



### *Five points to understanding homosexuality and Christianity.*

- Christians face a difficult challenge.
- Homosexuality involves the whole human race in its fallen condition.
- Sexual idolatry is an underlying problem.
- Homosexual behavior has a troubled track record.
- Speaking the truth in love is needed.

### A.

#### Sensing the dissonance

**Evangelical Christians are torn between a desire to be sensitive and yet faithful as they try to address this issue in the public square.**

### Evangelical Christians are caught between two spiritual virtues

Sensitivity to the heart felt experience of the homosexual community



To ignore this makes one an cultural bigot.

Sensitivity to the traditional understanding of the Scripture



To ignore this makes one a Christian heretic.

#### *Romans 1*

“<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them over to **degrading passions**; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is **unnatural**, <sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing **indecent acts** and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. <sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a **depraved mind**, to do those things which are **not proper**,”

**Many well known gay and bisexual people are talented, productive, sensitive, and caring. They don't seem to be God hating, spiritual rebels, who want to destroy all that is good.**

Hans Christian Andersen	Henri Nouwen	Alexander the Great
Susan B. Anthony	Philip Johnson	Rosie O'Donnell
Joan Baez	Angelina Jolie	Ellen Degeneres
James Dean		
Francis Bacon	Billy Jean King	Tyrone Power
Elton John		
Leonard Bernstein	Rock Hudson	Hadrian
Robert Reed		
Little Richard	Bill Blass	Czar Alexander I
Lily Tomlin		
Leonardo da Vinci	Tennessee Williams	Michael Feinstein
Aaron Copland	Barry Manilow	Scott Wittman
Anderson Cooper	Martina Navratilova	Andy Warhol



## B.

The whole human race is involved.

**Homosexuality is a visual aid to the fallen human race and its unnatural condition of being separated from God.**

## *Key points to Romans 1*

1. The natural man suppresses knowledge of the glory of God.
2. The natural man suppresses knowledge of his sinful condition.
3. **Paul is describing the condition of fallen humanity (as a whole) of which we are a part.**
4. **Homosexuality is a judgment on a whole culture, which has exchanged the natural for the unnatural.**

## C.

**Seeing the bigger issue**

**The homosexual question reveals a sexual idolatry.**

### Genesis 1:27

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

**The first two things God says about humans:**  
They are spiritual “created in God’s image”  
They are sexual “male and female”

Note:

- Pagan worship often included sexual acts.
- Greek gods were sexually active.
- Sexual sins are set apart in Scripture.

### Genesis 3

“<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.”

#### **Where do humans find fullness of life?**

To experience the life that God offered  
Eve needed to obey God’s Word,  
but the serpent convinced Eve to find life on her own  
and the seeds of human autonomy were sown  
bearing fruit in the Enlightenment  
resulting in the sexual revolution,  
which saw sexual freedom as a path to life.

### Galatians 5

“<sup>19</sup> Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: **immorality, impurity, sensuality,** <sup>20</sup> **idolatry, sorcery,** enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> **envying, drunkenness, carousing,** and things like these,”

**Where do we look for life apart from God?**

**Sexual fulfillment**    **immorality, impurity, sensuality,**

**Spiritual ecstasy**                      **idolatry, sorcery,**

**Social harmony**                      enmities, strife, jealousy,  
outbursts of anger, disputes,  
dissensions, factions, envying,  
drunkenness, carousing,

### *The great exchange of Romans 1*

Many people who are passionate about sexual freedom are **fighting for their hope of life** - human fulfillment and wholeness.

We live in a generation that has cast its lot (in the quest for life) with:

- ✓ **sexual fulfillment**
- ✓ **spiritual ecstasy**
- ✓ **social harmony**

But it has confused the creation with the Creator, and in seeking life apart from God it has lost it.

**D.**

## **Seeking the facts**

**Data about homosexuality is often ignored.**

## **Definition**

### **What is homosexuality?**

An activity (Biblical) culture      An orientation (modern) culture

1. Repentance has to do with sexual behavior not orientation.
2. It is possible to be a mature disciple of Christ without having a heterosexual orientation.

## **Moral responsibility**

**Sexual acts**

**Sexual lust**

Sexual longings

Sexual orientation

### ***We can expect God to change some things and not others.***

- A person's behavior can change immediately.
- A person's orientation may change over time.
- A person's orientation need not change to be fully repentant or healthy.
- If sexual attraction is outside our control, sexual behavior is not.
- Living a celibate life may be difficult and stressful, but it is not unusual, impossible, unreasonable, or unjust.

### **Matthew 10**

“38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.”



#### Four homosexual postures

- **Celibate** - they choose not to engage in sexual acts with members of the same sex.
- **Closet** - they are sexually active but private.
- **Confused** - they are sexually active but are not at peace with their sexuality.
- **Contentious** - they are openly advocating the public affirmation of homosexuality.

## Sexual Promiscuity

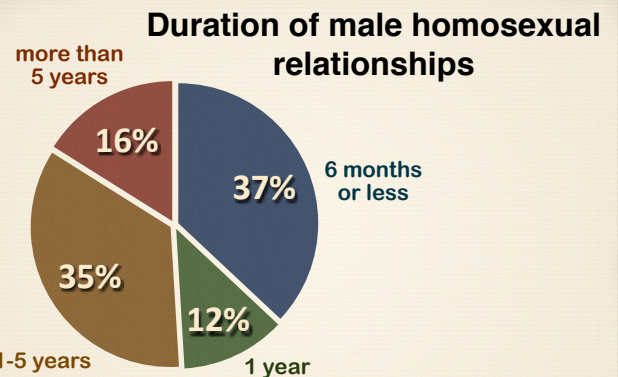
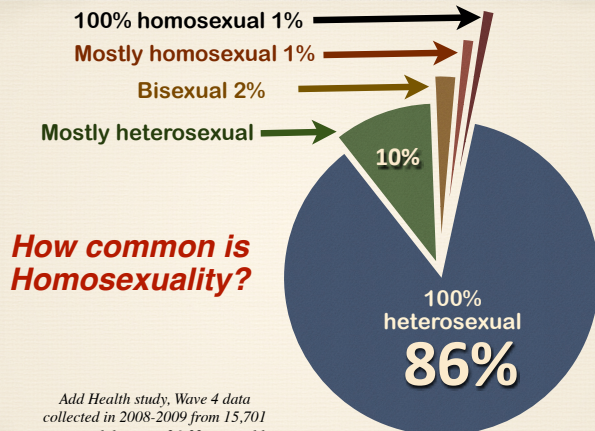
is  
recreational sex  
with multiple partners  
outside marriage.

## Sexual Addiction

is  
a preoccupation  
with sexual matters  
to the point of disrupting  
other important  
responsibilities in life.

## Sexual Idolatry

is  
the use of sexual  
experience as a means  
to satisfy the soul's  
hunger for life.



Sydney Men and Sexual Health (SMASH) 1995 by NCHSR and NCHECR (National Center in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research).

- The life expectancy of a gay male in America is shortened by 20 years (without factoring in HIV).

R. S. Hogg, S. A. Strathdee, et al.,  
*"Modeling the Impact of HIV Disease on Mortality in Gay and Bisexual Men,"*  
*International Journal of Epidemiology*, 26(3): 657-661, p. 659

- Depression is 7 times more likely among male homosexuals and suicide is 6 times more likely as compared to the control group.

(Hallfors, D., Waller, M., Ford, C., Halpern, C., Brodish, P., Iritani, B., (2004) Adolescent Depression and Suicide Risk: Association with Sex and Drug Behavior. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 27(3), 224-231)

- 75% of general population believe homosexuality is wrong but that homosexuals should have equal rights in the work place.

- 78% of male homosexuals have had sex with more than 100 partners,
- 43% with more than 500,
- 28% with more than 1,000
- 79% say that half of those partners are total strangers, and 70% of those sexual contacts are one night stands.

Bell AP, Weinberg ML. New York, N.Y.: Simon and Schuster;1978.  
*Homosexualities: a Study of Diversity among Men and Women.*

- 73% of all homosexuals have had sex with boys under 19 years of age.

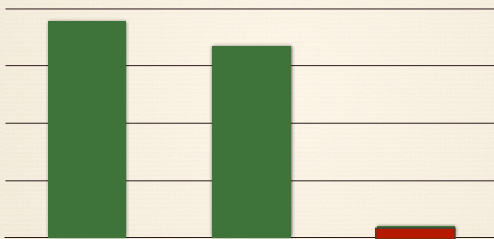
Jay and Young. *The Gay Report*. Summit Books, 1979, p. 275

- homosexual monogamy is rare (a distinction between emotional fidelity and sexual exclusivity is common)

Harold N Miller <http://members.aol.com/gaymatter/monog.htm>

### Percent reporting sexual fidelity

Married Females 85%  
 Married Males 75.5%  
 Homosexual Males (current relationship) 4.5%



*The Social Organization of Sexuality*, 216; McWhirter and Mattison, *The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop* (1984): 252-253; Wiederman, "Extramarital Sex," 170.

### The Old Testament speaks of six kinds of sexual sin.

- Seduction of a virgin (Exodus 22:16)
- Rape (Deut. 22:28)
- Adultery (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22)
- Incest (Lev. 20:11,12,14; Deut. 27:27,22,23)
- Bestiality (Exodus 22:19; Lev. 18:23, 20:15-16)
- **Homosexuality** (Lev. 18:22, 20:13)

"You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."

**Only homosexuality is questioned.**

In 1974, 60% of the members of the American Psychiatric Association voted to remove homosexuality from the category of conditions, which are in themselves pathological or diseased. A recent poll of psychiatrists has noted, however, that 69% of those approached still answered "yes" to the question, "Is homosexuality usually a pathological adaptation?" (18% answered no, 13% uncertain).

### Are homosexual acts unnatural?

Romans 1:26 "exchanged the natural function for that which is **unnatural**"

**The same language is used by non Christian authors in denouncing homosexual acts**

- Plato (300 BC) *Laws* 1.636C
- Philo (AD 40) *Special Laws* 3.37-39
- Josephus (AD 70) *Against Apion* 2.273-75
- Plutarch (AD 100) *Moralia, Dialogue on Love* 751.D-E

**Is "natural" defined by what "feels" normal for me or by what is healthy given my created purpose?**

**There are many things that "seem" natural to some - pedophilia, promiscuity, honor killing, hatred, revenge, racism, sexism, etc.**



E.

## Speaking the truth in love

**Christians must recognize the common story they share with all people including homosexuals.**

*Abigail Van Buren*

Her response to a reader who complained that a gay couple was moving in across the street and wanted to know what he could do to improve the quality of the neighborhood.

“You could move.”

*Billy Graham*

“I think that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is sin, but the Bible also teaches that pride, jealousy, hatred, and evil thoughts are sins.”

*Christians should understand that the **secondary signs** of our brokenness vary, while the **primary cause** is the same.*

### Curse



God's judgment on the earth because of Eve's sin effects everything including our sexual orientation.



#### Nature

Some people may have a genetic predisposition to be homosexual.



#### Choice

Homosexual acts are a choice stemming from spiritual decisions.



#### Nurture

Sexual orientation is shaped by the home and culture.

**Genesis 3:17**

“Cursed is the ground because of you”

**Romans 8:22-23**

“For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers . . .

. . . even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

*Christians share a **common story** with everyone else.*

- We share **common failures** as broken people in a broken world.
- We share **common longings** with everyone for unconditional love and fullness of life.
- We share **common temptations** to find our life in the creature rather than the Creator.
- We share **common redemption** through the Cross of Christ and faith.
- We share **common callings** to bear one another's burdens and walk in a manner worthy of our calling.

**Galatians 6:2**

“Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ”

*Scriptural ethics are a guide to finding fullness of life and avoiding idolatry.*

- Homosexuality is God's curse on a **rebellious society** - it is not the path to life.
- Homosexual acts are forbidden in Scripture because they are a **false hope** for fullness of life.
- We each have **different burdens to bear** because of the curse of the Fall.
- We expect to experience the joy of life by living **disciplined** lives no matter what our personal preferences.

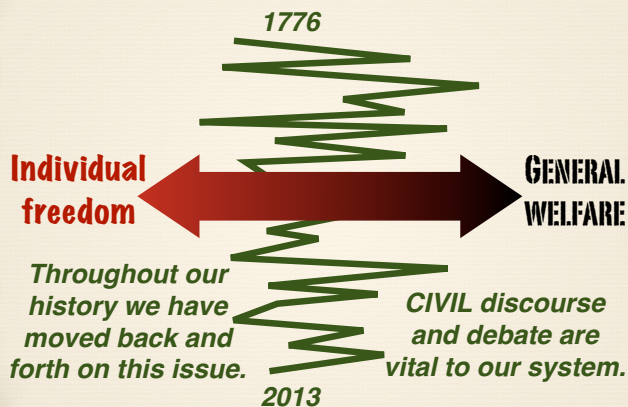
**Christians are called to be *tolerant***  
- *legally and socially but not ideologically.*

- Kingdom standards are **distinct** from public policy.
- **American pluralism** is defined by legal and social rights not personal or private ideology.
- No individual or culture is pluralistic at all levels - proscription of child sacrifice, racism, polygamy, honor killing, etc. reflect a **common ideology**.
- The gay community tends to **confuse and equate** ideological agreement with legal and social rights.

**Political responsibility**  
“*personal rights*” and the “*general welfare*.”

- Human (including gay) **rights** of all citizens should be defended in a pluralistic society.
- **Special rights** including special favored treatment for homosexuals should be resisted.
- The interests of the “**common good**” of a society will dictate the discouragement of some behaviors including homosexual acts.
- Moral dialogue in a pluralistic society should be conducted with respect for the **common good and common ground**.

**Competing values in the American vision**



**Pastoral responsibility**

- We start by **sharing** our common story of our search for love and life.
- We understand Scripture, sexuality, and spirituality imperfectly and therefore are **learners** (disciples).
- When we share the Gospel's hope and the wisdom of the Word of God, we must **audit our own souls**.
- Sexual preferences of all types require **sacrifice, discipline, understanding, and often repentance**.
- The church is made up of dirty, rotten, sinners who are fully **justified by grace through faith**.
- The church needs to **welcome and help** believers who struggle with homosexual issues.

**Homosexuals rights and wrongs.**

Civil rights?	Gay partnerships?	Christian status?
Civil rights <b>YES!</b> Special privileges <b>No!</b>	Civil contracts <b>YES!</b> Gay marriage <b>No!</b>	Christian fellowship <b>YES!</b> Ordination of active gays <b>No!</b>
		

*Pietro Aretino (poet 1550)*

“I love you, and because I love you, I would sooner have you hate me for telling you the truth than adore me for telling you lies.”

- **Homosexuality and the Bible** - two views  
by Dan Via & Robert Gagnon
- **Straight & Narrow** - Compassion & Clarity in the Homosexual Debate  
by Thomas E. Schmidt
- **What the Bible Really Says about Homosexuality**  
by Daniel A. Helminiak
- **Washed & Waiting** - Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality  
by Wesley Hill