

Definition

What is homosexuality?

Traditional
(Biblical) culture

Sexual acts with
members of the
same gender.

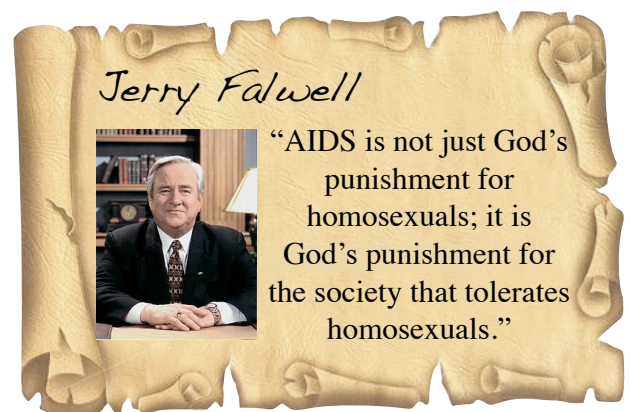
Technological
(modern) culture

Sexual attraction
to members of the
same gender.

Observations

Christian are
confused

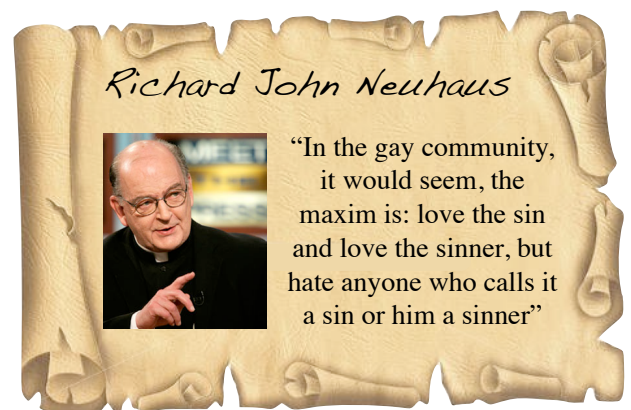
Gay activist's are
demanding



I hear so often—"But homosexuality is a choice, a sinful decision, a disorder, a psychological mistake."

But I find such judgmental beliefs to be the result of fearful ignorance, the defense tactics of **holy homophobia**.

"Teen View" author



Objectives

Help Christians approach this issue sensitively, Biblically, and constructively.

Help the gay community understand why Christians can see homosexual acts as sinful and yet not be homophobic.

Four points to this presentation

- Sensing the dissonance
- Seeing the bigger issue
- Seeking the facts
- Speak the truth in love

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.

Homosexual acts are a moral issue in Scripture.



Old Testament

Law of Moses
Lev.18:22
Lev.20:13

Examples
Judges 19:22-30
Ezek.16:50

New Testament

Jesus is silent

Paul
Rom.1:18-28
1 Cor.6:9-11
1 Tim.1:8-10
Jude 3-23

Church history

Until the modern era, the church has consistently condemned homosexuality.

Dear Dr. Laura Schlesinger

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your show and try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that, as you recently pointed out, **Leviticus 18:22** clearly states it to be an abomination and cannot be condoned under any circumstances – End of debate.

I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some other elements of God's Laws and how to follow them.

1. **Lev.25:44** states that I may possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations. A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? Why can't I own Canadians?
2. I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in **Ex.21:7**. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?
3. I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. **Ex.35:2** clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or should I ask the police to do it?

4. My uncle has a farm. He violates **Lev.19:19** by planting two different crops in the same field as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton and polyester). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? **Lev.24:10-16**. Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws. **Lev. 20:14**.

I know you have studied these things and thus enjoy considerable expertise in such matters, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.



Daniel Helminiak

PhD systematic theology
PhD educational psychology

“The Bible supplies no real basis for the condemnation of homosexuality. Therefore, people must stop opposing homosexuality merely by quoting the Bible because, taken on its own terms, the Bible simply does not support their case. If they have some other reason for their opposition, they ought to get clear what that reason is and state it up front.”

Romans 1

“²⁶ For this reason God gave them over to **degrading passions**; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is **unnatural**, ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ 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**,”

Some questions

that leave Christians uncomfortable

- Is not homosexuality **natural** for many people?
- **Jesus** never mentions homosexuality but does talk about loving relationships. Why not follow Jesus?
- Why do conservatives seem bent on **legislating** their personal morality on everyone else?
- Should not gay people enjoy the same civil **rights** (marriage) as anyone else?
- Why should a group that is so creative, peace loving, and productive be **rejected** just because of who they choose to love?

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.

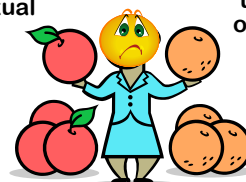
Hans Christian Andersen	Alexander the Great
Susan B. Anthony	Philip Johnson Rosie O'Donnell
Joan Baez	Angelina Jolie Ellen Degeneres James Dean
Francis Bacon	Billy Jean King Tyrone Power Elton John
Leonard Bernstein	Rock Hudson Hadrian Robert Reed
Little Richard	Bill Blass Czar Alexander I Lily Tomlin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

Evangelical Christians are caught between two spiritual virtues

Love
Sensitivity to the heart felt experience of the homosexual community



To ignore this brings the label of “holy homophobia.”



Truth
Sensitivity to the traditional understanding of the Scripture



To ignore this makes one a Christian heretic.

B.

Seeing the bigger issue

The homosexual question reflects 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

“⁶ 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. ⁷ 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

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

Where do we look for life apart from God?

Sexual fulfillment	immorality, impurity, sensuality,
Spiritual enlightenment	idolatry, sorcery,
Social community	enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing,

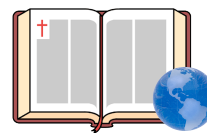
Many people who are passionate about sexual freedom are **fighting for their hope of life** - human fulfillment and wholeness.

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

- ✓ **sexual fulfillment**
- ✓ **spiritual enlightenment**
- ✓ **social community**

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

There are two very different views of how we experience “life.”



The path is given

based on Scripture



The path is created

based on Secular humanism

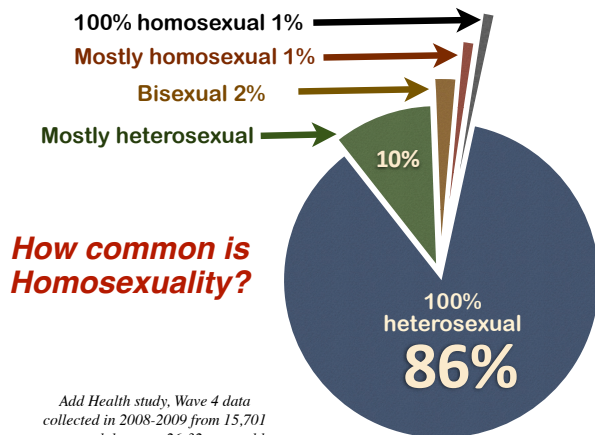
Sexual Idolatry

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

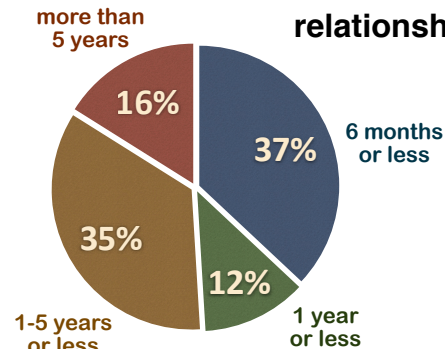
C.

Seeking the facts

Data about
homosexuality
is hotly debated.



Duration of male homosexual relationships



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.

- 75% 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.

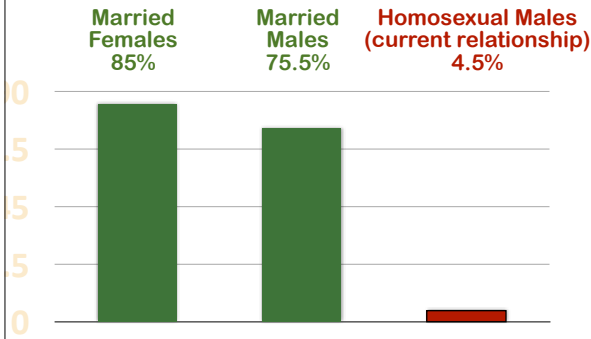
- 73% of all homosexuals have had sex with boys under 19 years of age.

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



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.

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?

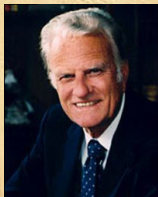
There are many things that "seem" natural to some - pedophilia, promiscuity, honor killing, hatred, revenge, racism, sexism, etc.

D.

Speaking the truth in love

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

Billy Graham



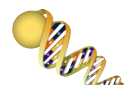
"I think that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is sin, but the Bible also teaches that pride, jealousy, hatred, and evil thoughts are sins."

Christians should understand that the secondary causes 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 frustrations** as broken people in a broken world.
- We share **common longings** with everyone - unconditional love and fullness of life.
- Jesus said that those who find their lives by **losing them in Him** will not be disappointed.
- When we seek to find life **in ourselves** (sexual experience, spiritual encounter, or social intimacy) we will ultimately be disappointed.
- We share the Gospel by starting with our common story - **Acts 17**.

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

- Homosexuality may be a part of God’s curse on a **rebellious society** but 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 find life by live **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.

*Christian citizens should promote - “**personal rights**” and the “**general welfare**.”*

- Human (including gay) **rights** of all citizens should be defended in a pluralistic society.
- **Special rights** including affirmative action 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



How should a disciple of Christ relate to a homosexual friend?

- 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 **discipline, understanding, and often repentance**.
- The church is made up of dirty, rotten, sinners who are fully **justified by grace through faith**.

Homosexuals rights and wrongs.

Civil rights?

Civil rights **YES!**
Affirmative action **No!**



Gay partnerships?

Civil contracts **YES!**
Gay marriage **No!**



Christian status?

Christian fellowship **YES!**
Ordination of active gays **No!**



“If the church gets overrun with homosexuals, that will be terrific. They can take their place in the pews right next to the liars, gossips, materialists, and all the rest of us who entertain sin in our lives.” “When I die, if someone stands up and says ‘Ed Dobson loved homosexuals’ I will have accomplished something with my life.”

Ed Dobson

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.”

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.”

