’s image and to fulfil God’s purpose. This *other* is woman, the only companion fit for him. She was the doorway into community.³¹

The command to exercise the created sexuality is depicted by the word *know*³² - to signify coitus in all its complexity (Gn. 4:1). The choice of the word to denote sexual intercourse has deep psychological overtones.³³ It should therefore not be dismissed as merely a euphemism. Exercising sexuality means much more than mere *intellectual comprehension* or *making acquaintance*.³⁴ Knowledge involved entering into a relationship with that which is known. Heterosexual coitus (intercourse) conveys knowledge of which one is, in his or her most fundamental nature, as male or female. In their sexual life they discover the deepest possibilities of human companionship and mutuality. Thus the word *know* in the Old Testament signifies *coitus*.

Baily, however, does not agree with this interpretation for *yada* in Gn. 4:1 and Jdg. 19:22. although he grants that it is used at least ten times in the rest of Scripture denoting *coition* (intercourse), he interprets the use of the word in the abovementioned Bible portions as such that it may mean no more than to *get acquainted with*. Although few commentators render a non-coital meaning for *yada* in these texts, it is frequently assumed to be the case with non-academics supporting the pro-homosexual cause. A non-coital interpretation may be based on linguistic considerations alone, cultural considerations or a combination of both.³⁵

Old Testament sexual morality with regard to homosexuality is directly addressed in only a few Bible portions³⁶ and assumed to be the case in a few other Bible portions.³⁷ There is no evidence that the Israelites ever approved of homosexual practices. The attitude towards homosexual

practices, as reflected in the Old Testament, is certainly not one of approval or even toleration. Homosexual acts committed by males were punished by death. The Old Testament does not differentiate between kinds of homosexual acts; the law terms the offence of homosexual *acts* simply as *lying with a male as with womankind*.³⁸

The impression from the Bible is that homosexual acts were perhaps relatively uncommon in Israel, but were regarded as deeds, which merited the severest penalty. Whilst the Law condemned male homosexual practices and punished them with death, the method of execution was not prescribed. However, the Mishna and the Talmud prescribed stoning. The Old Testament prohibited an adult³⁹ male from committing any homosexual acts.

In summary, given the Hebrew understanding of *yada*, knowledge necessarily involved entering into relationship with that which is known; in a sexual sense such knowledge is not available or possible to males entering into a sexual relationship. Sexuality provides the opportunity for the most complete, most accurate and most fulfilling knowledge available to humans, but only in the context male and female, never in the context male and male.

Maleness or femaleness can only be comprehended when exercised in the deepest and most intimate relationship possible with someone of the other sex. Therefore, coitus, as well as other heterosexual experiences, conveys knowledge of who one is, in his or her most fundamental, given nature as male and female. This standard is faithfully upheld throughout the Old Testament in stark contrast to Graeco-Roman sexual morality.

Graeco-Roman sexual morality

Homosexuality in classical Greek society is richly documented, although all Greek art, literature and archival material, with the exception of a little poetry, were the work of males. Female homosexuality is sparsely documented. The five most important sources of material on homosexuality are (1) late archaic and early classical homosexual poetry; (2) Attic comedy, especially Aristophanes and his contemporaries; (3) Plato; (4) a speech of Aiskhines, the *Prosecution of Timarkhos*; (5) homosexual poetry of the Hellenistic period.⁴⁰

The Greeks were aware that individuals differ in their sexual preferences. The Greek language has no nouns corresponding to the English nouns *homosexual* and a *heterosexual*. Dover adequately demonstrates that the Greeks assumed that mostly any individual responds at different times both to homosexual and to heterosexual stimuli and that hardly any male both penetrates other males and submit to penetration by other males at the same stage of his life.⁴¹

From about the sixth century onwards, the Greeks regarded homosexual desire by a man or youth for a boy, or by a man for a youth, as almost natural. The Athenian adolescent growing up in the time of Plato, took homosexuality for granted because his father's and grandfather's generations took it for granted. It was neither *unnatural* nor *effeminate* if he experienced homosexual desire for younger boys. Pederasty⁴² is generally used to describe the sexual attraction of an adult to an immature child, but to the Greeks it signified the love of a man for a boy who had passed the age of puberty but not yet reached maturity. The Greek love for boys was regarded not to be hostile to marriage, but supplemented it as an important factor in education⁴³ and denotes a decided bisexuality among the Greeks. The rape of boys also existed.⁴⁴ Homosexuality in the modern sense, between two adults of the same age group is seldom attested to in ancient Athens.⁴⁵

In vase painting, homosexual relationships are shown with very few exceptions in one of two ways. There are a number of examples of anal intercourse, in which the participants are members of the same age group but more often what is shown is interfemoral connection. The older person is usually shown as making the advance and there is little suggestion of *education*.

Pederasty was not regarded as an abnormality in ancient Rome and neither was it regarded as a weakness of the personality. Pederasty was no longer a means employed by the state in the education of the young, controlled by the highest authorities and an obligation for the older men to take upon themselves. It was not institutionalised as was previously done in Greece. In the late Hellenistic period pederasty is to be regarded as an erotic⁴⁶ phenomenon. In the state religion of Rome, phallic worship did not occupy an important place. However, images of phalli were common and can still be seen today in Pompeii.

Greek and Roman texts are full of homosexuality in action. Catullus boasts of his prowess and Cicero celebrates the kisses from the lips of his slave-secretary. According to taste and preference some chose women, some boys and some both. Horace repeatedly relates he adores both. Virgil preferred boys only and the Emperor Claudius, women only. Hadrian's catamite, Antinous, was honoured by an official cult after his death. The plays of Plautus are full of homosexual allusions. In Roman society *sodomy* was regarded as merely licentious, no concealment was necessary and lovers of boys were just as numerous as lovers of women. In Rome the favourite male slave took the place of the freeborn *ephebos*.⁴⁷ Legislation in place, meant to suppress homosexuality was, in fact, meant to stop freeborn citizens from being ravished like slaves.⁴⁸ This protected freeborn youths and girls alike.

It is clear that in the Graeco-Roman world all types of homosexual activity was known and one's behaviour was judged, not for one's preference for boys or girls, but by whether one played an active or a *passive* role. To be *active* was male. To take one's pleasure was virile, to accept it was servile. The freeborn male who was a homosexual of the passive kind was looked upon with utter scorn. The passive homosexual was not rejected for his homosexuality but for his passivity, a very serious moral and political infirmity.

The common view that sexual orientation and committed homosexual relationships, as it is known today, was not recognized in the ancient world is erroneous.⁴⁹ Hubbard, in *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome* writes:⁵⁰

'Social constructionists,' ... hold that patterns of sexual preference manifest themselves with different significance in different societies and that no essential identity exist between practitioners of same-gender love in, for instance, ancient Greece and post-industrial Western society. Some social constructionists have even gone so far as to deny that sexual preference was a significant category for the ancients or that any kind of subculture based on sexual object-choice existed in the ancient world.

Close examination of a range of ancient texts suggests, however, that some forms of sexual preferences were, in fact, considered a distinguishing characteristic of individuals. Many texts even see such preferences as inborn qualities and thus "essential" aspects of human identity: the earliest philosophical account of male sexual passivity, from the pre-Socratic philosopher Parmendes (10.5.134-35), traces it to a failure of male and female seed to blend properly at the moment of conception. Other medical writers consider effeminacy in men and masculinity in woman to be genetically determined (5.15). Aristotle (5.13) and his followers (5.16) believe that the desire to be penetrated anally arises from physiological deformity, either a congenital defect or something occurring through "abuse" as a child. Similarly, physiognomic writers (10.6-7) hold that effeminacy and sexual passivity be betrayed by visible physical traits, implying that the behavior stems from an organic etiology. Later astrological texts (10.38-41) consider all manner of sexual preference to be determined by the position of heavenly bodies at one's birth. The Roman fabulist Phaedrus (9.5) and the Greek comic poet Aristophanes (as recorded in Plato, 5.7.189-93) both produce mythological accounts explaining the origin of different sexual orientations in the prehistory and creation of the human race. In the context of these theories, it should not surprise us to see the late Greek novelist Longus introduce a character as "a pederast by nature" (10.19.11).

Even our earliest literary source for homosexuality, the iambic poet Archilochus in the early seventh century B.C.E., speaks of men with different *natures* and therefore different sexual preferences (1.1)....

Not only was there a widespread perception that individuals were characterized by their sexual preference, but there is considerable evidence that like-minded individuals congregated in social venues conducive to pursuing their mutual interests. In early Greece, athletics was practiced in the nude at least in part to showcase the beauty of young male bodies in motion: this aesthetic dimension of athletics is confirmed by the characteristic preference for male nudes in archaic and classical sculpture. It should therefore come as no surprise that the *palaestra* (a privately owned wrestling school, as opposed to public gymnasia) was a favourite gathering place for upper-class adolescent boys and their older admirers (3.11-12, 5.4-5).

Jewish sexual morality

The views of Hellenistic Jewish authors were shaped, not only by contemporary views of Graeco-Roman philosophers, but especially by their own Scriptures. Gagnon concludes that the number of texts⁵¹ that attest directly to the issue of homosexual intercourse are numerous enough and unanimous, allowing for an accurate assessment of Judaistic views on the matter. Evidence is primarily from the writings of Philo and Josephus.⁵²

Other references⁵³ also exist and echo the stance of Philo and Josephus. Over and above the texts, which explicitly address homosexuality, there are many other texts which allude to homosexual intercourse, including those which broadly forbid sexual immorality (πορνεία – porneia). The Qumran community did not expressly forbid same-sex intercourse, but did provide punishment for a member who even accidentally exposed his genitals to other males.

No Jew in antiquity would argue for a pro-stance towards male-male sexual intercourse given the severe stance against homosexual intercourse in the Leviticus laws. The Leviticus laws were recognised and applied to all male-male intercourse, regardless of the relative age, status or active/passive role of the participants.

Apart from the obvious fact that the Leviticus law forbade same-sex intercourse, Jews, like Greek and Roman critics of same-sex intercourse, rejected homosexual conduct on the grounds that it was *contrary to nature* or *against nature* (παρά φύσιν – parafúsin).⁵⁴ Evidence for their stance was drawn from the creation narratives where God intended heterosexual⁵⁵ intercourse and they understood and argued for *anatomical complementarity of fittedness* of the male and female sex organs.⁵⁶ Gender-transgressing feminization of the receptive homosexual partner evidenced and demonstrated homoeroticism's misdirection.

In conclusion one can summarise that Judaism regarded homosexual behaviour as a sin and a crime and that Jewish tradition assumes that such behaviour is not the result of anything else.⁵⁷ Created as a male, a man must remain pure and unblemished in his nature as maleness. To surrender it sexually by assuming the role of the opposite sex is a desecration of the divine order of creation. Same-sex sexual relations are forbidden. Sexual relations must be conducted within God-given boundaries.

New Testament sexual morality

Jesus made no *direct* or *explicit* comments on same-sex intercourse, just as He made no direct comments on many other important topics. The collective body of the Jesus tradition includes, therefore, no statement to the effect that same-sex intercourse is good or bad. However, Jesus was not silent about same-sex intercourse in as much as the inferential data clearly outlines Jesus' perspective.⁵⁸

Nothing in the Jesus tradition suggests that Jesus abrogated the Torah. Although Jesus does not explicitly refer to same-sex intercourse, implicit references do exist.⁵⁹ The impression one gets from Mt. 5:27-32 is that Jesus took sexual sin seriously. He regarded all sexual activity (thoughts and deeds) outside of lifelong marriage to one person of the opposite sex as unacceptable. Jesus' encounters with women who were considered sexual *sinner*s do not support the conclusion that Jesus was soft on sexual *sin*. Jesus forgave sexual sin, like all other sins, in the expectation of transformed behaviour. What is clear from the evidence that the Bible portions do offer, is that Jesus is no defender of homosexual behaviour. In what he says and in what he fails to say, He confirms the authority of the Old Testament witness against same-sex intercourse and the Old Testament is unanimous in its rejection of homosexual practice as are the Jewish authors in the centuries just before and after Jesus' birth.

The key Bible portions in the New Testament⁶⁰ are Rom. 1:24-27 and the vice lists in 1 Cor. 6:9-10 and 1 Tim. 1:9-10. Rom. 1:24-27 is central for the understanding of the New Testament attitude towards homosexual conduct and on which Christians must base their moral doctrine. It makes an explicit statement not only about same-sex intercourse among men, but also about same-sex intercourse among women. Here we need to come to grips with Paul's thoughts if we want to reach a valid understanding of sexuality and especially same-sex sexuality.⁶¹ Paul clearly relied heavily on the Hebrew Scriptures for his understanding of God's will for man.⁶² In general on none of the issues on sexuality did Paul deviate substantially from the traditions which he had spent a large part of his life learning, living and protecting.⁶³

Paul, unlike Jesus, did not spend his entire life in Palestine. He was a cosmopolitan, a world traveller who spoke and wrote Greek. Furnish⁶⁴ will have it that the Judaism that Paul learned was neither pure Old Testament nor Palestinian Judaism, but Diaspora Judaism, which was substantially influenced by Hellenistic thought and language.⁶⁵ It is essential to the understanding of Paul to realise that, although he may have used some of the same language as Hellenistic philosophy, this does not mean that he intended the same content or meaning. Paul condemns only sexual immorality (*πορνεία* – *porneia*) and not sexuality properly expressed.

As with the Old Testament and Jesus, Paul's concern is with the misuse of sexuality *per se*. He denounces both male-male and female-female sexual practices as contrary to nature. Both the *arsenokoites* (*ἀρσενοκοιτης* - active homosexual or sodomist) and the *malakós* (*μαλακός* - passive homosexual or *catamite*)⁶⁶ are threatened with spiritual retribution by disinheritance from the kingdom of God.

Contemporary sexual morality

Historically Christians have taught that people do not have the right to do with their bodies as they please. Such a view is undermined today by the defenders of three discernable and outspoken factions in contemporary culture: feminists, abortionists and homosexuals.⁶⁷ Questionable assumptions (sometimes most unscientific) in ethics, the human sciences and political thought presuppose a society tolerant of homosexuality in personal, ecclesiastical and civil spheres.

There can be no doubt that the visibility of homosexuality today is high and the organised pro-homosexual movement to dignify homosexuality and to have it recognised as *normal sexual practice* has infiltrated every area of culture: from the church to the television, from education to legislation⁶⁸ The growing number of proponents of this view is of the opinion that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality and that it even contains examples of loving, committed homosexual relationships⁶⁹ within its pages. The call to recognize homosexuality as morally acceptable behaviour is now being heard in ecclesiastical circles and by the church at large. Theologians are calling for the reinterpretation of the Bible portions historically taken to condemn homosexual acts and appeal to the church *to normalise* homosexuality as an acceptable variant of sexuality.⁷⁰ White

& Neill understands the same-sex controversy over the authority and interpretation of the Bible.⁷¹ Schaeffer, in his discussion on relativism and the denial of absolutes in current society, says that some current forums of homosexuality are to be seen as a philosophic problem referred to as *philosophic homosexuality*.⁷²

Much of the current debate centres on sexual and gender identity. This is reiterated by Keen⁷³ in reference to sex and gender confusion as the underlying problem within alternative human sexuality. The priest Fr. Oraison states that a man who is homosexual is not responsible for his situation; it is not a chosen condition but a condition ordained by God. This leads to a quite recent development: the distinction between *homosexual* and *homosexuality*.⁷⁴ The defence of homosexuality can be summarised in Corvino's arguments against the three most common objections: that homosexual relationships are unnatural, that they are harmful and that they violate biblical teaching.⁷⁵

Much of the focus in the current debate is on the subject of *nature*. From this follows the appeal for a third category.⁷⁶ Bahnsen is adamant there can be no third natural sex or alternative sexual orientation in God's diverse world.⁷⁷ The appeal to textual data in the contemporary debate brought about two major categories of exegetes: the *traditionalists* and the *revisionists*. Pronk⁷⁸ concedes that the majority of exegetes come to the conclusion that *these texts unanimously reject homosexual behaviour*. The minority report may be summarised in the words of Boswell: *There is only one place in the writings which eventually became the Christian Bible where homosexual relations per se are clearly prohibited (Leviticus) and the context in which the prohibition occurred rendered it inapplicable to the Christian community, at least as moral Law. The New Testament takes no demonstrable position on homosexuality*.⁷⁹

Scroggs comes to a similar conclusion when he states that biblical judgements against homosexuality are not relevant to today's debate. What stand out in the current debate are the contrasts between the presuppositions Paul had about homosexual relations and the presuppositions with which we approach homosexual relations today:⁸⁰ *Homosexual relations per se are not to be condemned, but with Paul, the condemnation of exploitive forms of homoeroticism (pederasty and prostitution) should be affirmed*. Contrary to this, Bahnsen argues that tolerance of homosexuality is based on doctrinal premises that deviate from biblical teaching. This deviation constitutes an antipathy to biblical revelation. Scripture is to be understood to condemn both homosexual orientation and homosexual acts, for there is no need in ethics to distinguish between them. Bahnsen is strongly supported by Gagnon in his arguments that the Bible unequivocally defines same-sex intercourse as sin, inasmuch as same-sex intercourse constitutes an inexcusable rebellion against the intentional design of the created order.⁸¹

The different schools of thought represent various approaches to the Bible. Pure humanism sincretistically forces itself onto biblical truths and systematically erodes biblical truth into an acceptable and digestible format for contemporary society. Distinctions like sex, gender, sexual orientation and sexual acts are finely tuned to the detriment of biblical truths. Acceptance or rejection of biblical authority seems to be the obvious distinction between the different approaches highlighted above. However, the authority of the Bible supersedes and reaches beyond the theology and doctrinal premises of modern scholars. Contemporary society is tolerant toward homosexuality.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above that the current debate on homosexuality in ecclesiastical circles and secular community is far from over. All the aspects of the debate are well attested to in the available literature.

The thrust of my argument is theological by its very nature. It recognizes the involvement of God in the social circumstances of man and man's reaction thereto. This involvement is expressed in the relevant Bible portions referring to homosexuality. Understanding ancient social conditions helps to interpret Bible portions and bridge the distance between ancient and contemporary societies. Old Testament sexual morality is closely linked to the concept of *the nature of man*. With regard to homosexuality the distinction between *male and female* should not be obliterated.

The Bible pictures this distinction as a creation by God. Whereas Old Testament sexual morality is defined by heterosexual conduct, the Graeco-Roman sexual morality is defined by homosexual conduct. Pederasty was the most obvious homosexual conduct in Graeco-Roman times but other types of conduct were also known. Judaist and New Testament sexual morality are closely linked because of the common Old Testament background, and both unanimously reject homosexual conduct as a normal expression of sexuality. This stance is vigorously opposed by the so-called revisionists of today – whose efforts are focused on *normalising* homosexuality as a variant of created sexuality over and against biblical doctrine on homosexuality.

CHAPTER 2

A SOCIO-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE FIRST CENTURY AD

Introduction

In the first century AD textual data, authors and subjects embrace and express cultural contexts and social phenomena that are not limited to one religious tradition or any one specific period of time. Interdisciplinary discussion is currently shaping research in biblical studies, religion, anthropology, cultural studies and other fields of study. This interdisciplinary discussion is important because Jewish and Graeco-Roman culture cannot be regarded as mere *background for Christianity*.¹

Scroggs gives substance to the preceding when he writes: *I want to convince the reader, in fact, that Graeco-Roman culture decisively influenced New Testament statements about homosexuality, and that this in turn, informs us about appropriate and inappropriate use of such statements in our present confrontation with homosexuality in the church.*² Meeks ponders on the question of historical understanding of textual data, but then settles for a *bottom up* approach. To understand the moral formation of the early Christian communities, we must understand their world. To understand their *homosexual world* we will, in this chapter, look at the various cultures/communities that existed side by side with Christian communities.³

This chapter will endeavour to identify the main trends in the Graeco-Roman, Judaic and early Christian cultures concerned. We need to come to an understanding of the prevailing codes regarding homosexual conduct. A social-historical overview of the prevailing code(s) on homosexuality within Judaism, Hellenism and early Christianity will identify the main trends. It is of importance for the evaluating of the impact of this culture, to visualise the periods and high points of these cultures on a chronological time line.⁴ Because this book is concerned with homosexual conduct, the focus will mainly be on researching and describing this form of sexuality.

Christianity originated from the bedrock formed by many cultures. One needs to orientate oneself with regard to these cultures and their chronological period of influence. Below is a timeline indicating some high points from the individual histories of Greece, Rome and Israel. Christianity is listed within Israel as a development flowing forth out of the Old Testament.

Chronology of Periods

Many dates are approximate
Initial dates are BC

				<i>GREECE</i>	<i>ROME</i>	<i>ISRAEL</i>
	3000					
Bronze Age						
	1200					
			1184	Traditional date of the fall of Troy. Fall of Mycenae.		
Dark Age				<i>GREECE</i>	<i>ROME</i>	<i>ISRAEL</i>
	800					
	753		753		Traditional date of the founding of Rome by Romulus	
			900	Homer		
			700	Hesiod		
				Semonides		
				Sappho		

				<i>GREECE</i>	<i>ROME</i>	<i>ISRAEL</i>
	509		509		Expulsion of kings, founding of Republic.	
	500					
			538			First Jewish exiles return to Jerusalem. New temple completed in Jerusalem.
			490-479	Persian wars		
			479			Esther becomes queen of Persia. Ezra returns to Jerusalem
			451-450	Citizenship law of Pericles	Traditional date of the Twelve Tables	
			445			Nehemia builds Jerusalem wall
			441	Aristophanes. <i>Lysistrata</i> .		
Classical						
			459-380	Lysias		
			390			Aramaic begins to replace Hebrew as Jewish language
			429-347	Plato		
		<i>regnum</i>	428-354	Philip II of Macedon. Praxiteles' of Aphrodite of Cnidus.		
		<i>regnum</i>	336-323	Alexander		
			264-241		First Punic War.	
Republic			234-149		Cato the Elder	
			218-201		Second Punic War	
			195		Repeal of Oppian Law	
			169		Vocanian Law	Temple of Jerusalem plundered by Antiochus IV
			165			Judas Maccabeus begins revolt against Antiochus IV
			133		Tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus. Beginning or 100 years of civil discord	
			106-43		Cicero	
			95-46		Cato the Younger	
			84-54		Catullus Virgil	

				GREECE	ROME	ISRAEL
			70-19		Propertius, Tibullus, Sulpicia, Livy.	
			44		Assassination of Julius Caesar.	
			43BC-17AD		Ovid	
			42BC		Oration of Hortensia	
			37			Herod the Great made king of Judea by the Romans
Hellenistic				GREECE	ROME	ISRAEL
	30		30		Death of Cleopatra VII	
	27	<i>regnum</i>	27BC-14AD		Augustus (formerly known as Octavian)	
			25?			Mary, Jesus' mother, born.
			20			Herod the Great begins remodelling temple in Jerusalem
			6/5			Jesus Christ is born
(Dates are AD)				GREECE	ROME	ISRAEL
			4			Herod the Great dies
			5?			Paul is born
			6			Judea becomes a Roman province. Jesus visits the temple as a boy
			14-37		Tiberius	John the Baptist begins his ministry. Pontius Pilate appointed as governor
			26			Jesus begins his ministry
			26/27			Jesus crucified; ascends into heaven. Pentecost. Early church begins.
			30			Paul's conversion on Damascus road.
			35			Herod Agrippa appointed king of Judea
		<i>regnum</i>	37-41		Gaius (Caligula)	

				<i>GREECE</i>	<i>ROME</i>	<i>ISRAEL</i>
			46			Paul begins first missionary journey
		<i>regnum</i>	41-54		Claudius	
			50-120		Plutarch	
			57			Paul writes Romans; imprisoned in Caesarea
		<i>regnum</i>	54-68		Nero	
Empire			59		Assassination of Nero's mother, Agrippina	Paul's voyage to Rome
			60			Paul writes "prison letters"
			61-112		Pliny the Younger	
			62			Paul released from prison
			67			Paul martyred
		<i>regnum</i>	69-79		Vespasian	
			70			Romans destroy Jerusalem
			73			960 Jews commit mass suicide at Masada while under Roman siege
			79-81		Titus	
			79		Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum	
		<i>regnum</i>	81-96		Domitian Tacitus Juvenal	
			95			Apostle John writes Revelation
		<i>regnum</i>	96-98		Nerva	

Graeco-Roman culture

The main purpose of this section is to describe the practices of and attitudes towards homosexuality in the Graeco-Roman culture as a *combination* culture.

It could be added that the attitude towards the male-male relationship from the Dorian world of the seventh century to the predominant attitude to pederasty in archaic and classical times, in the period from 750-300BC, was on the whole very positive.⁵ Pederasty was cultivated by heterosexually *normal* men in ancient Greece where it did not presuppose an inversely homosexual type of personality. It was meant as a central factor in the upbringing of boys and youths. Homosexual relationships provided to a youth, for whom marriage lay some years ahead, the opportunity for the seduction of a partner on the same social level as himself.

The Athenian youth growing up in Plato's time took homosexuality for granted and he was not taught that he was *unnatural* or *effeminate*. Men seem to have fallen in love not with effeminate-looking boys, but with boys of well-developed masculine physique, distinguished for their success in athletics.⁶ In pederasty, literally the *love of boys*, one partner, almost always the older, assumed the role of the active partner, and the other almost always the younger, that of the passive.

Many boys, youths and adult males voluntarily entered into a primarily romantic relationship in which the older partner expected to and did receive sexual gratification.⁷ However, the picture that the youth was always the passive *eromenós* and on the receiving end cannot be substantiated, and various authors attest to the fact that the roles varied.⁸

There are numerous passages from Greek authors, proving that boys and youths were to be had for money or presents or for both.⁹ Scroggs describes the so-called *effeminate call-boy*. He believes this practice to have had profound influence on the New Testament textual data concerned with homosexuality. This aspect of homosexuality was widely assessed in very negative terms and this category of homosexuality was simply referred to as *pomoi*, the *call-boys*, who were free (i.e. non-slave) youths or adults who sold themselves to individuals for purposes of providing sexual gratification.

When such youths decided that the practice was attractive and remunerative enough, they could make their living in this way by being taken into someone's house as *mistress*. They even perfumed their hair, removed body hair and wore feminine clothes.¹⁰ In 120AD Antinous, at twenty years of age, drowned in the Nile, and became famous. He had been the *eromenós* (beloved) of Hadrianus. Hadrianus had been one of the greatest emperors of Rome. This exemplifies the fact that pederast relationships in late pre-Christian Hellenism, and in the lives of the Greeks many centuries earlier, were not regarded as an abnormality or a kind of weakness of the personality.¹¹

In Greek antiquity there were strong repudiations of the idea of the love for boys. The seduction of boys was unreservedly repudiated.¹² Women on the whole objected to everything that had to do with this love of boys. Safeguards were implemented to protect youths.¹³ The law prohibited any male prostitute from holding city offices or participating in official civic affairs.

As pure eroticism, homosexuality was a prominent and visual element in pre-Christian Hellenism. A vast network of homosexual prostitution existed. Homosexuality also formed part of the erotic many-sidedness of the emperors Caligula (37-41AD) and Nero (54-68AD). In the State religion of Rome, phallic worship did not occupy any important place. Roman life was marked by bisexuality, homosexuality, brutality and emotional caprice.¹⁴ Suetonius' biographies of the twelve Caesars from Julius Caesar through to Domitian, is a catalogue of astounding psycho-sexual disease, from incest to transvestism.¹⁵ It is interesting to note how the Apostle Paul's lifespan relates to those of the twelve emperors:

Julius Caesar	:	58-44BC 27-14AD	
Augustus	:	Ἰ 14-37AD	Paul was born in 6 AD
Tiberius	:	 37-41AD	
Caligula	:	 41-54AD	and, after writing his epistles ca. 50-60 AD,
Claudius	:	 54-68	
Nero	:	AD⌋	he died in 67 AD
Galba	:	69AD	
Otho	:	69AD	
Vitellius	:	69AD	
Vespasian	:	69-79AD	
Titus	:	79-81AD	
Domitian	:	81-96AD	

Of the twelve mentioned, Paul's life parallels those of the three most sexually immoral emperors (Tiberius, Caligula and Nero).

Female homosexuality existed, but is mentioned in extant literature rather less frequently than male homosexuality. The *olisbos* (artificial sexual instrument) was frequently mentioned in Latin literature, usually as used by women for masturbation, but sometimes for triadic intercourse. Seneca, Juvenal and Lucian mentioned lesbianism. Prostitution and homosexuality were common among the actors and mimes of Rome. Heterosexuals gathered at the baths, along with prostitutes of both sexes.

Pederasty as an erotic phenomenon, differed from the homosexual practice of the Athenes of Socrates more than five hundred years earlier and was now seen as a personal matter, respected by the society in which Plutarch lived. Pederasty was no longer a means employed by the state in the education of the young and controlled by its highest authorities. It was no longer institutionalised, had no place in the cult and its symbols had ceased to be generally presenting the nobles outcomes of society.

Homosexual behaviour in Rome spanned the total spectrum from occasional and casual indulgence through transvestism to permanent relationships. There was, however, none of the pedagogic rationalisation of the Greeks.

Jewish culture

Scroggs poses the question as to whether Paul¹⁶ can only be understood from within the confines of the Graeco-Roman debate, or whether Jewish attitudes also inform the New Testament judgements. In line with the socio-historical approach a study of Judaism contemporary to the early church, is necessary. Such a study has to cover both Rabbinic Palestine and Hellenistic Diaspora. These two Jewish trends held much in common due to the common heritage of the Torah. These two forms, however, interpreted the Torah in similar and divergent ways. The first observable difference between the two was the translation of the Torah into the local language. For the Palestinian Jew this meant Aramaic, called *Targums*. As far as it concerns the Hellenistic Jew, the Torah was translated into Greek, the *Septuagint* (LXX).

The second level of difference has to do with *expression*, i.e. the interpretation of the Torah. For Palestinian Judaism these traditions of interpretation are largely extant. They comprised a very large and complicated corpus of legal and theological traditions gathered together under the common denominator, *rabbinic literature*. Here the Laws of the Torah were defined, refined and expanded.

Hellenistic Judaism's literary expressions are quite different. While Palestinian Judaism built up its traditions by the accumulation of individual judgements and sayings by a vast number of rabbis or scholars, the corpus for Hellenistic Judaism is limited to a few authors who wrote entire tracts of books.¹⁷

As the Old Testament is not the focus of this study, I will only highlight the conclusions regarding Bible portions pertaining to homosexuality in the Old Testament. This would enable us to trace the influence (if any) on Paul.

The phrase *cult prostitute* (Dt.23:17) is regarded by some to refer to heterosexual acts while others see this reference as male prostitutes who performed sexual services for males. Two portions of Scripture in Leviticus deal with homosexuality in general. The prohibition in Lev.18:22 is stated clearly and without ambiguity. This textual data constitutes the only legal traditions about homosexuality in the Torah.¹⁸

There are two pieces of narrative in the Torah (Gen.19; Jdg.19) which refer to homosex. The keyword in these narratives is the word *to know*. The interpretation of the *sexual* connotation has been called into question but the arguments for a sexual interpretation are overwhelming.¹⁹

The Palestinian Targums translate the word in Leviticus with *shamash*, a word that frequently meant *to have intercourse with*. Scroggs shows adequately that, in their treatment of Dt.23:18, Neofiti translate the prohibition to refer to *secular* male as well as female prostitution. The rabbinic discussions also take the verse in Deuteronomy to refer to male homosexual activities. The Targums translate the narrative of Sodom and Gomorrah as found in the Torah.²⁰ Male homosexuality is prohibited in the Torah. In the primary law code of this period, the *Mishnah*, male homosexuality is included among the crimes punishable by death. Aligning with the Graeco-Roman cultural context the rabbis made a distinction between active and passive partners, although acknowledging that the same man can be both. They also seemed to clearly identify the male prostitute with the passive role in a homosexual relationship.

The narratives of Sodom and Gomorrah as well as the Levite and his concubine are translated faithfully from the Hebrew. The common Greek word *ginósko* (γινώσκω - *to know*) is used and can (as is the case with its Hebrew counterpart) have the meaning *to have sexual intercourse with*. In the Gen.19:5 passage the translators chose *sungínomai* (συνγίνομαι), which literally means *to keep company with*, both for homosexual as well as heterosexual acts. In the Hellenistic Jewish discussions on the above Bible portions, the two types of homosexuality addressed are *pederasty* and *male prostitution*.²¹ Neither Philo nor Josephus elaborates on the Levite and his concubine. In his reference to the Sodom and Gomorrah narrative Josephus interprets it as *pederast rape*.

With both Philo and Josephus, on the subject of *homosexuality*, there is a silence regarding such practices in the Jewish community. There is no clear evidence to the contrary. There was a great divide between the sexual purity of the Jews and the impurity of the rest of the world.

Hellenistic Judaism is closer to the New Testament churches than Palestinian Judaism. Hellenistic Jews seem to have been the authors of most of the New Testament material. Hellenistic Judaism is itself the result of two cultures combining - which presupposes a mixing of language and content. As stated above, the Hebrew Scripture was translated into Greek, called the *Septuagint* (LXX). Lev.18:22 and 20:13 are translated faithfully from the Hebrew.²² Dt.23:18 apparently not only prohibits prostitution but also any Israelite from participating in foreign cults.

Early Christian culture

In comparison with the large corpus of material about homosexuality in Graeco-Roman culture, the New Testament has little to say. There are only three references²³ to homosexuality in the New Testament. These Bible portions are found in passages addressed to churches located in the Graeco-Roman world where *pederasty* was especially rife and homosexual relationships of all kinds were practised. Paul speaks of the non-Christians, but actually it is a warning to the Christians in Rome and Corinth.

These words further indicate that not everything with them was *kosher* by the standards of the righteous Jew. The congregations he addressed comprised not only Jews, but also Greeks and non-Greeks and to them the piety of the religious Jewish attitude was quite alien. Not only was ordinary immorality (*porneía*) to be fought against within the congregations, but extreme sexual elements also.²⁴ Paul had to remind the congregations to live, keep and protect God's standard for sexual purity in a world where traditionally homosexuality, and pederasty in particular, had been regarded as a matter of course, not morally condemned and even, in some circumstances, had been regarded with respect.

The Christians of the first century had to define their stand on issues of sexual immorality. It must be remembered that most of the issues pertaining to sexuality had been settled in the Old Testament and had been accepted as such by the New Testament authors. Schoedel regards the new concept of the family within the early Christian communities as perhaps the instigating factor for rejecting same-sex relations. The man could no longer express his authority by penetrating at will not only a wife, but also his male and female slaves or a young male favourite.²⁵

Jesus did not overturn prohibitions against immoral sexual behaviour in Leviticus or anywhere else in the Mosaic Law. Being a first century Palestinian Jew from Nazareth it is highly unlikely that He would have secretly harboured acceptance of homosexuality. On the matters of sexual ethics, the family, divorce²⁶ and adultery he did not adopt a liberal position at all, but seems to have been very conservative in his overall stance on these matters, demeaning more than the Torah proposed. In line with Jesus' teachings, early Christianity would not accept mere outer conformity to rules of moral behaviour. Christianity marks the full transformation from a shame orientated culture to a guilt culture, in which prohibitions are fully internalized and man is ruled by conscience rather than by disapproval from others.²⁷ The early church set herself against the libertine attitudes and practices of the Graeco-Roman world, at the same time also opposing the dualism and extreme asceticism which characterised Gnosticism. The Christian community grew out of Jewish soil, this heritage informing the theology of the early missionaries to the Gentiles.²⁸

It is clear that Christian societies and their beliefs and practices did not arise in a vacuum. Love in Rome was lusty, exuberant and unclouded by the sense of sin, yet strangely blended with obscenity, depravity and hatred. Relationships were flagrantly unfaithful.²⁹ But through Christianity a new ideal appears: virginity for both men and women, sexual purity in the face of sexual immorality, and loyalty in marriage to just one partner.

Conclusion

Reflecting on homosexuality in the first century AD, one can state that the New Testament church was not overly concerned with homosexuality as a problem. Female homosexuality gets even less attention than its male counterpart. Homosexuality is discussed as a male vice and pederasty is seemingly said to exist only among Gentiles.

The attitude to homosexuality is overall uncompromisingly negative. Like the textual data in Lev.18 and 20, the judgement in Rom.1 is negative and in general the indictment is on both female as well as male homosexuality. The Jewish traditions, in their negative judgement on homosexuality, put forward three reasons: *it is against nature; it denies pro-creation; and as it is a vice unique to pagans, homosexuality is related to idolatry*. This is stated in stark contrast to the Graeco-Roman culture that was very positive in attitude and practice to male-male relationships, especially pederasty.

Not much is said about homosexual practices in the Jewish traditions. Where it is addressed, it is prohibited in no uncertain terms. The New Testament has only three direct references to homosexuality (Rom.1:26-27; 1Cor.6:9-10; 1Tim.1:9-10). It seems to be clear from these references that the early church set herself against accommodating homosexual practices in her midst.

In the next chapters the Bible portions and other associated concepts in the New Testament will be scrutinised. The general attitude towards *porneía* (πορνεία – *sexual immorality*) forms the bedrock on which homosexual practices are vilified. An understanding of *porneía* (πορνεία – *sexual immorality*) is most important to grasp Paul's condemnation of homosexuality. Sexual immorality will be studied in some detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

SEXUAL IMMORALITY DEFINED

Introduction

A socio-historical overview of the sexual ethical codes within Judaism, Hellenism and early Christianity shows that very definite codes were in place.¹ Early Christianity inherited its sexual ethics from Judaism and reinterpreted it in the light of the Gospel. The Christian community originated and existed within a Gentile world within which sexual immorality was rife.

In this chapter a word-exegesis is done by means of the componential analytical method. The data from the Louw & Nida Lexicon is exploited for this purpose. The word *porneía* (πορνεία - *sexual immorality*) is studied to provide background to the view on homosexuality as expressed by Paul in Rom.1:26-27, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10. The meaning and intention of *porneia* as the bedrock for Paul's view on homosexuality is socio-historically determined according to the method employed by Malherbe (1989) which, in essence, is a literature study. I will show that Paul's view on homosexuality is inseparable from his stand on sexual immorality (*porneia*). Paul's view on abnormal sexual behaviour like homosexuality (Rom. 1:26-27), is informed by his convictions regarding sexual immorality (*porneia*). A clear understanding of the meaning of the word will substantiate the arguments put forward in the following chapters.

Componential analysis of πορνεία

The componential analysis positions *porneía* (πορνεία) within the general context of *sexual misbehaviour*. It will also clearly show the relationships between *arsenokoítês* (ἀρσενοκοίτης – active homosexual) and *malakós* (μαλακός – passive homosexual). This mutuality presupposes interdependence for understanding Paul's attitude towards homosexuality.

The New King James Version (1993) translates *porneía* with *sexual immorality*. The New International Version (Life Application Bible, 1997) also translates with *sexual immorality*, as does the Amplified Bible (1987). Louw & Nida give as possible English equivalents *sexual immorality, fornication and prostitution*. Fornication is defined by the Collins Dictionary as *voluntary sexual intercourse out of marriage*. Prostitution is defined as *rendering or presenting oneself to engage in sexual intercourse for money*. Sexual immorality is described as *immoral behaviour in especially sexual matters, licentiousness, profligacy, promiscuity or sexual confusion*.

Sexual immorality is part of a word group that includes: *porneía* (πορνεία – the act of sexual immorality, active prostitution), *pórnos* (πόρνος – immoral person, adulterer), *pornê* (πόρνη – prostitute) and *porneía* (πορνεία - sexual immorality, licentiousness). This word group describes illegitimate, out of wedlock or extramarital sexual conduct inasmuch as it deviates from acceptable social and religious norms. The following judgement of Demosthenes is significant for the understanding of *porneía*: *The hetaerae (prostitutes) we have for our pleasure, the concubines for the daily care of our bodies and our wives so that we can have legitimate children and a true guardian of the house.*² On the one hand these circumstances then led to an extended and widely ramified system of prostitution. On the other hand these circumstances encouraged the married Athenian women of ca. 450BC to have sexual relations with the slaves and to indulge in lesbian (homosexual) love.

The word group *pornê* (πόρνη – prostitute) is used fifty five times in the New Testament. *Porneía* as such is used twenty five times. Paul uses the word twenty one times, especially in the Corinthian letters (fifteen times). Within Pauline literature the word group *pórnê* represents any form of extramarital sexual intercourse. The information in Louw & Nida Lexicon leads to the conclusion that the word *porneía*, found in 1Cor.6:13 is used in the New Testament in only one semantic domain, which is domain 88. Louw & Nida categorises semantic domain 88 as *moral and ethical qualities and related behaviour*. Domain 88 is thematically divided into two sections:

firstly the *positive moral and ethical qualities* (88.1-88.104) and secondly *negative moral and ethical qualities* (88.105-88.318). The sub-domain *sexual behaviour* is distinguished from sub-domains *impurity* (88.256-88.261), *Licentiousness* and *Perversion* (88.262-88.270). These three sub-domains reflect sexuality.

The concept *porneía* (πορνεία)

Research shows very clearly that various forms of sexual immorality were performed in the era in which the books of the New Testament were written. This includes adultery, homosexuality, paedophilia, pederasty, cross-dressing, polygamy, fornication, prostitution, cult-prostitution, abortion and masturbation.³ Sexually speaking it was the world which the first century Christians knew and lived in. Some of the members of the church in Corinth, for example, were Jews and they knew the Torah. Most of the members, however, were non-Jewish converts and they, on the other hand, knew the cult religions. The letters to the Corinthian church presumed knowledge of these diverse origins (1Cor.5:1; 6:11; 7:18) for entire congregations. There was thus no pure Christian sexual morality.

Paul provided the Corinthians and Romans with answers to their questions that occurred due to the confrontation with the customs and cultures of their time. A new ethos and ethics were established in the context of their world. The *cooking pot* was the congregation and the *catalyst* was the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was proclaimed by Paul in the city of Corinth. Based on the gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul reinterprets the ruling standard of sexuality (Jewish and non-Jewish) for the congregation. The key to the question on how the readers probably understood the idea of sexual immorality is concealed in the words, and especially the idiomatic phrases used by Paul.

Paul does not discuss sexuality as such, but abnormal sexual acts and desires (Rom.1:26-27; 1Cor.7:1-2) which, according to him, are always potentially dangerous. *Porneia* for Paul always had the meaning of defilement. Premarital intercourse with someone outside of the church is defilement of the temple of God (1Cor.6:19). Within the church it would have been a case of deceiving your brother (1Thes.4:6).

Hence the advice that sexual desire should be under control at all times. In the light of 1Cor.5:1; 6:13, 18, it can be assumed that Paul was concerned about the integrity of the body of believers and the body (church) of Christ. All the issues which were raised, *the man sleeping with his stepmother, men who frequent prostitutes and fornication*, are included under *porneia*. Sexuality implicates the whole person and not only the sex organs. Paul stresses that sexual intercourse results in the man and woman uniting so that they become part of each other, their bodies become one (6:6).

Paul's uses of the phrase *to burn with desire* (πυροῦσθαι – *pyrousthai*)⁴ must be understood in similar vein. The first hearers/listeners most probably would have understood it to mean *sexual passion* or *sexual lust*. In brief, it refers to a *passion* and *desire* in sexual context. There is sufficient evidence from the classical Greek to place *pyrousthai*, sexual desires, passion or lust, all on equal footing.⁵ This contrasts *use* (χρησις – *chrésis*) in Rom.1:26-27.

The pericope 1Cor.6:12-20 shows clearly Paul's viewpoint that the body is not meant for *sexual immorality*. It must be seen in the light of the total rejection of *porneia* in the New Testament. As such the following in the New Testament are judged to be sin: *sexual intercourse outside marriage* (Jn.18:41), *sodomy and homosexual relationships* (Jude 7; Rom.1:24-27) and *prostitution* (1Cor.6:12-7:40). When Paul, therefore, speaks of *porneia* as the counterpart of *virgin* (παρθένος – *parthénos*), the first hearers would have understood it in terms of sexual immorality in general - which brings about impurity and defilement. Sexual relationships outside of marriage were, in Paul's understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, not at all acceptable. Several times Paul uses

the question: *Do you not know?* This question, time and again, implies that the Corinthians indeed *knew* and had the *knowledge* concerning the issue being discussed. It is a reproachful question, which places the responsibility for an answer on the congregation and makes unnecessary for Paul to answer it. Nevertheless, he answers the congregation and teaches them concerning several issues.

In 1Cor.7:1 Paul uses an idiom, a Corinthian proverb: *it is good for a man not to touch a woman* (καλόν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικός μη ἅπτεσθαι – *kalón anthrṓpó gynaikós mē aptesthai*). How would the first hearers have understood it? It is not completely certain. Some commentators understand it to mean: *it is not good for a man to marry a woman*. Others understand it to mean: *it is good for a man not to have sexual intercourse with a woman*. Paul uses *aptesthai* (ἅπτεσθαι) and not *aptein* (ἅπτειν). The word in both instances means to *touch*. Here, however, a proverb is under discussion in combination with the word *gynaikós* (γυναικός – woman) and this determines the meaning. The proverb *gynaikós mē aptesthai* (γυναικός μη ἅπτεσθαι) means: *it is not good to have sexual intercourse*. The medium ‘*aptesthai*’ is therefore used here with a sexual meaning.⁶ It seems to be a Corinthian proverb, and Paul used it very specifically within the context of his argument.⁷

One could ask now: How did the first hearers understand *porneia* in the light of 1Cor.6:12-7:40? All sins classified under this concept would be sexual immorality. Included within the sphere of sexuality, immorality is among other things homosexuality, bestiality, pornography, paedophilia, polygamy, fornication, any sexual indulgence, masturbation, cult-prostitution and physical contact between unmarried people. *Porneia* can occur in or outside the marital affinity (Gal.5; Col.3; Rom.1:12). Sexual immorality is emphatically condemned.

It is understood that sexuality’s place is within marriage. Sexuality is expressed between two people who are married (1Cor.7:2). No sexual contact before marriage is anticipated because marriage is a Godly institution where the Godly gift of sexuality is expressed. Marriage is, among other things, given as a protection against *porneia*. Therefore, *sexual purity before marriage* is a life free from *porneia* and also a life free from situations that could cause *pyroûsthai* (to burn with sexual passion) – which could lead to *porneia*.

The word *porneia* in the context of 1Cor.6:13 points to a sexual urge which competes with the Lord Jesus Christ for the possession of man’s body.⁸ To give in to this sexual urge is to give in to harlotry. The gift of self-control is needed to live a life free from *porneia*. People who had not received it and who could not remain celibate should get married.

Sexual immorality is not lightly regarded in the Old Testament. Laws and rituals were in place and rigorously applied to give some uniformity of conduct between the sexes.⁹ Westermack¹⁰ showed without doubt that in all communities some or other restriction governed sexuality. Such restrictions regulated for example the age and qualification before a person could marry, the spectrum for the selection of a spouse and the sexual conduct of engaged and married persons. In the Old Testament sex is seen as a gift from God (Gen.1:27, 31). So important was the man’s sexual power that castration was regarded with aversion (Dt.23:1). Homosexuality and bestiality were condemned in strong language.¹¹ These practices were judged as the misuse of a gift,¹² which in its proper usage had a sacral function.¹³

For the Jew in the Diaspora, it was not primarily about the creed of a specific religious conviction, but to be part of a certain nation. Yahweh chose their nation, and their religion gave them a comprehensive and unique identity. Because belonging to a family, tribe, nation or city formed the whole identity, there was no possibility of belonging to another religion. The whole of their human existence in a foreign country was determined by religious traditions accumulated over centuries. The basic significant aspect of this religious tradition, the essence of being a Jew, was their intense

focus on purity.¹⁴ This fundamental focus on purity caused Israel, even in the Diaspora, to be separated from other nations.¹⁵

To understand the concept of sexual immorality (impurity) within the context of Judaism, one should note the description by the cultural anthropologist Mary Douglas.¹⁶ She says impurity is essentially a substantive disorderliness. Impurity is *substance* (dirt) out of place with what is normal. In the application of this definition, it can be said that impurity is *substance* out of place within human relationships. Douglas uses the word *substance* to express the same meaning with which Countryman struggled many years after her.

Countryman sees this *substance* (dirt) as impurity, because homosexual theology reasons in terms of a religious framework and not on grounds of anthropology. In Judaism there existed a dualistic sexual ethic. One part thereof was an ethic of the right of possession. The inherent sin in this regard was covetousness. The second was an ethic of purity. The inherent sin here was impurity, spiritual dirtiness.¹⁷ Countryman sees and understands sexual ethics in the Bible in terms of this division. Early Christianity also inherited this ethic from Judaism and reinterpreted it in the light of the Scriptures.

The surrounding non-believing world of the first century church was predominantly described as being filled with sexual immorality, including homosexuality, which in many instances had a religious flavour.¹⁸ Phocylides wrote during the first century and warned his readers against quite a number of sexual atrocities which deprive one of sexual purity, namely adultery, prostitution, incest, homosexuality, abortion and castration of juveniles. The New Testament displays a harsh reaction to not only the sexual impurity¹⁹ of the Hellenistic world, but also to the Manichean's opinion that a woman is innately corrupt.

Sexual permissiveness, *porneia* in all its manifestations which was so prevalent in the Graeco-Roman era, is briefly though decisively, rejected in the New Testament. Sexuality is seen as God-given and good when used in agreement with God's will. Consequently marriage is seen as the intended restriction of space in which sexuality may be practiced. It is the improper use of sex that is disapproved of.²⁰ Therefore, sexual abuse (1Cor.5) is strongly rejected in no uncertain terms.

The New Testament does not provide much direct information on sexual immorality. It is, however, very clear that it condemns it. The pious Jews were shocked at the sexual immorality amongst the non-Jewish people. One of the conditions for a non-Jewish convert to be allowed into the congregation was that he had to abstain from *porneia* (Acts 15:23-29). It is thus clear that the early Christians rejected abnormal sexual behaviour, which included all sexual intercourse outside of marriage.

Thus, wherever homosexual intercourse is mentioned in the Bible, it is condemned. Paul is adamant that the body is not meant for sexual immorality (1Cor.6:13). *Porneia* (sexual immorality) is rejected in no uncertain terms as a sin against the self as well as sin against the Lord. *Porneia* robs the Lord of that which belongs to Him (1Cor.6:15) and is in essence anti-Christian. *Porneia* is the enemy that aims to destroy marriage. Therefore, Paul gives the advice to flee from *porneia* as one would flee from a mighty enemy in a war situation (1Cor.6:18). *Porneia* replaces the focus on eternity with a focus on the temporal (1Cor.6:19).

1Cor.6:12-20 is the prelude to 1Cor.7. After Paul has defined the essence of *porneia* (1Cor.6:12-20), he writes (1Cor.7:1): *it is good for a man not to touch a woman* (καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μη ἄπτεσθαι – *kalón anthrōpo gynaikós mē aptesthai*). Touch is used here with *sexual intention*. In 1Cor.7:9 Paul formulates a principle regarding sexual purity. Not only is *porneia* rejected in totality, but also all situations that could give rise to *sexual desire* must be avoided.

Where it becomes impossible to avoid *sexual desire*, *the couple must marry so that* (πυροῦσθαι – *pyroústhai*) can be quenched within marriage between husband and wife. This portion (1Cor.6:12-20) defines *porneía* in terms of its essence. Paul's whole argument is meant to define *porneía* as a rejectable sin, which has eternal consequences. *Porneía* undermines God's intention for humans with regard to sexual purity. The person who practices *porneía* ignores and denies that God's purpose with regard to sexuality is localised. It is meant to be realised within the constraints of marriage.²¹

Paul shows clearly that sexual contact outside of wedlock is sin and needs to be classified as *porneía*. It is regarded as sin against the physical body, the temple of the Lord. This correlates with *you are not your own* (1Cor.6:19), *therefore glorify God in your body* (1Cor.6:20) and *the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body* (1Cor.6:13). There can thus be no uncertainty regarding the intention of Paul. Sexual contact outside marriage is *porneía* and is to be rejected.

Conclusion

From the viewpoint of the New Testament, adultery was normally judged with reference to the married status of the woman involved in any such act. Sexual intercourse of a married man with an unmarried woman would be regarded as *porneía* (sexual immorality, fornication), but sexual intercourse of either a married or unmarried man with someone else's wife was regarded as adultery, both on the part of the man as well as the woman.²²

Porneía (sexual immorality) is rejected in the Bible (Gal.5:19; Col.3:5) *Porneía* is all extra-marital sex. It is also clear that pre-marital sex is to be regarded as *porneía* (1Cor.7:1). This does not only refer to the sexual deed, but includes all actions which would give rise to *sexual desire or passion* (πυρούσθαι). Sexual purity implies not only the avoidance of physical contact, but also the avoidance of *porneía* in one's thoughts (Mt.5:28). There is a total incompatibility between *porneía* and the Kingdom of God (1Cor.6:9; Eph.5:5).

It would seem therefore, that God's revelation through Paul regarding sexual immorality is quite clear. All sexual relationships outside of marriage are *porneía*. Therefore, all sexual relationships outside of marriage are wrong and in terms of biblical evaluation thereof, it is sin. In the chapters following, I will endeavour to show that homosexuality in Paul's understanding belonged clearly within the concept of sexual immorality. That is, a deviation from sexuality as intended by God.

CHAPTER 4

SEXUAL PURITY IN THE FIRST CENTURY AD

Introduction

The meaning and purpose of *sexual purity* in the First Century society has been interpreted in this chapter for the communities in the city of Corinth, namely the Jewish community, the Greek-Roman community and the first century Christian community in general. It has been done according to the socio-historical research method because the purpose of the socio-historical study is to establish what the first readers' apparent understanding was of the concept of sexual purity. While reading this chapter, keep in mind the previous chapter's discussion on sexual immorality. A contrast of the ethical codes of the three communities in the first century AD brings informative results to the surface and these results may be regarded to be the general situation for similar situations in other cities of non-Jewish character.

Corinth, so it seems, had a relatively large church (Acts 18:8, 10) free from any immediate danger of persecution.¹ The congregation consisted of Jews, but the greater majority were non-Jewish converts. Non-Jewish customs (1Cor.6:15), non-Jewish clubs (1Cor.8, 10) and meals with non-Jews (1Cor.10:27) were aspects that influenced Christians. The social structure of the Christians covered a broad spectrum. Even though the majority was not of noble descent or highly literate (1Cor.1:26), there are signs of intelligence.² It seems as if the Christians busied themselves with superficial rhetoric (1Cor.1:20), compared their ministers with one another (1Cor.3:4) were haughty (arrogant, 1Cor.4:10) and conditioned Paul's teachings to make them more acceptable (1Cor. 15:12). Out of the above, it seems as if the Corinthian Christians behaved like the world from which they had come and this caused tension in the congregation. It is, therefore, important to take note of the categories from which the believers had come, in order to form a single Christian group.

Since 27BC, Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. During the time of establishment of the New Testament, Corinth was a modern, commercial city. As a trade centre it was sought after, because the city was strategically positioned on an isthmus. Commodities were transported across the isthmus on paved roads (*diolkos*) from the two Corinthian harbours Lechaem and Cenchrea.

In addition to the Greek-Roman inhabitants, there was a large Jewish contingent in the city. Aristotle, Strabo, Pausanias, Horatius, Apuleius and other classical authors, as well as recent excavations sketch a clear picture of the city-life in Corinth. The city had a large market place, temples, theatres and baths. The arable land surrounding the city of Corinth was very fertile. This, together with its commercial (trade) importance, made the pre-Roman Corinth a very wealthy and prosperous city. It is also possible that temple prostitutes served in the well-known temple of the city, the Temple of Aphrodite.³ Temple prostitutes were prevalent in the worship of the Phoenician equivalent of Aphrodite, namely Astarte, but uncommon in the other places in Greece. As a result of this, Corinth had a reputation of being an immoral city. In this immoral city were different groups of people who maintained their own identity.

The Jewish community in Corinth

The ethnic construction of Corinth included a significant group of Jews. Du Toit is of the opinion that the population was *extremely cosmopolitan* and that the original Greek inhabitants were no longer the dominant group. Acts 18:4 suggests that there could have been a notable Jewish community.⁴

The status of the Jews in the city of Corinth was dubious. This was, strictly speaking, true of any foreigner living in a *polis* (town) but even more so in the case of the Jews. This was on the grounds of their consistency of religion, customs and symbols. This gave them their own unique identity. Circumcision, avoidance of work and business on a recognized Sabbath day each week,

refusing to eat pork, their absence at every public ritual or feast that had to do with sacrifices made to or recognition given to any other god other than Yahweh, all caused the Jews to constantly see themselves as a nation separated from other nations. What was true about the Jews in the Diaspora in general, was also true about the Jews in Corinth. Of importance to remember is the dualistic sexual ethic of the right of possession and an ethic of purity as discussed in the preceding chapter.

During the beginning of the first century, the Jews regarded their traditions with high priority.⁵ On the basis of their traditions they lived separated lives from other ethnic groups. Most of the ethnic groups Hellenised to such an extent that their gods were integrated with those from the Graeco-Roman society, that they accepted the Greek language as their dominant language and that customs of the Greek Roman culture were adopted. Although the Jews also adopted much of the Hellenistic culture, they kept their distance in the case of religion. It was of unequalled standard in comparison with other ethnic groups during that time.

The roots of the purity regulations of the first century Jews go far back in history. They are contained in the Torah. The Torah was constantly read and applied in the community. The two most fundamental compilations of purity regulations are found in Leviticus (chapters 11-16 and 17-26). The first compilation is mainly concerned with the aspects of impurity, and coupled with the purification regulations. The second, also called *the law of holiness*, does not as such include the individual as much as it does the whole tribe.

The tribe as a whole is called upon to cleanse themselves by removing the transgressor from their midst. According to Douglas' interpretation, purity for the author(s) of Leviticus meant comprehensive *Gestalt*, a wholeness and completeness. It is a substantial unity. The wholeness is not only wholeness in God, but also wholeness in God's creation. It is evident from the arguments of Countryman and Douglas that the purification system implicitly bears the view of what a perfect man and woman shall be like. If the practice does not correspond with the general expected ideal, it is impure. *Substance* or *dirt* is something abnormal, and must be dealt with.

Inside the framework of sexual purity, imperfection or impurity is defined in terms of menstruation, childbirth, sex with family members, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, the wearing of men's clothing by women and women's clothing worn by men. These items are all *substance* or *dirt* out of step with what is regarded as normal. Deuteronomy prohibits Israel to allow children, male or female, to be cult prostitutes (Dt.23:18-19). The Torah has no explicit prohibition on masturbation. Even the death of Onan (Gn.38:1-10) was as a result of disobedience and cannot be interpreted in terms of masturbation.

Within the Jewish purity system, adultery is defined as a man who has intercourse with a married or engaged woman. The man who commits adultery does not harm his own marriage, but the marriage of the woman and her husband. The purity law condemns adultery as impure and both the man and woman must die. Here Countryman makes a meaningful remark when he says that in Israel the ideal woman was the one who was a virgin when getting married and who remains faithful to one man.⁶ Countryman speculates that the underlying reasoning is perhaps the expectation that the perfect woman (including the betrothed) would only receive her husband's semen. Receiving the semen of another man makes her impure in her relationship with her husband. This purity code was the basis of the purity system, which was applied amongst the Jews during the time of the beginning of Christianity.

Within first century Judaism, likeminded religious Jews grouped together. The way in which they practised their national religion, their unique customs and other socio-cultural factors, distinguished various groups of importance during this period, namely: the Sadducees, Essenes, Pharisees and the fourth group known as the *Fourth Philosophy*.⁷ The opinions on sexual purity of

these groups are briefly mentioned below. It is important to note their respective viewpoints, since these groups were representative of the Jewish society of the time.

Little is known of the Sadducees, but it is accepted that their attitude towards sexual purity was close to that of the Torah.⁸ There was one law for the whole of Israel, namely the Torah. The Sadducees were priests and therefore this law would apply to them in particular. A higher standard was expected of them.

The Essenes' writings dealt with purity consistently and it was of central importance everywhere. The purity system as contained in the Torah was fully mandatory to the community of Qumran, but as interpreted by the Essenes. The Damascus scroll reaffirms the Torah's rules on incest. This rule prohibits immorality (which included polygamy). The Damascus scroll, however, goes beyond the Torah. A man was prohibited from having sexual intercourse with a woman before the age of twenty years. All sexual intercourse was prohibited within the boundaries of the *City of Holiness*. The same rule appears extensively in the Temple scroll, in which this city was identified as Jerusalem. However, the Damascus scroll identified this city as Qumran.⁹ The Essene group committed themselves to a much higher standard of purity, even beyond what is prescribed in the Torah.

The information regarding the third group, namely the Pharisees, is based on three sets of writings: The Old Testament, the work of the first century Jewish historian Josephus and the Mishna. The purity law of the Torah was in force. Purity and impurity was a simple discernable fact: play with mud and you will get dirty. In reality, their viewpoint on sexual purity was close to the viewpoint held by the Essenes. The Pharisees however, did not isolate themselves in their own colonies as did the Essenes, but they deliberately isolated themselves from the Jews amongst whom they lived.

Josephus¹⁰ mentions a group called the *Fourth Philosophy*. It includes the Zealots and other rebellious groupings. Here it can be accepted that their nationalism was the motivation for their existence, but their religious beliefs did not differ much from that of the Pharisees.¹¹

It is clear from the above that the lives of the Jews in Palestine and in the Diaspora rested upon a common foundation – the Torah. For the Jews in the Diaspora, purity and especially sexual purity, functioned as a means to distinguish them from other nations.

The Graeco-Roman community in Corinth

The cult of Astarte, the goddess of fertility, was practiced in the temple on the Acropolis. A thousand prostitutes served in the temple. The riches of the new Corinth,¹² the metropolitan community and the unrestrained immorality caused the city to be a favourite resort for pleasure seekers. The city had a liberal atmosphere and the constant commercial influx caused an increase of wealth. The population of the city was large and the inhabitants lived financially above average. Some of the Christians in Corinth were also financially independent (2Cor.8:14).

According to Stambaugh & Balch the population of the Graeco-Roman world can be divided into two main groups,¹³ namely those with influence and those without influence, the so called high-minded and the humble, those who ruled and those who were ruled, those who owned property and those who did not. This division was made in terms of power, influence and money.

In the first century Graeco-Roman world, the patriarchal system was practised. The marriage ceremony, which was concluded in the presence of witnesses, placed the woman and her belongings under the authority of her husband. As head of the house, the husband had to see to it that his children and other dependants learnt everything that was necessary to live in the *polis*. The

husband as head of the house was also responsible for the education of his wife, whom he typically would have married at an age between 12 and 15 years. The purpose of the education was to teach her to manage her household. Within the Graeco-Roman culture it was expected of the women (mothers, married women and daughters) to maintain a modest and discreet lifestyle.

Marriages were often arranged to suit the needs of the family. The custom of giving young girls, normally at approximately the age of 12, to a man in marriage, forced them to live discreet lives. This discreet lifestyle included the wearing of a veil outside the house or when male visitors came. It was also expected of a girl who was *engaged* not to have contact with men. She mainly stayed in and around the house.

At the beginning of the Christian era, the engagement was arranged by the two fathers of the families. As already indicated, it was done when both the children were still very young. The engagement was a contract without force of law. From the East, the West adopted a custom regarding the engagement, namely the *arrha*. It consisted of a promise (*arrha*), which in many cases took the form of an engagement ring. According to Carson the ritual focus of the marriage ceremony was aimed at the protection of the female's sexual purity.¹⁴

During the marriage ceremony, the veil was lifted and the bride looked at the bridegroom. The unveiling was the highlight of the ceremony and the bride was regarded as married after the veil was lifted. Hereafter the bridegroom presented gifts to the bride. These gifts were called *ta diaperthenia* (τά διαπαρθενία – the unveiling gifts), because they were presented in exchange for the bride's virginity.¹⁵ The moment the bride lifted the veil and the bridegroom saw her face, she was no longer a *parthenós* (παρθενός – virgin). She had been *touched*. Sissa discusses the meaning of the word *parthenós* (παρθενός – virgin) and suggests that *parthenós* must not only be defined as *virgin*, but may also have the meaning *young unmarried woman*.¹⁶

The Christian community in Corinth

Facets of the early history of the church in Corinth are broadly recorded in Acts 18. In approximately 50 AD Paul visited Corinth. He stayed with a Jewish couple, Aquilla and Priscilla. Paul's stay in Corinth lasted for approximately 18 months (Acts 18:11). Other teachers continued with Paul's initial ministry. There were followers of Peter (1Cor.1:12), Appolos went from Ephesus to Corinth. There were false prophets (2Cor.11), and 1Cor.4:15 implies that there was no shortage of teachers.

Malherbe points out that the attempts to establish the social level of early Christians, depends mainly on Paul's account of the converts in Corinth (1Cor.1:26).¹⁸ Wuelner, however, is sure that, based on 1Cor.1:26-28, the Christians in Corinth were mainly from the affluent middle class and that a reasonable percentage represented *the upper class*. The farmers and slaves were as a rule mostly untouched by the message of Christ. Early Christianity was an urban phenomenon.¹⁹ Du Toit convincingly argues that the brief reports in Scripture makes it difficult to construct the social level of the congregation in Corinth. Yet it is not in essence contradictory to the observations from the other social sciences.²⁰

Sexual immorality (*porneía* – πορνεία), in all its manifestations, so prevalent in the Graeco-Roman era is briefly though decisively rejected in the New Testament. Sexuality is seen as God-given and good when used in agreement with God's will. Consequently, marriage is seen as the intended restriction or space in which sexuality may be practiced. It is the improper use of sex that is disapproved of. Therefore, sexual abuse (1Cor.5) is strongly rejected in no uncertain terms.

There were some Christians who used the Corinthian idiom: *it is good for man not to touch a woman* to teach that sexual intercourse was to be avoided at all costs.²¹ They presented sexual abstinence as the ideal for all believers. Paul rejected this view (1Cor.7:1). Paul did not agree with

the extreme views of some Corinthians. On the one hand, there were those who saw sexuality as wicked and sinful and, on the other hand, those who saw it only morally and just shrugged their shoulders.²² Paul brought a balance in the practice of sexuality. He gave advice to the congregation on dealing with sexuality within the framework of God's will for the unmarried, the married and the widowed. Sexuality is a gift from God and it must not be abused.

The probable understanding of *sexual purity* by the readers of Corinthians

The Jewish, Graeco-Roman and Christian communities lived together in the well-known region of the city of Corinth. Each of these groups endorsed a code of conduct of sexual purity before marriage. Corinth was a Roman city. The moral status of Corinth was the logical result of the city's religious and social history.²³ The concept *porneía* (πορνεία) was known to them in all its facets.

Paul provided the Corinthians with answers to the questions that occurred due to their confrontation with the customs and cultures of their time. A new ethos and ethics were established in the light of the world out of which they came. Based on the gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul reinterprets the ruling standard of sexuality (Jewish and non-Jewish) for the congregation. The key to the question on how the readers probably understood the idea of sexual purity is concealed in the words - and especially in the idiomatic phrases - used by Paul.

The word *parthénos* (παρθένης) is translated with the word virgin. The *parthénos* (παρθένης) was no unknown entity within the Jewish and non-Jewish cultures. The *parthénos* (παρθένης) had never had any sexual intercourse. It seems that *parthenós* carries the meaning of both *virgin* and *young adult woman* (Jungfrau). The meaning of *young adult woman* could or could not have been understood as virgin. The question, however, is how the first hearers in Corinth would have understood it according to Paul's use of the word *parthenós*. The New Testament uses *parthenós* in the general sense of *young adult woman* (Acts 21:9) and in the sense of sexual purity (Rev.14:4). There is, however, consensus that Paul uses *parthenós* in terms of a girl (daughter or *Jungfrau*) who is sexually pure.²⁴ The Corinthians probably understood it as such.

Conclusion

It is clear that the codes of conduct with regard to sexual purity for the three groupings in Corinth were basically the same. Virginité was essential, particularly for girls. The difference between these groups is to be found in the requirements for the preservation of virginité. The Jewish and Christian societies were inspired by their religion, while in the Graeco-Roman society virginité was just a cultural occurrence without religious motivation.

Therefore, the Jews and Christians stood against the influences of the Graeco-Roman culture. Compromise with the Graeco-Roman culture was indeed syncretism and not merely the accommodation of cultural traditions.

CHAPTER 5

THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS

Introduction

There are more verses in the Old Testament on the theme of homosexuality than people think. The focus in the current debate usually rests on two sets of texts: first, the intended homosexual rape of the visitors to Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen.19:4-11 and, second, the legal proscriptions of the Holiness Code in Lev.18:22 and 20:13. To really get to grips with the Old Testament view on homosexuality we need to look at the rest of the textual data as well. This includes the creation narratives in Gen.1-3, the curse of Ham in Gen.9:20-27, the Levite's concubine in Judg.19:22-25 and the issue of homosexual cult prostitution.

The Old Testament originated against the backdrop of the ancient Near East. It might therefore be a worthwhile effort to examine the writings of the ancient Near East first before discussing the Old Testament texts pertaining to homosexual conduct. The results of the studies of texts from Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Hittite Empire and Canaan will be summarised in short.

The Ancient Near East

Some excellent studies and summaries are available which can be utilised to describe the incidence of, and attitude toward, homosexuality in the ancient Near East.¹

Egypt

It is not easy to assess Egyptian attitudes to homosex because very few texts are available to us and the evidence is somewhat conflicting. It does seem that the overall tone of the texts reflects negative connotations and feelings. The most significant text (1160BC) is the myth about the power struggle between two gods, Horus and Seth.² Seth abuses Horus sexually by anal intercourse, while the latter is asleep. Seth's objective is to show his overall superiority by forcing Horus into a position reserved for a defeated and raped enemy, thus making him unfit for the status of leader and king.

Seth, however, fails to some extent as Horus manages to get some of Seth's ejaculation in his hand. Nevertheless, Seth reveals to the gods that he had *played the male role* with Horus, successfully ejaculating his semen *between Horus' buttocks* while the latter was asleep. The gods then *screamed aloud, and belched and spat on Horus' face*. This account indicates that shame is associated with being a receptive male partner. This fact is to be kept in mind as it seems to run like a thread throughout religious history. Homosexual desire on the part of Seth cannot be ruled out. Springett³ quotes a papyrus fragment which reads: *The Majesty of Seth said to the Majesty of Horus: How beautiful are your buttocks!*

The evaluation of available Egyptian texts reveals that four types of homosex were practiced:

First, as metaphor for fearlessness or power over another person or even a god. In a coffin text it is stated: [the god] Atum has no power over me, for I copulate between his buttocks.⁴

Second, in homosexual relationships. There is an account of Pharaoh Neferkare (Pepi II-ca. 2400 BC) who made secret nightly visits to an unmarried general, Sisene, for homosexual intercourse. A tomb for two manicurists and hairdressers of Pharaoh Niuserre (ca. 2600 BC) pictures them as holding hands, embracing, and touching noses.⁵

Third, homosexual incest is also attested. Among the gods it is said that the earth god Geb's phallus is between the buttocks of his son and heir.⁶ Pharaoh Ikhnoton (1370 BC) is shown in intimate scenes with his son-in-law and probable co-regent, Smenkhare (nude and stroking under the chin of his son-in-law).⁷

Fourth, homosex with under-aged boys (pederasty). The Book of the Dead (ca. 1500 BC), in which the dead account their affairs during their earthly lives, contain two confessions in which a deceased proclaims in his defence: I have not defiled myself... I have not been perverted; I have not had sexual relations with a boy.⁸ In a Heracleopolitan text a man declares: I did not wish to love a youth. As for a respectable son who does it, his (own) father shall abandon him in court.⁹

Overall approval of at least some forms of homosex is clearly lacking in the texts. Both adult-insertive and youth-receptive homosexual acts are viewed as reprehensible. Aggressive penetration of another man was meant for an overpowered enemy or as proof of superiority. There may have been some tolerance towards homosexual relationships in earlier Egyptian dynasties. There is no evidence of homosexual cult prostitution.

The Hittite Empire

Ugaritic writings (ca. 2000 BC) contain only one text in which reference is made to homosex. Hittite law forbids sexual relationships between a father and his son.

Canaan texts

Both the Levitical Holiness Code (Lev.18:1-5. 24-30; 20:22-26) and the Deuteronomistic History (1Ki.14:24) refers to homosex as one of many *abominations* for which God drove out the Canaanites and other nations before Israel. If, as discussed later in this chapter, the story of Ham (the father of Canaan) seeing *his father's nakedness* refers to homosex, then the Yahwist was also of the opinion that homosex was a typical practice of the Canaanite nation.

Mesopotamia

Information may be gleaned from some literary works (epic stories) and law codes. Anal intercourse was part of the sexual repertoire. It is shown in figurative art from Uruk, Assur, Babylon and Susa as early as 3000 BC. Zimri-lin, king of Mari and Hammurabi, king of Babylon, both had male lovers. Zimri-lin's queen refers to them in passing in a letter.¹⁰

Laws 19 and 20 (tablet A) from the *Middle Assyrian Laws* undoubtedly addresses homosex between two men:¹¹

#18: If a man says to his comrade, either in a private or in a public quarrel: *Everyone has sex (ittinikkû) with your wife, I can prove the charges*, but he is unable to prove the charges and does not prove the charges, they shall strike him 40 blows with rods; he shall perform the king's service one full month; they shall cut off (his hair? – *igaddimus*) [also: *they shall castrate him*] and he shall pay one talent of lead.

#19: If a man furtively spreads rumours about his comrade, saying: *Everyone has sex with him (ittinikkûs)*, or in a quarrel in public says to him: *Everyone has sex with you (ittinikkûka)*, I can prove the charges, but he is unable to prove the charges and does not prove the charges, they shall strike him 50 blows with rods; he shall perform the king's service one full month; they shall cut off (his hair? – *igaddimus*) [also: *they shall castrate him*] and he shall pay one talent of lead.

#20: If a man has sex with his comrade (*tappasu inik*) and they prove the charges against him and find him guilty, they shall have sex with him and they shall turn him into a eunuch (*innikûs ana sa resen utarrûs*).

Laws regarding sexual acts between men follow laws regarding adultery. Punishments are severe and unconditional. The laws apply the principle of *talion* (*lex talionis*), that is, analogous

punishment (*they shall [all] have sex with him*) and to prevent the man from doing the same crime, he is castrated. Both punishments include disgracing the offender.

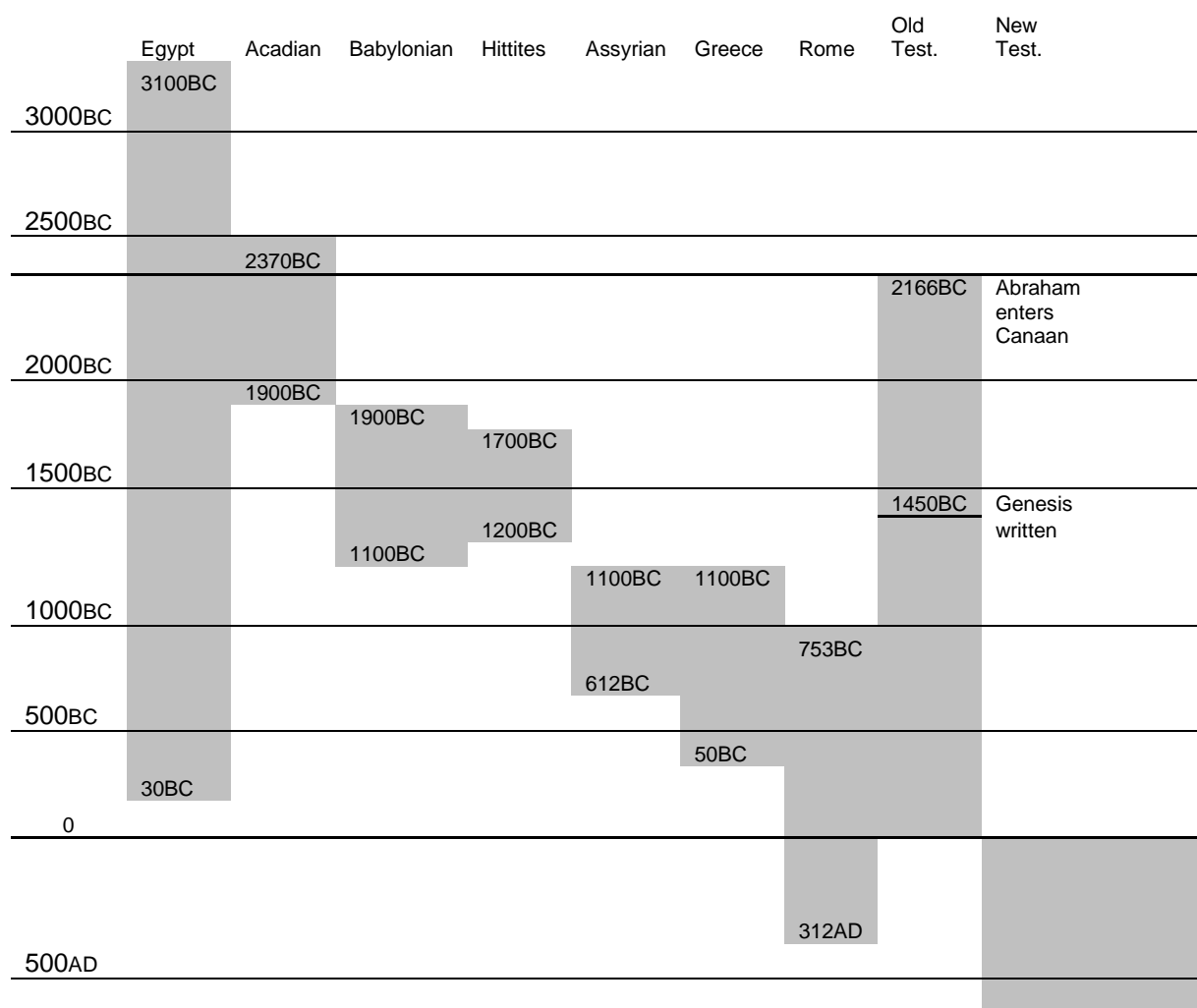
Both laws reiterate the fact that it was regarded as degrading and shameful for a man to be penetrated like a woman, regardless whether the passive partner was a forced or voluntary participant to the act. It is assumed in both laws that no self-respecting man¹² would want to be penetrated by another man. It was a disgrace for one man to lie on top of another where they were of equal status. It was indeed regarded as a criminal act. This is so because the penetrating partner effects a change in the other partner's role from active (male) to passive (female).¹³ There was something wrong, disgraceful and humiliating about any man being penetrated as if he were a woman.

Penetrating a male was *reserved* for a defeated enemy or someone of lower status who did not belong to the social circles of the penetrator (for example, a foreigner, a resident alien or non-resident alien, prisoner of war or a slave). The passive partner was subjected to the authority of the active (penetrating) partner. Sexual subjection involves surrender, loss of power and a change of gender. Raping a man was the ultimate act of disgrace. This is borne out by the Babylonian omen text which says: *If a man copulates with his equal, from the rear, he becomes the leader among his peers and brothers.*

Male cult prostitution, the role of the *assinnu*, *kurgarrû*, or *kulusu*, was institutionalised. They were treated with great disdain and said to have been created from the dirt under the god Enki's nails. They were also labelled *dogs*.¹⁴ They dressed like women and it was believed that the goddess Ishtar had transformed such men into a *man-woman* or even a *dog-woman*, with *dog* denoting a disgusting transformation from male to female and possibly also intercourse in doglike fashion.¹⁵ Homosex with male cult prostitutes was a reality in ancient Mesopotamian society.¹⁶

Some scholars interpret the *Gilgamesh Epic* as depicting a homosexual relationship between Gilgamesh, the king of Uruk, and Enkidu, the wild man created by the gods as a suitable partner for the oversexed Gilgamesh. Although homoeroticism is not the central theme in the Epic, the text suggests several erotic associations. Enkidu is portrayed in terms that liken him to a female prostitute by virtue of the subordinate sexual role he played after being defeated by Gilgamesh.¹⁷

The above demonstrate that homosex in all its manifestations was a known phenomenon in ancient times. The Old Testament paralleled most of the above empires and time periods. The Old Testament, therefore, did not originate in a vacuum and its authors would most certainly have taken note of the other surrounding cultures, their legal codes, myths, religious rituals and sexual mores. Moses, for instance, was brought up in the household of the pharaoh and would have known the Egyptian culture, values, religion, sexual taboos and history in fine detail. He is also the original author of the Pentateuch. Consider the following comparison before we turn to the Old Testament:



The Old Testament

The Old Testament texts that speak directly and indirectly on the issue of homoeroticism are enough to know what the Old Testament teaches and are sufficiently widespread to put forward a consistent and pervasive viewpoint. The position of the Old Testament on homosex provides an important backdrop to the New Testament and all of what was settled on the issue of homosex in the Old Testament, was accepted as such in the New Testament. The Old Testament did not originate in a vacuum, and the Hebrew monotheistic faith clearly had to position and expresses itself within the religious framework of its time. The severity of the judgement on homosex in the Levitical Laws goes well beyond the judgement of any other religion of its time.

The creation stories: Genesis 1-3

The creation stories present indirect references to the issue of homosexual practice. The stories do not speak of homosexual conduct or of heterosexual conduct. We should, however, understand that they do provide us with a general understanding of sexuality. This implies that we can deduce from the creation stories that certain principles pertaining to human sexuality were laid down as man and woman were being created. These principles hold true within the broader context of God's creational intention and purpose for mankind even today.

We find two versions of creation in the Bible: that of the Priestly (P) and the Yahwist (J) writers. Gen1:1-2:2:4a is attributed to P and Gen.2:4b-3:24 to J.¹⁸ I will assume this suggestion as valid for the purposes of discussing the creation of humans as male and female. Both authors suggest a biblical norm, namely heterosexuality although this term is modern and in use only since modern times. P's view of sexuality is linked to receiving and carrying out God's commands in relation to

ruling creation. Filling and populating the earth with humans is a divine precondition for ruling the earth. Procreation is a precondition for filling the earth.

26 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

For P the complementarities of gender differentiation are secured in the divinely sanctioned command of governing creation. It is quite clear that God's intention for human sexuality, that is, complementarity as man and woman, is firmly embedded in creation. *Male and female he created them* has definite implications for human sexuality. It is also clear that verse 27 is stating a mere fact: man was created male and female.

Man, unlike God, is characterised by sexual differentiation. God created in his image a male 'adam and a female 'adam. Both share the image of God. This image is to be understood in the light of the *oneness* of God. This emphasizes *man* as a *unity* whilst being biologically differentiated. The *oneness* of God is reflected in both the male 'adam and a female 'adam in their sexual *otherness*.

Sexuality is not an accident of nature, nor is it simply biological differentiation. Instead it is a deliberate, intentional and functional gift of God. While sexual identity and sexual function are foreign to God's person, it is nevertheless displayed as a part of his will for his image bearers. Only man and woman in a sexual relationship, not a man with another man, or a woman with another woman, can portray God's image and unity. Both the portrayal of God's image in the sexual complementary otherness and the procreation purpose, avoid a detachment of sexuality from God's male-female intend.

In Gen.2:4b-3:24, humanity is much in focus, more so as in Gen.1.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept: and he took one of the man's ribs (or side), and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her to the man.

23 And the man said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Gen.2:21-24).

In this, the Yahwist's narrative of creation, God did not create another 'adam as an independent creation, nor a replica of the first 'adam, but He made a complementary being from the 'adam because no suitable helper was to be found for him in the creation up to that point in time. None of Israel's neighbours had a tradition of the creation of female.¹⁹ Note that it was not the woman herself but simply the raw material that was taken from the 'adam. The 'adam does not emerge before the creative divine act on the dust is completed; in similar manner the woman does not emerge until a creative divine act is done on the raw material taken from the side of 'adam.

Only a being thus created from 'adam can and ought to become someone with whom 'adam could reunite in sexual intercourse (...they will become one flesh; (Gen.2:21-24) and in marriage.²⁰ A Man by himself is not *one flesh*. A woman by herself is not *one flesh*. Another man cannot be *one flesh* with another man. Only the man and the woman can *become one flesh*. Masculinity and

femininity unite into an oneness, sexually and in marriage, and this creates wholeness. This is impossible where masculinity and masculinity or femininity and femininity unite as one flesh; the very coition or marriage is void of wholeness.

The same argument holds true for two women. The woman is not just *like himself* but *from himself* (*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh* (Gen.2:21-24) and thereby qualifies to be the only possible complementary fit to his original wholeness. In v.23 it is stated that *she shall be called woman (isha) because she was taken out of man (ish)*. These two words, which are so much the same, emphasize their common identity and mutual dependence as man and woman.

The Yahwist does not focus on the procreation goal (childbearing) as does P, but rather on the relational goal as complementary beings (male and female). The man does not leave one family, his father and mother, to start another family. The very inclusive nature of the relationship (*a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife*), excludes relationships of people of the same sex.²¹ Male and female in their complementary otherness, witness God's intent and design for human sexuality. God's intent for human sexuality is imbedded in the material creation of gendered beings and the fullness or wholeness of God's image comes together in the one flesh – the union of male and female in marriage. A composite being, created through sexual union of man and woman – two complementary beings – in marriage, displays God's image. It will not do to argue that homosexual marriage will do the same. Homosexual relationships are not intended nor envisaged in the creation narratives. Male and female are perfect fits by divine intention, design and blessing. Male and male, or female and female, are not.

This is borne out by Romans 1:26-27, that the natural proclivity of man is not for other men, but for women.²² The natural function of which Paul speaks, is clearly that designed by God as described in the Genesis narratives and the unnatural function is man's design, a perversion of the male-female norm laid down in Creation.

Jesus showed little regard for the legal issue of divorce; He rather in His answer immediately zooms in on God's purposes of making mankind in the form of male and females. His answer simply concerns itself with marriage and human sexuality. Jesus without question accepted the model for marriage and sexuality presented in Genesis 1-2. In his discussion of divorce (Mk. 10:1-12) Jesus appealed to both Genesis 1:27 (*God made them male and female*) and Genesis 2:24 (*for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife and the two will become one flesh*). Jesus also added: *so they are no longer two but one flesh; thus what God joined together, let no one separate*. He did not broaden the Torah's (Law of Moses) sexual ethic to make allowance for any sexual union other than a male-female union in a monogamous exogamous lifelong marital relationship.

These statements of the Lord Jesus are of utmost importance. He acknowledges that marriage was ordained by God from the beginning of creation (Mk. 10:6) as the union of a male and female, a man and a woman, not of a man and another man, or a female and another female. There is no awareness, no acceptance and no provision for any other pattern. The creation texts allowed for only a male-female pattern. He declared the absolute, intentional and deliberate will of God, expressed in the purposeful creation as related in Genesis 1-2. Maleness and femaleness – as *visual and functional human sexuality* – are the evidence of God's intention that males and females enter into complementary, creative sexual unions that bind them together in a divinely intended and designed new form of life.²³

This matter was settled in the Hebrew Scriptures and accepted as such by Jesus. The authoritative nature of the creation narratives went unquestioned and they were applied as a matter of fact to the problem at hand. The proscriptions of Leviticus 18 and 20 regarding sexual unions of various

kinds made it a foregone conclusion that only male-female sexual union in marriage was acceptable.

Considering Jesus' stance on sexuality there is no place in the Genesis account to make provision for same-sex unions, whether loving and non-exploitive or otherwise. This one recorded statement by Jesus about human sexuality clearly shows that He understood males and females, not males and males nor females and females, to be created by God for mutual relations that unite and fulfil both male and female in a complementary union that satisfies the physical, spiritual, psychological and sexual needs. Paul also unreservedly embraces the creation account in his appeal that since the creation of the world His attributes are clearly seen (Rom. 1:20).

Natural meant for Paul the creation intent of the Creator God as revealed in the physical embodiment of male and female. The natural function so vividly displayed as male and female was clearly that designed by God as described in the Book of Genesis and the unnatural function was of man's design. Homosexual behaviour was a perversion resulting from a corrupted theology that worships the creature in its sensuality rather than the Creator.

Jesus never married. This indicates that male and female sexual union is by itself not a necessary condition for human fulfilment. Yet, Jesus' teaching is equally clear that heterosexual sexual union in the context of heterosexual marriage is to be the norm for human sexual behaviour. Both Jesus' words and actions presuppose that marital heterosexual unions and abstinence from sexual involvement are the options for human behaviour that accord with the will of God.²⁴

Noah & Ham: Gen.9:20-27

In Gen.9:20-27 the Yahwist tells the story of an incident between Noah and his sons, Ham, Shem and Japheth.

- 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.
- 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* across their shoulders, and walked in backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.
- 24 When Noah awoke from his wine, and found out what his younger son had done to him, he said: *Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.*

Was Canaan cursed just because his father Ham literally saw his grandfather Noah's nakedness (genitals)? The curse of their ancestor Canaan was disastrous for the Canaanites. As Wold and others²⁵ would have it, there is much more to the story than just a literal seeing of Noah's nakedness and a convincing case has been put forward for an interpretation as an instance of incestuous, homosexual rape. The whole of the debate on the issue will not be repeated here. It suffices to say that Ham was in his father's tent, he went out to tell his brothers, Noah *found out* what his youngest son had *done to him*, and because of this Noah cursed Canaan.

The language of *uncovering* and *seeing the nakedness of* corresponds with similar phrases denoting sexual intercourse. In Leviticus the phrase is used to denote incest (Lev.18:6-18; 20:11, 17-21) and in Lev.20:17 the phrase is used more specifically to describe sibling incest. This interpretation is supported by the Egyptian myth of Horus and Seth and the Mesopotamian texts sited above. His attempt to emasculate, disgrace and show dominance over his father through homosexual rape fails and his son Canaan is cursed. The punishment (*lex talionis*) fits the crime. Ham trespasses with his *seed* (sperm), and so too the curse befalls his *seed* (son, descendants). Nissinen points out that the story *does not speak of Ham's homosexual orientation but of his hunger for power.*²⁶

According to Lev.18:24-30; 20:22-26, incest and homosex were the reasons why God decided to vomit out the Canaanites from their land. Their participation in these acts was an abomination to God. Gagnon summarises the situation as follows when he says: *The Canaanites deserve to be dispossessed of the land and made slaves because they are, and always have been, avid practitioners of immoral activity. In the new post-diluvian (sic!) world, it was their ancestor who committed the most heinous act imaginable – not rape but incest; not just incestuous rape, but rape of one’s own father, to whom supreme honour and obedience is owed.*²⁷ In this story then, homosex was an important compounding factor that, among others, gave rise to the curse of Canaan.

Sodom and Gomorrah: Gen.19:4-11

Scholars today, especially the pro-homosex group, easily reject the Sodom and Gomorrah narrative as having nothing to say on the topic of homosexuality.²⁸ The reason being that in the revisionist’s view, this narrative speaks only on inhospitality and rape. The passage, according to this interpretation, condemns rape and not relationships of mutual consent. However, as we saw with the story of Ham’s incestuous, homosexual rape of Noah, the inherently disgraceful and degrading character of homosex plays a definite part in the author’s intention to show it as a compounding factor in the whole incident.

We take up the story where all the men, young and old, surround the house of Lot after the visitors joined Lot’s family in his house. The men from Sodom called to Lot:

- 5 *Where are the men that came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them.*
- 6 *And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,*
- 7 *And said, No, my friends, do not do this wicked thing.*
- 8 *Look, I have two daughters who have not known man; let me bring them out to you, and do what you like with them; only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the protection of my roof.*
- 9 *And they said: Stand back. And they said again: This one fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play a judge: we’ll treat you worse than them.* They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door (Gen.19:5-9).

There is no doubt that the Sodomites wanted to have sex with the visitors. The revisionist view that they only wanted *to know* (*yada*’) to get acquainted with the visitors, is not plausible at all.²⁹ The overwhelming support in the immediate context presupposes a sexual interpretation for *know* (*yada*’). It is used in a sexual sense only three verses later: Lot offers his daughters *who have not known men* (*have not had sex with men*) to the men of Sodom. The same verb is used in Judg.19:22-25, where the meaning again is unmistakably sexual. Very few scholars today, even among supporters of homoerotic behaviour, adopt a view of a non-sexual connotation for the verb *to know* (*yada*’).

It is a false distinction to separate inhospitality from sexual sin. The perversion of homosex appears to be an integral part of the story, along with the other factors mentioned as the story unfolds. Homosex is an active, aggressive form of inhospitality. This is why the name Sodom became a byword for inhumanity to visiting outsiders in later Jewish and Christian contexts, a word equated with homosex (*to sodomise is to partake in homosex; to be a Sodomite is to indulge in homosex*), because inhospitality manifested itself as homosexual rape.

The Levite’s concubine: Judges 19:22-25

The story of the rape of the Levite’s concubine closely correlates the incident at Sodom and Gomorrah. After the old man invited the Levite and his concubine into his house, we read:

- 22 Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, *and* beat at the door, and spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying: *Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.*
- 23 And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them: *Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.*
- 24 Behold, here is my daughter a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing.
- 25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go. (Jdg.19:22-25).

There are a few things mentioned in this portion which are undisputedly vile in intention and action, namely the intended homosexual rape of the man, the rape of the woman and the inhospitality and utter wickedness of the men of Gibeah. The story clearly marks the theme of inhospitality as a compounding factor. This theme is, however, overshadowed by the sexual atrocities intended for the Levite and sexual rape of his concubine. These acts supersede the theme of inhospitality precisely because heterosexual rape and homosex are abominable violations of God's standards for human sexual expression.

The aversion to and loathsomeness for male penetration (same-sex intercourse) must have been a significant factor in bringing the old man to the point of being prepared to give up his daughter and the Levite's concubine to the mob. The threat of homosexual rape is a vivid symbol of a cultural, inhuman and uncivilised behaviour. As is the case with the Yahwist's story of Sodom, the author here describes evil acts as they manifest themselves as homosex and heterosexual rape.

Homosexual cult prostitution in Deuteronomy 23:17-18

Homosexual cult prostitution existed in the period of the divided monarchy in Israel. A number of texts relate the existence of *qedesim* (*holy/sanctified men, consecrated men, men dedicated to a deity* (Dt.23:17-18; 1Ki.14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2Ki.23:7; Job.36:14). This word is mostly translated to denote *male temple prostitutes engaged in homosexual prostitution*. The command of God against this detestable practice clearly brings to the fore the despised, degrading and debilitating lifestyle that characterised the lives of the *qedesim*. God does not beat about the bush in stating his sexual standard for Israel's men and women when He says:

- 17 No Israelite man or woman is to become a shrine prostitute (*qedes*-male and *qedesâ*-female).
- 18 You must not bring the earnings of a female prostitute or of a male prostitute (*kelebh* – כלב : *of a dog*) into the house of the Lord your God to pay a vow, because the Lord your God detest them both.

All the other references display the same negative attitude of Deuteronomy towards male prostitutes. Job.36:14 relates that the *qedesim* were thought to live such miserable lives and were rejected to such an extent that they could only find solace in their *own kind*. Their miserable existence led to an early death:

- 14 They die in their youth, among male prostitutes (*qedesim*) of the shrines.

2Ki.23:7 reports that king Josiah *tore down the quarters of the male shrine prostitutes (qedesim), which were in the temple of the Lord and where women did weaving for Asherah*. This is a graphically honest point being made by the author. These reforms of Josiah were the direct result of his discovery of the *book of the law/covenant* in the temple in 622 BC – a book that most

scholars identify with Dt.12-26. This would mean that Josiah's action against the *qedesîm* at the temple was probably taken as a direct result of Dt.23:17-18.

The existence of homosexual cult prostitutes in Judah was a recurring problem, from the start of the reign of Rehobeam to the start of his great-grandson Jehoshaphat's (922-843BC) reign and including the period that led to the Josianic Reform in 622 BC. This phenomenon in Judah reminds one of the *assinu*, *kurgarrû* or *kulusu* of Mesopotamia. The *men-women (male cult prostitutes)* devoted to Ishtar, who feminised their appearance and for a fee allowed themselves to be penetrated anally by other males. Given the existence of the *assinu*, *kurgarrû* or *kulusu*, there seems to be little reason to doubt the accuracy of the reports of *qedesîm* in Judah.

It is clear that the biblical authors were utterly disgusted by the phenomenon of male cult prostitutes in Israel. When the biblical authors rejected homosexual cult prostitutes, they were in fact rejecting the whole phenomenon of homosexual practice. Consensual homosexual practice would have received the same treatment because homosexual practice in whatever form was detestable to God.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

In Leviticus we do not find narratives (stories), but commands. These commands occur in the larger compilation of laws known as the Holiness Code (H). The Holiness Code proscribed to all of Israel, not just the priests, to keep the land and not just the sanctuary unpolluted through holy living, the eminent result of obedience to the commands. It stated:

Do not lie with a man as with a woman; that is detestable (Lev.18:22).

If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads (Lev.20:13).

Revisionists in general argue against the relevance of the prohibitions of homosex in Lev.18 and 20 on the grounds that it rendered the partakers unclean but not inherently evil, and because the Gospel released believers from their part of the Jewish law.³⁰ Lev.18 and 20 list the forbidden sexual partners for a man. These lists are given to guide men in sexual holiness. It is very relevant even today because only the command not to have sex with a menstruating woman is no longer adhered to. The fact that this proscription is no longer valid today, shows the disrespect men have for menstruating women and cannot be used to invalidate the rest of Lev.18 and 20. Lev.18:22 occurs in the larger context of general, forbidden sexual relations. These proscriptions forbid incest (18:6-18), adultery (18:20), child sacrifice (18:21) and bestiality (18:23).

These prohibitions continue to have universal validity in contemporary society. If one abrogates the proscription against homosex, why then keep the rest? On what basis is one proscription abrogated but the rest universally applied? The proscription of homosex is unqualified and absolute.

All forms of homosex, not just oppressive forms, are forbidden and neither party to the act is excused, whether active or passive in the sexual act. Not even the ages of the parties to the act are specified. One can only conclude that the act was regarded as especially loathsome, something detestable and utterly repugnant and, therefore, universally condemned in all its manifestations.

The word *tô'ebâ* (*abomination, something detestable or revolting*) is used to describe God's feeling about homosex. Homosex violates God's established boundaries set against the practices of defilement characteristic of the godless. Although all of these practices are collectively renounced as abominations (18:24-30), only homosex is singled out in particular as an abomination (*tô'ebâ*) in the list of specific commands. Also in Lev.20:13 the word is applied specifically only to sexual

intercourse between males. In the whole of the Tetrateuch the word abomination (*tô'ebâ*) is only used in connection with homosex.

The relevance of the proscription of homosex for today is further established with the prohibition being carried over into the New Testament. The same God, who gave the Holiness Code, continues to regulate conduct through his Spirit in believers. A very substantial case must be made to abrogate a law and affirming conduct that was regarded with such revulsion and loathing.

Conclusion

The creation of the woman, Ham's incestuous, homosexual rape of his father, Noah, and the story of Sodom and Gomorrah all fall within the Yahwist's tradition. The Yahwist regarded homosex as an act that brought great shame on particularly the man being raped. Heterosexual intercourse is justified on the grounds that the woman was formed from the man. The man and the woman are bodily and psychologically complementary to one another. Heterosexual intercourse creates *one flesh* – a reunion with the sexual other and brings man to his original *oneness*.

The positions of the Priestly writer (P) and the writer(s) of the Holiness Code are also sufficiently clear. Same-sex relationships find no place within the structures imbedded by God in creation. P's stance on procreation and the boldness to declare that God created male and female for sexual union, precludes any acceptance of homosex or same-sex unions. P makes it abundantly clear why God vomited the Canaanites from their land; their participation in homosex, male cult prostitution at the shrines and incest warranted such action by God. H simply proclaims that homosex was essentially incompatible with the creation of male and female as sexually complementary beings. The sexual perversion of the heterosexual intention of God for mankind violates God's design for the created order.

The Ancient Near East is predominantly negative about homosexual conduct. The instances of possible appreciation are reserved for visiting male cultic prostitutes and sexually dominating men of lesser status and conquered enemies. Against this backdrop the Old Testament takes a severe and comprehensive stance against homosex, representing an unparalleled level of revulsion against homosexual conduct in all its manifestations. This unequivocal position of the Old Testament provides the backdrop to the New Testament.

CHAPTER 6

EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 1:18-32

Introduction

It is to Paul we now turn and, in particular, the key Bible portion Rom.1:26-27. With good reason, Rom.1:26-27 is commonly seen as the central Bible portion when it comes to the issue of homosexual conduct. Next to Lev.18:22 and 20:13, this Bible portion is the most substantial and explicit discussion on homosexuality in the Bible and it is furthermore located in the New Testament. This Bible portion is not only concerned with same-sex intercourse among men, but also with same-sex intercourse among women.

In this chapter a focussed exegesis of Rom.1:24-28 is done according to the grammatical-historical method. The data from the Louw & Nida Lexicon is once again utilized for a word-exegesis of the relevant phrases according to the componential analytical method. The outcome of this should bring us to a valid interpretation of Paul's pronouncements on homosexuality in Rom.1:24-27.

General Background

An overview of the general background of the epistle to the Romans highlights the current moral trends within which the Roman Christians found themselves. It also brings to the fore the continuity between the two civilisations that formed the Graeco-Roman culture. The Romans took over Hellenistic civilisation and fostered its spread in Western Europe. The Romans were the only ancient people who came into contact with Greek civilisation and went on to make major advances. From her earliest days Rome had been affected by Greek culture.

By the third century BC, Greek civilisation had passed into its Hellenistic phase which was more superficial, but far more attractive than the earlier Classic phase.¹ Even so, the Romans were very suspicious of the Hellenistic culture.² Much of what the Romans took from the Hellenistic East was on the level of entertainment and physical pleasure. Despite the efforts of Cato the Elder to drive out Greek philosophers, the great systems of Hellenistic philosophy became part and parcel of Roman culture. Seneca, Cato, Tacitus and others complained that civic corruption, religious mania, adultery and effeminacy were results of the loss of the original Roman spirit. They especially deplored the influence of the Greeks, which caused *gravitas*, *pieta*, *simplicitas* and *virtus* (grace, piety, simplicity and virtue) to be lost.³

Traditional ideas of class, morality and manners changed, and so did those of family and sex.⁴ The idea of a satisfying and fulfilled life centred no longer on family involvement, but on pleasure and passion.⁵ Upper-class children were raised by slaves and by Greek chambermaids, while parents pursued impermanent sexual satisfactions and laboured to climb the *social ladder*. Roman life was characterised by bisexuality, homosexuality, violence, brutality and emotional changeableness.⁶

Rome's most popular diversion was the arena, a drastic change from the Greek theatre. In the arena men were buried alive, dismembered, flogged with chains, disembowelled, decapitated and torn apart by beasts. The emotions of the Roman people needed extreme stimulation. Ovid recommended the arena as a fine place for flirtations and the beginning of love affairs. Martial and his Roman audience, like the Greeks, equated masculinity with aggression and dominance; one could use a younger male as a passive sexual object without loss of maleness⁷ and slaves were employed to satisfy sexual desires.

Only a living norm can be violated and can create contradiction. There must have been many people, a majority, who believed and maintained the traditional values of the Roman society at large and utterly disapproved of such things. There were poets, statesmen, bureaucrats, military officers and private citizens who continued to work and live free from greed, brutality and causing social injustice.⁸ It was during the early years of Nero's reign that Paul first came into contact with the Roman church. It is probable that the worst excesses of Nero, like the worst cruelty of Tiberius, did little harm to the mass of people even in Rome.⁹

But it was not only Nero, but Seneca also, who was active in Rome when Paul wrote to the congregation in Rome. Paul was at home in the Graeco-Roman world. He spoke the language. Lived and worked in its cities and knew its culture. Paul surely knew the Roman world inside out. He knew that there was a great deal of immorality, abortion and the exposure of children. Prostitution and the keeping of courtesans were equally common. Divorce was frequent and many married to get access to large fortunes.¹⁰

The Roman legislator promulgated legislation for the Roman world. Christian preachers from the east, on the other hand, proclaimed a moral law which purported to be valid for all mankind, including the Romans.¹¹ The moral teaching of the Christians sounded like criticism of the private lives of the imperial family members, an attack on Roman law and on the morals of Roman society. In the sphere of sex, the Romans were invited to follow an unwanted code of sexual behaviour so foreign to their own. Marriage was to be for life, divorce was wrong. Marrying again after having been divorced was also wrong. The basic principles of this new sexual morality so foreign to the Romans were clear although not acceptable for many.¹²

But what about homosexuality? Rom.1:26-27 seems to clearly condemn homosexual relations between both men and women. It is also at the centre of the current debate about homosexuality. It is the core Bible portion to the issue of homosexual conduct on which Christians could base their moral doctrine with regard to homosexuality.

The exegesis of the relevant phrases in the next section should bring us to a clearer understanding of the meaning of Rom.1:26-27:

Interpretations of the relevant Greek phrases

A literal translation of the Greek text (UBS, 1983:531) of Rom.1:24-27 is as follows:

(24)

Διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῶν καρδιῶν αὐτῶν εἰς

Therefore he gave up them God in the desires of the hearts of them to

ἀκαθαρσίαν τοῦ ἀτιμαζέσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς

uncleanness of the - to be dishonoured the bodies of them among them(selves)

(25)

Οἵτινες μετέλλαξαν τὴν ἀληθειαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ψευδεὶ, καὶ ἐσεβασθησαν καὶ

Who changed the truth of God with the lie, and worshipped and

ἐλάτρευσαν τὴν κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, ὅς ἐστιν εὐλόγητος

served the creature rather than the [one] having created who is blessed

εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.

Unto/until the ages, amen (=indeed/verily/surely!).

(26)

διὰ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας, αἰ

Therefore[because of this] He gave up them - God to passions of dishonour the

τε γαρ θήλειαι αὐτῶν μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρα φύσιν
even for females of them (ex)changed the natural use to the(use) against nature.

(27)

ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφεντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας
likewise even also the males leaving the natural use of the female

ἔξεκαυθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρεξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν
burned in the desire of them toward one another, males with/among males

τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει
the unseemliness working and the penalty which was due

τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες.
of the error of them in themselves receiving back

They exchanged natural use for what is against nature

(μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρα φύσιν)
They exchanged the natural use for what is the against nature

The key term for the understanding of Rom.1:26-27 are: *use* (χρησις - *chrésis*) and *nature* (φύσις - *physis*) which occurs in both verses 26 and 27, and *likewise* (ὁμοίως - *homoiôs*) which introduces v.27. In v.26 the natural *use* is exchanged for the unnatural. In v.27 the natural *use* with women is abandoned because men burned with *desire* (ὀρεξις - *orexis*) which resulted in unnatural practices. *Use* in v.26 and again in v.27 is connected by the term *likewise*. *Exchanged* (μετήλλαξαν - *metêlaxan*) is a rare term and in extant Greek literature is used for sexual perversion only in Rom.1.¹³

The noun *use*¹⁴ can be translated as *use, usage or usefulness* and sometimes *sexual intercourse*. We cannot understand *use* to mean similar sexual activities engaged in by women in v.26 and men in v.27 (e.g. non-coital penetration). This would give a too simple reading of these verses. Such a reading will presuppose a single common category for homosexuality in the mind of Paul and his readers, which transcends any differences in practice. Some exegetes understand Paul's denouncement to refer only to pederasty¹⁵ which, in the non-coital sense, will have reference only to intercural (interfemoral) connection. *Use* is perhaps best read as a reference to the sexual activities themselves rather than an abstract category presupposed by commentators.¹⁶ The phrase *the natural use of the male* in v.27 implies that the *ellipsis* in v.27 is to be completed to read *the natural use (of the female)*.

Therefore, in both cases *use* is to be understood *as regards sexual intercourse*. Paul's argument here assumes mutuality in the male-female sexual relationship in as much as *use* as sexual *use* is concerned. There is a natural *use* of the female by the male (Rom.1:27), but also a reciprocal natural *use* of the male by the female (Rom.1:26). Sexuality in Paul's understanding has its *function* or *use* in the complementary sexual *other*.

Others, however, argue that *use* in Rom.1:26-27 should not be translated *relation* or *intercourse* because *use* generally refers not to mutual gratification but to *the activity of the desiring subject, usually male, performed on the desired object, female or male*, implying that Paul focuses on marriage and *the husband's use of his wife*.¹⁷ It is the unnatural use of the female (wife) that Paul

most likely alludes to in Rom.1:26.¹⁸ The assumption that *use* highlights the possibility of *passion* and its consequences, rather than the violation of the male-female form of intercourse, needs also to be addressed. This implies that the persons having sex lack self-control as experienced by the user of another's body.

According to this argument Rom.1:24-27 is not an attack on homosexuality as a violation of the complementarity of the male-female physique, but a description of the human condition informed by the rejection of love in favour of excessive passionate love.¹⁹ The effort to show that *love's object was the body of another, with no specification of gender* as implied by Xenophon (*Symposium* 8.2,13) does not withstand a closer examination. The outcome of this direction of thought is the denouncement of *excessive sexual desire* instead of homosexual acts. This argument postulates the possibility that Paul would be arguing for *sex without passion* within the context of marriage. In the context of 1Cor.6-7 this line of thought may be dismissed in totality.²⁰

Use presupposes in the theology of Paul a *natural use*. Fredrickson contends that sexual activity between males is not portrayed in Rom.1:26-27 as the violation of a male-female norm given with creation, but as an example of *excess passion* into which God has handed over persons who dishonoured him.²¹ Rom.1:26-27 focuses on *passion* as the immediate problem, not on the gender of the persons having sex. Actually he argues that *use is genderless* in its application in Rom.1:26-27 or, at the least: *neither the gender of the subject nor that of the object is material to the concept of use*.

However, as being unnatural it is clear from the context of Rom.1:26-27 that the sex/gender of the partner *does* make all the difference in the definition of *use* (χρησις – *chrêsis*) of another in sexual intercourse. Sex with a member of the opposite sex in juxtaposition, is defined as natural, when exchanged for sex with a member of the same sex, it is here defined as unnatural. It is the *gender* of the persons having sex, and not sexual desire as such, which constitutes the problem. Excess passion in itself is not reason enough to warrant a given behaviour to be assessed as sin.

Exchange (μετήλλαξαν – *metêllaxan*) – The verses 1:23-32 have a structure built around the verb *exchange* on the part of man and woman and the verb, *to give over/abandon* (παρέδωκεν – *parêdoken*) on the part of God:

*And they **changed** (ήλλαξαν – êllaxan) the glory of God into an image (1:23).*

*Therefore God **gave them up** (παρέδωκεν) to uncleanness, to dishonour their bodies (1:24).*

*Who **exchanged** (μετήλλαξαν) the truth of God for the lie (1:25). Therefore God **gave them up** (παρέδωκεν) to vile passions (1:26a).*

*Even their women..., likewise also the men **exchanged** (μετήλλαξαν) natural relations for unnatural ones (1:26b-27). God **gave them over to** (παρέδωκεν) a debased mind to do things which are not fitting.*

Exchange (μεταλλάσσω – *metallásson*) – Rom.1:26 describes the result of the *exchange* of worship mentioned in 1:25 - by itself an intensification of *to change* (αλλάσσω – *allásson*) in Rom.1:23.

As the non-Christians perverted their worship with *idolatry/the lie* (Roman.1:25), so was also their sexual practice perverted.²² The phrase *exchange natural use for what is against nature* (μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παραφύσιν) lies at the core of the argument in Rom.1:26-27. Sexual differentiation is justified by sexual union. This truth is defined in Paul's usage of *use*. In creation man and woman fulfil a function of creative complementariness. Without her, the man is created incomplete and, without him, the woman is created incomplete. It is the woman who

brings man to completion and the man who brings the woman to completion. The purpose of sex is not just satisfaction or fulfilment, but completion.

Paradoxically, sex also serves an opposite purpose. When it becomes an end in itself and enhances a completely separated and isolated individuality, a separateness where an *exchange* takes place and the male-female separates into male-male and female-female (Rom.1:26-27) relationships *against nature*, it is sin. Same-sex relations are not a valid mode of sexuality but a tragic maiming of the creation intention of male-female *use*. That is why same-sex is not an intended mode of sexuality for it affirms incompleteness. Completeness can only be affirmed in the other who is truly other and this fact is vividly noticeable in the created physique of man and woman.

God gave them over (παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεός) – The words *God gave them over* in Rom.1:24-26, 28 can be understood in three ways.²³ Firstly, in the permissive sense, which means God passively permitted men to fall into retributive consequences. Secondly, it can be understood in the privative sense, which means that God withdrew his restraining hand from evil and lastly, in the active judicial sense, meaning that God actively gave men over to retributive vengeance.²⁴ The refusal to acknowledge God, ends in blind distortion of the created reality. The reversal of the created order in worshipping *the lie* rather than God is reflected in a reversal of the created order in sexuality. Both constitute instances of overturning God's design. This is emphasized by the term *exchanged* which parallels rebellion against God with the outcome of that rebellion.²⁵ There is a positive correlation between the sin and the retributive consequence which, by its very nature, is also sin.

Natural and/or nature (φύσικος/φύσις) – *phýsikós/phýsis*): The words *natural* and *unnatural* can be used in different senses: the biological, the moral and the religious senses. Biologically one can argue that natural means the complementarity of male and female - a congenital predisposition - and conclude that homosexuality in the biological sense is not natural, especially measured against the norm of homosexuality and procreation - the *traditional* ground for the condemnation of homosexuality.²⁶ The *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν – *para phýsin*) argument, however, is a theological argument and not a scientific biological argument.²⁷ Thus, the argument for congenital predisposition and procreation are, in the first place, a theologically based argument with secondary support from the other sciences. Hence *nature* is not the result of empirical investigation, or speculative determinism, but a theological norm determined by God. Therefore, *natural and/or nature* refer to one's constitution as given by God, the Creator. *Nature* may have the figurative sense of a natural endowment of condition inherited from one's ancestors, when used in Rom.1:27.²⁸

However, there is the literal sense of *physical nature* that is beyond heritage and is based on creational intent by the Creator.²⁹ Not the male, but the female, possesses, because of creational intent, the complementary opening for insertion by the male member – a point confirmed by the procreative capacity of male *seed* when it enters via the vagina into the female womb. The point of contention is that same-sex intercourse is a transgression of *natural boundaries*, distinguishable in the way males and females are made and not in *excess passion*. This meaning is innate in Paul's notion of sexual activity as *use* (χρήσις).

This is why idolatry is implicitly *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν), not because people are *constitutional monotheists*, because observation of the created cosmos presupposes a Creator, far greater than a god carved out of wood or stone in the image of one of God's creations (Rom.1:19-23). Not the innateness of one's passions, but rather the bodily design of humans themselves, should guide us into the truth about the nature of God and the nature of human sexuality.

Nature in this passage is used purposefully and in a moral sense. Actions could, therefore, be taken which contradict nature. To live *contrary to nature or in accordance with nature* (παρὰ φύσιν or

κατὰ φύσιν) implies moral categories; it denotes how man (and woman) should or should not live. Evil practices in Rom.1:26-27 are, therefore, described as *contrary to nature* and Paul condemns the Gentiles on the basis of *nature*.³⁰ Such actions ignore the realities of gender and reproductive capacity, reducing sex to pleasure only. Graeco-Roman and Jewish Hellenistic literature commonly employed *contrary to nature* to contrast same-sex practice with that which is *in accordance with nature*.

This phrase is crucial because it reveals the basis of Paul's condemnation of same-sex relations.³¹ Thus, the context requires us to understand natural sex as being according to *God's creational intent*. When man gives up the Creator (Roman.1:25), he likewise gives up the creation ordinances, which include the male-female relationship as the intended context for sex.³² The rationale of Paul to argue that homosexual acts are *against nature* can be summarised in his creationist orientation. The biblical creation narratives serve as a backdrop to the narrative in Rom.1:18-32. Paul's reference to the sexes in Rom.1:26-27 as *females* and *males* rather than *women* and *men* follow the style of Gen.1:27 (LXX). The inter-textual connection between Rom.1:23 and Gen.1:26 (LXX) is unmistakable.³³ For Paul both adultery and same-sex intercourse reject God's verdict that what was made and arranged was very good (Rom.1:31). It seems that Paul might have argued in terms of sexual pairing of male and female in Gen.1:26-31.

The arguments for the anatomical and procreative complementarity of male and female are of importance in assessing what Paul meant when he contended that same-sex intercourse is *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν). Given the meaning *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν) and comparable expressions used by Jewish writers to describe same-sex intercourse, the meaning of the concept in Romans is clear. It seems from Paul's argument in Rom.1:26-27 that he is referring to the anatomical and procreative complementarity of male and female. Gagnon³⁴ is quite vivid in his discussion on Paul's argumentation in condemning same-sex intercourse.³⁵ That Paul thought of *nature* not as *the way things are usually done* (culture convention) but rather as *the material shape of the created order* can also be deduced from his illustration that idolatry entails the suppression of the *knowable truth*.³⁶

Helminiak (1997:87) makes the point that for Paul *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν) meant *atypical*, that is, not *against nature* but *against culture*. He contends that *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν) is a Stoic technical term, which Paul used to *impress his Roman readers*. Helminiak concedes that it is correctly translated to mean *contrary to nature* or *unnatural* and then states emphatically that Paul knew Stoicism³⁷ ... *but Paul did not understand Stoic philosophy* and that Paul meant *atypical*. Within Stoic understanding it is to be understood as *beyond the natural* whereas for Paul it would mean *beyond the typical*.³⁸ The translations *beyond nature* and *contrary to nature* for παρὰ φύσιν cannot be played off against each other. *Beyond*, the more common and general meaning of παρὰ with the accusative and *contrary to* (*against, in opposition to* – a specific sense of this general meaning) are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

No provision is to be made for an *atypical* translation for *nature* (φύσις – *phýsis*) with Paul. Paul's use of *nature* is never abstract, but for a *concrete nature*, observable in its anatomical and procreational capacities and does not presuppose that *nature* should be understood to be *atypical*. Same-sex is *beyond* or *in excess* of *nature* in the sense that it transgresses or *progresses beyond* the boundaries for sexuality - both as established by God and being transparent in nature.

The capacity for pro-creation is by the very definition of same-sex eroticism annulled because of the separation of sexual interest from pro-creation.³⁹ In same-sex relations *contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν) means the *isolation of the sexual act*. This is so because, in one form or another, same-sex eroticism in conduct and expression, denies the goodness of God's creation of male and female (Gen.1-2). Any deviation from this *creation order* by same-sex relations reiterates that

humanity has deviated from God's order.⁴⁰ Same-sex is not only contrary to God's creational intention and to *nature* itself, but also contrary to his divinely intended types, male and female.

What type of homosexuality is meant in Rom.1:26-27? Scroggs concludes that *only in Romans 1 is there a negative judgement made on both male and female sexuality, which should be considered a general indictment*. He continues: *this general indictment about male homosexuality must have had, could only have had, pederasty in mind*.⁴¹ Scroggs' primary argument is that Paul only condemned pederasty in Romans 1 in its more dehumanising characteristics. The descriptions, however, of homoeroticism in Rom.1:24, 26-27 as *the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, dishonourable passions, contrary to nature, burned in their lust for each other, committing shameful acts*, argues strongly for an understanding of a context of consenting males rather than male and child. Scroggs' *pederasty model* as the sole focus, is excluded by the very wording of Paul's argument in Rom.1:26-27. The structure of the model as shown previously, postulates that the younger person, the *beloved* (ἐρωμενος – *eromenos*) was passive, and did not desire, or at least did not expect, sexual gratification.⁴² If a youth did feel pleasure, he was considered a prostitute. There is no evidence that he was given the opportunity to be satisfied. His bodily activity was simply to provide sexual satisfaction for his *lover* (ἐραστής – *erastês*). Surely in the language being used by Paul, he implies *mutuality*⁴³ contra to what Scroggs is arguing for.

Although pederasty might have been a major form of homosexual conduct in the first century, one has to conclude with Wright that Paul *sees beyond particular forms of same-sex relations or same-sex relations in a particular contexts*. Malik arrives at a similar outcome.⁴⁴ But even if Paul's awareness of homosexuality is to be regarded primarily as that of pederasty, it does not mean that his words must be limited to pederasty. As seen above, most of the terms Paul used in Rom.1 allow for more than pederasty, which includes adult-adult mutuality.

A major flaw in the assumption for pederasty as the only focus of Rom.1:26-27 is Paul's inclusion of female-female homoerotic relations in his argument. It would indeed be strange for Paul to begin with a reference to women when pederasty, as the only focus, is by definition a male vice. Paul is comprehensive in his theological statement, and that is why women are not included in a figurative way of speaking.

As we have seen above, Paul is very concrete in his theology. The view that Paul is discussing pederasty in Rom.1 cannot logically and exegetically be determined as being the case. Male and female are necessary counterparts. Humanity is created male and female and the one is not above the other to be excluded from the effect of homoeroticism. For Paul to give a general indictment against homosexual acts, he has to include both male and female. Given his Jewish background, it is nothing but natural to include both.

As background to Paul's comments on homoeroticism, Schoedel discusses the views of some ancient authors: Plato, Philo and Clement of Alexandria. Basically all three share a negative attitude and view on homoerotic practices.⁴⁵ In the light of various ancient parallels it seems that, in Rom.1:26, Paul is concerned with female homoeroticism rather than women engaging in *male homosexual practices*⁴⁶ or *heterosexual women committing homoerotic acts*.⁴⁷ Paul treats same-sex intercourse among females as an issue in its own right, holding women to the same level of accountability as men. The language of *natural use* and the link *likewise* between Rom.1:26 and Rom.1:27 clarifies that both male and female homoeroticism are seen as evidence of the same *dishonourable passions*. It implies a departure from a divinely intended, deliberately created, originally heterosexual relationship between males and females.

Female homosexuality⁴⁸ does not get much attention in the literature of antiquity, perhaps because the authors of the time were exclusively male. Little, in comparison with male homoeroticism, is said in the Graeco-Roman world about lesbianism. Rom.1:26-27 is also an only biblical passage

referring to female homosexuality. However, it can be concluded from the evidence listed, that female eroticism was not unknown and perhaps, more important, it was practised along with its male counterpart in the Graeco-Roman first century world. The literature referred to below shows that female homosexual practices were known and attested to in Greek and Latin literature. The picture of female homoeroticism may be distorted because it is viewed through a *male lens*.

There are arguments that postulate a *homosexual activity by heterosexuals* rather than a *hetero-homo perversion* view.⁴⁹ This argument is based on the phrases *degrading passions* (πάθη ἀτιμίας) and *committing shameful acts* (τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι). In his argument for a heterosexual interpretation, Boswell disregards pederasty as a focus area as well as the possibility that Paul's polemical target is the practice of temple prostitution connected with idolatrous non-Christian worship.⁵⁰ Against this argument it is contended that, although Rom.1:26 does not explicitly state that females had sexual intercourse with females, the parallel wording in Rom.1:27 strongly suggests it. The completion of the *ellipsis* pre-supposes the following understanding:

- 1:26 *their females* exchanged the natural use (of the males) for that which is contrary to nature.
 1:27 and likewise also *the males*, leaving the natural use of *the female*, burned in their desire for one another...

The expression *natural use of the female* (as sexual partner) in Rom.1:27 suggests that the implied objective genitive of *natural use* in Rom.1:26 is the male as a sexual partner. The continuation of Rom.1:27 makes clear that the exchange for men is not that of coital intercourse for non-coital intercourse, but rather an exchange of sexual relations⁵¹ with women for sexual relations with men.⁵²

Paul is describing, not individual actions, but the corporate rebellion of humanity against God; one kind of behaviour indicative of this rebellion is homosexual relationships. Same-sex relations are a specific falsification of correct behaviour. Female same-sex intercourse is cited as being *unnatural* or *contrary to nature*.⁵³ The fact that Rom.1:26 puts the blame squarely and solely on women indicates that it is not unnatural forms of heterosexual intercourse that are the issue.

From the context of Rom.1:26-27 it seems clear that Paul intended his denouncement to apply in a general way to all homosexual practices among both men and women. He censures homosexual activity in general terms, reaffirming the Levitical prohibitions in 18:22 and 20:13.⁵⁴ The present judgement in Rom.1:27 is imbedded in the past record, this being the Old Testament.

The importance of three terms has been studied in this section. These terms are *use* (χρησις – *chrésis*), *exchange* (μετήλλαξαν – *metêllaxan*) and *against nature* (παρὰ φύσιν – *para phýsin*). The three terms are part of the phrase:

μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τῆς παρὰ φύσιν
 they exchange the natural use for (that which is) against nature

Martin Luther wrote:⁵⁵

The heinous conduct of the people of Sodom is extraordinary, inasmuch as they departed from the natural passion and longing of the male for the female, which was implanted by God, and desired what was altogether contrary to nature. Whence comes this perversity: Undoubtedly from Satan, who, after people have once turned away from fear of God, so powerfully suppresses nature that he beats out the natural desire and stirs up a desire that is contrary to nature.

In summary: the exegesis of these three terms points to the fact that same-sex intercourse is contrary to God's creation intention for humanity as depicted in the distinctive modes of sexuality, namely male and female. Both *use* and *exchange* is informed by the intended *nature*. The hermeneutical arguments for understanding *against nature* to mean anything other than *against* or *contrary* to the intended nature of heterosexual intercourse based on anatomical, sexual and procreative complementarity cannot be substantiated from the textual data.

Burned with passion for one another

[ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους
(they) burned in the passion of them towards one another]

In the previous section it has been shown that Paul argues that same-sex intercourse is *unnatural* and it is accomplished by using one's body in an *unnatural* way. To be *inflamed* or *to burn* with lust or passion is to be dominated by an all-consuming desire, and mostly it is translated with *desire, lust or passion*.

Inflamed or to burn (ἐκκαίω –*ekkaiō*): The verb is translated and is used only here in the New Testament. It has the meaning of *being utterly consumed by fire*.⁵⁶ This considerably stronger meaning is portrayed in the usage of the word in Hellenistic Jewish texts⁵⁷ where often it is metaphorically used in connection with wrath and rage.⁵⁷ With regard to sexual⁵⁹ matters, it is used in Sir 23:17 in the saying: *A fornicator will not cease until the fire utterly consumes him*. The quoted phrase for Rom.1:27 relates to an idiom, which literally translates: *to burn with intense desire*. The idiom (ἐκκαίωμαι ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει) means *to have a strong, intense desire for something – to be inflamed with passion, to have a strong lust for, to be inflamed with lust*.⁶⁰

There is an opinion that *regards homosexual attraction and desire to be as entirely natural and unambiguous as heterosexual attraction and desire*. According to this viewpoint *sexual desiring in and by itself is not disordered*.⁶¹ This leads to the simple equation of lust and desire. Hence sex is looked upon as being of no consequence morally beyond whatever meaning and consequence the human agents choose to bestow upon it.

Not so with Paul. He uses three descriptors in his argument in Rom.1:24-27: *desire* (ἐπιθυμία – *epithumía*, Rom.1:24), *passion* (πάθος – *páthos*, Rom.1:26) and *desire* (ὀρέξις – *orexis*, Rom.1:27). In his discussion⁶² of these terms Helminiak concludes that all three terms as used by Paul are *ethically neutral*. The reason for this being that Paul apparently did not have *sin* in mind, but ritual purity. As with Helminiak, Countryman also argues that Paul carefully avoids his usual vocabulary for sin when describing homosexual acts in Rom.1:24-28.⁶³

In vv.24, 26 & 27 *desire/passion* (ἐπιθυμία, πάθος and ὀρέξις) are used to denote the will that leads to same-sex relations. Schmidt argues very convincingly against the *neutrality* viewpoint of Helminiak and Countryman.⁶⁴ Although Paul does not specifically use the word *sin* (ἁμαρτία – *hamartía*) in Rom.1:24-27, he nevertheless intends the connotation clearly and the description of *sin* is the outcome realised.

In his quest to show the thrust of Paul's argument to be *against passion and not same-sex relations*, Frederickson on the other hand argues for a non-neutral understanding of the three descriptors.⁶⁵ Each term by itself is shown to *carry meaning* (a key role) in the discussion of erotic love, not mere *neutral* terms in the usage thereof. The problem in Rom.1:24-27 highlights passion and its consequences.

Two further descriptors are added by Frederickson: *inflame* (ἐκαίω – *ekkaiō*; Rom.1:27) and *error* (πλάνη – *planê*; Rom.1:27) to complete a list of five erotic descriptors in the text. His discussion

culminates in the fact that *desire* (ἐπιθυμία – *epithumía*) and *passion* (πάθος – *páthos*) stand in parallel phrases in Rom.1:24 and Rom.1:26 and justifies our attempt to interpret them together under the theme of excessive sexual desire. One may deny the thrust of his argument when it comes to the sin Paul has in mind, but the arguments for the excessive eroticism Paul is judging, are quite convincing.

Apparently Paul was familiar with the literary philosophical ways of speaking about *erotic/sexual love* (ἔρως – *érôs*), as can be seen in the phrase *they were inflamed for one another* (ἐξεκαύθησαν εἰς ἀλλήλους; Rom.1:27). Fire imagery was the principal metaphor of sexual love in a broad range of literary genres and in philosophy. An interesting parallel to Paul's is to be found in *Dio Chrysostom's* (Discourse 4.101-102) depiction of the person devoted to pleasure, which brings together the themes of fire, insatiability and, as in Paul's argument, the resulting movement from females to male as objects of male desire.⁶⁶

Epictetus is an important source of understanding the role *desire* plays in the Stoic analysis of human action and ultimately in Paul's argument.⁶⁷ Examination of an individual's *desire* (ὄρεξις – *órexis*) and its objects reveal whether he was effectual in his desires of continually wanting things over which he had no control. This parallels Paul's argument in Rom.1:27 that *they were inflamed in their desire/lust*. In Discourse 2.14.21, Epictetus outlines the philosopher's diagnosis of a person in such condition: *your desires are feverish* (αἱ ὀρέξεις σου φλεγμαίνουσαι), *your attempts to avoid things are humiliating, your purposes are inconsistent, and your choices are out of harmony with your nature*. So, the *capacity/appetite* (ὄρεξις) for getting what they want, has been inflamed to such a point where they exchanged the natural use for erotic love for unnatural use.

The power of Paul's argument lies in the vivid simplicity with which he describes the wilful wrong sexual expression. Many human emotions run counter to God's intended design for nature and cannot be pronounced good just because of the affective experience thereof. In Paul's opinion such sinful impulses are depravity at its worst.

The noun *desire* (ὄρεξις – *órexis*) means (strong or intense) *desire; longing; yearning; appetite; appetency*. In isolation the word does not necessarily connote a negative desire; the context determines the alignment. It is used to denote the supreme goal of human beings as *exercising desire in accordance with nature*.

The only occurrence of the noun, here in Rom.1:27, clearly has a negative sense since the context speaks of desire for things *against nature*, especially desire for other males. Against Countryman's contention the translation *lust* is not inaccurate within the context of Paul's argument (Rom.1:24-27).⁶⁸

Men committed shameless acts with men

[ἄρσενες	ἐν	ἄρσεσιν	τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην	κατεργαζόμενοι
Men	with/among	men	the shameless acts	they committed]

The recalling to memory of *you shall not lie with a male as with a woman* in Lev.18:22; 20:13 summarises perhaps the point of contention, namely behaving towards another man as if he were a woman, by making him the object of male sexual desire. The Greek word *shameful* (ἀσχημοσύνη – *aschêmosunê*) used here (Rom.1:27) is also used in Rev.16:15. Cognates are also found in 1Cor.7:36; 12:23; 13:5.

To *act shamefully* (ἀσχημονέω - *aschêmoneo*): Louw & Nida classify this word under the domain *Moral and ethical qualities and related behaviour* and then under sub-domain T, *Act shamefully*. The meaning of this word is defined as: *to act in defiance of social and moral standards, with*

resulting disgrace, embarrassment and shame. English equivalents are: *to act shamefully, indecent behaviour, shameful deed*. 1Cor.13:4-5, Rom.1:27 and Eph.5:4 are quoted as illustrations of such usage.⁶⁹

Paul uses three terms to describe sexual acts: *against nature* (παρὰ φύσιν – *para phýsin*), *dishonour* (ἀτιμία – *atimía*) and *shameful act* (ἀσχημοσύνη – *aschêmosunê*). *Nature* (φύσις – *phýsis*) has been discussed in some detail in a previous section. In his consideration of *dishonour* (ἀτιμία – *atimía*), Helminiak concludes that the term means *without honour*, hence the possible translation *degrading*.⁷⁰ For Helminiak *dishonour* clearly refers to a negative judgement in the arena of public opinion, a person's standing or valuation in the eyes of others. The adjective (ἀσχημοσύνην – *aschêmosunên*) translates as *shameless* or *shameful*. He suggests that *dishonour* (ἀτιμία) is a parallel to *shameful* because both indicate negative public opinion. In all its usage in the New Testament it involves something sexual. The crux of Paul's argument according to Helminiak is that Paul did not mean to say *those acts are wrong; he says that they are unusual and do not enjoy social approval*.

Countryman's analysis that Paul evaluated same-sex intercourse as *dirty* but not *sinful*, insists that the descriptions of same-sex behaviour in Rom.1:24-27 as *uncleanness, the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, dishonourable passions, contrary to nature, burned in their desire for one another and committing indecency* does not connote sin to Paul.⁷¹ But it is obvious that the stance of Countryman and Helminiak is not accepted within the academic fraternity, but meets with serious criticism.⁷² *Males committing shameful acts with males* is derogatory in its relationship to the previous phrase of *being inflamed in their desire for each other*. The first alludes to the language in Lev.18:22; 20:13 - which prohibits same-sex relations between males of all ages, not only pederasty.

The term *shame* was, in addition to *shameful act*, also used for sexual organs, of which the privacy was well accentuated in Ex.20:26 and Lev.18:6-18. The term *shameful* (ἀσχημοσύνη – *aschêmosunê*) is clearly (in context) a euphemism for sexual intercourse of a shameful type. Paul's language and obvious intent has as its aim to remove any vestige of decency, honour and positive attitude from same-sex relations. In this Paul seems to act in consistence with his Jewish cultural tradition.

The phrase *men with men* (ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν – *ársenes en ársesin*) defines the sexual act by reference to a woman (Lev.18:22). This formulation emphasizes the inappropriateness of a male as the object of the sexual act between males.⁷³ Seeing that the prohibition in Lev.18:22 does not appear to echo the creation account or emphasize the procreative function, it simply describes the normative pattern of sexual relations.

Paul wrote *males with males*⁷⁴ and did not use a similar phrase to that of Plato (*Laws*, 3.836C: **ἀρσένων καὶ νεῶν** – *men with boys*). The words being used in Rom.1:26 are also indicative of adults. Lesbianism was usually understood to be between adults, thus arguing for adult-adult actions, not adult-child actions.⁷⁵ The activity of adults rather than adult-child behaviour seems to be the intention of *natural use of the woman* (τὴν φύσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας) as found in Rom.1:27. The phrases *toward one another* (εἰς ἀλλήλους), *men with men* (ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν) and *their error* (τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν) describe reciprocal activity with adults by choice.

Paul's words *males with males* (ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν, Rom.1:27) did not refer to men and boys, as did Plato. Paul compares *male* homosexuality to *female* homosexuality (ὁμοίως – *likewise*). Female homosexuality was simply understood in mutual adult terms and woman-girl relationships are not attested at all. The phrase *natural use* [function] of the woman (τὴν φύσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας, Rom.1:27) describes the activity of adults. The phrases *toward one another* (εἰς ἀλλήλους), *men*

with men (ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν), and their error (τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν) describe reciprocal activity with adults contra the *pederasty model* described by Scroggs.

In Rom.1:27 Paul uses the terminology of homoeroticism, perhaps more so in the case of males than females. The phrase *males with males* indicate adult male homosexual relationships. It is problematic to force the term *males with males* into a *pederasty* straightjacket. If the only pattern of male homosexuality that Paul could have known was pederasty, there is no counterpart on the female side as suggested in Rom.1:26. The unnatural relations of women with women are not *pederasty*, because there is no historical attesting to the fact of *woman-(girl)child* homosexuality in antiquity.⁷⁶

Conclusion: Rom.1:26-27 and biblical sexuality

It is generally held that Paul wrote the letter to the Romans in the middle fifties from Corinth. In chapter one he addresses homosexual conduct and one may assume with some confidence that what he writes about was evident to him at Corinth and elsewhere.

The key words for understanding Rom.1:26-27 are *use* (χρησις) and *nature* (φύσις). The *natural use* implies male-female sexual relationships, which is *inter alia* also the *nature* which is at stake. This must also be read and interpreted against the larger section of Paul's exhortation (Rom.1:18-32), concerning God's wrath toward the non-believers who had rejected God. Thus, homoerotic terminology used for both males and females, is based on an allusion to the prohibitions against homosexual acts in the Hebrew Torah. The statement that such acts are *against/contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν) refers to the created order as reported in Genesis. These acts show a disruption or confusion of the sexual intention of God for males and females. This was ordained in creation.

Paul condemns homosexual acts *per se*, whether performed by heterosexuals, bisexuals or innate homosexuals. The homosexual act is indicative of the *lust/desire* (ὄρεξις) and represents homosexuality as a sin in God's eyes. It is further an indication of rampant unrighteousness, which includes not only homosexuality but also *sexual immorality* (πορνεία) in general, *wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, murder, strife, deceit*, etc.. *Those who practice* such things, Paul says, *are deserving of death* (Rom.1:29-32).

The modern notion of *orientation* does not find any grounds in the letters of Paul. For Paul it is clear: the practitioners of such acts are excluded from the kingdom of God. The act defines the outcome. Boswell's comments that *Paul's reference to homosexual activity is not to stigmatise sexual behaviour of any sort cannot be sustained*.⁷⁷ His argument that Paul says nothing about persons who are *naturally homosexual* is misleading because Paul's condemnation of homosexual acts is all-inclusive.

The vocabulary used by Paul does not favour a particular homosexual style – *pederasty* or *heterosexuals practicing homosexuality*. It is stated in such a way so as to condemn homosexuality in general, making no allowance for exclusion based on age difference or other evaluative criteria.

Paul targets homosexuality in general as a movement away from God's intention for and design of humanity, and thus a movement away from godliness. That is why the phrase *He gave them over* (παρέδωκεν, Rom.1:24, 26, 28) is not simply permissive or privative, but descriptive of a judicial act of God giving humanity over to judgement for turning away from the Creator. Homosexuality is, therefore, not a proper expression of sexual relationships but is a perversion of the created *nature*.

Although *pederasty* may have been a dominant *historical activity* in Paul's time, the argument in Rom.1:18-32 needs not be limited to pederasty, because it is related to the creation account and God's design for sexual fulfilment within a monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Movement away

from this standard is sinful in intention and expression. Historical relations are a departure from heterosexual relations and, because of that, homosexuality is wrong. Homosexuality rather than a specific form (pederasty) is in focus because many terms used by Paul allow for more than pederasty. The idea of general homosexual conduct inclusive of adult-adult mutuality is supported in Paul's choice of words.

Paul's whole argument culminates in *all are under sin* (Rom.3:9), and to demonstrate that the Jewish Christians, and not just the non-Jewish Christians, are culpable before God. Rom.1:18-32 does not describe the origin of sin itself - it shows how sin runs amuck. God does not judge the Gentiles for their ignorance, but for acting contrary to the knowledge that they should have. The suppression of this knowledge shows itself in idolatry and same-sex intercourse. An absurd exchange of God for idols leads to an absurd exchange (μετήλλαξαν) of heterosexual intercourse for homosexual intercourse. Paul emphasizes this in his usage of the phrase *against/contrary to nature* (παρὰ φύσιν).

The context surrounding Rom.1:26-27, and the content thereof by itself, makes it clear that Paul regards all same-sex intercourse as sin.⁷⁷

CHAPTER 7

EXEGESIS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10

Introduction

Paul uses two relevant words in 1Cor.6:9-10 and these will be studied in detail, namely the new word (neologism) *active homosexual* (ἀρσενοκοίτης – *arsenokoitês*) and *passive homosexual* (μαλακός - *malakós*).

General background

Paul was writing to a Christian congregation in Corinth. 1Corinthians reveals the problems, pressures and struggles of a church called out of a non-Christian society. Paul addresses a variety of problems in the lifestyles of the Corinthian Christians: factions, lawsuits, immorality, questionable practices, sexual immorality, abuse of the Lord's Supper and spiritual gifts. In his letter Paul reacts to issues and concerns which had been communicated to him.

In 146BC the old city of Corinth was totally destroyed in the war with Rome. The locality of the city was so strategically placed that the Romans decided to rebuild the city on the same location a century later. It was a natural trade centre. Two harbours serviced the city – Cenchrea in the East and Lechaem in the West. As a Roman colony, Corinth grew and in the time that Paul visited the city in 49AD, the population was more than half a million people strong. In the city existed a Jewish community large enough to build and maintain a synagogue (Acts 18:4).¹

Corinth was a town with a reputation for sexual immorality and commercial prosperity. The very word *korinthiazesthai* (to live like a Corinthian) had become part of the Greek language, and carried the meaning of living in *drunken and immoral debauchery*.² Above the Isthmus towered the hill of the Acropolis and on it stood the great temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love.³

Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, was a very cosmopolitan place. As an important city, it was intellectually alert, materially prosperous, and yet immoral in lifestyle and conduct. Strabo (8.6.20) calls Corinth *unhealthy* for three reasons: its position, so advantageous for trade; the Isthmian Games; and the thousand prostitutes in the city. In the days of Paul the population was very mixed.⁴ The Roman element is illustrated by the number of Latin names associated with Corinth in the New Testament, such as Lucius, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, Quartus (Rom.16:21-23), Titus Justice, Crispus (Acts 18:7-8), Fortunatus and Achaicus (1Cor.16:17). It was a city where *Greeks, Latins, Syrians, Asiatics, Egyptians and Jews bought and sold, laboured and revelled*.⁵

It was probably when Paul was in Ephesus in 55AD that he, learning that things were not well in Corinth, wrote to the church there. The Corinthians had written to Paul by the hand of Fortunatus, Stephanas and Achaicus (1Cor.16:15-18). Paul sent Timothy with the letters, knowing perhaps that their force would be backed up by the recollection of his own emissary. Paul paid three visits to Corinth and he wrote four letters: the *previous* letter, 1 Corinthians, the *severe* letter and 2 Corinthians.⁶

In 1Cor.6:9-10 Paul uses the words *arsenokoitês* (ἀρσενοκοίτης) and *malakós* (μαλακός), thought to refer to homosexuals. These two words will be studied in detail in the exegesis of the Bible verses below.

The meaning of ἀρσενοκοίτης and μαλακός

The literal translation of 1Cor.6:9-10 is as follows:

(9)
ἢ οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι Θεοῦ βασιλείαν οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν,
or not you know that unrighteous ones God's kingdom not they will inherit?

μὴ πλανᾶσθε οὔτε πόρνοι οὔτε εἰδωλόλατραι οὔτε μοιχοὶ οὔτε
(do) not (be) led astray not/neither fornicators nor idolators nor adulterers nor

μαλακοὶ (*literally* “*soft ones*”) οὔτε ἀρσενοκοῖται
homosexuals in the passive role nor homosexuals in the active role (sodomites)

(10)
οὔτε κλέπται οὔτε πλεονέκται, οὐ μέθυσοι, οὐ λοιδοροὶ, οὐχ ἄρπαγες
nor thieves nor covetous ones, not drunkards not abusive ones, not extortioners,

βασιλείαν Θεοῦ κληρονομήσουσιν
(the) kingdom God’s/of God they will inherit.

In 1Cor.6:9 and in 1Tim.1:10 the words *malakós* and *arsenokoitês* are usually thought to point to *homosexuals*. *Malakós* literally means *soft* and has no apparent connotation with sexual immorality. *Arsenokoitês* obviously has sexual connotations,⁷ which in its literal translation means *a male person who has intercourse with males*.

Some English versions of the Bible translates *arsenokoitês* and *malakós* with *homosexual*, which represents a generic combination of the two words. The King James Version (1993) translates these words as *nor homosexuals*, *nor sodomites*, whilst the New International Version (1991) translates *nor male prostitutes*, *nor homosexual offenders*, and The Amplified Bible (1965) reads *nor those who particiapte in homosexuality*. These differences show that further study is needed in order to acquire more clarity on the meaning of the words.

Componential analysis of ἀρσενοκοΐτης

The Domain, Sexual Misbehaviour⁸ includes the same categories as *porneía*, discussed in detail in chapter 3.

It is clear that *malakós* and *arsenokoitês* are interpreted by Louw & Nida to belong to actions termed sexual misbehaviour and are not, therefore, to be confused with sexual behaviour taking place within the constraints of marriage.

Louw & Nida (1989a:772) define the meaning of the *malakós* as: *a male partner in homosexual intercourse, a homosexual* and translate the phrase *malakoí oúte arsenokoítai* (μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἀρσενοκοῖται) with *homosexuals*. It is possible, they add, that *arsenokoitês* in certain contexts refers to the active male partner in homosexual intercourse contrasting *malakós*, *the passive partner*. Louw & Nida defines *malakós* as *the passive partner in homosexual intercourse, a homosexual*.⁹

Various theological dictionaries show continuity of meaning for *arsenokoitês*:

Bagster (1975) defines *arsenokoitês* as *one who lies with a male, a sodomite*. He defines *malakós* as *soft; soft to the touch, delicate*, as used in Mat.11:8 and with reference to 1Cor.6:9: *an instrument of unnatural lust, effeminate*.

Abbott-Smith (1929) shows *arsenokoitês* to be a compound of *ársên* (ἀρσῆν – male) and *koité* (κοίτη – to lie/the bed of), and translates it with *sodomite*. *Malakós* in reference to persons and their mode of living is translated as *mild, gentle and soft or effeminate*. *Soft and effeminate* in reference to 1Cor.6:9 is noted to *carry obscene meaning*.

Moulton (1978) glosses *arsenokoitês* as *one who lies with a male, a sodomite* and *malakôs* as a person who is *an instrument of unnatural lust, effeminate*.

Liddell and Scott (1983) translate *arsenokoitês* as *one guilty of unnatural offences* and *malakôs* (in a derogatory sense) as *soft, effeminate*.

Bauer (1979) defines *arsenokoitês* as *a male who practices homosexuality, pederasty, sodomite*, and *malakôs* in reference to persons as *soft, effeminate (especially of katamites) and men and boys who allow themselves to be misused homosexually*.

The witness of the Septuagint (LXX) (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) cannot be ignored in determining the meaning of the word *arsenokoîtai*. The Septuagint (LXX)¹⁰ translates the Hebrew text of Leviticus as follows:

Lev.18:22 και μετὰ ἄρσεως οὐ κοιμηθήσῃ κοίτην γυναικείαν
and with a man not you shall lie intercourse as with a woman.

Lev.20:13 και ὃς ἂν κοιμηθῇ μετὰ ἄρσεως κοίτην γυναικὸς
and whoever shall lie with a man intercourse of/as a woman

The earliest extant version of the LXX is the translation executed at Alexandria in the third century BC.¹¹ The parallel between Paul's *arsenokoîtai* (ἄρσενοκοῖται) and the LXX is inescapable.¹² The latter reads (translated):

Lev.18:22: *and you shall not lie with a man as with a woman;*

Lev.20:13: *and whoever shall lie with a male as with a woman...*

Wright argues that it is likely that the *arsenokoît*-group (ἄρσενοκοῖτ-) of words is a coinage of Hellenistic Judaism or Hellenistic Jewish Christianity, and in all probability the LXX provides the key to all their meaning. Boswell (1980), Gagnon (2001), Scroggs (1983a) and Martin (1996) represent four specific viewpoints when it comes to the exegesis of the relevant Bible portions. The essence of their arguments, following their exegetical outcome, will be discussed below.

Boswell claims that the first half of the compound *arseno-* (ἄρσενο-) denotes (not the object but) the gender of the second half (-κοῖται).¹³ But, as shown above, it is not the case with the LXX translation, whether in the support of word formation of the word itself or the designation of meaning. Boswell denies that the meaning of *arsenokoîtês* (ἄρσενοκοίτης) refers to *male homosexual activity* without qualification, but restricts the meaning to that of *active male prostitute*. This includes heterosexual intercourse, which Wright also refutes.¹⁴ The core of Wright's argument is that the inspiration for the neologism¹⁵ *arsenokoitês* lies in the Greek of Lev.18:22 and Lev.20:13 (LXX). This is supported from the evidence of the early Latin, Syriac and Coptic¹⁶ renderings of the Pauline texts, which all paraphrastically preserve the verbal force of *men lying with men*. This confirms that *arsenokoîtês* denotes *male homosexual activity*.

Gagnon gives the meaning of the neologism as follows: *bedders of males, those [men] who take [other] males to bed; men who sleep or lie with males*.¹⁷ The translation *practicing homosexuals* does not convey the probable reference to the *active partner* and the translation *homosexuals* alone also poses a problem because the focus of *arsenokoitês* is on the act of having sex with other males. It also excludes those, if the meaning is narrowed down to *homosexuals*, who are heterosexuals or bisexuals who have same-sex intercourse.

Petersen argues that the term *homosexual* is totally inappropriate to use at all and he takes Wright to task for the use of the word.¹⁸ Wright, however, has shown adequately that *homosexual* is based on the modern usage of the word. He argues that, *within both Christian and non-Christian antiquity, no categories of homosexuals and heterosexuals existed. Instead, acts were the crucial matter.*¹⁹ However, some looseness in the use of *homosexuals* does seem to be required for ease of public discourse on the subject. A person *who practices homosexual acts* is mostly understood to be a *homosexual* irrespective of their known or unknown orientation.

Broken down to its roots, it literally translates as *the (masculine) ones who lie/sleep with men*. In both classical and Roman antiquity, male sexuality was regarded as *polyvalent*. A man might be *variously* a husband (άνήρ – *anêr*), a frequenter of prostitutes (πορνοκόπος – *pornokôpos*), a lover of another man or a young man (έραστής – *erastês*), a lover of youths (παιδεραστής – *paiderastês*), and/or a man having relationships with women outside of wedlock (μοιχός – *moichós*).²⁰ This might be the case, but men are still recognised by a *name* for the sexual deeds they practice, e.g. *husband, fornicator, pederast, adulterer and homosexual*.

That *arsenokoitês* refers to same-sex intercourse is strengthened by its pairing with *malakós*. Gagnon²¹ reasons from his deduction from the vice list that *arsenokoitês* and *malakós* can be recognized as a pair where *malakoí* (μαλακοί) is identified with being passive homosexual partners and *arsenokoítai* (άρσενοκοίται) refers to the active partners in homosexual intercourse.²² The context of the textual data in 1Cor.6:9-10 makes clear why the *malakoí* and the *arsenokoítai* belong with other forms of sexual immorality - *those who fornicate, commit incest or have sex with prostitutes, and adulterers* (πορνοί – *pornoí*); they all participate in a form of sexual behaviour other than that sanctioned in the context of a monogamous, lifelong, non-incestuous, opposite sex marriage bond.²³

What was wrong for Paul in the case of same-sex intercourse was the fact that the participants were members of the same sex. The question was not whether the sexual relationships were characterized by mutual consent, parity of age or age disparity, procreative capacity or procreative incapacity, innate sexual urges or contrived sexual urges, or any other extrinsic or intrinsic motivations, but the observable fact of same-sex relationships.

In the light of the work of other scholars,²⁴ Scroggs' quest to make pederasty the only possible focus of the Pauline textual data concerning *homosexual acts* is less than plausible.²⁵ One is left with the impression that Scroggs is forcing²⁶ a model onto the textual data to satisfy a personal presupposition. Although consenting that *arsenokoitês* next to *malakós* in the list (6:9-10), seems to mean literally *one who has intercourse with males* and that the conjunction of these two words seems to force some sort of connection between *malakoí* and homosexuality, he concludes that pederasty was the only *model* in existence in the world of Paul's time. *Malakós* and *arsenokoitês* point, in Scroggs' opinion, to a very specific form of pederasty (effeminate call-boy), one which the entire literature agrees is evil. The generic model of pederasty is not attacked, only the specific form described (the effeminate call-boy).

To judge Scroggs' view more objectively, one should consider the information given by Veyne in an article titled *Homosexuality in ancient Rome*. The Romans had three standards for sexual love, namely *free love or exclusive marriage, sexual activity or passivity, freedom or slavery*.²⁷ To seduce one's slave was of little importance but it was disgraceful for a Roman citizen to act as a passive instrument of another's pleasure.²⁸ One of the earliest relics of Latin literature, the *Plays of Plautus*, is full of homosexual allusions. A much-repeated way of teasing a slave is to remind him of what his master expects of him, i.e. *to get down on all fours*.²⁹ The Roman world was the world of heroic bravado, where the important thing was to be the ravisher, regardless of the sex of the victim. The two governing principles were *to be free and not to be the passive agent*. Thus, the

sort of homosexuality which was completely tolerated, consisted in active relations between a master and a young slave, his catamite.

Arsenokoîtaí may be the technical term for the active partners in homosexual anal intercourse; *malakoí* for the passive partners. Waetjen³⁰ advances the generic *pederasty model* as the type of homosexuality Paul opposes in 1Cor.6:9-10 and translates neither the words as ...*nor soft ones (malakoí) nor pederasts (arsenokoîtaí)*... Here, *malakoí* refers to *boys or young men between the ages of eleven and seventeen*. Waetjen also argues that Rom.1:27 must be read to exclude same-sex relations between male adults of more or less the same age. Martin states concerning the *malakós* that *the term refers to the effeminacy of which the penetration is only the sign or proof – it does not refer to the sexual act itself*.³¹ Throughout ancient literature *malakoí* are men who lived lives of decadence and luxury. All penetrated men were *malakoí*, but not all *malakoí* were penetrated men.³²

To Martin³³ *malakós* means *effeminate* and could not be narrowed down to a single act or role, *male prostitute, call-boy or the penetrated man in homosexual intercourse*. Against Martin and Scroggs³⁴ one could advance the argument that although Paul's criticism of men who are *soft (malakós)* could cover anything from mere effeminacy to the adoption of the passive role in penetration (same-sex eros), it is reasonably clear from the statement (1Cor.6:9-10) that the meaning of the term *malakoí* is determined by its association with the term *arsenokoîtaí*, which obviously has to do with same-sex eros and, as such, serves as a general condemnation of same-sex relationships for both the passive (penetrated) and active (penetrator) in such relationships. This seems at least to be the level of agreement for most scholars: viewing the terms as passive and active partners in male-male sexual activity.

Gagnon is also careful not to be too bold in his judgement of the meaning of *malakós* and in his own reading the meaning in 1Cor.6:9 probably lies somewhere between only *prostituting passive homosexuals* and *effeminate heterosexual and homosexual males*.³⁵ Philo uses the word *malakía* (softness, effeminacy) twice alongside the term *ánandria (unmanliness)* in his discussion of homosexual behaviour in Special Laws 3.3-3.42 to refer to the behaviour of passive homosexual partners who cultivate feminine features. This, concludes Gagnon, given the collective evidence from Philo³⁶ and 1Cor.6:9-11, puts to rest the qualifications imposed on the term *malakoí* by Martin and Scroggs. Therefore, in 1Cor.6:9 *malakoí* should be understood to mean *the passive partners in homosexual intercourse*.³⁷

Still today gay men are divided into two groups – either as the one doing the penetrating of the one being penetrated. The gay men refer to themselves as a *top* or a *bottom* today. When the gay prefers to be the one doing the penetrating during anal intercourse, he is a *top* and, in terms of Paul's writing he is an *arsenokoîtês*. When the gay prefers to be penetrated, he is called the *bottom*, in Paul's reasoning the *malakós*. This distinction is also known among lesbians where a *top* uses a dildo (*olisbós*) or other instrument to penetrate a *bottom*.

Some people also use the *top* and *bottom* categories for the person who takes the aggressive versus the passive role when having sex of any kind. This again, fits Paul's distinction of active (*arsenokoîtês*) and the passive homosexuals (*malakós*) in the homosexual act perfectly. Both are judged for their sin. Marcus³⁸ summarises the whole culture of *tops* or *bottoms* as follows: *Though some gay men and lesbians strictly define their sexual roles as tops and bottoms, most do not use these labels and are likely to shift from more aggressive to less aggressive roles from minute to minute, hour to hour, day to day, week to week*.

1Cor.6:9 confirms Paul's rejection of homosexual conduct in general. The combination of the terms *malakoí* and *arsenokoîtaí* is understood to apply to every conceivable male-male type of same-sex intercourse, inclusive of both participants in the sexual act. There are always at least two

people involved – the one who is passive in the act (receive) and the one who is active (give) in the act. If one links Paul's usage of *arsenokoitai* and *malakoi* to the modern labels of *tops* and *bottoms*, one can only conclude that Paul had it all clearly defined and knew precisely what he intended to condemn.

Conclusion: 1Cor.6:9-10 and biblical sexuality

The relevant words in 1Cor.6:9-10 are *arsenokoitai* and *malakoi*.

A translation of *arsenokoitai* renders: *the ones (males) who lie/sleep with men*. As in the case of Rom.1:26-27 Paul's choice of words in 1Cor.6:9-10 does not imply only *pederasty* but is a general condemnation of male same-sex relations. Paul did not choose one of the common current words or phrases denoting pederasty, but a term reflecting the Levitical ban (Lev.18:20; 20:13). The significance of Paul's choice of *arsenokoitês* is the fact that it is not attested to before 1 Corinthians. Scroggs' contention - that the word refers to the *active partner* who keeps the *malakôs* (effeminate call-boy) - is totally unconvincing because it is based on *it is not hard to imagine that Paul's basic attitude towards pederasty could have been seriously influenced by passing a few coiffured and perfumed call-boys in the marketplace.*³⁹

In *arsenokoitai* Paul has adopted or fashioned a term that is little more than a substantial transcript from the book of Leviticus (LXX). It simply speaks of males lying with males. No one claims that Leviticus refers to pederasty, and the New Testament at no point refers to pederasty as such. The opposite may be true: Paul, in his choice of language seems to have deliberately avoided the plethora of terms that could denote pederasty, as if he only had that type of homosexuality in mind. It is clear that Paul, in *arsenokoitês*, intentionally sided with the Levitical condemnation.

Since Jewish writers of the time condemned homoeroticism base on the model of dominance, Paul is likely to be referring to the passive *receptive malakoi* and the active *arsenokoitai*. The *malakoi-arsenokoitai* act is to be condemned and both participants are by their very activity excluded from the kingdom of God. The theme of immorality (*porneia* – πορνεία) forms the basis for Paul's view of community boundaries. The Corinthian Christian community is reminded that limits are placed on its behaviour – it may not engage in immorality (*porneia*, 1Cor.5:1-7:40). By listing certain forbidden practices (a vice list), he offers a way to judge community limits. Paul's use of the *malakoi – arsenokoitai* act in the vice list shows his conviction that the Christian community is to be distinguished from the world of its time.

The combination of *malakoi* (effeminate males who play the sexual role of females) and *arsenokoitai* (males who take males to bed), is significant as it stands. By its inclusion alongside a list of offences that lead to exclusion from the kingdom of God, cannot but classify it by its very nature as sin. The context of the vice list makes it clear that the *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai* belong with other forms of *porneia*. They all participate in a form of sexual behaviour other than that sanctioned in the context of a monogamous, life-long, non-incestuous, heterosexual marriage. A responsible hermeneutic could not but understand the combination of *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai*, in relation to *porneia*, as sin. The combination of the two words, thus understood, refers to every conceivable type of male-male same-sex intercourse.

CHAPTER 8

EXEGESIS OF 1 TIMOTHY 1:3-11

Introduction

Significant amount of scholars hold that the Pastorals are the work of Paul, whether directly or indirectly by the use of an *amanuensis*.¹ The authorship of 1 Timothy is perhaps not that critical for the studying of the word *arsenokoitês*, although it is quite significant that the neologism appears only in 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10. Much of what is written above concerning *arsenokoitês* in 1Cor.6:9-10 is likewise true of the use of *arsenokoitês* in 1Tim.1:9-10. Some additional arguments may, however, be given to elaborate on that which has been written in the preceding chapter.

General background

It is most reasonable to associate the Pastoral Epistles with the leaders of the congregations in the two areas mentioned in the letters – Crete and Ephesus.² Timothy was not a pastor, elder or bishop of the Ephesian church. He was a *delegate* doing what he had often done for Paul. He was sent into a difficult situation where true teaching and loyalty to Paul's gospel were needed. He probably stood outside of the church structure described in 1Tim.3 & 5, and had no title.³ Timothy was a long-time friend and trusted co-worker of Paul. The first letter to Timothy is not a manual directed at an unknown church situation. When Paul writes about how to conduct oneself in the house of God, it is probably the Ephesian house of God which is the immediate focus of the letter.

The list of fourteen vices in 1Tim.1:9-10 describes the kinds of people for whom the law was envisaged and contrasts them with the righteous for which the law is not intended. The list follows distinctive literary patterns and twelve terms are paired into eight groups. The salient feature of the vice list is its resemblance to the Decalogue, upon which it is based.⁴ The first three couplets correspond to offences against God, corresponding to the first four commandments in the Decalogue. The remaining vices – offences against other persons – correspond to the following six:

a) *those who beat their fathers and mothers*

honour your father and mother

b) *murderers*

you shall not kill

c) *fornicators, homosexuals*

you shall not commit adultery

d) *kidnappers*

you shall not steal; you shall not covet

e) *liars, perjurers*

you shall not bear false witness

The influence by the Old Testament on Paul is well established. The overt reference to the Law strengthens this influence.⁵ The list consists of types of sinners who would in general be condemned by Jews and non-Jews alike. It contains an inventory of persons guilty of severe and shocking crimes.⁶ Compared to the list in 1 Corinthians, one can see the similarities:

<u>1Cor.5:10</u>	<u>1Cor.5:11</u>	<u>1Cor.6:9-10</u>	<u>1Tim.1:9-10</u>
immoral	immoral	immoral	godless
idolaters	idolaters	idolaters	idolaters
greedy	greedy	adulterers	adulterers
robbers	robbers	robbers	murderers
	drunkards	drunkards	impious
	revilers	revilers	profane
		thieves	enslavers
		malakói	dishonourers
		arsenokoítai	arsenokoítai

Paul does not seem to care about any specific item in the lists. There is no indication that he wished to emphasize any one or group of vices. The one is as serious as the other. They all exclude the practitioner from the kingdom of God and the Law was given for such persons. It goes without saying that Paul disapproves strongly of all such activities. The words *malakós* and *arsenokoitês* in the lists, therefore, do not carry any particular weight over and against the others in the lists. They are as *bad* as the rest, with the same eternal consequences. Paul, it would seem, tailored his vice lists to the needs of the specific communities he addressed.⁷

The meaning of ἀρσενοκοΐτης

A literal translation of 1Tim.1:10 is as follows:

(10)

πόρνοις ἀρσενοκοΐταις, ἀνδραποδισταῖς ψεύσταις, ἐπιόρκοις, και εἴ
for fornicators, for homosexuals, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers and if

τι ἕτερον τη ὑγιαίνουση διδασκασία ἀντίκειται, ...
any other thing the sound teaching opposes...

In 1Tim.1:10 *arsenokoitês* (ἀρσενοκοΐτης) is usually thought to point to *homosexuals*. The word *arsenokoitês* (ἀρσενοκοΐτης) has obvious sexual connotations⁸ which, in its literal translation means *one who has intercourse with males*.

Componential analysis of ἀρσενοκοΐτης

The placement of *arsenokoitês* in the domain for sexual mis-behaviour⁹ highlights the sexual connotation of the neologism. This fact would become even clearer in the exegesis that follows.

Both 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 speak of *arsenokoitai* (ἀρσενοκοΐται) - *those who lie with males*. In both cases condemnation is strong. 1 Timothy calls such behaviour as something that the law prohibits and contrary to sound teaching (1Tim.1:10), and 1 Corinthians excludes those guilty of it, from the kingdom of God. Most exegetes and most Bible versions relate them to homosexual acts.¹⁰ 1Tim.1:9-10 reinforces rather than provides an additional or alternative understanding to 1Cor.6:9-10.¹¹

As with 1Cor.6:9-10, Scroggs tends to narrow down the meaning of *arsenokoitês* in 1Tim.1:9-10. By arguing that *pórnoi*, *arsenokoitês* and *andrapodístais* (πορνοί, ἀρσενοκοΐτης and ἀνδραποδισταῖς)¹² are to be taken as a topical unit, he ascribes to *pórnoi* the meaning of male prostitutes (*normal Greek usage*)¹³ rather than *sexually immoral persons*, the broader sense usually

ascribed to in the New Testament. *Arsenokoitai* is then limited to men who lie with the aforementioned male prostitutes. The *andrapodistai* is said to have captured men for the *homoerotic interests of some of their clientele*. This is alleged by Scroggs' particular interpretation of *people who sell boys and girls to brothel houses*.¹⁴

What did Paul mean by *arsenokoitês*? What informed him in using this word to the extent that he did? Much had been made of Paul as Hellenistic Jew. However, by his own confession he was first and foremost an orthodox Jew.¹⁵ The derivation of *arsenokoitai* from Lev.18:20; 20, its actual usage in Judeo-Christian literature, and the unqualified Judeo-Christian rejection of all forms of homosexuality, make the narrow interpretations of Scroggs (1983), Haril (1999) and Countryman (1989) less than plausible. In my opinion Gagnon (2001) is correct in his assessment that *arsenokoitai* has in mind the broad prohibitions in Leviticus against all forms of male-male intercourse, and this is established clearer in 1Tim.1:10 than in 1Cor.6:9, because in 1Tim.1:8-9 the vice list is described as coming from *the Law*, or at least prohibited by the Law.

Four arguments over and against Scroggs' argument for the possibility that *law* refers to civil law, are advanced by Gagnon: Firstly, in 1Tim.1:7, the author refers to Christians *desiring to be teachers of the Law*.¹⁶ Secondly, Paul alludes to the Mosaic Law with the phrase: *now we know that the Law is good* (1Tim.1:8). He does so in Rom.7:12, 16 as well, where *kalôs* (καλός) is used in both cases. Thirdly, this Law legislates not merely against social disorder, but against whatever is opposed to *sound teaching that conforms to the glorious gospel* (1Tim.1:10-11). Perhaps the most convincing is that, fourthly, the vice list corresponds to the order of the Decalogue.¹⁷

Putting the prohibition of same-sex intercourse under the common denominator of the seventh commandment against adultery points to the fact that early Judaism and Christianity rejected same-sex intercourse in the widest possible sense. This was done because same-sex intercourse, as with any sexual intercourse outside of wedlock, was regarded as immoral. Not only were forms of same-sex intercourse that were exploitative such as with *call-boys* rejected, but indeed as we have seen, all forms of homosexual acts were rejected.

The narrow meaning that Scroggs¹⁸ proposes for *pornoi* (πόρνοι) in 1Tim.1:10, *male prostitutes*, is very doubtful and cannot be sustained.¹⁹ A *pornos* (πόρνος) is a person guilty of sexual immorality, usually an adulterer or a fornicator. Marshall (1999:380) confirms that in classical Greek it could mean a *male prostitute*, but this reference is excluded as a meaning to *arsenokoitês* (ἀρσενοκοίτης) in 1Tim.1:9-10. Mounce (2000:38-39) is of likewise opinion and translates the pair *pornois-arsenokoitês* (πορνοί-ἀρσενοκοίτης) as *fornicators, homosexuals*. The two words describe different ways in which the seventh commandment can be broken. Paul is interpreting the commandment in a wider sense than adultery. The meaning of *arsenokoitês* is much debated.²⁰ Whatever the meaning in 1Tim.1:10, it refers to a form of illicit sexual activity that breaks the seventh commandment. Fornication, homosexuality²¹ and bestiality²² are especially prohibited in the Old and New Testament²³ and there is evidence that homosexuality was very common in Ephesus.²⁴

The exegesis of 1Cor.6:9-10 established that same-sex relationships are to be rejected; Likewise 1Tim.1:10. The occurrence of *malakôs* and *arsenokoitês* in the vice list in 1Cor.6:9, and of *arsenokoitês* in the vice list in 1Tim.1:10, confirms the reading of Rom.1:26-27. *Malakôs* has mostly a bearing to the context of the textual data, on males who actively seek to transform their maleness into femaleness in order to make themselves more attractive as receptive (or passive) sexual partners of men, and *arsenokoitês* has as focus: men who serve as the active partners of the *malakôs*. The context of 1Tim.1:10 indicates that the term has inter-textual connections to the Levitical prohibitions of homosexual intercourse. The exegesis of 1Tim.1:10 affirms and supports the arguments and conclusion of the exegetical work done in chapter 3.

Conclusion: 1Tim.1:9-10 and biblical sexuality

Arsenokoítai (ἄρσενοκοίταις) is found in the vice list (1Tim.1:10), sandwiched between *pornoí*s (πορνοίς) and *andrapodistá*is (ἀνδραποδισταῖς), that is, between fornicators and kidnappers. The combination *pornoí*s and *arsenokoítai*s (fornicators and homosexuals) refers to the breaking of the seventh commandments: *You shall not commit adultery* (Ex.20:14; Dt.5:18).

It would seem that *pornoí*s refers to male fornicators and the second (*arsenokoítai*s) to *male same-sex relations*. These two words describe two ways of breaking the seventh commandment. *Arsenokoítês* has the meaning of *a male having intercourse with a male*. Whether it refers only to the act itself or to the *attitude/condition* of a same-sex orientation, cannot be determined by its usage in the text. The evidence overall does not seem to support an interpretation other than what is generally understood as *homosexual*, including the category of an adult male with a male teenager.

Paul's argument is based on the Old Testament prohibition in Lev.18:20; 20:13. Placing the prohibition of same-sex intercourse under the rubric of the seventh commandment against adultery, points to the fact that Christianity in the first century rejected same-sex intercourse because it regarded any sexual intercourse outside of marriage (a monogamous union between a man and a woman) as **πορνεία** (sexual immorality). Therefore, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 collectively indicate that the term *arsenokoitaí* has inter-textual connections with the Levitical prohibitions on same-sex intercourse and with the exclusive endorsement of monogamous heterosexual marriage based on the creation intention and design according to Genesis 1-2. *Arsenokoitaí* also refers to the Decalogue prohibition of adultery.

Arsenokoitaí is best interpreted as *homosexuals*, based on the actual deed of the *homosexual sexual act*.²⁵

PART TWO

CHANGING THEOLOGY

CHAPTER 9

CHANGING THE THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY

Introduction

Most of the current debate on sexuality focuses on the controversial topics of homosexuality and homosex within a religious framework. Heated debates are found in virtually every church denomination about the moral status of same-sex marriage and the ordination of practicing homosexual persons. Collective voices are heard from various sectors for the normalisation of homosex as a normal variant of sexuality where heterosexuality and homosexuality are seen as the two ends of a linear scale and bi-sexuality as the middle point.

This debate and its outcomes are most important because it has such vital implications for the broader moral debate about sexuality and sexual ethics. This debate challenges us to reconsider our basic beliefs about God's authority in our lives. His claim over our lives as revealed in the Holy Book and our very understanding of our natures and identities in terms of the fundamentals revealed in the Holy Book, the Word of God or the Bible, as we usually refer to it.

Since the dawn of time homosexual conduct has had a tabooed character, for nowhere was homosexuality ever a prescribed relationship to be entered into by a minority of a population over a sustained period of time. Contemporary world civilizations are the first in the history of civilizations beginning at Creation to wilfully institutionalize same-sex relations on par with heterosexual relationships. Several countries like Belgium, The Netherlands, Canada, Spain, South Africa, and several states in the United States of America, have institutionalized same-sex marriage on par with heterosexual marriage; and numerous others have institutionalized it as some other form of domestic partnership with the same political and domestic implications as for heterosexual marriage.

Gay theologians claim that sexuality is neither right nor wrong; it is simply a gift from God. To be heterosexual or homosexual is not a question of sin or morality, but rather the product of God's infinite mind. The gay person therefore needs to be theologically enlightened to the point of accepting his sexual orientation as ordained by God. The belief that the homosexual condition is a gift from God is reportedly borne out in biblical verses such as the following:

- And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good (Gen 1:31).
- It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves (Ps 100:3).
- Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called (1 Cor. 7:24).
- For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving (1 Tim 4:4)
- For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He, who is able to receive this, let him receive it (Matt 19:12)

Obviously these verses in their context does not refer to people involving themselves in homosex. However, a homosexual interpretation is extremely convincing to a gay person searching for self-justification, because of the unfounded believe that homosexuality is innate and immutable. This fact is underlined by what is said by Valrejean.

Something new happened to me the other day; something I had never dreamed could ever possibly happen: I wept tears of joy and rejoiced in God that he had made me gay.... So really I feel that my gayness is a gift from God that I can use to further His work.¹

Pastor Perry, one of the pioneers of the gay Christian movement and founder of the UFMCC continuously preaches to his congregation the message that Jesus is calling homosexuals to Him. In his biography he says:

Not once did Jesus say: Come unto me, all you heterosexuals – who have sex in the missionary position with a member of the opposite sex – and you can become true followers. No! Jesus said: Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And that includes homosexuals too. God does not condemn me for the sex drive that He has created in me. He doesn't condemn me unless I leave the areas of love and go into the areas of destructive, excessive lust.²

Hose, a fellow pastor in the M.C.C., considers the physical act of homosexual in itself an expression of love. Unrestricted sexual behaviour – as long as it can be subjected to the ultimate test of love – is therefore allowable:

I'm not saying that every time someone cohabits with someone that these have to be people who are in love, but I think it is an act of love. If you love you, one of the ways I can demonstrate it is by loving your body as well as your spirit or soul. The fact that some people prefer to do it with their own sex, rather than the opposite sex, happens to be our bag. We're entitled to it.³

Some gay Christians do point out that lust is completely unacceptable within their theological framework. Perversion and sexual orientation (the gift from God) are by definition two very separate things in gay theology and sexual orientation should never be judged by perversion. Within gay theology it stands firm that they were foreordained to be homosexual and that a cure is neither desirable nor right. Gay theology maintains that sexual orientation change is impossible. The fact that homosexuality's alleged incurability is supported by neither Scripture nor medical research is commonly ignored. For Pastor Perry the matter is an open and close case. I'll agree, he says, Paul did not like homosexuals.

The most effective and fascinating support for the gay life-style is to be found in the interpretation of seven relationships in the Bible as homosexual relationships. In the minds of homosexuals these relationships signify the Bible's approval of the homosexual life-style as normal. However in each case (relationship) inference is involved for there is no direct biblical statement of a homosexual union.

- Ruth and Naomi are thought to have been lesbians.
- Paul and Timothy – Paul, a middle-aged adult, enjoyed a younger companion – typical of many gay (pederast) relationships.
- The Bible's first two brothers – Cain and Abel – are seen as providing histories first case of homosexuality – and incestuous homosexuality at that.
- The gay centurion of Matthew 8:5-13. This story refers to the healing of the young lover of the Roman centurion.
- The apostle John is seen as the gay lover of the Lord Jesus.⁴ He is mentioned as the one whom Jesus loved and in the gay world such love is always sealed sexually.
- A second possible homosexual relationship is attributed to the life of Jesus – with Lazarus.
- Mark, based on a secret gospel, the Secret Gospel according to Mark, is also seen as a possible lover of Christ. This gospel which was discovered in 1958 has since been lost.

- The ultimate example of a homosexual relationship is the case of David and Jonathan.⁵

It is clear from the above that there is no lack of ingenuity in gay theology. Based on the gay interpretation of Scripture the homosexual, Johstone concedes that the homosexual alternative Christian life-style, the inevitable result of gay theology, results in a rationalizing of all kinds of sexual conduct in their own words.

One night stands have been rationalised into relationships; casual sex with strangers has been converted into acts of Christian charity; and last but not least, promiscuity's self-justification has been simplified into nonchalant introduction of one's partner in lust to Jesus!⁶

Some homosexual theologians have attempted to give spiritual credence to their bathhouse (public baths/pools frequented by homosexuals) escapades by asserting that this gives them the opportunity to witness for Christ. The widespread acceptance of bathhouse sexuality with gay theology is yet another indication that biblical standards of holiness and sexual purity are non-existent in gay congregations. Silverstine & White vividly sketches the sexual indulgences taking place at these baths:

For sheer efficiency, the baths can't be bettered. At the baths making out is certain and more sex can be packed in per hour than anywhere else... In most baths you can take either a locker, which is cheaper, or a room, which is more expensive.... If you don't mind having sex in front of a crowd, then a locker will suffice.... There is a brutal honesty about the baths, but they do serve the interests of pure sensuality.⁷

Sin is an unpopular word in the gay religious community as are the subjects of immorality, sexual impurity and lust.⁸ Reverend Troy Perry has stated:

I believe there can be loving experiences, even in a one-night stand. I truly believe that two individuals can meet and share their complete beings with each other, totally sexually too, and never see each other again; and remember it as a beautiful loving situation.⁹

It is taught in gay theology that God actually accepts homosexuals in the context of their sexual uniqueness. The message is that gays are under grace, meaning that homosex is a normal expression of sexuality, and they should live out of the fullness of this grace as homosexuals. However, what does the Bible teaches?

The Bible and sexuality

The creation stories: Genesis 1-3

(For a full discussion of Genesis 1-3, see "*The Old Testament*," Chapter 5).

Gay theology of sexuality

Gay sexuality as topic refers to how gays and lesbians see their sexuality in relation to Scripture, same-sex relations and opposite-sex relations. Homosex, gay and lesbian sexual practices, create gay and lesbian identities. Evidence from research clearly indicates that homosexuals – gays and lesbians – are distributed throughout all geographical areas and socio-economic strata. In general the homosexual community is made up of two groups; one overt (open) and the other covert (secret). Members of overt groups openly admit and practice homosexuality while covert members attempt to pass of as heterosexuals in their social relationships, including heterosexual marriage. The two groups are interdependent, particularly because of the need to find sexual partners as well as to provide the gay/lesbian person with social support and the means to legitimize the homosexual life view.¹⁰

Thus, gay and lesbian sexual identities are constructed in relation to hetero-social definitions of gender, sexuality, and social roles. Gays and lesbians seek out other queers to claim their sexual identities. The gay and lesbian culture is a social network that creates a sense of group identity and values, distinctly sexually constructed in defiance of the dominant culture. It is alternative in discourse and practice to the dominant male-female sexual culture. For the gay and lesbian, cultural visibility and cultural flaunting have the potential of becoming a means for cultural change.

Gays and lesbians have created a common language, preferring specific terms with reference to their own sexualities. The lesbian feminist theorist Penelope said, *the attempt to claim words is the attempt to change the dominant shape of reality*.¹¹ *Queer* is for example a term of political dissidence and sexual difference.¹² *Queer* is an empowering symbol for living sexual differences within heterosexual dominant society. The word *queer* has been adopted by gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender members of the *Queer Nation*.¹³

Gay refers to a homosexual man and *lesbian* to a homosexual woman whilst *gay/lesbian* refers to sexual differences between gays and lesbians as well as their experiences common to their sexual preferences within society. *Gay/lesbian* also refers to the settled and evolving mutualities, experiences and understandings, between gays and lesbians.

Gay theology is a term which focuses inclusively on both gay and lesbian spirituality whilst feminist theology may at the same time render service to feminists (not necessarily lesbians) and lesbians (nearly always feminists). Within gay theology the focus in the creation narratives is not on the male-female differences but on the male-female similarities. Same-sex genital practice deconstructs the biblical understanding of masculinity and femininity as depicted in the creation accounts of Genesis.

The shift is from the physical differences to the affective and connotative similarities and aspects of being and thus, Genesis 2:23 is seen as *a picture of sexual celebration and the pleasure and fun of sexual love*.¹⁴ The focus of Genesis 2 becomes in this view a sexual interaction and not gender differentiation. It is sexual interaction for the sake of pleasure and not because of procreation.

The exclamation of Adam, *this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh* (Gn.2:23), is seen as the verbalization of the orgasmic pleasure derived from sexual intercourse. They can become one flesh because they are alike, not because they are different. Genesis 1-3 is all about sexual celebration. Sex is a gift from God to be used in service of one another and meant to be enjoyed. There is no indication of male-female *creational intent, sacramental union or covenantal commitment, but only natural sexual attraction that leads to a commitment*.¹⁵ The intention of the creation narratives is not to teach that heterosexuality is normative.

Within gay theology the heterocentric assumption that procreation is positively linked and normative to male-female sexual differentiation is abandoned.¹⁶ Seen like this, procreation becomes a blessing rather than a clearly reported command of God. The text does not explicitly exclude the possibility of non-procreative sexual acts and therefore homosexuality with its limited procreative potential may also be what God intended for human sexuality. The fact that homosexuality is not mentioned in the creation narratives poses no problem because *sex was before marriage*. Sexuality in the variety of its manifestations as well as sexual desire was created by God. Marriage came later to be a safe place and as a protection for this particular aspect of creation.

A gay theology of sexuality understands that the man will leave his parents and cleave unto his wife, not because they are a heterosexual couple, but because they are both human. All other created species are different and not capable of such mutual recognition of sameness. Same-sex

relationships is therefore distinctly possible because persons of the same-sex can find in their sexuality and unions the companionship and mutuality for which their sexuality was created.¹⁷ *Mutuality creates the lovers as equal, free of stereotypes and gender roles in lovemaking or work, bold and open in expressing desire and as likely to approach or be approached by the other.*¹⁸ The violation of this mutuality is sin.

Homosexual behaviour is therefore neither unnatural (contrary to the creation order) nor sin.¹⁹ Indeed, for the gay person there is nothing unnatural about any shared love in gay sexuality. Gay men and lesbians are a part of God's good creation and their capacities for sexual love are not regarded as sinful.²⁰ In gay sexuality the words of God on the sixth day of creation summarize their view of homosexuality: *And God saw everything that God had made, and behold, it was very good* (Gn.1:31). For the gay/lesbian they are part of what was very good, *that I was a good creation.*²¹ God, therefore, created, sanctified and continually celebrates the entire spectrum of human sexuality. God does not despise anything he created.

It is therefore assumed that God created mankind with at least three major sexual orientations or natures namely, heterosexual, homosexual and bi-sexual dispositions. This fact was unknown to ancient man, for example Paul, because:²²

...everything the apostle stated in Romans 1 was based upon the mistaken assumption that the human race was created exclusively heterosexual. The book of Leviticus had left no room for homosexual "exceptions" and it is clear from the verses Paul penned to the Roman Christians that, at that point of his understanding, he had not been enlightened by any revelation to the contrary.... Paul believed homosexual conduct to be outside the will of God.

The logic conclusion in gay theology is that homosexuality is a legitimate variant form of sexual expression and that it is sanctioned by nature. Paul did know the difference between perversion and inversion. Some gay apologists (Scanzoni & Mollenkott, Boswell, Bailey, and McNeill) assert that Paul was castigating homosexual lust, promiscuity and excessive passion in people with heterosexual natures practicing homosex against their natural sexual nature, thus an exchange of natures is affected. While it is then true that Paul harboured negative opinions concerning homosexual acts²³ because of his culturally conditioned perspective:

...it is essential to realise that the twentieth-century believer is not bound by the apostle's private or penned opinions, but by the basic principles he gave us – principles that can be relevantly related to the sociological/cultural situation confronting us in this current sexual controversy.

Against the background that Paul did not know of homosexual natures and therefore made no distinction in condemning homosex, as well as the fact that Paul mentions heterosexuals exchanging their male-female natural relations for female-female and male-male relations, the principle deduced simply states it would be indeed sin if natural homosexuals would exchange same-sex relations for opposite-sex relations. There is general agreement amongst homosexual apologists that the Bible at large is not dealing with confirmed homosexuals because the confirmed homosexual was only recognized in 1869.²⁴ The women and men Paul is talking about in Romans 1 is not at the core a homosexual person. Gay theology therefore asserts that *exchanged* and *given up* cannot be applied to confirmed homosexual inverters.

Jesus' words and actions that marital heterosexual unions and abstinence from sexual involvement are the option for human behaviour that accord with the will of God is seen within Gay theology as symbolic of asexuality, a model for subordinating women and denigrating sexual pleasure.²⁵ This results in misogyny and homophobia as a natural consequence of the asexual reading of the biblical narrative. Jesus' perceived celibacy gives way to a reconstruction of his sexuality to counteract the assumed historical asexual reading. Thus Driver observes.²⁶

The absence of all comment in them (the Gospels) about Jesus' sexuality cannot be taken to imply that he had no sexual feelings.... It is not shocking, to me at least, to imagine Jesus moved to love according to the flesh. I cannot imagine a human tenderness, which the Gospels show to be characteristic of Jesus that is not fed in some degree by the springs of passion. The human alternative to sexual tenderness is not asexual tenderness but sexual fear. Jesus lived in his body, as other men do.

Other writers also tried to change the perceived *anti-sexual* Christian perspective and to give rise to a sexual Jesus. Lawrence²⁷ for example commented:

If Jesus rose in full flesh, He rose to know the tenderness of a woman, and the great pleasure of her, and to have children by her.

To reconstruct a sexual Jesus is important in gay theology because it paves the way to a queer Christ and hence queer Christology. Queer Christology contrasts traditional ecclesial Christology. Boyd²⁸ reconstructs a gay-sensitive Jesus for gay Christians in terms of the modern understanding of gayness and raises the question of Jesus' homoerotic feelings when he says that *gay spirit as we have come to understand it, fits Jesus easily*. He also quotes Rev. Robinson, dean of Samaritan College.²⁹

I never knew how to separate my spirituality from my sexuality.... Sleeping with a woman was both natural and fulfilling. It's unthinkable to me that Jesus could be uncomfortable with my lesbianism. He understands fully that being lesbian or gay isn't simply a matter of genital behaviour but is a whole way of being. Jesus was just as queer in his time as we are in ours. What a gift.

In the process of claiming Jesus as one of their own the gay and lesbian community has consistently raised the question of Jesus' sexual intimacy. There is a widespread common belief amongst gays that Jesus had homoerotic sexual relations. Williams' speculation³⁰ goes beyond the biblical narrative when he says:

Jesus was the passionate lover of Lazarus, a young man who became his disciple. When the two of them met, there was that electricity we have learned to call limerence, or love at first sight.

Goss³¹ also comments on another manuscript of Williams, *The beloved disciple*, in which he reconstructs a fictional story of Jesus and Lazarus with vivid descriptions of lovemaking between Jesus and Lazarus. This completes the full circle to reconstruct Jesus as gay and sexual. This is hardly surprising given the Bible's negative attitude to same-sex acts and the modern gay's desire to reclaim Jesus as gay/lesbian-sensitive and thus to validate homoeroticism today as a legitimate expression of sexuality based on the reconstructed queer Christ.

The need is for a Christology that identifies with the struggle for sexual liberation. The crucifixion, the happenings during Easter, become for gay and lesbian Christians the events at which God made Jesus queer in his solidarity with them. Easter is seen as God's promise that sexual liberation will eventually triumph. The intention is clear; a gay and lesbian critical reading of the Bible means reading the Bible as their own. It deconstructs (breaks down) the traditional reading of homosexual conduct as sinful and reconstructs (builds up) an interpretation that can do justice to current queer experience.

And so the lives of gay and lesbian Christians become the text from which they interpret the biblical text. Their commitments to their gay and lesbian identities, practices and struggle for sexual liberation become the framework for interpreting a particular biblical text. They reject all readings that either depoliticise or spiritualise the biblical text.³² The lived sexual experience of gay and lesbian people is crucial in shaping a gay theology of sexuality and, according to

Germond,³³ this experienced sexuality and the way it is mediated by religious life, is the central issue in determining the content of gay sexual theology.

Queer theology is in a certain sense a reaction to what Germond regards as an *exclusivist theology of heterosexism* rooted in a predominant cognitive body of beliefs about human sexuality.³⁴ Basic to a queer theology of sexuality is the assumption that the Christian church throughout its history has wrongfully and wilfully assumed that heterosexuality is normative and that homosexuality is a perversion. The correct reading and interpretation that allows for a biblical acceptance of certain homosexual conduct is effected through a hermeneutics of suspicion where the assumptions of the biblical texts themselves are laid bare, for example a heterosexual bias.

In line with Germond, Johnstone argues that in a gay theology of sexuality:³⁵

...the permanent sexual condition of gay people can be seen as both permissible and consistent. Homosexuality or heterosexuality is neither here nor there; what matters is to keep God's commands. It is not our sexual orientation that is foremost in God's concern, but the way we express that sexuality within the framework of God's commands for responsible, loving, sexual behaviour.

A Biblical theology of sexuality

It is clear from the expositions above that we have two directly opposing viewpoints regarding what the Bible teaches about sexuality. Which is the correct one? Both viewpoints claim to be biblical in their understanding and praxis of the Bible's teaching on sexuality. It is also true that not both these viewpoints can be correct and that one will need to be discarded in the light of the Bible's teaching on sexuality.

There can be no understanding of sexuality apart from the Genesis creation narratives. The Designer had a very specific pattern in mind and we need to discern what he had in mind before any violations of the divine pattern can be recognized. The Bible is quite clear on at least the following facts: that God created mankind as male and female, they were created in the image of God, they were created as sexually complementary beings, that God separated femininity out of man's masculinity and this resulted in a divinely intended heterosexual desire in the male and female to be reunited in a sexual intimate oneness.

The whole Bible makes provision for only male and female relationships. Not once in the whole of the Bible is there any deviation from this sexual foundation for mankind, a foundation laid down when man and woman were created. No patriarch, no matriarch, no prophet, no priest, no disciple, no apostle and not even the Lord Jesus corrupted this heterosexual intention of God through homosexual conduct. They simply accepted, as given in Creation, that sexual identity was heterosexually shaped and humankind therefore presented itself as male and female. Thus, in all references to homosexuality in the Bible, notwithstanding the context, homosex is regarded as a sin and even referred to as an abomination unto God. No approval was ever given to homosexual conduct, neither explicitly or implicitly. It was not even tolerated but always rejected as sin, especially as sinful practice in the lives of the nations and the gentiles where it was normal and acceptable conduct.

A biblical norm is being violated in homosex. Homosex is illegitimate behaviour according to biblical norms in both natural and special revelation (Rom.1: 18-32). Depravity is depravity and perversion of a biblical norm and remains a perversion, notwithstanding the name given to it. The Bible simply fails to recognize and allow for *good homosex* and *bad homosex*. Such a distinction is illegitimate and unbiblical.³⁶ Beginning in Genesis and throughout the whole of the Bible the entire revelation of Scripture describes that the God-created sexual function is the male-female

relationship. Homosex originates not from the creative intent of God but from the depravity of man.

All civilizations throughout human history displayed male-female bias. Not one civilization ever approved homosexual conduct as normal or same-sex marriage as an alternative to heterosexual marriage. It is only now that such approval is granted.³⁷ Indeed, homosex had been reserved for conquered enemies, rivals and socially inferior people like male children, slaves and men from lower social standing.³⁸ Even cultures that have had no roots in Judeo-Christian heritage, have almost always celebrated the marriage of a man with a woman.

CHAPTER 10

CHANGING THE THEOLOGY OF SIN

Introduction

Does the Bible regard same-sex intercourse as intrinsically sinful?

This is a very important question to answer. If the Bible, and therefore God, regards homosex as sin, then that settles the case. If not, there are a myriad of possibilities waiting to be revealed to a waiting world who endorses anything and everything. To the church however, the Bible as the revealed Word of God, and not the world, decides on what is sin. The true church can never refrain from taking a stand against sin and evil. The church has to exhibit its own salvation to the world and has to call the world to responsible and accountable conduct.

Issues reflecting on homosexuality are pervasively and hotly debated in the political, religious and academic spheres in South Africa. More so since the South African Constitutional Court ordered the government to amend legislation to make provision for same-sex marriages. These amendments had to be in place by the first of December 2006. The order by the court points to genetic causation of homosexuality, the rightness of caring homosexual relationships, the antiquated life view and obsolescence of the Christian Holy Book and the fact that tolerance should supersede the absolutes of religion. The church on the other hand no longer with an unanimous voice appeals to the explicit negative statements regarding same-sex relationships, principles of sexual holiness, the long tradition of rejection of homosexual relations in church history and the unnaturalness of homosexual marriage.

Biblical scholars no longer take for granted that homosexual conduct is sin. Such acceptance of the Bible is regarded as uncritical reading of an ancient text. There is today a call for the critical reading of the Bible, meaning that the Bible must be freed from the assumed outmoded moral standards, as well as the cultural and personal biases of the authors before the interpreted message could be applied to contemporary contexts.

Nowhere is this overthrow of the old reading of the biblical text, the old moral order more evident than in how homosexuality is seen today. The popular culture today, in its hierarchy of values, put the joys of sex far above the obedience of Scripture. It is a new faith, a new religion with its own set of presuppositions and hermeneutical lenses through which the Bible is read. It is a religion for this world, here and now, refusing to recognize any higher moral order or moral authority; there are no absolutes in the universe.

Thus it is now believed and taught outside and inside church that the old Christian moral code that condemned sex outside of marriage and held homosex to be vile, immoral and unnatural was rooted in prejudice, biblical bigotry, religious dogma and the wilful wrong interpretation of Scripture.¹ Today it is understood by homosexual apologists that the Christian moral code which for two millennia rejected the legitimacy of homosexual conduct, was repressive to a minority group, an impediment to human fulfilment and responsible for the ruin of countless gay and lesbian lives.

It is obvious that within secular society all lifestyles are deemed equal. Love and its natural coexistent sex, are healthy and good, irrespective of whether it is exercised within a hetero, homosexual or bi-sexual relationship. All voluntary sexual relations are permissible, desirable and morally equal and neither the state nor the church should prohibit it.²

The principle – all lifestyles are equal – is to be written into law, and those who refuse to respect the new laws are to be punished. To disrespect the alternative lifestyle marks one as a bigot. Discrimination against those who adopt the alternative lifestyle is a crime. Homophobia, not homosexuality, is the evil that must be eradicated.

The new moral code is based on enlightened reason and respect for all. When the state wrote the Christian moral code into law, it codified bigotry. But when we write our moral code into law, we advance frontiers of freedom and protect the rights of persecuted minorities.

In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association de-listed homosexuality as a disorder. Anyone who today still considers homosexual conduct a disorder is a bigot and guilty of homophobia, the irrational fear of homosexual persons. In a very real sense words have become weapons. By being called homophobic or heterosexist by the homosexual apologists, the onus to prove one's character shifts from the gay and lesbian to the heterosexual opponent. The reason being that homosexuality is no longer regarded as a sin but as a valid sexual preference on par with bi-sexuality and heterosexuality.

Simply put, homosexuality has as its objective the normalizing of homosex as a normal variant of sexuality and the full acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle in the church. This would put it on par with heterosexual conduct and bring about that it would no longer be judged as sinful conduct by the church. Heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality, transvestisms, all become normal expressions of sexual conduct in the framework of gay theology. Gitlings, a lesbian, said:

What the homosexual wants – and here he is neither willing to compromise nor morally required to compromise – is acceptance of homosexuality as a way of life, fully on par with heterosexuality.³

A panel of theologians, ministers and scholars, were asked for their response on whether homosexual conduct is sin or not. The following quotations clearly indicate gay theology's view of sin.⁴

Rev. Dr William Stayton, Baptist:

Absolutely not! There is nothing in the Bible or in my own theology that would lead me to believe that God regards homosexuality as sin. God is interested in our relationships with ourselves, others, the things in our lives, and with God (Matt 23:36-40). There is nothing in the mind of God that could be against a loving, sexual relationship, freely entered into, without coercion, among sincere adults whether gay, bisexual, or straight.

Bishop John Spong, Episcopalian:

Some argue that since homosexual behaviour is unnatural, it is contrary to the order of creation. Behind this pronouncement are stereotypic definitions of masculinity and femininity that reflect his rigid gender categories of patriarchal society. There is nothing unnatural about any shared love, even between two of the same gender, if that experience calls both partners into a fuller state of being.

Our prejudice rejects people or things outside our understanding. But the God of creation speaks and declares, "I have looked out on everything I have made and 'behold it (is) very good' (Gen 1:31)." The word of God in Christ says that we are loved, valued, redeemed, and counted as precious no matter how we might be valued by a prejudiced world.

Bishop Stewart Wood, Jr., Episcopalian:

No. Our sexual orientation is a given something we discover about ourselves – some might say "a gift from God." How one relates to others – caring or exploiting – is the source of sin.

Bishop Stanley Olson, Lutheran (ELCA):

Of course not, God could (not?) care less about humanly devised categories that label and demean those who do not somehow fit into the norm of those in control. God made all of us and did not make all of us alike. Diversity is beautiful in creation.

The New Testament is full of verses that speak of the work of Jesus Christ in creating a new unity beyond our divisions... The Gospel is vastly more inclusive than we often imagine or have been taught.

Rev. Dr George Edwards, Presbyterian:

God does not regard homosexuality as a sin any more than heterosexuality. Sin is lack of respect or love for God; it is lack of love or respect for other persons.

Dr Karen Lebacqz, Unite Church of Christ:

What God DOES regard as a sin is oppression, injustice, persecution and disrespect for persons. This sin, then, is homophobia, gay-bashing, discriminatory legislation toward lesbians and gays, refusal to include lesbian/gay/bisexual people into our churches and communities.

Rev. Dr James Nelson, United Church of Christ:

I am convinced that our sexuality and our sexual orientations, whatever they may be, are a gift from God. Sexual sin does not reside in our orientations... When we express ourselves sexually in ways that are loving and just, faithful and responsible, then I am convinced that God celebrates our sexuality, whatever our orientation may be.

Bishop Melvin Wheatley (jr.), United Methodist:

Of course not!... Homosexuality is an authentic condition of being with which some persons are endowed (a gift of God, if you please), not an optional sexual life-style which they have wilfully, whimsically or sinfully chosen. Certainly one's sexuality – heterosexual or homosexual – may be acted out in behaviours that are sinful: brutal, exploitative, selfish and superficial. But just as surely, one's homosexual orientation as well as another's heterosexual orientation may be acted out in ways that are beautiful: tender, considerate, mutual, responsible, loyal, and profound.

It is quite clear that homosex has been removed from the category of sinful conduct and assigned to the category of gifts from God. It has been theologically purged and cleansed. It is no longer sin. Gay theology can now proclaim homosexual conduct (virtually any sexual orientation) as non-sinful conduct and apply all teachings in the Bible on heterosexuality to homosexuality. Lust and immorality (prostitution, adultery and promiscuity) are now redefined in terms of this new categorisation.

The Bible and sin

What is the origin of sin? This question begs the answer. In answering this question one has to be careful not to fall into the trap of speculation, but to remain sober and objective. We have to deal with the concrete fact of sinful man before a righteous God, calling upon God to accept him as a sinner. And what is to be done with man's sin?

The American Tract Society Dictionary defines sin as follows:⁵

Any thought, word, desire, action, or omission of action, contrary to the law of God, or defective when compared with it.

Its entrance into the world, and infection of the whole human race, its nature, forms and effects, and its fatal possession of every unregenerate soul, are fully described in the Bible, Ge 6:5; Ps 51:5; Mt 15:19; Ro 5:12; Jas 1:1-15.

As contrary to the nature, worship, love, and service to God, sin is called ungodliness; as a violation of the law of God and of the claims of man, it is a transgression or trespass; as a deviation from eternal rectitude, it is called iniquity or unrighteousness; as the evil and bitter root of all actual transgression, the depravity transmitted from our first parents to all their seed, it is called "original sin," or in the Bible, "the flesh," "the law of sin and death," etc., Ro 8:1-2; 1Jo 3:4; 5:17. The just penalty or "wages of sin is death;" this was threatened against the first sin, Ge 2:17 and all subsequent sins: "the soul that sinneth it shall die." A single sin, unrepented of the unforgiven, destroys the soul, as a single break renders a whole ocean cable worthless. Its guilt and evil are to be measured by the holiness, justice, and goodness of the law it violates, the eternity of the misery it causes, and the greatness of the Sacrifice necessary to expiate it.

"Sin" is also sometimes put for the sacrifice of expiation, the sin offering, described in Le 4:3, 25, and 29. So, Ro 8:3 and in 2Co 5:21, Paul says that God was pleased that Jesus, who knew no sin, should be our victim of expiation: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Easten's Bible Dictionary refers to various kinds of sins mentioned in the Bible.

Various kinds of sin are mentioned, (1.) "Presumptuous sins," or as literally rendered, "sins with an uplifted hand," i.e., defiant acts of sin, in contrast with "errors" or "inadvertencies" (Ps 19:13). (2.) "Secret," i.e., hidden sins (Ps 19:12); sins which escape the notice of the soul. (3.) "Sin against the Holy Ghost" (q.v), or a "sin unto death" (Mt 12:31-32; 1Jo 5:16) which amounts to a wilful rejection of grace.⁶

Webster's 1828 Dictionary (K-Z) renders the following definition.⁷

The voluntary departure of a moral agent from a known rule of rectitude or duty, prescribed by God; any voluntary transgression of the divine law, or violation of a divine command; a wicked act; iniquity. Sin is either a positive act in which a known divine law is violated, or it is the voluntary neglect to obey a positive divine command, or a rule of duty clearly implied in such command. Sin comprehends not action only, but neglect of known duty, all evil thoughts purpose, words and desires, whatever is contrary to God's commands or law, (1 John 3. Mt. 15. James 4). A sinner neither enjoys the pleasures of nor the peace of piety. Among divines, sin is original or actual. Actual sin, above defined, is the act of a moral agent in violating a known rule of duty.

Original sin, as generally understood, is native depravity of heart to the divine will, that corruption of nature or deterioration of the moral character of man, which is supposed to be the effect of Adam's apostasy; and which manifests itself in moral agents by positive act of disobedience to the divine will, or by the voluntary neglect to comply with the express commands of God, which require that we should love God with all the heart and soul and strength and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves. This native depravity or alienation of affections from God and his law, is supposed to be what the apostle calls the carnal mind or mindedness, which is enmity against God, and is therefore denominated sin or sinfulness. Unpardonable sin, or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, is supposed to be a malicious and obstinate rejection of Christ and the gospel plan of salvation, or a contemptuous resistance made to the influences and convictions of the Holy Spirit. Matt.12.

Spurgeon discusses the overall influence and presence of sin in a person's life in one of his sermons.⁸

Our opinion is that men, after they are converted, and begin to examine themselves in the light of God's Word, if they are at all like us, find sin everywhere within them;- sin in the affections, so that the hearts lusteth after evil things; - sin in the judgement, so that it often makes most serious mistakes, and honestly puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter – sin in the desires, so that though we try to curb them, they wander hither and thither, whither we would not; - sin in the will, so that Lord Will-be-will proves that he is still very proud, and wants to have his own way, - and is not willing to bow submissively to the will of God; sin in the memory, so that the most godly people can often recollect a snatch of a bad old song which they used to hear or to sing, far more readily than they can remember a text of Scripture; which they wish to treasure up in their memories, for memory has become unhinged, like all the rest of our faculties, and is quick to retain evil, and slow to retain that which is good.

We are living in a point of time, loosely referred to as post-modern times, where sin is no longer given any meaning. Sin has been redefined into non-existence. The concept of 'sin' has been thrown out of post-modern man's vocabulary. The very Bible that relates the origin and awfulness of sin in the Genesis narratives is evoked by post-modern theologians to redefine some deeds of sin as gifts of God to mankind. Sin, especially sexual sin, thus finds itself in a situation where it can flourish without biblical restraints. It is as if God is giving Christians today more visual instruction in the horrible effects of sin than ever before, yet modern man seems not to notice.

The conscience of society, however, will not allow itself to be scorched into silence. The roots of godly righteousness, the legacy of the Christian faith, will sprout guilt feelings in the souls of even sinful post-modern man. The innate sense installed in man to discern right from wrong during man's created origin will not allow itself to be pushed into historical oblivion. Sin separates man from God and brings a terrible harvest for all eternity. In an effort to appease his guilty conscience modern man practice "good deeds" to ratify the "sins" of his past: social inequalities, human rights for ill-defined minority groups (for example homosexuals, paedophiles) and social ills (for instance poverty, slums, prisons, prostitution and substance abusers). Forgiveness of sin by a righteous loving God is replaced by "Social activism" as modern man's way to salvation. The facts, however, show that social conditions are not a "sin" to go against, neither is it the cause of its spreading. Sin is spreading because modern man does not want to confront it, let alone punish it.

Whoever does not want to become guilty, by either going along with sin or tolerating sin, has to take a stand against sin. Resisting sin is an absolute must. The battle against sin means not only recognizing sin, but also investing precious time and energy fighting it and radically defining it in its original meaning so that modern man can never plead "not guilty" because of a lack of knowledge. Sin needs to be defined in terms of the Bible, in God's language, so that modern man can have a standard against which he can contrast his own sinful skills, attitudes and desires. Sin is not an old fashioned, antiquarian concept but the worst enemy that modern man will ever have to face.

Modern society is saturated with much knowledge about the Bible. Every university produces its fair share of theologians. Yet the one thing lacking in their spiritual makeup is a godly hatred of sin. More and more the modern church tolerates and nurtures sin within its structures. The context of their modern co-existence with secular societies in the global city demands a redefinition of sin to the extent that the modern church society has become indiscernible from the secular societies by compromising sin in her midst. Sin is tolerated, nourished and eventually institutionalized beyond the restrictions in the Bible. The sinner is tenderly handled, saved through cheap grace,⁹ all in the name of a false brotherly love that shows little similarity to godly love. So instead of taking a

stand of hatred against sin, the church sympathises with sin and allows it to grow strong and take deep root in the fertile soil of the church's pews.

We all know the power of lust, which is in our flesh. Eve lusted for the fruit. David lusted for the wife of Uriah. Amnon, son of David, lusted for his sister Tamar. The men of Sodom lusted for the male visitors in Lot's house. The men of Gibeah lusted for the male Levite visitor in the old man's house. Lust has an overpowering force and will not be confined within the boundaries of the commandments of God. Through lust sin upon sin is born.¹⁰ Blinded by their sensual desires modern man completely disregard the commandments of God. The usual consequence is sexual sin, premarital and extramarital sex or sexual relations with member of the same-sex (homosex).¹¹ Such behaviour is almost taken for granted today and even the Legislator is prepared to protect modern man's right to unbridled sexual indulgence with members of the same-sex and all of this in the name of "human rights." Homosexuals are the only minority group that is based on sin (the sin of homosex) and being recognized within constitutional legislation of several countries.¹²

What cannot be ignored is the Christian attitude toward homosexual behaviour since the inception of the Christian church. The phenomenon of homosexuality has been present with Christianity through the centuries. It was never absent and required periodic denunciation. From the middle of the second century to the end of the nineteenth century, the records show that homosexual offences were declared sinful.¹³ There is a remarkable consistency in the Christian attitude of about two thousand years in the assessment of homosexual relationships in the light of the Biblical pronouncements. It has always been judged as sin. Homosexual conduct was consistently and without exception rejected because it was deemed to be contrary to the will of God for mankind. It was regarded as sin.

Early Christian authors including Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, the participants in the Councils of Elvira and Ancyra, the author(s) of the Apostolic Constitutions, John Chrysostom and Augustine all expressed sharp disapproval of homosexual conduct.¹⁴ From history it is clear that the church fathers unanimously and unreservedly condemned male homosexual behaviour.

The early church councils of Elvira (Spain, 305 – 306 C.E.) and Ancyra (Asia Minor – 314 C.E.) both denied homosexuals baptism and catechetical status until they renounced their homosexual behaviour. Homosexual acts were thoroughly and severely dealt with in the Penitentials¹⁵ (570 – 1010 C.E.), the ordinance of Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen- 789 C.E.) cited the position of the Council of Ancyra to formulate a general condemnation of homosexuality and Liber Gomorrhianus (1051 C.E.) that condemned various homosexual acts. The Council of London at Westminster (1102) condemned those participating in "the shameful sin of sodomy" by anathema until they demonstrated through confession of their sin and penance that they were worthy of absolution.¹⁶ Thomas of Aquinas regarded the least homosexual act more sinful than any other kind of lust and he ranked only bestiality as being more depraved than sodomy. The reformers Luther and Calvin both rejected homosexual behaviour.

Only in the twentieth century did a shift occur to a more tolerant attitude towards homosexuality. In 1964 Thielick, the German philosopher lodged a strong appeal for social and religious toleration of homosexuality. This implied that understanding rather than denunciation was to be the Christian attitude towards homosexuality. The Kinsey reports (1948, 1952) left their mark on the church as well.

As early as 1963, in stark contradiction of the Bible and church history, a committee of the Society of Friends in England argued that homosexuality was a natural, morally neutral condition on par with left-handedness. Likewise, the Rev. Wood of the United Church in Christ in America suggested that the church should sponsor pro-homosexual activities, for instance, "drag" dances;

and that the church should conduct same-sex marriages. Since then the rivulet had become a river of change to the current point in time where several countries in the world have institutionalized homosexual behaviour as a minority human right.

However, it is abundantly clear from Scripture, the writings of the early church and church history of nearly 2000 years that homosexuality in orientation and conduct violates the creation order, sexual intention and patterns for male and female roles or marriage. It arises from the same internal disobedience and rebellion as did the Fall recorded in the opening chapters of the Bible. Homosexuality comes under definite condemnation of God, as sin. In all its manifestations, whether it is in the form of rape and violence (Genesis 19; Judges 19-20) or as consenting behaviour among adults (Leviticus 18, 20; Romans 1). Although homosexual orientation is not directly referred to in the Bible, the prohibitions are broad enough to cover the lustful inclination, the impure thoughts associated therewith as well as the act.

De Young¹⁷ very thoroughly establishes the intrinsic character of homosexuality in his evaluation of homosexuality in the light of the Bible, the socio-historical background of the Bible and church history. The Bible, as the Word of God, sufficiently portrays it as sin. No other reading or understanding is possible. Thus it was understood by the apostles, the early church, the patristic fathers, the church fathers and subsequently by the church in all her denominational manifestations throughout the ages up to this point of time.

Homosexual rape is the only sin described in the unfolding of events pertaining to the fall of Sodom. This sin is portrayed as the zenith of all sins of Sodom and begs the special judgement of God that will bring about the destruction of Sodom and the town's inhabitants. That homosexual rape was the sin of Sodom is the only possible interpretation that fits the micro and macro literary context and structure of the story (Genesis 19). Homosexual rape is also the sin of the incident in Gibeah (Judges 19 -20). Homosexuality reveals itself as ritualistic or cultic sin, usually between two males, and practiced by the pagan nations surrounding Israel. Homosexuality in all its manifestations, whether ritualistic, cultural or as consensual, is condemned in no uncertain terms in the books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Kings. As sin, homosexuality comes under the condemnation and judgement of God, whether it is in the form of violent rape or as consenting behaviour among adults.

The truth is also substantiated within the New Testament. The literary structure of Romans 1 places homosexual behaviour under the judgement of God. It is a self-destructive sin, generating from within itself the energy to enslave and destroy the homosexual, a judgement that God places on people who suppress the truth. Paul intentionally argues that homosexuality is a sin to which God has abandoned people as a consequence for the sins of sexual impurity, shameful lusts and a depraved mind (Romans 1:24-38).

Paul's use of *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai* in 1Corinthians 6:9 and *arsenokoita* in 1Timothy 1:9 leaves no room for doubt that all forms of homosexual expression are wrong and therefore sin. De Young summarizes the biblical view on homosexuality as follows.¹⁸

Homosexuality is sin, not just impurity nor an ethical failing limited to Israel's cultic system. The terms that introduce the lists refer to those who are "wicked" (1Cor 6:9), "lawbreakers," "rebels," "ungodly," "sinful," "unholy," and "irreligious" (1Tim. 1:8-10 in the NIV). All or almost all these terms refer specifically to sin, not impurity (such as the word *uncleanness* would communicate).

Gay theology and sin

Some of the most frequent arguments from the Gay and Lesbian minority are that condemnation of homosexuality had been based on a "literal interpretation of a few texts from the Bible."

Furthermore it is assumed that these texts are restricted to a particular historical context and thus not applicable to the modern context without revision. Other arguments that have been added to support the revisionist viewpoint of sin are “the etiology of human sexuality and modern Biblical scholarship (and) discrimination based on old interpretations of Biblical texts.”¹⁹

Mack, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Washington,²⁰ is a prime example of how the biblical texts are to be revised, reinterpreted and twisted to make homosexuality into a gift of God rather than to regard it as the sin it is. He argues:

Either God created people who find romantic love among those of their same gender or this condition is a fall from grace, a sin. Since the incidence of same-sex love occurs in all times and cultures in approximately the same proportions, many have come to consider it a part of God’s creation. The attraction is inherent to the createdness of each person. The realm of sin, in biblical terms, has to do with those areas over which we have some control.

As is typically the case with gay and lesbian apologists Mack’s argumentation is flawed with personal assumptions based on subjective personal experiences and insights rather than the Word of God. The point of departure is not the Word of God but the phenomenon “same-sex love” occurring in any given population. The fact that it does occur renders it a gift and not a sin, “createdness” rather than a “fall from grace, a sin.” Hidden behind his argument is the modern notion that people are born “gay” and have no say or control in the matter of their own sexuality. This kind of reasoning is especially evident when it is *ipso facto* used to justify bi-sexuality, pederasty, transvestism, paedophilia, polygamy, polyamory and other sexual deviations.

But does the fact of a sexual sin’s occurrence render it a gift of God? The current homosexual context would have us believe that the homosexual condition did not exist before 1869. This faulty assumption consistently clouds the objectivity of pro-homosexual theologians and causes their arguments to contain much subjective theological nonsense. It is abundantly clear from ancient sources that mutuality in homosexuality as well as homosexual orientation are not modern phenomena. The ancients could think of love, whether heterosexual or homosexual apart from actions.²¹

Rabbi Yoel Kahn²² affirms that the modern context rather than the Bible must be the point of departure when he says:

We begin from an entirely different perspective than our ancestors. If we grant that homosexual acts are not inherently sinful, then can a homosexual relationship be sanctified? ... I do not propose merely that we politely overlook the historical Jewish teaching condemning homosexual behaviour but that we explicitly affirm its opposite; the movement from to’evah to kedushah. This transformation in our Jewish standard, from a specific act to the evaluation of the context in which acts occur, seems to be entirely consistent with Reform Jewish thought and practice...the situation of the gay and lesbian Jews among us points out the need for new categories in our thinking.

It is clear from the argumentation that there is a wilful move to justify homosexual relationships irrespective of what the Bible and Christian tradition teach. The affirmation of the opposite, that is from to’evah (abomination) to kedushah (sanctification), from sin to gift from God is the only way to get around the biblical condemnation of homosexuality. The modern sexual context demands “new categories” of thinking and homosexual apologists have become apt reformists or revisionists of biblical texts which condemn homosexuality. One such thought pattern exemplifies such a “new category” of thinking.²³

There is no univocal Judeo-Christian tradition against same-sex marriage. It appears that the Israelites fleeing Egypt were opposed to same-sex marriages they witnessed in Egypt and that opposition is reflected in the admonitions in Leviticus against same-sex male intimacy. At no

point, by the way, does Leviticus condemn same-sex female intimacy or marriage. Nothing else in the Old Testament is telling on the issue of same-sex marriage.

And also:

Christ's teachings recorded in the Gospel books of the New Testament, contain no condemnation of same-sex unions or intimacy. Instead Christ's message relentlessly emphasizes charity to others, compassion for those different from oneself and God's equal love for every human being. Some early Christian authors, notably St. Paul and St. Augustine, were anxious about sexuality in general and male intimacy in particular...

This mindset would sometimes go beyond what can be reasonably deduced from the biblical narratives. The Metropolitan Community Church was founded by an openly homosexual former Baptist pastor, Troy Perry.²⁴ It is the largest denomination catering for religious homosexual people in the United States of America. According to the Church's website, members underwrite the following.²⁵

- Homosexual behaviour is not a sin in God's eyes. Instead, the teaching that homosexual behaviour is sinful is the result of twisted teaching of "homophobic" men.
- The references to homosexual behaviour in the Bible really don't mean what they say.
- Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed not because of homosexual behaviour but because the people there ignored the poor and the needy.
- Johnathan and David were homosexual lovers.
- Ruth and Naomi were lesbian lovers.
- Christ lived an alternative lifestyle and he loved other men besides John.
- Christ wore a purple robe to the cross as a connotation of his homosexuality.

The above statements have the net result that the biblical texts condemning homosexuality are stripped of their literal meaning and that the sin of homosexuality is turned into a gift from God to mankind. This deliberate twisting of Scripture revises all texts in the Bible denouncing homosexuality. All the direct and indirect references in the Bible to homosexuality and homosexual conduct condemn it as a sexual perversion and therefore a sin in the eyes of God. Reverend Chip Aldridge of the pro-homosexual group Reconciling Ministries Network says:

When persons simply say that the Bible views homosexuality as a sin, they are dealing with a specific, narrow interpretation of the Bible.²⁶

But how broad in the process of interpretation do you have to be to simply disregard the following biblical rejections of homosexuality:

Genesis 18:20-21: And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry, which has come unto me; and if not, I will know.

Leviticus 18:22: You shall not lie with a man, as with a woman it is an abomination.

Leviticus 20:13: If a man also lies with a man, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death: their blood shall be upon them.

Deuteronomy 23:17-18: There shall be no harlot of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. You shall not bring the wages of a harlot, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD your God for any vow: for even both of these are an abomination unto the LORD your God.

1 Kings 14:24: And there were also male prostitutes in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

1 Kings 15:12: And he took away the male prostitutes out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

1 Kings 22:46: And the remnant of the male prostitutes, who remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

2 Kings 23:7: And he broke down the houses of the male prostitutes that were by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the idol pole.

Job 36:14: They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

Romans 1:26-27: For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is shameful, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was fitting.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11: Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Timothy 1:9-10: Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for homosexuals, for slave traders, for liars, for perjurers, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

The meaning of these verses are obvious and straight forward and it boggles the mind to see how anyone can interpret them as anything different than condemning of homosexual behaviour. It is not a case of broad interpretation or narrow mindedness in reading what the Bible says concerning sin or even a specific, narrow interpretation of the Bible, but rather a case of wilful decision to change the meaning of the text to suit modern notions and presuppositions concerning homosexuality. Gay contextual theology demands a total denial of the implicit meaning of these verses to explain away their affirmation of homosexual behaviour.

A Biblical theology of sin

I use the term *homosexuality* to indicate the practice of same-sex intercourse. The public debate over homosexuality centres not so much on the morality of homosexual intercourse, but on the various changes to public policy advocated and verbal pressure applied by the gay rights movement. Objections to homosexuality may include the rejection of what may be called the *homosexual lifestyle*, or the view that homosexuality is an alternative to heterosexuality; an alternative lifestyle, one capable of providing the same sort of companionship, fulfilment and sexual pleasure as heterosexual relationships.

Basic to all arguments is the question: *Is it wrong simply by virtue of being a sexual act between two persons of the same sex, without regard to its further characteristics?* In my opinion the only possible answer to this question is a theological one. Not only does the theological answer supersede other arguments, but it presupposes any psychological, biological, anthropological, sociological and cultural arguments, and evaluates them in terms of Scripture.

This view opposes the view of the so-called revisionists or the pro-homosexual school of thought who argue to interpret the biblical texts in their historical context. In practice the result of their interpretation means that Scripture is made irrelevant in its application for today on moral issues. Scriptural references are bound up in their historical context, never to be released or to render them useless so that the gospel allows no rule against the following, in and of themselves: masturbation, non-vaginal heterosexual intercourse, bestiality, polygamy, homosexual acts or erotic art and literature. The condemnation of homosexual action *per se* seems to be singularly inhuman in the revisionist view, and it therefore may be concluded that anal sex is an acceptable way of sexual experience which may not in principal be rejected. The Bible – according to this argument – gives no grounds to argue that homosexual deeds are unacceptable.

I have argued that the Bible does speak of *homosexual acts*. There is consensus enough among scholars (exegetes and commentators) to prove acceptance of this fact, even though the textual data do not render the present-day term *homosexuality*. The Bible often describes the behaviour that has come to be known as homosexuality. Leviticus describes the sin of *homosexuality* (literally) as *a male lying with a male, the lying of a female – that is, lying with a male as one would with a female*. Paul uses descriptive terminology in Rom.1:26-27 as well: *For their women exchanged the natural use for that which is unnatural, likewise males, leaving the natural use of the female, burned with desire toward one another*. It is therefore invalid to assert that the Bible does not refer to homosexuality just because it does not refer to it by that name. When the Bible speaks about homosexual acts, it speaks of homosexuality and implicates homosexual orientation. It may be true that, in antiquity, monogamous and committed homosexuality did not present itself frequently, particularly among males, but the act of homosexuality defines the content of the relationship, whether one calls it homosexual or by any other name. The modern notion of innate homosexual orientation would have made no difference to Paul's opposition to homosexuality.²⁷ Paul's criticism does not focus on homosexuals or heterosexuals, but more generally on persons who participate in same-sex erotic acts.

The distinction between sexual orientations is clearly an anachronism that does not help to understand Paul's line of argumentation. As pure eroticism, homosexuality was prominent and visual in pre-Christian Hellenism. I conclude as well that the Graeco-Roman culture decisively influenced New Testament statements about homosexuality. Paul does not mention *tribadés* (τριβαδές) or *κινάιδοι* (*kinaîdoi*), i.e. female or male persons who were habitually involved in homoerotic relationships, but if he knew about them (and there is every reason to believe that he did), it is difficult to think that, because of their apparent orientation, he would not have included them in Rom.1:26-27. For him there is no individual inversion of inclination that would make the conduct less culpable.

It has been argued that nothing would have made Paul approve homoerotic behaviour.

Those who claim that something like the modern category of an exclusive, innate homosexual orientation did not exist in antiquity, seem to be wrong in light of what we have learned from the Graeco-Roman culture (chapter1). In general the current theories of homosexual causation (like innate orientation) are, at least broadly speaking, compatible with ancient theories that may have contributed to Paul's views.

I argued that *porneía* (**πορνεία** – sexual immorality) is the general background against which Paul’s arguments on homosexuality must be evaluated. A couple of years before writing the letter to the Romans, Paul wrote to the church in Corinth about the subject of *porneía*. In 1Cor.6:12-20 Paul gives a general treatment of the relationship of the use of one’s own body to the Gospels’ proclamation of freedom in Christ. In so doing he draws on the particular example of sex with a prostitute, with the example of homosexual intercourse in Rom.1:26-27 to make his point in case. In 1Cor.6:16 Paul cites Gen.2:24: *a man... shall be joined to his wife and the two will become one flesh*, to establish that intercourse with a female prostitute makes a Christian man *one body* with her.

Here is confirmation that, whenever Paul considers sexual behaviour of any sort as *porneía* (**πορνεία** – sexual immorality) his standards remain tied to Gen.1-2 and not the convention of the day of culture’s specific norms. For Jesus and Paul the only legitimate sexual union for Christians is that between one man and one woman in a permanent, exogamous and monogamous marriage. All other forms of sexual intercourse is contra God’s intention and design as depicted in Gen.1-3; such sexual intercourse, inclusive of same-sex intercourse, is *porneía*, i.e. immoral perversions of this bond (1Cor.6:18-19).

The number of Scripture portions that speak directly on the issue of homosexuality shows that homosexual practice was not as marginal an issue as some would like to think. Frequency of mention should not be equated to degree of importance. The fact that Paul cited the issue of homosexuality three times is more than enough to establish that Paul regarded homosexual conduct as an extremely serious offence in which Christians should not be engaged. If Paul was opposed to homosexual conduct, the likelihood of other New Testament authors having a less rigorous stance is non-existent. According to the *Apostolic Decree* cited in Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25, non-Jews did not have to be circumcised but they still had to abstain from *porneía*. That *porneía* would have included same-sex intercourse is evident from the fact that the prohibitions of the *Apostolic Decree* derived from the laws of Lev.17-18.

The exegesis of Rom.1:18-32 confirms that the Bible portions referring to homosexuality are part of a much larger biblical philosophy of life that consistently portrays only one model for sexual relations: that between a man and a woman in lifelong monogamous partnership. In Rom.1:26-27 there is an unambiguous indictment of homosexual behaviour as a violation of God’s intention for humanity. On the descriptive level, throughout the Bible there is not a single hero of faith that engages in homosexual conduct. The Song of Solomon is devoted to singing the praises of committed heterosexual love. Every proverb or wisdom saying refers to heterosexual, and not homosexual, relationships as fitting for the lives of the faithful. In short: the universal silence in the Bible regarding an acceptable same-sex union, combined with the explicit prohibitions, speaks volumes for a consensus disapproval of homosexual conduct.

Paul’s own views did not depend on any one theory or model of causation but rather on the male-female complementarity embedded in creation. All could access this truth through either Scripture or nature. A biblical theology of homosexuality should recognize that the Bible not only denounces homogeneity, but homosexual conduct in all its variations, whether it stems from innate orientation or not. It is not the innateness of one’s desires or passions that guides a person in discovering the truth about human sexuality. Rather it is the material creation, the physical and observable, the bodily intention and the design of humans themselves that guide a person into the truth of the nature of God and the created nature of human sexuality respectively.

Paul did not separate personal humanity from biological humanity – the so-called *ordered ontology* of being a human. A human has an essential created structure which is sexually and personally differentiated as male and female. Sexual differentiation at both the personal and biological level is an aspect of the *structural being* (ordered ontology) of human life. The Genesis

narrative cannot be ignored. It establishes the norm of heterosexuality (male and female; male or female), which the rest of the Bible assumes as natural (given, ordered ontology) whenever the particulars of sexual morality are addressed. And it is important to realise that Paul understands homosexuality to be among the departures from this norm, which is ordered ontology.

The phrase *pará phýsin* (παρὰ φύσιν - *against nature*), as used by Paul is crucial, because it reveals the basis of Paul's condemnation of same-sex relations. The sexual identity of a person carries moral implications and this sexual identity is a created status. Homosexuality denies the realities of gender and bodily sexual differentiation. Paul's understanding of *human nature* goes deeper than popular *custom* – he understands that *male and female* were created for each other with complementary sexualities grounded in the distinctive observable constitutions of their sexual organs, and that this arrangement has been legitimized since creation only by marriage.

In Rom.1:26-27 it is doubtful that Paul is speaking of nature in the sense of custom. *Physikós* (φύσικος - *nature*) and *phýsis* (φύσις - *nature*) refer to one's constitution as given by God the Creator and, therefore, it is argued that Rom.1:26 bears the idea of a natural constitution as established by God in the creation of the human race. In Rom.1:26 *physikós* means *in accordance with the intention of the Creator* and *pará phýsin*, as Paul uses it, means *contrary to the intention of the Creator*.

All the Scripture portions studied (Rom.1:26-27, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10) regard homosexual activity as immoral and to be renounced. The theological structure in which Paul places his condemnation of *relations contrary to nature* is a weighty one indeed. Nothing in Scripture or in the Christian tradition of the first centuries counterbalances his judgement. Arguments in favour of acceptance of homosexual relations find their strongest arguments in empirical investigations and contemporary experience. At the end of this study I am not persuaded by Boswell's (1980) argument for *heterosexuals engaging in homosexual acts* and Scroggs' (1983a) proposal for a *pederasty model* for the understanding of Rom.1:26-27 and 1Cor.6:9-10.

The exegesis of 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 renders the meaning of *arsenokoitês* and *malakós* as *homosexual*. However, it is to be recognized that the word *arsenokoitês* in 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 is a compound word that refers to *males in bed*. The most probable understanding by the first hearers/readers of the words *arsenokoitês* (ἄρσενοκοίτης) and *malakós* (μαλακός) would have been *a male who takes another male to bed* and *the effeminate male* respectively. It may well be that they understood the first to be the penetrator and the second the penetrated. This word seems to be legitimately and sufficiently translated by the English word *homosexual*. A valid interpretation of Paul's pronouncement on the phenomenon of homosexuality in Rom.1:26-27, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 is that he denounces homosexual relationships and practices by both men and women. The pairing of the neologism *arsenokoitês* with *malakós* in 1Cor.6:9-10 strengthens the notion of (adult) male-male relations. The vice lists of prohibited behaviours are not random choices, but follow the sequence (1Cor.6:9-10) and content of the Decalogue.

The sins in Rom.1:26-31 also correspond to Ex.20, but homosexuality replaces adultery. In Rom.1 Paul mentions homosexuality as a particular non-Christian sexual sin and then lists non-sexual sins. In 1Cor.6:9-10 he mentions various sexual sins, but here the list is more comprehensive. Every sexual act that the Bible calls sin is essentially a violation of heterosexual marriage, whether existing or potential in character. The focus of Paul is then on the act, which implicates the *desire* or *orientation* as well. The Genesis textual data is quoted by both Jesus (Mat.19:3-8) and Paul (1Cor.6:12-20; Eph.5:21-32).

Paul's concern in Rom.1:26-27, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim.1:9-10 is to offer evidence of attitudes and behaviour that represent sin, i.e. the distorting effects of godlessness. Homosexual conduct is one such sin. Paul rebukes what he considers sinful behaviour and call people to repentance. *Porneía*

(sexual immorality) is closely linked to the attitude towards homosexual conduct. *Porneía* is all extra-marital sex. There is a total incompatibility between *porneía* and the Kingdom of God. Homosexuality is clearly sexual conduct outside of heterosexual marriage and thus to be regarded as *porneía*. Therefore it is wrong and, in terms of the biblical evaluation thereof, denounced as sinful conduct

Based on Paul's view of *porneía* and his understanding of *sexual purity*, especially his discussion on marriage and celibacy (1Cor.6:12-7:40), I conclude that Paul would not have condoned modern homosexual activity any more than he did in his time. It is all summarised in his response to the Corinthian Christians: *Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I, therefore, take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!* (1Cor.6:15).

There can be no valid appeal made for a third natural sex or alternative sexual orientation within God's created reality. The socio-historical background and the exegesis of the relevant Bible portions do not support such an appeal to the textual data. Homosexuality should be rejected as an abnormal expression of sexuality because biblical sexual morality is defined by heterosexuality. The attitude to homosexuality is throughout the Bible uncompromisingly negative. Only if one turns to extra-biblical authorities can one approve of the practice of homosexuality, but then the Bible – the church's one authority for faith and practice, will have been abandoned.

CHAPTER 11

CHANGING THE THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE

Introduction

In this chapter I will present information to show that the only biblical model for marriage is between a man and a woman. Since the dawn of time every known civilization has practiced marriage and always between a man and a woman. The Bible, and therefore God, prescribes marriage to regulate sexuality and ensure that children grow up with biologically connected mothers and fathers. Thus sexuality is confined to a committed, loving and exclusive relationship between a man and a woman. Marriage between one man and one woman is not merely a private matter but is a public good that is best for society, in particular for the children within a society and the future generations.

Gender matters much in the whole concept of marriage. Same-sex marriage implies there is no relevance to gender and thus this results in the abolition of gender directedness of male-female in marriage. Indeed the abolition of gender is advocated unashamedly today and the concept of male-female for marriage is regarded as an outdated, stereotypic model that has no exclusive place in modern secular society.

Same-sex marriage is paving the way for all sorts of variations and requests for the legalizing of polygamy and polyamory (group marriage) have been made in various countries of the western world. A simple word search on the Internet reveals the agendas of the polygamy and polyamory movements to have their marital requirements legalized. Both these movements are structuring their agendas on the “gay rights model” demanding recognition of minority rights and sexual orientation. Polygamy typically involves one man with multiple wives, whereas polyamory involves a variety of human relationships.¹

Unlike classic polygamy, which features one man and several women, polyamory comprises a bewildering variety of sexual combinations. There are triads of one woman and two men; heterosexual group marriages; groups in which some or all members are bi-sexual; lesbian groups and so forth.

It is obvious to the discerning reader that once same-sex marriage is recognized by the government it becomes nearly impossible to deny minorities with other sexual relationships the same right.

Why all the fuss about marriage? Why all the effort to defend marriage as a male-female gender specific institution? Why do we hold onto the restricted definition that marriage means one man with one woman in a formal exclusive faithful sexual relationship? It is because the word marriage carries meaning and denotes a norm. Marriage is much more than just a man and a woman in a formal, state recognized relationship. Marriage implies that a child needs a father and mother and a stable family situation that results from the fundamental permanent exclusive sexual and domestic relationship we call marriage. Not two men and neither two woman by themselves can produce a child and bring naturally a family into being. This is how God designed humankind and intended it to be: male complements female and female complements male. Even societies who did not know God recognized this as a given and Paul rightfully comments:

For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.... (Romans 1:20)

The truth of what the apostle Paul is saying is well brought under words by Stanton and Meier.³

Marriage is built on the paradox of humanity – that we exist as male and female. The strong benefit of marriage is that males and females are designed with profound differences, and these differences are coordinated in marriage so that each contributes what the other lacks. Together they create something larger than themselves. The polarity of the two genders is inextricably locked into the meaning and practice of marriage.

With same-sex marriage male and female are meaningless and interchangeable entities. Thus marriage is robbed and stripped of its unique and desirable quality in uniting men and women into a voluntarily cooperative relationship where they complement and complete one another in their differences, physically and spiritually. Same-sex marriage changes marriage into what it has never been and into something it was never intended to be.

Every marriage, expressed as monogamous, faithful, exogamous and opposite sex in character, is a declaration to all in society that male and female matters and that male and female are not interchangeable parts. Males need females and females need males by design and intention of the Creator. Every heterosexual marriage declares all other marriages other than between one male with one female to be false and of man's own design and desire.

All societies of all times, since the creation of man, have limited marriage to be between men and women. God is narrow in His definition of marriage and nature portrays this narrowness with remarkable consistency.

The Bible and marriage

God intended marriage from the beginning when He made humankind as male and female. The physical union of one man and one woman in a permanent relationship is what God wanted from the beginning. Marriage then is a naturally occurring condition for humans simply by being human. We are male and female and the divine innate intention for our sexual togetherness is expressed in the urge for marriage, an exclusive condition for two people of the opposite sex. Marriage manifests humanity's God-given innate aptitude for community and family grouping. Marriage is an attribute of the whole human race, irrespective of religion, nation, or culture. This fact had been adequately demonstrated over and over again by anthropology, sociology and archaeology.

Marriage is therefore not peculiar to the Christian church and marriage does not depend upon the admittance or acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Marriage does however, become uniquely Christian through the faith of the community and the couple in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the powerful fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Christian marriage mirrors the Triune community and becomes a celebration of the fruits of the Spirit; love, grace, patience, compassion and faithfulness (Gal.5:22).

In Genesis 2:24 we find the phrase "the two shall become one flesh." Sexuality is expressed "from the beginning" in this promised union between a male and female. Within the created order God had from the beginning vividly and prophetically envisioned through marriage the relationship between Himself and His people, as well as Christ and the New Testament church many millennia later. Since the inception of marriage it always represented the physical, prophetic and eschatological nuance of meaning. Marriage is therefore not one among more ethical concerns but is foundational to God's intention for humankind. Mankind in its bodylines joins together the first things (createdness) and the last things (eschatological) related in the Bible. Even more, marriage serves as an "icon" of our human nature and destiny, written into our bodies by our Creator and Redeemer.⁴

Marriage is defined as a permanent relationship between two people that is monogamous, faithful, exogamous and opposite sex in character. It is a special relationship between a male and a female with the intention to give rise to the smallest "community" in society, the family. The integrity of God's intention for sexuality requires the limitation of quantity, namely "two." Marriage smashes to smithereens when the created paired configuration of a male and a female and the limitation of "two" is violated. Johnson explains as follows:⁵

Monogamous love is inherent in the sign (of marriage). This Israel had to learn slowly, for Israel first had to live under the gracious pressure of the Lord's "jealously," which we translate into theoretical terms by the concept of monotheism. One God – one spouse: in the history of revelation, these truths, monotheism and monogamy, are uncovered as one at the same moment, in the great prophetic age of Hosea and Ezekiel. So that finally these great truths, one God – one spouse, were confessed by Israel in that theologically mature and coherent text of Genesis. Placed at the beginning of the canon, this theological "pre-history" served to pass judgement on the polygamy of the patriarchs and kings as a "defection" from the original will of the creator. This is why in the time of Jesus the monogamous ideal was assumed in Israel.⁶

The human destiny is therefore a two-fold, male-female and marital destiny. "Two" is no mere numerical designation without content. This "two-fold composition" has meaning beyond the prohibition of polygamy, adultery and other sexual orientations. It satisfies no human coherent rationale but it represents the wilful arbitrary inhibition by decision of a sovereign God, disparate with all other possible numerical cohabitation models the human mind can envisage. It is tied exclusively with the male-female constitution of humanity as made in the image of God. Male and female as complementary in the physical and spiritual realms of their existence, reveals "the image of God" by their "one flesh" union in marriage. Sex within marriage enhances God's "image." Any other "one flesh union" is void of the mystery of the physical, prophetic and eschatological intention of the Creator God in the moments of the genesis.

But marriage encompasses much more than "sexual intercourse." The phrase "for this reason a man will leave his father and mother" (Gen. 2:24) and the phrase "your desire would be for your husband" (Gen. 3:16) implicate for marriage the self-donation of the man and woman to each other. This capacity to lose oneself in another and to find oneself in another is only possible because of the created "otherness" to the point where the complementarity of male-female is wilfully discarded for the sake of homosexual "one flesh unions." Sexuality is integrated into heterosexual marriage from the beginning and totally assimilated into self-sacrifice and self-giving, so fundamental to marriage. This marital capacity of the body so vividly displayed in the "physical otherness" of the male and female bodies, is foundational in creation.

Therefore God gave marriage. Marriage and family is blessed by God. He, being the author and definer of marriage, gave the command to mankind in Genesis 1:28 "to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it." This command has normative status in the life of the believer and the church. It cannot be ignored or invalidated by the wave of the hand. "Fruitfulness" has to do with one of the basic profiles of life. From the beginning man and woman have united to create and care for their offspring. This was only possible because of their created "otherness."

Their bodily differences and complementarities as male and female make it possible. Only the female had been created to receive the man sexually and nurture the child born as a result of their "becoming one flesh." Neither the male-male union nor the female-female union in "becoming one flesh" is capable to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it." Homosexual marriage by design and construct is false and a lie because it denies the very nature God intended for marriage. It gives rise to a condition of continuous disobedience to the commands of God.

A man is bodily and psychologically not created to receive another man sexually and a female is bodily and psychologically not created to receive another woman sexually. Thus homosexual marriages are barren by design and construct because it is not based on God's created order but man's own sinful design. Therefore, blessing promised for heterosexual marriage becomes a curse for the homosexual marriage. Sex in homosexual marriage effaces that part of God's "image" intrinsically woven into human sexuality.

"Becoming one flesh" in marriage is not just about having sex within a valid circumstance. Marriage makes the male and female co-creators with God. In marriage man and woman becomes

a sexual whole through uniting what is essential male and essential female. God specifically gave marriage and designed man and woman for this wholeness in terms of anatomy, physiology, psychology, essential stimulation patterns, and essential relational expectations. Same-sex unions because of the “sameness” of the partners cannot provide the missing complement to bring about sexual wholeness. Homosexual marriage requires a total different creation narrative to make it an acceptable alternative to heterosexual marriage.

What did Jesus say about marriage? According to Mark 10:2-12 Jesus spoke about human sexuality by appealing to Genesis 1:27 and 2:24. This is especially important because Jesus was from the genesis (Jn. 1:1-5) and He should therefore know God’s purpose with sexual differentiation and marriage. John in his Gospel says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

So, when the incarnate God, Jesus the Christ appeals to the genesis of everything, one should surely regard it as highly significant. Jesus took Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 as normative for defining sexual practice. He regarded these narratives as prescriptive and not merely descriptive for human sexual practice. Thus it superseded Mosaic Law (allowing for divorce) which Jesus regarded as inferior adaptations to provide for man’s sinful inclinations in contrast of God’s will for marriage.

For Jesus the focal point in sexual practice is the indissolubility of marriage and he takes for granted that there is a “two-some” wholeness in marriage, caused to be so by the simple fact that there be a “male and female” in marriage. Jesus does not beat about the bush. For Jesus the Creator ordained marriage. Only a “man” and a “woman” are biologically capable to becoming “one flesh” through sexual union and that in marriage. “For this reason” presupposes that God made them male and female, complementary beings (1:27) and a man and a woman only may be joined in a permanent one-flesh union (2:24).

Marriage as a lifelong union of a man and a woman is not to Jesus a social construct to be nullified for any reason other than adultery. Both the Bible portions Jesus cited with obvious approval as well as questioning audience that Jesus addressed, presumed the male-female prerequisite. This comes as no surprise because the New Testament as a whole and therefore all the authors of the New Testament books accepted the sexual and marital pronouncements of the Old Testament as “base theology” for their own theologies. Male-female complementarity and heterosexual marriage were accomplishments and not mere theological opinions in first century Judaism.

Gay theology and marriage

The radical gay movement would be satisfied with nothing less than “marriage” as understood in Christian terms. Their agenda would proceed irrespective of biblical verdicts, research results, scientific findings and dialogue. The goal of the homosexual movement is to:

“...fight for same-sex marriage and its benefits and then, once granted, redefine the institution of marriage completely, to demand the right to marry not as a way of adhering to society’s moral codes but rather to debunk America and radically alter an archaic institution.”⁷

It is obvious that such a goal has major implications for the theology of marriage. The biblical expectations for a monogamous lifelong union are not possible within homosexual unions if it is informed by such a goal. It is all too clear that homosexual marriage is not the same as the biblical model of marriage. Former practicing homosexual William Aaron explains why homosexual men do not practice monogamy:

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 arrangements.⁸

Gay theology is based on the deliberate and intentional assumption that homosexual relationships should be “celebrated and affirmed.” In contrast to the rejection of homosexual practice by the Bible whenever homosexual conduct is mentioned, pro-homosexual theologians declare that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. To be able to sustain these assumptions hermeneutical revisionism of biblical texts is practiced.

A homosexual reading of the Bible seeks to re-examine and reread those passages that have traditionally been understood to condemn homosexual practice. Traditional interpretations are doubted, questioned and assumed to be informed by biblical scholars’ heterosexist bias. Sometimes the contexts of Bible portions are compared to the contemporary homosexual context and if it differs it is rejected. Homosexual David Comstock describes the process of revision of biblical texts as follows:

Motivated by the hope that there might be a friendly note for us in Scripture, we have searched for a neglected word or fact that would reverse or call into question traditional interpretations. We have, for example, minimized the importance of Leviticus... We have argued that the sin of Sodom was not homosexuality,... We have observed that Jesus said nothing about homosexuality, and that Paul was not critical of lesbians and gay men themselves, but of heterosexual men indulging in homosexual practices. Some have argued that the kind of homosexuality condemned in the Bible is pederasty, not loving, caring, consenting relationships between adults. ... I would suggest that our approach to the Bible become less apologetic and more critical – that we approach it not as an authority from which we want approval, but a document whose shortcomings must be cited.⁹

The above being the case The Gay Liberation Front for example notes that they:

...expose the institution of marriage as one of the most insidious and basic sustainers of the system. The family is the microcosm of oppression.¹⁰

This typifies the radical attitude towards traditional marriage, especially in its Christian understanding. The Christian insistence on monogamy in marriage is regarded by the homosexual movement as suppressing sexual liberty that is the chief aim of gay liberation.

Norman Pittenger has argued that a non-monogamous, open relationship should be considered a morally sanctioned form of Christian life-style. It is often argued by proponents of gay theology that open relationships, which are essentially sexual non-exclusivity life-styles, are actually a liberating experience.¹¹ In fact Pittenger argues that in order to insure a lasting relationship, both partners should be allowed the freedom to engage in occasional sexual contact with others:

It may very well be the case that now and again a loyal partner in a gay union will engage in what I have styled an occasional contact – for fun, because of affection or liking, as manifesting friendship, or... simply because of plain lust or urgent and irrepressible sexual desire... But if this is understood, accepted, seen as part of life, there is little likelihood that the primary union will be broken up.

The closed character of marriage, being monogamous, faithful, heterosexual and lifelong, is seen by most expositors of homosexual theology as a negative aspect, detrimental to the homosexual union. Some gay advocates argue that gay unions or relationships cannot be compared to and

should not be patterned on heterosexual marriage covenants in terms of exclusivity or ethics. Other homosexual theologians again do argue for the superiority of a monogamous relationship.

However, it is argued as well that the Bible elates examples of open marriages, so-called three-way or triangular relationships, and Abraham, Sarah and Hager provide then the fitting example. Macourt thinks that the model of heterosexual monogamous marriage should be strived for but should not be made the norm for homosexual unions, neither for sexual relationships in general. Openshaw argues that homosexual marriage is the constitutional right of lesbians and gay men and the church has no other obligation than to affirm this basic right by marrying them.¹² Mark Olsen summarizes his view as follows.¹³

...I have seen God blessing and using homosexual Christians who have united with each other in loving sexual relationships. In faithful, committed relationships, gay and lesbian Christians find God at work. We must not be so attached to a few verses of Scripture – or our own interpretations of them – that we miss this witness of God’s Spirit.

Pittenger, O’Neill and others conclude that the conventional heterosexual marriage should not be made to be the blueprint for homosexual marriages or unions.¹⁴

Fidelity in the closed marriage is the measure of limited love, diminished growth and conditional trust. Fidelity is then redefined... It is loyalty and faithfulness to growth, to integrity of self and respect for the other; not to a sexual and psychological bondage to each other... New possibilities for additional relationships exist, and open (as opposed to limited) love can expand to include others...beside[s] your mate.

Although Johnstone in his book *Gays Under Grace* proposes and pleads for a more conservative homosexual ethic he is but a lonely voice calling out for reform against a vast theological liberal homosexual majority.

Lesbian feminists are some of the most outspoken critics of marriage arguing that marriage had been traditionally employed to enslave and brutalize women. The Bible is seen as a heterosexist patriarchal book characterized by the institution of heterosexual marriage. This enslaved women by the role of housekeeper, rendering them dependant on the male breadwinner.¹⁵

The political legalizing of gay/lesbian marriage is a want because it is seen as having huge potential to destabilize the biblical gendered definition of marriage. Marriage is all about discrimination and not sin, a human right and not a godly institution. Granting “marriage” to homosexuals is seen as the issue that would most fully test the dedication of Christians who are not gay to give full equality for homosexual people. Today there are very few government policies in the world that explicitly discriminates against homosexuals. The right to marry or establish domestic partnerships have been granted by most governments to homosexual couples worldwide. But “marriage” in the church has remained the last heterosexual bastion to be breached.

Gay theology aims to refute the Bible’s normative claim that marriage ought to be male-female by definition. To sidestep this biblical prerequisite for marriage it is argued that the dominant role of marriage is and should be to bring about oneness. That is the spiritual and personal oneness of the committed couple and not pro-creativity. Therefore, the need for male-female complementarity in marriage is annulled if having children is the issue, and biological differences are negated if sexual intimacy is the issue. Gay theologians contextually argue that being capable to produce children should not be a necessary condition for marriage; neither should male-female complementarity be normative because post-modern society is a non-discriminative human rights society no longer informed by the Bible’s preconditions for marriage.

New authority contrary to the biblical norm of male-female complementarity is generated in modern society for example Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Canada, Spain, Belgium and South Africa. Based on this new history it is therefore deduced that marriage must not necessarily be between a husband and wife but, rather, that marriage should be a social and political construct that serves social and political functions. Obviously the Bible is out of line with this view and homosexuals demand that the modern church as the proclaimer of the Good News ought to reconsider archaic interpretations of Bible portions with reference to marriage.

Gay theologians contend that Christ's teachings, recorded in the Gospel books of the New Testament, contains no condemnation of same-sex unions or intimacy. Christ's message is rather seen to affirm charity to others, compassion for those different from oneself and God's equal love for every human being irrespective of gender, race or sexual orientation. Comstock looks at the ministry of Jesus and says:

Jesus' ministry, to be sure, was remarkable, but it was not complete. Jesus is, for example, observed to have broken traditional barriers in his relationships with regard to women; and yet his organization of twelve disciples were all male (as it has been recorded in the Bible) and has provided for a model of patriarchy that holds for structuring church leadership to this day. We have the task of expanding and altering that ministry and not accepting it as a finished product... I do not think, though, that we have from Jesus the encouragement to change that which is oppressive in our tradition and to break or repeal those rules, laws and immoral lessons in the Bible that serve death and pain.¹⁶

Finding thus the authority to reinterpret and change Bible teachings on marriage and sexuality gay theologians have revised the traditional sense of marriage to:

Marriage being the ultimate form of friendship achievable by sexually attracted persons.

Such a definition does not require heterosexual orientation and simply believes that marriage is based on an agreement between two people that they will live together as one.

A Biblical theology of marriage

A biblical theology of marriage ought to include the following:

- God designed humans at creation for heterosexual relations.
- The genesis of marriage allows only for male-female marriage.
- Man and woman complement each other sexually and physically.
- Sex is to be confined to male-female marriage.
- Homosexual relations are a departure from God's design for humans.
- Homosexual marriage is a perversion of male-female marriage.

Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:18-24 sets the standard for a male-female prerequisite for marriage. The cultural command from God to the couple to increase and fill the earth would be laughable and totally inappropriate if that was not the case. The story of the human creation stresses compatibility and complementarity, not male dominance. "Male and female" in combination express God's image. It is significant that Jesus took the creation of "male and female" as the basis not just for procreative acts but also for the wholesome joining of two in one flesh which is not possible in same-sex unions.

The Creator God ordained marriage. Marriage is to be understood theologically; it is not a social construct. It is meant to be a lifelong union of one man with one woman for the purpose of forming an enduring sexual whole in an exclusive relationship. Jesus clearly agreed with this standard. Jesus was so adamant regarding the sexual purity of the married couple that he even declared that the man marrying a divorced woman committed adultery (Mk. 10:2-12; Lk. 16-18; Mt. 5:32).

He further narrowed down lifelong monogamy by explicitly demanding that the heart and mind are both to be committed to the standard set at creation and no fornication is to be allowed there. Jesus rescinded men's assumed right to divorce their wives in the light of the standard set at creation. Jesus, quoting Genesis 1:27 and 2:24, affirms that sexual intimacy, partnership, and lifelong commitment are indispensable constituents of the bond that comes into being in marriage.

The phrase "it is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18) is no free ticket to indulge in sexual relationships of any kind. Although one may argue that it is not good for humans to be alone, that is without a partner in marriage, it is far worse for humans to settle in a homosexual marriage. To be alone is no sin but an incident of deprivation while homosexual marriage is an intrinsic sinful phenomenon violating a core standard established by God. There are no assurances in this life that a lonely person will find a sexually satisfying marriage partner, let alone that peace, harmony and understanding will prevail at all times in a marriage. But, to engage in one of the harshest forms of sexual immorality (same-sex intercourse) under the masquerade of homosexual marriage to avoid loneliness, is simply put, deliberate wickedness. Gagnon explains.

In the scope of Scripture's entirety, "becoming one flesh" with the sexual counterpart is far from God's only answer to the problem of being alone, even if it is a significant answer.... Close intimate friendships – the *koinonia* or "partnership" with fellow believers – must always be kept in view as a counterweight to individual loneliness. It is not necessary to have sex with persons to be bonded to them.... Singleness, even when experienced as a difficult deprivation, is not sin; engaging in same-sex intercourse is.¹⁷

The recognition of homosexual marriage is something that the Christian church and the Christian believer cannot allow and still remain faithful to the God of truth. Marriage is God's institution. He sets its terms and determines the prerequisites. It is also noteworthy that the Lord Jesus allowed the character of marriage as being male-female, between a man and his wife, to stand unchallenged (Mt. 19:10). Every instance of marriage in the Bible conforms to this pattern. There is not a single example of a marriage other than heterosexual marriage. The whole history from the genesis to the expected eschatological apocalypse relates one standard for marriage only; marriage is heterosexual.

CHAPTER 12

CHANGING THE THEOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

Introduction

The traditional family is under attack and not only from the side of the homosexual community. The following statistics are most disturbing:

In many parts of Europe, a generation of children is growing up with no idea of what the traditional family is like. In countries such as Norway, Iceland, and Denmark, it has been decades since many children have known what it is like to live in a traditional family with a father and mother.

More than half the children in Europe are born to unwed mothers. In Sweden, 54 percent of all children are born out of wedlock. In Norway, the figure is 49 percent, in Denmark, 46 percent, and in Iceland, it is over 65 percent. And in America, 26.7 percent of children born to white mothers and 68.8 percent of children born to black mothers are out of wedlock. Over 43 percent of all children born in America will live in a single parent home sometime in their childhood.¹

Homosexual marriages would surely compound the problem. Edna Brattstroem, professor of comparative literature at Stockholm University, says.

For the children, it makes no difference whether their parents are married or not. Traditional family values are not important to us anymore. They are something we do research on.²

Yet this is not the issue at hand when we talk from a biblical viewpoint about homosexual marriage and families. The above statistics are most disheartening and to be lamented, however, they still result from heterosexual interaction. Homosexual family constitution attacks the very core and essence of the traditional biblical family model. The male-female, father-mother model is replaced with the alien male-male and female-female social construct.

Reverend Robert Wood, a United Church of Christ minister has said:

Homosexuality is the God-created way of protecting the human race on this planet from the suicide of overpopulation and we should pause to give God thanks for the presence of homosexuality and its adverse effect on the birth rate.³

This viewpoint is contra the biblical view that God ordained the male/female family unit. Loomis says that homosexuals do not have to contend with:

...pregnancy, diaphragms, daily complaints, marriage contracts and divorce settlement, alimony, babies that screech in the night and adultery.⁴

The family has to be redefined in terms of the theological redefinition of homosexuality. Germond says that we can now only talk in terms of the multiplicity of forms of what might constitute a family. He continues:

The idealisation of the family (the traditional or biblical family form) also fails to recognize that within the New Testament itself there exists a powerful critique of the family as barrier to true discipleship. Luke 14:26 read, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even life itself, cannot be my disciple.' This terrible pronouncement points out how a family, a family in any society, can be a snare: it can so entrap its members that if one of them severs connections with it in response to an astonishing summons to a new practice of sharing, of opening closed doors, of breaking with the received ideology, he or she will be repulsed.⁵

According to gay theology all discussion about the family in general is absurd.

Homosexual couples (gay and lesbian) are pioneering new family configurations. Because such couples can have no children by their own endeavour, a relationship with a third party can be and is often included to realize a family of choice. A third party must be involved to have children. Some same-sex couples bring children from previous marriages and relationships into the same-sex family. Lesbians have children through artificial insemination, a once-off sexual encounter with a male of choice or adoption. Gay men have children through surrogacy, adoption and other arrangements.

Accepting same-sex families requires the rejection of gender. Same-sex families proclaim that gender does not matter and that children are as successfully brought up in same-sex families as when they are raised in heterosexual families. The traditional biblical notion of a family with a father, mother and children, all living under the same roof, has become something of a relic of a past era. If the traditional family becomes unnecessary, the whole nation will be living in sin and children will be raised in sinful circumstances.

Marriage has not been forced on culture by any particular religion, secular government, or dictatorial power structure from which it must be released. God is the architect and establisher of marriage. God's divine purpose with marriage has always been to make the family secure and to ensure that children have the benefits of both their father and mother. God rooted it in all human nature.

The Bible and the family

The origin of the Christian family is imbedded in the Genesis narratives concerned with the creation of man and woman and the subsequent command to multiply and fill the earth. This view is upheld by Jesus when he affirmed the monogamous, permanent heterosexual marriage as the universal norm for the family. For the authors of the Old Testament, Jesus, Paul and other New Testament authors, the creation of humans as male and female (Gen. 1) and heterosexual union that constitutes marriage (Gen. 2) lie at the basis of the totality of Scripture and Scripture's comments on sexuality, marriage and the family.

Redefining the family to accommodate same-sex couples will never make it to be a family by God's standard. It would only succeed in assisting in the inevitable destruction of the family as we have known it since the genesis. No human society – not one – except our own, has ever embraced homosexual marriage. Since the genesis, marriage is always heterosexual, everywhere, and at all times in the history of humankind. It is not part of the tradition or history of any culture and has never been taken to be equal to natural marriage. There is no society where women alone care for each other and their children and no society where fathers are not expected to care for their children and the mothers to whom they were born. Such notions are totally foreign to the Bible's teaching on marriage and the family.

The relationship between fathers and their sons and mothers and their daughters lies at the heart of the biblical family. The family is the environment in which values are formed, norms are taught and future generations are prepared. The Bible prescribes that children should have parents and in the Bible these are called "father and mother" (Ex. 20:12; Lk. 18:20; Mk. 7:10-12). How then can two men or two women act as parents when the very term from the beginning of mankind has referred to a father and mother?

Many marriages and many types of families are found in the Bible. But the one kind of marriage not found, and the one type of family not encountered is of the same-sex type. Within God's will for mankind same-sex relations, whether in marriage relationship, familial configuration or casual

sexual encounter are not ordained. Same-sex marriage and families are not complementary, parents being the same-sex, and it lacks the ability to produce children. It is a non-perpetuating entity, doomed to failure by its very essence which is contrary to God's will.

Gay theology and the family

Gay theology concerning marriage and family starts from the basic premise that gay is good, therefore same-sex marriage is good for gay people and same-sex marriage civilizes gay people.⁶ Contemporary homosexual apologists reiterate that the community shapes their morality. Although the whole Bible can shape their theology, only the whole community acting together can decide which ethical standards should prevail in present-day society.⁷ This gives rise to a contextual reading of the Bible portions concerned with homosexuality.

Within Gay theology we find very explicit teachings on the family. The one feature of the homosexual family other than the fact that the parents are not male-female is the truth that same-sex couples cannot have children through their own efforts, a third party must be involved: a former different sex spouse, a sperm donor, a surrogate mother, a parent or agency offering a child for adoption. Thus the homosexual family always carries with it the burden of third party involvement and the subsequent complexities it brings with it. It also demands novel ways of interpreting Bible portions with regard to incest, sexual immorality, adultery, monogamy, etc.

Gay theology aims to radically change the historical biblical concept of the family. Gay apologists argue that families need not be heterosexual and they need not procreate. Homosexual activist Eskridge hopes that gay marriage will dethrone the traditional biblical family in favour of "families we choose." Thus the definition of family is stretched beyond the historical bonds of blood, adoption and matrimony. Two irreconcilable understandings of the family cannot exist side by side very long. Radical changes would be wrought to the concept of family as the conflicting understandings fight it out for first prize.

This is why people like Eskridge and others that agree with him advocate that the traditional concept of the family must be restructured – if not destroyed. The Gay Liberation Front said that the family is the microcosm of oppression⁸ while the National Coalition of Gay Organizations demanded in February 1972 already the:

Repeal of all legislative provisions that restrict the sex or number of persons entering into a marriage unit and extension of legal benefits of marriage to all persons who cohabit regardless of sex and numbers.

Legalizing homosexual marriage has enormous potential to destabilize and reorder the traditional gendered definition of marriage and family. A whole menu of family options becomes available to gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender persons. The original concept of the family could irrevocably be changed given enough time if marriage is allowed to be redefined and homosexual conduct accepted as a normal expression of sexuality.

Homosexual theologians or religious apologists believe that the Genesis narrative does not forbid homosexual marriage and subsequently same-sex families. Gay couples cannot procreate but, they reason, these verses cannot be seen as a model for all couples in all times. They also believe that Romans 1 does not apply to monogamous, loving, long-lasting homosexual relationships. The mind-set underlying gay theology is a contextual one; a Bible portion has to be interpreted in the context of the time it was written and therefore that Bible portion may no longer be relevant today. Furthermore the current context and beliefs concerning homosexuality validates or invalidates what Bible portions are applicable today.

It is held that contemporary human society and not theology and revelation should determine the configuration of the family. Theology and revelation cannot limit God's will for another day and time. Exegesis and socio-historical research of the Bible can therefore affirm that biblical authors regard homosexuality as sin, but does this mean it should be normative for the twenty first century homosexual? A new context establishes how much weight should be given to the Bible's pronouncements on homosexuality.

A Biblical theology and the family

A biblical theology of the family accepts Genesis 1 and 2 as the source of God's intention for the configuration of the family. The biblical concepts of marriage and family are indissoluble entities because they are intrinsically interwoven from the genesis and fully conversant with God's perfect will for perpetuating humankind. Biblical marriage and family satisfy the two basic stipulations ordained by God:

- Genesis 1:27-28 – And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; **male and female created He them**. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish 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 upon the earth.
- Genesis 2:20-24 – And the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the heavens, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found a help meet for him. And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, **made he a woman, and brought her unto the man**. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh**.

It satisfied in the first place the stipulation that both marriage and family ought to result from a male-female (heterosexual) bond. Secondly the male-female stipulation for marriage and family is the only condition that by itself has the capability to produce children. No third party intervention is needed. Same-sex marriage is doomed from the day of its commencement because it cannot satisfy these two prerequisites set by God at the genesis.

The fact that some heterosexual couples cannot have children does not *ipso facto* mean they do not satisfy the prerequisites and therefore homosexual marriage is acceptable. Not having children does not negate the fact that heterosexual parents have the capability to do so even though the capability is non-expressionable for reasons beyond their own doing. The simple fact of the matter is that God gives or withholds children to parents:

- Genesis 30:22 – and God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.
- 1 Samuel 1:15 – but unto Hannah he gave a double portion; for he loved Hannah, but Jehovah had shut up her womb.
- Psalms 127:3 – Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

Marriage and family comes natural to humanity because it is rooted in the binary creation of humanity as male and female. Much as people do not know, recognize or hate the Designer it cannot be denied that we are born with the clear markings of the Designer's blueprint for

humanity's survival; we are born male and female. Sociologist Sara McLanahan from Princeton University wrote:

If we were asked to design a system for making sure that children's basic needs were met, we would probably come up with something quite similar to the two-parent ideal. Such a design, in theory, would not only ensure that children had access to the time and money of two adults, it would also provide a system of checks and balances that promoted quality parenting. The fact that both parents have a biological connection to the child would increase the likelihood that the parents would identify with the child and be willing to sacrifice for that child, and it would reduce the likelihood that either parent would abuse the child.⁹

Lutzer makes the point that the family was to be the means of propagating the truth of God's word from one generation to another.¹⁰

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 – And these words, which I command you this day, shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the door-posts of your house, and upon your gates.

In the family the fathers were to teach the children, sons and daughters the law of God. The family is the precious environment where God wants biblical values and morals to be nurtured in the lives of children.

It is highly significant that God uses both the genesis established principles of heterosexual marriage and family as metaphors in the Old and New Testaments to illustrate and represent God and Israel, as well as Christ and the church. This metaphor rejects any possibility other than male-female, husband-wife, and the bridegroom-bride possibilities. Using this metaphor throughout the Bible pervasively allows no possibility for same-sex figurative language let alone real life situations. Same-sex marriage and same-sex families are consistently and without exemption rejected in what the Bible explicitly say about it, in what it does not say about it and in what the Bible say about heterosexuality.

Why does the Bible not make allowance for possibilities other than male-female marriage and heterosexual parenthood? The Bible confirms a single standard set right at the beginning when all was created – a male shall marry a female and the family will have a male and female as parents. Same-sex marriage and parenthood are perversions of the norm, the manifestations of the deceitful heart of humanity.

Same-sex family is but one of the many types of "groupings" demanded by contemporary humanity, other than the one man and one women biblical model, in defiance of Scripture. These "groupings" spring forth from various sexual orientations other than heterosexuality that are today accepted as "normal" for example, homosexuality, bi-sexuality, transgender sexuality, pederasty and paedophilia. Today there are demands before the secular courts and church councils for marriage recognition based on polygamy (more than one wife), polyandry (more than one husband) and polyamory (multiple groups of men and women). With same-sex marriage these are all sinful perversions of the biblical model.

The church cannot allow the redefinition of marriage and the family. The redefinition of the family will not stop with same-sex marriage. The inevitable result of tampering with God's model for marriage and the family would bring about various sinful humanistic concepts of "family." Christianity ought not to allow the traditional biblical family to be perverted.

EPILOGUE

Epilogue

The church is nearing the limits of toleration at quite a liberal pace. It finds itself within the mainstream of liberal political thinking, accommodating culture at the cost of evangelical truths. The church is fast becoming another interest group among many, helping actively in the deconstruction of evangelical Christianity, and aiming at adopting the ideas and practices of liberal culture.

Within evangelical Christianity a weakened church opts, with little resistance, for theological revisionism as well as social and political liberalism, especially in the area of sexuality. Although the vast majority of Christians find this paradigm shift irritating, it has been tolerated and very few church members can muster the energy to resist and speak out against the church's capitulation into the hands of theological revisionism.

On the issue of sexuality, we have arrived at the limits of toleration. It is my firm belief that decisions by church denominations to normalise homosexuality as a normal variant of sexuality, are exceeding the limits of tolerance.

This paradigm shift is vividly displayed in the attitudes and decisions of various denominations and theological seminaries. The content of the revisionist agenda is summarised well in the words of Benne:

The gist of the revisionist argument contends that there really is no persisting, discernible sexual identity tied to the obvious differences in biological form. Traditional differences, they argue, are oppressive cultural definitions imposed by heterosexual males that have proven to be highly relative, both from culture to culture and from person to person within a culture. Thus, they counsel that love between persons be the sole criterion governing sexual relations. 'All you need is love.' The 'appropriate to form' qualifications should be dropped, at least as it pertains to homosexual relations. Homosexual relations are not disordered or imperfect, only different. There is less interest in dropping the 'appropriate to form' qualification with regard to incest, pedophilia and bestiality though it is difficult to see why those barriers should not also fall, given their argument.¹

But, thank God, the revisionist argument does not convince every theologian and church member. Many are still holding fiercely to their traditional theological positions. They do so because the biblical position on homosexual conduct seems fairly clear and straightforward: homosex is sin. This conclusion is unequivocally supported by the heterosexual attitude and structure of the Bible. Germond is a typical spokesperson for the revisionists when he labels the Bible as *heterosexist* and *misogynistic* in its sexual orientation. This judgement then renders the Bible useless in giving guidance within the current controversy.

Despite the revisionists' efforts to legitimise their viewpoint in reformed theology, there is not the slightest evidence in either the Bible or Christian tradition to legitimate homosex and homosexual relationships. Starting with the creation stories in Genesis, the Bible as a whole rejects homosexual acts whenever it is mentioned. Pro-homosexual theologians and activists, in a unanimous voice, cannot but admit that the Bible is consistent in its negative judgement of homosexual conduct.

In their effort to circumnavigate the negative judgement of the Scriptures, theological revisionists have debased the biblical message of homosexual conduct and deprived the Bible of the intended meanings of the Bible portions speaking on the issue of homosexual conduct. To pretend that the Bible approves – through revision of the relevant Bible portions – of certain types of homosexual relationships is to be fundamentally wrong. We simply cannot revise the Bible message to say what it does not intend to say. We either accept the judgement as it stands or reject it in favour of

our own convictions or presuppositions with which we approach the Bible and that would lead us into unconstrained sexuality.

The church seems to have lost its biblical message on sexual ethics in favour of a cultural *smorgasbord* of sexual diversity where the once exceptional has become normal. Johnson criticises the church in general for lack of integrity to stand up and be counted. He says:

We are so compromised by our pastoral silence regarding sexual behaviour, so embarrassed by our personal failures, so jaded by the general ethical chaos, that clarity or courage on the matter of homosexuality seems out of reach ... The 'need' for sexual expression, the quasi-religious status granted to romantic love, the 'right' to happiness, the shrinking of marriage down to a single dimension of mutual happiness, the general separation of sexual love from fecundity, the naturalization of lust: these cultural orthodoxies and influences hem us in. The call for chastity can be heard only as the imposing of a cruel and unusual punishment.²

The current confusion in the church is the result of theological failure to know what the Bible says about sexuality as well as marriage. The relentless and increasing challenge by the homosexual fraternity to its normative teaching on sexuality has left the church reeling in a confused daze, quite prepared to give up its Holy Book to be secularised by the liberal homosexual agenda. The push for endorsement of homosexual practice represents a focussed attack today on the Bible's teaching on human sexuality. The debate on homosex and the Bible acutely raises the question of the Bible's place and authority in the church.

In the end the outcomes of the controversy over homosex and its implications for the church can only be decided conclusively on religious grounds. History shows that no society (and this includes the religious society) that has sanctioned unconstrained sexuality has survived long. Prager, a reformed Jewish cultural commentator writes:

Man's nature, undisciplined by values, will allow sex to dominate his life and society. ... It is not overstated to say that the Torah's prohibition of non-marital sex made the creation of Western civilization possible. Societies that did not place boundaries around sexuality were stymied in their development. The subsequent dominance of the Western world can, to a significant extent, be attributed to the sexual revolution, initiated by Judaism and later carried forward by Christianity.³

The essence of the entire debate about homosexuality is inextricably grafted in the Christian concept of sin. The whole idea that homosex represents sinful conduct, and is therefore to be regarded as wrong, entered modern culture from the Jewish and Christian faiths. The pagan cultures of the world not rooted in the worship of the God of Israel, regard homosexual conduct as perfectly acceptable and normative behaviour. The Bible describes most sins as pleasurable, natural and self-reinforcing to the point of compulsion. They are, in effect, addictions.⁴ Paul confirms this truth when he writes:

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion (Rom.1:24-27).

Thus the Bible highlights a vital and integral dimension of sin. Sin is not only increasingly addictive, but a definite form of idolatry.⁵ This truth manifests itself in the way modern people regard most restrictions (moral restrictions) as archaic, arbitrary and unnecessary.

This truth surfaces within the homosexual agenda as well. Homosexual theology redefines the sin of homosex in such a way that only homosexual promiscuity (the perversion of the perversion) is regarded as sin. Homosex is normalised and seen as the one end of the linear presentation of sexuality while heterosexuality forms the other end. In the middle we find bi-sexuality and around it all expressions of sexuality (transgender, transsexual, cross dresser, transvestite, pederast, paedophile). However, the Bible not only identifies homosex as an error or a wrongful act, but it also clearly tells us that those who engage in such acts will not see God. The fact that the Bible regards homosex as sin cannot be changed. The revisionist theologians therefore follow the only option available to them and wilfully strip homosex of its sinfulness. Thus, the theology of sin, marriage and the family is changed to comply with predetermined outcomes in which homosex is regarded as good and a gift from God.

This fact is amply illustrated by various voices within the homosexual theological movement and by exponents of homosexual theology. Gay theology is a reaction against the so-called conservative churchianity⁶ that underwrites the conviction that homosexual conduct is sin. This conservative viewpoint is judged to provide a simplistic account of human nature and sexuality. Macourt states it in clear terms that we have a modern generation today that subscribes to a different set of religious norms and values when he writes:

The gay movement exists. More to the point there are an amazingly large number of (mainly young) men and women who are happy to have or to seek same-sex relationships. The problem of homosexuality is no longer the problem of those who have or who seek same-sex relationships but; it is the problem of those who cannot, or will not, understand that reality.⁷

What is called for is a heterosexual adjustment, a theological paradigm shift, a change in theological thinking to justify homosexual conduct in terms of the Bible in a modern society - which is morally more inclined to the humanist secular worldview than the biblical worldview. Like other minority groups (feminists, bisexuals, transvestites), homosexuals have developed a sub-culture – a way of life – and a theology to cope with religious arguments against their sexual lifestyle.

Some people will be amazed, perhaps even shocked, to realize that such a thing as a church for homosexuals exists.⁸ An invitational leaflet of the Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco (M.C.C.-USA) states:

Today there is a church where the gays and the straights worship God side by side. Some churches give lip service approval to the gay Christian. Yet their members snub the gays. Today there is a church which accepts homosexuals as normal persons. That church is the Metropolitan Community Church. This is a church where gay lovers can come to the altar rail together. This is a church that has a social life that is geared to the gays. M.C.C. is a church where you can renew your childhood faith in Christ and yet not hide nor be ashamed of your sexual inclination. Why don't you renew your faith in Christ this Sunday at M.C.C.?⁹

An invitational and information booklet of the Reforming Church (South Africa) states:

The Bible acknowledges the fact that not all people are the same. No expectation is created that all people must be or become the same. Galatians 3:28 states clearly that man's sexuality is not the norm whereby God regards us. All that the Lord seeks when He looks in your heart is whether there is faith. If you believe, you have the right to be a child of God. This is the basic premise of the Reforming Church.¹⁰

It is obvious that the evangelical heterosexual Christian is faced with the issue of whether homosexual conduct is a legitimate life style, or sickness, or sin. In the end it is basically a matter of sin and righteousness. Today the evangelical Church is challenged to give answers to the following questions for which the homosexual Church has already found its own theological answers:

- Will the mainstream churches accept that heterosexuality is not the God-ordained norm for all humanity?
- Will they accept homosexuals at every level of their institutions?
- Will they undertake to minister to the needs of people in terms of their sexual orientation?¹¹

Answers to these questions have direct implications for what the evangelical Christian believes the Bible teaches about sin, sexuality, marriage and the family. If there is no understanding for the Bible's view on these concepts, the members of the Christian church body will be persuaded by the gay theology agenda to accept a totally unbiblical view of these concepts as the declaration by the National Council of Churches shows:

Jesus Christ calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves. As Christian clergy we embrace the gay and lesbian persons as our neighbours. From our reading of Scripture and from our pastoral experiences, we believe there is sufficient evidence to conclude that homosexuality is neither sickness nor sin.¹²

Homosexual practices cannot be tolerated by the church. There can be no ecclesiastical blessing of homosexual unions/marriages. Homosexual marriage is a linguistic and a moral monstrosity, a contradiction in terms. Homosexual conduct is according to the Bible, sin! The church finds itself in a sea of moral confusion. The small but influential homosexual minority is taking the church to task and is eroding the biblical theology of sin, marriage, family and sexuality.

There can be no acknowledgement of a so-called conservative homosexuality because any homosexual conduct is in essence already promiscuous and therefore sexually liberal. Homosexual behaviour is un-Christian and unbiblical. The quest to legitimize homosexual practices perverts the biblical theologies of sin, marriage, sexuality and family. Consequently it damages the accepted pattern, norms and values of the family unit, which is the basis of all human societies.

Homosexuality militates against the family and destroys the function of the family as the last place where affectivity can be cultivated. Homosexual conduct is corruptive by its very nature and corrosive to familial structures in general. Homosexual practice destroys the joy of family relationships and affections. The church should by no means encourage homosexual practice by legitimizing or validating it through ecclesiastical sanctioning of gay unions/marriage. The lie that homosexual practice is normal and that homosexuality is an acceptable sexual attitude should be countered by sound biblical preaching and blameless heterosexual Christian living.

PART THREE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Which orientation is valid? Homosexual, heterosexual or bi-sexual?

Homosexual orientation is the hype word today. Homosexual orientation says: a person *in his sexuality is focussed on a person of the same sex and not a person of the opposite sex*. It is frequently assumed that the Bible writers did not know about mutually caring same-sex relationships. It is further believed that such mutually caring same-sex relationships originated in modern times. It is also the contention of the pro-homosexual lobby that there is no Greek or Hebrew word for homosexual; the word homosexual was first used in 1869.¹

This last statement is correct. There is no word in either of the two languages describing what we understand to be a *homosexual* which transliterates from Hebrew or Greek into *homosexual*. However, both languages do contain phrases describing a person who engages in *homosex*, just as the word *homosexual* does in English. Collins Dictionary (2000) defines homosexual as *a person who is sexually attracted to members of the same sex*. The Bible's definition of a homosexual is, *a man (who) lies with a man as one lies with a woman (Lev. 20:13); men exchanged natural relations (sex) with a woman and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts (sex) with other men (Rom. 1:27), and some were bedders of men (1 Cor. 6:9)*. It is absolutely clear that the Bible describes precisely what we today understand to be a *homosexual*. There is no difference between the homosexual act of antiquity and the modern homosexual act. The act defines the doer thereof as a homosexual.

To help understand the concept of sexual orientation the American Psychological Association (1999) made available the following definition:

Sexual Orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction to another person. Sexual orientation exists along a continuum that ranges from exclusive homosexuality to exclusive heterosexuality and includes various forms of bisexuality. Bisexual persons can experience sexual, emotional and affectional attraction to both their own sex and the opposite sex. Persons with a homosexual orientation are sometimes referred to as gay (both men and women) or as lesbian (women only). Sexual orientation is different from sexual behaviour because it refers to feelings and self-concept. Persons may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behaviours.²

This, however, is a dangerous definition because it assumes three *sexual natures* and accepts homosexuality as a normal variant of sexuality.

Though every person experience an orientation, it is a diabolic delusion to believe that feelings and desires are intrinsic to who a person is, and therefore self-identify accordingly. Orientation is very fluid². Psychiatrist, Dr Dan Siegel wrote a profound, thought provoking statement:⁴

“Objectivity permits us to have a thought or feeling and not become swept away by it. It recruits the ability of the mind to be aware that its present activities – our thoughts, feelings, memories, beliefs, and intentions – are temporary and, moreover, that they are not the totality of who we are. They are not our identity.”

Psychologist, Dr Nicolosi enlightens us on how two different world views influence peoples' perception of themselves and their inevitable self-identification and actions:⁵

'It is our *feelings and desires* that tell us who we really are.' These words summarize the foundational assumption of the gay and transgender movement.

According to this philosophy, if a woman (like Chastity Bono) says she feels like a man inside, then she must *be* a man, and we must begin to address her as 'he.' Similarly, if a man feels homosexually attracted, then he must be gay. Destiny has simply created such people to be different, and we must celebrate that differentness and never question it.

But there is a different worldview, supported by millennia of tradition as well as decades of clinical observation that paints a very different picture.

Our bodies tell us who we are. Following in a long-established --and never scientifically disproven--psychodynamic tradition, reparative therapists see homosexuality as a defence against the trauma of same-sex attachment loss that occurred in early childhood.

According to this psychodynamic tradition, the man with same-sex attraction (SSA) has failed to fully identify with his own gender, so he romanticizes what he lacks--he falls in love with the masculinity of another man. But this does not mean homosexuality reflects his true nature, for a man's body was designed for the opposite sex. It was not designed for oral or-- more particularly, anal intercourse, which is destructive to his anatomy.

The Judeo-Christian concept of humanity and traditional psychodynamic psychology share the same understanding: the concept that human nature is supposed to '*function according to its design.*' Traditional psychology and the Judeo-Christian worldview both envision humankind as part of a *universal heterosexual natural order*, where some people will always struggle with SSA, but SSA is not intrinsic to who they are. In fact, many such men will heed the call to 'come back home' to their true nature--the nature made plain to them by their biological design.

Homosexual acts for most of human history have not been associated with a homosexual identity. In fact there has not been a word, homosexual, or "gay" until very recently. Even the distinctions of heterosexuality and bi-sexuality are a modern invention. It would seem that the concept of heterosexuality was only used since those who practice perverted sex (homosex and bi-sexual intercourse) began to view themselves as a special group of people. So, the word heterosexual was invented to categorise the other 98% of the world (homosexual people comprise about 2% of the world population). God did not make homosexuals, bi-sexuals or heterosexuals -- just men and women.

It is wrong to assume that the Bible writers had no knowledge about mutually caring same-sex relationships or orientation (*Graeco-Roman sexual morality*, chapter one). Numerous examples of emotional statements about the beauty of same-sex love are to be found in Graeco-Roman literature. Paul probably knew several types of homosexual relationships and practices among both men and women.

The pro-homosex author Boswell⁶ lists the following examples: *Euripides was the lover of Agathon when Euripides was seventy two and Agathon was forty; Parmenides and Zenon were in love when the former was sixty-five and the latter forty; Alcibiades was already full bearded when Socrates fell in love with him.* He also says *the actual age of the male involved may have mattered to some Greeks; to others it obviously did not ... Most used terms which suggested erotic attraction for young men and for older males interchangeably.* Smith⁷ mentions for example, *Xenophon of Ephesus in his second century novel, Ephesiaca, [where he] introduces Hippothoos, a truly versatile man who was in love with a male his own age, an older woman, and a younger man.* Springett⁸ quotes Suetonius' reference to the emperor Galba who showed *a preference for mature and sturdy men. It is said when Icelus, one of his old-time bedfellows brought the news of Nero's death, Galba openly showered him with kisses and begged him to get ready and have intercourse with him without delay.*

So it is obvious that homoeroticism in antiquity manifested itself in all forms; between man and boy, between young adult males, between adult males of unequal age, between adult males of roughly equal age, between adult males who alternated in the roles of active and passive partner, between bi-sexuals and homosexual marriages. The existent sources for Graeco-Roman homosexual practices also provide evidence for female homosexuality, often relationships of

mutual consent without reference to active-passive distinction or age differentiation or exploitation.

On how Paul's lifespan related to those of the twelve emperors, see the *Graeco-Roman Culture*, chapter two. Paul's life parallels three of the worst sexually immoral emperors (Tiberius, Caligula and Nero) out of the twelve mentioned. Homosexual behaviour in Rome spanned the total spectrum from occasional and casual indulgence through transvestism. There was, however, none of the pedagogic rationalisation of the Greeks.

All the above reiterates the fact that Paul indeed knew more forms of homosexuality than just pederasty and that he knew what we today understand to be *homosexual orientation*. These forms were definitely also known in antiquity, albeit not by that name, but definitely by its manifestation in heterosexual, homosexual and bi-sexual practice. The Bible recognizes only one valid form of sexual practice. It is sex between a man and a woman within marriage. All other sexual practices are seen as perversion of this principle. The Bible recognizes and teaches, and it's (human) authors professed only heterosexuality. No provision is made for any other form of sexual practice although all other deviant forms were known in antiquity.

2. What were the early teachings on homosexuality?

We have seen that the Bible condemns homosex whenever it is mentioned. It condemns not only specific forms of homosex but all possible manifestations thereof. But, what did the Church Fathers say about homosex?⁹

The Didache (2.2: 70 AD)

You shall not commit murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit pederasty, you shall not commit fornication, you shall not steal, you shall not practise magic, you shall not practise witchcraft, you shall not murder a child by abortion or kill one that has been born.

The Letter of Barnabas (10: 70 AD)

You shall not commit fornication; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not be a corrupter of boys, nor be link unto such.

Justin Martyr (First Apology 27: 151 AD)

[We] have been taught that to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught lest we should do anyone harm and lest we should sin against God, first, because we see that almost all so exposed (not only the girls, but also the males) are brought up in prostitution. And for this pollution a multitude of females and hermaphrodites, and those who commit unmentionable iniquities, are found in every nation. And you receive the hire of these, and duty and taxes from them, who you ought to exterminate from your realm. And anyone who uses such persons, besides the godless and infamous and impure intercourse, may possibly be having intercourse with his own child, or relative, or brother. And there are some, who even prostitute their own children and wives, and some are openly mutilated for the purpose of Sodom; and they refer these mysteries to the mother of the gods.

Clement of Alexandria

(Exhortation to the Greeks 2: 190 AD; The Instructor 6: 193 AD)

It is not, then, without reason that the poets call him [Hercules] a cruel wretch and a nefarious scoundrel. It were tedious to recount his adulteries of all sorts, and debauching of boys. For your gods did not even abstain from boys, one having loved Hylas, another Hyacinthus, another Pelops, another Chrysippus, (and) another Ganymede. Let such gods as these be worshipped by your wives, and let them pray that their husbands be such as these – so temperate; that, emulating them in the same practices, they may be like the gods. Such gods let your boys be trained to worship,

that they may grow up to be men with the accursed likeness of fornication on them received from the gods (Exhortation).

The fate of the Sodomites was judgement to those who had done wrong, instruction to those who hear. The sodomites having, through much luxury, fallen into uncleanness, practising adultery shamelessly, and burning with insane love for boys; the all-seeing Word, whose notice those who commit impieties cannot escape, cast his eye on them... Accordingly the just punishment of the Sodomite became to men an image of salvation which is well calculated for men. For those who have not committed like sins with those punished, will never receive a like punishment (The Instructor)

Tertullian (Modesty: 220 AD)

[A]ll other frenzies of the lusts which exceeds the laws of nature, and are impious towards both [human] bodies and the sexes, we banish, not only from the threshold but also from the shelter of the Church, for they are not sins so much as monstrosities.

Novatian (The Jewish Foods 3: 250 AD)

[God forbid the Jews to eat certain foods for symbolic reasons:] For that in fishes the roughness of scales is regarded as constituting their cleanness; rough, and rugged, and unpolished and substantial, and grave manners are approved in men; while those who are without scales are unclean, because trifling, and fickle, and faithless and effeminate manners are disapproved. Moreover, what does the law mean when it says the swine to be taken for food. It assuredly reproveth a life filthy and dirty, and delighting in the garbage of vice ...Or when it forbids the hare? It rebukes men deformed into women.

Cyprian of Carthage (Letters 1.8: 253 AD)

[T]urn your looks to the abominations, not less to be deplored, of another kind of spectacle...Men are emasculated, and all the pride and vigour of their sex is effeminate, in the disgrace of their enervated body; and he is more pleasing there who has most completely broken down the man into the woman. He grows into praise by virtue of his crime; and the more he is degraded, the more skilful he is considered to be. Such a one is looked upon – oh shame! – and looked upon with pleasure.

Eusebius of Caesarea

(Proof of the Gospel; 319 AD-Lv.18: 24-25)

[Having] forbidden all unlawful marriage, and all unseemly practice, and the union of women with women and men with men, he [God] adds: Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for in all these things the nations were defiled, which I will drive out before you. And the land was polluted, and I have recompensed [their] iniquity upon it, and the land is grieved with them that dwell upon it.

Basil the Great (Letters 217: 62, 367 AD)

He who is guilty of unseemliness with males will be under discipline for the same time as adulterers.

John Chrysostom

(Homilies on Titus 5: 390 AD; Homilies on Romans 4: 391 AD)

*[The pagans] were addicted to love of boys, and one of their wise men made a law that pederasty....should not be allowed to slaves, as if it was an honourable thing; and they had houses for this purpose, in which it was openly practised. And if all that was done among them was related, it would be seen that they openly outraged nature, and there was none to restrain them....As for their passion for boys, whom they called their **paedica**, it is not fit to be named (Titus).*

All of these affections (in Rom. 1: 26-27)....were vile, but chiefly the mad lust after males; for the soul is more to the suffer in sins and more dishonoured than the body in diseases. [T]he men have done an insult to nature itself. And a yet more disgraceful thing than these is it, when even the women seek after these intercourses, who ought to have more shame than men.

Augustine (Confessions 3:8:15 – 400 AD)

[T]hose shameful acts against nature, such as were committed in Sodom, ought everywhere and always to be detested and punished. If all nations were to do such things, they would be held guilty of the same crime by the law of God, which has not made men so that they should use one another in this way.

The Apostolic Constitutions (AC 6:11 – 400 AD)

[Christians] abhor all unlawful mixtures, and that which is practised by some contrary to nature, as wicked and impious.

It is clear from these quotations that the early Christians (before 400 AD) regarded homosex as disgraceful and vile, and not to be practised at all. It went against God's law (sexual) for humanity and constituted a rebellious act against God's intention for humanity. All the Church Fathers are unanimous in their rejection of homosex as a possible expression of human sexuality.

It is clear from the writings of the Fathers that homosexual practice was to be rejected in whatever form it manifested. The first instance of homosexual practice in Jewish antiquity was recorded in the fourth century. This does show that it was a practice not tolerated.

3. Is it possible to accept the authority of the Bible and at the same time practice homosex?

Scripture has the status that it is the most important authority for faith and practice. In answering the above question the authority of the Bible should be final in deciding if the answer should be yes or whether it should be no. If the authority of Scripture is that vital then those who seek to overturn it must meet with an extraordinary burden of proof. The evidence advanced to revise the Bible's view must be strong, unambiguous and irrefutable. It must also set aside the Bible's reasons for its position on the subject.

The Bible's teaching on sexuality constitutes, what I would suggest, a core value of Scripture. A core value is a value held pervasively throughout the Bible, Old and New Testaments, without any exceptions and as a matter of established significance. This view is supported and strengthened where such a value has arisen in opposition to prevailing cultural biases and tendencies. It is also significant if it can be shown that such a value has had universal acceptance in the church for the past two millennia.

The Bible's view that acceptable sexual intercourse for people should be between people of the opposite sex in a monogamous, exogamous, heterosexual permanent marital relationship is a core value. This core value for sexual conduct is taught in the Bible pervasively, without exception, in opposition to the prevailing cultural trends held as such by the catholic (general Christian) church for two millennia. The Bible makes no provision for the acceptance of any other type of sexual expression (homosexual, bi-sexual, incest, prostitution, cultic sexual rituals, etc.) but consistently rejects all of it as illegitimate and sinful perversions of God's intention for sexual conduct - which is limited to sexually complementary partners - a man and a woman.

Revisionism is an effort to reinterpret the Bible but yet to leave its authority intact. This is a false expectation because revising the biblical data changes the intended message. Much of the debate concerning whether homosex should be normalised and practising homosexuals should be

accepted in the church, revolves around what the Bible actually teaches. Revisionism depends heavily on current scientific results and surrounding culture in formulating values. They teach that God's Word is to be evaluated in the light of surrounding culture. The result of this effort is that, if homosexuality is acceptable in the surrounding culture, then the Bible must be re-interpreted and re-evaluated so as to make homosexuality acceptable in the church.

Yet the real, ultimate issues are biblical and theological, not scientific or cultural. If science is the ultimate authority, then we would have to reject the existence of God, Jesus as the Christ and God's creation of life. The Bible's own claim is to be inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and therefore to be the ultimate and authoritative Word of God. It teaches ultimate truth (2 Pet. 1:19-21; 2 Tim. 3-16). The Lord Jesus confirmed this view of God's word (Jn. 17:11). If we do not accept that the Bible is the ultimate authority in our relationship with God, we deny its ultimate claims and statements about itself as being the ultimate truth. Thus we reject the Bible as false.

In the foregoing chapters I have shown adequately that the Bible rejects homosex every single time it is discussed, irrespective of the type of homosexuality mentioned. This message of the Bible portrays unashamed tension between the standard of God's Word and the culture around it. Homosexuality was seen (in practice) as acceptable behaviour at the time that God set His proscriptions against it. In ancient Egypt and Canaan, marriage contracts were drawn up for homosexuals. With the exception of Claudius, the first fifteen emperors of Rome were either innately homosexual or involved in homosexual acts - Nero blatantly so. Against this background, the Law of Moses and the New Testament writers forbade all homosexual practices for God's people. There is, therefore, no compromised position possible in this debate.

Only one conclusion is possible in the light of the discussion above: it is impossible to accept the authority of the Bible and at the same time practice homosex. Homosexual practice is totally foreign to the biblical message of sexual purity. It is regarded by the Bible as sexual immorality (*porneia*) of the worst kind. It is a sinful practise. For further reading on this matter I advise you to read Dr Michael Brown's book, *Can You Be Gay and Christian?: Responding with Love and Truth to Questions about Homosexuality*.

4. What did Jesus say about homosexuality?

Jesus did not say anything about homosexuality or homosex. Yet, it is highly unlikely that Jesus' silence on this issue could be taken as acceptance of such sexual conduct. Jesus did not shy away from expressing his disapproval of the conventions of his day. Because the whole question about homosex was already settled in the Old Testament and as such accepted in the New Testament, Jesus would have accepted the univocal stance against homosexual conduct which was characteristic of the Judaism of Jesus' day. If Jesus wanted to differ from the ethics of his day and communicated affirmation of same-sex relationships or homosex he would have had to state it publicly in no uncertain terms, because as far as can be determined from the socio-historical situation in first-century Judaism, there were no dissenting voices on the matter.

It is very clear from Scripture that neither Jesus nor any of his disciples ever engaged in homoerotic behaviour with other males. Although Jesus did not say anything explicitly about Homosex, implicit references exist. He said, *for it is from the human heart that evil intentions come: sexual immoralities (porneia), adulteries, licentiousness... All these evil intentions come from within and defile a person (Mark 7:21-23)*. No first century Jew could have heard the word *porneia* and not have in mind the list of forbidden sexual offences in Leviticus 18 and 20 (incest, adultery, same-sex intercourse and bestiality).

A second instance of implicit reference to homosex is found in Jesus' answer to the rich man who inquired about the requirements for eternal life. (Mark 10:17-22). Here Jesus starts in His

discussion with a young man reciting portions of the Ten Commandments including the prohibition of adultery. This prohibition in the 7th Commandment is an all embracing special law, according to Philo, against incest, pederasty, bestiality, prostitution and other sexual intercourse matters. It is probable that in Jesus reference to the 7th Commandment against adultery, there was an implicit rejection of homosex.

The third instance of implicit reference to homosex, we find in Mark 10: 1-12. Here Jesus appeals to both Genesis 1:27 *God made them male and female* and Genesis 2:24 *for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and will be joined with his wife and the two will become one flesh*. This suggests that Jesus accepted the model for marriage and sexuality and sexual union presented in Genesis 1-2. Jesus understood that marriage was ordained by God *from the beginning of creation* as the union of a man with a woman, not of a male and a male, or a female and a female (Mark 10:6).

From only these three instances we can deduce that Jesus did not make any provision for same sex relationships. Although He did not say anything, he did not change any proscriptions of scripture with regard to homosex. Thus it can be concluded that Jesus did not approve of homosexual relationships or more specifically, same sex marriage.

5. Is homosexual marriage a tolerable option?

Before attempting to answer this question it might be good to recap some facts.¹⁰

According to Genesis God made a woman as Adam's companion; not a man, nor a woman and a man. This is an extremely important point because the basis of so much moral teaching takes its departure from the creation account. We cannot ignore the significance of creation. The woman was created as *help meet* (a counterpart or mate) for the man. The design of the male and female anatomy and psychology is obviously intended to be complementary.

The natural design does teach us truths about God's intention for mankind (1 Cor. 11:14; Rom. 1:20). Therefore, the indisputable apparentness of the bodily design of man and woman declares that the woman is the intended marital partner for man. If some men were created with bodies designed for sexual intercourse with other men, one would assume that this was part of God's intended creation purpose. There is, however, a complete lack of such a design, the reverse is true, same-sex intercourse is abnormal. The human body is anatomically incompatible with same-sex expression. Even if one subscribes to evolutionary progression, one would have to agree that logically there is no physiological compatibility in homosexual copulation.

The Lord Jesus quoted Genesis 2:24 as a general prerequisite for marriage: *God made them male and female, a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh*. Paul quotes the same verse in Ephesians 5:31. Neither Jesus nor Paul made provision for the possibility of homosexual marriage. Surely the Son of God would not have been ignorant of such a possibility if it were to be allowed. The Son of God and Paul, as did all the writers of the Bible, assumed heterosexual marriage to be the only acceptable and legitimate form of marriage; not because they were *misogynistic, heterosexist or homophobic* but because the basis of marriage is in the creation of Adam and Eve.

Paul taught that there is only one moral, legitimate outlet for man's God-given sex drive – marriage (1 Cor. 7:2). Monogamous, heterosexual marriage is the only way to have sex without sin and guilt. Anything contrary to the creation ordinance of marriage between one man and one woman is not acceptable to God and is sinful. Homosexual marriage is not allowed by the Bible. Homosexual conduct is consistently and unequivocally called sin; homosexual marriage would, therefore, be sin as well.

Is homosexual marriage a tolerable option? Some church denominations *marry* homosexual pairs while others bless *homosexual unions*. The fact that the church tolerates sin in her midst does not change sin's status. Homosexual marriage is sin and, therefore, it should not be at all tolerated. Homosexual marriage, based on the teaching of the Bible, is not even a legitimate option let alone a tolerable option! The church cannot tolerate homosexual marriage and claim to remain faithful to the God of truth.

6. Is heterosexual marriage and homosexual marriage the same?

Several countries in the world have legalised homosexual marriage. It is, however, clear that not all homosexuals want marriage and some are opposed to marriage, at least to the extent that it is biblically and traditionally understood.

It is true that feminists argued for years that marriage is a troubling institution because it is a biblical patriarchal institution and needs to be redefined to suit the twenty-first century woman. It comes as no surprise then that the homosexual movement is advised by the feminist movement to *re-imagine love, sex and the family* because love, sex and family are at the heart of the liberalist ideal. Mitchel Raphael, the editor of *fab*, a Toronto (Canada) based gay magazine, said:¹¹

I'd be for marriage if I thought gay people would challenge and change the institution and not buy into the traditional meaning of *till death do us part* and monogamy forever.

According to Raphael, fear exists in the Gay community that marriage would be used as a means to clean up the homosexual overt, institutionalised sex culture, a culture that lacks the so-called baggage of eternal monogamy.

Paul Flynn, a homosexual writing in the British newspaper *The Guardian*, notes:

The thought of a priest pronouncing the couple in front of me husband and husband makes me feel icky ... I've been to a couple of parties celebrating gay love that were sweet and jolly in equal measure. But neither dressed up the occasion as marriage. Both seeming implicitly to understand that a gay partnership might be equal to a straight one but that doesn't necessarily make it the same ... Marriage is about men and women.¹²

At this point it would be beneficial to reread the section *Gay Theology and Marriage* in chapter 11, *Changing the Theology of Marriage*.

Why the drive by homosexuals to be married? It is rather about the simple fact that homosexuals have the deeply rooted desire for society (especially the religious society) to affirm that homosexuality, not only people, but homosex as such, is the full equivalent of heterosexuality in every way – morally, socially, sexually and legally.

This is confirmed by Mubarak Dahir, writing in the *Washington Blade*, a gay newspaper.

This is about more than the little certified piece of paper, or even all the legal benefits it brings. It's about the recognition that our love is valid, just as real, just as much worth celebrating as anyone else's.¹³

The implications of the homosexual attitude to marriage are well documented in numerous studies of gay relationships, including formal partnered relationships, covering a period of decades. The bottom-line is simply that sex with multiple partners is tolerated and also envisaged for the so much desired marriage. Rather than marriage – the heterosexual model thereof – changing the behaviour of homosexuals to match the relative sexual fidelity of heterosexuals, it seems most probably that the opposite would occur.

A most disturbing study was published in the journal *Aids*. The results of this study revealed that homosexual men in formal partnered relationships had on average eight sexual partners per year outside of the primary relationship.¹⁴ This is an amazing contrast to the sexual behaviour of married heterosexuals, among whom 75 percent of the men and 85 percent of the women reported never having had extramarital sex.¹⁵

Marriage is the foundation of the family. The family is the foundation of society. The biblical heterosexual model of marriage is not the same as what gays envisage marriage to be. Marriage cannot be anything we want it to be and especially not what gays want it to be. To have homosexual marriage is to radically redefine a fundamental and historical human institution and for Christians, a basic institution sanctioned by God. To do so is to deconstruct the family and eventually humanity. Marriage is something done between a man and a woman.

Homosexual marriage is to be opposed and rejected in no uncertain terms by society and the church more specifically. Affirming same-sex marriage would forever change the meaning of marriage and family for everyone. No human society – not one – has ever embraced homosexual marriage. It is only now that some societies have allowed it. Gay marriages have never been taken to be morally equivalent to heterosexual marriage. Marriage is always heterosexual, everywhere, at all times in history and it should remain the same.

7. Are homosexual families acceptable?

God's law through Moses presupposes, as does the creation narrative, that heterosexual family life was to be the basis of His people's communal life. As we have seen in the previous section, the Bible makes no provision for homosexual marriage. The fact that secular laws today provide for such marriages and families, does not mean that God's Word should tolerate it as well.

The whole idea of marriage in the Genesis creation narratives is associated with producing children. Homosexual marriage has no natural godsend possibility of producing children or keeping the world from being overpopulated as some pro-homosexual activists would have it. Because of its unnaturalness, homosexual marriage is dependent on extramarital intervention in all possible options available to acquire children. It is evident that fecundity drops with the practice of homosex. Justifying homosexual families means rejecting the Genesis record, a record that was accepted without prejudice by the Lord Jesus, Paul and indeed all writers of the Bible, whether implicitly or explicitly stated to be the case.

Marriage is God's institution. God invented it. God has set its terms and given the blueprint for it. Heterosexual marriage is a prerequisite for the family and no one has the right to alter the terms set by God, not even the church.

Children are to have parents, and in terms of God's Word, parents are called *father and mother* (Ex. 20:12; Lk, 18:20; Mk 10:17-19; Eph 6:1-2). Every instance of marriage in the Bible is heterosexual, every instance of family mentioned is heterosexual, every time a child or children is mentioned in relation to a family it is heterosexual, every time divorce is mentioned it is between a man and a woman; hetero-sexuality is the pattern for all marriages and, therefore, *inter alia* for the family.

To speak of a *homosexual family* is a contradiction in terms. A family in terms of God's intention is heterosexual and, therefore, the fact of a father and a mother is obvious. A homosexual family does not display either of these God intended prerequisites. Homosexual families are neither desirable nor acceptable.

8. What about homosexual people in the church?

Although one disagrees strongly with homosexual theology, one has to understand that the homosexual and lesbian are not the enemy of the church, but people in need of the church's support and spiritual guidance. The last word on the issue of homosexuality should always be: *love God and love your homosexual neighbour*. Indeed the old saying *hate the sin but love the sinner* holds true. The fact that the church is required to reject homosex as a normal expression of sexuality does not diminish the believer's call to love the individual homosexual. The believer is required to reach out in love to the homosexual in the church community, while withholding approval of homosexual behaviour.

Homosex is sin. The Bible describes it as *acts of grave depravity* and regards it as intrinsically sinful. God reaches out to us in our sin. God is also reaching out to the homosexual caught up in the sin of homosex because homosex is not the unpardonable sin. Homosex, whether consensual or forced, is not an act of love. The homosexual road leads to death: physically, morally and spiritually. This situation is vividly described by Karl Barth in his commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans when he says:

... they became no longer capable of serious awe and amazement. They become unable to reckon with anything except feelings and experience and events. They think only in terms of more or less spiritual sophistry, without light from above or from behind. Here is the final vacuity and disintegration. Chaos has found itself, and anything may happen. The atoms whirl, the struggle for existence rages. Even reason itself becomes irrational. Ideas of duty and of fellowship become wholly unstable. The world is full of personal caprice and social unrighteousness.¹⁶

The challenge for the church lies in the pastoral dimension; day-to-day compassionate and merciful response to people whose sexual behaviours are recognised to be sinful. The challenge is to bring homosexual people to understand that their sexual behaviour is harmful to themselves, to the church and to society at large. The common initial response to sin in the church is fear, followed by a reluctance to get involved, yet fear and non-involvement not only prolong the problem, but may even deepen it.

The church has to overcome fear and non-involvement and take notice of the homosexual people in their church and actively reach out to them because no one should be left to live in a state of sin without realising the consequences of their sin. Paul clearly and with authority, places the practising homosexual without qualification outside of the kingdom of God and thus excludes them from the church of Christ. This is a devastating consequence of this sinful lifestyle.

The gospel is the power unto salvation for the sinner, also for the homosexual. When the homosexual and the lesbian embrace the gospel, repent of their sin and renounce and refrain from practising it, the church can do nothing but accept them into the Christian fellowship. Those whom God has forgiven and accepted are not to be rejected by His church. The same requirements are to be met by the homosexual who becomes a Christian as are laid on every other converted sinner, for example the thief, adulterer, prostitute, drunkard, idolater or sexually immoral person.

The church must both express strong disapproval of homosexual conduct as a sin and be involved in the lives of homosexuals to bring God's grace to bear on the lives of homosexuals. The repentant homosexual, converted by God's grace, must be welcomed and received by the church. The unrepentant homosexual is excluded and evangelised to be received as brother or sister in the Lord upon their conversion.

9. Are there not examples of loving, monogamous homosexual relations?

Homosexual conduct is intrinsically a perversion and perversions tend not to be long lasting. The Bible says in Romans 1:24-32:

- 24 Therefore God gave them over to the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.
- 27 Men committed indecent acts with the other men, and received in themselves the due penalty of their perversion.
- 28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.
- 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but they also approve of those who practise them.

The truth of these verses seems to manifest itself consistently in the lives of homosexuals, especially those who try to turn the perversion into a long lasting value-relationship comparable with heterosexual marriage. The innate destructive nature of homosexuality makes loving, monogamous homosexual relations nothing more than an illusion. This observation is well documented and confirmed by the very people who practise a homosexual lifestyle. Listen to what they say themselves. Shields, a United Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches' (UFMCC) pastor says:

Should you 'trick:' should you act out your S & M fantasies; should you be involved in orgies: should you be living in an open relationship or monogamous one? I cannot say. I can speak to only what works for me, and offer ideas that have helped me. The decision to choose to make are yours. What is ethical or moral for me may not seem so to you. What you do or do not do may seem unethical to me – but that too, is a part of assuming responsibility for our own lives and actions.¹⁷

Reverend Perry, one of the pioneers of the gay Christian movement stated:

I believe that there can be loving experiences, even in a one-night stand. I truly believe that two individuals can meet and share their complete beings with each other, totally sexually too, and never see one another again; and remember it as a beautiful loving situation.¹⁸

The Anglican theologian Pittenger, has gone so far as to argue that a non-monogamous, open relationship should be considered a morally sanctioned form of Christian lifestyle.¹⁹ Many proponents²⁰ of open relationships argue that such sexual non-exclusivity is actually a liberating experience, and as such can be an avenue for greater emotional growth and maturity for a couple, as long as such an arrangement is acceptable to both individuals in the *loving, monogamous homosexual relationship*. The core *value* on which this argument stands is that in order to *ensure a lasting love relationship*, both persons should be allowed the freedom to engage in occasional sexual contact with others:

I believe that one of the conditions for a genuinely successful union (marriage) is the allowance of a degree of freedom for the partners, so that the union (marriage) will not be threatened when there are such (sexual) contacts, but accepted precisely because it is understood in advance that homosexual unions (marriages) are not identical with the expectations usually found in conventional heterosexual marriage.

He continues;

It may very well be the case that now and again a loyal partner in a gay union (marriage) will engage in what I have styled an occasional contact – for fun, because of affection or liking, as a way of manifesting friendship, or...simply because of plain lust or urgent and irrepressible

sexual desire ...but if this is understood, accepted, seen as part of life (so to say), there is little likelihood that the primary union will be broken up.

It is obvious that within gay *mainstream theological* thinking the closed character of the conventional loving monogamous long lasting marriage is deemed unsatisfactory and a negative aspect of this sacred institution, and not to be pursued within the gay lifestyle. The *marriage or union* acceptable to the gay community has an open character as summarised by O'Neil & O'Neill:²¹

Fidelity in the close (heterosexual) marriage is the measure of *limited love, diminished growth, and conditional trust* ... New possibilities for additional relationships exist, and open (as opposed to limited) love can expand to include others beside[s] your mate.

All statistical data for homosexual conduct show that it has a very unsatisfactory record so far as enduring monogamous relationships are concerned. Bell & Weinberg²² reported that 84% of white homosexual males (WHMs) and 77% of black homosexual males (BHMs) had had 50 or more homosexual partners in their lifetime. Within the group of 50+ partners, 28% of WHMs and 19% BHMs had had over 1000 partners. Only 3% of WHMs and 6% of BHMs had had fewer than 10 homosexual partners in their lifetime.

A 1997 study²³ of 2 583 homosexually active men in Australia found that, of those over forty-nine years of age, 26.6% had had more than 10 male partners in the *past six months* alone, 44.9% had had between 2 -10, and 28.5% had had just one partner. In the course of their lifetime to date, only 2.7% reported having just one partner. The percentages for response categories are just as amazing: 2-10, 10.2%; 11-20, 14.1%; 21-50, 12.9%; 51-100, 11.8%; 101-500, 21.6%; 501-1000, 11%; 1000+, 15.7%. Nearly 9 out of 10 of those over forty-nine years old had had more than 10 male sex partners and of these the majority had had over 100.

Even within the context of a *stable relationship*, homosexual males do not exhibit serial monogamy. Fidelity is the exception rather than the rule. A Dutch study of the sexual habits of one hundred and fifty six male homosexual couples published in 1994 reported that on average, each partner had had seven other sexual partners in just the one year preceding the survey.²⁴ Nearly 62% of these monogamous gay relationships were non-monogamous in the same one-year period. The number of outside partners averaged 2.5 in the first year of the relationship and by the 6th year of the relationship the number had increased to eleven. Results in a study by Blumstein & Schwartz closely follow the Dutch findings.²⁵ The study found that 79% of close-coupled gays had sex with one or more persons other than their primary partner, compared to 19% close-coupled lesbians, 10% of married homosexuals, and 23% of unmarried cohabiting heterosexuals.

The consensus among homosexual couples interviewed were that the heterosexual model of monogamy does not work for gay relationships. The rule of monogamy for heterosexual relationships is the exception for male homosexual relationships. The vast majority of male homosexual relationships do not last beyond a few years. A study in England and Wales discovered the mean length for cohabitation with a regular male sex partner to be only 21 months. Another study found that only 8% of homosexuals and 7% of lesbians ever had a relationship that lasted four years or longer.²⁶ Blumstein & Schwartz found the average length of relationships in a study of 8000 couples was 3.5 years for male homosexual couples and 2.2 years for female homosexual couples.

All of the above suggests, although there will always be an exception to the rule, that the so-called enduring, loving monogamous homosexual relationship is an extremely rare occurrence. Any current example of a loving, monogamous homosexual relationship will most probably not last beyond the 7 year mark; some studies found the 7 year length to be the longest period recorded for a monogamous homosexual relationship within which the partners only had sex with one another.

10. Why should homosex be compared to bestiality, incest, adultery and prostitution?

Study the following table:

Verse	Leviticus 18	Verse	Leviticus 20
[6]	Sex with close relative	[10]	Sex with your neighbour's wife
[7]	Sex with your mother	[11]	Sex with your father's wife
[8]	Sex with your father's wife	[12]	Sex with your daughter-in-law
[9]	Sex with your sister	[13]	Sex with a man
[10]	Sex with your half sister	[14]	Sex with both a woman and her daughter
[11]	Sex with your grandchild	[15]	Sex with an animal (man)
[12]	Sex with your half sister	[16]	Sex with an animal (woman)
[14]	Sex with your aunt	[17]	Sex with your sister/half sister
[15]	Sex with your aunt	[18]	Sex with a menstruating woman
[16]	Sex with your daughter-in-law	[19-20]	Sex with your aunt
[17]	Sex with your sister-in-law	[21]	Sex with your sister-in-law
[18]	Sex with both a woman and her daughter		
[19]	Sex with your wife's sister as a rival wife as long as your wife is living		
[20]	Sex with a menstruating woman		
[21]	Sex with your neighbour's wife		
[22]	Sacrificing your child to Molech		
[23]	Sex with a man Sex with an animal		

It is clear from the above table that homosex is a sexual sin. Other sexual sins are incest, adultery and bestiality. A further sexual sin mentioned in the Bible is prostitution. Pro-homosexual proponents like to utilise slavery, women in church ministry, divorce/remarriage and long hair for men, etc. as analogies as to why homosex should be tolerated in the church community.²⁷ Yet none of these even hints in the direction of being sexual in content.

Surely the best analogies for comparison must at least be sexual by their very nature and comparable to the salient features of the biblical view of same-sex intercourse.

- Sexual behaviour
- Proscribed in both Old and New Testaments
- Pervasively within the Testaments
- Absolutely, severely and consistently judged as sin

Obviously none of the *normal* analogies used in the debate qualifies when the above is considered. From the table above one can logically deduce that comparable analogies, being sexual in nature, should be incest, bestiality, adultery and prostitution.

A further point in case is that none of the *normal* analogies used in the debate is judged to be a sin that would exclude the practitioner thereof from the kingdom of God and thus from the community of the saints (church). Paul is adamant that those who partake in and practice homosex, incest,

prostitution and adultery *will not see God, but experience His wrath and exclusion from His kingdom* (Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3: 5-7; Rom. 1: 28-32; 1 Cor. 5:1-5, 6:9-11).

11. Should we not only reject promiscuity in both hetero- and homosexual relations?

This question assumes as acceptable, both heterosexual and homosexual conduct. This opinion is supported by most pro-homosexual proponents, and heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality are all seen as normal expressions of sexuality. Transvestism, cross-dressing, transsexuality, pederasty and even pedophilia are also expressions of normal sexuality within this paradigm.²⁸

In terms of the Bible, homosex is a perversion and not a normal expression of sexuality. It is promiscuous by its very nature. Homosex is a perversion just as incest, prostitution and bestiality are perversions of heterosexual conduct. It is wrong to speak of promiscuity in homosexual relations because homosex is in essence already promiscuous sexual conduct. It is therefore a contradiction in terms to say one rejects promiscuity in homosexual relations. Homosexual conduct is not on par with heterosexual conduct.

One should therefore reject promiscuity in heterosexual relations as well as any form of homosexual conduct whether promiscuous or not.

12. The whole body is holy unto the Lord: Why not the anus as well?

Barnard, for one, argues:

The whole body is holy – the so-called excretion organs as well.²⁹ Anal stimulation or penetration cannot be rejected on any biblical grounds.

It is clear what Barnard is wrongfully arguing for; the anus is holy because the body as a temple of God is *totally holy*! This represents a gross distortion of what Paul presupposes when he states:

Therefore, I urge you brothers, in the view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God (Rom. 12:1).

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body (1 Cor.6:19-20).

It is fundamentally wrong to argue for the approval of anal sex based on the assumption of holiness of the excretory orifices. This reasoning shows to what lengths pro-homosexual proponents would go in an effort to legitimise a precarious lifestyle. The Bible clearly rejects homosex whenever it is mentioned and male homosex is anal sex.

There can be no doubt that the Bible rejects both homosex and anal sex.

Even if one argues foolishly, as does Barnard, that the anus is holy because the whole body is holy unto the Lord, then it should not be used for *unholy sexual practices* (sinful sexual practices). Homosex is a sinful practise which the Lord God judges to be an abomination. It is a vile, disgraceful, repugnant sexual act and is to be rejected.

13. Is the cause of homosexuality not a homosexual gene?

It has become the mantra of our time; your genes (DNA) are your destiny! The unproven theory of a *homosexual gene* is widely accepted as fact within psychology, biology and theology. The claim

that homosexuality is a natural, genetically inherited orientation is aggressively promoted today. Yet, to date, no proof of a homosexual gene has been provided:

In neither male nor female homosexuals is there convincing evidence of abnormality in sex chromosomes or the neuro-endocrine system.³⁰

There is no evidence to support the hypothesis that *homosexuals or bisexuals of any degree or any type are chromosomally discrepant from heterosexuals.*³¹

There is no evidence that treating male homosexuals with male hormones significantly alters the sexual preference. The clear implication of these results is that sexual preference is predominantly a socially learned response, not an orientation fixed from the outset by genetic or hormonal factors.³²

There are many identical twins in which only one is homosexual. This means that the homosexual twin cannot ascribe his homosexuality to genetic factors.³³

Attributing sexual orientation to genes appeals to the homosexual community because it counters the argument by the *religious* groups who assert that homosexual conduct is *unnatural*. Another reason is that many homosexuals feel guilty about their sexual orientation and if a biological foundation is found, it would not be their fault. Thirdly, by advancing a biological explanation, gay-rights advocates assert that it would afford homosexuals more legal protection against discriminatory practices. In the fourth place, the so-called *Christian homosexuals* would be able to say to the church in general: *God made us like this*. Homosexuals, therefore, believe that if there is a gene contributing to sexual orientation, it follows that homosexuality is normal and thus worthy of preservation.

Do scientific studies support the existence of a gay gene? On April 14, 2003, the International Human Genome Consortium announced the successful completion of the Human Genome Project. The one piece of information that never materialized from this project was the identification of the so-called *gay gene*.³⁴

The most frequently cited study was done under supervision of the molecular biologist, Hamer. However this study is under investigation by the federal Office of Research Integrity (USA) for possible scientific misconduct. His finding was greeted with considerable criticism from the scientific community. Hamer began his search for a genetic contribution to sexual behaviour in 1993 by studying the rates of homosexuality among male relatives of seventy-six known gay men. Hamer's results remain controversial to this day. An independent study of gay siblings did not reproduce his results. None of the results, however, support the claim that any single gene determines or can determine sexual orientation. Hamer concluded:

We have not found the gene – which we don't think exists – for sexual orientation. There will never be a test that will say for certain whether a child will be gay. We know that for certain.³⁵

A second study (1991) claiming that there is a connection between homosexuality and biology (genetics) was done by the neurophysiologist Simon LeVay. His claim to fame is that a specific structure in the brain is smaller in homosexual than in heterosexual men (though he has had no evidence regarding the sexual orientation of the woman whose brains he examined).

All his research was conducted on the brains of cadavers. Much circumstantial evidence to the sexual orientation of the dead persons is inherent to his research results. Furthermore the homosexual men had all died of AIDS, which is known to affect brain structures. His 1993 book *The Sexual Brain* is an effort to popularise his theory that sexuality in all forms is ultimately attributable to the physical structures of our brains. Despite all the flaws of LeVay's work, it has been received as the first proof for a biological base for sexual orientation. By linking

homosexuality with science, it promotes faith in the expectation that science will soon find the fundamental (gene?) difference between homosexual and heterosexual men. About his own work LeVay said:

It is important to stress what I didn't find. I did not prove that homosexuality is genetic, or find a genetic cause for being gay. I didn't show that gay men are born that way, the most common mistake people make in interpreting my work. Nor did I locate a gay centre in the brain.³⁶

A further study by Baily & Pillard³⁷ has also found no evidence that male homosexuality is influenced by a gene passed from mother to son and scientists do not have much faith in any one study unless other studies find the same result. Born homosexual? What the studies actually suggest is that persons who experience homoerotic feelings and attractions are not prisoners of their biology. The scientific argument for a biological basis (born homosexual) for sexual orientation remains weak. LeVay himself says:

Time and time again I have been described as someone who proofed (sic!) that homosexuality is genetic...I did not!

In general then, there is no convincing evidence to support the theory that homosexual orientation is linked to biology. There is no science that supports an only biological (genetic) basis for homosexuality.

The socio-historical background and the exegesis of the relevant Bible portions do not support such an appeal to the textual data. Homosexuality should be rejected as an abnormal expression (perversion) of sexuality because biblical sexual morality is defined by heterosexuality. The attitude to homosexuality is uncompromisingly negative throughout the Bible.

14. Can homosexual orientation change?

If homosexual orientation cannot change, then the apostle Paul would have been wrong when he stated in 1 Corinthians 6:11 *that is what some of you were*. Any proof that homosexual persons cannot change may also point towards the traditionalist view as being unbiblical and heartless. To claim, as some pro-homosexuals do, that *homosexual orientation is immutable* is to say that there has and will never be any change of homosexual orientation.³⁸

There are quite a few religiously based groups that provide support to homosexual persons seeking change. Some of the more prominent groups are *Restored Hope Network*, *Homosexuals Anonymous*, *Hope for Wholeness Network* and groups associated with Courage. These groups are based in the USA with offices or affiliates throughout the world. Further information regarding these organisations and their work may be obtained from their web sites.³⁹ Studies done with regard to homosexual persons that received professional therapy and religious support to change sexual orientation, have shown without doubt that change is possible.⁴⁰

The National Association for Research and Therapy (NARTH) has recently published a study of the change experience for a large group of homosexuals seeking change. Eight hundred and fifty five persons were reported on in the study.⁴¹ The average age of awareness of homosexual tendencies was 12.4 years. A total of 503 persons reported having a childhood homosexual experience at an average age of 10.9 years with a person initiating the contact being an average age of 17.2 years.⁴² The following table show the results of the NARTH study:

	Before therapy	After therapy
Kinsey scale 6 Exclusively homosexual	37%	5%
Kinsey scale 5 Nearly exclusively homosexual	31%	8%
Kinsey scale 4 More homo-as heterosexual	22%	23%
Kinsey scale 3 Equally hetero-en homosexual	9%	11%
Kinsey scale 2 More hetero- as homosexual	?	20%
Kinsey scale 1 Nearly exclusively heterosexual	?	18%
Kinsey scale 0 Exclusively heterosexual	?	15%

The participants reported substantial decreases in *homosexual thoughts, masturbation to homosexual pornography and openly homosexual behaviour*. Of those who participated 99% believing that homosexual orientation can be changed. The view that homosexual orientation is unchangeable is an invalid assumption.

The core issue for the church is not that all homosexuals should change to being heterosexual and marry someone of the opposite sex, but that they will be able to refrain from homosexual behaviour.⁴³ However, such change in the homosexual is very possible and desirable and has been shown to happen.

APPENDIX

Aren't Some People Born Gay?

(By André Bekker, July 2014)

To answer the question *Aren't some people born gay?* we need to understand the difference between *genes and environment* (nature and nurture) and *biological and environmental*.

Starting with *genes and environment*: Genes are inherited and are present in every human being from the moment of conception. *Environment* is a concept that sometimes causes confusion. Geneticist Catherine Baker explains:

Unfortunately, the term “environment” often leads to confusion because it has a different meaning in behavioural genetics than the one that ordinarily comes to mind. As an ecological term, environment means the physical world. As a genetic term, environment means all influences other than inherited factors.¹

Dr Satinover gives clarity on this matter when he says:

The nongenetic factors that can influence the development of a behavioral pattern fall into five categories:

1. Intrauterine (prenatal) effects, such as the hormonal milieu (environment).
2. Extrauterine (postnatal) physical effects, such as trauma, viruses
3. Extrauterine “symbolic” effects, such as familial interactions, education
4. Extrauterine experience, such as the reinforcing effect of the repetition of behaviors
5. Choice²

We often hear scientist talk about the biological causes of homosexuality. Here we have to understand that the term *biological* normally has a broader meaning than only *genes*. It includes both genes and the intrauterine (prenatal) effects, such as hormones. It is in this sense that we will discuss the question: *Are some people born gay?* We will look at the *gay gene theory* and mention the *Prenatal Neurohormonal theory*.

Psychiatrist, Dr Jeffrey Satinover wrote:

It is much easier to ask the meaningless, but subtly bias-inducing, sound bite question, ‘Isn't homosexuality genetic?’ than to ask the much more realistic – but frustratingly complex – question, ‘To what degree is homosexuality (or any other behavioural trait) genetic and nongenetic, innate and acquired, familial and nonfamilial, intrauterine-influenced and extrauterine-influenced, affected by environment and independent of environment, responsive to social cues and unresponsive to these cues, and when and in what sequence do these various influences emerge to generate their effects and how do they interact with one another; and after we have put these all together, how much is left over to attribute to choice, repetition, and habit?’³

No scientific evidence has established a genetic cause for homosexuality or found a *gay gene*.⁴ On April 14, 2003, Dr Bethesda, on behalf of the International Human Genome Consortium, announced the successful completion of the Human Genome Project:

The Human Genome Project has been an amazing adventure into ourselves, to understand our own DNA instruction book, the shared inheritance of all humankind," said NHGRI Director

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., leader of the Human Genome Project since 1993. "All of the project's goals have been completed successfully - well in advance of the original deadline and for a cost substantially less than the original estimates."⁵

The one thing that never surfaced from the genome project is the *gay gene*. Dr Collins, in his book *The Language of God*, wrote:

An area of particular strong public interest is the genetic basis of homosexuality. Evidence from twin studies does in fact support the conclusion that heritable factors play a role in male homosexuality. However, the likelihood that the identical twin of a homosexual male will also be gay is about 20 percent (compare with 2-4 percent of males in the general population), indicating that sexual orientation is genetically influenced but not hardwired by DNA, and that what ever genes are involved represent predisposition, not predetermination.⁶

What does it mean to say that there is a link between genetics and behaviour?

Does it mean that there is a gene that makes some of us blush when embarrassed; that there is one gene that makes you prefer classical music and another gene that makes you dislike it; that there is a bunch of genes that each provides for different levels of skill in playing poker? The answer to all these questions is no. **Does it mean behaviour passes down from generation to generation, i.e., is inherited, just like baldness and eye colour? Again, the answer is no.**

The pervasive role of genes in behaviour does not mean what it is commonly misunderstood to mean. **It does not mean that a gene or even several genes can make you act in any particular way.** It does not mean that a behavior can "pass down through the genes." Such claims are not accepted in behavioural genetics.

It *does* mean that genes play a vital role in the body's development and physiology, and it is through the body, acting in response to and upon surrounding environments, that behavior manifests itself. So while we do inherit our genes, we do not inherit behavior traits in any fixed sense. The effect of our given set of genes on our behaviour is entirely dependent upon the context of our life as it unfolds day to day.⁷

In a very interesting discussion on genetic influence and predisposition, Dr Satinover observes:

The genetic contribution to a given trait, behavioural or otherwise, need not be direct; actually, when the trait is behavioural, the genetic contribution is usually *not* direct. In other words genes often contribute to some other phenomenon that in turn *predisposes* an individual to a given behavioural response.⁸

He then continues to explain it by means of an example:

An obvious example of this principle is basketball. No genes exist that code for becoming a basketball player. But some genes code for height and the elements of athleticism, such as quick reflexes, favourable bone structure, height-to-weight ratio, muscle strength and refresh rate, metabolism and energy efficiency, and so on. Many such traits have racial distributions (which makes the genetic connection evident), resulting in more men of Bantu or Nordic stock (being taller) playing on professional basketball teams than men of Pygmy or Appenzeller Swiss stock (being shorter).

Someone born with a favourable (for basketball) combination of height and athleticism is in no way genetically programmed or forced to become a basketball player. These qualities, however, certainly facilitate that choice. As a consequence *the choice to play basketball has a clear genetic component*, most evident in the high heritability of height. Were scientists to undertake a study of basketball-playing comparable to the studies that have been done to date on the genetics of homosexuality, they would find a much higher degree of apparent genetic

influence. In summary, the strong genetic correlation does not mean that people are forced to play basketball.⁹

Dr Whitehead concludes:

In the present case, about two decades of research on (same-sex attraction) SSA-genetic association has found only genes that are individually not statistically significant (Mustanski, Du Pree, Nievergelt, Bocklandt, Schork, & Hamer, 2005). More research is proceeding, but even if it yields positive findings it will need much replication and confirmation, particularly because of the previous conflicting findings in this field. It is likely, as for most traits, that SSA will be multigene, and such genes will eventually be found—but each will have a very weak and indirect influence by itself and individual confirmation will be quite difficult. Even if the influence of such genes is unequivocally established, it would be a further step to establish in this particular case the mechanism that produces poor concordance¹⁰

Was there ever a *gay gene* found?" Let's hear Dr Dean Hamer himself, ¹¹ to whom the discovery of the *gay gene* is attributed, on this matter:

We did not say that Xq28 "underlies" sexuality only that it contributes to it in some families. Nor have we said that Xq28 represents a "major" gene, only that its influence is statistically detectable in the population that we studied.¹²

We have not found the gene, which we don't think exists, for sexual orientation.¹³

Scientific American asked Dr Hamer if homosexuality is only rooted in a biological cause. To this he answered:

Absolutely not. From twin studies, we already know that half or more of the variability in sexual orientation is not inherited. Our studies try to pinpoint the genetic factors...not negate the psychosocial factors.¹⁴

These genes do not cause people to become homosexuals.... The biology of personality is much more complicated than that.¹⁵

In an article in *Psychology Today*, Drs Stanton Peele and Richard DeGrandpre states:

Popular reactions to genetic claims can be greatly influenced by what is currently politically correct. Consider the hubbub over headlines about a genetic cause for homosexuality and by the book *The Bell Curve*, which suggested a substantial genetic basis for intelligence. Many thought the discovery of a "gay gene" proved that homosexuality is not a personal choice and should therefore not lead to social disapproval. *The Bell Curve*, on the other hand, was attacked for suggesting differences in IQ measured among the races are inherited.

The public is hard pressed to evaluate which traits are genetically inspired based on the validity of scientific research.... At a personal level, people wonder about how much actual choice they have in their lives. **Accepting genetic causes for their traits can relieve guilt about behaviour they want to change, but can't.**

Meanwhile, genetic claims are being made for a host of ordinary and abnormal behaviours, from addiction to shyness and even to political views and divorce. **If who we are is determined from conception, then our efforts to change or to influence our children may be futile. There may also be no basis for insisting that people behave themselves and conform to laws. Thus, the revolution in thinking about genes has monumental consequences for how we view ourselves as human beings.** [*Emphasis mine*]¹⁶

It is of interest that mention is also made of Epigenetics and its influence on homosexuality. A paper by epigenetic researchers (Rice, W.R., Friberg, U. Gavrillets, 2012) has been generally reported as being a new explanation of homosexuality.¹⁷ Dr Neil Whitehead has this to say about this research paper:

My conclusion, in accordance with that of the authors, is that this is a theory only. There have been numerous attempts within at least 13 different research fields to show a strong biological basis to homosexuality and all have failed. This new field – epigenetics – will probably join them. The authors make a good case that epigenetics should be included in the mix of factors contributing to homosexuality. I agree, but believe it will prove to be a minor contributor only, along with many other minor contributors.

Epigenetics is control of genetic expression by factors other than the genes. These factors may be pre-natal or post-natal (occurring at any time of life), often coming from the exterior environment, both biological and social. Epigenetic marks (changes in protein configurations around the DNA) can also be passed on to descendants – but only to some extent.¹⁸

About this specific paper in question Dr Whitehead highlights the following:

Their theory, reflected in the title of their paper, *Homosexuality as a consequence of epigenetically canalized sexual development*, is that prenatal epigenetics causes a “canalization” (channelling) to heterosexuality and also to homosexuality. This is a misleading title for the paper because it predominantly discusses what they believe to be a strong epigenetic influence on sexual differentiation in the genitalia of the two sexes. From this basis they theorise epigenetics must also have a predominant role in homosexuality.

The work relies on the generally accepted idea that prenatal testosterone is critical in sex-development, and the authors believe that epigenetics play an important role in reinforcing the sexual differentiation caused by testosterone, e.g., they make the statement, “...sexual dimorphism strongly influenced by androgen exposure – both genitalia and brain”. However they do not seem to have encountered the important 2012 paper (Lombardo et al. 2012) in which testosterone is shown to have only a weak influence on sexual dimorphism in the brain.¹⁹

Dr Whitehead concludes:

The paper brings together a wide range of knowledge from many fields, and establishes a possible role for epigenetics. But firm results are needed from eager researchers in those fields before it can be said that epigenetics has anywhere near a predominant role in male/female differentiation, let alone sexual orientation. In my view this paper risks joining the many other efforts to show a powerful biological causality in homosexuality, all of which have failed.²⁰

In the same vein there is no conclusive scientific evidence for Prenatal Neurohormonal origins of homosexuality. For the purpose of this paper I will not discuss the topic here. However, you can familiarise yourself with it by reading the sources mentioned in the footnote.²¹

Let alone the fact that no one is *born homosexual*, scientifically sound and well-reasoned, Dr Whitehead argues that even heterosexual people are not born heterosexual. In the introductory remarks to chapter 3 of his book *My Genes Made Me Do It*, he states:

Most heterosexuals asked how they became heterosexual would probably shrug and say something like, “I don’t know, it just happened. Maybe I was born that way?” But it’s no mystery how we become heterosexual; the stages of human development toward heterosexuality are well known and documented, and in this chapter we’ll look at the most important ones. Altogether they make a strong case for an environmental rather than a biological basis to sexuality. The research literature also gives good evidence that many people who have a homosexual orientation (whose sexual attraction is toward the same sex) often had

a struggle with a couple of stages critical to heterosexual development. We will also emphasise that a strong individual chance element is involved in sexual development. The conclusions of this chapter contradict the theory that there is a prenatal surge of testosterone which permanently and overwhelmingly masculinises the brain.²²

Dr Julie Hamilton in her article *Homosexuality 101: What Every, Therapist, Parent, and Homosexual Should Know*, says:

Two myths about homosexuality are popular in our culture: that people are born homosexual and that change of sexual orientation is not possible. Yet the research reveals the opposite. While most people do not *choose* their attractions, the research is also clear that people are not simply *born* homosexual. Researchers on both sides of the debate recognize that homosexuality is not simply a matter of biology.²³

To substantiate Dr Hamilton's claim, proponents of both sides of the debate are quoted.

The American Psychiatric Association answers the question; *What causes Homosexuality, Heterosexuality, Bisexuality?*

Currently there is a renewed interest in searching for biological etiologies for homosexuality. However, to date there are no replicated scientific studies supporting any specific biological etiology for homosexuality. Similarly, no specific psychosocial or family dynamic cause for homosexuality has been identified.²⁴

The American Psychological Association answers the question; *What causes a person to have a particular sexual orientation?*

There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, gay, or lesbian orientation. Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social, and cultural influences on sexual orientation, no findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles.²⁵

The American College of Paediatricians released a fact sheet stating:

Homosexual attraction is determined by a combination of familial, environmental, social and biological influences. Inheritance of predisposing personality traits may play a role for some. Consequently, homosexual attraction is changeable.

Contrary to the "born that way" myth, the scientific evidence links homosexuality to social and parental influences... combined in varying degrees with biological predisposition in some people. Sexual orientation is not fixed at birth but rather is environmentally shaped and unfolds slowly across childhood, adolescence and even into adulthood for some individuals.²⁶

Psychologist, Dr Joseph Nicolosi writes:

Efforts within my profession to present homosexuality as solely and simply "biologically predetermined" have failed, even, in fact, by the admission of the researchers themselves (many of whom are gay). All behavior, of course, has some biological basis; and some children may indeed have a biological predisposition to homosexuality. But "predisposition" is not the same as "predetermination." Susceptibility is not the same as inevitability. No research has proven that some children are inevitable destined to be homosexual.²⁷

Gay activist Peter Tatchell is quite opinionated regarding this matter:

According to gay gene theory, genetic factors are responsible for sexual orientation, with our genetic inheritance programming us to desire one sex rather than the other. This is a very simple, deterministic thesis: A causes B.

I don't disagree that genes (and hormonal exposure in the womb) influence sexual orientation. The scientific evidence for these biological influences is presented in the book *Born Gay* (2005), written by Glenn Wilson of the Institute of Psychiatry in London and Qazi Rahman, a lecturer in psychobiology at the University of East London.

But contrary to what the authors seem to suggest, an influence is not the same as a cause. Genes and hormones may predispose a person to one sexuality rather than another. But that's all. Predisposition and determination are two different things.

There is a major problem with gay gene theory, and with all theories that posit the biological programming of sexual orientation. If heterosexuality and homosexuality are, indeed, genetically predetermined (and therefore mutually exclusive and unchangeable), how do we explain bisexuality or people who, suddenly in mid-life, switch from heterosexuality to homosexuality (or vice versa)? We can't.

One of the main original proponents of gay gene theory, Dr Dean Hamer, now concedes that it is unlikely that something as complex as human sexuality can be explained solely in terms of genetic inheritance. He seems to accept that while genetic factors may establish a predisposition towards homosexuality, a predisposition is not the same as a causation.

Many studies suggest social factors are also important influences in the formation of sexual orientation. These include the relationship between a child and its parents, formative childhood experiences, family expectations, cultural mores and peer pressure.

The relative influence of biological versus social factors with regard to sexual orientation is still uncertain. What is, however, certain is that if gayness was primarily explainable in genetic terms we would expect it to appear in the same proportions, and in similar forms, in all cultures and all epochs. As the anthropologists Clellan Ford and Frank Beach demonstrated in *Patterns Of Sexual Behaviour* (1965), far from being cross-culturally uniform and stable, both the incidence and expressions of same-sex desire vary vastly between different societies.²⁸

Dr Satinover sensibly gives a summary of the true state of scientific findings:

Like all complex behavioural and mental states, homosexuality is multifactorial. It is neither exclusively biological nor exclusively psychological, but results from an as-yet-difficult-to-quantitate mixture of genetic factors, intrauterine influences (some innate to the mother and thus present in every pregnancy, and other incidental to a given pregnancy), postnatal environment (such as parental, sibling, and cultural behaviour), and a complex series of repeatedly reinforced choices occurring at critical phases in development.²⁹

Dr Joseph Nicolosi does an excellent job to describe how biology and environment interacts:

A helpful way to understand the interaction of biology and social environment is as follows. First are the "givens:" genes and prenatal hormonal influences. These biological factors work together to create a temperamental predisposition, either to gender conformity and the likelihood of normal heterosexuality or to gender nonconformity and the possibility of homosexual development. Layered on top of those biological givens is the social environment of parents, peers and life experiences; and last, there is the influence of free will and choice.

The biological and social factors work together to shape gender identity and eventual sexual orientation. The element of choice operates in terms of the values we choose to identify with, the social group we select and the behavioral avenues we pursue – all of which serve to reinforce or modify our early shaping experiences.³⁰

The conclusion is that there is no compelling evidence that anyone is determined from birth to be born homosexual. Although genetic and biological factors may play a role, these desires stem from the complex interaction of psychological, environmental and temperamental influences.

Can Sexual Orientation Change?

(By André Bekker, July 2014)

Talking about change needs clarification, seeing that very often there are contradicting opinions about sexual orientation change. Change should not be seen as an all-or-nothing experience. The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) explains:

When change is viewed in absolute terms, then any future experience of same-sex attraction (or any other challenge), however fleeting or diminished, is considered a refutation of change. Such assertions likely reflect an underlying categorical view of change, probably grounded in an essentialist view of homosexual sexual orientation that assumes same-sex attractions are the natural and immutable essence of a person. What needs to be remembered is that the delegitimizing of change solely on the basis of a categorical view of change is virtually unparalleled for any challenge in the psychiatric literature.”¹

Change should rather be seen as something occurring on a continuum.

“This is in fact how sexual orientation is defined in most modern research, starting with the well-known Kinsey scales, even as subsequent findings pertinent to change are often described in categorical terms. NARTH affirms that some individuals who seek care for unwanted same-sex attractions do report categorical change of sexual orientation. Moreover, NARTH acknowledges that others have reported no change. The experience of NARTH clinicians suggests that the majority of individuals who report unwanted same-sex attractions and pursue psychological care will be best served by conceptualizing change as occurring on a continuum, with many being able to achieve sustained shifts in the direction and intensity of their sexual attractions, fantasy, and arousal that they consider to be satisfying and meaningful.”²

With the above said, Dr Hamilton wrote:

The myth that people cannot change is a myth for the following reasons:

- It only takes one person having changed to nullify the myth that change is not possible.
- There are thousands of people who claim various degrees of change in behavior, lifestyle, attractions, or all of the above.
- Change is documented in the professional literature spanning at least the past one hundred years.³

That sexual desire and behaviour are flexible was demonstrated by the Kinsey Institute in 1970. It reported that 81 percent of 684 gays and 93 percent of 293 lesbians had changed or shifted either their sexual feelings or behaviours after age 12. 58 percent of the gays and 77 percent of the lesbians reported a second shift in sexual orientation; 31 percent of the gays and 49 percent of the lesbians reported a third shift; and 13 percent of the gays and 30 percent of the lesbians reported even a fourth shift in sexual orientation before "settling" into adult homosexuality.

The shifts reported by these subjects varied in degree, but some were quite dramatic - about a quarter of gays and a third of lesbians once had heterosexual desires and 5 percent of heterosexual men and 3 percent of heterosexual women once had substantial homosexual desires. Heterosexuals in the study were much less likely to report shifts in their orientation. Even so, 29 percent of 337 heterosexual men and 14 percent of 140 heterosexual women reported at least one shift; while 4 percent of the men and 1 percent of the women reported at least three shifts. Immutable things like eye colour or skin colour don't change once, much less three or four times!⁴

In *A Report of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality*⁵ it is reported:

Among studies finding evidence of the fluidity of sexual orientation, Bell, Weinberg, and Hammersmith (1981) reported that approximately 2 percent of the heterosexual population they surveyed had reported having been exclusively homosexual at an earlier time. Bell and Weinberg (1978) found that those who report themselves as homosexuals showed variety in their sexual experiences when measured on a continuum: 65 percent of homosexual men and 84 percent of homosexual women reported having had heterosexual intercourse.

Of the homosexual women interviewed, 70 percent reported that their first sexual experience was with a man (Paczensky, 1984, as cited in Warczok, 1988), and 43 percent of homosexual men reported that they had engaged in heterosexual intercourse more than once (Dannecker & Reiche, 1974, as cited in Warczok, 1988). Warczok reported that seeing an attractive woman “intensively” excited 13 percent of a sample of homosexual men (Warczok, 1988, p. 181). Tanner reported that as many as half of the lesbians whom she knew had reportedly been heterosexual until middle age (Tanner, 1978, cited in Whitehead & Whitehead, 2007). And in the last decade, Diamond (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2008) reported longitudinal data that clearly shows the fluidity of the sexual orientation of women.

There is little documentation about shifts in erotic preferences in exclusively heterosexual men. While Greer and Volkan (1991) note that it is not unusual for heterosexual men to report “homosexual fantasies” (p. 109) in the course of psychoanalysis or intensive psychotherapy, those fantasies are not accompanied by erotic arousal. In their work with nonincarcerated men, Goyer and Eddleman (1984) reported that a man who previously identified himself as exclusively heterosexual changed his sexual preference as a result of being sexually assaulted by two men. After the rape, the man experienced sexual identity confusion and began voluntarily engaging in homosexual activity (p. 578).⁶

Across three experiments, in a 2013⁷ study, researchers at UCLA found that heterosexually-identified men and women reported significantly more same-sex sexual desires and interests when they were exposed to positive, supportive information about homosexuality than when they were exposed to negative, stigmatizing information. In response to this research finding Snezana Vrangalova remarks:

We like to think of sexual orientation as something that is pretty stable and that, once established during childhood or early adolescence doesn’t change much. We certainly don’t think it can change in response to fleeting, casual influences from our environment.

This is quite remarkable. This is essentially the first experimental evidence out there that factors outside of actual sexual experience can *causally* shape how we perceive our own sexual orientation.

Now think of the implications of this. If reading a single pro-or anti-gay news story or statistics or even seeing a few unconscious, subliminal pro-or anti-gay images can make us perceive ourselves as more or less gay, imagine what a whole life of pro-or anti-gay upbringing, education, comments, media exposure, etc. can have. Not only on our attitudes toward homosexuality, but also on our own sense of our sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation is a much more fluid thing than we think it is. I can’t wait for more science to show us just how fluid...⁸

Some people transition spontaneously from a homosexual orientation to a heterosexual orientation:

This has been well-known since the time of Kinsey, who, like other researchers, reported many such cases of change. Approximately 3% of the heterosexual population once believed they were homosexual or bisexual. We know that significant change in attraction takes place in both directions on the heterosexual-bisexual-homosexual continuum.⁹

Other people transition through religious means, others through therapy or support groups, and others by means of a combination of these.

This is not a new phenomenon. We read about it in the Bible as early as 51 AD, in 1 Corinthians 6:11 “*And such were some of you.*”¹⁰

Orientation change is not only a religious matter but also of interest to academics, professionals and researchers.

I will start with a very important research study, conducted by Dr Robert Spitzer, professor of psychiatry at Columbia University.¹¹

The reason why this study is particularly valuable is because Dr Robert Spitzer, who, in 1973, led the team that removed the diagnostic category of *Homosexuality* from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual.¹²

Though Spitzer in 2012 “retracted”¹³ this study, and apologised to the gay community,¹⁴ it is very important to read Dr Rosik’s article “*Spitzer’s “Retraction”: What Does It Really Mean?*” Dr Rosik observes:

A great deal of attention is currently being given to the recent “retraction” by Robert Spitzer, M.D., of his important study of sexual-orientation change (Spitzer, 2003a). The quotation marks around “retraction” are purposeful, for what has happened should not be characterized as a retraction. While this turn of events has now become a favorite talking point for those opposed to sexual orientation-change efforts (SOCE), the language of retraction reflects politically motivated speech rather than scientific analysis.¹⁵

Dr Spitzer's study consisted of interviews with 200 former same-sex attracted persons. He found that for the 143 men and 57 women, the change in their sexual orientation had been significant.

Dr Spitzer gives the reason for conducting this research in the following words:

Position statements of the major mental health organizations in the United States state that there is no scientific evidence that a homosexual sexual orientation can be changed by psychotherapy, often referred to as “reparative therapy.” This study tested the hypothesis that some individuals whose sexual orientation is predominantly homosexual can, with some form of reparative therapy, become predominantly heterosexual.¹⁶

Dr Spitzer made this profound statement after this study:

Like most psychiatrists, I thought that homosexual behaviour could be resisted, but sexual orientation could not be changed. I now believe that's untrue. Some people can and do change.¹⁷

Of the Spitzer research, psychologist Dr Scott Hershberger conducted a Guttman analysis of the study sample, and declared:

The orderly, law-like pattern of changes in homosexual behavior, homosexual self-identification, and homosexual attraction and fantasy observed in Spitzer's study is strong evidence that reparative therapy can assist individuals in changing their homosexual orientation to a heterosexual one.¹⁸

In 2009 NARTH published their results after conducting one of the most comprehensive reviews of research in the area of homosexuality. NARTH gave the following reason for their research:

This document was prepared in response to certain statements and resolutions of the American Psychological Association (APA) that are inaccurate and not grounded in science, in direct violation of the APA's own "Leona Tyler Principle" (Fowler, 1993; Tyler 1969). As members of NARRH's Scientific Advisory Committee, we feel obligated to inform both the scientific and lay communities about the plethora of studies that lead to a singular conclusion: *Homosexuality is not innate, immutable, or without significant risk to medical, psychological, and relational health.*¹⁹

It is very important to take note of a study done by Dr Stanton Jones, of Wheaton College, and Dr Mark Yarhouse, of Regent University in 2007 and a follow-up study done in 2011. The conclusion by the researchers after the follow-up study is as follows:

Evidence from the study suggested that change of homosexual orientation appears possible for some and that psychological distress did not increase on average as a result of the involvement in the change process.²⁰

The literature on the fluidity of sexual orientation and changing thereof is plenty and cannot all be mentioned here. For this reason I refer you to more sources cited in the footnote for further reading.²¹

To conclude this section, I quote a renowned psychologist, Dr Cummings. He submitted an affidavit on the 6th of June 2013 to the New Jersey Superior Court, in the SPLC lawsuit,²² stating:

17. I am also a proponent of the right of patient self-determination. I believe and teach that gays and lesbians have the right to be affirmed in their homosexual identity and also have the right to seek help in changing their sexual orientation if that is their choice.

19. I personally saw over 2000 patients with same-sex attraction and my staff saw another 16000.

20. These patients generally sought therapy for one of three reasons: to come to grips with their homosexual identity, to resolve relational issues, or to change their homosexual orientation.

23. Of the patients who had sought to change their sexual orientation, hundreds were successful.

25. The role of psychotherapy and counselling in sexual orientation change efforts has become highly politicized. Gay and lesbian activists appear to be succeeding in their efforts to convince the public that homosexuality is one identical, unitary, unvarying, and inherited characteristic.

27. Persons who identify as homosexuals fall along a very broad spectrum of personalities.... Contenting that all same-sex attraction is an unchangeable or immutable characteristic like race is a distortion of reality.

28. Attempting to characterize all sexual reorientation therapy as "unethical" violates patient choice and makes a third party the de facto determiner of therapeutic goals.

29. Rather it is unethical for a professional or a professional organization like the APA, to prevent a patient from help to change his or her sexual orientation if that is the psychotherapeutic treatment the patient desires after being informed of the difficulty of the work, the chances of success, and the possibility of recidivism.

30. Accusing professionals who provide treatment for fully informed persons seeking to change their sexual orientation of perpetrating a fraud is not accurate. Such a tactic serves only to stigmatise the professional and shame the patient. A political agenda should not be permitted to prevent gays and lesbians who desire to undertake sexual reorientation efforts from exercising their right to self-determination.²³

Read my story of change: <http://www.learntolove.co.za/index.php/people-s-stories-dealing-with-same-sex-attraction/god-s-amazing-grace>.

Read other stories of change: <http://www.learntolove.co.za/index.php/people-s-stories-dealing-with-same-sex-attraction/voices-of-change>.

Watch Ex-gay video testimonies of Change: <http://www.gcmwatch.com/10615/80-exhomosexual-video-testimonies>.

NOTES

Preface

¹ *Homosex* is a term coined by Dr Robert Gagnon, Associated Professor of New Testament, Pittsburg Theological Seminary, and author of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Text and Hermeneutics*. He gives the following explanation for using this term: "It is not easy getting the right nomenclature down to describe the different camps in the homosexuality issue. I often use the word *Homosex* as a convenient short hand for homosexual practices (i.e. as a noun) or, more particularly, for that which pertains to homosexual practice. (i.e. as an adjective). The term also rightly focusses the debate on behaviour rather than on acceptance or rejection of persons." (Footnote 3, page 19 *Why the Disagreement over the Biblical Witness on Homosexual practice* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/ReformedReviewArticleWhyTheDisagreement.pdf>). On 16 August 2014 Dr Gagnon explained on his Facebook "Although when I came up with it I was unaware of anyone else using it. I subsequently found it used in an academic publication devoted to (and supportive of) homosexual relations. It also now appears in Webster's Unabridged Dictionary: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/homosex>."

² Dr Michael Brown's book, *Can You Be Gay and Christian?: Responding with Love and Truth to Questions about Homosexuality* helps a great deal to understand the controversy regarding being actively Gay and referring to oneself as a Christian. See also Dr Gagnon's article *Can One Be a "Gay Evangelical"?* My answer to a New York Times reporter and how she reported it <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homoGayChristianNewYorkTimes.pdf>.

³ See Dr Gagnon's article *Church Policy As Regards Homosexual Practice: Membership And Ordained Ministry* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexChurchPolicy.pdf>. And *Transsexuality and Ordination* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/TranssexualityOrdination.pdf>.

⁴ Veith, 2001. World, August 18

Chapter 1

¹ The biblical authors found it necessary to admonish the believers and Church of the day not to be involved in same-sex relations as many in the world of its time did. This is abundantly clear for Scripture portions like Lev. 18:22 & 20:30; Rom. 1:10-32; 1 Cor.6:9-10 and 1 Tim. 1:3-11. These Bible portions are so frequently quoted in the contemporary debate to counteract the inroads made by the homosexual fraternity into the Church today. Homosexual people are found in the Church and the world alike.

² *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Theology, Analogies, and Genes* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homoTheologyMattersArticle.pdf>

³ Gagnon argues his case convincingly, why, emits the fact that everybody claims to use the Bible as authority, and authentically do their hermeneutics and exegesis, there are these opposing conclusions, in his article *Why the Disagreement over the Biblical Witness on Homosexual practice* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/ReformedReviewArticleWhyTheDisagreement.pdf>.

⁴ Scroggs, 1983a:VI.

⁵ Van Unnik, 1980:203'

⁶ Van Rensburg, 1994:1

⁷ Malherbe, 1983:15

⁸ Malherbe (1983:17) emphasizes that the New Testament writings must be of primary importance in any socio-historical study. We must begin with these writings and read them with a sensitivity and understanding with regard to their social dimensions before we argue for larger patterns of conformity. Secondary sources would include references in other literary sources concerning relevant social circumstances and remarks and observations from which deductions can be made relating to the relevant social circumstances under discussion.

⁹ The point of departure for this study is to be found in reformed theology. This *inter alia* means that Romans, 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy are viewed to be part of a volume of books known as the New Testament, which is canonical and therefore authoritative for the believer in his/her relationship with God and his/her neighbours. This view correlates with the point of departure for Van Rensburg (1994) in his study of the concept alienism in 1 Peter.

¹⁰ Elliot (1981:21) confirms that the books of the New Testament are not only the product of a social world, but is a product of, and a contribution towards a social world in the making. This, however, negates the dimension of the involvement of the Triune God in the social world in the making.

¹¹ This view opposes that of mechanical dictation or automatic writing or any process, which involved the suspending of the action of the human writer's mind. Such concepts of inspiration are found in the Talmud, Philo and the Fathers, but not in the Bible. The divine direction and control under which the biblical authors wrote was not a physical or psychological force and it did not detract from, but rather heightened, the freedom, spontaneity and creativity of their writing. The fact that, in inspiration God did not obliterate the personality, style, outlook and cultural conditioning of the authors, does not mean that His control of them was imperfect, or that the authors inevitably distorted the truth they had been given to convey in the process of writing it down.

¹² In *The Authority of Scripture in the "Homosex" Debate* Dr Gagnon authentically makes a case for responsible dealing with matters like *the proper use of analogies, Jesus on the double love commandment, Paul on Law and Grace*, <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoAuthorityScripture.pdf>. See also *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Theology, Analogies, and Genes* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoTheologyMattersArticle.pdf>. and *What the Evidence Really Says about Scripture and Homosexual Practice: Five Issues* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexScripReallySays.doc.pdf>

¹³ Cultural milieu as a meaning-giving context includes the totality of the conditions under which people live. It includes material conditions, education, the ways their psychological needs are met or not met, their socio-economic efforts and relationships with people and groups, institutional influences, religious beliefs, normative symbols, ideas and other spiritual aspects, the expression of sexuality within the community and the behavioural patterns.

¹⁴ Matthews & Benjamin, 1993.

¹⁵ The differences being highlighted in our modern era that have direct bearing on the study, are important to grasp. The biblical world is an Eastern world; ours is Western. The world of the Bible is changeless whilst our world is ever changing. Biblical people thought of themselves as households; we think of ourselves as individuals and, perhaps most important, as well as most difficult for the modern reader to understand, in the world of the Bible there is no separation between religion and daily life. Therefore, promiscuity in the world of the Bible was not simply a lack of sexual discretion, but rebellion against God.

¹⁶ Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:xii.

¹⁷ Patai, 1959:47-49.

¹⁸ The Hebrew view of sex showed that sex was an endowment from God, which was to be used in the building of the family. There the seed of the man was precious and, therefore, to be used. To waste it was an irresponsible act. To bestow it upon an improper person or object was an abomination. The book, Song of Songs, however, shows clearly that sexuality was to be enjoyed, notwithstanding its functional purpose.

¹⁹ Goldberg, 2008: 239.

²⁰ Ibid, 145.

²¹ Mace (1953:224), as many other scholars do, regards the sinfulness of Sodom as proverbial of the most abandoned kinds of wickedness (Gn. 13:13; 18:20; Is. 3:9; La.4:6) in the Old Testament and the two references in the New Testament (2 Pet.2:6-7 and Jude 7). There is no room for doubt that it describes wickedness of a sexual nature. The term Sodomite, however, is used in the Old Testament almost invariably in connection with apostasy (Dt. 23:17-18; 1 Ki. 14:24; 22:46; 2 Ki.23:7; Jb. 36:14; Ho. 4:14). This suggests that it perhaps had at first a specific nuance, which later became more generalized, and shows that Israel's abhorrence of sodomy was largely due to their hatred of foreign cults.

²² In Leviticus 18:22 male homosexual deeds are denounced as an abomination, while in 20:18 it is judged as punishable by death. In the latter the offence seems to be treated simply as a misuse of sex without any suggestion of its connection with non-Israelite cults (Mace, 1953:223-224).

²³ Goldberg, 2008:234.

²⁴ Ibid, 235.

²⁵ Ibid, 239.

²⁶ Rapport, 2004:3

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Goldberg, 2008:235

²⁹ Here one should consider what is meant by man's creation in God's image, after His likeness. Sapp (1977:7) convincingly argues that the usage of likeness guards against misinterpreting image in concrete and material terms. The word image implies likeness to God in that man possesses the capacity to think, to communicate, to act self-consciously, and to respond to God's will for him. Image, therefore, means that humans reflect God's nature and possess qualities similar to God's.

³⁰ God commands male and female to exercise the sexuality He has created. There is also an element of blessing in these words, which is repeated whenever the promise of great achievements is bestowed (G. 9:1; 12:2; 17:2-6; 22:17). Until the woman is created, the man is incomplete and alone, without suitable companionship. The fact that God creates the sexes and establishes sexuality and then exercises the sexuality, establishes a relationship: human existence as male and female.

³¹ Cole, 1960:188.

³² *aday* (יָדָע – know). This root occurs 944 times and expresses a multitude of nuances of knowledge gained through the senses. The root is found in Akkadian, Ugaritic and the Qumran materials. It is used to designate sexual intercourse on the part of both men and women (Gildchrist, 1981:366) as seen in the statement Adam knew Eve his wife and its parallels (Gn. 4:1; Nu. 31:17, 35; Jdg. 11:39; 21:11; 1 Ki. 1:4; 1 Sa. 1:19). It is used in addition to describe sexual perversions such as sodomy (Gn. 19:5; Jdg. 19:22) and rape (Jdg. 19:25). Most of its usage is, however, concerned with God's knowledge of man and his ways, man's knowledge, to distinguish, to express acquaintance and to designate relationship to the divine.

³³ Sapp, 1977:20.

³⁴ The word has the connotation of experiencing, becoming acquainted, even being able. Today we might call such knowledge existential or use the word experience in the place thereof. Hence sexuality provides the opportunity for the most complete, most accurate, most fulfilling, most satisfying and most comprehensive knowledge of one another available to man and woman.

³⁵ Cultural considerations include knowledge of the local circumstances and social conditions to interpret the motives, conduct and intentions conveyed by a word within context (Bailey, 1955:2-3).

³⁶ Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13.

³⁷ Gn. 9:1-11; Jdg. 19 (Helminiak, 1997; Bailey, 1955; Boswell, 1980).

³⁸ מִשְׁכַּי אִשָּׁה – literally, with the lyings of a woman. The Septuagint has *κοίτην γυναικὸς* and the Vulgate *ha coitu femineo*.

³⁹ The Talmud, in expanding Leviticus 20:13, suggests that mankind signified any male without distinction of age. This prohibition extended to active sodomy (Bailey, 1955:62) whilst passive sodomy was prohibited by another law (Dt. 23:17).

⁴⁰ Dover, 1978:9.

⁴¹ Dover, 1978:87.

⁴² Throughout the two centuries (from the early sixth to the early fourth century) during which pederasty flourished, the Greeks maintained that it was for the sake of higher education. When a boy finished his orthodox schooling, he was taken under the wing of an older man (usually in his thirties).

⁴³ Licht, 1949:457.

⁴⁴ Pederasty (*παῖδεραστία*) is etymologically a combination of *παῖς* (boy) and *ἐρᾶν* (to love). The word pederasty did not have the negative connotation it has for us today, because it was regarded as an expression of one variety of love. There were in Greek antiquity those who repudiated the idea of the love of boys; the seduction of boys was also unreservedly repudiated. Women in general objected to everything that had to do with this love of boys (Licht, 1949:442, 446-447; Veyne, 1985:32; Scroggs, 1983a:19, 50).

⁴⁵ Tannahill, 1980:86.

⁴⁶ As pure eroticism, homosexuality was prominent in pre-Christian Hellenism. A vast homosexual prostitution existed and there were very little if any moralistic attitudes towards prostitution. Petronius, in his *Satyricon* depicts the sexual abandonment of his characters in shared hetero- and homosexual relations. The same attitude is to be found in the works of Catullus, Tibullus and Vergil. Suetonius testifies to the fact that homosexuality formed part of the erotic many-sidedness of Nero and Caligula. Nero married two men in succession (Nissinen, 1988:71; Vanggaard, 1972:132; Karlen, 1971:50).

⁴⁷ If the master was so oversexed that his girl slaves were not enough, he had to ravish the boys. The important thing was to respect women, virgins and youths of free birth (Veyne, 1985:29; Tannahill, 1980:92).

⁴⁸ The *Lex Scantinia* of 149BC was later confirmed by Augustan legislation, the *Lex Julia*. The lawgiver was not trying to ban homosexuality but solely tried to protect the young citizen against infringement of his or her person. Rome was a slave-owning society in which the master had sexual dominance, so that slaves expressed their compliance the sexual dominance of their master in the saying: There is nothing shameful in the doing of whatever the master orders (Veyne, 1985:28).

⁴⁹ Many claim that Scripture's opposition to same-sex inter-course is grounded in an obsolete notion about the origin of homoerotic passion; namely, that *all* who engage in sex with members of the same sex do so as bored heterosexuals looking for additional novel sexual adventures. Since we now allegedly know that homosexual passions constitute a distinct "orientation" that is given at birth, often exclusive, and generally

immutable, we can disregard Scripture's opposition. This view thus banks on the assumption that Scripture opposes same-sex intercourse solely because it believes homoerotic passions to be manufactured in participants who have other options for sexual fulfillment.

We will first examine Paul's thinking on the subject in his historical context...

On Paul's thinking:

- 1) A number of Greco-Roman sources suggest at least a partial congenital basis for homoerotic attraction—and some of these same sources still argued that same-sex intercourse was contrary to nature. We are not the first culture to theorize this view of causation (see pp. 384-85, 392-95 of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*).
- 2) It is improbable that Paul was unaware of the existence of men whose sexual desire was oriented exclusively toward other males. For example, there existed in the first-century Roman world people called *cinaedi* (Latin plural; singular *cinaedus*; derived from Greek *kinaidos*, pl. *kinaidoi*, “butt-shaker”). These were adult males who perpetuated an effeminate appearance in order to attract male sex partners. Moreover, they were exclusively attracted to other males. Philo, a first-century Jew, was quite aware of their existence. Since the *cinaedi* appear frequently in the literature of the period, it is highly unlikely that Paul was unaware of their existence.
- 3) In antiquity “excess passion” never constituted an independent critique of same-sex intercourse. Passion was judged as excessive (e.g., the passion for sex with animals) on the basis of other criteria about behavioral limits. Otherwise, how could one determine which passions were in excess? There has to be some prior determination that something is wrong with the behavior in question in order to determine that it constitutes excess passion. Paul likely viewed any transgression of God-ordained boundaries to be—by definition—an overheating or excess of desire, in the sense of desiring something that God did not ordain humans to desire by virtue of creation intent and design.
- 4) It is not possible to deduce from Paul's remarks in Rom 1:24-27 that Paul believed that every single individual who engaged in same-sex intercourse also experienced heterosexual desire at one time (much less that idol worship was a necessary prerequisite for homoerotic behavior!). Paul was referring to collective entities, not individuals, and to widespread effect, not origin.
- 5) It is illogical to think that Paul only condemned participation in homosexual acts by those “naturally” attracted to the opposite sex. For, if we were to draw that conclusion, we would have to draw that same conclusion for other sexual behaviors that Scripture opposes. In that event we would have to assert that Scripture expresses opposition only to acts of incest, bestiality, and adultery by those not constitutionally predisposed to committing such sins. Incidentally, it is worth pondering that the overwhelming majority of men are constitutionally predisposed to have multiple sex partners. It may be true of many women as well but it is especially a problem for men (the off-the-charts promiscuity of homosexual men, even in relation to homosexual women, is stark testimony to this reality). In a world that sanctioned and provided cultural incentives for high numbers of sex partners, men generally would have little problem with having sex with large numbers of women. But that is not what God calls us to do because it is self-destructive and other-destructive behavior, even when it is consensual.
- 6) In terms of Paul's understanding of nature, Paul distinguished between innate passions perverted by the Fall and exacerbated by idol worship on the one hand—and, by the way, one does not have to create a statue to worship idols—and material creation that was left relatively intact despite human sin on the other hand. There is a whole series of behaviors and passions listed in Rom 1:29-31, following the reference to same-sex intercourse in 1:24-27, that certainly have some innate basis. People do not choose to be covetous or envious, for example. They are simply born with an innate proclivity to feel bad when others have attractive things or persons that they do not have. That does not mean that covetousness and envy are *natural* or *in accordance with nature* in the Pauline sense. So the innateness of homosexual passions would not subvert Paul's view of them as *contrary to nature* since by *nature* Paul meant God's intended design for creation untouched by the introduction of sin into the world (i.e., the anatomical, procreative, and interpersonal complementarity of male-female sexual bonds as more secure heuristic clues than innate passions).
- 7) Current theories of homosexual development are essentially compatible with Paul's own view of sin. In Romans 5 and 7 Paul speaks of sin as an innate impulse operating in the human body, transmitted by an ancestor human, and never entirely within the control of human will. This is precisely how homosexual-affirming advocates describe homosexual orientation. And Rom 1:24-27 itself talks about God “giving over” people to pre-existing passions for members of the same sex, passions which, apart from God's help, are beyond control. If Paul could be transported into the twenty-first century and told that homoerotic desires have (at most) a partial and indirect connection to innate causation factors, he doubtless would have said either “I could have told you that” or at very least “That fits well into my own understanding of sin.”

The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Theology, Analogies, and Genes
<http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homoTheologyMattersArticle.pdf>

Gagnon in response to an article [Matthew Vines vs Dr Michael Brown Debate](#) wrote the following on his Facebook wall on 1 July 2014: “For more (and better) references to committed homosexual relationships in the ancient world see my article in the Scottish Journal of Theology, a copy of which can be found here: <http://www.robagnon.net/Critical%20Review%20of%20Stacy%20Johnson's%20Time%20to%20Embrace.htm>. Or see my recent presentation at the Family Research Council, especially from the 47 min. mark on but really the whole of the talk: <http://www.frc.org/eventregistration/jesus-scripture-and-the-myth-of-new-knowledge-arguments-about-homosexual-unions>.”

The young Matthew Vines is simply in way over his head on such matters in claiming otherwise. On top of this is the clear evidence in Gen 1-2 and Jesus' remarks in Mark 10 (parallel in Matt 19) and the intertextual echoes to Gen 1:27 and 2:24 in his indictments of homosexual practice, all of which point to God's intentional creation of two complementary and primary sexes, stamped with the image of God, as an essential prerequisite for all sexual unions. The indictment of lesbian relations in Rom 1:26 (the case for which is substantial against those who contest a reference to lesbianism) also points in the direction of an absolute prohibition of homosexual practice, as does the mutuality of affections stressed in Rom 1:27, as does the nature argument in Rom 1:26-27 (which clearly plays off of the creation argument employed in 1:19-21, contrasting the ungodly actions of humans with the evidence from "the things that God made"), as does the clear echo to the absolute Levitical prohibitions in the term *arsenokoitai* ("men who lie with a male") in 1 Cor 6:9 (and, incidentally, early Judaism understood Lev 18:22 and 20:13 to be absolute prohibitions).

Claiming that committed homosexual relationships would have caused Paul (or even Jesus) to have a positive view of homosexual relationships is like claiming that knowledge of adult-committed incestuous unions would have caused them to view this unnatural act natural, as though the embodied, structural ubersameness of the sexual partners could be disregarded by mutual comment.

Real scholars and historians (as opposed to Matthew Vines) who are thoroughly supportive of homosexual relationships, acknowledge that Paul's indictments of homosexual practice included committed homosexual relationships.” Following are some of them (quoted from the article *Does Jack Rogers's Book “Explode the Myths” about the Bible and Homosexuality and “Heal the Church”? Instalment 1* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/RogersBookReviewed.pdf> – read also *Instalment 2* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/RogersBookReviewed2.pdf>):

Bernadette Brooten has written the most important book on lesbianism in antiquity and its relation to early Christianity (especially Rom 1:26), at least from a pro-homosex perspective. She admits that neither committed homosexual unions nor knowledge of homosexual orientation would have made any difference to Paul's indictment of homosexual practice (*Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* [University of Chicago Press, 1996]). She criticized both John Boswell and Robin Scroggs for their exploitation argument:

Boswell...argued that...“The early Christian church does not appear to have opposed homosexual behavior per se.” The sources on female homoeroticism that I present in this book run absolutely counter to [this conclusion]. (p. 11)

If...the dehumanizing aspects of pederasty motivated Paul to condemn sexual relations between males, then why did he condemn relations between females in the same sentence?...Rom 1:27, like Lev 18:22 and 20:13, condemns all males in male-male relationships regardless of age, making it unlikely that lack of mutuality or concern for the passive boy were Paul's central concerns...The ancient sources, which rarely speak of sexual relations between women and girls, undermine Robin Scroggs's theory that Paul opposed homosexuality as pederasty. (pp. 253 n. 106, 257, 361)

She also criticized the use of an orientation argument:

Paul could have believed that *tribades*, the ancient *kinaidoi*, and other sexually unorthodox persons were born that way and yet still condemn them as unnatural and shameful...I believe that Paul used the word “exchanged” to indicate that people knew the natural sexual order of the universe and left it behind...I see Paul as condemning all forms of homoeroticism as the unnatural acts of people who had turned away from God. (p. 244)

And she mounts a very strong argument against those who claim that Rom 1:26 does not refer to lesbian intercourse (pp. 248-52; see also my discussion in *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, 297-99). This is important for two reasons: (1) Rogers raises a question of whether Rom 1:26 even refers to such (p. 78, relying on Nissinen); and (2) since lesbianism was *not* known in the ancient world for being conducted in a

particularly exploitative way (i.e., with boys, slaves, or prostitutes), an indictment by Paul of female-female intercourse would be strong evidence that Paul's indictment of homosexual practice was absolute, no exceptions for non-exploitative conduct. Rogers fails to mention even a single argument for the identification of Rom 1:26 with lesbian intercourse, let alone respond to such arguments or recognize their import for his overall thesis.

William Schoedel has made similar points in his significant article "Same-Sex Eros: Paul and the Greco-Roman Tradition" (in D. Balch, *Homosexuality, Science, and the "Plain Sense" of Scripture*). Although writing an article overall supportive of committed homosexual unions, Schoedel (like Brooten) admits that neither the exploitation argument nor the orientation argument is without serious problems. On the matter of pederasty, Schoedel intimates that in the Greco-Roman world homosexual intercourse between an adult male and a male youth was regarded as a *less* exploitative form of same-sex *eros* than intercourse between two adult males. The key problem with homosexual intercourse—behaving toward the passive male partner as if the latter were female—was exacerbated when the intercourse was aimed at adult males who had outgrown the "softness" of immature adolescence. Schoedel's comment on Philo of Alexandria is apt:

Philo adds something new in this connection when he rejects the love of males with males even though they "only" differ in age ([*Cont. Life.*] 59). The "only" is important here. For the difference in age made all the difference in the Greco-Roman view. Philo is subtly suggesting that the normal abhorrence for the love of adult males can with equal propriety be extended to pederasty. (p. 50)

Schoedel states that "some support" exists in Philo, *Abraham* 135 for thinking that Paul might be speaking in Rom 1:26-27 "only of same-sex acts performed by those who are by nature heterosexual." But he then dismisses the suggestion:

But such a phenomenon does not excuse some other form of same-sex eros in the mind of a person like Philo. Moreover, we would expect Paul to make that form of the argument more explicit if he intended it...Paul's wholesale attack on Greco-Roman culture makes better sense if, like Josephus and Philo, he lumps all forms of same-sex eros together as a mark of Gentile decadence. (pp. 67-68)

Schoedel also acknowledges that a "conception of a psychological disorder socially engendered or reinforced *and genetically transmitted* may be presupposed" for Philo (p. 56 [emphasis added]; see also my short review and critique of Schoedel in *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, 392-94).

Louis Crompton in the massive *Homosexuality and Civilization* (Harvard University Press, 2003) has written:

According to [one] interpretation, Paul's words were not directed at "bona fide" homosexuals in committed relationships. But such a reading, however well-intentioned, seems strained and unhistorical. Nowhere does Paul or any other Jewish writer of this period imply the least acceptance of same-sex relations under any circumstance. The idea that homosexuals might be redeemed by mutual devotion would have been wholly foreign to Paul or any other Jew or early Christian. (p. 114)

Walter Wink, in his generally mean-spirited review of my book *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, had to admit:

Gagnon exegetes every biblical text even remotely relevant to the theme [of homosexual practice]. This section is filled with exegetical insights. I have long insisted that the issue is one of hermeneutics, and that efforts to twist the text to mean what it clearly does not say are deplorable. Simply put, the Bible is negative toward same-sex behavior, and there is no getting around it... Gagnon imagines a request from the Corinthians to Paul for advice, based on 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 [on how to respond to a man in a loving and committed union with another man]. "...When you mentioned that *arsenokoitai* would be excluded from the coming kingdom of God, you were not including somebody like this man, were you?"...No, Paul wouldn't accept that relationship for a minute. ("To Hell with Gays?" *Christian Century* 119:13 [June 5-12, 2002]: 32-33; see my response to Wink's review: "Gays and the Bible," *Christian Century* 119.7 [Aug. 14-27, 2002]: 40-43, with fuller version on my website www.robgnon.net)

Dan O. Via (professor emeritus of New Testament at Duke University Divinity School) also acknowledges in his response to my essay in *Homosexuality and the Bible: Two Views* that the Bible's rule against homosexual practice is "an absolute prohibition" that condemns homosexual practice "unconditionally" and "absolute[ly]" (pp. 93-95). This is an interesting admission in view of the fact that he had charged me in his own essay in *Two Views* with "absolutizing . . . the biblical prohibition of all same-sex intercourse"

(p. 27). What does it mean to “absolutize” an already absolute biblical prohibition? At any rate, he acknowledges in his more lucid moments the absoluteness of biblical opposition to homosexual practice. In his essay in *Two Views* he rightly notes:

The Pauline texts...do not support this limitation of male homosexuality to pederasty. Moreover, some Greek sources suggest that—at least in principle—a relationship should not be begun until the boy is almost grown and should be lifelong...I believe that Hays is correct in holding that arsenokoites [in 1 Cor 6:9] refers to a man who engages in same-sex intercourse...True the meaning of a compound word does not necessarily add up to the sum of its parts (Martin 119). But in this case I believe the evidence suggests that it does...First Cor[inthians] 6:9-10 simply classifies homosexuality as a moral sin that finally keeps one out of the kingdom of God. (pp. 11, 13)

See also *An Open Letter to the Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold*

<http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoGriswoldLetter.pdf>

⁵⁰Hubbert, T. K. 2003:2. *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A sourcebook of Basic Documents*. University of California Press.

⁵¹Actual instances of homosexual behaviour amongst Jews covering the period 200BC to 200AD are not attested (Gagnon, 2110:161). A specific case is reported for ca 300AD when Rabbi Yehudah ben Pazzi caught two men having sex in an attic.

⁵²Philo was the Jewish philosopher from Alexandria, Egypt, who lived ca 10BC-45AD. And Josephus was a Jewish priest, general and historian who lived ca 37-100AD. He lived in Jerusalem to the age of about 30 years and then took up residence in Rome under the patronage of the emperor. Philo addresses homosexual sex in *On the life of Antiquities, Special Laws*, and *On the Contemplative Life*. Josephus does so in *Jewish Antiquities* and *Against Apion*. Gagnon (2001) discusses the texts in detail in a most comprehensive study on homosexual practice.

⁵³In the Letter of Aristeas 152 (ca 200-100BC, Alexandria) the author attests to the fact that Jews are morally superior to the non-Jewish in that the latter not only draw near to males but also defile their mothers and even their daughters. We Jews are quite separated from these practices. In the Sibylline Oracles 3 (ca 163-145BC, Alexandria) we read that, when the Romans come to dominate the world, immediately compulsion to impiety will come upon these men. Male will have intercourse with male and they will set up boys in houses of ill fame and the Jews are mindful of holy wedlock, and do not engage in impious intercourse with male children and avoid adultery and indiscriminate (confused) intercourse with males. The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocyclides (ca 50BC-100AD) urges that the limits of sexual intercourse set by nature not be transgressed by intercourse between males, nor should females imitate... the sexual role of men. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (ca 150BC-100AD) speaks of corrupters of boys and of Sodom, which exchanged the order of its nature.

⁵⁴Four reasons can be precipitated from sources why only intercourse between male and female was considered to be in accordance with nature or natural (kata physin). Of primary importance are (1) homosexual intercourse cannot lead to procreation; (2) homosexual intercourse is contra to God's sexual intention for males and females by uniting two non-complementary sexual beings. The focus centres on the inherent degradation of males being penetrated as if they are females. The other two reasons are of lesser importance being that (3) homoerotic desire constitutes an excess of passion and (4) even animals do not practice homosexual intercourse.

⁵⁵Taxonomic classification, the typing or categorizing of human beings as governed by the natural fact of sex. Genitals determined gender. Therefore humankind was divided into two types of human beings, male and female. The interpretations of the text concerned with the creation of the male and female bear witness to this binary differentiation. Consequently man (ish) and woman (ishah) belong together. The integrity of this divine established orientation of male and female is guarded by the Holiness Code of Leviticus 17-26. There is no compromise of sexual identity. Man's sexual identity is defined by God, his orientation is ordained by God and because his sexual activity is ordained to be within a heterosexual context, homosexuality is not a third kind of natural sex or alternative sexual orientation in God's created world.

⁵⁶Waetjen, 1996:103; Sapp, 1977:31.

⁵⁷Umansky, 1997:181.

⁵⁸Given the first-century Judaist contest, it is most unlikely that Jesus would have adopted a fundamentally different stance toward same-sex intercourse. Jesus' appeal to Gn. 1:27 and 2:24 in his discussion on divorce (Mk. 10:1-12) confirms his support of an exclusively heterosexual model of monogamy. Jesus' opinion on sexual ethics was in general more rigorous than those of his contemporary culture (Gagnon, 2001:187).

⁵⁹ No first-century Jew, for example, could have heard Jesus' reference to sexual immoralities (πορνεία) in Mk.7:21-23 without having in mind the list of forbidden sexual offences in Leviticus 18 and 20 (incest, adultery, same-sex intercourse, bestiality, fornication and prostitution).

⁶⁰ The New Testament is in organic continuity with the Old Testament. The authors of the New Testament were basically satisfied and at ease with what the Old Testament taught. What the Old Testament said about sexuality was accepted and assumed by the authors of the New Testament.

⁶¹ Paul's attitude and expression are somewhat complex and at times paradoxical – a fact noted in his own time: Our beloved Paul wrote to you... speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

⁶² Furnish, 1968:28-44.

⁶³ By his own affirmation, Paul was a strict Jew before his conversion, in fact a Pharisee and a son of Pharisees (Acts 23:6; 26:4-11). In Gal. 1:14 he says: I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

⁶⁴ Furnish, 1968:44-50.

⁶⁵ Paul was known as the Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:14), people whose sexual morals were generally lower than those of the Jews. The influence of dualistic anthropologies tended to bring the Gentiles to see sexuality in ways totally alien to Paul's outlook as a Jew.

⁶⁶ The interpretation of these two words has commanded a huge amount of attention by academics and non-academics alike. Both words, arsenokoitês and malakós occur in a vice list in 1 Cor.6:9, and arsenokoitês recurs in 1 Tim. 1:10. The translation of these two words varies as may be ascertained from the different English Bible translations. In the twentieth century they have often been taken to refer to people who engage in male homosexual sex.

⁶⁷ I am in principle agreement with Bahnsen (1978:5) when he says: the ironic problem with the modern discussion of homosexuality is its virtually uncritical perpetuation of cultural prejudices in an unconditional sense especially where the contemporary culture is the point of departure. This reiterates the simple fact that the Bible has lost its authority within contemporary society to teach, admonish and guide societal moral approaches.

⁶⁸ McCafferty & Hammond, 2001:5.

⁶⁹ The following women partners in the New Testament are sometimes referred to: Tryphaena and Tryphosa (Rom16:12); Euodia and Syntyche (Phil.4:1); Martha and Mary (Lk.10:38-42) and in the Old Testament: Ruth and Naomi (Ru.1:16-17) (D'Angelo, 1997:441-455). The following male partners in the Old Testament are referred to: David and Jonathan (1Sam.18-23) with special reference to David's eulogy for Jonathan in 2Sam.1; Cain and Abel (Oraison, 1977:73; Horner, 1978:59-60).

⁷⁰ Barnard, 2000:87; Bartlett, 2002:11.

⁷¹ White & Niell, 2002:15.

⁷² Schaeffer, 1982:37; White & Niell, 2002:15.

⁷³ Keen (1992:72) writes: The earthquake that is shaking men and women, their roles and inter-relationships, is part and parcel of the world culture's tectonic plates... the changes in our gender roles are only one aspect of the upheaval that accompanies the death of one epoch and the birth of another.

⁷⁴ Hanigan (1988:35) underlines the difference between an irreversible homosexual orientation and the occasional experience of homosexual attraction, desire, or even overt behaviour. Homosexual orientation involves the being and personality of a person in a very fundamental way. This distinction manifests in orientation and behaviour (Also: Oraison (1977:2). Finnis (1997:31) defines orientation as an overtly manifested active willingness to engage in homosexual conduct. On the other hand there are homosexual acts.

⁷⁵ Corvino, 1997:3-16.

⁷⁶ Pronk (1993:xii) states: For gays and lesbians we use, therefore, a third category, namely that of sexual orientation. Orientation is, as such, not the same as sex or gender. But it affects both. This implies a distinction between homosexual acts and homosexuality. In the biological sense homosexuality is, therefore, not unnatural because it is a natural biological predisposition outside of the control of the homosexual person. This notion of a third category is quite recent in origin. Not all biblical scholars agree that Paul had no understanding of the concept of sexual orientation (Brooten, 1996:190; Schoedel, 2000:47). I also agree that knowledge of sexual orientation would not have mattered to Paul at all because not orientation but homosexuality as expressed in the deed is the focus of his condemnation and that includes all forms of homosexuality irrespective of its roots or origin.

⁷⁷ Bahnsen, 1978:30.

⁷⁸ Pronk (1993:265) states that exegesis, as such, furnishes no answer to the question of what weight has to be attributed to the textual data involved. He then mentions that personal theological presuppositions predetermine the outcome of the exegetical process and, secondly, the predetermined position on homosexuality determines the exegete's attitude in exegesis. This carries a specific viewpoint into the exegetical process (eisogesis) with the result that an unbiased reading of textual data is a myth. In my opinion, the position of Pronk is untenable. Exegetical objectivity becomes obsolete and, therefore, the reality of Biblical norms is delivered into the exegete's position on the role of Scripture, and his secular disposition Old Testament issues of contention and is relativised into conditional truths. How could he possibly argue for objectivity for his own exegesis or sustain his arguments in the light of the majority report he acknowledges? Scroggs (1983a:125) maintains that only exegesis, not hermeneutics, can decide what the eternal valid rule is about.

⁷⁹ Boswell, 1980:113-117.

⁸⁰ Scroggs, 1983a:127; Siker, 1996:143.

⁸¹ The two main arguments at stake here have to do with procreation and gender complementarity. From this basis flows the nurture against nature debate, views on excess passion and animal heterosexuality, as the creation intention of God for all living mammalian creatures.

Chapter 2

¹ Current research relating to sexuality in general and homosexuality specifically, and focusing on first century Christianity is characterised by interest in both socio-historical constructions as well as the examination of ideology and rhetoric and how these relate to issues of sexuality (Shaw, 2000:401).

² Scroggs, 1983a:16.

³ Meeks, 1987:11.

⁴ Scroggs (1983a:1) states that Christian statements about homosexuality in the New Testament are responses to the cultural scene. He further implies that the New Testament textual data (Rom.1:26-27; 1Cor.6:9-10; 1Tim.1:9-10) can only be understood against the backdrop of Greek pederasty. I imagine this is an over-simplification and over-accentuation of the Greek culture as such. A visual presentation (chronological) indeed shows the cultural distance between these cultures and should make one aware of the fact of the commonality of language of the New Testament which, leaning on the Greek culture so much, ignores the influence from other cultures and the historical Jesus in particular.

⁵ Vanggaard, 1972:25.

⁶ Dover, 1974:215.

⁷ The older adult was the active partner, the erastes (lover), usually seeking out the relationship, provoking the sexual contact and, in one way or another, obtaining orgasm by the use of the boy's body. The younger person, on the other hand, was the passive partner and was called the beloved, the eromenós. Apparently the eromenós did not desire, was not supposed to desire or at the least did not expect sexual gratification from the erastes. Indeed, if the youth did feel pleasure, he was considered to be no better than a prostitute (Dover, 1978:52). Scroggs (1983a:40) mentions that the typical pattern was that the erastes found a more youthful boy when the present eromenós reached clearly into puberty of pubertal masculinity (beard appears).

⁸ Exceptions to the rule do occur and the following generalisations are attested to in late archaic and early classical homosexual poetry: Attic comedy; Aristophanes and his contemporaries; Plato; a speech by Aiskhines, the Prosecution of Timarkhos; homosexual poetry of the Hellenistic period and Greek art: (Dover, 1978; Scroggs, 1983; Vanggaard, 1972; Licht, 1949; Halperin, 1990) a) a typical romantic relationship with the eromenós, most often a boy or youth. b) the erastes most likely an adult, older than twenty years, with the upper age extending indefinitely. c) relationships of inequality where the older man is the eromenós. This situation is, however, a rare occurrence and would be more associated with an adult male prostitute who retains the passive role well into adulthood.

⁹ Licht, 1949:437; Scroggs, 1983:40.

¹⁰ Such persons were seen as effeminate, having lost their masculinity, having adopted the practices of women, allowing themselves to be penetrated, to be used as if a woman. Among several words used to describe such persons was malakós, a Greek adjective literally meaning soft but, metaphorically, effeminate. Paul uses this word in 1Cor.6:9-10.

¹¹ Vanggaard, 1972:129.

¹² Licht, 1949:447.

¹³Laws were implemented to protect boy citizens from any sort of sexual harassment during the school day: teachers shall open the school-rooms not earlier than sunrise; every choragus (coach, trainer) who is appointed by the people shall be more than forty years of age; the superintendents of the gymnasia shall under no condition allow anyone who has reached the age of manhood, to enter the contests of Hermes (wrestling contests) together with boys (Tannahill, 1980:92; Scroggs, 1983a:19).

¹⁴Karlen, 1971:48.

¹⁵Julius Caesar (58-44BC) slept his way to early success in the bed of King Nicodemus of Bethynia, he depilated his body and was called the Queen of Bethynia and every woman's man and every man's woman. Tiberius (14-37AD) retired to a pleasure palace on Capri where he kept spintriae (effeminate homosexuals). Caligula (37-41AD) committed incest with three of his sisters, indulged in both heterosexual and homosexual acts and often appeared in public dressed as a woman. Nero (54-68AD) was introduced to homosexuality by his tutor Seneca. He slept with his mother and had her assassinated (Karlen, 1971:50; Vanggaard 1972:131). Nero raped the virgin Rubria, castrated the boy Sporus and married him. Vitellius (69AD) earned the throne by being a spintriae for Tiberius at Capri in his boyhood and depended for political advice on his catamite Asiaticus. Titus (79-81AD) kept a troop of invertes and eunuchs. Domitian (81-96AD) at first forbade castration, enforced laws against adultery and child prostitution and had many men convicted under the old Scantinian Law that forbade homosexual relationships with freeborn boys, but later in his life he succumbed to bisexuality, which dominated him.

¹⁶Scroggs (1983a:66) acknowledges the three explicit New Testament references to homosexuality (Rom.1:26-27, 1Cor.6:9-10; 1Tim.1:9-10). Regarding Paul he states: His writings reveal such mastery of the exegetical skills of the emerging rabbinic scholarship that he must have been expertly trained in these skills by someone or some school. It is equally clear that he is informed by Hellenistic Judaism. Acts 22:3 confirms that Paul studied with the Jewish rabbi Gamaliel.

¹⁷Exponents of this Hellenistic Judaism are best represented, though not exclusively, by Philo and Josephus (Scroggs, 1983a:6).

¹⁸Scroggs, 1983a:71; Horner, 1978:65; McNeill, 1977:57.

¹⁹Bailey, 1955:1-28; McNeill, 1977:42-50 and Scroggs, 1978:72-75; Bahnsen, 1978:31-35; Gagnon, 2001:71-78.

²⁰Neofiti chooses the word hacham, literally to be wise which has the metaphorical meaning to have sexual intercourse with. Pseudo-Jonathan translates the passage to indicate clearly homosexual rape. It can be concluded that the Palestinian Jewish traditions intend a general prohibition against Israelite male and female secular homosexuality and prohibition of the passive partner in homosexual activity (Scroggs, 1978:76).

²¹When Philo discusses Lev.18:22 and 20:13 he says: Much graver than the above is another evil, which has ramped into the cities, namely pederasty. It would seem from these passages that Philo interprets the general prohibitions in Scripture as being against the male homosexuality that culturally manifested itself in his own environment. Dt.23:17-18 he seems to understand to refer to male prostitution.

²²Lev.18:22: With a male (arsen) you shall not lay the intercourse (koite) of a woman (Scroggs, 1978:86; Brenton, 1990:153). Dt.23:23:17-18: There shall not be a telesphoros (idolatress) among the daughters of Israel; there shall not be a teliskominos (initiated person) among the sons of Israel (Scroggs, 1978:86; Brenton, 1990:262).

²³Paul refers to it three times. In two of these, 1Cor.6:9-10 and 1Tim1:9-10, homosexuality is strongly suggested to be the subject, but in only one (Rom.1:26-27) is the topic explicitly maintained. There are two other related passages which scholars have interpreted as alluding to judgements on homosexuality/homosexual practices: Jude 6-13; 2Pet.2:4-18.

²⁴1Cor.5-7 is a good example of the vices Paul had to counter. 1Cor.5:1 he writes: It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles – that a man has his father's wife. This by no means is strange seeing as Paul's mission was in the Graeco-Roman world, which completely lacked the Jewish view of sexual acts and symbols (Vanggaard, 1972:138). It remains, however, surprising because the addressees are members of the Christian congregation and not of a secular club of sorts.

²⁵Schoedel, 2000:72.

²⁶*Evangelicals have been softening their stance on divorce-and-remarriage for decades.* This is Dr. Gagnon's commencement of his discussion of the biblical teaching on divorce and remarriage in his article *Divorce and Remarriage-After-Divorce in Jesus and Paul: A Response to David Instone-Brewer* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/DivorceOUPEntrySexualityS.pdf>. And Prof. David Instone-Brewer's

Response to My "Divorce and Remarriage-After-Divorce in Jesus and Paul" and My Rejoinder

<http://www.robagnon.net/articles/DivorceInstoneBrewerResponse.pdf>.

²⁷ Gagnon, 2001:227; Karlen, 1971:70.

²⁸ Cole, 1960:227.

²⁹ Though Roman love was imitative of Greek sexual morals, the differences were significant. Pederasty was popular, but remained forthright and openly physical. Roman men had no interest in winning youths by means of spiritual and mental attraction but to seduce or buy them. The aim was to get them into bed without intellectual bother; there was nothing educational about it. It was an appetite, the satisfying or which was needed. By the end of the first century BC adultery had become the fashion of the day (Hunt, 1960:50)

Chapter 3

¹ Botha, 2001:41.

² Reisser, 1986:498.

³ Boring et al, 1995:210, 403, 489; Winkler, 1990:189.

⁴ Πυρόομαι: to experience intense sexual desire; to burn with passion; to be sexually aroused. Κρείττον γάρ ἐστιν γαμῆσαι ἢ πυροῦσθαι – for it is better to marry than to burn with sexual passion (1Cor.7:9).

⁵ Louw & Nida, 1989a:292; Schönweiss, 1986:458.

⁶ Brown, 1986:859.

⁷ Keulers, 1953:229; Barrett, 1968:154; Schrage, 1995:59.

⁸ Findlay, 1912:819.

⁹ Mace, 1958:143.

¹⁰ Westermack, 1934:278.

¹¹ Schodel, 2000:48; Bird, 2000:148.

¹² Mace, 1953:143.

¹³ The sacrality of the male genitals is illustrated in the fact that it was used in the taking of a particular oath (Gen.24:2, 8). Antique literature does not relate that this particular ritual was still a general practice by the time of the first century church or a cultural related phenomenon within Jewish first century culture.

¹⁴ Joubert, 1996:37.

¹⁵ Countryman, 1989:23; Meeks, 1986:70.

¹⁶ Douglas, 1977:55; Cole, 1960:194.

¹⁷ Countryman, 1989:66. Barnard, 2000; De Bruyn, 1982; Mace, 1953.

¹⁸ Marin, 1977:55; Cole 1960:194.

¹⁹ Sexual intercourse outside marriage (Jn.8:41; 1Cor.6:12), sodomy and homosexual relationships were condemned as sinful (Jude 7; Rom.1:24-27). Yarbrough, 1985:119

²⁰ Sapp, 1977:58; Nissinen, 1998:115.

²¹ Schmidt, 1995:43.

²² Louw & Nida, 1989a:272.

Chapter 4

¹ Walls, 1972:253.

² Judge, 1960:49-61.

³ Salmon, 1984:398-399; Tenney, 1974:272; Burkett, 1985:153.

⁴ Du Toit, 1984:59; Meeks, 1986:66.

⁵ Salmon, 1984:24; Meeks, 1986:67.

⁶ Joubert, 1996:37; Countryman, 1989:23; Meeks, 1986:70.

⁷ Josephus, 1976:376.

⁸ Vermes & Vermes, 1978:106-109.

⁹ Josephus, 1976:376.

¹⁰ Josephus, 1976:376; Vermes & Vermes, 1978:120.

¹¹ The old Corinth was destroyed in 146 BC and was rebuilt in 46 BC by Julius Ceasar. Augustus made it capital of the new Achaia.

¹² Stambaugh & Balch, 1986:110.

¹³ Joubert, 1996:38; Schillebeekx, 1976:240; Carson, 1990:161.

¹⁴ Carson, 1990:163.

¹⁵ Sissa (1990:339-363) concludes that classic authors saw παρθένος as a virgin, while the meaning of unmarried young woman represents the viewpoint of sociologists and historians, because they focus on age difference, the rituals of matrimony and the integration of women in the society.

¹⁶ Countryman, 1989:59.

¹⁷ 1Cor.1:26: Brothers: Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were influential, not many were of noble birth. According to Malherbe (1983:29) recent studies show that there was a minority of influential and wealthy people from the lower class. Judge (1960:59) supports this view of Malherbe.

¹⁸ Malherbe, 1983:63; Wuelner, 1973:670; Du Toit, 1984:61.

¹⁹ Du Toit, 1984:61.

²⁰ Cole, 1960:194.

²¹ Yarbrough, 1985:119

²² Cole, 1960:229.

²³ Tenney, 1974:270.

²⁴ Meyer, 1877:228; Orr & Walther, 1976:219; Calvin, 1968:164.

Chapter 5

¹ Greenberg, 1988:96-135; Olyan, 1994:95-192-195; Gagnon, 2001:42-62; Nissinen, 198:19-36, 144-152; Wold, 1998:43-61; Springett, 1988:33-48.

² Griffiths, 1960:41-46; Greenberg, 1988:35=36.

³ Springett, 1988:35-36.

⁴ Coffin Texts VI, 258 f-g. in Westerndorf, 1977, 1272-1274.

⁵ Gagnon, 2001:52.

⁶ Faulkner, 1973:2.162, 264.

⁷ Nissinen, 1998:144.

⁸ Greenberg, 1988:134; Nissinen, 1998:19.

⁹ Wold, 1998:59.

¹⁰ Greenberg, 1988:126.

¹¹ Nissinen, 1998:24-26; Gagnon, 2001:44-47.

¹² The word for comrade or neighbour, tappasu, has the meaning of a man of equal status or a man who was socially involved with the wrongdoer, like a neighbour or business partner (Nissinen, 1998:26; Gagnon, 2001:45).

¹³ The verb for have sex with, lie with, niâku, means have dominant sex, that is, to have sex as the dominant partner (Nissinen, 1998:26-27; Gagnon, 2001:45-46).

¹⁴ Compare the usage of dog (kelebh – ro tolrah a fo erih eht gnirb ton llahs uoY :tnematseT dIO eht ni בלב) the price of a dog into the house of the Lord your God for any vow. (Dt.23:18). Thomas (1960:411-427) argues convincingly that the Ishtar cult knew pederastic priests whose manhood Ishtar changed into womanhood. He does, however, think that the term dog of god may be a title of honour, denoting faithfulness within Semitic religious practice and certain usages in the Old Testament. However, what was regarded as respectable elsewhere in the Semitic world, was not always regarded as such by the Deuteronomist, consequently both the בלכ (השד) and the (השדק) were banned, together with other features of pagan worship.

¹⁵ Gagnon, 2001:48-49; Nissinen, 1998:27-28. For a detailed discussion see Nissinen, 1998:28-36.

¹⁶ Wold, 1998:48-51; Greenberg, 1988:33-35; Gagnon, 2001:49.

¹⁷ Greenberg, (1998:113) argues in favour of a sexual relationship, as is suggested by phrases like: ... covers his body like that of a bride and ...he loved Elkidu like a wife. Wold (1998:49) does not. Both Nissinen (1998:24-25) and Greenberg compare the relationship in the Epic with the non-sexual relationship of David and Jonathan. Even Gagnon (2001:50-51) argues for a non-sexual context because it would otherwise be in tension with the Middle Assyrian Laws. This view assumes that Gilgamesh and Enkidu were of the same status, which is not true. Therefore a homosexual context would not be in tension with the Middle Assyrian Laws in the case where Enkidu were not of equal status.

¹⁸ This is important to remember because it has reference to other narratives we find in the Bible where homosex is mentioned. Not only did P write Gen.1:1-2:4a, but he also wrote the narrative of the Levite and his concubine and the Levitical proscriptions. J wrote Gen.2:4b-3:24, and the narratives of Noah and Ham and Sodom and Gomorrah.

¹⁹ Hamilton, 1990:177-178. The text says that God took one of the *sela* of man. Almost without exception this word has been translated as rib. A better translation of *sela* is side. This word designate a side of the

shell of the Ark of the Covenant (Ex.25:12, 14; 37:3, 5), the side of a building (Ex.26:20; 36:25), or even the whole room (side chamber – Ezek.41:5-8) or a ridge or terrace (2Sam.16:13). Gen.2:21 is the only place in the Old Testament where the modern versions render this word as rib. If it is translated side rather than rib, then the passage states that the woman was created of a part of man's body rather than from one of his organs or from a part of bony tissue. A similar teaching is to be found in later Jewish (Tannaic) tradition. Here God took the side of man and, from this half, made the woman. Only the two together restore the wholeness of God's original creation (Midrash Rabbah Gen.8:1).

²⁰ Gagnon, 2001:60-61.

²¹ Fewell & Gunn, 1993:29.

²² Gangel, 1978: 92.

²³ Soards, 1995: 28.

²⁴ Soards, 1995: 29.

²⁵ Wold, 1998:66-67; Nissinen, 1998:52-53; Springett, 1998:77-78; Gunkel, 1997:80; Von Rad, 1972:137; Bruns, 1967:75-76; Phillips, 1980:41; Sarna, 1989:66; Levin, 1993:119; Schmidt, 1995:88; Kunin, 1995:174-175; Robertson, 1998:177-180.

²⁶ Nissinen, 1998:53.

²⁷ Gagnon, 2001:67.

²⁸ It is stated: The notorious story of Sodom and Gomorrah – often cited in connection with homosexuality – is actually irrelevant to the topic (Hays, 1994:3). Bird (2001:147), in his reaction to this statement, says that he believes Hays to be right in insisting that the text does not address the cases under consideration today, but I do not think it can be dismissed as testimony to the Old Testament's attitude toward homosexual activity. See also Dr Gagnon's article *Why We Know That the Story of Sodom Indicts Homosexual Practice Per Se* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosex7thDayAdvArticleSodom.pdf>

²⁹ A non-sexual connotation is argued for by Bailey (1955), Boswell (1980), McNeil (1976), and Countryman (1988). This stance is sufficiently and convincingly refuted by the scholars, for example, Wold (1998), Grenz (1998), Springett (1988), Nissinen (1998), Edwards (1984), Greenberg (1988), Scroggs, (1983), De Young, (1991), Haas (1997), Boughton (1992).

³⁰ See Dr Gagnon's article *A Critique Of Jacob Milgrom's Views On Leviticus 18:22 And 20:13* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoMilgrom.pdf>

Chapter 6

¹ Starr, 1971:1.

² The Roman, Cato the Elder wrote to his son in 2BC: Concerning those Greeks, Son Marcus, I will speak to you in the proper place. I will show you the results of my own experience at Athens: that it is a good idea to dip into their literature but not to learn it thoroughly. I shall convince you that they are a most iniquitous and intractable people, and you may take my word as the word of a prophet: whenever the nation shall bestow its literature upon us, it will corrupt everything (Karlen, 1971:45).

³ Karlen, 1971:46.

⁴ In the first century the emancipation of the Roman women was complete. Her free consent was necessary for marriage. She received an education and had liberty of movement with full economic rights. The hetaira (courtesan) was virtually unnecessary, for a wife, lover or single woman of one's own class might have all the freedom, charm and sexual expressiveness that the Greeks allowed only to bad girls (Karlen, 1997:47, Tannahill, 1980:60).

⁵ Shaw, 2000:409.

⁶ The poet Catullus fell in love with Clodia, the wife of the governor of Cisalpine Gaul. He wrote love poems to her, using the name Lesbia that may suggest bisexuality. Without Lesbia around, he would write love poems to boys. He indulged in homosexuality. Tibullus fell in love with Delia, and then Nemesis the mercenary, then followed the young man, Marathion, who deceived him for a wealthier man and then a girl. Horace wrote love poems to both boys and girls and Propertius wrote: A woman's love? My enemies may have it. I wish my friends the love of some young boy. Horace also had advice for his compatriots: Adultery and whores are just trouble. When your passions urge, and a young slave girl or boy whom you long for is at hand, would you rather be consumed with desire than possess it? (Karlen, 1971:49). Homosexuality was called the Roman religion (Douma, 1988:15).

⁷ Karlen, 1971:56.

⁸ These stable people included the poor and the undistinguished, who had no time, inclination, urge or opportunities for more than family and work. Countless villages and small towns in the provinces

continued with life as usual. Here the institution of slavery and the sexual exploitation of youths were not the norm, at least not until the spread of the Great Mother cults all over the empire. Juvenal described the worshippers of this cult as a bunch of sexually crazed women coupling with each other, men and beasts (Tannahill, 1980:118-120).

⁹ Sanday & Headlam, 1962:xv.

¹⁰ Vanggaard, 1972:138; Yarbrough, 1985:63; Tannahill, 1980:122.

¹¹ Lewinsohn, 1958:83.

¹² Lewinsohn (1958:86) summarises the apostle Paul's teaching as follows: If a man finds sexual abstinence easy, let him remain unmarried, but if sexual impulses are so strong that he cannot live in continence, let him marry. This rule applies alike to bachelors and widowers, to men and to women. For the rest Paul does not tamper with the old tradition. It is still for parents to determine their children's future, but they must take account of the sex-instinct. No one who wishes to live in virginity is to be forced to marry, and no one unable to restrain himself sexually is to be debarred from marrying. This seems to be a fair summary of Paul's intention in 1Cor.6-7 and clearly highlights the superiority of Paul's teaching on sexual matters.

¹³ Miller, 1995:3.

¹⁴ Χράομαι – to use, make use of; desire, yearn after, enjoy. Louw & Nida, (1989a:258) defines the meaning as: the sexual function or use of the same or opposite sex – sexual use, sexual function. With reference to Rom.1:26-27, Louw & Nida translate: for the women pervert the natural sexual function for that which is contrary to nature, and likewise men give up the natural sexual function of women. Gagnon (2001:236) quotes Pseudo-Lucian (Affairs, 25) where he uses the word: I will show that the womanly “use” is better by far than the “use” of a darling boy.

¹⁵ Scroggs, 1983a:101.

¹⁶ Miller, 1995:3.

¹⁷ Frederickson, 2000:201.

¹⁸ This argument is not plausible. One can hardly draw the same conclusion for the male, as the word likewise would have it. The reason being that the paucity of examples of the female's use of the male can be explained in part by the lack of the attention paid by male authors to female sexual experience and also by their reluctance to think of women as users, a male social role, rests on too many contemporary assumptions regarding the female-male role in sexual activity.

¹⁹ Five terms are recognized to describe erotic (ἔρωσ) love in the ancient world (Frederickson, 2000:208): ἐπιθυμία (desire, 1:24); πάθος (passion, 1:26); ἐκκαίω (inflamm, 1:27); ὄρεξις (appetite, 1:27) and πλάνη (error, 1:27). Paul does not use ἔρωσ at all. To argue that Paul is building his argument around the implied topic of ἔρωσ assumes too much.

²⁰ Foucoult, (1988:174) argues for sex without passion understanding on the basis of 1Thes.4:4 – Having a wife in honour as if it equals passionless sex for the male readers of the Thessalonian text. The fact for which Frederickson (2000:209) argues: that (in sexual matters) πάθος is employed without regard to the gender of either the subject or the object of desire, may just show the unnaturalness of the male-male or female-female desire. The argument is not about πάθος or χρῆσις as such, but the fact that it is not heterosexually, but homosexually directed. This is the πλάνη (error).

²¹ Frederickson, 2000:202-207.

²² Outside Romans the related term ἐναλλάσσω is more common for sexual perversion (Miller, 1995:3). See, for example, the parallels in Wisdom 14:26 and Testament of Naphtali 3:4-5. Miller argues that ἐναλλάσσω is non-specific to the type of sexual perversion and may be used for any activity which the author considers a perversion, and concludes that μεταλλάσσω is probably non-specific. If, however, μεταλλάσσω is intended to be specific, the context must provide the information of what specific perversion is intended by Paul's use of μεταλλάσσω.

²³ Malick, 1993:335.

²⁴ The active sense of παρέδωκεν does not allow an interpretation of either the permissive or privative use. The active judicial sense lines up with Paul's intention in other parts of Scripture (Rom.4:25; 6:17; 8:32; 1Cor.5:5; 1Tim.1:20). Thus, the best reading to understand the phrase is in the active judicial sense, where the act of God is to be seen as a penal infliction of retribution. This action is consistent with God's holiness (Malick, 1994:337; Hultgren, 1994:318; Sanday & Headlam, 1962:45).

²⁵ The term exchanged which parallels rebellion against God with the outcomes of that rebellion, is confirmed in v.23 (ἠλλαξαν), 25 (μετήλλαξαν) and 26 (μετήλλαξαν).

²⁶ Pronk, 1993:215.

²⁷ Homosexuals cannot lay claim to and own nature with its particular predisposition. The appeal to a God-ordained special homosexual nature allows claims for other natures, e.g. a bi-sexual nature, a pedophilic

nature or bestiality nature. This is, however, not the case. The term *παρὰ φύσιν* is at the same time inclusive and exclusive; it includes a specific nature and excludes all others as deviation of that nature. It would exclude homosexuality as *contra naturum* if homosexuality is proven not to be natural, i.e. aligned with what is biblically regarded to be natural.

²⁸ Malick, 1993:331.

²⁹ This is how Paul uses the term in 1Cor.11:14 when he refers to nature as an argument for head coverings. Paul argues that the branches of the olive tree are natural (*κατὰ φύσιν*). Branches are grafted into it *contra naturum* (*παρὰ φύσιν*). To my mind Cranfield (1985:835) correctly observes that in Rom.1:26 *φύσικος* means in accordance with the intention of the Creator and *παρὰ φύσιν* means contrary to the intention of the Creator.

³⁰ Martens, 1994:55.

³¹ Paul argues that he views sexual sin as specified in Rom.1:26-27, a result of rebellion against the Creator. There is no direct quote of Genesis and Rom.1:18-32, but the passage is filled with allusions of humanity's creation. The following are of special interest: ever since creation (1:20) the thing He has made (1:20); Creator (1:20) males and females (Rom.1:26-27) as in Gen.1:27 where it says: male and female He created them. For Paul, the creation account of sexual differentiation is the only *φύσις*. The word for creation (*κτίσις*) in 1:20 refers to the act or process of creation (Barret, 1991:39). Same-sex relationships constitute obscene/shameful pleasures, which is a perversion of the created order (Schmidt, 1996:297; De Kruijf, 1986:45).

³² Cottrell, 2000:157.

³³ Gagnon, 2001:290.

³⁴ Gagnon, 2001:254.

³⁵ Paul argues that even pagans who have no access to the book of Leviticus should know that same-sex eroticism is *παρὰ φύσιν* because the primary sex organs fit male to female, not male to male or female to female. Fittedness also clues to complementarity provided by procreative capacity and the capacity for mutual and pleasurable stimulation. These clues make it clear that neither the anus, the orifice for excreting waste products, or the mouth, the orifice for taking in food, are complementary orifices for the male member (Gagnon, 2001:254-255). The reciprocal point of view is well-illustrated by Barnard, (200:45): The point of departure is that the whole body is holy – the so-called orifices for excretion of waste products as well. Barnard queries the judgement that the anus is solely regarded as an excretory organ seeing as the penis is also an excretory organ and at the same time a sexual organ. He calls upon research results by sexologists to support his claim that anal sex is natural because it is sexually stimulating and if it was not natural then surely sexual stimulation would have been absent (2000:44). He concludes that the Bible is not prescriptive in the ways of sexual intercourse, but definitely prescriptive in the attitude accompanying intercourse. Countryman's (1989:243) conclusion that the New Testament did not justify any sexual rule, by appealing to physical purity, states: (1) that the Gospel allows no rule against, in and of themselves: masturbation, non-vaginal heterosexual intercourse, bestiality, polygamy, homosexual acts, or erotic art and literature and (2) bestiality, where it is the casual recourse of the young or of people isolated over long periods of time from other humans, should occasion little concern.

³⁶ Scholars who point to the male-female complementarity as the key to understanding Paul's use of *παρὰ φύσιν* include: Hays (1985); Schmidt (1995); Wright (1984). Other commentators are not clear on the issue and allude to same-sex intercourse as a violation of the natural order or order of nature created and intended by God. Fitzmeyr (1993:286) explicitly mentions the order seen in the function of the sexual organs themselves, which were ordained for an expression of love between man and woman and for the procreation of children. Cranfield (1986:125-126) takes nature as a metonym for the way God made us. Hoheisel (1994:294) admits that Paul viewed same-sex intercourse as outside the order of God or of creation while Balz (1987:66) says that it is a matter of an offense against the human body given with creation, false use of one's sexual potency, a renunciation of offspring, an offense against creation – appropriate combination of man and woman and, finally, probably the disturbance of the bodily relationships of life willed by God ... Paul appeals, when he speaks of *φύσιν*, to an insight accessible to everyone in the reality of creation given in all that is. Gagnon (2001:255) observes that for Paul it was a matter of common sense observation of the human anatomy and procreative function that even non-Christians otherwise oblivious Old Testament God's direct revelation in the Bible, had no excuse for not knowing.

³⁷ The Stoic philosopher Seneca (ca 2-65AD) laid bare the wickedness in human nature, and in his moral exhortation he approximated to Christian teaching more than any other classical philosopher. Mosinius Rufus (30-101AD) and Epictetus (55 – ca 135AD) also use language comparable to the New Testament.

Many terms in the New Testament have had a place in Stoicism: spirit, conscience, logos, virtue, self-sufficiency, reasonable service, but Stoicism did not have a fully personal God, a Creator. Everything was possible through the logos. Paul encountered Stoics at Athens (Acts 17:18). Whereas Paul identified nature as the observable, Stoics saw nature as reason. For the Stoics the only rational motive for undertaking sexual intercourse is procreation (McNeill, (1977:93). But this being the case, it is quite contra Paul, because he does not indicate an innate nature in the philosophical sense, but always relates to religious and cultural heritage. From the beginning of his arguments against non-Christian religion and morality, which would include Stoicism by definition, Paul has in mind God as Creator, the cosmos and the creation by the invisible God, and non-Christian religion as the fatally flawed attempt to seek in elements of nature (the lie) the manifestation of the invisible God who defies all images (Mauser, 1996:11).

³⁸ Helminiak, 1997:87.

³⁹ Pollak, 1985:41.

⁴⁰ Douman, 1983:69-70.

⁴¹ This, to my mind, is a contradiction in terms. Scroggs (1983a:121) is arguing for a qualitative fact that his argument cannot have. Jewett (2000:235) argues against Scroggs' opinion when he says that the evidence in this verse (Rom.1:26) is particularly damaging to the hypothesis by Scroggs that the critique of homosexuality in this pericope aims solely to attack pederasty and thus has no bearing on homoerotic relationships between consenting adults.

⁴² Scroggs, 1983a:32.

⁴³ Paul argues as follows in the various verses of the Romans pericope and implies mutuality: In the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves (1:24); Burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful (1:27); And receiving in themselves the penalty of their error that was due (1:27).

⁴⁴ Wright, 1989:295; Malik, 1993:338.

⁴⁵ Schoedel (2000:72) concludes that the Jewish and early Christian rejection of same-sex eros was but one aspect of a new conception of the family. The male could not now express his authority by penetrating at will not only the wife but also his male and female slaves or a young male favourite. A new model for the family was emerging at that time. This seems to be an over-emphasis of the family as no other source attests to this emerging family model. This model also ignores the long moral history of the Jews and the early Christian church's submission to the ethical codes of the Torah, the common denominator of Jews and Christians.

⁴⁶ Miller (1995:10) says: Thus the similarity in function described in Rom.1:26 refers to non-coital sexual activities, which are engaged in by heterosexual women similar to the sexual activities of homosexual males. So females, described first, exchanged the natural function for the unnatural but an exchange of partners is not indicated. This view is not supported by Rom.1:26-27. The word likewise implies an exchange of partners and a moving away from the divine intention of heterosexual partners and not just a mere exchange of function.

⁴⁷ Frederickson, 2000:233.

⁴⁸ Scroggs (1983:140-144) lists some instances of female homoeroticism in antique literature. His conclusion is that there is virtually nothing in the texts about female homosexuality. He might, however, be underscoring the truth in support of his view on pederasty as the only homosexual model in the Graeco-Roman world. He mentions Sappho of Lesbos and a single reference in the speech of Aristophanes in Plato's Symposium. Another is Plutarch's life of Lycurgus and the mentioning that *παρθέναι* (young girls) found female lovers. Other instances include Clement of Alexandria, Pseudo-Lucian's *Erotes* and a final portion in Lucian's *Dialogues of the Courtesans*. Smith (1996:223-251), however, takes Scroggs to task for his limited references concerning female homosexuality in ancient literature and art. Over and against the ten references listed by Scroggs, Smith (1996:223-252) states: On the contrary, several certain statements can be made about female homosexual practices. Considerably more is known about female homosexuality. He then lists an additional seven instances not mentioned by Scroggs from Graeco-Roman literature and instances of rabbinic literature. Dover (1978:184) refers to numerous references and quotations to conclude: If lesbian women had a reputation for shameless and uninhibited sexuality, they are likely to have been credited with all such genital acts as the inventive pursuit of a piquant variety of pleasure can devise, including homosexual practices together with fellation, cunnilinctus, threesomes, copulation in unusual positions and the use of *olisboi* (masturbation aids). Waetjen (1996:111) refers to some references but leans for his information on Dover (1978). He mentions extravagant and uninhibited language, which was employed to express relations between women and also girls.

⁴⁹ Miller, 1995:10; Boswell, 1980:109.

⁵⁰ There are three reasons, says Boswell (1980:108-109) why temple prostitution is not in focus: (a) Temple prostitution was not limited to homosexual activities; (b) It is clear that the sexual behaviour itself is objectionable to Paul, not merely its associations; (c) Paul is not describing cold-blooded dispassionate acts performed in the interest of ritual or ceremony. He refers to lust as motivation for homosexual behaviour. Therefore, the persons that Paul condemns are manifestly not homosexual. What he derogates are homosexual acts committed by apparently heterosexual persons. It is valid to state that Paul is not concerned here with temple prostitution or another form of homosexual prostitution. However, it is not valid to state that he is concerned about heterosexual people committing homosexual acts in lust. Rather, Paul is profoundly against homosexual acts per se. Boswell's view of heterosexual people committing homosexual acts goes unsupported by the Bible references.

⁵¹ When one views the way Paul's contemporaries used the contrast *κατὰ φύσιν/παρὰ φύσιν* (according to nature/contrary to nature) in relevant contexts, it is obvious that Paul had an exchange of nature in mind. Plato (Laws, 636C) writes that when a male unites with a female for procreation, the pleasure experienced is held to be due to nature, but contrary to nature when male mates with male or female with female, and that those first guilty of such enormities were impelled by their slavery to pleasure. Plutarch (ca 100AD) contrasts natural love between men and women with union contrary to nature with males and those who consort with males do so against nature (Erotikos, 751, E). Philo (Abraham, 135) remarks that men of Sodom threw off from their necks the law of nature to mount males, not respecting the common nature with which the active partner acts upon the passive. In Special Laws, III:37-42 he characterizes pederasty as a transformation of the male nature (Schmidt, 1997:101). These quotes support the argument that Paul had an exchange of female for male relations in view (contrary to nature) and not a mere exchange of function.

⁵² Gagnon, 2001:298; Malick, 1993:337; Schmidt, 1997:100-101.

⁵³ Brooten, (1996) refers to Plato, Seneca the Elder, Martial, Ovid, Ptolemy, Artemidoros and Dorotheos of Sidon. These references refer to female same-sex intercourse as being *παρὰ φύσιν*.

⁵⁴ Indicative of this widely accepted censure by Paul is the fact that even the so-called revisionists accept Paul's condemnation of homosexual acts (Miller, 1995:1; Boswell, 1980:112-113; McNeill, 1977:53-56).

⁵⁵ Jaroslav Peliken, ed. 1961. Luther's words 111, St Louis: Concordia Publishing House. P. 255. As quoted in Sears & Osten, 2003. The homosexual agenda: Exposing the principal threat to religious freedom today. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. P. 122-123.

⁵⁶ Hultgren, 1994:319.

⁵⁷ In the Septuagint: Ex.21:6; Num.11:1; Jdg.15:5.

⁵⁸ In the Septuagint: Dt.29:20; 32:22; 2Sam.22:9; 2Ch34:21, 25.

⁵⁹ Louw & Nida (1989a:291) classify *ἐκκαίωμα* under domain 25: Attitudes and Emotions and sub-domain (b), Desire Strongly. This sub-domain includes meanings which are ethically disvalued, in the sense of being that which is not normal.

⁶⁰ Louw & Nida, 1981:291.

⁶¹ Hanigan, 1988:64.

⁶² *Ἐπιθυμία* simply means desire, a term in itself neutral which should be qualified by an adjective to cancel neutrality. In Col.3:5 it is qualified as evil desires. Therefore, says Helminiak (1997:88), the translation of *ἐπιθυμία* with lusts in Rom.1:24 is unwarranted. *Πάθος*, he argues, means sexual desire or passion. Its core meaning is neutral therefore, *πάθος* in Rom.1:26 is explicitly described as dishonourable, not as wrong. Lastly *ὀρεξις* is a synonym for *πάθος*, occurring nowhere else in the New Testament, but the intent is also neutral.

⁶³ Countryman, 1989:112.

⁶⁴ Particular attention is given to other occurrences of *ἐπιθυμία* in Romans. In Rom.6:12 Paul commands: Do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey its passions/lusts (*ἐπιθυμία*). See also Rom.7:7-8 and Rom.13:14. In 1Thes.4:5-6 believers are exhorted not to express their sexuality with lustful passion. In all these instances a neutral reading is impossible. The same can be said regarding *πάθος*. It is used twice in the rest of the New Testament, firstly in 1Thes.4:5 where it is clearly not neutral, and in where it is used in a vice list. In Rom.1:27 Paul uses *ὀρεξις* to describe the desire of males for one another. This is the only usage in the New Testament. From the discussion by Schmidt (1997:98-100) it becomes clear that the viewpoint of Helminiak and Countryman is challenging, yet in the light of other views, not acceptable (Louw & Nida, 1989; Gagnon, 2001; Hultgren, 1994; De Kruijf, 1986). Helminiak (1997:91) presupposes criticism of his point of view because his conclusion radically challenges standard beliefs. Frederickson (2000:209) throws down the gauntlet to this challenge when he states that discussions of erotic passion generally assume *ὀρεξις* as a neutral term, a structured way humans appropriate parts of the external world: *ἔρω* is *ὀρεξις* which has become irrational and excessive.

⁶⁵ Frederickson, 2000:197-209.

⁶⁶ Dio Chrysostom writes: He is passionately devoted to all these things (pleasures of the five senses), but especially unrestrainedly to the poignant and burning madness (ὄξειαν καὶ διαπύρον μανίαν) of sexual indulgence through intercourse both with females and males and through still other unspeakable and nameless obscenities; after all such, indiscriminately he rushes and also leads others, abjuring no form of lust and leaving none untried (Discourse, 4.101-102).

⁶⁷ Frederickson, 2000:213.

⁶⁸ Countryman, 1988.

⁶⁹ Louw & Nida, 1989a:759.

⁷⁰ Helminiak, 1997:87.

⁷¹ Countryman (1989:117-123) argues that, in Paul's mind, God handed non-Christians over to homosexual practices only after they were already filled with the sinful vices in Rom.1:29-31. Gagnon (2001:274) refutes Countryman's stance by referring to the two most extensive vice lists in the undisputed Pauline letters outside of Rom.1:29-31. These are 1Cor.6:9-10 and Gal.5:19-21. In the beginning of 1Cor.6:9-10 the sexually immoral (fornicators: πόρνοι – pornoi), idolaters, adulterers, males who play the sexual role of females and men who take males to bed, are mentioned. Gal.5:19-21 begins with sexual immorality (fornication: πορνεία – porneia), uncleanness, licentiousness (as also in Eph.5:3-4 and Col.3:5-8). In Rom.13:13 unrestrained sexual activity is mentioned (compare 1Tim.1:9-10 as well) and also at the very end of 2Cor.12:20-21. Gagnon (2001:275) concludes that the prominence of sexual vices in the textual data does not necessarily mean that sexual vices are the worst of all sins, but it may suggest that sexual vices are the most pernicious in terms of temptation and addiction.

⁷² Schmidt, 1997; Smith, 1996; Hays, 1988.

⁷³ Bird, 2000:151.

⁷⁴ There are four views to be evaluated: Scroggs (1983a) proposes that Paul refers to pederasty (male with child) relations; Gagnon (2001) reasons for adult homosexual acts whilst in the third place Boswell (1980) and Miller (1995) argue for heterosexual adults performing homosexual acts. Jewitt (200:237) is of the opinion that neither pederasty nor homosexual acts between adults are at stake in v.27; Paul condemns homoeroticism without making any distinction between pederasty and relationships between adults, consenting males or between active and passive partners as Roman practice of the day was inclined to do.

⁷⁵ Karlen, 1971:21; Malick, 1993:338.

⁷⁶ Wright, 1989:295.

⁷⁷ Boswell, 1980:107-117.

⁷⁸ See Dr Gagnon's articles: *The Apostle Paul on Sexuality*

<http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoNeilElliottResponse.pdf> and *Rowan Williams' Wrong Reading of Romans (...and John 14:6)* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexRowanWilliamsResp.pdf>.

Chapter 7

¹ A doorpost of a synagogue was found with an inscription on it (Wright, 1979:264). This inscription may refer to a later date than Paul's visit to Corinth, but it could confirm the existence of a synagogue in the time of Paul.

² Barclay, 1975:2.

³ There were more than a thousand prostitutes connected with the temple of Aphrodite in old Corinth (Strabo, 8.6.20). The goddess could be styled Aphrodite Kallipygos, Aphrodite of the Beautiful Buttocks (Athenaeus, 12.554C). Shrines were erected to Aphrodite the hetaira as patroness of harlots (Athenaeus, 13.559a). Dio Chrysostom (Discourses, 8.5) speaks of Diogenes observing large numbers gathering at Corinth because of its harbours and its prostitutes (Morris, 1987:18).

⁴ There were Roman veterans whom Julius Caesar had settled there and, secondly, merchants settled in Corinth, for her situation gave her commercial supremacy. Thirdly, many Jews were among the population and, in the fourth place, Phoenicians and Phrygians, and people from the east with their exotic customs settled in the city. Barclay (1975:4) quotes Farrar saying this mongrel and heterogeneous population of Greek adventurers and Roman bourgeois, with a tainting infusion of Phoenicians; the mass of Jews, ex-soldiers, philosophers, merchants, sailors, freedmen, slaves, trades people, hucksters and agents of every form of vice; a city without aristocracy, without traditions and without well-established citizens.

⁵ Morris, 1987:18.

⁶ Bray, 1999:2.

⁷ Boswell (1980:341-344) denies that ἀρσενοκοίτης refers to a homosexual person in general, but more specifically to the male prostitute, who could serve heterosexual and homosexual clients. The sin is prostitution, not homosexuality. Scroggs (1983a:13) is of the same opinion: Even if such a male did service other males, it is prostitution per se, which is prohibited, not homosexuality in general. I will argue below that these opinions are not substantiated by Scripture.

⁸ The Domain, Sexual Misbehaviour was discussed in detail in Chapter 10 above.

⁹ Louw & Nida (1989a:773) makes the point that, as in Greek, a number of other languages also have entirely distinct terms for the active and passive roles in homosexual intercourse.

¹⁰ The Septuagint being used is that of Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton (1897-1862) done in 1851 with a literal English translation accompanying the Greek text. Included with the Septuagint is the Apocrypha. It was printed under the title *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* in 1990 by Hendrickson Publishers, after it was first published in 1851 by Samuel Bagster & Sons, London.

¹¹ Brenton, 1990:1.

¹² Wright, 1984:129.

¹³ In the effort to refute Boswell's (1980:342) argument, Wright (1984:129) quotes various usages of the compound ἀρσενοκοίτης to show that out of twenty-two compounds of –κοίτης there is no support for Boswell's claim. The first element, in fact, specifies the object or the sleeping or its scene or its sphere, e.g. χαμαικοίτης-sleeping on the ground; ήμεροκοίτης-sleeping by day. Thus δουλοκοίτης-sleeping with slaves, not slaves sleeping with others; μητροκοίτης – not mother who sleeps around; and πολυκοίτης – sleeping with many others. Wright (1984:130) concludes that invariably –κοίτη has a verbal force on which is dependent the object or adverb specified in the first half of the word. The rest of the argument entails a discussion on ἄρρενας and ἄρρενοκοίται, the difference to be noted is only in dialectical diversity with no difference in semantic significance in the variations. Thus all variation of ἄρσην and ἄρρην should be considered. The –ρη- affected especially Attic, while –ρσ- spellings predominate in the LXX, the papyri of the Ptolemaic period and the New Testament. (The –ρη- spellings are dominant in the Roman and Byzantine eras.) The above suffices to conclude that, if no semantic importance attaches to the difference between ἄρσην and ἄρρην, likewise it can scarcely be pertinent in the case of their compounds.

¹⁴ Wright, 1984:45; 1987:398.

¹⁵ The neologism, ἀρσενοκοίτης, occurs for the first time in extant literature here in 1Cor.6:9 and later in 1Tim.1:10. Sodomite as a translational equivalent is best avoided, because the Greek word does not incorporate the proper name Sodom and because the natives of Sodom were guilty of many other evils besides same-sex intercourse. Ἀρσενοκοίτης makes no direct allusion to the story of Sodom. Wright (1986:125-153) argues persuasively that the neologism ἀρσενοκοίτης was probably coined by Hellenistic Jews (Paul?) from compounding two Greek words appearing in the LXX's rendering of Lev.18:22 and 20:13. The Greek word for male is ἄρσεν and the word for bed is κοίτη, to which has been added a masculine suffix – (τ)ες denoting the agent or doer of the action. Scroggs (1985:8b, 108) subscribes to this view as well. He observes that the rabbis used the phrase miskab zalkûr (lying of/with a male) drawn from the Hebrew text of Lev.18:20; 20:13, to refer to homosexual intercourse. It is possible that the Hebrew phrase may have been in circulation prior to Paul's letters, in which case ἀρσενοκοίται (homosexual intercourse) and its derivatives would be a straightforward Greek translation.

¹⁶ The Peshitta text of 1Cor.6:9 and 1Tim.1:10 breaks ἀρσενοκοίται into three words, literally those who lie with men. The Coptic versions in both Sahidic and Boharic dialects render the Greek word by two Coptic words lying with males or sleeping with males.

¹⁷ Gagnon, 2001:312.

¹⁸ Peterson, 1986:187.

¹⁹ Wright, (1984) cites textual data challenging Boswell's (1980) translation of male sexual agents or active male prostitutes in favour of homosexuals. The texts cited are those with the word group ἀρσενοκοίτ- as denoting homosexual activity (139, 140); homosexual conduct (137); male homosexuality (131, 133, 134); homosexuality (141, 145); male homosexual activity (144); that homoerotic vice which the Jewish writers... regarded as a signal token of pagan Greek depravity (145).

²⁰ If, as Peterson (1986:188) argues, the word homosexual is unacceptable, what would one do with words like fornicator, adulterer, pederast and such like? A male who frequents the prostitutes is a fornicator. A male who has sex with a woman he is not married to, is an adulterer. A male who has sex with a male youth, is a pederast. Why then should the male who has sex/performs sexual acts with other males not be called a homosexual? In my opinion the interpretation of Wright is accurate as it stands, given the context of 1Cor.6:9 and 1Tim.1:10. Read in this conjunction also with Rom.1:26-27 and Lev.18:20; 20:13 (LXX), where the meaning is confirmed.

²¹ Gagnon, 2001:316.

²² Normally, as shown previously, the older adult was the active partner, the ἐραστής (erastês – lover), usually seeking out the relationship, provoking the sexual contact, and in one way or another obtaining orgasm by the use of the boy's body. The younger person was the passive partner and was called beloved, the ἐρώμενος (erômenos). The age of the ἐρώμενος varied, a boy prior to puberty, may be called παῖς (pais – boy) or, if past puberty, he may be identified as a μειράκιον (meirákion – lad). The above denotes the active and passive person in pederasty, which holds true for any male-male situation, as there is always an active and passive partner involved. Age reversals are attested to as well as adult-adult relations, although much more infrequently than pederasty (Scroggs, 1983a:34)

²³ In 1Cor.5 Paul draws on the Levitical proscription of incestuous behaviour (πορνεία –porneía) in Lev.18 & 20, which reinforces the supposition that Paul had in mind the proscriptions against male same-sex intercourse in Lev.18:20; 20:13 when referred to ἀρσενοκοίται in 1Cor.6:9 (Gagnon, 2001:327). The overlap in the vice lists in 1Cor.5:10-11 and 1Cor.6:9-10 indicates that all unrepentant participants in πορνεία – be it incest, fornication, adultery or same-sex intercourse, are to be expelled from the community. 1Cor.6:9-20 forbids all πορνεία, here sex with a prostitute, on the grounds that it joins in a one-flesh union two people other than a husband and a wife in holy matrimony.

²⁴ Wright, 1984; Gagnon, 2001; Dover, 1978; Boswell, 1980.

²⁵ Scroggs (1983a:62-65) discusses the status of malakós, malakía and malthakós at length in an excursus.

²⁶ In the light of Scroggs' (1983a) research he should have come to a more nuanced conclusion. He cites evidence of homosexuality between youths of approximately the same age (133-135) and of adult lovers (erômenoi) (135-138). Here there are examples quoted of passive submission by adults, e.g. Cicero suggests Anthony was playing the passive role, as if he were then a wife. Scroggs also quotes from the speeches of Aeschines and Demosthenes (137).

²⁷ Veyne, 1985:26.

²⁸ Artemidorus (Onirocritica, 88-89) singles out relations that conform to normal behaviour, i.e. with one's own wife, with a mistress or with a male or female slave: but to let oneself be buggered by one's own slave is not right. Plato (Laws, 840C) drew up laws of a Utopian city, from which he banished pederasty which, he said, was against pederasty and sodomy as an excessively licentious and unnatural practice.

²⁹ Veyne, 1985:29.

³⁰ Waetjen, 1996:108-111.

³¹ Martin, 1996:125.

³² The real problem of being penetrated was that it implicated the man in the feminine, and malakós referred not to the penetration per se but to the perceived aspects of femaleness associated with it. The word malakós refers to the entire ancient complex of devaluation of the feminine. Thus people could, for example, use malakós as an insult directed at men who loved women too much (Martin, 1996:127).

³³ Martin, 1996:332-355.

³⁴ The translation of malakoí as effeminate call-boys (Scroggs, 1983a:106-108) and the effeminate (Martin, 1996:117-136) seeks to render the word unusable for those who regard homosexual behaviour as sin. The view of Scroggs seems to be speculative in the light of all the evidence sited. In any case: even if it was true, then Paul's blank condemnation would include it without regarding it as the only point of reference.

³⁵ It seems so improbable that Paul would have general effeminacy in view. In 1Cor.11:2-16, Paul, e.g. argues strongly and in general that a woman who pray and prophesy should wear a veil. He notes that short hair is natural for men, but not for women. Yet, despite the inappropriate headgear, hairstyle or conduct of women in the congregation, he at no time suggests that it will lead to exclusion from the kingdom of God. Not so with μαλακοί (malakoí). In 1Cor.6:9 malakoí is sandwiched between μοιχοί (adulterers) and ἀρσενοκοίται (people who participate in same-sex intercourse). Immoral sexual intercourse would seem to be the point of reference for μαλακοί as well. The epithet soft (with meaning in the bad sense) itself then suggests males playing the female role (passive) in sexual intercourse with other males.

³⁶ Philo treats the discussion in Special Laws 3.37-3.42 under the category of pederasty and alludes to the active partner as a pailerastês. Philo makes it clear that male-female types include adults, who employ various means to prolong their youthful beauty. Philo apparently had in mind the κιναιδός (kinaidos), a man who, out of desire to be penetrated by other men, permanently, even as an adult, assumed the role of the passive partner, with effeminate mannerisms. There is no criticism levelled by Philo against any age disparity in the relationships (Nissinen, 1998:62, 78, 83).

³⁷ Gagnon, 2001:309-310.

³⁸ Marcus, E.1999:156.

³⁹ Scroggs, 1983a:43

Chapter 8

¹ Marshall, 1999:58.

² Marshall, 1999:85.

³ Mounce, 2000:lviii.

⁴ Vice lists are common to Paul – Rom.1:29-31; 6:9-10; 1Cor.5:10-11; 6:9-10; 12:20; Gal.5:19-21; Ephesus.4:31; Co.3:5,8; 1Tim.6:4-5; 2Tim.3:2-5; Tit.3:3. Vice lists tend to be general (Debellius & Conzelmann, 1983:22-23) and include especially heinous sins. It is suggested that, in 1 Timothy 1, Paul is not describing the specific sins of the opponents, but is rather describing in general the type of person for whom the law is still applicable (Mounce, 2000:30).

⁵ Bruce, 1977:41-52.

⁶ Marshall, 1999:379.

⁷ Gagnon, 2001:305.

⁸ This can be deduced from the fact that Boswell (198):341-344) denies that it refers to a historical person in general, but more specifically to the male prostitute, who could serve heterosexual and homosexual clients. The sin is prostitution, not homosexuality. Also Scroggs (1983a:13) is of the same opinion: Even if such a male did service other males, it is prostitution per se, which is prohibited, not homosexuality in general. With Scroggs, however, it is using the effeminate call-boy who is in focus, and not adult male prostitutes. The exegesis done in chapter 6 above confirms the sexual connotation of ἄρσενικοίτης which is implicated by the views of Boswell (1980:341-344) and Scroggs (1983a:13).

⁹ The Domain, Sexual Misbehaviour, has been discussed in detail in chapter 6.

¹⁰ Pronk, 1993:272.

¹¹ It is nevertheless significant because, if Paul had not written the Pastoral Epistles (as most scholars propose), it confirms that Paul's opposition to homosexual behaviour continued in the early post-Pauline churches.

¹² The word ἀνδραποδίστης (andrapodistês) means slave dealer, kidnapper. Scroggs (1983a:119-120) argues that the preceding context described a particular type of slave dealer: people who kidnap and sell boys or girls to be slaves for brothel houses. Harril (1999:97-122) supports Scroggs inasmuch as he has shown the meaning of ἀνδραποδίστης to literally mean men-stealers, and it was a derogatory term applied to slave dealers who were notorious for procuring slaves through illegal means and for financial gain. The issue of contention though, was the kidnapping of freeborn citizens with or without accompanying feminisation for homoerotic clients. Philo, however, treats the sins of ἀνδραποδίσται in Special Laws 4:13-19 without once mentioning homosexual prostitution (Gagnon 2001:333).

¹³ Gagnon, 2001:332.

¹⁴ Scroggs, 1983a:119-120.

¹⁵ Paul wrote in Phl.3:4-5: If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day. Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; condemning the Law, a Pharisee, concerning the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless. Paul's credentials are impressive: upbringing, nationality, family background, inheritance, orthodoxy, activity & morality. In 2Cor.11:22: Are they Hebrews? So am I. And in Gal.1:13-14: For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. Paul had been one of the most religious Jews of his day, by his own testimony. He kept the law scrupulously, and relentlessly persecuted the church (Act 9:1, 2). He was more zealous for the Law than the Judaisers. He had surpassed his contemporaries in religious knowledge and practice.

¹⁶ Scroggs, 1983a:118, 120; Gagnon, 2001:334.

¹⁷ The summary of the Decalogue in Pseudo-Phocylides 3-8 connects homosexual behaviour with adultery – Neither commit adultery nor stir up passion for males. Philo (Special Laws 3.1-82) regarded the seventh (LXX: sixth) commandment against adultery as a rubric to include incest, intercourse during menstruation, pederasty, bestiality, prostitution and other matters connected to sexual intercourse. The Didache depended on the Decalogue for its construction of the second commandment of the way of life, placing the prohibition of pederasty within the heading of the seventh commandment against adultery: (7) – You shall not commit adultery, you shall not corrupt boys, you shall not commit πορνεία (porneía) (Marshall, 1999:379).

¹⁸ Scroggs, (1983a:119-120).

¹⁹ See 1Cor.5:9, 10, 11; 6:9; Ephesus.5:5; Heb.12:16; 13:4; Rev.21:8, 22:15. Paul's references here are broad to include sexually immoral people in general, and adulterers and fornicators in all categories.

²⁰ Bailey (1975:57) argues that it refers just to the sex act with someone of the same sex. Boswell (1975-57) prefers a meaning of active male prostitutes because, in his opinion, the first half of the word ἀρσεν (male) refers not to the object of the second half, κοίτη (to sleep with males) but to the subject (a male who sleeps). Scroggs, (1983a:119) says it refers to a male who uses an effeminate call-boy. Wright (1984:129), however, argues convincingly that this neologism was coined based on Lev.20:13. He is supported in this by Hays (1986:184) and De Young (1991:158-165). Wright (1984:125-153) argues that the term should be understood to generally mean homosexual, including but not limited to, the most common form in Greek culture, i.e. an adult having a sexual relationship with a male teenager.

²¹ Lev.18:20; 20:13; Rom.1:27; 1Cor.6:9; cf Wisdom 15:14-26.

²² Ex.22:19; Lev.18:23, 20:15; Dt.23:18; 27:21.

²³ Reisser, (1986:498-499).

²⁴ Hanson, (1983:59).

²⁵ See Dr Gagnon's articles that touches on much of what was discussed in the previous chapters. *A Book Not To Be Embraced: A Critical Review Essay on Stacy Johnson's A Time to Embrace* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexStacyJohnsonSJT2.pdf> and *More Reasons Why Stacy Johnson's A Time to Embrace Should Not Be Embraced: Part II: Sodom, Leviticus, and More on Jesus and Paul* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexStacyJohnsonMoreReasonsCritique.pdf> and *More Reasons Why Stacy Johnson's A Time to Embrace Should Not Be Embraced: Part III: Science, Nature, History, and Logic* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexStacyJohnsonMoreReasons3.pdf>.

Chapter 9

¹ Valrejan V, 1970. The Paraclete

² Perry Theological, 1971. The Lord is my Sheppard, and He knows I am gay: 153. Perry is the founder pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church, Los Angeles, USA.

³ Slide 28 <http://www.slideserve.com/Leo/session-4>.

⁴ *Was Jesus in a Sexual Relationship with the Beloved Disciple?* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/HomosexBelovedDisciple.pdf>

⁵ Enroth & Jamison, 1974. The gay church: 55-60.

⁶ Johnstone, 1983. Gay's under grace: 143.

⁷ Silverstine & White, 1977. The joy of gay sex: 20-21.

⁸ Johnstone, 1983. Gays under grace: 149.

⁹ Perry, 1973. In Lerigo, 1973. MCC; The church comes out.

¹⁰ Leznoff & Westley, 1972: 79.

¹¹ Penelope, 1992: xiii.

¹² Goss, 1993: xix.

¹³ Queer Nation was formed by gays and lesbians in New York City to fight against violence directed at them from the heterosexual society and to increase queer visibility, and to gain media attention for gay/lesbian civil rights. Queer Nation is mostly USA centred and portrays the queer community's culture in visible practical ways. It also promotes coming out for all gay and lesbian people in society (Goss, 1993:41).

¹⁴ Barnard, 2000: 7; Atkinson, 1990.

¹⁵ Barnard, 2000: 7.

¹⁶ Germond, 1997: 198; Jung & smith, 1993:13.

¹⁷ Germond, 1997: 199.

¹⁸ Comstock, 1990: 129.

¹⁹ Spring, 1990.

²⁰ Clark, 1989: 131.

²¹ Comstock, 1993: 17.

²² Johnstone, 1983: 97.

²³ Johnstone, 1983: 93.

²⁴ *The term 'homosexual'* <http://rictornorton.co.uk/social14.htm>.

²⁵ Goss, 1993: 69.

²⁶ Driver, 1965: 240-243.

²⁷ Lawrence, 195: 391.

²⁸ Boyd, 1990: 90.

²⁹ As quoted in Goss, 1993: 214.

³⁰ Williams, 1992: 116-122.

³¹ Goss, 1993: 214.

³² Goss, 1993: 102.

³³ Germond, 1997: 196-197.

³⁴ Germond, 1997: 194.

³⁵ Johnstone, 1983: 8.

³⁶ Dr Gagnon deals with this matter extensively in his article *Does Jack Rogers's Book "Explode the Myths" about the Bible and Homosexuality and "Heal the Church"?*, *Installment 3* <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/RogersBookReviewed3.pdf>.

³⁷ Canada, Spain and South Africa only approved same-sex marriage during 2005. The Netherlands and Belgium has also approved same-sex marriage some years earlier.

³⁸ See Gagnon (2001) and Dover (1978) for more detailed discussions on this phenomenon.

Chapter 10

¹ Buchanan, 2002: 51.

² Buchanan, 2002: 52.

³ Gitlings, 1975. Time, September: 1943.

⁴ All the quotations are taken from PFLAG, 1992. Is homosexuality a sin?

⁵ Swordsearcher 4.8.

⁶ Nave's Topical Bible gives an exhaustive list of references which includes the following: Against The Spirit.

Isa 63:10; Mt 12:31; Mr 3:29; Ac 5:3; 7:51; Eph 4:30; 1Th 5:19; Heb 10:29; 1Jo 5:16

General References to the Bondage of sin

Pr 5:22; Joh 8:34; Ac 8:23; Ro 6:16; 7:23, 2Ti 2:26; 2Pe 2:19

Concealment of sin

Ge 3:8; Jos 7:21; 2Ki 17:9; Pr 28:13; Isa 29:15; 30:1; Eze 8:12

Examples of National sin

Nu 21:7; Jg 10:10; 1SA 7:6; Ezr 9:6; Ne 1:6; Isa 59:12; Jer 8:14; 14:7; Da 9:5

Examples of Personal sin

Balaam: Nu 22:34; Achan: Jos 7:20; Saul: 1Sa 15:24; David: 2Sa 21:13; 24:10; Job 7:20; Ps 41:4; 51:3; Mt 27:4; Converts of John the Baptist: Mt 1:5; Peter: Lu 5:8; Prodigal Son: Lu 15:18; 23:41

Dead in, the state of the sinner

Pr 21:16; Mt 8:22; Lu 15:32; Joh 6:53; 2Co 5:14; Eph 2:1; 5:14; Col 2:13; 1Ti 5:6; Re 3:1

Denunciation of sin

Isa 30:1; Eze 16:37; Mt 3:7; 23:33; Lu 10:13; 19:46; Ac 7:52; 13:10; 23:3

Despised by Saints

Ps 101:3; 119:104,113; Pr 8:7, 13; Ro 7:15; 2Pe 2:7

Destructive sin

Ps 34:21; 140:11; Pr 8:36; 11:3,19; 18:7; Isa 3:9; Ho 13:9; Mt 7:13; Ro 7:11; ITi 6:9

Inevitable exposure of sin

Nu 32:23; Job 20:27; Pr 26:26; Ec 12:14; Lu 12:2; 1Co 4:5

Forbidden sin

Isa 1:16; Joh 5:14; 8:11; Ro 6:12, 1Co 15:34; 1Jo 2:1

To be forsaken

Job 11:14; Pr 28:13; Isa 55:7; Eph 4:22; Col 2:11; Heb 12:1; 1Pe 2:11

Shown by increasing Insensitiveness of the Spiritual Faculties

Mt 13:15

Will become more Evident in the Last Days

2Ti 3:13

Loved by Men

Job 15:16; 20:12; Ps 52:3; Pr 2:14; Isa 5:18; Jer 14:1; Mic 3:2; 2Th 2:11,12

Misery of sin

De 28:67; Jg 2:15; 1Sa 28:15; Job 15:20; Ps 107:17; Pr 13:15; Ro 2:9; 3:16; Jas 5:1

Origin of sin

Ge 3:6; Ps 51:5; Mt 15:19; Jas 1:15; 4:1

Penalty for sin:

Death, Physical and Spiritual

Ge 2:17; 3:19; De 32:51; 1Ch 10:13; Pr 11:19; Eze 18:4; Ro 5:12; 6:23

Separation from God

Ex 33:3; Jos 7:11, 12; Ps 66:18; Isa 59:2; 64:7; Ho 5:6

Abandonment by God

Jg 16:20; 1Sa 16:14; 28:6; 2Ch 30:7; Ps 81:12; Pr 1:28; Mt 23:38; Ac 7:42; Ro 1:24

Penalty Sometimes Delayed

Ge 15:16; 1Ki 11:12; 21:29; 2Ki 13:23; Ec 8:11; Isa 48:9; Lu 13:7, 8, 9; 1Pe 3:20

Inevitable, No Escape from sin

Pr 11:21; 16:5; 19:5; Jer 11:11; Am 5:18,19; 9:2; Mt 23:33; Ro 2:3; 1Th 5:3; Heb 2:3; 12:25

⁷ Webster's 1828 Dictionary, Swordsearcher 4.8.

⁸ The Abiding of the Spirit the Glory of the Church. A Sermon (No. 1918). Delivered on Sunday, September 5th, 1886, by C.H. Spurgeon, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington

⁹ For an in-depth discussion see Brown's book *Hyper Grace: Exposing the dangers of the Modern Grace Message*

¹⁰ Desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin (James 1:15a)

¹¹ See Romans 1:24-27.

¹² Belgium, Netherlands, Canada, Spain and South Africa.

¹³ Coleman, 1980:124.

¹⁴ Soards, 1995: 36.

¹⁵ Soards, 1995: 38. These works were of Celtic origin but they spread and developed through Western Christendom from about 570 to 1010 C.E. It represents a complete treatment of homosexual conduct and the punishment for various homosexual acts.

¹⁶ Soards, 1995: 40. This condemnation was reiterated at the councils at Neapolis (112) and the 3rd Lutheran Council (1179).

¹⁷ De Young, (2000: 61).

¹⁸ De Young, (2000: 202)

¹⁹ Eskridge, 1996: 208. These concepts are put forward by Reverend Carla B. Gorell, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C. and they represent overall a fair indication of the type of arguments presented by gay apologists.

²⁰ As quoted in Eskridge, W.N. 1996. The case for same-sex marriage. New York: The Free Press. P. 198.

²¹ The term 'homosexual' <http://rictornorton.co.uk/social14.htm>. K.M. Benkett, invented the German linguistic equivalent to homosexual. This term he used to refer to orientation, impulse or affective preference; it had "nothing to do with sexual acts". So, modern usage limits the term homosexual to desire and propensity. See De Young, 2000: 137-234.

²² In Plato's Symposium, Plato anticipates virtually all elements used in the modern discourse on love and homosexuality. For a full discussion see De Young, 2000: 189-195.

²³ Rabbi Yoel Kahn. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, San Francisco. As quoted in Eskridge, W.N. 1996. The case for same-sex marriage. New York: The Free Press. P. 199-207.

²⁴ Eskridge, 1996: 99-100.

²⁵ Perry T, 1971. The Lord is my Sheppard, and He knows I am gay. Perry is he founder pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church, Los Angeles, USA.

²⁶ Sears & Osten, 2003. The homosexual agenda: Exposing the principal threat to religious freedom today. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. P. 126-127.

²⁷ See the in-depth discussion in footnote 41, Chapter 1.

Chapter 11

¹ Stanley Kurtz. Beyond gay marriage, Weekly Standard, 11 August, 2003. P.26

² Stanton G.T. & Meier B. 2005. Marriage on trial: The case against same-sex marriage and parenting. Vereeniging: Christian Art Publishers.

³ Johnson, P.M. 2003. The spiritual nature and destiny of the human body: A pastoral perspective on human sexuality. (In Saltzman, R.E. ed. 2003. Christian sexuality, Kansas City: Missouri).

⁴ Johnson, P.M. 003: 84. Johnson is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jersey City and is the Senior of the Society of the Society of the Holy Trinity, an international fellowship of pastors dedicated to the renewal of the Lutheran pastorate in faith and life.

⁵ See also Schillebeeck, E. 1965. *Marriage: Human reality and saving mystery*. Translated Smith, N.D. London: Sheed and Ward and John Paul 11. 1997. *The theology of the body*. Boston: Pauline Books Media.

⁶ Homosexual activist Michelangelo Signorile as quoted by Staver, M.D. 2003. *Same-sex marriage: Putting every household at risk*. Nashville: Tennessee. pp. 52-53.

⁷ William Aaron as quoted by Staver, M.D. 2003. *Same-sex marriage: Putting every household at risk*. Nashville: Tennessee. pp. 53-54.

⁸ Comstock, G.D. 1993. *Gay theology without apology*. The Pilgrim Press: Cleveland. pp. 38-39.

⁹ Eskridge, W.N. 1996. *The case for same-sex marriage*. New York: The Free Press. p 53.

¹⁰ Pittenger, 1977. *Gay lifestyles*: 109-110, 112.

¹¹ Openshaw, 1997. *The right to marry*: 124.

¹² Olsen, 1994. *Untangling the web*.

¹³ O'Neill & O'Neill, 1972. *Open marriage*: 256-257.

¹⁴ Eskridge, 1996: 54.

¹⁵ Comstock, 1993: 47-48.

¹⁶ Gagnon, R.A.J. 2003. Does the Bible regard same-sex intercourse as intrinsically sinful? (In Saltzman, R.E. ed. 2003. *Christian sexuality*. Kansas City: Missouri). Pp. 125-127.

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¹ Sears, A. & Osten, C. 2003. *The homosexual Agenda: Exposing the principle thread to religious freedom today*. Broadman & Hallman Publishers: Nashville. P. 89-90.

² As quoted in Sears, A. & Osten, C. 2003. *The homosexual Agenda: Exposing the principle thread to religious freedom today*. Broadman & Hallman Publishers: Nashville. P. 89-90.

³ Batchelor, 1982. *Homosexuality and ethics*: 165-166.

⁴ Loomis. *Gay Spirit* as quoted in Noebel, 1984. *The homosexual revolution*: 170.

⁵ Germond, 1997. *Heterosexism, homosexuality and the Bible*: 200-201.

⁶ Eskridge, 1996: 8.

⁷ De Young J. B. 2000. *Homosexuality: Contemporary claims examined in the light of the Bible and other ancient literature and law*. Kregel Publications: Michigan. P. 290.

⁸ GLF's leaders in July 1969 as quoted in Eskridge, 1996: 53.

⁹ McLanahan, S. Christian Coalition International Canada, Inc. <http://christianitytoday.com> as quoted in Lutzer, E.W. 2004. *The truth about same-sex marriage*. Moody Publishers, Chicago. p.60.

¹⁰ Lutzer, E.W. 2004. *The truth about same-sex marriage*. Moody Publishers, Chicago. p. 68.

Epilogue

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⁴ Satinover, J. 2004. *Homosexuality and the politics of truth*. Grand Rapids: Hamewith Books.

⁵ Dr Gagnon deals with this matter superbly in his article *Scriptural Perspectives on Homosexuality and Sexual Identity* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/ScripturalPerspectives.pdf>.

⁶ Johnstone, 1983. *Gays under grace*: 5.

⁷ Macourt, 1977. *Towards a theology of gay liberation*: 3.

⁸ At least 14 churches in South Africa declares themselves gay-friendly, according to the website of Deo Gloria Family Church, a Christian congregation "for all people", with a major focus in its ministry to the gay and lesbian community. <http://www.deogloria.org/content/lgbti-churches-south-africa>

⁹ Enroth & Jamison, 1974. *The Gay Church*: 10.

¹⁰ Muller, 2005. *Reënboog: Reformerende Kerk Pretoria gemeentebled*.

¹¹ Stuart, 1997. *Aliens in the household of God*.

¹² National Council of Churches, 1997: *On homosexuality and the Christian Faith; A Madison Affirmation*

Frequently asked questions

¹ *The term 'homosexual'* <http://rictornorton.co.uk/social14.htm>.

- ² http://www.pflagdetroit.org/answers_to_your_questions_about.htm
- ³ See Appendix B.
- ⁴ His Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/drdansiegel> on 22 October 2013.
- ⁵ Should Human Nature “Function According to its Design”? <http://josephnicolosi.com/should-human-nature-function/>.
- ⁶ Boswell, 1980, 27-30.
- ⁷ Smith, 1996: 236-237.
- ⁸ Springett, 1988. (Galba 21).
- ⁹ All quotations are from: Catholic Answers, 2003. www.catholic.com. Accessed 05/08/03.
- ¹⁰ See Dr Gagnon’s articles *Why “Gay Marriage” Is Wrong* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoPresbyTodaySB.pdf> and *The Bible and the “Gay Marriage” Question* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexChristianPostRespToJefferson.pdf> and *The Bible’s Surprisingly Consistent Message on a Male-Female Requirement for Marriage* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexKnustCombinedResp.pdf> and *Case Not Made: A Response to Prof. John Thorp’s “Making the Case” for Blessing Homosexual Unions in the Anglican Church of Canada* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexThorpCanadaResp.pdf> and *Did Jesus Approve of a Homosexual Couple in the Story of the Centurion at Capernaum?* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexCenturionStory.pdf> and *How Bad Is Homosexual Practice According to Scripture and Does Scripture’s View Apply to Committed Homosexual Unions?* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexWinterResponse.pdf> and *Four Myths of Pro-Homosex Propaganda: A Response to Tex Sample’s “What Do Bible, Tradition Say About Gay Marriage?”* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoTexSampleResponse.pdf> and *Answers to an AP Reporter’s Questions about the Church’s Debate of Homosexual Unions* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoAPReporter.pdf> and *More than “Mutual Joy”: Lisa Miller of Newsweek against Scripture and Jesus* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexNewsweekMillerResp.pdf> and *. Bad Reasons for Changing One’s Mind* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoRogersResp2.pdf>
- ¹¹ As quoted in Foust. Homosexuals oppose same-sex marriage, magazine poll suggests. *Baptist Press*, 7 April, 2004.
- ¹² O’Neill & O’Neill, 1972. Open marriage: 256-257.
- ¹³ Dahir, M. 2004. Nattering nabobs among our own. *Washington Blade*, 5 March, 2004.
- ¹⁴ Xiridou, M., et al. The contribution of steady and casual partnerships to the incidence of HIV infection among homosexual men in Amsterdam. *AIDA* 17, 2003.
- ¹⁵ Lauman, E.O., et al. 1994. The social organisation of sexuality: Sexual practices in the United States. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ¹⁶ Barth, K.:53.
- ¹⁷ Shields, 1980:27.
- ¹⁸ Perry, 1973.
- ¹⁹ Pittenger, 1977:109-112.
- ²⁰ Johnstone, 1983:163
- ²¹ O’Neill & O’Neill, 1972:256-257.
- ²² Bell & Weinberg, 1978:81-902; 312-325.
- ²³ Gagnon, 2001:455.
- ²⁴ Deenen, et al, 1994:421-431.
- ²⁵ Blumstein & Schwartz, 1990:317.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Gagnon elaborates on this aspect in his article *Jack Rogers’s Flawed Use of Analogical Reasoning in Jesus, The Bible, And Homosexuality* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/RogersUseAnalogies.pdf>. See also *Slavery, Homosexuality, and the Bible: A Response part One* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoKrehbielResponse.pdf> and *Part Two* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoKrehbielResp2.pdf>. In *The Authority of Scripture in the “Homosex” Debate* Dr Gagnon authentically makes a case for responsible dealing with matters like *the proper use of analogies, Jesus on the double love commandment, Paul on Law and Grace*, <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoAuthorityScripture.pdf>. See also *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Theology, Analogies, and Genes* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homoTheologyMattersArticle.pdf>, and *It’s Silly to Compare Homosexual Practice to Gluttony* <http://www.robgagnon.net/articles/homosexGluttony.pdf> and *Why*

Homosexual Behavior Is More like Consensual Incest and Polyamory than Race or Gender A Reasoned and Reasonable Case for Secular Society

<http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexIncestPolyAnalogy.pdf>

²⁸ Saghir & Robins, 1973.

³⁹ Barnard, 2000:45, 70.

³⁰ McCafferty & Hammond, 2001:455.

³¹ Winter, 1989.

³² Money, 1980:66.

³³ Davis, 1993:99, Horgan, 1995:26.

³⁴ See footnote 6 of Appendix A for a detailed discussion.

³⁵ Whitehead, 1999:135; 146-147.

³⁶ Quoted in Byrd, et al., 2001.

³⁷ Baily, et al., 2000:533.

³⁸ See Appendix B for a detailed discussion.

³⁹ Restored Hope Network, <http://www.restoredhopenetwork.org/>. Homosexual Anonymous, <http://www.homosexuals-anonymous.com/>. Hope for Wholeness, <http://hopeforwholeness.org/>. Courage, <http://couragec.net/EnCourage.html>. For other resources see <http://www.learnlove.co.za/index.php/other-resources-regarding-same-sex-attraction>.

⁴⁰ See Jones & Yarhouse, 2000:117-151.

⁴¹ NARTH, 1997. A sexual orientation change. May 17, 1997. See also www.narth.org.

⁴² Jones & Yarhouse, 2000:117-151.

⁴³ Dr Gagnon adequately deals with the matter of *change* and *choice* in his article *Does Jack Rogers's Book "Explode the Myths" about the Bible and Homosexuality and "Heal the Church"?*, *Installment 4*

<http://www.robagnon.net/articles/RogersBookReviewed4.pdf>

Appendix A

¹ Catherine Baker, Behavioral Genetics: An introduction to how genes and environments interact through development to shape differences in mood, personality, and intelligence, (United States:2004), 4-5.

² Satinover, Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth (Grand Rapids: Hamewith Books, 1996), 97.

³ Jeffrey Satinover, Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth (Grand Rapids: Hamewith Books, 1996), 93-94.

⁴ For further discussion on the "gay gene theory" I refer you to research scientist, with a Ph.D. in biochemistry, Dr Neil Whitehead's book "My Genes Made me Do It," chapters 1, 2, 9 and the Summary. It can be downloaded from <http://mygenes.co.nz/download.htm>.

⁵ <http://www.genome.gov/11006929>

⁶ Francis S. Collins, The Language of God (New York: FP Free Press, 2006), 260. It is important for the readers to note that amongst the gay community there exist quite some resistance towards this quote. It all started with this article by Dr Dean Byrd, "Homosexuality Is Not Hardwired," Concludes Dr Francis S. Collins, Head of the Human Genome Project, <http://narth.com/2010/09/homosexuality-is-not-hardwired-concludes-dr-francis-s-collins-head-of-the-human-genome-project/>. It resulted in Ex-Gay Watch corresponding with Dr Collins and they wrote an article, Major Geneticist Francis Collins Responds to NARTH Article, <http://www.exgaywatch.com/2007/05/major-geneticist-francis-collins-responds-to-narth-article/>. Since this article was posted, many in the gay community use it for many different reasons, but mostly to defend their views. However, it is important to read NARTH's article written in 2011, Ex-Gay Watch Editor Misrepresents NARTH, Misinforms Dr Francis S. Collins, <http://narth.com/2011/03/ex-gay-watch-editor-misrepresents-narth/>.

⁷ Catherine Baker, Behavioral Genetics: An introduction to how genes and environments interact through development to shape differences in mood, personality, and intelligence, (United States:2004), VIII.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Neil. Whitehead, Neither Genes nor Choice: Same-Sex Attraction Is Mostly a Unique Reaction to Environmental Factors; Journal of Human Sexuality; Vol 3 (2011); p. 106.

¹¹ "The Gay Gene: Assertions, Retractions, and Controversy" gives a good overview of the gay gene research. <http://www.bio.davidson.edu/courses/genomics/2002/pierce/gaygene.htm>. See also an article on a recent study <http://www.ibtimes.com/does-gay-gene-exist-new-study-says-xq28-may-influence-male-sexual-orientation-1555564>

- ¹² D. H. Hamer et al., “Response to N. Risch et al.,” *Science* 262 (1993), p.2065.
- ¹³ Dr Dean Hamer, geneticist at the US National Cancer Institute, July 1993.
- ¹⁴ “New Evidence of a ‘Gay Gene’,” by Anastasia Toufexis, *Time*, November 13, 1995, vol. 146, Issue 20, p. 95.
- ¹⁵ J. Madelein Nash, “The personality Genes,” *Time* Vol. 151, no 16 (April 27,1998): 60-61.
- ¹⁶ *My Genes Made me do it: Misunderstanding the Role of Genes Fosters Myths about Mental Illness*, 6 Augustus 2010
- ¹⁷ Rice, W.R., Friberg, U. Gavrilets, S. (2012). Homosexuality as a consequence of epigenetically canalized sexual development. *Quarterly Review of Biology*, 87(4), 343-368
- ¹⁸ Neil, E.Whitehead (2012). Is epigenetics a critical factor in homosexuality? <http://mygenes.co.nz/epigenetics.htm>
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ A proponent of this theory, Dr Simon LeVay wrote an excellent book “Gay, Straight and the Reason Why.” It is however, important to read Dr Whitehead’s book review on this book in *Journal of Human Sexuality*, Vol 4, 2013, p 107-135 (you should soon be able to retrieve it from here <http://narth.com/2013/02/journal-of-human-sexuality-volume-1-complete-text/>). Read also chapter 7 and 8 of *My Genes Made Me Do It*, as well as Prenatal hormones play only a minor role in making anyone gay, straight or transgender <http://mygenes.co.nz/Phoenix.html>, and Dr Jeffrey Satinover’s book *Homosexuality and the politics of truth*. Another book, *Brain Storm*, (2010), by Dr Rebecca Jordan-Young, poses the most comprehensive challenge yet to the claim that prenatal hormone exposure permanently structures the brain to be either masculine or feminine.
- ²² Neil, E. Whitehead (2012), *My Genes Made Me Do it*. (61) <http://mygenes.co.nz/PDFs/Ch3.pdf>.
- ²³ Julie H Hamilton, 2011. *Homosexuality 101: What Every, Therapist, Parent, and Homosexual Should Know*. <http://narth.com/2011/11/homosexuality-101-what-every-therapist-parent-and-homosexual-should-know-2/>
- ²⁴ The American Psychiatric Association, on their website <http://www.psychiatry.org/lgbt-sexual-orientation>, under the heading “LGBT-Sexual Orientation,” stated it as a partial answer to the question “What causes Homosexuality/Heterosexuality/Bisexuality?”
- ²⁵ The American Psychological Association’s pamphlet, “Answers to your questions for a better understanding of sexual orientation and homosexuality” (2008), answers the question; “What causes a person to have a particular sexual orientation?” (p 2).
- ²⁶ The American College of Paediatricians released a fact sheet on their project website *Facts about Youth*, under the heading “What you should know as school official,” www.FactsAboutYouth.com.
- ²⁷ Joseph J. Nicolosi, *Shame and Attachment Loss* (United States of America: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 36-37.
- ²⁸ “Homosexuality: It isn’t natural,” “Spiked,” Tuesday 24 June 2008 (<http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/article/5375/>). Peter Tatchell is a human rights campaigner, and a member of the queer rights group OutRage! and the left wing of the UK Green Party. Although I cannot agree with everything he says, this is an informative article and worth reading.
- ²⁹ Jeffrey Satinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Hamewith Books, 1996), 77.
- ³⁰ *Shame and attachment Loss*, 58.

Appendix B

- ¹ NARTH Statement on Sexual Orientation Change *Approved by the NARTH Board of Directors on January 25, 2012*, <http://narth.com/2012/01/narth-statement-on-sexual-orientation-change/>. It will serve the reader well to read the complete statement for a better understanding of the problem posing itself regarding the understanding of what is meant by change.
- ² Ibid
- ³ Julie H Hamilton, 2012. *Misinformation Rampant in the Mental Health Field*, <http://narth.com/2012/05/misinformation-rampant-in-the-mental-health-field/>.
- ⁴ Belt AP & Weinberg MS *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978. And, Hammersmith SK, *Sexual Preference: Statistical Appendix*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981.
- ⁵ James E. Phelan; Neil Whitehead; Philip M. Sutton (2009), *What Research Shows: NARTH’s Response to the APA Claims on Homosexuality*, *JOURNAL OF HUMAN SEXUALITY*, Volume 1.

⁶ Ibid (p 11-12).

⁷ Preciado, M. A., Johnson, K. L., & Peplau, L. A. (2013). The impact of cues of stigma and support on self-perceived sexual orientation among heterosexually identified men and women. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49, 477-485.

⁸ Snezana Vrangalova, PhD student, Human Development, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, Straights Are More Gay When Gay Is OK, 22 April 2013. <http://zhanavrangalova.wordpress.com/category/sex-science-news/>. (<http://sexgenderlab.human.cornell.edu>; <http://www.freewebs.com/vrangalova/>)

⁹ Neil Whitehead, 2011. Dr Whitehead on the APA Task Force Report, <http://narth.com/2011/01/dr-whitehead-on-the-apa-task-force-report/>

¹⁰ “Surely you know that the wicked will not possess God’s Kingdom. Do not fool yourselves; people who are immoral or who worship idols or are adulterers or homosexual perverts or who steal or are greedy or are drunkards or who slander others or are thieves – none of these will possess God’s Kingdom. Some of you were like that. But you have been purified from sin; you have been dedicated to God; you have been put right with God by the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (TEV 1 Cor 6:10-11). Mention is made of “homosexual perverts.” In the Greek it is two separate words describing “the passive male partners in homosexual intercourse,” and “the active male partners in homosexual intercourse.”

¹¹ “Can Some Gay Men and Lesbians Change Their Sexual Orientation? 200 Participants Reporting a Change from Homosexual to Heterosexual Orientation,” conducted by Dr Robert Spitzer, professor of psychiatry at Columbia University, published in the *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, October 2003, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 403-417. See this interview with Dr Spitzer in 2004 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHmt6ITImAY>.

¹² Homosexuality and Sexual Orientation Disturbance: Proposed Change in DSM-II, 6th Printing, page 44 http://www.torahdec.org/Downloads/DSM-II_Homosexuality_Revision.pdf.

¹³ Mark Yarhouse, On Spitzer’s “Change”, <http://psychologyandchristianity.wordpress.com/2012/04/13/on-spitzers-change/>.

¹⁴ Psychiatry Giant Sorry for Backing Gay ‘Cure’, *New York Times*, May 18, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/health/dr-robert-l-spitzer-noted-psychiatrist-apologizes-for-study-on-gay-cure.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

¹⁵ Christopher H. Rosik, 2012. “Spitzer’s “Retraction”: What Does It Really Mean? <http://narth.com/2012/06/2532/>.

¹⁶ Steve Bose, Spitzer Study I: A Micro Target Ex-Gay Watch, October 8th, 2003 <http://www.exgaywatch.com/2003/10/spitzer-study-i/>.

¹⁷ Spitzer Study At Center Of Sex Ed. Debate In Maryland, <http://www.narth.com/docs/maryland.html>.

¹⁸ Scott C Hershberger, Guttman Scalability confirms the Effectiveness of Reparative Therapy, *Archives of Sexual behaviour*, October 2003, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 440.

¹⁹ James E. Phelan, et al, 2009 What Research Shows: NARTH’s Response to the APA Claims on Homosexuality, *Journal of Human Sexuality*, 1, p.1-121. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/115507777/Journal-of-Human-Sexuality-Vol-1>.

²⁰ Christopher H. Rosik, Change in Sexual Orientation is Possible, Harm Unlikely, according to New Evidence of Long-Term Outcomes. <http://narth.com/2011/10/2061/>. The two studies referred to are: Jones, S. L., & Yarhouse, M.A. (2007). *Ex-gays? A longitudinal study of religiously mediated change in sexual orientation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, and Jones, S. L., & Yarhouse, M. A. (2011). A longitudinal study of attempted religiously mediated sexual orientation change. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 37, 404-427. See also this video [Understanding Same-sex Attraction](#).

²¹ My Genes Made Me Do It, chapter 12, Can you change your sexual orientation? and the endnotes. I also encourage you to read Straights are More gay when Gay is Ok <http://zhanavrangalova.wordpress.com/tag/mostly-heterosexual/>, a discussion of a recent study: Preciado, M. A., Johnson, K. L., & Peplau, L. A. (2013). The impact of cues of stigma and support on self-perceived sexual orientation among heterosexually identified men and women. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49, 477-485. A very good summary of some of the studies can be found on the website of Christian Dental and Medical Association, Homosexuality Statement. http://www.cmda.org/WCM/CMDA/Issues2/Other1/Sexuality1/Ethics_Statements13/Homosexuality_Statement.aspx. For fluidity of female sexuality read Dr Lisa Diamonds book, “Sexual fluidity: Understanding Woman’s, Love and desire;” and for fluidity of male sexuality, watch Dr Diamond’s video and read the article “Male sexuality more fluid than we thought:” <http://www.peterould.net/2014/05/25/lisa-diamond-male-sexuality-more-fluid-than-we-thought/> and “Do Homosexuals change”

<http://karenbooth.goodnewsmag.org/do-homosexuals-change/>, [Lisa Diamond on sexual fluidity of men and women](#).

²² <http://www.jonahweb.org/article.php?secId=336> , <http://vimeo.com/56644750>, Dr Nicolas Cummings interviewed by the Catholic Register, <http://ex-gaytruth.com/clinical-science/dr-nicolas-cummings-interviewed-by-the-catholic-register/>. Read also his article: Sexual reorientation therapy is not unethical, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/07/30/sexual-reorientation-therapy-not-unethical-column/2601159/>.

²³ http://www.consciencedefense.org/contents/media/Nicholas_Cummings_Declaration.pdf. See also <http://josephnicolosi.com/interviews/#videos>.

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