

HOMOSEXUALITY:

Growing Acceptance of Man -vs- Continuing Abomination to God

Understanding the Homosexual Rights Agenda & Its Impact

- 50 Yrs. Ago Homosexuality
 - ◆ Was Illegal
 - ◆ Was Hidden
 - ◆ Was Shameful & Contemptuous
- Today Homosexuality
 - ◆ Is Legal
 - ◆ Is Mainstream
 - ◆ Is Politically Correct & Celebrated
- What Happened to Cause the Change?

Homosexual Advocacy Groups

- NGLTF - National Gay Lesbian Task Force
- LAMBDA
- ACLU
- IGLA - The International Lesbian & Gay Association
- NOW - Feminist group
- GLAA - Gay & Lesbian Activists Alliance
- MCC - Metropolitan Community Church
- Numerous media programs

Supreme Court: Overturned Texas Sodomy Law, Thursday, June 26, 2003

- Quote from Justice Anthony Kennedy:
 - ◆ Denied that government can act on society standards on what is “right and acceptable behavior, and respect for the traditional family.”
 - ◆ “The issue is whether the majority may use the power of the State to enforce these views on the whole society through operation of the criminal law.”
- Quote from Justice Sandra Day O’Connor:
 - ◆ “A law branding one class of persons as criminal solely based on the state’s moral disapproval of that class and the conduct associated with that class runs contrary to the values of the Constitution and the Equal Protection Clause, under any standard of review.
 - ◆ 17 years ago, court ruled homosexuality, “immoral and unacceptable” (that’s 1986)
- What about Bigamy? Incest? Prostitution?
- Dissent from Justice Antonin Scalia:
 - ◆ “Today’s opinion is the product of a Court, which is the product of a law-profession culture, that has largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda.”
 - ◆ “Today’s opinion dismantles the structure of constitutional law that has permitted a distinction to be made between heterosexual and homosexual unions, insofar as formal recognition in marriage is concerned.”
 - ◆ Justices Scalia, Rehnquist & Thomas opposed the Court’s ruling
- Statements from activist leaders
 - ◆ “I feel like this is a day of independence”
 - ◆ “This is a wonderful day for Gay Americans...”

- ◆ “It’s a really watershed moment for us”
- ◆ “A historical transformative decision...”
- ◆ “This ruling is the best that we could have hoped for...”
- ◆ “It brings our country one step closer to fulfilling its ideas of equal treatment under the law...”
- ◆ “This is a momentous decision, especially here in Texas, where it’s been used as an excuse to discriminate...”
- Consequences of decision:
 - ◆ Overturns sodomy laws in Texas, Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Virginia, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina and Utah
 - ◆ “Defense of Marriage” laws by states may be overthrown as unconstitutional
 - ◆ Could clear the way to make incest, bigamy & prostitution legal (two consenting adults)
 - ◆ Will bring challenge to allow in military
 - ◆ Verifies clear turn of society to immorality

Gay Kiss: Business as Usual (Frank Rich – New York Times – June 21, 2003)

- This Year’s Tony Awards
 - ◆ Plugged musical about life of homosexual singer-songwriter Peter Allen
 - ◆ Best Play: “Take Me Out” (baseball player comes out of the closet -- full frontal nudity)
 - ◆ Award winner: Cross dressing character from play “Hairspray”
 - ◆ “The Kiss” -- between two award winners, celebrating their Tony & living together for 25 years
 - ◆ CBS received only 10 calls & 68 e-mails of complaint (out of 8 million viewers)
- Examples of growing acceptance
 - ◆ Same sex American couples going to Canada after Ontario court extended gays in that country full marital rights
 - ◆ Gay marriages accepted in Vermont; court cases advancing in Mass. & New Jersey
 - ◆ Former NATO Supreme Commander Wesley Clark indicated his receptiveness to homosexuals openly serving in military
 - ◆ Homosexual with live-in partner appointed ambassador to Romania by President Bush
 - ◆ Actor Richard Chamberlain declared he was gay “to widespread yawns”
 - ◆ Oscar nominees this year included:
 - Ed Harris as a gay man with AIDS
 - Salma Hayek as bisexual, Frida Kahlo
 - Musical comedy “Chicago” (with gay themes)
 - ◆ Comic book movie “X2: X-Men United” intimated a “coming out” in one scene
 - ◆ TV shows “Will and Grace,” “Six Feet Under,” “Queer as Folk” & “Boy Meets Boy” all flaunt homosexuality

Last Week’s MTV - Video Music Awards

- Featured singing & dancing routine with Madonna, Britney Spears & Christina Aguilera
- In midst of performance, Madonna deep kissed both women
 - ◆ Crowd at the awards show gave standing ovation & cheered
 - ◆ Pictures & videos seen on TV, Internet & print media
 - ◆ Continues to be run frequently with praise on MTV
- Pop-culture has openly embraced homosexuality

Gallup Poll May, 2003

- 60% Americans think homosexual relations between consenting adults should be legal
 - ◆ Up from 43% in 1977, and 54% in 2001
- 88% believe they should receive “equal opportunity” provisions in workplace, just like other “minorities”
 - ◆ Up from 80% in 2001
- Poll split evenly on granting privileges & rights of marriage
 - ◆ 49% for and 49% against

Two Major Misconceptions Furthering Homosexual Agenda

- About 10% of the total population is homosexual -- found among every group in society
- “Sexual orientation” is genetically inherited -- no choice in whether one is heterosexual or homosexual
- Both Are False!

Kinsey Research Skewed by Non-Representative Sampling

- Kinsey Research flawed
 - ◆ Database included high percentage of prison inmates and known sex offenders
 - ◆ Convicted criminals comprised 25% of Kinsey’s male sample
 - Compared to less than 1% of total U.S. population
 - ◆ “Ideology, not sound science, has perpetuated a 1-in-10 myth. In the nearly half century since Kinsey, no survey has come close to duplicating his findings” (Newsweek, 2/93)

Gay Activist Admissions

“The most widely accepted study of sexual practices in the United States is the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs). The NHSLs found that 2.8% of the male, and 1.4% of the female, population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual... This amounts to nearly 4 million openly gay men and 2 million who identify as lesbian.” **(Friend of the Court brief, 31 homosexual and pro-homosexual groups. *Lawrence VS Texas*)**

Further Studies on Validity of 10% Figure from 1948 Kinsey Research

- Other figures
 - ◆ Men (20-39) -- 1.1% exclusively homosexual in past 10 years (Alan Guttmacher study)
 - ◆ Less than 3% admit to being homosexual (1992 NY Times post election poll)
 - ◆ Other figures:
 - Less than 2% (Bell/Weinberg, 1970)
 - 3.1% (Cameron/Ross, 1975-1978)
 - 2% (Catania/NABS, 1992)
 - 1.1% (Billy/Battelle, 1993)
 - Less than 1% Gay/Lesbian Couples (Census)

The Gay Gene?

Nature VS Nurture (Is Homosexuality a Genetic Trait?)

“Even though a trait may have a chromosomal link, it does not necessarily mean it is genetic. **Genetic traits** are those, such as eye colors, that are coded for us by genes alone. Each human

gene can be thought of as a book that provides a complex set of instructions for the synthesis of a single protein. These proteins are then responsible for forming and operating everything else in the body.” (Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, *The Gay Gene?*)

“**Behavioral traits**, such as weight, are influenced by genetics, but unlike genetic traits, most behavioral traits are programmed by multiple genes and things such as the environment in the womb, the mother's health habits or postnatal effects of a virus. All of these and more may combine and influence one another throughout a lifetime. Behavioral traits, as opposed to simple, single-gene physiologic traits such as eye color, **always interact in this way.**” (Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, *The Gay Gene?*)

Dean Hamer – Gay Researcher

“We knew that genes were only part of the answer. We assumed the environment also played a role in sexual orientation, as it does in most, if not all behaviors.... **Homosexuality is not purely genetic...** environmental factors play a role. There is not a single master gene that makes people gay....I don't think we will ever be able to predict who will be gay.”

Simon LeVay – Hypothalamic Brain Differences

“It's 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 center in the brain... Since I looked at adult brains, **we don't know if the difference I found were there at birth, or if they appeared later.**”

Camille Paglia, - Lesbian Activist & Writer

“No one is born gay. The mere idea that that is possible is a flimsy fabrication of sloppy journalists and amoral queer activists. Any person, male or female, who cannot feel the sexual allure of the opposite sex has been traumatized by some early combination of social circumstances.”

But What Does The Bible Say?

“Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them” (Rom. 1:32).

Homosexuality: Two-Fold Problem

- **First, the practice itself.** Condemned by God. Practiced by a small, but vocal group demanding rights and recognition in society.
- **Second, the toleration of the practice.** Though homosexuals are only a small percentage of the total population, they are tolerated by a growing majority in our society.

Old Testament Teaching

Genesis 19:4-5

“Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.’”

Genesis 19:12-13

“Then the men (*messengers from God*) said to Lot, ‘Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city; take them out of this place! For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.’”

Jude 7

“...as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

Leviticus 18:22

“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.”

Leviticus 20:13

“If a man lies with a male 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.”

Condemned from Beginning

- God’s will regarding sexual fulfillment set in creation (*Gen. 2:18-24*)
- Name originates from abomination at Sodom (*Gen. 19:4-11*)
- Viewed as “strange flesh” (*Jude 7*)
- Law called practice an “abomination”
 - ◆ *Leviticus 18:22-30*
 - ◆ *Leviticus 20:13*

Sodomites Present In Old Testament Times

- Tolerate in evil times:
 - ◆ *1 Kings 14:22-24*
- Put away in reign of good kings:
 - ◆ *1 Kings 15:11-12*
 - ◆ *1 Kings 22:46*
 - ◆ *2 Kings 23:7*
- History of homosexuality tied to decline of Israel & Judah

New Testament Teaching

Romans 1:26-27

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.”

Romans 1:26-27

- “Vile Passions”
 - Literally, *passions of dishonor*
 - ◆ Origin of desire not genetic but of own will: “*lusts of their hearts*” (v. 24)

- “Against Nature”
 - ◆ Literally, *against that produced, brought forth and propagated by natural order*
 - ◆ Homosexuality is not a “natural” practice
- “Shameful”
- “Their Error”

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.”

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

- **“Homosexuals” or “Effeminate”**
 - ◆ Literally, soft to the touch; used to denote practice associated with softness of life
 - ◆ A&G: Allowing self to be misused homosexually
- **“Sodomites” or “Abusers of themselves with men”**
 - ◆ Refers to sodomy or one practicing such; pederast
- Note also *1 Timothy 1:10*
- Every passage authorizing proper marriage shows error of homosexuality

Yes, God Abhors Homosexuality!

Consider Example of the Episcopal Church

“The Episcopal Church has largely been taken over by modernism. *A majority of the leaders hold rationalistic beliefs, denying the perfect inspiration of the Bible and denying or questioning Christ's deity, virgin birth, resurrection, and other Bible miracles, yet they are allowed to remain in good standing within the denomination.* In the first half of the 20th century, Episcopal Bishop James Pike denied all of the major tenants of the Christian faith. He said, ‘Religious myth is one of the avenues of faith and has an important place in the communication of the Gospel’ and he spoke of the ‘myth’ of the Garden of Eden and the ‘myth’ of the virgin birth. Pike said, ‘I have abandoned ship on the doctrine of the Trinity. I have jettisoned the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ’” (Christian Beacon, Mar. 17. 1955).

“Jesus Christ, as portrayed in some New Testament passages, is ‘narrow-minded’ and ‘vindictive.’ The Gospel writers ‘twisted’ the facts concerning Jesus’ resurrection, which was never meant to be taken literally. The virgin birth of Christ is an unthinkable notion, and there is not much value in the doctrine of the Trinity, or in the belief that Jesus Christ was sent to save fallen humanity from sin. St. Paul, the missionary to the Gentiles, was a repressed and ‘self-loathing’ homosexual....” [Views of John Spong (Bishop in America’s Episcopal Church) as summarized in *Time*, Feb. 18, 1991, p. 66]

“A clergyman who left his wife and two daughters for a male lover would become the first openly homosexual priest elected an Episcopal bishop if he prevails in a contest in New Hampshire.” [*Gay Episcopal Priest Nears Election as Bishop*, by Julia Duin, *THE WASHINGTON TIMES* - June 06, 2003]

“‘The electing convention in New Hampshire was well aware Gene Robinson was a homosexual living in a partnership,’ said Mark Hollingsworth, a delegate from Massachusetts. ‘They made a decision that deserves your support.

“‘We must not be intimidated about threats of schism. Those concerned about this election are not concerned about unity, but uniformity. *There is no such thing as unity without diversity.*’” [*Pioneer Press*, Aug. 02, 2003, “EPISCOPALIAN GENERAL CONVENTION: Gay bishop's election tests church unity,” by Stephen Scott]

"I appreciate the dignified way in which my fellow priests, the Rev. Hill Riddle and the Rev. Andrew Rollins, agree to disagree on the question of the Episcopal Church's affirmation of our first openly gay bishop, the Rev. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire (Other Opinions, Aug. 8).

"In agreeing with the Rev. Riddle on this issue, I could argue that the overwhelming emphasis on inclusion in the New Testament trumps the two or three passages from St. Paul that may condemn homosexuality...

"I could argue further that every time the church has moved in the direction of inclusion it has been strengthened, in spite of tremendous controversy early on. But my primary reason for agreeing with the Rev. Riddle is personal. Nearly 30 years ago my first marriage ended in a divorce I did not choose. With two children and a lot of love for family life, *I chose to disobey not just Paul but Jesus himself and get remarried.*

"Even though Jesus says that a remarried man commits adultery, the church blessed my second marriage and gave me and my new family (as well as my former wife) full support. As my second wife and I set out to raise four young children, this support proved essential.

"I want for my gay sisters and brothers what the church gave to us. If they choose to commit themselves to a lifelong relationship, I want the Episcopal Church to give them its liturgical blessing -- but, more important, its blessing of love and support. The acceptance of the new bishop of New Hampshire will help our church along its way into yet another kind of inclusion."

[The Rev. William Barnwell, *The Time-Picayune*, letters to the editor, 8/13/03]

"Voting for him will move us forward as a church *just like the ordination of women did.*"

[Coleman McGhee, retired bishop, *Star Tribune*, Minneapolis, MN, page A-10]

Many institutional churches now have women preachers -- Could they be far behind?

A Cappella Chorus -- gay and lesbian members of the CHURCHES OF CHRIST

- "In 1979, gay and lesbian members of the Houston area Churches of Christ formed a fellowship to provide educational and spiritual support to each other and the Church as whole"
- "Gay Christians seek the opportunity to worship the one God in peace and love supported by the Church as we are supported by God"
- "The Church needs to reassess its attitudes towards homosexuality in the larger context of the full range of issues relating to human sexuality. We encourage further studies on individual scriptures traditionally thought to be anti-gay."

Excerpts from Stone-Campbell Discussion List

Open & Affirming Churches Accepting Homosexuality

Since the church community is experienced as anything from blandly neutral ("don't ask/ don't tell") to outright hostile, many gay and lesbian people fall away and become totally lost. The core problem is that church is inhospitable to who they truly are. I suspect a few drift into accepting church environments outside the CoC, but most leave religion entirely. I personally have known two gay people with strong CoC backgrounds who feel unable to return and unmotivated to try another church.

This is a sorry record that needs to be addressed as an immediate priority. There are real people whose spiritual, emotional, and physical lives are at stake. Elders, ministers, and other leaders need to examine the substance of their teaching, and how it is carried out in day-to-day church life.

In our Restoration Movement, the Disciples' Open and Affirming congregation program is a bold new initiative to take a fresh look at scripture, scientific understanding, societal issues, and specifically the role of gays and lesbians in the church. The O&A process assumes that scripture is subject to ongoing interpretation in the tradition of a living church. Having been through a study process which covers both the Old and New

Testaments, I have enhanced my own understanding. We do families a serious disservice to "defend orthodoxy" simply because we feel it has "worked" for so long. Based on a revitalized understanding of scripture and a growing faith, an O&A church is prepared to publicly welcome and affirm gay and lesbian people, not in spite of who they are, but for who they are. O&A churches welcome them not only into the baptistery but also the pulpit, as ministers and congregational leaders.

Accepting Homosexuality on Basis of Science

Scientific literature and personal acquaintance with gay and lesbian couples inform me that sexual orientation is at the core of one's being, similar to gender identity. Research is underway which thus far suggests that there may be a genetic basis for sexual orientation. The best analogy I can think of is left-handedness.

From Accepting Divorce to Homosexuality

From a historical perspective, I think it's safe to predict that two forces will change attitudes among conservatives regarding homosexuality in the next decade or two, following pretty much the same direction carved out by churches that are more affirming of homosexuals, and also following the pattern regarding divorce.

The first force would be the increasing amount of personal experience with gay and lesbian family members and friends, who will persuade their loved ones that neither their homosexual nor others' heterosexual orientation is a matter of choice. As this issue becomes more personal and as more is learned about how sexuality develops, the old unexamined assumptions will fade away, as will the appeal to Bible verses that support them.

The second force could well be a gradual acceptance of a theology and spirituality of sin that helps each of us recognize our own intractable capacity for evil and hurt, and to deal with our continuing need for forgiveness throughout life, so that if anybody ever started a spiritual housecleaning to get rid of all who are openly and unrepentantly sinful we'd stop before there would be nobody left.

Are We Headed Down the Same Path?

Series arranged by:

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Material for this study was borrowed from excellent work done by Stan Cox, Jeff Smith & Steve Wallace on the subject. Their help is gratefully acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

Appendix I

[Following is a reprint of a brochure from the A Cappella Chorus describing its origin & views]

A CAPPELLA CHORUS – gay and lesbian members of the CHURCHES OF CHRIST

HERITAGE

Churches of Christ are a part of the Restoration Movement, an effort beginning in the early 19th century to restore New Testament Christianity and the unity of all Christians. As a part of that movement, churches of Christ have attempted to be nondenominational and place emphasis on congregational autonomy. As a result, congregations holding to a common faith may vary from place to place in the expressions of worship; we are bound to Christians everywhere by faith, not ritual.

HISTORY

In 1979, gay and lesbian members of the Houston area Churches of Christ formed a fellowship to provide educational and spiritual support to each other and the Church as whole. Since then, additional fellowships have formed in many large urban centers. Named an A Cappella Chorus because most congregations of our fellowship have no instrumental music, the organization also serves as a network for gay people in small towns and rural areas.

GAYS AND SPIRITUALITY

Most gays in the Church and many gays in the larger community have the some spiritual needs and feelings as the whole Church. We believe in the same one God, have similar spiritual goals, similar hopes. We rejoice when friends commit their lives to Christ and join in prayer for our oppressors as well as those we love.

How disappointing it is, then, when we are rejected not only by the world, but also by the Church that has taught and nurtured us. Sometimes through open hostility, other times through 'tolerant compassion', oppression serves to keep gay people in hiding, lonely and self-hating. It is difficult, if not impossible, to fully celebrate Christ in our lives, let alone encourage others to know the selfless love of Jesus, in a church that rejects, or at best ignores, Christians because of the norms of general society.

Gay Christians seek the opportunity to worship the one God in peace and love supported by the Church as we are supported by God. We seek no more, but no less, than acceptance, as does everyone else who believes, in the fellowship of those who are striving to do God's will.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHINGS ON HOMOSEXUALITY

While our study of scripture leads us to no single conclusion regarding homosexuality, it is clear the sin of idolatry is at the basis of the most explicit condemnations of homosexual behavior in the Bible. We recognize that the worship of the creature rather than the creator is a mark of some homosexual, as well as heterosexual, behavior and is therefore disruptive in the relationship between God and the person involved. The point is that sexuality itself, while a gift of God through creation, is an aspect of our humanity that is susceptible to exploitative manipulation for selfish ends.

Scripture in the past has been used to condemn and/or justify a wide range of human actions based upon the social norms of the period: slavery, the Crusades, persecution of Jews and Catholics, the inquisition, and on

and on. Even today, as mentioned above, there are wide interpretations of scripture in the Church: some refuse to play cards or attend Sunday schools, others encourage Church support of orphanages, etc.

The Church needs to reassess its attitudes towards homosexuality in the larger context of the full range of issues relating to human sexuality. We encourage further studies on individual scriptures traditionally thought to be anti-gay. We encourage the Church to face honestly and forthrightly the questions and needs of gay and lesbian people, both within the Church and those who have left it, in light of the failings of Christians to understand them.

THE A CAPPELLA CHORUS SINCE 1979

An A Cappella Chorus/Houston publishes a bulletin every other month which is mailed to gay members of the Church in 27 states, South Africa and Micronesia. It is also mailed to non- gays within the Church nationally to enlighten their consciousness. Additional Chorus fellowships have begun in Los Angeles, Nashville and Seattle. Numerous social outings, luncheons, homecomings, gospel meetings, singings and clothing drives for the homeless are held annually. Tracts are available on topics ranging from "About Coming Out" to "Answers to a Parent's Questions about Homosexuality."

MORE INFORMATION

While we do not seek to change anyone's sexual orientation, we invite those who share our spiritual goals to write for additional information such as the tracts mentioned above.

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