

## Homosexuality

Some time ago I read that the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in St. Paul, Minnesota welcomed three lesbian ministers into their church. Sadly, this has become so common that it's no longer news. Not only do many church accept homosexuality, but they even accept homosexual clergy.

What caught my attention was that the church took this as an opportunity to repent of the “sin” of having *condemned homosexuality in the past*. That's right: the church now believes that its previous stance of calling homosexuality a sin was actually a grievous offense against God Himself! In their own words, they said they should have “listened, learned, and included” instead of condemning it as sin and urging homosexuals to repent.

That's a pretty astonishing step to take, even in today's jaded and immoral culture. At one time churches throughout the country taught that homosexuality was a sin; now they teach that *condemning* homosexuality is a sin. Times really have changed.

I've heard people try to argue that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality, but they are grossly wrong. Anyone who tells you that the Bible has no problem with homosexuality is either astonishingly ignorant or a liar. The Bible not only condemns it, but it condemns it with incredibly strong language.

For example:

**Leviticus 18:22:** “Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination.”

Notice that God doesn't encourage homosexuality or lavish praise upon it. Nope. Instead, God calls it an *abomination*. That's pretty clear language! A couple chapters later God elaborates on this idea:

**Leviticus 20:13:** “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.”

It's hard to imagine a stronger condemnation of homosexuality than that! In fact, it's so strong that this verse has caused the Bible to be banned as “hate speech” in numerous countries around the world. That fact alone should put to rest the idea that the Bible smiles approvingly on homosexuality. But God has a great deal more to say about the subject. Do you remember Sodom and Gomorrah? God didn't look down on those homosexual cities with favor, nor did He choose to “listen, learn, and include.” He didn't seek out the sodomites and put them in positions of authority over His children. Instead He destroyed those cities and everyone who lived in them with fire and brimstone:

**Genesis 19:24:** “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;  
25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.”

Just in case we missed the point, the book of Jude takes pains to explain exactly why God destroyed these cities:

**Jude 1:7:** “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner,

giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

The reason God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah is because homosexuality is an abomination to God, and it invites God's wrath. The destruction of these two cities is a clear example of divine judgment upon homosexuality. Notice, also, that this passage of Jude is from the *New Testament*. God condemns homosexual behavior in both testaments because *God never changes*. He is eternal, perfect, and unchanging:

**James 1:17:** “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

**Numbers 23:19:** “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

**I Samuel 15:29:** “And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.”

The New Testament does not smile approvingly upon homosexuality. In fact, the New Testament actually says that homosexuality is a *curse*:

**Romans 1:26:** “For this cause God gave them up unto vile afflictions: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 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 unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.”

What is homosexuality called? A “vile affliction.” The Bible does *not* depict it as an “alternative lifestyle.” It is an abomination to God, and those who engage in it *or approve of it* have a reprobate mind:

**Romans 1:28:** “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

God clearly sees homosexuality as an evil thing. It may be acceptable to society but it is not acceptable to God. The Lord calls it a sin and urges all those living that lifestyle to repent of it and come to God for forgiveness, cleansing, and healing. God is more than willing to extend forgiveness, but in order to accept that forgiveness you must first acknowledge that it *is* a sin against God.

People say “Well, we can't help it. Homosexuality is genetic – there's just nothing we can do

about it.” That in itself is a lie: homosexuality is treatable, and a great many people have left that lifestyle and found healing. But for the sake of the argument, let's say that there was a genetic disposition toward homosexuality. If that were true it would not change the situation at all. After all, if someone had a genetic disposition toward molesting children, would that mean it's ok for them to carry out those desires? Or if someone had a genetic disposition toward cannibalism, would that mean “they just can't help it” and society should just step back and let them disembowel people and then eat them?

Of course not! A sin is a sin, and sin separates us from God. The fact is, *all* of us are predisposed to sin because we have sin natures. Sinning is what we do; it's who we are. But God can change us, if we ask Him to. He can set us free from the bondage of sin and give us a new life. He can grant us forgiveness and grace, *if we repent*. But we *do* have to repent.

That is why the actions of this particular church are so horrible. There are very real consequences to homosexuality – not just in this life, but also in the life to come. The Bible is clear that those who refuse to seek God's forgiveness and cling to the homosexual lifestyle will not make it to Heaven, but will instead face the eternal and unending wrath of God:

**I Corinthians 6:9: “Know ye 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,**

**10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

**11 As such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”**

The offer that God makes is this: *everyone* has sinned in God's sight, but Jesus came to Earth and died in our place, taking upon Himself the punishment that we deserved. If we will agree with God that the things we've been doing really *are* sins, and if we confess them to God and ask Him to forgive us, then He will do exactly that. As verse 11 says, God is powerful enough to cleanse us of all our sins and give us a new heart. He can defeat the sin in our lives no matter how many times it has defeated us in the past.

This church, however, is not teaching its congregation any of these things. Instead of telling people that they are on the road to Hell and desperately need to ask God for forgiveness, they tell them that God approves of what they are doing and that everything is fine. There is *nothing* loving or kind about that. Which is more loving: warning people on the road to Hell that they are in a lot of trouble and need to save themselves from the wrath to come, or telling them that everything is fine?

All over the world criticism of homosexuality is being criminalized as “hate speech.” The reality is that those who approve of homosexual behavior are actually the ones guilty of true “hate speech,” for they are encouraging people to choose a lifestyle that will damn them for all of eternity. There is nothing loving about that.

The truth is that you cannot fight God. You may hate Him and His laws and you may despise His Word, but the fact remains that one day you will die, and after death – whether you believe in God or not – you will stand before a holy God and give an account of your life. God has made it very clear what will happen to those who insist on clinging to their sins: if you reject God's forgiveness and mercy then you will face His wrath. There are no other options. Deciding to not believe in God will not make Him go away.

Look at it this way. God is an all-powerful, immortal being who created the entire universe and who will one day come back and destroy it. If you refuse His forgiveness then what hope do you think you have? How are you going to defeat an almighty God?