What Is God's Will Concerning Homosexuality?

Help for Church Leaders and Others to Speak the Truth in Love

Second Edition

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WORK IN PROGRESS: CHECK BACK FREQUENTLY

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What Is God's Will Concerning Homosexuality? Help for Church Leaders and Others to Speak the Truth in Love

Preface to the Second Edition

Since the publication of the first edition of this volume, a significant addition has been made to the scientific literature that is carefully done, which provides further support (not that the Bible needs it) and sound illustrations of what God reveals in his Word, his special revelation, concerning homosexual practice. Also since that first edition, issues have arisen in the church pertaining to LGBTQ+ matters that must be addressed in the light of God's Word and historic Christian theology. Further, I continue to be amazed by the reports from the hosts of both of my websites as to the reading of the first edition. Of all my writings, this book is one of the most read and by all kinds of people, e.g., professors, students, parents, and numerous others in many countries throughout the world.

Therefore, this second edition has become necessary. I have received emails and calls pertaining to these matters from people in church congregations, asking me about what has been done in their congregation and what they should do in response. Since these matters are serious, I have added my replies and additional information in the appropriate places in this latest edition. What I have added will remain. This second edition contains the first edition within it together with the new subject matter.

In consideration of the requests and advice of many, I have put this unfinished second edition on both of my websites. When I have told them that I always strive for excellence and do not like to publish a document that is incomplete, they have replied, "But we don't have anything on these matters; what you have on these matters is what we need!" That touched my heart. I have told them of other good sources of some aspects of this subject, but what I've written and published in both editions of this e-book is free and accessible everywhere at any time.

I have also received requests for a short summary of key points. I have therefore also published "Homosexuality/LGBTQ+: An Abbreviated Fact Sheet for Speaking the Truth in Love," which contains some information not included in this second edition.

Therefore, in order to help with these urgent needs for Biblically accurate theology and sound science regarding these new matters that have arisen, this latest edition is now available, so that the global church and others can have this information, which is not being published by what has been called "the mainstream media." Neither is it being published or taught in most of academe. Both the media and the academy, together with other sources of information, such as Hollywood, social media, government regulations and legislation, business leaders who are caving to the high pressure and heavily funded LGBTQ+ activists, and uninformed loved ones and friends, who only listen to one side of the subject, continue to supply the need for the new information that follows. Please keep in mind that this is a work in progress, which I will finish, Lord willing, as soon as I complete my previous writing and teaching commitments.

What Is God's Will Concerning Homosexuality? Help for Church Leaders and Others to Speak the Truth in Love

Introduction

How do you decide what is right or wrong about any given matter? Today, many if not most people make decisions based on how they feel about the subject or on the basis of what other people they care about think concerning that subject. In fact, even their own feelings are shaped by what other people they value, sociologically called their reference group or cohort, think.

This is why not only the Bible but secular wisdom counsels much care in the selection of who our friends should be. An old Spanish proverb puts it this way: "Tell me with whom you walk, and I'll tell you who you are."

But who should we be? Whose opinion counts the most? Further, whose opinion is ***by far*** the most important? If you answered "God's opinion," also meaning God's will, you're right, thus the title of this book. As will be considered more below, those of us who are believers in and walking with the Lord Jesus Christ especially need to keep God in the picture.

To employ another analogy we need to not only keep God on our radar screen but in the very center of it, for he has called us to be holy, that is set apart, to him and not just as individuals. Christ Jesus established his church, the Greek word for which means those called out to be holy to him, to serve him in an organized manner to accomplish as an organism what we cannot do individually. And as we read throughout the Bible, God is employing the church as the main means through whom he is working to redeem and renew his Creation.

As we begin, we need to be clear on the meaning of the main terms being used. Others will be clarified when we first come to them.

We should first define what we mean here by the words "homosexual" and "homosexuality." In common parlance, as defined in standard English dictionaries, the words homosexual and homosexuality involve directing a sexual desire toward and engaging in sexual intercourse with another person of the same gender.[1]

Do not confuse such practice with those individuals having God's gift of celibacy that is given to some single people in order to be able to serve him in ways that married people are unable to do.[2] In what follows, when I refer to homosexuals and homosexuality, I am referring to the engagement of sex acts between two (or, as often occurs, more than two others) of the same gender.

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[1] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/homosexual. (Accessed 08/27/10)

[2] Matthew 19:11-12; 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 32-35. This gift is often called the gift of singleness.

Other distinctions must be clarified so we are thinking about and discussing the same phenomenon. What about SSA (same-sex attraction)? Some people struggle with unwanted feelings of being attracted sexually to others of the same gender, but the feelings are undesirable, and they remain celibate. Such thoughts, as many others that are evil, being contrary to God's Word and will which emerge from our sinful human nature (e.g., Matthew 9:4; 15:19-20; Romans 2:15-16; James 2:4) are sinful. People trying to obey God, repent of those attractions, thoughts, and desires; do not act out on those emotions; and in this case refuse to engage in sexual relations with those of the same sex.

Some questioners ask, "Well, isn't SSA just a temptation? Jesus was tempted by Satan, but Jesus did not sin. (Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 4:14-15; cf., 7:27; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:19) However, an essential difference between the sinful temptations that Jesus rejected and the temptations that all the rest of us human beings encounter, is that the temptations Jesus encountered came externally, from another source, i.e., Satan. The source of the temptations that we struggle with are internal; i.e., they arise from within our sinful nature.

Rosaria Butterfield, a former lesbian, LGBT activist, staunch atheist, and tenured professor of English and women's studies at Syracuse University, explains more. As a former practicing homosexual, who now has lived with great pleasure a heterosexual life for over a quarter of a century as a wife, homeschool mother, writer, and speaker, her scholarly and personal testimony are a powerful witness to the sovereign love and Lordship of Jesus Christ who has saved her from the temporal and eternal destruction of the LGBTQ+ lifestyle. I quote her at length so you can understand her compelling rationale.

> God forbade eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but the serpent told Eve that God was not telling her the truth. Looking at the tree through Satan's point of view, she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired [חָמַד *chāmad*)] to make one wise" (Gen. 3:6). The word "desired" is translated "covet" [חָמַד (*chāmad*)] in the 10th Commandment (Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). Eve desired or coveted the forbidden fruit before she ate it. She created attraction for the tree in her heart by listening to the serpent. She began sinning in her heart before she tasted the fruit from the forbidden tree with her mouth.[4] This means that the beginning of sinful attraction, desire, inclination, or impulse is sin proper, not "fallenness" or "brokenness." Covetousness violates the 10th Commandment ("thou shalt not covet"). The 10th Commandment prohibits the sin that precedes action. Coveting what God has put off limits to you is contrary to HIm, and any impulse or desire in us that is contrary to God is sin.
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> Importantly, the "you" in Genesis 3:1-5 is plural ("you all"): "for in the day you (all) eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (vs 5). Because of her sinful desire, she ate and

gave some to her husband (who was standing right there). Adam, the federal head, stands as the responsible agent for the sin they—and now we—share. Due to their sin, which is a twisting of God's good design, the lust of the flesh plunged all of humanity into sin. Now, we are all conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5), and Adam's sinful flesh is in all of mankind (1 Cor. 15:22). All that is contrary to God in us comes from Adam's sin, which is now our sinful flesh….

The Bible does not regard sexual orientation as a category of personhood because sexual orientation is a 19th-century category mistake [by Freud]. You do not "have" same-sex attraction (like you have brown eyes), and you do not "experience" same sex attraction (like you do a cold or acne). You have a sin nature, and your job is to go to war against that sin nature and its impulses using the power of the Holy Spirit (Jeremiah 17:9)

Homosexuality is Overcome by the Savior:

Anyone who wants to minister the gospel of grace to people overcome by homosexual desire must firmly understand why God is anti-gay. God is anti-gay because God is love, and therefore, God is anti-sin. But God doesn't just condemn sin and leave us to suffer with no help or cure. The Lord Jesus Christ became sin on the cross so that His people would be ransomed into the grace of forgiveness and the progressive victory over sin as we fight against our sin nature in the power of the Spirit's grace. But the sexual sinner must fight with active and sincere repentance and drive a fresh nail into their homosexual sin a thousand times a day. You must not be passive and call sin by any other name.

Galatians 5:17 records the daily battle of every Christian: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish". The blood of Christ is no ally to the sin of homosexual desire because the blood of Christ does not make an ally to the sin it crushes on the cross. Christ can change homosexual patterns of sin just like He can change any pattern of sin. Yes, sexual sin runs deep, and yes, the battle is fierce, but God is for you in this fight. In His power, Christians can repent and live according to God's design for us as male or female.

If you have sinned in homosexual desire, lust, or sex, you are not "called" to lifelong celibacy; you are called to repentance. The first step in repentance is admitting that "gay" is not who you are. Instead, you are male or female with a pathological sin pattern that Jesus Christ can change. Repent of your evil desires and trust in Christ. Live His morality from your heart and keep repenting of indwelling sin until it is put to death. Yes, you will fight your sin nature for as long as you live on earth, but that does not mean that your indwelling sin patterns remain fixed. Sanctification is a progressive and real process, and God changes the

affections of the heart, conforming the repenting believer to walk in His truth. Jesus Christ is worth the fight against our sinful nature because the tomb is empty – He sits at the right hand of God the Father, interceding on your behalf and leading you to greater and greater victory. Because you are male or female, you can love and marry an opposite sex Christian. But you will not experience any such victory if you keep one foot in the gay camp, telling yourself that your sin is your "sexual orientation."

Conclusion:

Freud or God, which way, Christian? Every generation must defend the gospel anew and protect its young people from Satan's devices. You are not who you feel you are. You are who God says you are. Neither your flesh nor your feelings determines your identity. God does, and He created you male or female, including your sexuality.

By rejecting the modern myth of "sexual orientation," submitting to salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and agreeing with God's law in the Bible, you can live a godly life from your heart in obedience to God, by His Holy Spirit. Having trusted in Christ, daily freedom in Christ from false identities is yours for the taking and living, if you will live in humble repentance according to God's design for you.

God is anti-gay. The question is, "Are you?" If not, you are opposing God and who He created you to be. You cannot kick against God's design and have joy in Him at the same time. If you are anti-gay, then enjoy Christ above all by repenting of every form of homosexual desire in you. The fight is worth it because Christ is worth it.[3]

Thus, SSA, sinful itself and for what it produces, is a vital matter, for unchecked and without help, those emotions can and do motivate crossing the line into full blown homosexual practice, which is counterproductive to, indeed destroys, one's physical, psychological, and spiritual health. Moreover, for Christians such a false identity as SSA is unbiblical and a negative witness for Christ.

As Dr. Butterfield has also written in that same article, "We have walked the long road with prodigals and their parents. Some have been led by the nose by the false idea that homosexuality is a permanent feature of some people's humanity and that God loves homosexuality. This grievous heresy has denied an entire generation of young people the repentance needed to fight sin and grow in Christ. We want you to know the truth: you need to hate your sin without hating yourself."

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[3] Rosaria Butterfield, "Yes, God is Anti-Gay," The Aquila Report, September 17, 2026. Her footnote [4] is "Allen P. Ross, Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998); 136. Also see Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1-15, Word Bible Commentary 1. Ed. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, and John D. W. Watts (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1987), 75-76."

While herein we will refer periodically to SSA—due to its existential link to and, as Rosaria writes, the fuel that drives homosexual actions and thereby document the help which exists for those with that struggle, while offering much evidence that they have hope for overcoming that struggle—the focus of this volume is on homosexuality, the practice of engaging in same-sex sexual relations and its countless implications. In fact, since SSA typically leads to homosexual practice (all who are homosexual have had same-sex attraction, but not all who have SSA engage in homosexual acts physically), everything that is said about the latter relates directly to the former; i.e., one who wrestles with SSA must be aware of what comes with homosexuality, which is part of the reason for this writing. Furthermore, for Christians SSA is unacceptable. As Rosaria documents in the above-referenced article, SSA is sinful; "Homosexuality is neither normal nor safe nor redeemable for the service of God….All sin is treason against a holy God."

That said, we must also discern a vital difference between repentant former homosexuals and unrepentant and practicing homosexuals. The former reject the homosexual lifestyle and are trying to live a truly normal life <u>in accord with</u> God's general and special revelation. The latter are trying to redefine what is considered natural and make it include homosexuality, <u>contrary to</u> God's general and special revelation. Furthermore, redefining terms is a logical fallacy, as will be discussed later in this book.

To answer this question before us most adequately we must begin with God's Creation. Doing so, we see clearly there that God's original plan does not include homosexuality, which only occurs ***after*** Adam and Eve's fall into sin.

In the original Hebrew of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 God calls homosexual actions תּוֹעֵבָה (*tôʿēbâ*), i.e., an abomination, detestable, to be abhorred. The New Testament, e.g., Romans 1:18-32, also condemns both male and female homosexuality (in contrast to the spiritual gift of singleness about which we read in Matthew 19:10-21). Yet in today's media, homosexuals are portrayed as a couple of guys walking down the street holding hands or females hugging (part of the homosexual agenda explained in their own words in this volume). How is that hand-holding and hugging *tôʿēbâ*?

Or, is there more to the homosexual lifestyle than is being communicated, even taught, by Hollywood, TV, electronic and print journalism, schools, and the government? The answer is yes, very much so.

When homosexuality is discussed in society and in the church it is typically not defined. Most people don't have a clue as to what homosexuality involves. If the people in these conversations have any thought as to what constitutes homosexual practice, the images of the guys walking down the street holding hands or the lesbians hugging flash in and out of their minds. Extremely rarely and virtually never are homosexual acts ever mentioned. Yet to accurately discuss the matter before us, we need to know what it is that homosexuals do that God condemns. That is one of the reasons why this book has been written.

This book explains what it is about homosexuality that is *tôʿēbâ*, why God detests it, why he has commanded that humans not do it, why they truly are not gay when they do, and how he expects Christians to treat men and women who engage in homosexual practice. In these pages you'll become acquainted with much careful and sound social science research on homosexuality that has not been widely reported. We'll examine the homosexual agenda, including its flaws in logic (presenting in the process a primer in logical fallacies that also can be widely used in other contexts).

Using the historic and universal principles of interpretation in the discipline of hermeneutics, you'll see why the Bible texts, properly understood, do not support "gay bashing," but neither can they be twisted to fit a modern pop cultural interpretation that conforms to cultural and political "correctness." Using the words of Jesus, Paul, and many other Old and New Testament texts, which teach that we should truly love all people, this volume explains what that love means for how we are to treat homosexuals according to God's will. It raises and answers the question, *if one genuinely loves as Jesus commanded, how can he or she philosophically advocate for, or encourage, a fellow human being to embrace, much less continue in, a practice which is an unhealthy, dangerous, indeed, a physically and spiritually lethal lifestyle that is unholy and contrary to God's will*?

Thus my urgent concern is first for the church, the body of Christ, too many of whom are following the culture into a position on homosexuality that is contrary to God's Word, which disobedience threatens to sidetrack the calling and mission God has given us to extend and nurture his Kingdom throughout the world. When his people have done this throughout both Testaments, he has not treated the matter lightly. We must not mistake his patience with his approval.

My related second urgent concern is for the homosexual people whom God loves, who are headed down the wrong road. Because God loves them, we too must love them, part of which means we must not hinder them; we must help them. Neither may we hurt them. After studying the Scriptures and the science, it is clear that homosexuality is dangerous to one's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. This is why a lesbian you'll meet in these pages pleads with us to not hinder her and her fellow homosexuals who are struggling to break free of this lethal lifestyle.

If the church, contrary to God's special revelation in the Bible and his general revelation observable to all, ignore those revelations and audaciously encourage people to disobey him, what will we say to God when we stand before him to give account of what we've done with our lives?[4] Further, we cannot fail to keep in mind a key text sandwiched between Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.

[4] See, e.g., 2 Corinthians 5:9-10, "So we make it our goal to please [the Lord]…For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." Anthony Hoekema offers a fine commentary on this and the related sobering texts that would be good to read in its entirety. "But—and this is the important point—the sins and short-comings of believers will be revealed in the judgment as *forgiven sins*, whose guilt has been totally covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as was said, believers have nothing to fear from the judgment—though the realization that they will have to give an account of everything they have done, said,

Read or reread Leviticus 19:16b-17. "Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the LORD. Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt." How to help, not endanger, him or her is a major focus in these chapters. We'll see how making this judgment does not violate Matthew 7:1, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged."

This book is written in response to calls for help by people in the church who are asking how God would have us think and act rightly concerning homosexuals in and outside the church. They're asking for theologically sound and Biblically-based sermons and study materials that they can use individually or in church groups to help them understand this important matter. It is with these people in mind that I have written the following pages.

This volume is especially needed in order to prepare for and respond to the homosexual activists' agenda to change even the conservative church congregations. As explained in the book, a highly organized, extensively funded, and strategically staffed plan is in place to persuade every conservative church (they already have done so long ago with the liberal churches) in all 50 states, and in other countries, that homosexuality is normal and acceptable in the church as well as in society. That objective must not be achieved in the church.

The church is the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:27) In his first letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul further explains that "I am writing these instructions so that if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." (3:14b-15) This statement means that the church is the repository and stronghold of the revealed Word and will of God pertaining to his plan of redemption of his creation. If we are the "pillar and foundation of the truth," how can we sit back and allow that truth to be corrupted and its power be destroyed? Where would people then turn to find the truth?

Providentially, Christ Jesus has assured us that he will build his church and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18 KJV) The outstanding New Testament Greek scholar, R. C. H. Lenski explains the grammatical reasons for this translation and then says, "The implication is that hell's gates shall pour out her hosts to assault the church of Christ, but the church shall not be overthrown (Rev. 20:8, 9). What makes her impregnable is her mighty foundation, Christ, the Son of the living God (1 Cor. 15:24 b)."[5] One of the ways the Lord is building his church is in his call, and equipping of us through the Holy Spirit, to be and remain faithful to him (e.g., 1 Timothy 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:13; Revelation 14:12) and, speaking again through Paul, to "not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you

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and thought should be for them a constant incentive to diligent fighting against sin, conscientious Christian service, and consecrated living." Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 259. Read pages 258-259 for the more complete commentary on these passages.

[5] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel*, WORDsearch 10, p. 628.

will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

The major overall theme of this book is "speak the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15) Its purpose is to present the facts of which most people are unaware, so the truth of God's will in this matter can be told in love, including being "patient, kind…[and] not rude." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Both aspects of this command are necessary for us to do at the same time, for truth without love is harsh and can be cruel, and love without truth is weak and ineffective and can be misleading, deceptive, and even destructive. Additional information to this book will be available on the Current Issues page of my website at www.fromacorntooak12.com (also www.edwardseely.com) and on my academic website at https://seelyedward.academia.edu/.

Some comments about style. This book is intended for teachers, pastors and other church including denominational leaders, professors, parents, business executives, and government as well as other policy makers. It is also beneficial for thoughtful general readers who can skip the many footnotes, scanning only those of interest or for further information. A characteristic of my teaching and writing is resistance to what I've often referred to as the "'bumper-sticker mentality' and superficial thinking of the 'sound-bite age'" in which we live. Thus, when warranted on particular subjects, and among other reasons, I've quoted from some documents at length in order to provide a more thorough understanding of the argument a particular writer is making for the purpose of equipping the reader with the information he or she needs to engage family members, the church, and the public square on this crucial issue and to answer most adequately the question before us, "What is God's will concerning homosexuality?"

Thus the book can be read straight through or used as a reference work. Especially for the latter use, since its latest version will be on my website in a digital format, it can be downloaded for free, and the "Find" feature and other search engines can quickly locate specific subjects one needs to address. For those reading the print version of this volume, who wish to look up cited URLs in the footnotes, you can easily and more quickly do so by going to the online version and simply clicking on the desired links.

All quotes from the Bible are from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise indicated. Also, I wish to let the reader know I'm aware that the adjective Biblical is usually, though not always, written with a lower case b. However, with my background as an English major in my baccalaureate, as a theologian in my masters, and as an educator in my doctoral studies, observing the large, unwise, and dangerous amount of disregard for God and his Word, especially in the Western Hemisphere, I choose to use an upper case B to draw attention to the fact that the Bible is God's Word and our highest authority and standard, superior to all others, an understanding of and adherence to which is crucial for effectively answering the question before us in the pages which follow.

Edward Seely

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Chapter 1

The Truth from God's Word, the Bible

During one of the healing services at a large suburban Chicago church, I was standing in my place waiting for someone to come with a prayer request. I soon looked up to see a young man standing before me. On the card he handed me with his request for prayer he had simply written, "I am a homosexual." I asked him if he wanted to be healed. He said, "Yes."

Why would I ask him if he wanted to be healed? And why would he say he did? After all not a few people today believe homosexuality is a valid alternative lifestyle with partners and children who are as normal as you and I, and they are promoting it as such, including engaging in a vigorous social and political agenda on multiple levels with the intention of establishing credibility, acceptance, and normalization.

The American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of disorders in 1973, though reports indicate more for political than scientific reasons and with only 25% of its membership voting. A former colleague of mine, psychology professor Stanton Jones, Ph.D., explains that the APA vote was made in the context of explicit threats from homosexual activists to disrupt APA conventions and research. He states that the majority of APA membership continued to view homosexuality as a mental illness; four years after the vote a poll of the psychiatrists revealed 69% reported they believe that homosexuality usually is a pathological adaptation.[6] Nevertheless, we see something significantly different in *God's Word, which reproves and offers hope*.

To find God's will on any subject we must first turn to the Bible, the Word of God, our highest authority.

For most Christians over the millennia since God gave his law to Moses, the Bible has been clear on the subject of homosexuality as well as on other forms of sex outside of marriage between one man and one woman. God's Word still is clear except for most of those modern revisionists who approach it with a philosophical or theological premise

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[6] Stanton Jones, "Homosexuality, the Behavioral Sciences and the Church," Wheaton College, unpublished and undated essay, p. 4. See Dr. Jones' related publications, including *Homosexuality: the Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate* (co-authored with Mark A. Yarhouse, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000) and "A Study Guide and Response to Mel White's What the Bible Says—and Doesn't Say—about Homosexuality," Wheaton College, 2006. Jones' excellent guide is available at http://www.wheaton.edu/CACE/resources/booklets/StanJonesResponsetoMelWhite.pdf. See also Robert Knight, "Sexual Disorientation: Faulty Research in the Homosexual Debate," *Family Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Family Research Council, June 1992, p. 5. I have not only read but carefully studied Mel White's writing which is a sad attempt to twist Scripture texts to try to make them say something other than what they have been interpreted to mean by church leaders throughout the world for millennia, using universally established standard principles of hermeneutics. Knowing, and having worked with Stanton Jones, I am aware of his careful and thorough scholarship, and I highly recommend his critique of White's confused and contorted casuistry in order to effectively explain its errors so as many as possible may be kept from harm and that God's redemptive purposes may be accomplished.

(not unlike those with a veil over their hearts to whom Paul referred in 2 Corinthians 4:4[7]) who seek to find confirmation of that premise and to find a way to interpret the text as saying what they want to hear rather than what the original writer intended.[8] This practice is called "Scripture twisting."[9] Such manipulation of Scripture is obviously what Paul had in mind when he wrote, "we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Corinthians 4:2)

When we think about, speak, and act on God's law, we must keep in mind this basic premise: *God has not made a law against, or prohibited us from doing, anything that would be good for us*. *Everything that God has made a law against would be harmful to us if we did it*. God is good and love to the core of his being; he only desires what is good for us. As we examine the subject of homosexuality in this book, we'll see many reasons why he has called the practice of same sex intercourse abhorrent to him, and these reasons have to do with the severely negative, even destructive, effects physically, emotionally, socially, and most of all spiritually, of people he loves. Understandably, these realities are not admitted or disclosed by proponents of "the gay lifestyle," which, as we'll see is not at all "gay," including by those participating in that lifestyle as well as by such liberal causes as the so-called "mainstream media" (who are no longer so "mainstream" and whose readership is declining so much that large layoffs are occurring), but when we dig deeper and examine other, much more reliable sources, we find the truth, and I've documented these sources, many of which are hyperlinked, so you can easily check them out yourself and for further information.

The following are the main texts in the Scripture that Biblical scholars, who hold to the historic Christian teaching that the Bible is God's Word and our highest authority and standard, i.e., the canon, agree are the most explicit to the subject of homosexuality.

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[7] See also Ephesians 4:17-19.

[8] One key principle to keep in mind in interpreting the Bible is to distinguish between exegesis and eisegesis. Exegesis involves drawing the meaning out of the text, letting a passage speak for itself. Eisegesis involves reading into the text. The former is the established and correct way of interpreting a writing; the latter is considered an inaccurate, misleading, and faulty interpretation that fails to discern and fairly explain and apply the meaning of what the author has written.

[9] A relatively few, such as Professor Walter Wink, at least have the intellectual honesty and perspicuity to concede and admit as he does that "'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.' And that 'Paul wouldn't accept [a loving homosexual] relationship for a minute.' However, he and similar revisionists view the Bible as offering no coherent sexual ethic *for today*, especially as regards homoeroticism, which teaching Wink terms 'interpretative quicksand.' Instead, such hold that people possess a right to sex that supersedes Biblical structural requirements for sexual unions, and essentially proposes that sexual ethics are best determined by one's own subjective understanding of Christian love," clearly abandoning the historic Christian view of the Bible as mankind's highest authority and standard to which we are accountable. Walter Wink, "To hell with gays" and "the Bible and homosexuality" quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/11/15) *Conservapedia: The Trustworthy Encyclopedia* is a well-researched and well-documented website containing a treasure trove of valuable resources on the subject of homosexuality that are consistent with the Bible and historic Christian hermeneutics and exegesis.

Other texts provide related and further information on the subject; yet while important for the most complete understanding of the matter, they are not required to answer the question before us. Therefore, to be as parsimonious as possible, several of these other texts will not be examined in this treatise.[10] Others will be included throughout the book where applicable.

One of the main principles in the discipline of hermeneutics, the field of literature interpretation, is that in order to accurately understand a text it must be considered in its context. In the related discipline of Biblical hermeneutics, the context is not only the verses immediately before and after the one under study but the whole chapter, the whole book, and ultimately in the light of where it is in the context of the whole Bible, the complete counsel of God's Word.

The globally respected late pastor and theologian, John Stott, has persuasively argued that the starting point in answering the question this book is addressing, and its related questions, is to begin not with what the Bible teaches about aberrant forms of sexuality (homosexuality not at all being the only such form) but with God's standard in creation. This approach of course is based on Jesus' hermeneutic that he used in responding to the Pharisees' question about divorce as recorded in Matthew 19:8, where he indicated that to properly understand God's teaching about this subject, they had to consider it in the light of God's original plan in creation. The subject must be framed in its Biblical context in order to understand and apply God's will.

Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:7, 18, 20-25

> 26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let
> them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the
> livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the
> ground." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God
> he created him; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them
> and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and
> subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over
> every living creature that moves on the ground."

[10] For further information on the texts see Wendell P. Karsen, retired missionary and former Director of the Master of Theology Program, Western Theological Seminary, "What the Bible Teaches about Homosexual Practice**,"** an unpublished essay based on the work of noted Biblical scholar at Pittsburg Theological Seminary, Robert A. J. Gagnon, author of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001). Carefully consider also Richard Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: Harper, 1996), Chapter 16. A caveat: While we can disagree with Gagnon on his view of the documentary hypothesis, he and Hays offer insightful and sound explanation of the Old and New Testament texts pertaining to homosexuality. However, I disagree with some of Hays' applications of the textual teaching on certain subjects, including some pertaining to homosexuality, e.g., that homosexuals can be members and some may be ordained leaders in the church. See my reasoning to the contrary in Chapter Five. When reading scholarly essays and larger writings, it is always important to keep in mind that the scholar may have a correct view of the principle but his or her application of the principle can be in error. Discernment is required.

We see in this first passage the very clear teaching that all mankind bears the image of God. Biblical theologians stipulate that all humans bear the image of God, characteristics of God that he has built into us that he has in macrocosm but that we possess in microcosm. For example, as God is rational, we too can think, albeit nowhere near his ability to do so. ("'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'" Isaiah 55:8-9) As the core of God's being is love, so he has given us the capacity to love; so also such other attributes as a spiritual being and fellowship. Theologians distinguish between the natural qualities in the image of God and the moral qualities of his image, the former having been obscured but not lost by sin. The moral qualities of true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness were lost by sin but are restored to those in Christ. (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10)[11]

It should be noted before proceeding that not all of God's characteristics are built into us, even in microcosm. Those that are part of the image of God in us are referred to as communicable attributes.[12] Some of God's attributes, those not part of his image in us, are called incommunicable attributes and include but are not limited to such divine characteristics as the independence or self-existence of God, the unchangeableness of God, and the infinity of God.[13]

God's Word also reveals to us that while human beings bear some characteristics of God built into us in microcosm, which gives us superiority and greater worth and dignity over all animals and other aspects of creation, we clearly are not in any way "little gods." God is far superior to us; we belong to him, and he will hold us accountable for how we live and act.

One other observation should be made pertaining to the Genesis 1:26-28 text. In verse 28, we see that God *commands* the male and female humans he has created to "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." In the original Hebrew of this passage, all four verbs, and the fifth which follows in the next sentence ("rule"), are in the second person plural of the Qal conjugation or form of the verb and in the imperative tense, whereby God commands the couple to procreate. This strong statement proves God is not at all thinking of homosexuality, for homosexuals can neither procreate nor, therefore, can they do so extensively to increase in number to the magnitude of filling the earth, subduing it, and ruling it.

The understanding of mankind being created in the image of God has very significant implications for the question before us, especially for how we view and treat homosexual people, and we'll return to this text when we come to that part of the discussion below. In the creation of human beings we read the following.

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[11] Louis Berkhof, *Manual of Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1933), pp. 129-130.
[12] Berkhof, p. 65.
[13] Berkhof, pp. 62-65.

2
7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. (2:7)

The original Hebrew of these and the related texts contains significant meanings that bear on our understanding of the Biblical creation account. The Hebrew word, *ʾādām*, translated humankind or mankind, that God created to bear his image, is the generic word for man. Transliterated the word becomes Adam, (2:20) the proper name of the first human being. The meaning of Adam's name has additional significance in Hebrew, for it is related to the word for ground, *ʾădāmā,* the soil from which God formed him.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." 18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (2:15-18)

We see in this passage that in God's Providential care of the crown of his creation he taught that humans are social beings, as God himself is in the Trinity. Yet, as important as our relationship is with God, he is saying that we need peer relationships. God, being far superior to us is not our peer, and neither are the animals nor any others in the lesser orders of creation. Adam would truly be alone if he were the only human.

So God said he would make another human to meet the peer fellowship and belonging needs of Adam. This new person would be a suitable helper for Adam. The word suitable in Hebrew is *kenegdô*, which means a corresponding opposite or counterpart, *similar* ***but not the same***, who would be Adam's helper.

20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (2:20-25) 23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." 24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. 25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (2:20-25)

As Adam viewed and named all the animals, he saw that none of them constituted a *kenegdô*, a peer for him who would be his corresponding opposite. So God administered an anesthetic and did some surgery on Adam. When Adam awakened, God brought the new being to him, and we can sense his delight in his counterpart, a woman. The Hebrew of two of these words sheds more light on the relationship of

Adam and Eve. When Adam said, "she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man" (2:23), the word, translated "man" in the Hebrew is *ʾîsh*, which means a man or husband.[14] The word *ʾādām* connotes the earthly connection with mankind, and his connection with all other humans, while *ʾîsh* designates other characteristics of man, including the vast difference between him and God (Numbers 23:19) and the significant difference between man and animals (Exodus 11:7).

Thus the word for woman and wife is *ʾîshshāh*. In Genesis 2:23 Adam calls his female counterpart *chawwāh*, from the verb, *chāyāh*, meaning "to be alive," or "to have life," or "living." In 3:20 her Hebrew name has been Anglicized to Eve, which the text explains is "because she would become the mother of all the living [human beings]." Here we see clear evidence that the institution of marriage that God established was between a man and a woman, who was to be the man's counterpart, his corresponding opposite, *similar but not the same gender*. It must be remembered as we saw above that she, too, bears the image of God in which both she and her husband were created. (Genesis 1:27) It is significant that the intimate and profound interconnection with and relationship to the husband and wife is seen in both Hebrew and English as well as other languages. The husband is ***ʾîsh*** and his wife is ***ʾîsh****shāh*; ***man*** and wo***man***.

And what a great blessing God has given both genders! As brain research has revealed and continues to inform, and as humans have experienced for millennia, each gender is "wired" differently. We think, feel, and act in different ways that truly complement and support one another. Each gender brings his or her God-given characteristics and strengths to the marriage and to the whole family. Such differences not only help us cope with the challenges of life but encourage us and enrich our life together as husband and wife in countless ways. Sadly, those in homosexual relationships miss out on these blessings that come most deeply and profoundly within Biblical marriage, the one flesh marital bond. Further, and with more sadness, as can be imagined and is disclosed by careful scientific research discussed in Chapter Two, children who are raised by two men or two women lose out in very significant ways when they are bereft of a mother or a dad. They not only are deprived of the unique, wonderful, and irreplaceable experience of a loving mom or dad, but they are denied a model for their own development or to guide them in selecting an opposite gender marriage partner who will be a *kenegdô* (a corresponding opposite) for them and provide the innumerable benefits a dad or mom brings to his or her children.

This reference to the marriage bond and its provision for children is clearly indicated in God's message through the prophet Malachi. "Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth." (Malachi 2:15) God knows and is telling his people that relationships that he

[14] Sometimes *ʾîsh* is also used collectively to refer to humankind.

views as *tôʿēbâ* are not characterized by producing godly children.

In Genesis 2:24 we read that "…a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." The pro-homosexual argument tries to force דָּבַק *dāvaq* (be united to, be joined to, cleave to, be attached to, cling to) and pathetically insist that same-sex couples can have that unity as well. In their eisegesis they fail to notice the context won't let them make that interpretation. The text first says a man and his wife will be so joined; then the term, one flesh, clearly designates God's design of the unique male-female marital bonding of their physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual oneness in the fitting together of their physical body parts in their loving embrace.

Quoting this passage, Jesus explains, "So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." (Matthew 19:6) The Lord added the second sentence in answer to the Pharisees' question about divorce. The outstanding Bible commentator R. C. H. Lenski further interprets,

> In order still more to impress the point regarding what God made of marriage at the time of creation Jesus adds: "Wherefore they are no longer two (like father and son, mother and son) but one flesh." The physical sexual union consummated in marriage actually makes "one flesh" of the two. And it ought to be self-evident that, therefore, this union is to be permanent.[15]

The late pastor, theologian, and author Stott, who never married, exposits the essential meaning of this creation account. In so doing, he makes a significant application to the matter we're addressing.

> It is of the utmost importance to note that Jesus himself later endorsed this Old Testament definition of marriage. In doing so, he both introduced it with words from Genesis 1:27 (that the Creator "made them male and female") and concluded it with his own comment ("so they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate"—Matthew 19:6). He thus made three statements about God the Creator's activity. First, God "made" them male and female. Secondly, God "said" that a man must leave his parents and cleave to his wife. Thirdly, he "joined" them together in such a way that no human being might put them apart. Here then are three truths which Jesus affirmed: (1) heterosexual gender is a divine creation; (2) heterosexual marriage is a divine institution; and (3) heterosexual fidelity is the divine intention. A homosexual liaison is a breach of all three of these divine purposes.[16]

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[15] *Commentary on the New Testament*, Vol. 1-12, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* by Richard C.H. Lenski, copyright © 1961 Augsburg Publishing House. Database © 2008 WORD*search* Corp., p.730.
[16] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution: Major Issues for a New Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), p. 200. Cf. Ephesians 5:31.

We see clearly in the creation texts the nullification of pro-homosexual arguments that post creation, specifically post Genesis 2, prohibitions against homosexuality (e.g., Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13) are culturally conditioned, modified, and limited. God gave a woman to be the wife of, one flesh with, a man, not another man, and vice versa: he gave to the woman a man, not another woman. Since God created male and female the way he did and for the purpose of dual gender marriage, his intention is that male-female marriage be universal, immutable, and transcultural. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and all other passages that condemn homosexuality are to be read in the context of the creation passages.

Stott's wise analysis of the pro-homosexual message deduces their cultural argument as being that the Biblical writers were only addressing matters pertaining themselves without any consideration of our circumstances or the issues we would face. Similarly they make assertions such as Paul not being aware of Freudian psychology. John Stott has answered these objections well.

> If the only biblical teaching on this topic were to be found in the prohibition texts, it might be difficult to answer these objections. But once those texts are seen in relation to the divine institution of marriage, we are in possession of a principle of divine revelation that is universally applicable. It was applicable to the cultural situations of both the ancient Near East and the first-century Greco-Roman world, and it is equally applicable to modern sexual questions of which the ancients were quite ignorant. The reason for the biblical prohibitions is the same reason why modern "loving" homosexual partnerships must be also be condemned—namely that they are incompatible with God's created order. And since that order (heterosexual monogamy) was established by Creation, not culture, its validity is both permanent and universal. There can be no "liberation" from God's created norms; true liberation is found only in accepting them.[17]

This basic premise of the Creation account, including that God saw all he created as good, and mankind as very good, puts homosexuality (which again was not part of God's Creation) in its proper perspective, i.e., a post-fall phenomenon, and helps us answer the objections pro-homosexual activists raise. One such objection concerns the question of homosexual activity among animals. Our first reply is that God's Word says homosexuality is counter to his will and sinful. That reality alone should suffice as a response to this objection.

Other responses can be made. For example, in all due respect to the 18th century Swedish botanist and physician, known in the scientific community as Carl Linnaeus, who developed the taxonomy for classifying nature into three kingdoms with subcategories, we human beings are neither animals nor members of the animal kingdom. We humans

[17] John R. W. Stott, "Homosexual 'Marriage:' Why same sex partnerships are not a Christian option," *Christianity Today*, November 22, 1985, p. 26.

alone bear God's own image, and that reality puts us in a separate category all our own far above the animals.

Thus, no matter what some animals do it does not affect God's will for us. Further, those who have studied animal behavior observe that homosexual behavior in animals is rare, if it in fact occurs at all, is not universal, is also part of the fallenness in which the power of sin that causes all creation to groan (Romans 8:22), is reportedly seen mostly in immature animals, and where it supposedly occurs it's observed to be much more a statement of dominance than of sexual lust or even sexual interest. When one male mounts another it is more "an act of hierarchical aggression…For proof of this, just present a female in heat. The same-sex behavior is abandoned—quickly," writes former homosexual Mike Haley who adds

> this whole line of argument should be insulting to any human being. We are not animals. We are endowed with superior minds by the Creator of the universe, who (even more importantly) came to die for us, giving us inestimable value. To compare a human in any way to dogs or cats or cheetahs or zebras or orangutans or platypuses trivializes God's design. So the next time you're faced with this argument, you might think of responding with, "I bet you're glad your mom doesn't believe the same way….In the animal world, some mothers eat their young.[18]

From the Early Church in this "novel" (141, 344 AD) from Justinian we have this account:

> Again, we know what the blessed Apostle says about such things, and what laws our state enacts. Wherefore it behoves all who desire to fear God to abstain from conduct so base and criminal that we do not find it committed even by brute beasts.[19]

Many such questions are raised with a variety of motivations. Some are asked sincerely by those seeking information to help themselves and others. Some are asked by activists to confuse and dissuade people. All have good answers. Those that pertain to the subject of this book will appear in the text below. Those that are somewhat related to but outside the scope of this study will not be included here, but the answers to them will be found in many fine books such as Mike Haley's just cited.

Genesis 18:16-19:38 (Sodom), Judges 19:1-21:25 (Gibeah), and Jude 7

> Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous…." (18:20)

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[18] Mike Haley, *101 Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2004), pp. 198-199.
[19] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality#cite_note-30 (Accessed 11/13/14)

> Then Abraham approached [the LORD] and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city?" (18:23-24a)…The LORD said, "If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake." (18:26)
>
> …Then [Abraham] said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?" He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it." When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home. (18:32-33)

We conclude that Abraham wasn't able to find even 10 righteous people in the city of Sodom. The following passage describes the evil situation.

> 1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.
> 2 "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square."
> 3 But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.
> 4 Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house.
> 5 They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex [root word: *yādhaʿ*] with them." (19:1-5)
> 6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him
> 7 and said, "No, my friends. Don't do this wicked thing.
> 8 Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with [*yādhaʿ*, known cf. KJV, NRSV] a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof."
> 9 "Get out of our way," they replied. And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.
> 10 But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door.
> 11 Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.
> 12 The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here,
> 13 because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it."

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to
marry his daughters. He said, "Hurry and get out of this place, because
the LORD is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he
was joking.
15 With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take
your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away
when the city is punished."
16 When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife
and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD
was merciful to them.
17 As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, "Flee for your
lives! Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the
mountains or you will be swept away!" (19:6-17)

24 …Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and
Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens.
25 Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those
living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land.
26 But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.
27 Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where
he had stood before the LORD.
28 He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of
the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a
furnace.
29 So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered
Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the
cities where Lot had lived.
30 Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he
was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave.
31 One day the older daughter said to the younger, "Our father is old, and
there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the
earth…." (19:24-30)

The average person after reading this passage would conclude that Sodom (and Gomorrah) were being destroyed as a punishment for outrageous homosexual sins (thus the derivation of the English word sodomy). Indeed, that has been the traditional interpretation of this text for millennia. However, since the writing of Derrick Sherwin Bailey in the mid-1950s (in particular his book, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*) followed by a plethora of literature by homosexual activists who claim to be Christians, it has become popular to reinterpret this account as a judgment on Sodom for its neglect of Middle Eastern customs pertaining to hospitality. Bailey drew his conclusion on basically two points: (1) He argued that when the men of Sodom demanded the men (angels) in Lot's house be released to them it wasn't for sex but to come to know them, taking the word *yādhaʿ* in 19:5 literally; *yādhaʿ* is usually

translated know.[20] The pro-homosexual argument is thus that the men of Sodom wanted to interrogate the male visitors in Lot's house to determine if they were up to some nefarious plot that would endanger the city. (2) In the second point Bailey et al. argue that the sins of Sodom mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament do not include any reference to homosexuality, only implications of hypocrisy and social injustice (Isaiah); adultery, deceit, other wickedness (Jeremiah); and arrogance, greed, and unresponsiveness to the poor (Ezekiel).[21]

However, on closer examination of this passage, the argument of Bailey and his ilk does not hold up. John Stott interprets much more accurately and explains why exceptionally well.

> …Sherwin Bailey's case is not convincing for a number of reasons: (1) The adjectives "wicked," "vile" and "disgraceful" (Genesis 18:7; Judges 19:23) do not seem appropriate to describe a breach of hospitality; (2) the offer of women instead "does look as if there is some sexual connotation to the episode;" [quote from James D. Martin in *Towards a Theology of Gay Liberation*, ed. Malcolm Macourt (SCM, 1977), p. 53] (3) although the verb *yādhaʿ* is used only ten times of sexual intercourse, Bailey omits to mention that six of these occurrences are in Genesis and one in the Sodom story itself (about Lot's daughters, who had not "known" a man, verse 8); (4) for those of us who take the New Testament documents seriously, Jude's unequivocal reference to the "sexual immorality and perversion" of Sodom and Gomorrah (verse 7) cannot be dismissed as merely an error copied from Jewish pseudepigrapha. To be sure, homosexual behavior was not Sodom's only sin; but according to Scripture it was certainly one of its sins.[22]

As with most who criticize the Bible and its millennia-long traditional interpretation, the critics fail to consider the whole context, i.e., that which comes before and after a particular passage.[23] They stop at the point they want to make rather than include all of

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[20] The Hebrew word, *yādhaʿ*, is a covenant word with very intimate and relational connotations. The context in the Old Testament clearly indicates when the word is used as a euphemism for sexual intercourse (e.g., "…Adam knew Eve, his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain,…" [Genesis 4:1 KJV; cf. NRSV]).

[21] John Stott, *Decisive Issues facing Christians Today* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1984), p. 339.

[22] John Stott, *Decisive Issues facing Christians Today*, p. 340. Further, a careful examination of the verses in this text shows Lot exercising extensive hospitality. The passage contains several indications of such, e.g., verses 1-3, 6-7.

[23] In the most accurate interpretation of a Biblical text, the complete context is not only the verses just preceding and following a passage under consideration, but the whole chapter in which it occurs, the whole book (including the main theme the author is emphasizing), and, indeed, the Bible as a whole, including its main purpose (to reveal God's creation, its corruption due to the seriousness of sin, God's unfolding plan of redeeming his Creation in Jesus Christ, and the calling of the church, people to be holy to God and the main means through whom God is carrying out his redemptive purposes). The interpreter thereby employs understanding of the total context to explain the meaning of a particular text and how that specific passage relates to God's redemptive plan in Christ Jesus, including how it applies to what the church needs to do today.

what God is revealing to us and requires us to know. The sin of Sodom involved much more than what Ezekiel mentions in 16:49; the preceding verses and those following verse 49 (cf. e.g., vss. 47 and 50) refer to "detestable practices" and "detestable things," both terms translating a derivative of the Hebrew word *tôʿēbâ*, which, as we'll see more below when we examine the two passages in Leviticus 18 and 20, primarily refers to people, things, and practices ritually and morally offensive to the LORD. Both ritual and moral practices of *tôʿēbâ* are the main subjects of Ezekiel 16.

Jude 7 reads, "In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire." How can anyone, especially anyone called to love people in Christ's Name, affirm much less encourage them to engage in such spiritually and otherwise dangerous behavior?

Judges 19:16-30

> 16 That evening an old man from the hill country of Ephraim, who was
> living in Gibeah (the men of the place were Benjamites), came in from his
> work in the fields.
> 17 When he looked and saw the traveler in the city square, the old man
> asked, "Where are you going? Where did you come from?"
> 18 He answered, "We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to a remote
> area in the hill country of Ephraim where I live. I have been to Bethlehem
> in Judah and now I am going to the house of the LORD. No one has taken
> me into his house.
> 19 We have both straw and fodder for our donkeys and bread and wine for
> ourselves your servants—me, your maidservant, and the young man with
> us. We don't need anything."
> 20 "You are welcome at my house," the old man said. "Let me supply
> whatever you need. Only don't spend the night in the square."
> 21 So he took him into his house and fed his donkeys. After they had
> washed their feet, they had something to eat and drink.
> 22 While they were enjoying themselves, some of the wicked men of the
> city surrounded the house. Pounding on the door, they shouted to the old
> man who owned the house, "Bring out the man who came to your house
> so we can have sex with him."
> 23 The owner of the house went outside and said to them, "No, my friends,
> don't be so vile. Since this man is my guest, don't do this disgraceful
> thing.
> 24 Look, here is my virgin daughter, and his concubine. I will bring them
> out to you now, and you can use them and do to them whatever you wish.
> But to this man, don't do such a disgraceful thing."
> 25 But the men would not listen to him. So the man took his concubine
> and sent her outside to them, and they raped her and abused her
> throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go.
> 26 At daybreak the woman went back to the house where her master was

staying, fell down at the door and lay there until daylight.
27 When her master got up in the morning and opened the door of the
house and stepped out to continue on his way, there lay his concubine,
fallen in the doorway of the house, with her hands on the threshold.
28 He said to her, "Get up; let's go." But there was no answer. Then the
man put her on his donkey and set out for home.
29 When he reached home, he took a knife and cut up his concubine, limb
by limb, into twelve parts and sent them into all the areas of Israel.
30 Everyone who saw it said, "Such a thing has never been seen or done,
not since the day the Israelites came up out of Egypt. Think about it!
Consider it! Tell us what to do!" (19:16-30)

1 Then all the Israelites from Dan to Beersheba and from the land of
Gilead came out as one man and assembled before the LORD in Mizpah.
2 The leaders of all the people of the tribes of Israel took their places in
the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand soldiers armed
with swords.
3 (The Benjamites heard that the Israelites had gone up to Mizpah.) Then
the Israelites said, "Tell us how this awful thing happened."
4 So the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, said, "I and my
concubine came to Gibeah in Benjamin to spend the night.
5 During the night the men of Gibeah came after me and surrounded the
house, intending to kill me. They raped my concubine, and she died.
6 I took my concubine, cut her into pieces and sent one piece to each
region of Israel's inheritance, because they committed this lewd and
disgraceful act in Israel.
7 Now, all you Israelites, speak up and give your verdict."
8 All the people rose as one man, saying, "None of us will go home. No,
not one of us will return to his house.
9 But now this is what we'll do to Gibeah: We'll go up against it as the lot
directs.
10 We'll take ten men out of every hundred from all the tribes of Israel,
and a hundred from a thousand, and a thousand from ten thousand, to get
provisions for the army. Then, when the army arrives at Gibeah in
Benjamin, it can give them what they deserve for all this vileness done in
Israel."
11 So all the men of Israel got together and united as one man against the
city.
12 The tribes of Israel sent men throughout the tribe of Benjamin, saying,
"What about this awful crime that was committed among you?
13 Now surrender those wicked men of Gibeah so that we may put them to
death and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjamites would not listen
to their fellow Israelites. (20:1-13)

27 And the Israelites inquired of the LORD. (In those days the ark of the

covenant of God was there,
28 with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, ministering before it.)
They asked, "Shall we go up again to battle with Benjamin our brother, or not?" The LORD responded, "Go, for tomorrow I will give them into your hands."
29 Then Israel set an ambush around Gibeah. (20:27-29)

35 The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and on that day the Israelites struck down 25,100 Benjamites, all armed with swords.
36 Then the Benjamites saw that they were beaten. (20:35-36)

48 The men of Israel went back to Benjamin and put all the towns to the sword, including the animals and everything else they found. All the towns they came across they set on fire. (20:48)

25 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit. (21:25)

Here we have the story of a Levite and his concubine, which has significant parallels with the story of Sodom. The homosexuals of Gibeah surround the house of the man giving hospitality to the Levite and demand to have sex with him. The hospitable old man pleads with the homosexuals to not "do this disgraceful thing." So the Levite sends his concubine outside, and the homosexuals ravage her all night and kill her.

The Hebrew word translated "wicked men" in 19:22, comes from the root *belîya'al* and means perverted men, corrupt, morally debased, degenerate. Commenting on this text in the *NIV Study Bible*, Davis and Wolf join with scholars through the centuries and hold that "the reference is to homosexuality."[24]

That the men of Sodom and Gibeah wanted to first have sex with whom they perceived to be men (not knowing the men in Lot's house were angels) but settled for ravaging women fits with what we know about homosexuality today. As will be discussed below, most homosexuals are bisexual.

The homosexual and bisexual abuses in this account are described as wicked (19:22), disgraceful (19:23-24), lewd (20:6), vile (20:10), and evil (20:13). Verses such as 20:12-13 leave no doubt that the revulsion that swept the whole Israelite nation was primarily what occurred to the Levite and his concubine, not to her being severed after her death into 12 pieces and sent to the 12 tribes; that part of the revulsion was rooted in the primary sexual evils of which the land was to be purged. (20:13) The root of the evil was the original homosexual attack and bisexual gang raping of the concubine. We see in 20:28 and 35 that the defeat of the unrepentant and uncooperative Benjamites was a judgment administered by God due to the tribe's support of and failure to bring to justice its homosexual men of Gibeah who attacked the Levite and his concubine.

[24] John J. Davis and Herbert Wolf, "Judges" in *NIV Study Bible*, General Editor Kenneth Barker (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), p. 358.

As Stott notes, Bailey and others try to cast the account as a hospitality failure as with Sodom. Yet the NIV rightly translates 19:22 as "wicked men" who want to have sex with the old man's male guest, and due to the striking parallels of the Gibeah and Sodom narratives, Stott's critique of Bailey's thesis also applies regarding the Gibeah passage, is a much stronger explanation, and is to be preferred.

Leviticus 18:22

> "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable."

The Hebrew word the NIV translates "detestable" is תּוֹעֵבָה *tôʿēbâ* (pronounced toe-a-bah), or an abomination,[25] disgusting,[26] and to be abhorred.[27] The word is used primarily to indicate people, practices, and other things that are morally or ceremonially (in the sense of God's worship and the ritual involved in his worship) offensive in the sight of the LORD.[28]

Distinguish Three Types of Laws.

If you haven't already, you will hear a question such as this one: "Why should we still keep this law about homosexuality, when we don't keep other laws in the Book of Leviticus like slaughtering animals without defects and wearing clothes woven of two different kinds of material?" This is an honest question that we've raised ourselves, and God has called us to answer it also for others. In order to do so we first have to understand a key aspect of the Bible in general and distinguish among three types of laws within the Old Testament (OT).

Regarding the key aspect of the Bible, it's important to include in our explanation that the Bible is God's progressive revelation of his plan of salvation, the redemption of his creation. As a good teacher teaches addition and subtraction before multiplication and division, God reveals only so much at a time over centuries, progressively giving his

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[25] Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner (eds.), *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), p. 1022. B. Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexic*on (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited, 1963), p. DCCLXVII.

[26] *The Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary* in WORDSearchBible.com.

[27] Davidson, p. DCCLXVII.

[28] Two other Hebrew words, *shiqqûts* and *sheqets*, are translated "abominable" and "detestable." The former, *shiqqûts*, only refers to idolatrous practices, sometimes to idols in general (Ezekiel 5:11), sometimes to specific false gods (2 Kings 23:13), and sometimes to the reality that those who worshipped the pagan idols became as detestable as the idols (Hosea 9:10). The latter, *sheqets*, unlike *shiqqûts*, doesn't necessarily refer to idolatry; most of its uses are in Leviticus 11 and pertain to laws concerning clean and unclean foods. The two occurrences of *sheqets*, in Isaiah and Ezekiel have the same meaning. *The Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary*. WORDSearch. The word, which, when used, always denotes ceremonial abominations is *sheqets* (Leviticus 7:21; 11:10-13,20,23,41,42; Isaiah 66:17; Ezekiel 8:10), and then *shâqats,* from which it is derived, which itself is only used in Leviticus for dietary violations, (Leviticus 11:11,13,43; 20:25) and a "cursed thing" in Deuteronomy 7:26, and an abhorred cry in Proverbs 22:24.
http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/12/2015)

people as much as they can understand in order to recognize and be prepared for the culmination and fulfillment of his plan in his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. (Cf. e.g., Galatians 4:4-5) Thus in the OT God gave different kinds of laws for different purposes.

Biblical scholars distinguish among three main types of laws in the Old Testament. The three are designated *ceremonial*, *civil*, and *moral* laws. These three terms are not in the Bible; the people prior to Jesus' first coming didn't need to distinguish differences among them—all the laws were required to be obeyed as written, both in principle and in the applications of the principle. As with all laws, they taught; they also were, and at least in principle still are, the standard for God's people for their daily living. God commanded these laws to teach and reinforce certain aspects of his will for his people.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18) The words, "until heaven and earth disappear," clearly refer to when he returns in his Second Coming (cf. 2 Peter 3:10-13). Thus, the whole law will be in effect through all history.

However, to fully understand God's Word, we need to interpret it as it was written to be interpreted. We use rules of interpretation, called hermeneutics (from the Greek word, ἑρμηνεύω [*hermēneuō*]), meaning to interpret, in order to correctly understand the meaning of what we are reading. There are general principles of interpretation, which we've studied since the third grade (but which weren't called hermeneutics), that typically apply to all literature, e.g., how to tell when to take a word literally and when to take it figuratively. In addition to these general hermeneutics, there are specific rules of interpretation that apply to God's Word, e.g., rules for interpreting prophecy.

One important hermeneutical axiom is the rule to distinguish between principle and application of principle. To correctly interpret and apply the laws, in our teaching and in our own practice, we need to recognize this distinction pertains to all three types of laws, the ceremonial, the civil, and the moral laws.

With respect to the OT laws, in particular those in Leviticus, we see certain principles, for example the *principle* in the ceremonial law to bring an offering to God in his worship. An *application of that principle* was the bringing of an animal to be sacrificed as a vicarious atonement (one dying for another) for the sins of the worshiper. Since Jesus Christ has come and offered himself as the perfect vicarious sacrifice for us to be acceptable to God, Jesus' sacrifice being the once-for-all sacrifice (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12), the application of the offering principle in our worship between Jesus' first and second comings has changed. The *principle* of the need to bring an offering *remains* until heaven and earth pass away at his Second Coming (the current heaven and earth to be replaced by the new heaven and the new earth [2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-4]), *but the application of the principle has changed for us who believe in and follow Jesus Christ due to Christ's mighty work in his first coming*. Instead of an animal, in the New Testament (NT) the application of the principle is fulfilled in Jesus' perfect once-for-all sacrifice. Now our offerings include ourselves in Christ, as living sacrifices pleasing to

God, no longer conformed to the pattern of this world (Romans 12:1-2) and monetary offerings (2 Corinthians 8-9) both types given in gratitude to God for his marvelous grace to us and to accomplish his redemption of his creation through the church.

All three types of law, ceremonial, civil, and moral, thus contain *principles* that last until Christ's Second Coming. But *applications of those principles* that God intended for a specific time in history, that point to the first coming of Jesus Christ, have changed in regard to the ceremonial and civil laws in accord with his coming for those who belong to him through faith. Both the principles and the application of the principles all point to Christ Jesus who fulfilled the entire law, but there are new applications to which we adhere in thankful obedience to his Word. (Matthew 5:17; 2 Corinthians 8-9). The third type of Old Testament law, called *the moral law in both principle and application of principle exists for all time*—until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to help us maintain our holiness to God for the accomplishment of his purposes through us, the church, whom he has called out to serve him who is Most Holy and who requires those who would be in fellowship with him to be holy. (Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:5)

Ceremonial Laws

Ceremonial laws thus stipulate God's requirements for worship acceptable to him during the Old Testament period. As we've seen, these laws include certain kinds of sacrifices for specified purposes. Examples of ceremonial, ritual laws include eating the meat of specific animals (Deuteronomy 14 and Leviticus 11); NOT sacrificing an ox or a sheep that has a defect or flaw in it—it must be unblemished (Deuteronomy 17:1); and NOT wearing clothing woven of two kinds of material (Leviticus 19:19c).

The laws forbidding eating meat of specific animals and wearing clothes woven of two different kinds of material pertains to *the principle of separation* which is at the base of the major motif of holiness to God. The word motif is a technical word Biblical scholars use to refer to a major theme that flows throughout both the Old and the New Testaments.

By not eating certain animals, and by not wearing clothing woven of two different kinds of material, the people learned and were daily reminded of the principle of separation, that they are separate from the world—pertaining primarily to its cultural values—and uncommon, holy to God to function effectively in the high and holy calling he gave them to be his people, his church, the primary means through which God is redeeming his creation. Thus, the *principle* is separation from the world in the very profound sense that God calls them to be holy to him; two *applications of the principle*, until the time of Christ, are not eating these kinds of meat and not wearing clothing woven of two types of material.

In the New Testament the *principle* of separation/holiness remains. At least one *application* also remains: the command to marry only a fellow believer in and follower of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14) That application also existed in the OT. (Genesis 26:34-35; 27:42—28:1; Exodus 34:16; Ezra 9:1-2; Nehemiah 10:30; Malachi 2:11) But the applications of not eating certain kinds of meat and of not wearing

clothing woven with two different kinds of material are no longer required. (Acts 10:9-16; 15:1-35)

The matter of NOT sacrificing an ox or a sheep that has a defect or flaw in it—that it must be unblemished (Deuteronomy 17:1)—also teaches God's people, pointing them to and preparing them for the First Coming of Christ. It teaches that God, who is Most Holy, requires that all who would come into his presence must be holy and uncontaminated with sin and evil. Throughout the Bible, in both the OT and the NT, God teaches that all solely human beings are sinful and fall short of the glory of God. (Psalm 51:1-5; Proverbs 20:9; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10) So in the OT in preparation for Christ's First Coming, the *principle* of vicarious atonement was taught, and the *application of that principle* consisted of the sacrifice of animals that had to be perfect, unblemished. Every being that appears in God's presence must be perfect, and those that are not, all of us, must be made so according to the means God has prescribed. In the OT that was by having the perfection of the sacrifice credited by God to the believing worshiper.

In the New Testament the *principle* remains that everyone who would enter God's presence must be made perfect, and in the NT God brought to completion his plan for making people acceptable to him by offering his only-begotten Son as the perfect atoning sacrifice, whose sacrifice would be credited by faith to those who believe in him. (Romans 3:9—4:25) It had to be a man who would perform the perfect once-for-all sacrifice, since it was man, not animals, who sinned and corrupted all human nature and rendered mankind unacceptable to God. And it had to be a perfect man, without defect and unblemished. The only human being ever qualified to fulfill that requirement was Jesus Christ. This special human would not only be human, could not only be human, but would also have to be God—100% human and 100% God—so he would be able to bear and overcome the Satanic pressure to succumb to temptation, the overcoming of which provided redemption for all of us who truly believe.

Returning to the question that opened this section, many critics of the Bible and specifically pro-homosexual skeptics, and even people who have a sincere inquiry, raise the question, "Since most people today no longer avoid wearing clothing made of two kinds of material, no longer adhere to the OT prohibition on eating certain animals, and no longer sacrifice animals in worship, why should we still uphold the OT teaching about abhorring homosexuality that is in the very same part of the Bible, even the same part of the book of Leviticus? We must be prepared to answer such questions. (Deuteronomy 6:20; 1 Peter 3:15)

We should explain that these are *applications of the principles* of *ceremonial* laws, and the ceremonial laws in the Old Testament were what Biblical scholars call typological of Christ. In literature, particularly in Biblical literature, a type is a person or thing in the OT that foreshadows that to which it points and which fulfills it in the New Testament. That is, as we've been seeing there was a quality about them (e.g., being an unblemished sacrifice) that pointed to Christ, and when Jesus came in his First Advent, he fulfilled those ceremonial laws that pointed to him; thus, it is no longer necessary for Christ's

followers to practice the applications of the principles of those OT laws. (See also Acts 15.)

Animals were sacrificed in the OT to teach the principle of life for life. The shedding of blood was necessary, due to life being in the blood, (Leviticus 17:11) and the vicarious atonement was done out of God's grace, so the other would not have to suffer death in the final and most ultimate sense, in the undoing of the result of Adam's and Eve's sin. (Genesis 2:17)

This was all done in the OT to prepare people to understand the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan of redemption, the ultimate application and fulfillment of the principle. Since it was man and not animals that sinned, it would have to be a man to make reparation for human sins, but it would have to be a perfect man (since in Leviticus one of the key principles in the sacrifice was that it had to be unblemished). God saw that the only man who could perform the perfect sacrifice that would be effective for all others would have to be his only-begotten Son. When the time was right in God's sight (Galatians 4:4) he completed his plan of redemption for man in his Son, Jesus Christ. Christ's perfect sacrifice has transformed worship in this period between his First Advent and his Second Advent.

As we saw above, ceremonial laws pertaining to food were one of the ways God taught people the concepts of holiness, being separate and pure from that which is detestable to God who is Most Holy. However, now that Christ has come, all foods are permissible for God's people. (Acts 10:9-28) Pastor Arthur DeKruyter has explained well the function of the ceremonial laws and another type of law in the Old Testament that is no longer needed due to Christ's work.

> [The ceremonial laws] deal with those activities performed in religious rites in the tabernacle and temple, and which point forward to the coming of the Messiah. The Book of Hebrews clearly states that these laws have been fulfilled. We do not perpetuate them. That toward which they pointed has already become a reality, so we don't need the signs anymore.[29]

Civil Laws

When God gave his laws to Israel he ruled his people directly by communicating with their leader, e.g., Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, in a theocratic form of government. Thus, some of the laws he gave his people were to direct them as to his will for how they were to govern their civil relations in order to please him. DeKruyter's brief overview explains it well.

> Then there are also civil laws which have to do with the theocracy, the rule of God over his people. The nation of Israel was a covenant people to

[29] Arthur H. DeKruyter, "Homosexuality?" *The Pulpit of Christ Church*, p. 3. A reprint of a sermon offered at Christ Church of Oak Brook in 1978.

> whom was promised a Messiah for the entire world to receive. This nation, ruled by God, had its civil laws and governmental controls, as defined in the Scriptures. But when the Messiah came, the nation dissolved itself not only as to purpose, but also as to identity as a covenant nation. Now all the believers of God are called the Israel of God. Those civil laws no longer pertain to a governmental entity.[30]

We see some examples of civil laws in Deuteronomy 17:14ff., where God specifies regulations pertaining to the king. Speaking through Moses, God commanded that the people seek the LORD'S will as to whom he has chosen to be king (v. 15); that the king be a fellow believer, an Israelite, and not a foreigner (v. 15); that the king must not accumulate large amounts of silver, gold, or horses (vss. 16-17); that he must not take many wives, so his heart doesn't go astray (v. 17); that he must read and follow God's Word every day and revere the LORD (vss. 18-19); that he must not consider himself better than the other Israelites ("his brothers") and turn from the law to the right or to the left (v. 20).

Since the end of the Old Testament God does not rule any nation as a theocracy, as he did Israel for a while in the OT times. His rule is in and through Christ whose Kingship and rule is in the minds and hearts of the regenerated (born again) believers in the church.

Thus, the Old Testament laws were designed to teach God's people key aspects of his plan of redemption, who they are, the mission to which God was calling them and pointing them ahead to Christ, and how they are to function in that calling. Some of those laws (applications of the principles of the ceremonial and civil laws) were intended to be in place until Christ came the first time. Jesus said that he came not to abolish but to fulfill all the law (Matthew 5:17-18), and he has done so. Nevertheless, another set of laws remains to guide us.

Moral Laws

The whole law remains in place and is the standard upon which all people will be judged. For those of us in Christ, who is the only human being to have lived the perfect life and fulfilled all the law, his righteousness is credited to us by faith, and we are justified apart from works of the law. (Romans 3:21-31; see especially v. 28) Yet the moral law remains binding for everyone, including those of us in Christ. (E.g., Acts 15:20) We are called to be holy to God, and God commands us to avoid lifestyles that contradict his Word that we are to proclaim; the moral laws help us live that holy lifestyle and serve God more effectively.

God's calling of a people to be holy to him is central to his plan of redemption of his whole creation, and in particular to the human race. It is through this holy people that the Christ would come and through the message this people would bring from God that the world would hear of his provision for how to be saved. The message of holiness, with its core concept of being set apart to God who is Most Holy and to be separate, uncommon,

[30] Arthur H. DeKruyter, "Homosexuality?" *The Pulpit of Christ Church*, p. 3.

with the necessary integrity to unite word and deed, leaves no room for lifestyles, heterosexual (e.g., fornication, adultery, incest) or homosexual, that contradict, undermine, and exist in rebellion against the accomplishment and application of God's loving plan.

God's attributes of justice, integrity, and holiness arise from the core of his being, his great and steadfast love. Because he loves his people God will not permit those who oppose him to overthrow his plan and cause his people to be destroyed. God will not compromise his integrity and allow evil to coexist with him and his people in his Kingdom when it comes in its fullness, and he will have no part of it himself now. That concept needs to be taught and acted upon now. Those who engage in evil in opposition to God are of no use to him in the achievement of his purposes (Jeremiah 2:5), unless they change, which is the message we are called to proclaim in partnership with the Holy Spirit who will accomplish the actual change in people's lives.

Examples of moral laws addressing what is *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight, include those pertaining to child sacrifice (Deuteronomy 12:31), lending at usury (Ezekiel 18:13), cross-gender dressing (Deuteronomy 22:5), and homosexuality as seen the Leviticus passages above and below, clearly and forthrightly specifying that God is offended by homosexuality. Thus it is not spiritually healthy to practice it. Nor, as we'll see in Chapter Two, is it physically healthy.

The *principle* underlying this passage (Leviticus 18:22) is the holiness of God and the holiness to which he calls his people. The *application of this principle* is God's clear condemnation of the practice of males engaging in sexual relations with each other, what we call homosexuality. *Regarding the moral laws in the Bible both the principle and the application of the principle last forever*. (Romans 1:18-32)

The Leviticus 18:22 text does not specifically refer to lesbian sex. God has not told us why he didn't speak to lesbianism in Leviticus or elsewhere in the Old Testament, but he addressed it in the New Testament with an equally strong condemnation of woman-to-woman same-gender sex, as we'll see later in this chapter. Some scholars speculate that cultural, psychological, and other factors resulted in female homosexuality taking more time to develop and become manifest.

One possible explanation as to why no texts in the Old Testament specifically relate to lesbianism may be found in the Hebrew understanding of what OT scholars refer to as the corporate personality. In that period when the male progenitor was the head of his clan, all the laws, blessings, and curses that obtained for the head of the clan were extended to the rest of the clan as well. (cf. Exodus 20:5) In the Hebrew mentality Jacob was referred to not only as Jacob but also Israel. When the male was circumcised, indicating his membership in the covenant with God, all within the clan, male and female, were considered included in the covenant.[31] Thus, the laws that applied to the males applied

[31] The word covenant is another example of a major motif, or theme, a concept that runs throughout the entire Bible, Old and New Testaments. The most common word for covenant, *berith*, occurs 286 times in the Old Testament and 33 (*diatheke*) in the New Testament. On numerous other occasions references occur

also to the females. Therefore, the condemnation of homosexual practice specifically referencing men, also applied to females by extension of the concept of the corporate personality and also logically, female-to-female sex being literally homosexuality, i.e., sex with the same (homo) gender. Later in the OT period God revealed through the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 18) that he would change that understanding in the new covenant, where he would treat all people as individuals, preparing the way to change the sacrament from circumcision to baptism, which all individuals could receive, not just the males. (Colossians 2:9-12; Galatians 3:26-29)

However, we must proclaim the message of the moral laws with concomitant lifestyles. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for word also mean deed: the unity of word and deed, faith and action, the practice of what is preached. People will not be attracted to listen to us, much less respond positively, if they see us living lives that contradict the message. *Unholy lives do not witness to a holy, indeed a Most Holy, God*. Whatever constitutes homosexuality in the lives of certain people, none of it is holy in God's sight…or even in the sight of most if not all human beings.

Even homosexuals don't want to be considered holy, i.e., separate and uncommon. They are desperately trying to be seen "like everybody else." Mmmm, that would be like all the people Jesus referred to who are taking the broad road "that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Pro-homosexual protagonists try to argue that *tôʿēbâ* rarely refers in Scripture to something intrinsically evil or moral sins and usually refers to ritual and other matters. This spacious argument has been well refuted. For example

> …in support of the traditional position, examination of the use of tōʻēḇā in the original language text is shown to evidence that it is not used in Leviticus for dietary violations, and is only used 2 or 3 times elsewhere to refer to the such things being abominable for Israel (versus the Egyptians), and in contrast, tōʻēḇā is the word most often used for abomination in reference to grave moral sins, including those which are unmistakably universally sinful. Collectively it is used for all the sins of Lv. 18 + 20. (vs. 27,29) As idolatry is the mother of all sins, tōʻēḇā can be directly used for such. (Dt. 32:16, etc.)[32]

In speaking on this subject I've been asked where else in the Bible is the word *tôʿēbâ* used and to what does it apply. Consider carefully the following list and contrast these matters with the ceremonial and dietary violations. The following are the majority of

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to covenants and covenantal relationships apart from the use of the word covenant. The covenant refers to the relationship God has with his people whom he has called out to serve him as the major means through which he is redeeming his creation. The church is the visible manifestation of the covenant.

[32] Anchor Bible Dictionary, Abomination of Desolation quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/12/2015) If you need more specific details you can find them at this URL.

specific sins which are said to be *tôʿēbâ* and receive God's strongest condemnation wherever they occur in the Scripture.

1. idolatry or idols (Dt. 7:25,26; 13, 2Kg. 21:2-7; 23:13; 2Chr. 33:2,3; Is. 44:19)
2. empty, vain worship (Is. 1:13)
3. witchcraft; occultism (Dt. 18:9-12)
4. illicit sex (Ezek. 16:22,58; 22:11; 33:26)
5. remarrying divorced women [one's former wife after she's been married to another man] (Dt. 24:2-4)
6. marriage with unbelievers (Ezra 9:1,2)
7. male homosexual and (collectively) heterosexual immorality (Lv. 18:22; 18:26,27,29,30; 20:13)
8. temple prostitution (1Kg. 14:24; 21:2,11)
9. offerings from the above (Dt. 23:18)
10. cross-dressing (Dt. 22:5)
11. child sacrifice to idols (2Ki. 16:3; Jer. 32:35)
12. cheating in the market by using rigged weights (Dt. 25:13-19, Prov. 11:1)
13. dishonesty (Prov. 12:22)
14. dietary violations (Dt. 14:3; Jer. 16:18)
15. stealing, murder, and adultery, breaking covenants, (Jer. 7:10)
16. violent robbery, murder, oppressing the poor and needy, etc. (Ezek. 18:10-13)
17. bringing unbelievers into the holy sanctuary of God, and forsaking the holy charge (Ezek. 44:78)[33]

The Bible also contains laws against making and worshiping idols, false gods (Deuteronomy 7:25-26; 27:15; 29:17), female and male prostitution in cultic worship (as done by the nations such as the Canaanites) and using the income from such vile acts in the LORD's worship (Deuteronomy 23:18). These laws, which contain gross immorality, also involve the rejection of God and the worship of false gods which God will not tolerate. They not only highly offend him but also destroy people he loves. He wants them to have life not death, so God prohibits these practices.

We must observe also that the new covenant was not brand new but renewed in Christ. That is, there is continuity between the new and the old covenant; the covenant is essentially one (because God said it is an everlasting covenant, Genesis 17:7), but it is modified in Christ in the New Testament. The original Greek language of the New Testament has two main words for new (*neos*, meaning new in time or in origin) and *kainos* (meaning new in nature or in quality). The word for new in the term "new covenant" is *kainos*, indicating not brand new but ratified and renewed in Christ with some changes. See 1 Corinthians 11:25 where Jesus talks of "the new (*kainos*) covenant in my blood." This modification is in fulfillment of the promise the LORD made through

[33] http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/12/2015)

the prophet Jeremiah when he said, "I will make a new covenant." (31:31 The Greek word translated new in this passage in the 250 BC Septuagint [Greek] translation of the OT Hebrew is, you guessed it, *kainos*.)

Karsen addresses the objection that even some Christians try to make, that these texts are culturally outdated. "However," he writes, "when considered within the context of the rest of the Bible's teaching on this subject, it is evident that these prohibitions against homosexual practice are transcultural and timeless core concepts."[34] This is an excellent point, and one that has to be made. Due to the nontimebound and universal authority of the Bible, God's Word, this and John Stott's observations above are sufficient rebuttals to the cultural argument, especially when we observe that God put no qualifying statements in Leviticus, or anywhere else in his Word, that a particular passage will be operative until 100 AD, 2000 AD, or any other time until the Lord's Second Coming. In fact Jesus said

> 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law [of which Leviticus is a part] until everything is accomplished.

Does any of that sound like cultural outdatedness? Not for those of us who adhere to the view of the historic Christian church, that the Bible is our timeless, universal, and ultimate authority. Then Jesus added a statement that should make us all shudder and give anyone pause who would him- or herself break, and encourage others to break, any of God's commandments:

> 19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:18-19)

Leviticus 20:13

> "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."

The Hebrew word the NIV translation renders "detestable" in this text is also *tôʿēbâ*. Thus it is not spiritually healthy to practice it. This teaching about homosexuality in Leviticus 18 and 20 appears in the section of the Law that Biblical scholars call the Holiness Code, God's commands and guidance for his people as to how they need to act in order to accomplish God's redemptive purposes in and through their lives. Homosexuality is unholy, as is indicated in these and other Bible texts as we'll see below.

Undergirding God's strong condemnation of same-gender sex acts is the death penalty. This judgment shows how serious God takes this form of disobedience. Homosexuality

[34]Karsen, "What the Bible Teaches about Homosexual Practice," p. 4.

is serious for several reasons. First, it is a rejection of God's creation order and commands in the first two chapters of Genesis. Second, God has called his people to be holy to him, which includes being set apart from the evil of the world, being uncommon, and being righteous in his sight. Third, God is working out his plan to redeem his creation and doing it primarily through his people, the church; the unholiness of homosexuality will interfere with, and for some sidetrack, but due to God's sovereignty it cannot destroy, that plan of redemption. Fourth, an anthropological reality is that healthy humans are trying to improve themselves, do better, and one of the ways they do so is to look for others who are models of what they want to become, and they are drawn to those models and try to act accordingly. Fifth, if God's people, the church, live our lives engaging rather than rejecting evil, we will nullify our call, not attract anyone to Christ, and further, we will receive the judgment of God, whose Word to his people of Judah through the prophet Jeremiah is still in effect: "Thus says the LORD: What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves?" (Jeremiah 2:5 NRSV) How would we fit that development into our identity, including our self-esteem?!

Karsen makes an important point when he observes that "Although in the New Covenant, the penalties have been ameliorated, the proscriptions of the behaviors described in the Levitical list remain in force. For example, when Jesus swept aside the literal penalty of death by stoning in the case of the woman caught in adultery, he did not abrogate the commandment not to commit adultery." (See John 8:1-11.)[35] Nevertheless, emphasizing the very serious abhorrence and condemnation of homosexuality by God, the Apostle Paul says that those who practice homosexuality, and approve of others who do so, while knowing (using a strong Greek verb for knowing, no ignorance is involved) of God's will concerning homosexuality, thus consciously and intentionally spurning his will, "deserve death." (Romans 1:32)

Some homosexual casuistry argues that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 only apply to temple idolatry, but the grammar of both texts is universal. Further, both passages are entirely consistent with other transcultural immutable commands given here, which forbid adultery, incest, and other sex outside of marriage to one's wife or husband, which would include homosexual practice. It is entirely unwarranted to restrict these texts as applying only to male temple prostitution.[36]

Here in God's Word, we have a far different view from what the media portray as homosexuality when they typically show a couple of the same gender embracing, kissing, or holding hands, and failing to show what else homosexual men and women do, therein providing a disservice to our society, the broader culture, and the world, including the global church. As in Leviticus 18:22, this passage also does not specifically refer to lesbian sex. The Apostle Paul fills in that supposed gap in the New Testament.

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[35] Karsen, "What the Bible Teaches about Homosexual Practice**,"** p. 5.
[36] See in this regard http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations.

Deuteronomy 22:5

"A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man wear women's clothing, for the LORD your God detests anyone who does this."

This law applies to homosexual transgender dress. By extension it also applies to transgender alteration of sex organs, for the basic principle of God's command lies in his prohibition of a person trying to change his or her gender and identify as someone he or she is not, thus rejecting God's choice of gender.

See also Deuteronomy 23:1 (NASB), where we read God's command that "No one who is emasculated or has his male organ cut off shall enter the assembly of the LORD." The Hebrew word for male organ is שָׁפְכָה (*šopĕkâ*, penis). The seriousness of sin is seen throughout the Bible, beginning in Genesis 3 with the expelling of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and the characteristic of God as being most holy and separate from all evil, that no evil can enter his presence.

The seriousness of this particular sin, this man's rejection of the sex in which God created him, means that he cannot enter the assembly. The Hebrew word in 23:1 for assembly is קָהָל (*qāhāl*, assembly, congregation). Very significantly, the Greek translation of *qāhāl* is most often, including in 23:1 in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament), rendered by the word, ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*, assembly, congregation, church). In the Old Testament, transsexuals, those now called transgenders, were not even to be in the church.

Before modern medical technology has made such physical changes possible as are now being done, some such alterations were made even in Bible times. For example recall Jesus' reference to eunuchs who were made that way by men, (Matthew 19:12) though the purpose then was not usually for transgenderism. However, the extensive employment of surgical, hormonal, and other procedures to change gender that is currently being done is producing tragic results, as will be discussed below, and many who have undergone such operations have regretted the decision and the accompanying outcomes which are irreversible.

This sadness indicates another reason for God's law against rejection of one's God-given gender. The rejection is first a rebellion against God, whose will is foremost and who always makes the best decisions for all involved. Going against God's will always results in outcomes that are counterproductive to the well-being of the one(s) involved, for his, her, or their family, for the church, and for society.

Therefore, it is no surprise for us to see that the Hebrew word in 22:5 that is translated "detests" is…yes, you guessed it…*tôʿēbâ*. We'll shortly see more reasons why.

Deuteronomy 23:17

"No Israelite man or woman is to become a shrine prostitute."

This text is a commandment that God's people are not to follow the practices of the vile, destructive, and evil religions of the nations in the land that God was giving to Israel, which nations worshiped false gods and goddesses and in their worship engaged in child sacrifice and male as well as female prostitution. Thus God also specifically forbids his people to participate in homosexual practice (as well as in heterosexual prostitution) in pagan worship.

In Deuteronomy 7 and in other places in the Old Testament God commanded his people to avoid the false religions that would lead them astray and cause them to fail to accomplish his redemptive purposes through them. In the first six verses we read the following:

> 1 When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to
> possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites,
> Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations
> larger and stronger than you—
> 2 and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you
> have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty
> with them, and show them no mercy.
> 3 Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or
> take their daughters for your sons,
> 4 for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods,
> and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.
> 5 This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their
> sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the
> fire.[37]
> 6 For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God
> has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his
> people, his treasured possession.

Verses four and six are especially significant for understanding this text. God had already revealed that he is holy (Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15) and that his people are to be holy, which, as we saw earlier, means uncommon and set apart to serve him. His people, the church, established in the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17, is the main means through which God is working to redeem his creation.[38] Why did he tell his people Israel

[37] This passage is also a good example of how out of step contemporary American political correctness is contrasted with God's Word. All ideas, and especially all religions, are not equal in God's sight, and he is holding people accountable for selecting the right one. See John 14:6.

[38] As one of the major themes in Scripture, the word covenant is seen throughout the Bible. The beginning and purpose of the covenant are seen in Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 17:1-9. As discussed above, the unity and continuity between the Old Covenant/Testament and the New Covenant/Testament is seen in the Greek word used for new, *kainos*, meaning new in nature or quality. The unity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church is seen very clearly in another way in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament Hebrew, which was the Bible that Jesus and the early church used, "the holy Scriptures" to which Paul refers in 2 Timothy 3:15. In the Septuagint the Greek word, *ekklēsia* (> *ek* [out of] + *kaleō* [to call], i.e., those called out), translated "church" in the New Testament, is used to translate the Hebrew

to destroy the nations that practiced such evil? Doing so was God's judgment on their evil, which by then had reached its limit. (Genesis 15:16) Deuteronomy 7:3-4 explains they were to do so in order to avoid being led astray by these other religions and to maintain their holiness in God's service so the present and future generations could be saved.[39] In the verses which immediately follow he declares again his love for his people. God wasn't going to sit back and watch his plan of redemption for his people and his creation be destroyed. He had us in mind way back then!

God knew that if his people did not wipe out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan and instead did have such relationships with them, his people would be led astray from their appointed task. Sure enough, they failed to follow God's command and eradicate the pagan nations, and they were led into the false religion of the nations in their practice of the fertility cults. The people in these cults had a very localized cosmology and theology with gods and goddesses in charge of specific areas and aspects of life. They told the Israelites, "Your God may have been good enough out in the desert with his superiority as a warrior, but in this agricultural land if you are to be successful and survive you have to appease the gods and goddesses who control the elements and the fertility of the soil, so here's what you have to do…," and they persuaded the Israelites to worship the gods and goddesses of the fertility cults in which child sacrifice, male and female prostitution, and other evils were practiced. In their deluded thinking led by demonic forces they believed that engaging in sexual practices during worship of the fertility gods and goddesses connected them with the primal forces in nature that would yield productivity and that in doing so they would earn the favor of the gods and goddesses who would grant them productive crops and other well-being. The Israelites did just as God had foretold, forgetting that he is in control of everything in the cosmos, including the elements and the fertility of the soil; he alone is able to guarantee success, through faith in and obedience to him. So they rejected God and turned to the false gods and goddesses for help and in so doing corrupted themselves and needed to be disciplined.[40]

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word, *qahal*, assembly or congregation, some 100 times throughout the Old Testament. Thus, the word, *ekklēsia*, is also used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, to refer to God's covenant people whom he has called and set apart to be holy to him. See, e.g., Deuteronomy 9:10; 18:16; Psalm 22:22; 26:12; 68:26; 149:1; Joel 2:16. For a direct New Testament connection between the New Testament church and Abraham's covenant, see Galatians 3:26-29; 1 Peter 2:9-12 together with Exodus 19:6.

[39] The Biblical principle of choosing a marriage partner who is a fellow believer in Christ has its roots in the Old Testament in passages such as this one, but the principle extends throughout the Bible and is grounded in the concept of separation, holiness. See, e.g., Exodus 34:16; Nehemiah 10:30; Malachi 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14. As a pastor I urge all who are considering marrying to be sure to wed a fellow believer in the Lord. In 50 years in the ministry I have seen the sad results, especially spiritually but otherwise as well, of where a Christian has been married to an unbeliever. See my checklist and commentary, "Guidelines for Selecting a Marriage Partner," on the Marriage page of my website at www.fromacorntooak12.com.

[40] Recent articles have questioned this long-held understanding of male and female prostitution in the fertility cults as portrayed in the Old Testament (OT) and in Akkadian and Ugaritic literature. Nevertheless, I am not persuaded by their argument; the previous understanding and other contemporary scholarship to the contrary is much more sound and carries much more weight. "Israel was at least influenced enough by the practices of the nations around her to corrupt herself. Official cultic prostitution was a reality. (E.g., 1 Kings 14:22-24) The contextual usage of these words in the OT gives some insight into their significance. It is clear from the texts available that the male or female prostitutes were tied

That discipline came in the form of direct and indirect judgments from God. Directly, he followed through on his promises often repeated much earlier as to what he would do if his people violated the stipulations of the covenant and worshiped the pagan gods and goddesses. (See, e.g., Deuteronomy 28:15-68; 1 Kings 9:1-9; 2 Kings 17; 2 Chronicles 7:17-22.) Indirectly, he allowed the natural course that occurs when disobedience to his will is done especially in those acts that result in related diseases, which is a built-in judgment that takes place, a judgment that would not have been experienced if the people had obeyed God's will and Word. (See, e.g., Job 36:14—"They die in their youth, among male prostitutes of the shrines." Note also Hosea 4:14 and Romans 1:27.)

Malachi 2:1-14

Notice two very significant points in this text that are very germane to the subject before us. The first addresses how seriously God looks upon the leadership behaviors of those he has called to shepherd his people. (Cf. James 3:1) We see this seriousness throughout Scripture but nowhere more graphic than in this text.

> 1 "And now this admonition is for you, O priests.
> 2 If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name," says the LORD Almighty, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me.
> 3 "Because of you I will rebuke your descendants; I will spread on your faces the offal from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it.
> 4 And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue," says the LORD Almighty.
> 5 "My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name.
> 6 True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.
> 7 "For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction--because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty.
> 8 But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi," says the

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closely to pagan concepts of fertility religion, which included imitative or sympathetic magic. Through intercourse with the devotees of the gods, the worshipers believed that they influenced the gods to grant them fertility and increase in their families, lands and crops…. Male and female prostitutes were only one feature of Canaanite fertility religion, but they were a central feature, one that violated the morality and ethics of the Covenant that the LORD had made with Israel at Sinai. The veneration of other Canaanite goddesses, such as Astarte and Anath, helped foster cultic prostitution. Male or female cult prostitutes were explicitly outlawed in Israel (with good cause) by the Sinai Covenant (Deuteronomy 23:17)." *Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary* – Pe-Resh. WORDSearch.

LORD Almighty.
9 "So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the
people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality
in matters of the law."
10 Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we
profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?
11 Judah has broken faith. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel
and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the LORD loves, by
marrying the daughter of a foreign god.
12 As for the man who does this, whoever he may be, may the LORD cut
him off from the tents of Jacob--even though he brings offerings to the
LORD Almighty. (Malachi 2:1-12)

We see here how strongly God feels about the disobedience of his leaders. Instead of following their ancestor and model, Levi, who offered true instruction and nothing false, walking with the LORD in peace and uprightness, and turning many from sin, the priests in Malachi's day turned from God's way and by their teaching caused many to stumble. These priests did not speak the truth, and they failed to honor and revere God and stand in awe of his name. The priests did not function as God called them to do: "For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty."

Therefore, how must God look upon his clergy today, who claim to speak as his messenger, but whose words contrast with, rather than conform to, God's Word on this subject throughout the Bible? God does not contradict himself. He will not command something in his Word and then tell his messengers to say the opposite. How confusing that would be to his people! And how confusing it is when clergy today try to change the teaching of God's Word on homosexuality.

People ask, why God condemns homosexuality. We've seen indicators of what it is about homosexuality that is *tôʿēbâ*, detestable, in God's sight. Here we see another that is linked with God's original creation plan.

13 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep
and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts
them with pleasure from your hands.
14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness
between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith
with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.
15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his.
And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself
in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.
16 "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's
covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the
LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.
17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. "How have we wearied

him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and he is pleased with them" or "Where is the God of justice?" (Malachi 2:13-17)

Notice the reference to God's creation of a husband and wife to be one in flesh and in spirit. "And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring." A relationship that is *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight is not associated with the production of godly children, and they'll be harmed in other ways, as we'll see in Chapter Two.

Mark 7:21

Jesus said, "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery…." The original Greek word Jesus used for "fornication" means all kinds of illicit sex. Since Jesus upheld the whole Old Testament (e.g., Matthew 5:17-18) that includes the Old Testament texts we've just examined that condemn homosexual relations.

Matthew 19:4-6

"Haven't you read," he [Jesus] replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

In this passage Jesus clearly reiterates that it is one man and one woman that constitute a valid marriage in God's sight. There is no room in this statement, or anywhere else in the Bible, for any such concept as same-sex "marriage." Further, Jesus states that it is God's will that the marriage God has instituted is not ended in divorce.

Before leaving this chapter, we should note verses 10-12.

> 10 The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry."
> 11 Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. 12 For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it." (Matthew 19:10-12)

Here Jesus introduces what is referred to as the gift of singleness, that ability from God that enables some people to function with no desire for sexual intimacy. This is why some people, males and females, do not have a desire to marry and who just want to serve the Lord as a single person. Jesus both verifies and briefly explains that desire. The Apostle Paul also validates and explains further in 1 Corinthians 7 how an unmarried believer can do more to serve the Lord in the church than can married believers.

We must be sensitive to and watchful for this gift and be ready to help those who have the gift of singleness but are confused about their lack of desire for marriage to understand and be comfortable with that circumstance. Christian education and pastoral care come together at such times.

A pastor in Asia asked me to meet with a young woman in his congregation who wanted to be baptized but was afraid she was a lesbian because she dearly loves a woman friend with whom she shares an apartment and is not at all attracted to men. I told the pastor that if she were committed to a homosexual relationship as a lesbian in disobedience to God's Word, I could not recommend she be baptized, but I said I would be glad to talk with her. I soon discovered in our conversation that while she had no desire to marry a man, neither was she involved in a sexual relationship with her female companion. In fact, the thought of sexual intimacy with her or anyone else was abhorrent to this young woman. It became clear that she had the gift of singleness, which understanding greatly relieved her. I was very glad to affirm her request to be baptized, and her pastor agreed.

Romans 1:18-32

This whole passage is essential for understanding the rationale of God's condemnation of homosexuality. As Hays has written, the passage is "[t]he most crucial text for Christian ethics concerning homosexuality,…because this is the only passage in the New Testament that explains the condemnation of homosexual behavior in an explicitly theological context."[41]

Paul declares (verse 20) that since disobedient people can clearly see God by inference from observing what he created, phenomena that could only be there by his powerful and divine hand, that reality renders them without excuse for rejecting God, failing to give thanks for all he has done, and turning instead to idols made in the image of fallen man and animals, thus their hearts became darkened. In their rebellion against God, although they claimed to be wise (where have you heard that recently?) they became fools.

> 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. (Romans
> 1:26-27)

The Apostle Paul makes an important theological distinction in this passage between what in theology is called general and special revelation, the latter being what God discloses to human beings only in his Word, the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the former being that revelation of God regarding certain qualities of himself and his work that everyone can observe, and is without excuse for failing to notice and take into account by appropriate action. We see the reference to special revelation in verse 32 in

[41] Hays, p. 383.

the words regarding "God's righteous decree" and that those who act contrary to it "deserve death."

In most of the passage, however, beginning in verse 18 Paul shows how general revelation is an adequate argument (which we also can use with people who don't accept God's special revelation) for God's disapproval of "the godlessness and wickedness of men," including homosexuality and lesbianism. The Greek word translated "men" is *anthrōpōn*, the generic word for mankind, thus including females and establishing the context for what will follow in verse 26. Here Paul gives us a model of how we can witness to people who disregard God's special revelation, and even God himself, by reasoning from the truths he has disclosed in his general revelation in nature, what has been called the natural law. When normal healthy people hear what homosexuals do, they react with revulsion; it is repugnant to them.[42] They readily sense such acts go against human nature. *But they have to know what these acts are in order to know and explain what homosexuality really involves*, since those acts are not revealed in the homosexual literature, and they certainly are not reported in the supportive media. That is why this volume provides this information.

In Romans 1:18-32 and specifically in vss. 26-27 we see two other items very relevant to the present discussion. The first of these is the reality that though God is extraordinarily patient, there is a limit to his patience. When he concludes he has given people long enough to repent, turn to him, and do rightly, and if they haven't done so, and, being all-knowing he is aware that they aren't going to do so, he "gives them over" to their "sinful desires [Greek *epithumiais*, covetous lust] of their hearts" (v. 24), "to a depraved mind" (v. 28). As Hays puts it, "Paul is offering a diagnosis of the disordered human condition: he adduces the fact of widespread homosexual behavior as evidence the human beings are indeed in rebellion against their Creator."[43] The consequence of this rebellion is to plunge themselves into depravity and confusion.[44] Thomas Schmidt would agree with this assessment of homosexuality, and he goes further observing that "Even on the basis of anatomical engineering, homosexual intercourse is seen to be a supreme insult to God and His power and wisdom, with unnecessary deleterious consequences."[45]

Indeed, the depravity and idolatry continue. Ironically, men and women turn away from God, whose loving hand as we've seen above has created the institution of marriage as he intended it to be, which is a wholesome, unmitigated, and unparalleled blessing for both

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[42] This revulsion applies even to the very limited knowledge of homosexuality promulgated in the press that includes only the most superficial concept of what homosexuality involves. Even a questionable study reveals that heterosexuals "don't want to see those [same-sex] couples display affection in public [PDA]." Kim Geiger, "Study: Straight people back legal rights for gay couples, reject PDA," *Chicago Tribune*, *Reporter-Herald*, November 21, 2014, 6A.
[43] Hays, pp. 387-388.
[44] Hays, p. 396.
[45] *Straight and Narrow? Compassion and Clarity In The Homosexuality Debate*, pp. 117-118, Thomas E. Schmidt quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/10/15)

sexes. Instead they've turned to idolatry that enslaves, degrades, and sooner or later destroys the people who worship false idols rather than the Creator.

It is important that everyone, especially the church, sees homosexual, and all other, defiance of God's commands in Scripture as rebellion. Franklin Graham took a strong stand in pointing out this rebellion to President Obama and all others who read his release.

> CHARLOTTE, NC, May 9, 2012—Franklin Graham, president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association issued the following statement in response to President Obama's statement in support of same-sex marriage.
>
> "On Tuesday my state of North Carolina became the 31st state to approve a constitutional amendment defining marriage as being between a man and a woman. While the move to pass amendments defining marriage is relatively new, the definition of marriage is 8,000 years old and was defined not by man, but by God Himself.
>
> In changing his position from that of Senator/candidate Obama, President Obama has, in my view, shaken his fist at the same God who created and defined marriage. It grieves me that our president would now affirm same-sex marriage, though I believe it grieves God even more.
>
> The institution of marriage should not be defined by presidents or polls, governors or the media. The definition was set long ago and changing legislation or policy will never change God's definition. This is a sad day for America. May God help us." Franklin[46]

When the leader of a nation makes such a statement contradicting the Bible, the basis of our nation's moral foundation, a grave undermining of that foundation has occurred. I hope and pray it can be restored. Here is a stark and striking example of an axiom in political science: elections have consequences. And sometimes those consequences are serious.

The second of these related realities in Romans 1:26-27 is that when God gives them over to the covetous lusts of their hearts, the result is that they suffer the consequences of their own decision to disobey God. That penalty is in themselves (in contemporary parlance "they bring it on themselves") and is a type of judgment. One of the penalties "in themselves" of such disobedience in sexual sins is contracting one or more of the many sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, through such immoral and evil behavior.

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[46] Franklin Graham, "Franklin Graham Response to the President's Support of Same-Sex Marriage," Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, BGEA Features, May 10, 2012. The author received this news release via e-mail.

Though they will not admit it, “the consequences of their own decision to disobey God” and practice homosexuality that results in the “penalty…in themselves” include not only physical harm, such as these illnesses, but also spiritual and emotional problems. Lenski unpacks this aspect of the meaning of 1:32.

> The full guilt of men is now emphasized by means of the qualitative οἵτινες, "such as," they who are such as are now described, men who realized (not only knew) the righteous ordinance of God, *die Rechtsordnung Gottes*. Paul at once states what this guilt is, "that those practicing such things are worthy of death." Yet they are such as not only keep doing them but also applaud those practicing them. The ungodly cannot plead ignorance as an excuse for all this vice and this viciousness. Ever and ever creation manifests God's existence to them, and they cannot escape the revelation of his wrath (v. 18-20). Not for one minute does Paul let us forget this fact.
>
> All the atheists in the world may ridicule the very idea of God, deny the existence of a human soul and its accountability to God, they are still, like all other men, absolutely subject to the fact of God's manifestation and his wrath's revelation. What men can do is only to reprobate God so as "not to have him in their realization" (v. 28). Hence there ensues all this abomination of immorality, which is both the cause (ἐν ἀδικίᾳ, v. 18) and the punitive consequence ("therefore," v. 24: "because of this," v. 26; "even as," v. 28; and the three "give them up did God") of their godlessness. But while they reprobate *him* from their realization (ἐπίγνωσις, v. 28) they are unable to get rid of realizing (ἐπιγνόντες, the identical word but now a participle) *the righteous ordinance* of God, that they who practice these things are worthy of death. If that is paradoxical, it is nevertheless the fact. One thing that must be remembered with regard to Paul is that he always deals with the facts (the ἀλήθεια, reality) and that he never theorizes, philosophizes, speculates. He has facts, so many, so tremendous, that he has no time for theorizing.
>
> God's δικαίωμα is his judicial righteous finding, call it verdict, ordinance (our versions), or law. Paul is not speaking of it as it is embodied in the Mosaic law but as it is ineradicably embedded in the human conscience. Let men do what they will, fight against it if they will, it clings to them, not merely in their γνῶσις [experiential knowledge] but in their ἐπίγνωσις [understanding] because they are moral creatures, because they are, therefore, accountable. And this is God's *dikaiōma*, the right as a general verdict or law established by *him* alone ("of God" here too is cause, author, source) that is impressed upon man's inner consciousness. Man's natural sense of justice is the reflex of this divine ordinance. By naming it as God's Paul goes back to the ultimate source, God himself. But by stating its substance he names not only what God has decreed as right but what man in his own nature also realizes as right: "that those practicing

such things are worthy of death," not fit to live and to continue in their vicious course among other men.

Men may deny that their sense of justice, the conviction that such are not fit to live, is the contents of God's own righteous ordinance and may try to explain this sense by means of evolutional, sociological hypotheses and regard it as the consensus of the human herd which developed so that the antisocial were abolished. That, however, is only reprobating God from the consciousness (v. 28) as Paul has already stated; this "right" remains in full force in the universe of men and, as Paul states, remains as God's ordinance.

Even pagans instinctively trace this right back to deity (a sample occurs in Acts 28:4: "whom vengeance suffereth not to live"). When wrath (v. 18) strikes down some of those that are not fit to live, the invisible higher hand is felt and perceived by them. The true religion has always aided this realization among men generally. All human moral laws, although they are often imperfect, have this background. Justice may miscarry, may not be able to reach the culprit, but it ever remains; and although human retaliation fails, the dread power of justice with its mysterious, inescapable power, like the sword of Damocles, remains.

The participle is concessive: "although having realized." Frightful as is the guilt [declared by God and emotionally sensed by sinners] of practicing such things, the ultimate of this frightfulness is that men are "such as not only keep on performing them but also keep on applauding those practicing them" in the face of their realization of the death-bringing character of what they thus do…doing what is death-worthy, applauding and encouraging others in doing the same. So did Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5; so do the criminal gangs in the face of prison and the chair or the noose; so evildoers in every line. Applauding others, they also applaud themselves. And yet, not only does God's eternal right stand, men's conviction regarding it likewise stands. Man himself justifies God's righteous wrath.[47]

The unshakable and unadmitted guilt is sensed in the depths of the soul. Attempts to break free from the guilt are multitudinous and endless, and they comprise progressive involvement in the same sin that produced the guilt in the vain hope to lose the pain in an increased emotional “high;” attempts to escape guilt as in substance abuse; and philosophical argumentation in the futile attempt to discredit, disavow, disregard, and destroy God’s law. But none of these attempts work; God’s will and his law remain. (Matthew 5:18) Aberrant sex as with substance abuse is also progressive due to their inability to satisfy. Aberrant sex, homosexual and heterosexual, requires more and more bizarre acts and/or with more people in order to titillate; what once provided a high no

[47] Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 123-126.

longer does, hence the progression toward more deviance, e.g., adding sadomasochistic (SM) acts. Normal behavior? Not at all, it's *tôʿēbâ*!

We see two main types of judgment in the Bible, the judgment God administers (e.g., the final judgment [Matthew 25:31-46]) and the judgment that he has built into the warp and woof of life, whereby people who do wrongly experience the consequences. We do need to keep in mind that this second type of judgment does not compensate for our sins, otherwise Jesus' sacrifice would be unnecessary at best and insufficient at worst, neither of which is true. The judgment of consequences is simply one of the first parts of God's addressing the evil in the world today; the rest will come later and be completed in the final judgment and the righting of all wrongs prior to the emergence of the new heaven and the new earth. (2 Peter 3; Revelation 21-22)

Led by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul wrote in the first chapter of Romans that the wickedness of human beings has led to their thinking becoming futile and their foolish hearts darkened. (Romans 1:18, 21) And, as Hays points out, this passage is the only one in God's Word that refers specifically to lesbian sexual relations.[48] But all it takes is one.

1 Corinthians 6:9-20

> [9] Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders [10] nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

We need to observe in this passage that many sexual and other sins in addition to homosexuality are presented as equally evil, enough so to keep those who habitually do them (thus showing the nature of their heart) out of the kingdom of God. We here focus on homosexuality, the subject of this book, but we need to keep in mind that, as Paul also teaches in Romans 3:23, we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and are therefore unable to cast stones. Nevertheless, while we can't look down our noses at other sinners, neither can we affirm, much less do, homosexual sins or heterosexual sins, for the sake of the body of Christ and the holiness which is essential to the church's calling to be effective as the agents through whom God is working out his plan for redeeming his creation.

Some Biblical scholars and Christian theologians, who hold and submit to the authority of Scripture, point out that the other evils Paul identifies here and in his other "sin catalogues," including heterosexual sins, are as evil as homosexual sins. They observe that Paul groups them all together in this passage. In fact, the Greek gives emphasis to, by placing first in the text, the "sexually immoral [*pornoi*]," which includes heterosexual as well as homosexual sinners.

[48] Hays, p. 384.

Kevin DeYoung, at that time senior pastor of University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan, in an article for The Gospel Coalition, a fellowship of outstanding "evangelical churches deeply committed to renewing our faith in the gospel of Christ and to reforming our ministry practices to conform fully to the Scriptures,"[49] wrote that

> Sexual sin is never considered *adiaphora*, a matter of indifference, an agree-to-disagree issue like food laws or holy days (Rom. 14:1-15:7). To the contrary, sexual immorality is precisely the sort of sin that characterizes those who will not enter the kingdom of heaven. There are at least eight vice lists in the New Testament (Mark 7:21-22; Rom. 1:24-31; 13:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-9; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Rev. 21:8), and sexual immorality is included in *every* one of these. In fact, in seven of the eight lists there are multiple references to sexual immorality (e.g., impurity, sensuality, orgies, men who practice homosexuality), and in most of the passages some kind of sexual immorality heads the lists. You would be hard-pressed to find a sin more frequently, more uniformly, and more seriously condemned in the New Testament than sexual sin.[50]

It must be acknowledged and acted upon that both heterosexual and homosexual sins are evil in God's sight. A question has been raised as to the extent of these evils.

Some scholars and theologians even go so far as to say that heterosexual sins have made a much worse impact on our culture, I would add so far that is, than homosexuality due to the significantly larger number of heterosexual persons, their sins, and the ripple effect of those sins (homosexuals accounting for only three percent or less of the population[51]) that have constructed a slippery slope mentality and a malaise that has dulled the senses of our society as to what is occurring—a reprise of the frog in the kettle syndrome. They make a very important point: heterosexual sinning deploys a devastating and destructive series of effects on our society. The only dispute is with the word "worse."

Nevertheless, another group of scholars has sounded an alarm to raise awareness that the ripple effect of homosexuality, despite the much smaller number of those who practice it, presents an even greater threat to the society, as has been seen in other cultures historically. We'll hear from them shortly.

Those who urge us to necessarily and concomitantly keep in mind the seriousness of heterosexual sins, while discussing the seriousness of homosexuality, make a strong argument that not only must be acknowledged but addressed much more widely than has been done heretofore. For example, adultery usually leads to divorce, which has led to public policy disasters such as no fault divorce and the destruction of vast numbers of

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[49] http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/about/council (Accessed 3/14/15)
[50] Kevin DeYoung, "Why Can't the Church Just Agree to Disagree on Homosexuality?" March 13, 2015, http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2015/03/13/why-cant-the-church-just-agree-to-disagree-on-homosexuality/ (Accessed 3/14/15)
[51] This and related demographic data will be discussed in Chapter Two.

marriages that has extensive and very negative effects on the family and on the whole society which is based on the family.[52]

Yet to elucidate this framework is neither to minimize the seriousness of homosexuality nor to mitigate the church's response to it, for as we now see, more serious setbacks in our society are upon us. Other scholars, taking into account societal changes in the United States and other Western countries, see significantly more danger in homosexuality now that its historic stigma has become popularized and promoted in the Western media and due to unwise judicial decisions overturning state laws banning "same-sex marriage." The alliance of Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars in their 2015 declaration emphasized that

> [a]s the most venerable and reliable basis for domestic happiness, marriage is the foundation of a just and stable society. Yet in our times this institution has been gravely weakened by the sexual revolution and the damage it has done to marriage and the family: widespread divorce; the dramatic increase in out-of-wedlock births; the casual acceptance of premarital sex and cohabitation; and a contraceptive mentality which insists that sex has an arbitrary relation to procreation. In this environment, families fragment, the poor suffer, and children are especially vulnerable and at risk. The decline of marriage culture is evident throughout the world, and where it is evident, the common good is imperiled.
>
> If we are to remain faithful to the Scriptures and to the unanimous testimony of Christian tradition, there can be no compromise on marriage. We cannot allow our witness to be obscured by the confusions into which our culture and society have fallen.[53]

We cannot succumb to the temptation of parsimony and allow too simplistic an answer to the question of which is worse, heterosexual or homosexual sins. I urge us to acknowledge and act on the reality that both are evil in God's sight and both if done regularly and without repentance keep people from the Kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

The first annual national conference of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in October 2014 focused on the subject, "The Gospel, Homosexuality, and the Future of Marriage." In his review and analysis of the conference, Andrew T. Walker, Director of Policy Studies for the ERLC, made the very

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[52] One such scholar, Christopher Wolfe, has insightfully analyzed this phenomenon and makes these points in an interview with Ken Myers of the *Mars Hill Audio Journal* No. 49, April 2001. Wolfe has edited and published *Same-Sex Matters: The Challenge of Homosexuality* and the anthology, *Homosexuality and American Public Life*.

[53] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

important observation that "Simply being against same-sex marriage is an insufficient apologetic for rebuilding marriage as a cultural fixture. When deviations from marriage—such as cohabitation, divorce, and promiscuity—become routine, same-sex marriage can seem intelligible and acceptable."[54] This point must be acknowledged and addressed in every pulpit and lectern in every church throughout the world. One resource for doing so is the sermon in Appendix D, which is based on the text before us.

When we study carefully these Biblical passages, and what constitutes homosexual practice, it is hard to understate the evil in homosexual as well as heterosexual sins, and we easily see why such sinful practice is *tô ʿēbâ* in God's sight. The church must not only understand what is involved in this practice, but avoid it, proclaim God's Word (his special revelation), and point out as needed the natural law (part of his general revelation) on this subject.

We saw in the Romans 1:18-32 passage that Paul portrays the homosexuals in rebellion against God, which is *tô ʿēbâ*. In this passage in 1 Corinthians 6:9 the apostle uses the word "idolaters" (*eidololatrai*) in the context of two types of homosexuals and in the same sin catalogue as the other evils mentioned, indicating that those who engage in such behavior have set themselves up in opposition to God and are thereby committing idolatry.

To aid further understanding in that regard, two more words need clarification in verses 9-11. The term "male prostitutes" (Greek, *malakoi*) in verse nine refers to those who are often young boys,[55] who are effeminate, and who allow themselves to be used passively as partners in homosexual activity. The word right next to it, "homosexual offenders" (Greek, *arsenokoitai*) means a male homosexual. It comes from two Greek words, *arsēn* (male) and *koitē* (bed). Hays points to research that shows *arsenokoitai* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew term, *mishkav zakur* ("lying with a male"), thus derived directly from and showing that Paul had in mind Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and that the term was used in the Rabbinic literature to refer to homosexual intercourse.[56]

Here we have clear and unmistakable language in God's Word that "homosexual offenders" will not inherit the kingdom of God without changing their behavior. And to further reinforce the point, in case anyone has missed it, Paul repeats it in the next verse (10). We must teach this truth in our church congregations today! Otherwise, how can we effectively teach God's Word to the countless people who need to hear it both in the church and in the world God is calling us to reach out to for him?

> 13 The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the
> Lord for the body. 14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead,

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[54] Andrew T. Walker, "Evangelicals and the LGBT Community: What Does the Future Hold?" The Witherspoon Institute, Public Discourse, November 13, 2014, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/11/14081/?utm_source=The+Witherspoon+Institute&utm_campaign=b47c382ecd-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15ce6af37b-b47c382ecd-84093705 (Accessed 3/14/15)

[55] Hays, p. 382.

[56] Hays, p. 382.

> and he will raise us also. [15] Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! [16] Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." [17] But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.
>
> [18] Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. [19] 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; [20] you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 13b-20)

This passage urges God's people to glorify him in our bodies, for we belong to him. This message was very important to make with those in the Greek culture, the worldview of which conceptualized everything as lying along a continuum with low-valued material entities on the bottom and the highly valued spiritual entities at the top; all else was positioned between the two ends according to how much of any given entity was material and how much of it constituted any spiritual dimension. Thus in the Greek mentality the body was of little value and could be used and abused at will.

Therefore, it was essential the Corinthians were taught that in God's sight the body is of great worth, the affirmation of which is seen in the Lord entering and doing his mighty work in human flesh as well as his body being resurrected, the first fruits of our own bodies being resurrected. Moreover, as we belong to God and he is indwelling us in his Holy Spirit, Paul explains in our text that "all other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (v. 18), which being a temple of the Spirit makes this an especially serious matter. One of the many ways one sins against his or her own body is through subjecting it to one or more of the STDs that are epidemic in our society and throughout the world, as we discussed above. But far worse is when a believer unites his or her body, which is also united with the most holy Christ (v. 15), in the profound psychophysical sexual bond in an extremely unholy alliance in a grievously serious sin.

To use our body in ways contrary to God's will is also to hinder our relationship with the Lord. (Leviticus 18, 19:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:13b-20; cf. Isaiah 59:2; John 15:1 Peter 3:7) In 1 Corinthians 6:13 ff. Paul gives us information about the human body that is crucial to the issue before us and necessary to know for our own sexuality and in order to help others avoid peril. He says, "The body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." The word he uses for body is *soma*, from which we obtain our word somatic. This Greek word for body refers to the whole personality in relationship with God. The Bible portrays a person as being a holistic entity so that his or her body and spirit are one. A person's *soma* is not simply an external part of him or herself; he or she doesn't just have a body but is a body that is animated with his or her spirit, the life principle which controls the body. The words soul and spirit are used

interchangeably in the Bible. The holistic body is the essence of the human being's personality, not just an accidental or inferior appendage to be mistreated. The body has been designed to be related to Christ, including being the dwelling place of his Spirit, i.e., the Holy Spirit. This is **not** to say that Christ and the Spirit are the same, the whole being of God belongs to and is shared by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

But it is the Holy Spirit who comes to dwell with one who believes in Christ. This reality is what Paul is referring to when he says, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?" and "he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit."

Further, Paul asks in verse 19, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God." Here notice two very important realities.

First, the word "body" is singular and refers to you personally, not plural meaning the whole church is a temple of the Holy Spirit, as it means in the plural in chapter 3:16 when he said, "You [plural] are God's temple." (NRSV) That is, the Holy Spirit dwells with you in your soma, your body, your person as a whole. Thus, your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Second, when Paul says your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, he uses the special Greek word, *naos,* which refers to the holiest part of the temple, the sanctuary where God meets with his people. Paul did not use the word, *hieron*, which referred to the whole temple complex with its buildings and courts. Are you seeing how God views your body as very holy and how he wills that you view and use your body in his service?

Now, this body of yours, Paul continues, is highly esteemed by the Lord, who took on a body for himself thus bringing great honor and dignity to the human body. You're known to a significant extent by those with whom you associate. This fact should be especially so for us who walk with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, Jesus' body was resurrected, as a first fruit of our own body's resurrection. Therefore, we ought not deprecate and mistreat our body; it should not be abused. Nor should it ever be united with evil!

The apostle quotes from the Old Testament, the creation account in Genesis 2, and explains that in the marital sexual union a man and a woman by God's design become one flesh. This unique bonding in marriage is a psychophysical and spiritual gluing of the two people together. The shredding of this bond is the basis of the enormous pain in divorce as the two who have become one are torn and ripped apart. ***But how beautiful this oneness is when done according to God's plan!***

We are thus to honor God with our body (v. 20). The actual word translated "honor" in the NIV is literally "glorify." One of the leading Bible scholars of our time, and one I especially appreciate, Leon Morris, writes, "The prime motive in the service of the Christian must be not the accomplishing of purposes which seem to him to be desirable,

but the glory of God…[and the tense of the Greek here clearly indicates that] Paul does not want the command to glorify God to be taken as something that does not matter. There is an urgency about it. Let there be no delay in obeying." We glorify God when we obey his commands. (Cf. John 15:8) In so doing we testify strongly to the world regarding the One to whom we belong.

We honor God by teaching and modeling for our children that reserving sex for marriage, and in so doing obeying God's will, witnesses to our creation as bearers of his image (demonstrating our significant difference from and superiority to animals with their sex drives, most of which do it with any female available.) Now contemplate in the light of what we've just been considering what occurs when one engages in fornication, adultery, prostitution, and homosexuality. If the person is a believer, he takes a temple in which the Holy Spirit resides and unites it with someone else in an unholy alliance that offends the very God of the universe! It never ceases to amaze me to hear so many people shout that something offends them, *but I don't hear concern that God is offended by sin*.

Paul writes (v. 15) "Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute?" Paul immediately answers his rhetorical question with a thunderous response: *me genoito*! "Never!" in our NIV translation, but it is a powerful exclamation in the Greek which the English words, "may it not be," only remotely convey. "Do you not know," Paul continues, "that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh. But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit," a reference to our mystical union with Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the bodies of believers.

God is not only holy, he is holy, holy, holy, the three-fold repetition being the way the Hebrew language expresses the superlative, i.e., Most Holy. (Isaiah 6:3) It is not his will to allow evil in his presence. The church (which didn't begin at Pentecost but began with the covenant God made with Abraham [Genesis 17])[57] is the primary means through which God is redeeming his creation. This is why God calls us to be holy, which means set apart, uncommon, righteous and morally pure, why he gave his people the Holiness Code in Leviticus, and why the call for the church to be holy remains to this day and will always be so.[58]

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[57] The unity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church is seen very clearly in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, which was the Bible that Jesus and the early church used, "the holy Scriptures" to which Paul refers in 2 Timothy 3:15. In the Septuagint the Greek word, *ekklēsia*, translated "church" in the New Testament, is used to translate the Hebrew word, *qahal*, assembly or congregation, some 100 times throughout the Old Testament. Thus, the word, *ekklēsia*, church, refers to God's covenant people whom he has called and set apart to be holy to him. See, e.g., Deuteronomy 9:10; 18:16; Psalm 22:22; 26:12; 68:26; 149:1; Joel 2:16.

[58] See Hays, p. 391. "The biblical strictures against homosexual behavior are concerned not just for the private morality of individuals but for the health, wholeness, and purity of the elect *community*. This perspective is certainly evident in the holiness code of Leviticus. Almost immediately following the prohibition of homosexual conduct (Lev. 18:22), we find the following general warning, which refers to all the foregoing rules about sexual practices (Lev. 18:6-23): *Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for by all these practices the nations I am casting out before you have defiled themselves. Thus the land became defiled; and I punished it for its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you shall keep my statutes and my ordinances and commit none of these abominations, either the citizen or the alien*

We can now see what is especially significant about sexual sins. They also thwart our calling. (1 Corinthians 6:11 ff., 20 b) Our calling also involves our identity. In verse 11, Paul tells the church at Corinth that some of them used to practice these serious sinful behaviors, and "…that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." Now you belong to God and have a new identity and righteousness; act it out, demonstrate it, and function effectively as agents of God's redemptive purposes, according to your calling. In verses 19 and 20 Paul also says, "You are not your own; you were bought at a price," a very steep price: the excruciating suffering of the only-begotten Son of God! We have been saved for his service. This is our calling, the Latin word for which is *vocare*, the basis of our word vocation. In the Bible and in historic Christian theology our vocation is to be Christ's witnesses, to speak of him and his plan of salvation, including what he has done for us, to live accordingly, and to extend and nurture God's kingdom.

As we've seen above and will see more below, this identity includes our holiness, being set apart for God to be holy to him who is Most Holy in order for him to accomplish his redemptive purposes in and through us. Those practicing homosexuals who claim to be Christians, and pastors and other church leaders who are accommodating them, ignore or try to twist the meaning of this core teaching in God's Word. Some who are struggling with their homosexuality, more accurately in their case referred to as unwanted same-sex attraction (SSA), and trying to be or become Christians, recognize the conflict, repent of that attraction, and reject the false message of homosexuals and pro-homosexual church leaders.

Hays writes about a close friend named Gary who came to visit him at the end of his young life when he realized he only had days to live.

> We prayed together often that week, and we talked theology. It became clear that Gary had come not only to say goodbye but also to think hard, before God, about the relation between his homosexuality and his Christian faith. He was angry at the self-affirming gay Christian groups, because he regarded his own condition as more complex and tragic than their apologetic stance could acknowledge. He also worried that the gay apologists encouraged homosexual believers to "draw their identity from their sexuality" and thus to shift the ground of their identity subtly and idolatrously away from God. For more than twenty years, Gary had grappled with his homosexuality, experiencing it as a compulsion and an affliction. Now, as he faced death, he wanted to talk it all through again from the beginning, because he knew my love for him and trusted me to speak without dissembling. For Gary, there was no time to dance around the hard questions….Gary believed that [the writings of the homosexual apologists] did justice neither to the biblical texts nor to his own sobering

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who resides among you. (Lev. 18:24-26) Israel as a holy nation [the church (cf. Galatians 3:29; 1 Peter 1:13-2:12)] is called upon, for the sake of the whole people's welfare, to keep God's commandments."

> experience of the gay community that he had moved in and out of for twenty years.[59]

Not many days later Gary died. He was 42.

Gary is not the only homosexual to express anger toward church leaders who mislead people who are trying to understand their and others' strong desires for sex with those of their gender. They realize, intuitively or through study of the Scriptures and accurate theology they have read and heard, that the sad attempts of especially clergy who are misinterpreting and twisting the above and other Biblical passages turn people away from God and hinder as well as harm those who are trying to leave this very unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy lifestyle. We'll meet another, a lesbian who shares Gary's anger, later in this volume.

"Flee from sexual immorality," Paul writes to the Corinthians and to us. (6:18) The verb, *pheugete*, is in the present imperative Greek tense which means to do so continuously and repeatedly: run, run, and keep on running!

1 Timothy 1:5-11

One more text should be considered. The Apostle Paul also wrote to Timothy, whom he placed in charge of the church in Ephesus, "As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer." (1:3) Then he added,

> 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a
> good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Some have wandered away from
> these and turned to meaningless talk. 7 They want to be teachers of the
> law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so
> confidently affirm.
>
> 8 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. 9 We also know
> that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the
> ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their
> fathers or mothers, for murderers, 10 for adulterers and perverts, for slave
> traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the
> sound doctrine 11 that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God,
> which he entrusted to me.

Notice Paul's first concern. In the light of verses three and seven, Paul instructs Timothy to teach the church leaders who will influence many others, those who "want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm." It is clear that Paul instructs Timothy to teach the church leaders, as well as the church members and others, that homosexuality is contrary to God's will and should not, indeed cannot,

[59] Hays, pp. 379-380.

characterize God's people whom he has called to be holy to him. The church leaders must no longer teach false doctrines, including these Paul specifically mentions. How greatly present day pastors, other church leaders, the members of the church, and our society need to hear these words and obey them!

When Paul says that "law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful…," he is making the point that those in Christ are righteous and are following the law in gratitude for what God has done for them. Thus we who are in Christ are reminded and guided by the law as to how we should live, and we gladly do so.

Paul points out that the law's primary purpose is to inform the lawbreakers and these others that they are doing wrongly in God's sight and need to make changes in their lives. One of these groups he refers to is perverts (Greek *arsenokoitais*, male homosexuals), as we observed above in our reflections on 1 Corinthians 6:9. You can review what was said about the meaning of this term in the discussion above pertaining to that passage.

Why don't these passages mention sexual orientation?

Before we continue further a word about sexual orientation is in order. We have not seen anything in these Scripture passages concerning sexual orientation. Some people on both sides of the issue of homosexuality point out that the Bible doesn't mention the word "orientation." That's because God has made it clear in his Word that he is holding humans accountable to the standard he has set for us. God's Word speaks of the behavior he expects and requires of us.

We began our answer to the question before us, what is God's will concerning homosexuality, with an examination of what his Word says about his creation, i.e., about how it pleased him for his creation, including us, to function, or his will for human living. In creation he made us male and female. Our natural orientation is to either of those two genders and the natural proclivity he has given us to function according to the gender in which we have been created.

After Adam and Eve's fall, he instituted his plan for redemption, including giving us his law, a blessing—an indication of his will for how we should live in order to have the best life possible in a now fallen world, for how his people are to serve him most effectively, and how he will hold us accountable to him to whom we must answer as to how we have lived according to his will.

He has not "dumbed-down" his plan to accommodate the lowest common denominator, as humans do in this age of egalitarianism. He does not grade on the curve. He evaluates us according to the criterion, the standard he has set and to which he requires humans to adhere. While we do not accomplish the whole law sufficiently ourselves, due to our sin, thanks be to God's love he credits to those who believe the righteousness of Christ Jesus,

the only one who has perfectly obeyed the whole law. Yet the law remains as the criterion for all. (Matthew 5:17-18)

Homosexuality is not part of God's creation plan, nor is it now acceptable to him, as we see in his Word. It is part of the confusion and nonsense due to the corruption of human nature caused by the disobedience of human sin. God has not downgraded his plan of creation to accommodate human rebellion, sin, and corruption. He has made no provision for accepting a third, fourth, or fifth type of sexual orientation not in accord with his creation.

He requires us to rise to the standard he has set, which he has provided for us, and which he enables us to have, rather than abandon his perfect plan and consign the crown of his creation to a lesser life composed of pain, sadness, and external separation from God who is Host Holy and who will not permit that which is evil to coexist in his presence and forever harm those whom he loves. So in his plan of redemption our choice is to accept his plan and live according to his will or reject his plan and die spiritually in a sad existence separated from him.

Thus, orientation is a moot question; the bottom line of Biblical morality is the behavior God requires of all of us, including those of us who are heterosexual. We, too, have powerful urges that God has told us how to manage. All of us humans will be held accountable as to how we behave in this life, regardless of our orientation. God has given us the standard to which we are to adhere. The fact that God commands us to behave in certain ways logically implies that we can do so. A basic part of our call to be holy to God and partner with him in the accomplishment of his redemptive purposes is to proclaim and explain that standard, especially since it is ignored by those trying to justify homosexuality in all its forms that to God remain *tôʿēbâ*.

Pastor Tom Eckstein says it well when he states

> …though it can be shown that the apostle Paul and other biblical authors were aware of theories about inborn homosexual desires, even if they had known about modern scientific arguments suggesting a genetic cause for homosexual orientation this would NOT have influenced their teaching that homosexual behavior is sinful. *They condemned all forms of homosexual behavior regardless of the motivation or cause for such behavior!*[60] [Emphasis his]

God's will is most important for a Christian. We cannot allow the issue of homosexuality, especially in the church, to be cast in the framework of human urges and passions, or culture, being the standard. Our calling is to march to a different drummer than the world follows. If we seek to do his will, he will help us do it. Recall Hebrews 2:18, where we read about Jesus, "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."

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[60] Tom Eckstein, *Bearing Their Burden (Galatians 6:1-2): Speaking the Truth in Love to People Burdened by Homosexuality* (Lulu.com Publishing, 2010) p. 185.

Also part of the message we are to help people understand is that God is reconciling the world to himself. We do not, and cannot, reconcile him to our standard. It doesn't work that way; we don't get to make the rules. We must remember who owns the cosmos and who thereby is the only One with the right to say how it will work. This is logical and makes perfect sense, especially when we keep the broad perspective and see not only what is going on all around us and what has been occurring throughout history. When in God's extraordinary patience he allows mankind to depart from his will what do we see? The anguish we see is further explained by careful empirical as well as anecdotal observation, which we'll examine shortly. We'll also see how it is possible to have hope and to manage and even overcome unwanted same-sex attraction, including in the words and witness of those who have done so…and there are thousands upon thousands all over the world!

The historic interpretation of the Bible on homosexuality is clear and sound.

The basic, primary, and most important source for finding the answers to our question of what is God's will concerning homosexuality, which is why it is the first chapter in this book, is God's Word, the Bible, our standard of authority. At this point it is necessary to address the matter that pro-homosexual writers and speakers do not look at the above passages the same way as presented in this volume and as interpreted throughout church history. We must be able to explain why these writers and speakers are wrong.

I am very much aware of the movement by some pro-homosexual people, including some pastors and other church leaders, to reinterpret the above and related Biblical texts, thus engaging in a practice called *revisionism*. I have not only read but have studied much of their literature which attempts to reexplain the passages in the Bible as not condemning homosexuality. However, such attempts do not ultimately succeed, because they violate long established rules of both general and Biblical hermeneutics, including a correct understanding and use of the Biblical languages, which rules are required even, and especially, in a postmodern age lest communication fails.

We must teach and hold to the Bible as our ultimate authority and criterion. Employ historically established hermeneutics that view the Bible as the infallible, inerrant, and unalterable Word of God and emphasize exegesis (drawing out of the text its meaning), not contemporary revisionist hermeneutics that view the Bible as a "living document" that employ and even emphasize eisegesis (reading into the text one's own ideas). This latter, grievously flawed, hermeneutic involves what is called "Scripture twisting," in order to, as they say, "bring the Bible into 'relevance with today's world,'" with such unwarranted philosophical capitulation that replaces Biblical correctness with political correctness, contrary to the Holy Spirit's infallible inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16) that guided the Apostle Paul to command, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world…." (Romans 12:2a) The textual evidence in the original Greek manuscripts of Romans 12:2a favors the reading, ˊσυσχηματίζεσθε (*suschēmatizesthe*),[61] second person plural, present tense, imperative mood, and a middle or passive voice (the context

[61] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, WORDsearch 10, p. 749.

indicating to this interpreter the passive); thus, in the present imperative we are commanded to always (durative, continuously, not "one and done") resist the world acting on and manipulating us. We are to shun and carefully separate ourselves from the world, especially its values, this separation being an essential aspect of the holiness to which we are called. (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 2:9) The Bible is always relevant. The problem people have is not wanting to obey God's Word.

God takes this matter very seriously. To more clearly understand God's will pertaining to this subject, read the context of the 1 Thessalonians 4:7 passage.

> It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; [4] that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, [5] not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; [6] and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. [7] For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. [8] Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)

Hermeneutics, again, refers to the methodological precepts of interpreting literature. The teaching of the Bible that addresses homosexuality in each of the passages is plain and easily understandable. (Romans 1:19) The homosexuals' argumentation reveals a contorted and confused casuistry and often sophistry that fails to persuade those genuinely seeking the truth, particularly those unconstrained by personal relationships, agendas, or other biases.[62]

An important caveat must be considered. Like fire, water, computers, and many other aspects of life, hermeneutical principles are misused and abused. Sadly pro-homosexual polemicists work overtime doing so, and it is necessary to keep in mind the implications of what they are doing. It has been well expressed this way:

> Hermeneutics employed by those seeking to negate the Levitical injunctions, if applied consistently, would effectively disallow a coherent

[62] The Bible texts and their interpretations and the other explanations offered herein are sufficient in themselves and by extension to adequately refute the attempts of pro-homosexual advocates to revise or otherwise undermine the clear teaching of God's Word about his will concerning homosexuality. The pro-homosexual activists are stretching to advance their cause with a seemingly unending stream of often far-fetched and bazaar attempts to advance their agenda, and this book does not have space for these specious claims which are not worth considering, some of which are even refuted by their own ilk, as referenced on these pages. However, if you have a need to address these off-base arguments and would like additional help, I'm glad to say that fine resources exist for you. For more detailed information for your interest or to counter specific pro-homosexual arguments, see the excellent and exhaustive website of *Conservapedia: The Trustworthy Encyclopedia*, a well-researched and well-documented website, containing a treasure trove of valuable resources on the subject of homosexuality, that is consistent with the Bible and historic Christian hermeneutics and exegesis. It can be accessed online at http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality. (Accessed 1/11/2015)

> sexual ethic in the Bible, yet the laws on sexual partners are presented as universal commands and reiterated as a class in a way that presumes they can be understood and obeyed by all, without being open to a vast degree of interpretation which effectively allows them to be negated.[63]

It should not surprise us that part of the practice of revisionism, which homosexuals and their sympathizers do, as well as many others who do not like what the Bible teaches, involves employing a pseudohermenutical method known as Scripture twisting. In fact this game has been played for thousands of years. The Apostle Peter draws to his readers' and our attention that "ignorant and unstable people" were distorting the writings of the Apostle Paul, "as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16) And it continues today, as it will until the Lord returns, so we must be on guard and discerning when we read.[64]

The homosexual literature not only tries to reinterpret and misapply Scripture texts. They refer to Greek words in the Biblical texts to try to gain credibility for their arguments and in so doing mistranslate them and/or claim that Biblical scholars don't know the meaning of certain words that have been translated as referring to homosexuals. One attempt asserts that "[t]he word 'homosexuals' is not justified by the Greek text [in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:5-11], which reads 'malakoi' and 'arsenokoitai.' Scholars do not know what these words mean (they have something to do with prostitution) so some translations have arbitrarily inserted the word 'homosexual.'"[65] Such an assertion is not true and is one reason why I included those and other relevant Greek terms in the examination of the Bible texts above (including the ones referenced in this paragraph).

Discern and address logical flaws.

Such assertions and the pro-homosexual argument that Bible authors and editors were ignorant of homosexuality, and also homophobic, fail on a number of accounts in addition to the above and following observations. They commit several errors in logic. These and many other logical fallacies will be examined in Chapter Four, but it is important to mention these now as a response to the assertions just made pertaining to the Bible.

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[63] http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations. (Accessed 1/13/15)

[64] See also 1 John 4:1, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

[65] "What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?" Good Shepherd Parish, Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago. I have also studied much other homosexual literature that commits the same and other errors in the attempt to misinform, mislead, and justify homosexual behavior contrary to God's Word. The examples herein are sufficient to make the point. Other homosexual literature is readily available for those who need to examine it further. I prefer to do what I'm informed some banks do in teaching their tellers the difference between counterfeit and real currency. Since counterfeiters are constantly coming up with different versions of false money, rather than try to acquaint their employees with each fraudulent issue, they have their workers learn so carefully what the real money looks like that when they see the counterfeit they immediately recognize it as such. My purpose here is to provide the Biblical foundation and framework that will enable each person "to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

First, rarely if ever is the term homophobia and its derivatives defined. We must be careful, consciously discerning, when it comes to the words we use. Employing culturally loaded terms in our language, without discerning differences with the Bible, and without defining them, results in our sending messages contrary to what God has called us to communicate.

Using words, including accusing, without proper definition results in fallacious argumentation.[66] The medical definition of a phobia is "an exaggerated and often disabling fear usually inexplicable to the subject and having sometimes a logical but usually an illogical or symbolic object, class of objects, or situation."[67] The word homo, coming from the Greek word meaning same, is defined as "any of a genus (*Homo*) of hominids that includes modern humans (*H. sapiens*) and several extinct related species (as *H. erectus* and *H. habilis*)."[68] The two words put together as homophobia would communicate a fear of humans!

Second, these assertions of ignorance also commit the logical fallacy of the undocumented or unsupported premise; they offer no sound rationale or proof of such a lack of understanding, bias, or emotional disability, anxiety, or fear. Further, as is usually if not always the case, no medical examination of the person being accused of such a phobia, that is known to the accuser, is available and likely has not been done. Much more so is this lack of evidence true for those who wrote the Bible! Where are the data that Moses, Matthew, Mark, and Paul had a bad case of homophobia?!

Much more, since the Bible is God's Word, and since the Holy Spirit guided the Bible writers to inscribe what He willed them to write and preserved them from error in the process, their sin, no matter what it was, did not contaminate the divine Word. (1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16) Then, do the pro-homosexual advocates want to accuse God of homophobia? That won't work either; God, who is sovereign and omnipotent isn't afraid of anything. (Job 42:2; Isaiah 46:10; Luke 1:37; Matthew 19:26; 1 John 5:14-15) Everything is fully under his authority and control, and he has placed it all in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ; everything is "under his feet." (Matthew 28:18; 1 Corinthians 15:27; Ephesians 1:15-23; Hebrews 2:8)

Third, the attack of accusing the Bible writers and any today of homophobia also commits the logical error of *argumentum ad hominem*, which is an attack against the person, or in this chapter God's Word, rather than addressing his or her, or the Bible's, argument. We'll return to this subject with further explanation in Chapter 4.

In the meantime you have here enough information to hold up a verbal mirror and gently suggest to someone who accuses the Bible authors or you of being homophobic that at best he or she appears to thoughtful people as employing flawed reasoning and at worst

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[66] Irving M. Copi, *Introduction to Logic* (New York, The MacMillan Company, 1959), p. 85.
[67] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phobia (Accessed 2/5/2015)
[68] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/homo (Accessed 2/5/2015)

appears to be little different from the elementary school children who like to call people names. Kindly tell them, "You can do better." ☺

Many, if not most, of those with a pro-homosexual agenda also wrongly assume that the Bible is a solely human document. On the contrary the church throughout history holds that the Bible is the fully inspired Word of God in which the Holy Spirit guided the authors to write according to God's will and kept them from error as they wrote.

Pastor Joseph P. Gudel, after studying the various forms of pro-homosexual revisionism, draws a similar conclusion. He observes,

> It is extremely revealing to note that almost every pro-gay group within the church shares one thing in common: they reject the Bible as being fully the Word of God...Likewise, the many pro-homosexual books that have come out almost all reject - or even ridicule - the church's historic stance on the inspiration and authority of Scripture.[69]

Likewise, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President, Dr. Albert Mohler, describes pro-homosexual polemics as contending that "either the biblical texts do not proscribe homosexuality...or the texts do proscribe homosexuality, but are oppressive, heterosexist, and patriarchal in themselves, and thus must be rejected or radically re-interpreted in order to remove the scandal of oppression." Further, he states that "The passages are not merely re-interpreted in light of clear historical-grammatical exegesis - - they are subverted and denied by implication and direct assault."[70]

Discredit the cultural distance argument.

A well-informed, careful, and insightful pastor and scholar, who I've known for many years, Kevin DeYoung, observes that while the Bible "has nothing good to say about homosexual practice" that reality is "not all that controversial." He writes

> Even the gay Dutch scholar Pim Pronk has concluded that "wherever homosexual intercourse is mentioned in Scripture, it is condemned. With reference to it the New Testament adds no new arguments to those of the Old. Rejection is a foregone conclusion; the assessment of it nowhere constitutes a problem."[1] There is simply no positive case to be made from the Bible for homoerotic behavior.
>
> Revisionist arguments in favor of same-sex unions do not rest on gay affirming exegetical conclusions as much as they try to show that

[69] Joseph P. Gudel, "Homosexuality in Society, the Church, and Scripture, The Authority of Scripture," *Christian Research Institute Journal*, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/11/15)

[70] Fact Sheet on Homosexuality, http://www.lifeway.com quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/11/15)

> traditional interpretations of Scripture are unwarranted. That is to say, the only way revisionist arguments make sense is if they can show that there is an impassable distance between the world of the Bible and our world.[71]

DeYoung maintains that the primary pro-homosexual argument today, that is being used by those claiming to be Christians with a value on the Bible as having authority, is that the homosexuality against which the Bible is speaking is not the same homosexuality that exists today. He explains that the pro-homosexual cultural distance argument asserts that in the world during Bible times the issue was not gender but gender roles, e.g., whether men were acting like women; whether men were having sex with boys; and whether power and oppression were involved, such as gang rape, all of which the Biblical authors, they argue, knew nothing.

On the contrary, DeYoung stipulates that there are at least two major problems with such thinking.

> *For starters, the cultural distance argument is an argument from silence.* The Bible nowhere limits its rejection of homosexuality to exploitative or pederastic (man-boy) forms of same-sex intimacy. Leviticus forbids a male lying with a male as with a woman (Lev. 18:22; 20:13). The text says nothing about temple prostitution, effeminate men, or sexual domination. The prohibition is against men doing with men what ought to be done with women…*If the biblical authors meant to frown upon only certain kinds of homosexual arrangements, they wouldn't have condemned the same-sex act itself in such absolute terms*.... [Emphasis mine]
>
> *The second reason the distance argument fails is because it is an argument against the evidence.* The line of reasoning traced above would be more compelling if it could be demonstrated that the *only* kinds of homosexuality known in the ancient world were based on pederasty, victimization, and exploitation.
>
> To suggest that only certain kinds of homosexual practice (the bad kinds) were known in the ancient world is a claim that flies in the face of many Greek texts. Here, for example, is [highly regarded New Testament scholar] N.T. Wright's informed conclusion:
>
> As a classicist, I have to say that when I read Plato's *Symposium* [ca. 400 years before the apostle Paul, who was well-acquainted with Plato], or when I read the accounts from the early Roman empire of the practice of homosexuality, then it seems to me they knew just as much about it as we do…The idea that in Paul's day it was always a matter of exploitation of younger men by older men or whatever . . . of course there was plenty of

[71] http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2014/11/13/not-that-kind-of-homosexuality/ (Accessed 1/26/15) DeYoung cites the Pronk quote from Pim Pronk, *Against Nature? Types of Moral Argumentation Regarding Homosexuality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 279.

> that then, as there is today, but it was by no means the only thing. They knew about the whole range of options there.[9]
>
> And then there is this paragraph from the late Louis Crompton, a gay man and pioneer in queer studies, in his massive book *Homosexuality and Civilization*:
>
> Some interpreters, seeking to mitigate Paul's harshness, have read the passage [in Romans 1] as condemning not homosexuals generally but only heterosexual men and women who experimented with homosexuality. According to this interpretation, Paul's words were not directed at "bona fide" homosexuals in committed relationships [a contradiction in terms as will be seen below]. 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 circumstances. The idea that homosexuals might be redeemed by mutual devotion would have been wholly foreign to Paul or any Jew or early Christian.[10]
>
> Scholars all of different stripes have said the same thing: the cultural distance argument will not work. There is nothing in the biblical text to suggest Paul or Moses or anyone else meant to limit the Scriptural condemnation of homosexual behavior. Likewise, there is no good reason to think from the thousands of homosexuality-related texts found in the Greco-Roman period that the blanket rejection of homosexual behavior found in the Bible can be redeemed by postulating an impassable cultural distance between our world and the ancient world. There is simply no positive case for homosexual practice in the Bible and no historical background that will allow us to set aside what has been the plain reading of Scripture for twenty centuries. The only way to think the Bible is talking about every other kind of homosexuality except the kind our culture wants to affirm is to be less than honest with the texts or less than honest with ourselves.[72]

Alex D. Montoya, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry at The Masters Seminary, concurs. Explaining why he was writing an essay on this subject, he said the following:

> Developments in the secular society in its acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle have put pressure on the evangelical church to respond in some way. Homosexual spokespersons have advocated varying principles of interpretation to prove from the Bible the legitimacy of their lifestyle. They have resorted to either subjectivism, historic-scientific evolving of

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[72] http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2014/11/13/not-that-kind-of-homosexuality/ (Accessed 1/26/15) DeYoung quotes N.T. Wright [9] from John L. Allen Jr., "Interview with Anglican Bishop N.T. Wright of Durham, England," *National Catholic Reporter*, May 21, 2004, http://www.nationalcatholicreporter.org/word/wright.htm (accessed November 11, 2014) and Louis Compton [10] from Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2003), 114.

> society, or cultural biases of the Biblical writers to find biblical backing for their position. Scripture condemns homosexuality in such passages as Genesis 19; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10; 2 Pet 2:7; and Jude 7. The true biblical teaching on the subject requires the church to condemn the sin of homosexuality, convert the homosexual, confront erroneous teaching, and cleanse itself. The church must be careful not to adopt the customs of the world.[73]

Avoid the errors of the "third way."

Some church leaders are trying to find a "middle ground" between the high and holy words God uses in the Bible, to which he *requires obedience* (which the proponents of the "third way" don't emphasize or even mention), and capitulation to the culture's immorality. The "third way" is a principle that has more than one application. One application is the affirmation of homosexuals in the church by admitting them to membership and to leadership. This is a matter that is very important to address thoroughly, and that will be done in Chapter Five.

Another application of the "third way" concerns an alternative for business people who are Christians and are faced with a dilemma: to compromise their commitment to God's Word and comply with an unjust law, thus providing services for and/or at a same-sex "wedding" **or** refuse to compromise their commitment to God's Word and fight city hall, facing any consequences in the process, some of which could involve a huge fine and/or jail time. How this is being done successfully is recounted in Chapter Five. Some argue that there is a "third way" in between these two opposing options. One proponent of such an alternative is Russell Nieli, who is a lecturer in the Department of Politics and the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University.

Nieli's main concern is to provide a way in which Christians, and others whose religiously-based moral values conflict with the laws of the land pertaining to same-sex "marriage," can still maintain their values without being subjected to fines and even imprisonment for doing so. I want you to hear his argument in his own words.

> I think there is a third way. Although it may not be acceptable to all in this situation, it would be acceptable to many. It is simply this: to obey the law and serve gay weddings, but to make it known publicly that you believe that the law forcing you to do this is unjust, needs to be changed, and is obeyed only under protest and out of your respect for law and the democratic process.

[73] "Homosexuality and the church," *The Master's Seminary Journal* (TMSJ), 11/2 (Fall 2000), quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/11/2015)

> I could well imagine a pious religious couple, running the kind of wedding-focused catering hall that I once worked at in New York, posting on its premises an announcement something to this effect:
>
> We are required by the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) provision of New York State's anti-discrimination statute to make our wedding facilities available to anyone who seeks to use them, including gay and lesbian couples who want to marry under New York's same-sex marriage law. We believe strongly in the democratic process and the rule of law. For this reason, we will obey the state law governing our business. However, we obey this law only under the gravest protest, as we believe it violates our deepest moral and religious convictions. It does so needlessly and with apparent intent to polarize our country and inflame an already overheated cultural war.
>
> We are Christians, and we believe that marriage is exclusively a relationship between one man and one woman. It should not, in our view, be construed as a relationship between people of the same sex or relationships involving three or more people.
>
> We realize, however, that there are many people today who do not agree with us on these matters, and who hold their opposing views just as strongly as we hold ours. We respect the views of such people. We only ask that such people respect our own views in the same way that we respect theirs, and that, in the interest of tolerance and religious pluralism, they join us in seeking repeal of a law which requires us to violate our conscience. Those people who do not believe that marriage need be restricted to its traditional form and who seek a venue to celebrate non-traditional marriages have access to many other catering halls in this area that would be more than happy to accommodate their wishes.
>
> Please do not ask us to violate our religious beliefs. We all must work together to accommodate our sincerely held differences in these matters. Our continued existence as a free, vibrant, tolerant and loving people surely depends upon it.[74]

In this manner Nieli and a considerable number of others who are climbing on board with him are suggesting that by issuing such a public protest they can go ahead and obey the unjust law and yet still hold to their religiously-based moral value. Writing as a Christian and addressing the issue for Christians, Nieli argues that such a position would

1. establish a positive peacemaking tone that would attract people to the righteousness of the Christian's stand on this issue,

[74] Russell K. Nieli, "Gay Weddings and the Shopkeeper's Dilemma," Public Discourse, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/12/14190/ (Accessed 4/17/15)

2. offer a public protest drawing attention to an unjust law,

3. probably discourage homosexuals from even wanting to trade at a business with such a public posting, and would

4. cast the opponents as authoritarian bullies and gain sympathy from many sectors of society who dislike government bureaucrats and their cohort pushing around the little guy trying to put food on his family's table and a roof over their heads and walk the high road in the process.

As such, an important aspect of the "third way" would involve saying the law needs to be changed, whereby the requirements for big businesses wouldn't apply to mom and pop size small businesses. They believe the approach would yield a wash economically, with the loss of some customers being replaced by those attracted to the stance and with most people not being affected in either case.

The main problem in this casuistry is the construction of an alternative that places culture alongside of, or worse over, the Bible, as their standard of authority and moral judgment. It is easy to see a lot of affirmation in our culture for an option that moves one away from full compliance to God, but I don't see in the Bible any indication that would support such a "third way." Let's briefly analyze just a few of the major flaws in this alternative.

1. With God's Word as our highest authority and the standard we should employ in our decision-making on all matters pertaining to faith and life, consider these questions:

    a. When Daniel learned about the new law in Babylon that "anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king [Darius], shall be thrown into the lions' den" what did he do?

        1) Did he comply with that unjust, indeed evil, law?
        2) Did he disobey the law?
        3) Did he come up with a "third way" (amounting to complying with the unjust law) such as just not praying to any being for 30 days?

        He did the second, the only right option, and much more: he not only *disobeyed* the unjust and evil law, praying to the only living and true God, he did so *immediately* and in his room that had windows where he could be seen. His faithfulness and obedience to God resulted in God's mighty affirmation of him by protecting him with the miracle in lion's den. We also see in the Bible that in God's sight in this act of civil disobedience Daniel acted in faith and God declared him innocent in his (God's) sight. (Daniel 6:1-28, esp. vv. 10, 22-23; Hebrews 11:33) This passage teaches clearly that it is not wrong to violate a man-made law which contradicts God's law.

Other passages in God's Word teach the same principle. As we'll see in Chapter Five, a husband and wife ministry team chose to obey God's commands rather than capitulate to city hall, and they were prepared to go to jail and pay a heavy fine if necessary. Listen to their rationale: "'The Apostle Paul spent quite a bit of time in jail for his faith, so who am I to feel like I have any right to avoid the same thing?' Don Knapp said during the couple's exclusive interview with *The Daily Signal*."

b. What do you think God would have told the prophet Daniel if he said to God, "Well, I'll do what the king ruled, in spite of it being against your Word and will, but I'll do it under protest."

c. What do you think Daniel would tell Russell Nieli?

2. What are some of the flaws in Nieli's argument? Start with the unwarranted assumptions he and the others are making, for example:

   a. Does the "third way" compromise and/or go against Scripture?

   b. Does the opposition see the "third way" as a sign of strength or weakness? Do they not see the "third way" as caving? How strong is the "public protest" when the business owner still goes along with the unjust law? What is the specific plan to change the law?

   c. Do the pro-homosexual activists really care what the business owner thinks (i.e., that the law is unjust), and therefore, will they even care to comply with the request, "Please do not ask us to violate our religious beliefs?"

3. Is it possible to participate in a same-sex "wedding" in any way without it being an expression of affirmation of what these two people and their friends are doing? Regardless of what words are said in writing or verbally, can and do actions at least mitigate or even eradicate the words? In spite of Nieli's casuistry, the third way is still performing service that results in supporting the same-sex "wedding."

4. People who are willing to weaken their upholding of a commandment of God should consider the seriousness of what they are doing. This so-called "third way" weakens their witness to God's Word and will and supports disobedience to God's will that harms society and themselves.

   As attorney Jeffery J. Ventrella writes, "announcing disagreement with injustice while acting in agreement with it disintegrates the human person. It

separates man's words from his deeds, searing rather than sustaining his conscience. This "solution" does not heal; it harms."[75]

5. Do you really "respect the views" of people who rebel against God's will and life a lifestyle so counterproductive to their own physical and spiritual health and counterproductive to society's well-being? At least say you respect the freedom they have in this country to even live in ways that harm themselves but also that you don't want to be part of them doing that to themselves or to others.

6. Unjust laws and the wrongful enforcement of other laws should be immediately, and in some cases, as we'll see, proactively, tested. Pushback rather than compromise is what God's holy people can do to be salt and light in society and to be his witnesses most effectively. How this can be done with the help of legal organizations composed of Christian attorneys who have produced good results in such cases will be examined in Chapter Five.

Jeffery Ventrella insightfully adds the following relevant philosophical and legal observations:

> Nieli contends that mom-and-pop enterprises are really an extension of the "family, its values, or their private life." Not only does his assertion that larger, more impersonal businesses or franchises cannot possess and express moral messages and values contradict the *Conestoga Wood Specialties* and *Hobby Lobby* rulings, his point about mom-and-pop endeavors actually undermines his own thesis.
>
> If, in fact, mom-and-pop enterprises uniquely convey moral messages, then directing them to violate or undermine their unique moral message is even more directly onerous and more directly injurious. As he notes, these "Proprietors . . . remain agents only of themselves." Thus, his "solution" requires coerced speech. That is, it mandates that these precious, small, extended-family enterprises speak and act in a manner that erodes and contravenes their family, values, and private-life messages.
>
> …the "solution" is also unworkable, even if it were deemed prudent. Nieli acknowledges that if the indicated law required action or messaging supporting abortion, this "strategy would obviously have to be rejected." This claim is wrapped in a judgment about the "order of gravity" and abortion being a "moral violation of a radically different order of magnitude." Really?

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[75] Jeffery J. Ventrella, "Resist or Accommodate Evil: There is No 'Third Way,'" Public Discourse, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/01/14264/ (Accessed 4/17/15)

Are the situations morally different between a health-care provider and a business owner? Each person's conscience is being wrongly violated. Each person would be disintegrated if he acts against his conscience. Harm inures in each case once the specific conduct occurs: to the unborn child as well as the health worker, and to the same-sex ceremony participants as well as the business owner. Taking innocent life is inherently immoral; cooperating with and facilitating that immorality remains inherently immoral. Similarly, the conduct desired in a same-sex ceremony is inherently disordered, and the conduct practiced is inherently immoral; cooperating with and facilitating that immorality as an artisan who affirmatively contributes a component to that ceremony remains inherently immoral. The fact that one takes life and the other does not is morally irrelevant to the coerced actor—the same breach of conscience occurs and the same disintegration occurs, because both facilitate inherently immoral activity.

The simple truth is this: one need not be required to take innocent life before one ought to be able to stand firm in one's conscience against an unjust law. As the tradition teaches, even the tiniest pinch of incense to Caesar is too much compromise for a well-formed conscience. Indeed, stopping an unjust law before it leads to innocent bloodshed is morally preferable, is it not? Ask [Martin Luther] King [Jr.]—or, if you prefer, St. Thomas More, Maximilian Kolbe, or Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

The use of an announcement that one disagrees with the law is not a silver bullet, nor even a "third way." This may stem from Nieli's misapprehending the aim of SOGI laws. The "harm" SOGI laws target is not the lack of services, but the injury to the same-sex couple's sense of dignity. Frankly, in today's hostile legal environment, posting what Nieli proposes could well expose Mom and Pop to a charge of "animus," which is the driving force for much of the legal effort undermining marriage today. If so, then the posting of the announcement could well be deemed "offensive," "bullying," or even "hate speech," all of which could be deemed to comprise harm to dignity. Thus, posting the announcement would comprise a separate "violation."

The SOGI laws are designed to silence the messages such a sign would convey. It is naïve to think that such postings would be allowed to exist for long, because they flout the prevailing orthodoxy that bans dissent from or disapproval of total sexual autonomy.

History's signposts of liberty show us the path toward preserving conscience and religious liberty. King's letter [*Letter from Birmingham City Jail* set forth a citizen's moral justification for refusing to obey, not simply any imprudent law, but a fundamentally unjust law] and More's dissent—and the long moral tradition upon which they build—admit of no "third way." When conscience flirts with the idea of accommodating an

> unjust law, it must politely, yet firmly, reject the sirens of seduction. Any other result would be—in a word—compromise.[76]

DeYoung has well-observed and written of the theological and moral disaster to which the "third way" leads those who travel on it.

> When the Bible uniformly and unequivocally says the same thing about a serious sin, it seems unwise to find a third way which allows for some people (in a church, in an organization, or in a denomination) to be for the sin and other people to be against the sin.
>
> No one would think of proposing a third way if the sin were racism or human trafficking. To countenance such a move would be a sign of moral bankruptcy. Faithfulness to the Word of God compels us to view sexual immorality with the same seriousness. Living an ungodly life is contrary to the sound teaching that defines the Christian (1 Tim. 1:8-11; Titus 1:16). Darkness must not be confused with light. Grace must not be confused with license. Unchecked sin must not be confused with the good news of justification apart from works of the law. Far from treating sexual deviance as a lesser ethical issue, the New Testament sees it as a matter for excommunication (1 Corinthians 5), separation (2 Cor. 6:12-20), and a temptation for perverse compromise (Jude 3-16).
>
> But if 1 Corinthians 6 is right, it's not an overstatement to say that approving same-sex sexual behavior—like supporting any form of sexual immorality—runs the risk of leading people to hell….When we tolerate the doctrine which affirms homosexual behavior, we are tolerating a doctrine which leads people further from God. This is hardly missional leadership or kingdom Christianity. According to Jesus, it's *repentance* for sexual immorality, not tolerance of it, which leads to human flourishing (Rev. 2:20-23). Christians who get this fundamental point confused are not purveyors of a liberating third way, but of a deadly and dastardly wrong way.[77]

DeYoung is correct, and we need to remember that in the Bible repentance is much more than just a tongue-in-cheek whisper, "I'm sorry." The noun (μετάνοια *metanoia*, from the root verb μετανοέω, *metanoeō*) is a strong one in the New Testament. Much more than remorse or emotional regret, this repentance is a thorough change in thinking, attitude, and purpose; to be converted[78] meaning to turn against the previous orientation and proceed in the opposite direction in accord with God's Word and will.

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[76] Jeffery J. Ventrella, "Resist or Accommodate Evil: There is No 'Third Way.'"
[77] Kevin DeYoung, "Why Can't the Church Just Agree to Disagree on Homosexuality?" March 13, 2015, http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung/2015/03/13/why-cant-the-church-just-agree-to-disagree-on-homosexuality/ (Accessed 3/14/1
[78] *Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary, The* – Lambda-Omicron. WORDSearch.

Compromise. In many people's minds that's one of those nice-sounding words that people should always be prepared to do in a conflict. To meet someone half-way is held out as being big-hearted, generous, fair-minded. However, I caution that it is a word that needs to be examined before proceeding. What does it mean, especially in the matter at hand?

If what is meant by compromise is meeting someone half-way on a matter where both people want to do something in two different ways, both of which are in accord with God's Word, and where the compromise is also in accord with God's Word, fine: that's just fairness. BUT, if by compromise is meant that one or both of the people involved have to do something against God's Word, and thus his will, that is, to compromise his Word and will, that is unacceptable. Unacceptable to God.

The Barna Research Group has discovered that heterosexuals and homosexuals differ significantly on most key aspects of Biblical teaching, including the accuracy of the Bible itself and its disclosure of who God is and what he is like. Their research found that "homosexuals in general tend to have a different view of God than the Biblical one, often indicated to be that of a pantheistic nature of deity which can refer to any of a variety of perspectives."[79]

The homosexual literature also claims that the traditional interpretation of the related Scripture texts is based on scant documentation. As I've shown above and is otherwise attestable, this assertion is untrue. John Stott has well established and written that "[t]he Christian rejection of homosexual practices does not rest on 'a few isolated and obscure proof texts' (as is sometimes said), whose traditional explanation (it is further claimed) can be overthrown."[80]

For believers in and followers of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, what the Bible says is most important; it is the Word of God, our ultimate authority and standard. Even churches such as the Roman Catholic Church, that place certain denominational doctrine and tradition on a level with the Scriptures, base their official teaching on the Bible and believe that their doctrine is a true explanation and application of God's Word. Thus for Christians, when God condemns homosexual practice, and we see the traditional interpretation easily upheld hermeneutically against the Scripture twisting of the opposition, the case is settled as far as the question of the rightness or wrongness of the issue. The remaining questions deal with understanding the realities involved and how we can most effectively respond in God's service.

Those who argue that there are nuances that must be examined and that will "shed new light" are misleading people. The continued discussion should be on how to help people

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[79] http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/282-spiritual-profile-of-homosexual-adults-provides-surprising-insights (Accessed 1/11/2015) quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_biblical_interpretation#Lesbian_sexual_relations (Accessed 1/11/2015)

[80] John Stott, *Decisive Issues facing Christians Today*, p. 344.

who are struggling with a difficult situation they want to leave and others they should leave in order to obey God, live healthier and safer lives, relieve their loved ones of concern, and avoid harming the church and society. Circumstantial nuances may inform more appropriate and effective pastoral care, but nuances do not authorize altering God's Word.

For the many to whom we are called "to give an answer for the hope that is within us, and to do so with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15), and to "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), we need to be prepared to explain God's Word. "Why," some ask, "does God call this practice 'detestable'?" "Should homosexuals be admitted to church membership?" "Why shouldn't we ordain homosexuals to church office?" The first question we've already begun to answer. It is to provide further trustworthy information that will facilitate a loving reply to these and other questions we'll be asked, and to be able to do so in gentleness and respect, that is the focus of this treatise. The concentration in what follows will be on the lesser known scientific and other data that relate to, illustrate, explain, and apply the Biblical commands on homosexuality. For those who wish to further explore the hermeneutics of the specific Scriptural texts, and why the traditional understanding of their teaching is more reasonable and to be preferred, many fine works are readily available.[81]

What then makes homosexuality tôʿēbâ in God's sight?

We thus see God's Word, the Bible, revealing that homosexuality is not in his creation design. Homosexuality does not occur until *after* sin enters the world as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's will. That disobedience powerfully and profoundly corrupted God's perfect creation, including contaminating human nature, thus causing a massive four-fold disharmony: between God and man, between and among humans themselves, within each individual human being, and throughout the creation.

Nevertheless, the good news is that God is in the process of redeeming his creation in and through Jesus Christ, the implications of which we will return to later, one being that Christ provides the power and the hope for homosexuals to break free from the bondage of that lifestyle from which many want to be free and from which many are with the Lord's help escaping permanently.

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[81] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*; Stanton Jones, "A Study Guide and Response to Mel's What the Bible Says—and Doesn't Say—about Homosexuality;" and Richard J. Bates, "The Historical Biblical Perspective on Homosexuality with Attention to Modern Revisions," February 10, 2005, an unpublished essay by a former colleague and a friend of mine, as well as a fine scholar, Bible teacher, and preacher. In addition to his own strong argument, Dr. Bates cites the following resources: Robert Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2001; Gregory Koukl, *Setting the Record Straight: The Bible & Homosexuality*, Stand to Reason, 2002; Thomas E. Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow: Compassion & Clarity in the Homosexual Debate*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1995; Stand to Reason (www.str.org or 1-800-2-REASON); Jeffrey Statinover, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, Baker, 1996; John R. W. Stott, *Same-Sex Partnerships*, Revell, Grand Rapids, MI, 1998. See also http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality.

Homosexuality is essentially a flagrant rejection of the Creator's plan. Referring to the first chapter in Romans, Chuck Colson comments that "homosexual sin denies God's order, design, and authority. It exchanges the 'truth of God for a lie.'"[82] (Romans 1:25)

The "suitable helper" for Adam, equal to him in value though distinct in some functions, who with Adam would bear God's image (Genesis 1:26-28) and be Adam's wife (Genesis 2:24-25; 3:17, 20-21; 4:1) far above the animals, was not another male but a female specially created out of the body of the first human yet significantly different physiologically and otherwise from him. She is his counterpart indicated by the Hebrew words in the text, including the words for man (*'îsh*) and woman (*'îshshāh*). (Genesis 2:20-25) We saw other key passages of the Bible clearly stating that homosexuality is against God's will. In fact, we see that God calls it *tôʿēbâ*. (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13)

But are there other aspects of homosexuality that make it *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight? What's so bad about it even for people who don't believe in God and thus aren't troubled, as they should be, about the seriousness of homosexuality being a rebellion against God and his will? What else about homosexuality does God see as *tôʿēbâ*, "detestable," "an abomination," consisting of "shameful lusts," "indecent acts," "to be abhorred," and "perversion?" Following this brief review of his most important special revelation, the Bible, we'll look in the next chapter to what he discloses in his general revelation, including true science.

Homosexuals fight hard to achieve what is called "same-sex marriage" as a legal right, hoping to have all the benefits of marriage and move out of what they call second-class citizenship. Even if they achieve their goal of the legalization of "same-sex marriage" in all states and other countries, which is unlikely, they will never be married in the eyes of God, or in the eyes of those who hold to the authority of God's Word. Thus, the rejecting of God's plan and rebelling against him, spurning God's gift of marriage between one man and one woman, are the first indications of why God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*. There are many more.

One of the reasons Satan tempted Adam and Eve to disobey and to bring the death that resulted in that disobedience is to undermine God's great plan and glory. Satan wants to keep people from God and from doing his will. The devil obviously opposes all God is doing and has commanded, including the prohibition against homosexuality. When God created human beings as male and female, he told them to "be fruitful and multiply," (Genesis 1:27-28) indicating that it is his pleasure and will to have many people in his kingdom. Satan, knowing that homosexuals cannot "be fruitful and multiply," uses this means to try to undermine that part of God's will.

Thus, Colson concludes rightly that "homosexuality mocks God's loving design itself."[83] He observes that "homosexual sin bears particularly egregious consequences. Not only in the character of those who commit it, but in the corporate civil order as well. And so we have a duty, as Christian citizens, to actively oppose its inclusion as normative in

[82] Chuck Colson, "Neither Busybodies nor Bigots," *Jubilee*, March 1993, p. 7.
[83] Colson, p. 7.

culture."[84] We'll return to this subject in the chapters that follow. Since homosexuality produces "egregious consequences," these outcomes should be visible; indeed, empirical observation does disclose not only those consequences but their destructive results, as we'll see in Chapter Two.

Furthermore, there is much else about homosexuality, that is not commonly known, but that God knows (and knew from the beginning including before sin became a reality), which makes homosexual practice *tôʿēbâ* in his sight. The purpose of this writing is to cast light on this practice to give a glimpse of what homosexuality involves, in order to help people avoid it and to help believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ to explain why God's Word condemns homosexuality.[85]

The politically correct media, the unabashed bias of which often obscures rather than reveals truth, prefer to omit reporting on the homosexual lifestyle as it actually is in reality. While never perfect, media coverage of political matters declined significantly in objective truth telling in the latter half of the 20th century. In addition to my own observation of this phenomenon in Chicago, I heard Arnaud de Borchgrave, who has been described as one of the most noteworthy journalists of the modern era, speak on the decline of journalistic credibility, and my own mother, Vera D. Seely, the first woman in New York State to head the news department of a major radio station as well as co-owner of an award-winning newspaper in the northern metropolitan area of New York City, lament the same observation before she died.

How do the media distort the truth? They do it in several ways, including by presenting wrong information, by omitting pertinent and germane information, and by showing misleading graphics. For example, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, movies, and other media as well as the public schools and other government entities, portray homosexuality with pictures of a couple of guys walking down the street holding hands, and lesbians hugging and kissing one another. That is the information they are communicating to educate the society that this is homosexuality. But it's not homosexuality—not even close—as careful research in the natural and social sciences makes clear.

For Reflection and Discussion

Chapter One

1. Identify at least three implications and applications of the fact that homosexuality does not appear in the Biblical texts pertaining to God's creation but only after Adam and Eve's fall?

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[84] Colson, p. 7.

[85] Throughout this book the word "gay" will not be used as a synonym for homosexual, except in quotation from another author. As will be seen in what follows, the homosexual practice and lifestyle does not lead to a gay experience, as the word gay has historically been used. See "It's Not Gay: Former Homosexuals Tell a Story Few Have Heard," Videocassette recording, American Family Association, 2000.

2. Why is homosexuality a rebellion against God's will for human marriage according to Genesis 2 and Matthew 19?
3. Some interpret the Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18-19) and Judges (19-21) episodes as simply violations of Middle Eastern hospitality. Cite and discuss at least three reasons why this interpretation of these passages is inaccurate, deceptive, and misleading.
4. Some say that many laws in Leviticus are no longer necessary for Christians due to Christ's ministry, and thus the homosexual condemnations no longer apply as well. Cite and explain at least one reason why this interpretation of Leviticus 18 and 20 is flawed.
5. Some say that Leviticus 18 and 20 as well as much else in Leviticus is culturally outdated. Identify and explain at least three reasons why this cultural argument is mistaken and misleading.
6. Explain the meaning of the term hermeneutics. Distinguish between principle and interpretation of principle in Biblical interpretation, and give an example from the Scriptures examined in this chapter how to use this distinction to understand and obey God's Word.
7. How do you correct the criticism that the church holds to a double standard, i.e., permitting heterosexual sins such as adultery but condemning homosexuality? See also Chapter Five.
8. What can we learn from homosexuals such as Gary who are angry that no one informed them of the dangers of homosexuality and now they have a life-threatening disease?
9. How do you answer the contention made by some that the Bible does not mention "sexual orientation?"
10. How would you and the others in your group answer the questions in the section on avoiding the errors of the "third way?"

Chapter 2

The Truth from Careful Science

What do we learn from research in the natural and social sciences that helps us understand some of the reasons why God calls homosexuality tôʿēbâ?

No scientific proof exists to support the biological argument for homosexuality.

Before we get too far away from the subject of creation and turn to examine the homosexual lifestyle and the specific aspects of it that are *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight, we should address at the outset the homosexuals' claim that they have been created or born with their sexual orientation, that is that their proclivity to have sex with the same gender is genetic in its origin. They adamantly claim they did not choose this orientation; they vehemently assert that there is a biological basis for their sexual desire. The reasons for their assertion will be discussed later (for example to provide a legal basis for the societal approval, legislation, and other benefits they desire, by using precedent civil rights involving race, which is obviously biologically based); for now let's focus on the claim's level of credibility.

The argument that homosexuality is biologically based fails not only on Biblical grounds but also on scientific and logical examination. As we saw in Chapter One, there is no evidence in the Bible that God created homosexuality, which occurred only after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Moreover, the Bible reveals the core of God's being as love, (1 John 4:8) and it discloses that he is just and righteous. (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 89:14; 101:1) Therefore, he does not create someone with an orientation to do what is abhorrent to him and extremely unhealthy and dangerous to those he loves, then make a law against the orientation he has created, and then punish someone for doing what he or she was created to do. As we clearly see in the Scriptures such thinking runs counter to God's revelation of who he is and what he is like.

Scientifically, there is no evidence that homosexuality is biologically based. Examining the most prominent theories of a biological basis for homosexuality, Jones points out why such theories as the fraternal birth order theory (that hypothesizes the development within mothers of something like an allergy to their male baby's in utero male hormones resulting in the baby's being "incompletely masculinized"); the older brother studies (examining the theory that homosexuals have a disproportionate number of older brothers); and the twin theory (that the more two people who share their genetic endowment are more likely to have the same sexual orientation) have not proven a significant effect resulting in homosexuality.[86] He cites later studies that refute previous studies but that are not acknowledged throughout the scientific community or in the general media.

[86] Stanton L. Jones, "Same-Sex Science," *First Things*, February 2012, p. 30.

Jones' cautionary note concerning the ongoing search for a genetic mechanism is based on the use of the statistical calculation of

> heritability, which estimates how much of the variability of sexual orientation may be attributed to genetic influences. The higher this estimate, the greater the suggested genetic contribution. The best recent studies consistently generate heritability estimates for male homosexuality of 30 to 50 percent, a statistically significant finding that sounds quite powerful. Heritability estimates for female homosexuality are slightly less than for males, but still statistically significant. But what do heritability estimates of 30 to 50 percent mean?
>
> Behavior genetics has established heritability estimates for a vast array of psychological traits. Quite a number of traits demonstrate much higher heritability than does homosexual orientation. Those with roughly similar heritability include social attitudes such as right-wing authoritarianism, inclination to religiosity, and church attendance. One study by a giant of behavioral genetics, Robert Plomin, found that the proclivity to watch television has an average heritability estimate of 45 percent, on par with the typical estimate for the heritability of male homosexuality.
>
> Contrary to the assumptions of many social conservatives, biology does appear to play a modest part in determining sexual orientation. Contrary to the assumptions of many social progressives, psychological and environmental variables also appear to play at least a modest part in determining sexual orientation….And the fact that causation is indubitably a complex and mysterious by-product of the interaction of biological and psychological variables confounds the assertion that sexual orientation is just like skin color, determined at birth or even conception. And contrary to the suggestions of some, the involvement of some biological influence does not prove that change in sexual orientation is impossible.[87]

How can we understand even a very small, even if insignificant and minor, possibility of a *predisposition* to homosexuality? In Chapter One we saw that homosexuality was not present in God's original creation of human beings; homosexuality only emerges ***after*** Adam's and Eve's sin, the evil of which corrupted human nature. Further, since God has commanded that homosexual practice not be done, it is possible to reject it, just as it is possible to reject the heterosexual urge to have sex outside of marriage. If true science (not the pseudoscience that results from manipulation of data to conform to culture and "politically correct" premises) ever were to show conclusively that a possible predisposition were genetically present, it would not surprise us with the Biblical teaching on how sin has corrupted human nature, including our present bodies.

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[87] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 30. In fact, as we'll see below, many people are leaving the homosexual lifestyle and are not returning to it. Subsequent research shows psychological and social factors are not minor but "strongly influential." See the following statement from the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) and other studies in this book.

Nevertheless, in the light of the passages we've studied in God's Word, any predisposition would be able to be overcome, for at least two reasons: God's all-sufficient help, and the minor, if any, presence of such a predisposition. The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) reports that

> Biological factors may play a role in the *predisposition* to homosexuality. However, this is true of many other psychological conditions.
>
> Research suggests that ***social and psychological factors*** are strongly influential. Examples include problems in early family relationships, sexual seduction, and sense of inadequacy with same-sex peers, with resulting disturbance in gender identity. Society can also influence a sexually questioning youth when it encourages gay self-labeling.[88]

Even Dr. Dean Hamer, the "gay gene" researcher, who is himself a homosexual, says that genes don't determine behavior. As Exodus Global Alliance reports on its website,

> Perhaps one of the biggest concerns for the person on the street is whether we are stuck with our genetic inheritance, or whether we can overcome our genes. Dean Hamer stated, 'One of the biggest myths is that something genetic is therefore fixed. This simply isn't true. It's what we do with our genes that matters. Someone who relishes novel experiences might use this trait for good or for bad — to become a great explorer or a violent criminal. All these genes do is to give us a disposition one way or another. Whether we act on that —or don't — is very much a matter of our free will.' [The Power of Our Genes: An Interview with Dean Hamer, Science & Spirit, December 1998].
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> [And] from six studies between 2000-2011 researchers have concluded that if one identical twin has same-sex attractions, the chances that the co-twin has it too are only about 11% for men and 14% for women. This indicates that factors the twins have in common, such as genes and upbringing are mostly not responsible. [89]

Studies of identical twins refute the biological argument.

The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) has published a report on international studies of identical twins. These studies are especially significant due to the fact that these twins have identical DNA and experienced the same prenatal conditions. Their report features the work of Dr. Neil Whitehead, whose Ph.D. is in biochemistry and statistics.

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[88] http://www.narth.org/menus/myths.html (Accessed 4/12/15)
[89] "Is Sexual Orientation genetic or is it a choice?" http://exodusglobalalliance.org/causesc37.php (Accessed 3/9/15)

> Eight major studies of identical twins in Australia, the U.S., and Scandinavia during the last two decades all arrive at the same conclusion: gays were not born that way. "At best genetics is a minor factor," says Dr. Neil Whitehead, PhD. Whitehead worked for the New Zealand government as a scientific researcher for 24 years, then spent four years working for the United Nations and International Atomic Energy Agency. Most recently, he serves as a consultant to Japanese universities about the effects of radiation exposure.
>
> Identical twins have the same genes or DNA. They are nurtured in equal prenatal conditions. If homosexuality is caused by genetics or prenatal conditions and one twin is gay, the co-twin should also be gay. "Because they have identical DNA, it ought to be 100%," Dr. Whitehead notes. But the studies reveal something else. "If an identical twin has same-sex attraction the chances the co-twin has it are only about 11% for men and 14% for women."
>
> Because identical twins are always genetically identical, homosexuality cannot be genetically dictated. "No-one is born gay," he notes. "The predominant things that create homosexuality in one identical twin and not in the other have to be post-birth factors."

Whitehead then addresses the next question that arises in people's minds, not only about such twins but about all homosexuals in contrast to heterosexuals. "What explanation can be postulated for why some become homosexuals? If homosexuality is not genetically based, what 'post-birth factors' tend to influence a small percentage of the population to become homosexual?" Or as a theologian would frame the question, "Understanding the demonic dimension behind the evil that influences rebellion against God, what physical, emotional, and environmental factors does Satan and his demonic followers use to entice some people to embrace homosexuality?" NARTH replies

> Dr. Whitehead believes same-sex attraction (SSA) is caused by "non-shared factors," things happening to one twin but not the other, or a personal response to an event by one of the twins and not the other. For example, one twin might have exposure to pornography or sexual abuse, but not the other. One twin may interpret and respond to their family or classroom environment differently than the other. "These individual and idiosyncratic responses to random events and to common environmental factors predominate," he says.
>
> The first very large, reliable study of identical twins was conducted in Australia in 1991, followed by a large U.S. study about 1997. Then Australia and the U.S. conducted more twin studies in 2000, followed by several studies in Scandinavia, according to Dr. Whitehead. "Twin registers are the foundation of modern twin studies. They are now very large, and exist in many countries. A gigantic European twin register with a projected 600,000 members is being organized, but one of the largest in use is in Australia, with more than 25,000 twins on the books."

> A significant twin study among adolescents shows an even weaker genetic correlation. In 2002 Bearman and Brueckner studied tens of thousands of adolescent students in the U.S. The same-sex attraction concordance between identical twins was only 7.7% for males and 5.3% for females—lower than the 11% and 14% in the Australian study by Bailey et al conducted in 2000.
>
> In the identical twin studies, Dr. Whitehead has been struck by how fluid and changeable sexual identity can be. "Neutral academic surveys show there is substantial change. About half of the homosexual/bisexual population (in a non-therapeutic environment) moves towards heterosexuality over a lifetime. About 3% of the present heterosexual population once firmly believed themselves to be homosexual or bisexual. Sexual orientation is not set in concrete."
>
> Even more remarkable, most of the changes occur without counseling or therapy. "These changes are not therapeutically induced, but happen 'naturally' in life, some very quickly," Dr. Whitehead observes. "Most changes in sexual orientation are towards exclusive heterosexuality."[90]

Janet Levy, Contributing Editor for *FamilySecurityMatters.org*, adds more.

> A unique 2008 study of 7,600 Swedish twins, the largest of its kind to date, did not find homosexuality to be genetically determined. Only seven pairs of male-identical twins and 26 pairs of female-identical twins were found in which both had a same-sex partner in their lifetime.[91]

I cite these studies and their reports at length so the reader can have nontheistic information and resources to present to those who do not accept the Bible as God's Word and their ultimate, or any, authority. Nevertheless, we who are called to be Christ's witnesses, should also, at least at the conclusion of our conversations, always mention the most important matter: God's will far supersedes and renders moot the question of cause, especially for the church. God says don't do it; so we shouldn't do it. Neither in the light of the first two chapters of this book, should Christians advocate that it is OK for others to do. Homosexuality may occur in the world until Jesus returns; it should not be so in the church.

One of the most powerful studies in the world that relates the causes of homosexuality to environmental rather than to biological factors has been done in Denmark. The study is especially significant due to the virtual absence of at least

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[90] NARTH Institute, "Identical Twin Studies Demonstrate Homosexuality is Not Genetic" http://www.narth.com/#!gay---born-that-way/cm6x (Accessed 4/12/15)
[91] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

two key factors that negatively affect the accuracy social science research: sample size and respondents' hesitancy to report the truth, called in the literature the response set for social desirability.

Concerning the first factor, the scientists had access to the national data base, which is a social scientist's dream. In such research the strongest claim to be able to generalize to an entire population under study is to either contact each member of that population or to conduct a random sample of those people. Rarely if ever can such a study access virtually every individual in the population being studied. Further, it is rare that a true random sample can be obtained, which severely limits the degree to which the scientist can generalize his or her findings. (But it doesn't stop the media from doing so!) With access to the national registry the research included a population-based sample of 2,000,355 native-born Danes between the ages of 18 and 49.[92]

The second factor, the concern of respondents for social acceptance, was mitigated by their being Danes. Denmark has a reputation for its tolerance of a wide range of alternative including homosexual lifestyles, and it was the first country to legalize "same-sex marriage." Thus, the common fear of respondents for how they will be perceived in such a study, that does affect their answers in such studies, was lacking in this one.

Linda Ames Nicolosi, publications director for the National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), summarizes the study's key findings. She quotes the authors as concluding, "Our study provides population-based, prospective evidence that childhood family experiences are important determinants of heterosexual and homosexual marriage decisions in adulthood."

The following are findings from this new data:

1. Men who marry homosexually are more likely to have been raised in a family with unstable parental relationships -- particularly, absent or unknown fathers and divorced parents.

2. Findings on women who marry homosexually were less pronounced, but were still associated with a childhood marked by a broken family. The rates of same-sex marriage "were elevated among women who experienced maternal death during adolescence, women with short duration of parental marriage, and women with long duration of mother-absent cohabitation with father."

3. Men and women with "unknown fathers" were significantly less likely to marry a person of the opposite sex than were their peers with known fathers.

[92] Linda Ames Nicolosi, "New Evidence Found for Childhood Family Factors Influencing Sexual Orientation," http://www.narth.org/docs/influencing.html (Accessed 4/12/15)

4. Men who experienced parental death during childhood or adolescence "had significantly lower heterosexual marriage rates than peers whose parents were both alive on their 18th birthday. The younger the age of the father's death, the lower was the likelihood of heterosexual marriage."

5. "The shorter the duration of parental marriage, the higher was the likelihood of homosexual marriage...homosexual marriage rates were 36% and 26% higher among men and women, respectively, who experienced parental divorce after less than six years of marriage, than among peers whose parents remained married for all 18 years of childhood and adolescence."

6. "Men whose parents divorced before their 6th birthday were 39% more likely to marry homosexually than peers from intact parental marriages."

7. "Men whose cohabitation with both parents ended before age 18 years had significantly (55% -76%) higher rates of homosexual marriage than men who cohabited with both parents until 18 years."

8. The mother's age was directly linked to the likelihood of homosexual marriage among men -- the older the mother, the more likely her son was to marry another man. Also, "only children" were more likely to be homosexual.

9. Persons born in large cities were significantly more likely to marry a same-sex partner -- suggesting that cultural factors might also affect the development of sexual orientation.

"Whatever ingredients determine a person's sexual preferences and marital choices," conclude the study's authors, "our population-based study shows that parental interactions are important."[93]

Notice how important both a mother and a father are to the development of children. At the same time, it is important to think theologically about these matters. With the constant awareness of God's involvement in the lives of his people, directly and through the church, one should not conclude that a child in the church who loses a parent will necessarily be more likely to become homosexual. Other research shows a significant difference in the impact on children when they lose a parent by divorce or by death. The latter is much less severe.

[93] Linda Ames Nicolosi, "New Evidence Found for Childhood Family Factors Influencing Sexual Orientation," http://www.narth.org/docs/influencing.html (Accessed 4/12/15). Original report, Morten Frisch, Anders Hviid, "Childhood Family Correlates of Heterosexual and Homosexual Marriages: A National Cohort Study of Two Million Danes," *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, October 2006, Volume 35, Issue 5, pp 533-547.

The science of epigenetics refutes the concept of biological determinism.

We see more in the science of epigenetics, a subfield of biology, the implications of which indicate that change in sexual orientation is very possible, even on the human level.[94] The word, epigenetics, comes from the Greek preposition, ἐπί (*epi*) meaning above, around, beyond, over + genetics, referring to the genes and how information in the genes is modified and translated into the substance and behavior of an organism.[95] Rachel Rettner, Senior Writer at Live Science, explains that epigenetics "refers to external modifications to DNA that turn genes 'on' or 'off.' These modifications do not change the DNA sequence, but instead, they affect how cells 'read' genes. Epigenetic changes alter the physical structure of DNA."[96] These external modifications coming from the environment, including chemicals as well as emotions and conscious and unconscious thoughts in the mind of the individual involved, constitute the "epi" affecting the gene structure.[97]

That is, epigenetics examines how changes in gene activity occur that are not caused by changes in the individual's DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) sequence. The studies include the effects of such changes on the human being's characteristics or phenotype, which include his or her traits, biochemistry, physical features, and behavior.

As Michael Roizen, M.D. and Mehmet Oz, M.D. explain epigenetics applications with respect to physical health in their "You Docs" column,

> …Epigenetics—your epic ability to assert control over your DNA by switching certain genes on and silencing others.
>
> While you can't change your basic genetic code (DNA), you can make the best of what you have by changing your gene expression, or what gets turned on and what gets turned off.
>
> This new science is getting plenty of attention in the media, with headlines like "Reprogram Your Genes" and "How to Hack Your Own DNA," and in scientific journals, too. There have been more than 10,000 research papers on epigenetics published in the past 10 years.[98]

Osteopathic physician Joseph Mercola explains more. I quote at length to mitigate the limitations of "sound bites," to give you as much as possible of the comments' context, to let the author speak for himself with minimal interpretation from me, and in this case so

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[94] Such statements pertain to the human plane. We must always remember that "all things are possible with God." (Mark 10:27; Philippians 4:13, 19)
[95] http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/epigenesis?s=t (Accessed 2/18/15)
[96] http://www.livescience.com/37703-epigenetics.html (Accessed 2/18/15)
[97] Joseph M. Mercola, DO http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/04/11/epigenetic-vs-determinism.aspx#! (Accessed 2/18/15)
[98] Michael Roizen and Mehmet Oz, "6 ways to switch on happy genes," "You Docs," *Reporter-Herald*, February 15, 2015, C1.

you can understand more of the rationale behind this dimension of biological science that has been emerging in recent years.

> The ramification of buying into the central dogma [of molecular biology] is that it leads to belief in absolute determinism, which leaves you utterly powerless to do anything about the health of your body; it's all driven by your genetic code, which you were born with.
>
> However, scientists have completely shattered this dogma and proven it false. You actually have a tremendous amount of control over how your genetic traits are expressed—from how you think to what you eat and the environment you live in.
>
> …the experiments of John Cairns, a British molecular biologist…in 1988 produced compelling evidence that our responses to our environment determine the expression of our genes. A radical thought, for sure, but one that has been proven correct on multiple occasions since then….
>
> As if genes changing expression in response to environmental factors such as nutrients wasn't enough, other researchers have demonstrated that this "environment" that your genes respond to also includes your conscious thoughts, emotions, and unconscious beliefs.
>
> …with the advent of quantum physics, scientists have realized the flaws in Newtonian physics, as quantum physics shows us that the invisible, immaterial realm is actually far more important than the material realm. In fact, your thoughts may shape your environment far more than physical matter!
>
> Each cell membrane has receptors that pick up various environmental signals, and this mechanism controls the "reading" of the genes inside your cells. Your cells can choose to read or not read the genetic blueprint depending on the signals being received from the environment. So having a "cancer program" in your DNA does not automatically mean you're destined to get cancer. Far from it. This genetic information does not ever have to be expressed...
>
> What this all means is that you are not controlled by your genetic makeup. Instead, your genetic readout (which genes are turned "on" and which are turned "off") is primarily determined by your thoughts, attitudes, and perceptions!
>
> The major problem with believing the myth that your genes control your life is that you become a victim of your heredity. Since you can't change your genes, it essentially means that your life is predetermined, and therefore you have very little control over your health…The new science, however, reveals that *your perceptions control your biology*, and this

> places you in the driver's seat, because if you can change your perceptions, you can shape and direct your own genetic readout.
>
> This new science also reveals that you are in fact an extension of your environment, which includes everything from your thoughts and belief systems, to toxic exposures and exposure to sunlight, exercise, and, of course, everything you choose to put onto and into your body.
>
> Two years ago, a study performed by the Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University was showcased at the annual Experimental Biology convention. The study demonstrated how "histone modifications" can impact the expression of many degenerative diseases, ranging from cancer and heart disease to bipolar disorder….
>
> So the good news is that *you are in control of your genes* … You can alter them on a regular basis, depending on the foods you eat, the air you breathe, and the thoughts you think. It's your environment and lifestyle that dictates your tendency to express disease, and this new realization is set to make major waves in the future of disease prevention -- including one day educating people on how to fight disease at the epigenetic level.
>
> You can begin to do this on your own, long before you manifest a disease. By leading a healthy lifestyle, with high quality nutrition, exercise, limited exposure to toxins, and a positive mental attitude, you encourage your genes to express positive, disease-fighting behaviors.
>
> You can also turn your genes off and on with your emotions too. Many, if not most people carry emotional scars; traumas that can adversely affect health.[99]

Let us look at one more strand of evidence from scientific research which both supports the biological theory that a person is not bound to a fatalistic outcome due to his or her genetic structure and also suggests additional activity that one can do to change the genetic hand he or she is holding. Michael Forrester reports on how mindfulness and an individual's thoughts can induce specific molecular changes in the genes. Again, I quote at length for clarity and more extensive understanding of this key and emerging biological finding.

> With evidence growing that training the mind or inducing specific modes of consciousness can have beneficial health effects, scientists have sought to understand how these practices physically affect the body. A new study by researchers in Wisconsin, Spain, and France reports the first evidence of specific molecular changes in the body following a period of intensive mindfulness practice.

[99] Joseph M. Mercola, http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/04/11/epigenetic-vs-determinism.aspx#! (Accessed 2/18/15)

> The study investigated the effects of a day of intensive mindfulness practice in a group of experienced meditators, compared to a group of untrained control subjects who engaged in quiet non-meditative activities. After eight hours of mindfulness practice, the meditators showed a range of genetic and molecular differences, including altered levels of gene-regulating machinery and reduced levels of pro-inflammatory genes, which in turn correlated with faster physical recovery from a stressful situation.
>
> "To the best of our knowledge, this is the first paper that shows rapid alterations in gene expression within subjects associated with mindfulness meditation practice," says study author Richard J. Davidson, founder of the Center for Investigating Healthy Minds and the William James and Vilas Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
>
> "Most interestingly, the changes were observed in genes that are the current targets of anti-inflammatory and analgesic drugs," says Perla Kaliman, first author of the article and a researcher at the Institute of Biomedical Research of Barcelona, Spain (IIBB-CSIC-IDIBAPS), where the molecular analyses were conducted.
>
> The study was published in the Journal Psychoneuroendocrinology.
>
> Mindfulness-based trainings have shown beneficial effects on inflammatory disorders in prior clinical studies and are endorsed by the American Heart Association as a preventative intervention. The new results provide a possible biological mechanism for therapeutic effects….
>
> The key result is that meditators experienced genetic changes following mindfulness practice that were not seen in the non-meditating group after other quiet activities — an outcome providing proof of principle that mindfulness practice can lead to epigenetic alterations of the genome….
>
> Subconscious beliefs are key. Too many positive thinkers know that thinking good thoughts–and reciting affirmations for hours on end–doesn't always bring about the results that feel-good books promise….because positive thoughts come from the conscious mind, while contradictory negative thoughts are usually programmed in the more powerful subconscious mind.[100]

Of course the power of prayer and meditation is nothing new to God's people who, we read throughout the Bible, have been doing it for millennia. Therefore, we are not surprised that true science, the findings of empirical research that has carefully followed

[100] Michael Forrester, "Researchers Finally Show How Mindfulness and Your Thoughts Can Induce Specific Molecular Changes to Your Genes," http://wakeup-world.com/2013/12/18/researchers-finally-show-how-mindfulness-and-your-thoughts-can-induce-specific-molecular-changes-to-your-genes/ (Accessed 2/20/2015)

the established and time-tested scientific method yields valid and reliable data (part of God's general revelation) that disclose the benefits of meditation, which God teaches in his special revelation in the Bible. True science is always compatible with and illustrates God's Word.

The question of biological influence is further mitigated by two other theological realities. The first is that God has commanded that all people abstain from sex outside of the one man-one woman marriage, including heterosexuals: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14 KJV) God does not command people to do something they cannot do. Thus, heterosexuals are to control their sexual drives, impulses, and urges, and homosexuals are expected to not act on such drives, impulses, and urges with others of the same gender, with the expectation that they can comply.

We humans have the ability to behave in accord with God's will; the problem is that we do not always choose to do so. Moreover, we have God's help directly in our hearts and minds through the Holy Spirit to help us, and his help indirectly through others (e.g., trusted pastors, counselors, and other believers in Christ) when we need assistance to stay on the right path. One of the key factors involved is the motivation to obey.

Dr. Paul Little, in his classic book, *Know Why You Believe*, offers a poignant anecdote explaining why many people fail to avail themselves of the Lord's all-sufficient power and provision for well-being. Little travelled throughout the United States and Canada speaking to college and university groups about Jesus Christ. He recounts that after one address to such an audience, a student came to him and thanked him for his excellent presentation which convinced the student that Christianity was by far superior over all the world's religions. Dr. Little then asked him if he was going to accept Christ as his Savior and Lord and become a Christian. When the student said no, Little asked him why not. The student replied he wouldn't do so, because becoming a Christian would "mess up" his lifestyle.

The second theological reality is that God's Word is our highest authority. If God commands that homosexuality is sinful and not in accord with his will, then the matter of origin and causation is moot and of interest for heuristic and treatment purposes, but not for justification of action. It really does not matter that one was born in any particular way; if God says not to do something, he will hold us responsible for not doing it and accountable to him if we do. (Psalm 51:4)

What do homosexuals really do? What is homosexual sex?

We can now return to the question of what it is about homosexuality that is *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight. Since the media have taught people that homosexuality is just a couple of guys walking down the street holding hands and a couple of lesbians hugging and kissing, that doesn't sound so bad to many people, in particular to those from certain cultures. We must be prepared to explain to others what else about homosexuality is so repulsive to God, who, being all love, is also not only holy but holy, holy, holy (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). As we take a closer look at what homosexuals actually do, we'll see that such behavior is also repulsive to many, in fact by far most, human beings.

The media fail to mention such homosexual activities as rimming,[101] fisting or handballing,[102] ingestion of feces, golden showers,[103] and sodomy (oral and anal sex), anonymous sex in public restrooms, and the inserting of "toys" into the rectum for pleasure. Occasionally, while moving these objects back and forth the one doing so loses his grip and the foreign body is sucked into the colorectum. Emergency room (ER) personnel have recovered many such objects including soft-drink and other bottles, carrots and many other vegetables, fruits such as bananas and apples, and watermelons (as one ER nurse told me), just to name a few.[104] These media also ignore group sex, sadomasochism (torture for sexual "fun"), bondage, and bestiality.[105] All of these forms of aberrant sex illustrate what makes homosexual practice *tôʿēbâ*, abhorrent to God, as he reveals in his Word.[106] Recall what the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write: "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. [12] For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret." (Ephesians 5:11-12)

How can those who engage in such experiences be considered normal, much less "gay?" Obviously, they cannot; such a deceptive designation is only a Satan-inspired strategy by

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[101] Rimming is licking or inserting the tongue in an anus.
[102] Fisting or handballing is the insertion of a fist and arm into the rectum and colon.
[103] The term golden showers refers to splashing with and/or drinking urine.
[104] Other objects removed by ER personnel include but are not limited to the following: jars (even a large peanut butter glass jar), light bulbs, candles; vegetables like cucumbers, onions, potatoes, and turnips; dildos, vibrators, tumblers, a polythene waste trap from the U-bend of a sink, salami, sponge rubber balls, a steer's horn, baseballs, tennis balls, hard-boiled eggs, sand-filled bicycle inner tubing, an aluminum tube (used by a prisoner to store money and other valuables), broomsticks, broom handles, various types of brushes, ax handles, whip handles, soldering irons, a wood-handled carborundum sharpening stone, glass tubes, frozen pig's tail, and kitchen items such as spatula, ice pick, and mortar pestle.[(1-12)] Also found were a plastic fist and forearm, and a live eel. Evidence exists of the practice of inserting gerbils to obtain pleasure when the animal scratches the colon, a very dangerous situation that could lead to perforation of the colon; infection, such as peritonitis; and if left untreated, death. Very few would consider these behaviors normal, and the few who do would not be considered normal by the population as a whole. One 56 year-old man attempted sexual stimulation with a shoe horn that tore his rectum; since he did not seek medical help he died. The typical patient that presents in the emergency department with colorectal foreign objects is a male homosexual;[(4)] the other patients are women or patients who have been rectally assaulted with a foreign body. Erik Holland, "Rectal Insertion of Foreign Bodies by Male Homosexuals," http://www.homosexinfo.org/Sexuality/RectalObjects. (Accessed 06/01/14)
[105] Erik Holland, "Bondage and Discipline (B&D), Sadomasochism (S&D)," http://www.homosexinfo.org/Sexuality/Sadomasochism, "The Relation between Nonheterosexuality and Zoophilia," http://www.homosexinfo.org/Sexuality/Zoophilia. (Accessed 06/01/14) Sprigg and Dailey quote Dennis Osmond's examination of surveys where he found that "'receptive oral intercourse with at least 1 partner without a condom was highly prevalent' among the homosexual men…'ranging between 60 percent and 90 percent of participants.'" The authors concluded, "Acquisition of KSHV [Kaposi sarcoma-associated herpes virus] via insertive penile-oral intercourse could explain the concentration of infection in homosexual men without ready spread to heterosexual groups." Dennis H. Osmond, et al., "Prevalence of Kaposi Sarcoma-Associated Herpresvirus Infection in Homosexual Men at Beginning of and During the HIV Epidemic," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 287, no. 2 (January 9, 2002), 224–25 in *Getting It Straight: What the Research Shows about Homosexuality*, Peter Sprigg and Timothy Dailey, Co-Editors (Washington: Family Research Council, 2004), p. 82.
[106] See, e.g., Exodus 22:19; Leviticus 18:23; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:3.

his demon followers to gain acceptability and to normalize such a lifestyle.[107] It is part of the homosexual agenda as will be shown in Chapter Four. It can only succeed if people who seek the truth fail to speak up in all venues to which they have access, beginning in their family, in their neighborhood, and in the media, as will be described in Chapter Five.

Appearing embarrassed, when homosexuals enter emergency rooms for the removal of objects from their colon they cannot retrieve by themselves, they offer bizarre explanations as to how the objects entered their colon. They offer explanations that include accidental ingestion, accidental insertion due to slipping and falling on the object, or deliberate insertion but to disimpact feces, such as the 50 year-old man who claimed he inserted a 50 cm-long eel in order to relieve constipation.[108]

It is not hard to understand why such acts are detestable to God who has revealed his essence as being love (1 John 4:8) and Most Holy. (Isaiah 6:3[109]) In his love for human beings who bear his image, he is offended by what harms them and the disobedience that causes that harm.[110] For example, anal intercourse commonly ruptures the wall of the colon, which he did not create for penal penetration and is thinner than and not as strong as the vagina, which is what he designed for sexual intercourse.[111] The rupturing of the colon issues in semen (including HIV and other infection) and fecal matter entering other parts of the body that were not designed to receive such matter and produces negative health outcomes. In his holiness God is offended by the distorted, perverted, and disobedient use of what he created as good, indeed as very good. (Genesis 1:31) It is necessary to know this information, and what follows, so we can explain to people why God commands us to not engage in homosexuality. It is *far* from two people of the same gender holding hands, embracing, and kissing.[112]

Homosexual activists, and others sympathetic to them, e.g. many, if not most, though not all in Hollywood, government, education, and the mainstream media, want society to view homosexuals and their lifestyle as normal. However, such acts as those just mentioned and others, of which most people are unaware, are not normal, are certainly

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[107] Calling such a lifestyle "gay," is a deceptive euphemism. Deception is a lie, and the Lord Jesus Christ exposed Satan as "a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

[108] Erik Holland, "Rectal Insertion of Foreign Bodies by Male Homosexuals," Homosexinfo, 2007, http://www.homosexinfo.org/Sexuality/RectalObjects. (Accessed 4/17/13) The web page also shows photos of some of these objects including the eel biting the splenic flexure (the sharp bend between the transverse and the descending colon) and the damage it did to the patient's rectum.

[109] The Hebrew language of the Old Testament, which lacks the superlative, expresses the concept of "most" and "greatest" by repeating the designation three times. God is not only holy; he is holy, holy, holy—the only one of his attributes given this three-fold emphasis in the Bible. Notice in this passage the fear of sinfulness in the presence of God who is Most Holy.

[110] Compare the outrage of parents, albeit in microcosm, when they hear another child has harmed their child at school or elsewhere.

[111] Erik Holland, "Anal Sex among Male Homosexuals," http://www.homosexinfo.org/Sexuality/AnalSex. (Accessed 06/01/14)

[112] Nevertheless, we need to discern differences in types of kissing. Some kinds of kissing communicate non-sexual expressions of affection and non-romantic love. Other types of kissing do indeed communicate strong sexual expressions that lead to coitus.

abhorrent to God, and "are improper for God's holy people." (Ephesians 5:3, 1 Corinthians 6:9)

What is homosexual pedophilia?

Consider the disclosure of the FBI informant who infiltrated NAMBLA and reported that their members believe it is fine to engage in sex acts with boys as young as 18 months with most preferring boys in the 10-12 year-old range.[113] NAMBLA adherents argue that such acts with boys are "good" for them and they "enjoy" such experiences. If that were so, the Roman Catholic Church would have little or none of the hundreds of law suits by children who've encountered sex with pedophile "priests" and who are now grown up and are seeking compensation for psychological as well as other damages. The church also would not have had to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in fines and court costs that have bankrupted some dioceses. The prophet Isaiah had this to say about such twisted perversion: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."[114] NAMBLA and other international homosexual organizations are upfront in their literature about their agenda priority to legitimize sex between adults and children, and they disguise such evil as "true love," "boy-lovers," "pederasty" (which they define as love between a man and a youth of 12 to 18 years of age), and other deceptive terms.[115]

Such adult acts with children are not love. Legally they are referred to as statutory rape in some states. Most states refer to the acts as sexual assault and sexual abuse, reasoning that children below a certain age, varying from state to state between ages 14-18 with the average being 16, are legally incapable of giving consent to sexual intercourse. Punishment varies by state from a minimum of six months to life in prison.[116]

Homosexual activists make the false claim that most sexual assaults on children are done by heterosexuals, but that claim has been well refuted.[117] To the contrary reliable and valid research reveals that homosexual assaults against boys occur at a significantly much higher rate than the comparatively small number of heterosexual assaults. Constitutional law attorney Matt Barber writes that

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[113] Sean Hannity interview on KCOL AM 600 with the FBI agent on October 9, 2009. NAMBLA is an acronym for the North American Man/Boy Love Association, an avowed homosexual organization with an activist agenda. What this organization calls love is contrary to the love God defines, commands, and models in the Bible.
[114] Isaiah 5:20; cf. Malachi 2:17.
[115] See, e.g., the article, "Pederasty and Homosexuality" by David Thorstad and other postings at http://nambla.org/pederasty.html.
[116] Sandra Norman-Eady, Chief Attorney, Christopher Reinhart, Associate Attorney, and Peter Martino, Research Fellow, "STATUTORY RAPE LAWS BY STATE," http://www.cga.ct.gov/2003/olrdata/jud/rpt/2003-r-0376.htm (Accessed 9/20/2014)
[117] Matt Barber, "Homosexual HRC Founder Arrested for Raping 15-year-old Boy," http://barbwire.com/2014/11/20/homosexual-hrc-founder-arrested-raping-15-year-old-boy/ (Accessed 11/21/14)

> a study published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior, of over 200 convicted pedophiles…found that "86 percent of offenders against males described themselves as homosexual or bisexual." This demonstrates, as noted by Peter Sprigg of the Family Research Council, that "homosexual or bisexual men are approximately 10 times more likely to molest children than heterosexual men."[118]

Anecdotal accounts more fully disclose what lies behind the statistics. Recently a 68-year-old well known homosexual activist and political operative, Larry Brinkin, was arrested in San Francisco for having in his possession and distributing a huge amount of child pornography.

Barber states CNS News reported at the time that

> Police said that Brinkin, a former city employee, apparently had photos of children, as young as 1- or 2-years-old, performing sexual acts and being sodomized by adult men in attachments linked to the email address, reported The Chronicle. The email account was also linked to Yahoo discussion groups involving sexual exploitation of young people.

Barber also stated that Brinkin pled guilty to the charges.[119]

One more fact is telling. When such high profile pedophiles are arrested, they are vigorously supported by their ilk and remain on boards of which they are a part. For example, Terrance Patrick Bean, 66, founder of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the sole purpose of which is to promote the homosexual agenda and which is one of the world's largest, most highly funded, and most powerful anti-Christian organizations, was arrested for homosexual assault (consisting of two counts of third-degree sodomy, a felony, and one count of third-degree sex abuse) on a 15-year-old boy. He continued to remain on the board of the HRC.[120]

These adults are taking advantage of and abusing children at an age when they are very vulnerable. Their understanding of themselves, their identity, is still developing, and their sexual identity is still fluid at this point in their lives.

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[118] Matt Barber, "Homosexual HRC Founder Arrested for Raping 15-year-old Boy," http://barbwire.com/2014/11/20/homosexual-hrc-founder-arrested-raping-15-year-old-boy/ (Accessed 11/21/14)
[119] Matt Barber, "Homosexual HRC Founder Arrested for Raping 15-year-old Boy," http://barbwire.com/2014/11/20/homosexual-hrc-founder-arrested-raping-15-year-old-boy/ (Accessed 11/21/14)
[120] Matt Barber, "Homosexual HRC Founder Arrested for Raping 15-year-old Boy," http://barbwire.com/2014/11/20/homosexual-hrc-founder-arrested-raping-15-year-old-boy/ (Accessed 11/21/14)

What do we know about teenage identity development, including normal sexuality and homosexuality?

Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., M.D., a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital, and a practicing psychiatrist, maintains "that sexual identity is not completely formed until much later in teen years, even early 20s."[121] Ann Polk, author of *Restoring Sexual Identity: Hope for Women Who Struggle with Same Sex Attraction* and Executive Director, Restored Hope Network, says that "Dr. Lisa Diamond, a lesbian researcher at the University of Utah found that the homosexual and bisexual identities are the most fluid; heterosexual identity is the most solid."[122] Psychologist James Dobson recalls Sigmund "Freud said there is a homosexual period in puberty when the object of sexual interest is not yet fixed, there is a developmental process they're going through, and they are confused at that time. If you only have one set of voices that they hear and don't hear the other side when they're trying to develop their identity, they are trapped."[123]

In his review of the literature in the twins studies cited above, Whitehead found

> The fluidity is even more pronounced among adolescents, as Bearman and Brueckner's study demonstrated. "They found that from 16 to 17-years-old, if a person had a romantic attraction to the same sex, almost all had switched one year later. The authors were pro-gay and they commented that the only stability was among the heterosexuals, who stayed the same year after year. Adolescents are a special case—generally changing their attractions from year to year."[124]

This fluidity is undoubtedly why the letter Q is now being added to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) designation, making it LGBTQ.[125] The Q stands for Queer (their own term; no longer the pejorative label it used to be, an example of reframing and marketing the narrative) or Questioning; it represents those who are unsure of their gender and are searching. What is not being openly admitted or said is that this addition

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[121] Quoted by Pediatrician Meg Meeker, M.D., author of *Strong Mothers, Strong Sons*, on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.
[122] Quoted by Ann Polk, in an interview on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014. Ann, a former lesbian, began a struggle with same-sex attraction that started in early adolescence (age 12, 13) and overcame it.
[123] James Dobson, Ph.D., on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.
[124] NARTH Institute, "Identical Twin Studies Demonstrate Homosexuality is Not Genetic" http://www.narth.com/#!gay---born-that-way/cm6x (Accessed 4/12/15)
[125] This designation will be discussed further below. It should also be noted that some, in particular Richard Cohen, a Christian, former homosexual, psychotherapist, and Founder and Executive Director of the organization, International Healing Foundation (IHF), adds the letter U which stands for Unwanted same-sex attraction. See the HIF website at http://www.comingoutloved.com/fact-or-fiction (Accessed 2/28/2015) The U designation is not likely to be employed by the homosexual activists, one of the main agenda items of whom is to try to convince people that their homosexual attractions and actions are normal and, as Randy Thomas, former worker with the Christian organization, Exodus International, says, "I am gay. I am ok with who I am." At least that's what he'd like you to believe.

is a further marketing technique, inviting vulnerable young people into relationships with homosexuals and incorporation into the homosexual lifestyle, where they will find it difficult to leave.

This awareness is very significant. A valuable opportunity exists here for the church to reach out and be available to help these youth, especially the younger they are.[126] Churches should ask their youth ministers and youth directors if they are aware of this aspect of what homosexuals are doing, as well as the rest of the information in this book.

What do we know about transgenderism?

In Deuteronomy 28:20-28, we read that when people forsake the LORD and do evil, he will afflict them with confusion of mind and heart (the Hebrew word, *lebāb* signifying both mind and heart), thus giving them over to what they want to do, where they will suffer the consequences for doing so. (Cf. Romans 1:24) Such confusion is nowhere more evident than in the sad (not at all "gay" as we'll see) people who want to be of the opposite gender than the one God gave them, so much that they take steps to change their bodies to conform as much as possible with that of the other gender and to engage in sex with them.

Consistent with other aspects of homosexuality, those struggling with transgender desires and then acting them out, claim to have had these feelings since childhood. The LifeTree Café ministry of Group Publishing, Inc. has undertaken this subject in a film/discussion session, and they feature a transgender man, named Bob, who is married with a grown daughter, and he now wants to be a woman and live out his life-long desire as Rose Elizabeth. This decision of the person wanting to be a different gender, who is thinking more of him- or her- usually *him*self than of his family, obviously has a huge impact on the marriage, which often results in divorce with all the devastating effects of that marital dissolution,[127] the father-child relationship, and the psychological and spiritual health of all the members in the family.

Bob says "I knew at the age of 4 that I was really a girl in a boy's body." When we hear such statements, we need to understand them in the light of reality, which is not always comprehended by the one speaking or many other sources of information in our society. First of all, most boys at some time around that age have enjoyed walking around in their mother's shoes and pretending to be like her. Next, some children, who for many reasons have become confused about their gender identity and haven't received the necessary

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[126] Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, "Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective," May 27, 2014, p. 1. This report has been carefully prepared and written with competent attention to the scientific dimensions of the subject and with sensitivity and the desire to be a helpful representative of the best in church pastoral care while at the same time maintaining the Biblical standard of God's Word and the historic Christian theology on the subject. Very helpful guidance is given for how to offer pastoral care to people experiencing great pain, sorrow, frustration, shame, and despair in the area of gender identity confusion. (Pp. 7-9 and *passim*)

[127] Just some of those devastating effects, ones heavily impacting children, are identified with their respective scientific documentation in my essay, "Is Divorce Harmful to Children?" on the Marriage page of my website at www.fromacorntooak12.com.

nurture growing up, receive an extra jolt of confusion in the teen-age years when it is natural for such uncertainty for many, though surely not all, to occur in this period of normal human identity development, as we've just seen in the preceding section of this chapter. Further, when such people, predominately boys, do not receive the guidance they need, they proceed into life with such confusion, which can lead to a decision to act out their transgender desires, especially when encouraged by individuals influential in their lives, the media, and other sources persuasive to them.

Remember also that, as we'll discuss in depth in Chapter Four, the homosexual agenda very actively promotes false teaching, openly admitted in the homosexual literature (from which I quote below), that is designed to mislead people to act out their homosexual and questioning desires. Putting all that together, it is not surprising that many (though only about 700,000, or 0.3%, nationwide[128]) try to live as the other gender than that which God gave them prior to birth. Thus, though only a relatively small percentage of the American population engages in such activity, it is occurring enough that Craig Cable of LifeTree Café observes that, "This issue-transgenderism-raises all sorts of questions for people. Increasingly, our schools, workplaces, and faith communities are looking for answers."[129] That is another reason why I've written this book.

Bryan Fischer has well written why attempting gender transformation is not only wrong but also dangerous; in so doing we see some reasons why transgenderism is condemned by God. (Deuteronomy 22:5)[130] He also expresses the loving rationale for opposing the practice and why as believers in and followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we must not encourage anyone who's considering such an attempted transformation to do it.

> Do we oppose the normalization of transgenderism because we hate transgendered individuals? Absolutely not. We flatly and unequivocally oppose the normalization of transgenderism because it destroys people. We do not oppose transgenderism because we hate people. We oppose it because we love them.
>
> We do not want to see anyone's life ravaged by the pathologies that accompany this disorder of the mind and soul.
>
> Until 2012, the American Psychiatric Association classified transgenderism as a "gender identity disorder." It has since relabeled it "gender dysphoria" in an effort to soften the stigma that properly should attach itself to this problematic lifestyle choice.
>
> But "dysphoria" means "a profound state of unease or dissatisfaction," indicating changing terminology does…nothing to change a heart and a life wracked with a profound inner disturbance.

[128] See the full discussion, including documentation, below in Chapters Four and Five.
[129] Craig Cable, "When He Becomes She," http://lifetreecafe.com/topics/072615. (Accessed 07/27/15)
[130] See or review the discussion of this text above in Chapter One.

> Most Americans are blithely and blindly unaware of the mental, psychological and emotional devastation transgenderism wreaks on those who get trapped into this lifestyle. But the results are tragic.
>
> Transgender regret is now a sad and sorrowful reality in our cultural landscape. A survey conducted in 2010 by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force - neither of them members of the vast rightwing conspiracy - revealed the heartbreaking reality that a staggering 41 percent of transgendered Americans have attempted suicide. This is a rate more than 25 times higher than the population at large.
>
> Social research has revealed that 65% of all those who undergo cosmetic surgery live to regret it. How much higher must that figure be for those who have undergone genital mutilation?
>
> The homosexual lobby itself knows that there is something wrong with transgenderism. The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association - again, not a part of the evangelical pro-family movement - lists a number of pathologies that are so common among transgenders that the GLMA warns the transgender community about them.
>
> Among these pathologies are an increased risk for heart attacks and strokes, sexually transmitted diseases (they are at four times the risk of HIV/AIDS as the general population, for instance), substance abuse, depression and obesity. In other words, transgenderism is an enormously risky and unhealthy lifestyle.[131]

Some of the health "risks" the GLMA fesses up to include the following that are on the GLMA website in an article entitled, "Ten Things Transgender Persons Should discuss [sic] with Their Healthcare Provider." The author is a physician on the Board of Directors of the Gay and Medical Association.

> Following are the health issues GLMA's healthcare providers have identified as most commonly of concern for transgender persons. While not all of these items apply to everyone, it's wise to be aware of these issues.
>
> 1. Access to Healthcare
>
>   It is not easy to find a healthcare provider who knows how to treat transgender people. Sometimes it is difficult to find someone who will agree to treat you. Some providers may feel that there is something wrong with you because you

[131] Bryan Fischer, "Why Oppose the Normalization of Transgenderism," Friday, November 21, 2014, http://www.afa.net/the-stand/homosexuality/why-we-oppose-the-normalization-of-transgenderism/ (Accessed 11/21/14)

are a transgender person. They are not correct, of course.[132] They may not understand that you have always been this way….

3. Hormones
   Talk with your provider about hormone treatment. If you are starting hormones for the first time, ask about the things you need to watch out for while taking these medicines. If you are a transgender woman, ask about estrogen and blood clots, swelling, high or low blood pressure and high blood sugar. If you are a transgender man, ask about the blood tests you will need to be sure your testosterone dose is safe….

4. Cardiovascular Health
   Transgender persons may be at increased risk for heart attack or stroke, not only from hormone use but from cigarette smoking, overweight, high blood pressure and diabetes. Transgender women may fear that their provider may make them stop estrogen if they develop heart trouble, and so they may not report feelings such as chest pain or trouble breathing. Be sure to tell your provider if you do have these feelings.

5. Cancer
   …Your provider will also check for possible cancer of your sex organs, if they have not been removed….

6. Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Safe Sex
   Transgender people, particularly young transgender people, may be engaging in sexual activity. Just like anyone else, transgender people may get a sexually transmitted disease.

7. Alcohol and Tobacco
   Transgender persons who drink alcohol may drink too much and risk damage to the liver or other organs. Too much alcohol may also cause a person to treat themselves

[132] Here is another example of the homosexual agenda item that it is OK to lie. This statement in #1 is wrong as is the other statement about the person as having "always been this way;" the critics are correct, there is something wrong with transgender people. To begin with this lifestyle choice is contrary to God's will, as we saw above in the discussion of Deuteronomy 22:5. That should be enough to count something as wrong. Further, as we've seen, no genetic evidence exists for homosexuality.

or other people badly, or to drive unsafely. Alcohol and hormones may be more dangerous when taken together. Many transgender people smoke cigarettes. This increases their risk of heart and lung disease, especially in persons taking hormones. Transgender persons who care about their health should not smoke, and they should drink only small amounts, if at all.

8. Depression
   It is very easy for transgender persons to become sad and depressed. If our families or friends don't want to see us anymore, it is a very depressing time. Even after transition, depression can still be a problem. When someone is depressed, they cannot be happy no matter what they are doing. Depressed persons may make bad choices and may harm themselves.

9. Injectable Silicone
   Some transgender women want to look feminine and beautiful without having to wait for the effects of estrogen. They expect injections of silicone to give them "instant curves." The silicone, sold at "pumping parties" by non-medical persons, may move around in the tissues and cause ugly scars years later. It is usually not medical grade, may be contaminated and is often injected using a shared needle. You can get hepatitis or HIV through shared needles. Silicone is dangerous and should not be used.

10. Fitness (Diet & Exercise)
    Many transgender people are overweight and do not exercise.[133]

Michelle Cretella, M. D., president of the American College of Pediatricians, provides further evidence from careful science and explanation for why no one can truly transgender and why the attempt to do so is very damaging for all who try and for many others. She said the following in an interview.

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[133] Rebecca A. Allison, M.D., "Ten Things Transgender Persons Should discuss [sic] with Their Healthcare Provider." Revised May 2012. http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=692 (Accessed 11/21/14)

Essentially, transgender ideology holds that people can be born into the wrong body: It's simply not true. We can demonstrate this by looking at twin studies. No one is born in the wrong body. So to take that lie and essentially indoctrinate all of our children from preschool forward with that lie, we are destroying their ability for reality testing.

This is cognitive and psychological abuse. I want to say just a little more about that. The reason it destroys reality testing is because most children at age three (pre-school age) can correctly identify themselves by saying "I am a boy" or "I am a girl" and most children will not understand that a boy grows into a man and stays a man and that a girl grows into a woman and stays a woman. So when many seven-year-olds see a man get into a dress and put on makeup, they may believe that he just became a woman. The other side is not being honest and not acknowledging that.

This happened most recently in Rocklin, California. It was the end of the kindergarten school year and the teacher called the whole class together, at the behest of the boy's parents, and had the children sit down and she read them two stories. I will call them "gender bending stories." One was The Red Crayon in which you have a crayon that's actually blue wrapped in red paper. That primes the kids to think, "Oh, what's on the outside doesn't have to match the inside."

The next story the teacher read was I Am Jazz, which is about a boy whose parents helped him impersonate a girl from the age of three. He's 17 now, has his own television program and looks like a girl from the waist up. After these two stories were finished, a boy (I'll call him Joey) left the classroom, presumably to use the bathroom and came back in a dress. The teacher said: "Boys and girls, Joey is actually a girl just like Jazz. From now on we need to call her Josephine" (again I'm making the names up). This was very confusing to the other children in kindergarten and it terrified one girl in particular, which was clear from something that happened when she was home with her mother. Her mom had wrapped her up after she had go out of the tub and she was going by the mirror when she saw her hair slicked back. Then, she burst into tears, saying, "Mommy, am I turning into a boy? I don't wanna turn into a boy! Joey turned into a girl, am I gonna turn into a boy?"

Now, I know this because the mother called me. As the president of the College of Pediatricians I've been outspoken and parents reach out to me. This mother is being told that she is the one who's crazy and that her daughter is the one who's having a problematic reaction.

So transgender ideology—yes, it's child abuse because we are gaslighting our children. And now that they're thoroughly confused they will think that they really are the opposite sex and will be sent down a medical pathway. As they approach puberty, they will be put on puberty blockers and then on cross-sex hormones. That combination will permanently sterilize most, if not all, of those children and also puts them at risk for heart disease, diabetes, and various cancers. If girls have been on testosterone, which is

their sex change hormone, for a full-year, by age 16 they can get a double mastectomy. So, gaslighting, pubertal castration and surgical mutilation: It's institutionalized child abuse.

To make matters worse you must realize that prior to transgender ideology, these children were treated with watchful waiting, because for many kids it may be a passing phase. Sometimes the girls may just be tomboys. So with either watchful waiting or family and individual therapy the vast majority, 75-95% of kids, would accept their biological sex by young adulthood. So yes, this is child abuse!

If the parents find that their child is questioning their sex, if things on your own at home are not going well, I encourage all parents to seek out a local therapist who will work with them to find underlying family dynamics or conflicts. If the only therapist you find locally says, "You must accept them as transgender," you can reach out to us at bestforchildren.org, that's our website. We can recommend some therapists who will work with families. If they're not in the local area, they can even do it by Skype….

Words matter... biology is reality, not bigotry.

We're at a point now in which we have documented at least 6,500 genetic differences between men and women. Men and women cannot be treated the same in medicine. Because of these genetic differences women are more prone to autoimmune diseases than men are. We must approach our patients in accordance with their biology, not in accordance with their perceptions which are delusional.

I hope I would be able to respond [to those who question] in that fashion, but it would be very difficult because just as we are seeing this tyrannical enforcement of newspeak on our college campuses, it is the same within the highest levels of medicine. At our office at the American College of Pediatricians, I receive e-mails and phone calls even from physicians and therapist, psychologists on the left who are clearly against us because we're pro-life, and they're even LGB[T] affirming, but they will thank me for speaking out because they say, "We wish we could, but we can't because we'll lose our jobs. We'll get death threats."

I receive emails from concerned parents throughout the nation asking me to review health curricula because it has now become "transphobic" to teach middle school students that women have ovaries and men have testes. That's transphobic!....

The argument, [being "trapped in the wrong body"] if you can even call it that—I'll just call it a claim—the claim by the activist physicians on the other side is that when a child persistently and consistently insists that he (I'll use he for ease of example) is really a girl, well then that's it—that's how you diagnose transgender. That is proof that they have the brain of the opposite sex in their body. They say, "We have proof, we have studies that

prove changes or differences between adult transgender brains and the brains of their biological peers who are not transgender."

Okay, so let's unpack that:

#1. The definition of a delusion is a fixed false belief. So if I persistently and consistently insist that I am Margaret Thatcher, or persistently consistently insist that I am a cat, or that I am an amputee trapped in a normal body—I am delusional. In fact, there are people who believe they're amputees trapped in a normal body and they are appropriately diagnosed as having Body Identity Integrity Disorder, a mouthful, but you get my drift. So if you want to cut off an arm or a leg you're mentally ill, but if you want to cut off healthy breasts and genitals then you are transgender and you don't have a mental illness. That's completely unscientific. That's no diagnosis.

#2. Let's talk about the brain studies. There have been several. Many have found no brain differences, but "we don't talk about those." There are a few that have found some differences on what's called functional MRIs and they prove nothing. The reason they prove nothing is because the brain changes due to behavior. We have documented in numerous studies that behavior changes the appearance, the physiology and function of the brain. So to have a few studies that are very small, have never been replicated, say, "Hey, there are brain differences." More than likely, the fact that the person has lived transgender is what caused those differences, if they're even real.

You may ask, "So how do we know, Dr. Cretella, that what you said, that no one's ever born this way, is true? How do we know that?" If a brain were somehow the wrong sex, due to factors before birth, every single identical twin would have the same gender identity all the time, but they don't.

Why? Identical twins have identical DNA. So if it were in the genes and solely in the genetic DNA, then 100% of the time they would both be transgender or both be non-transgender. The best twin study we have shows that the vast majority do not match. If you have one identical twin who's [considered] transgender, 72% of the time the other twin is normal. That tells us that it's post-birth effects that primarily impact your identity—post-birth effects, not pre-birth.

[Why do some medical doctors validate the idea that a man can become a woman?] Ideology. Really, it comes down to an ideology and worldview. I mean, it's been that way since the beginning.

Gender as a term, prior to the 1950s:

#1. Did not refer to people;
#2. Was not in the medical literature.

Sexologists were PhDs and MDs in the 50s who were taking people who believed they were transsexuals (the term was transsexual at the time),

mostly men who wanted to be women, and basically invented the so-called "sex reassignment surgery." Amongst themselves in the 50s, they said, "What are we treating? How are we going to justify this?" because they knew full well even then that sex is in the DNA and that mutilating the body does not change a person's sex. They basically looked at the word gender, which meant male and female referring to grammar.

So in the 1950s, one of the sexologists at the time was Dr. John Money. And they said, "We're gonna take gender and say that for people it means 'the social expression of an internal sex identity.' That's what we're treating." They pulled it out of the air to justify lining their pockets to do mutilating surgeries. And this is the very same definition that the activists are using. It has no basis in reality….

NO surgery will change the DNA which is imprinted in every single cell of the body. Again, this is a combination of reason and science. They meld. They go together.

Human sexuality is binary…. We know this because in nature, reproduction is the rule and human beings engage in sexual reproduction. You need a man and a woman to do that.

Chromosomes: women are XX, those are the sex chromosomes. Women have two Xs and men have an X and a Y. Those are genetic markers, they are genetic markers for female and male respectively—binary. That's the rule and it's self-evident. Biological exceptions to the rule do not invalidate the rule, and by that I am referring to intersex conditions. We live in an imperfect world. We live in a world with disease and disorder.

There are a variety of very rare biological genetic disorders that result in disorders of sex development. These individuals have a true physiological, genetic, biological problem, so it may be appropriate within those cases to give them surgery or they may need hormones. But that's a case-by-case basis and they are the exception, not the rule. Why do we refer to them colloquially as intersex? Because they are between the norms.

Many people with intersex conditions can lead very happy and healthy lives, but their treatment is very personalized. Someone who identifies as transgender, however—that's not a problem in their body. Gender identity…all identities are in our thoughts and feelings. Those are not hardwired, they develop and they may be factually wrong or factually correct. Individuals with disorders of sex development are being used as pawns in the fight for basically a civil right to a mental illness. There's no such thing as a civil right to a mental illness, but that is in fact what we are dealing with in the transgender rights movement….

[To believe what many liberal professors claim, that the male-female binary is only a social construct, that you grow up learning that men and women are different, but it's really something that's entirely fluid], to believe that, you have to be completely ignorant of genetics. There are

6,500 genetic differences between men and women. Now the fact that it's a binary as I said, comes down to the fact that the reality is we have sexual reproduction in the human species and reproduction is the rule in biology. Okay, number one: We have a binary. To rationalize outside of that, you have to rationalize away the entirety of medicine, because with 6,500 genetic differences between the two, it impacts how we treat disease.

Women are not small men! That is how women used to be treated. Science used to do research predominately on men and then look at women and say, "Oh, you're just a smaller body mass, so we're gonna treat your heart attack the same way and your high blood pressure the same way." And now we're realizing, "Wow! No wonder we had different results with women, look at this. Now we can prove and understand why!" And there's a big push to get more women into pharmaceutical studies than ever before because we are different.

Transgenderism is a social construct. The "fluidity" of sexuality: That's a social construct. They have it exactly backwards. And the word gender, as I said earlier, is nothing more than a linguistic engineering term and should have no place in medicine.

We have biological sex, we have sex differences, some of which are purely biological and others that develop as a result of nature and nurture. Women have loads more oxytocin and oxytocin receptors than men do. That is the hormone that is associated with nurturing. It is released during labor, breast-feeding and is so key and important in the first three years of the mother and infant bonding. It's the bonding hormone. Although men have oxytocin as well, they have far fewer receptors in their brains. Every organ of the body is "sexed," if you will, genetically speaking and it's utterly ridiculous to make that assertion….

[The transgender movement is attacking the order that exists in human nature….human nature is under attack.] If my feelings alone determine who I am, then there really is no such thing as a man or a woman.

We're essentially promoting doping. Men are doping on estrogen to become handicapped men. Women are doping on testosterone to become handicapped men in a sense.

This whole "Oh, what do we do in sports?" I mean, really…doping is illegal, period. The end! That's it. Giving a woman testosterone does not make her a man, giving a man estrogen does not make him a woman, the estrogen makes a man a handicapped man. And the testosterone makes the women the equivalent of a handicapped man. Well, I shouldn't even say a handicapped man because you can't change sex.

And in fact, in the Olympics, if a woman were extremely excelling, they [officials] would be concerned about doping and they would be looking in her system for testosterone, high levels of it. So this is utterly ludicrous….

> The error is to equate equality with sameness... they're not. Same does not mean equal. Because we're equal in human dignity, but being male or female, that is the ultimate diversity we should be celebrating. There is no greater diversity than female and male. That is our innate identity and it's written on every cell of our body at the level of our DNA.
>
> [W]e're making the mistake of equality meaning same. If that's what you believe, then ultimately we're eliminating: There's no such thing as a woman, there's no such thing as a man….
>
> [More Americans [need] to stand up for the sacred institution of the family…the natural family, meaning a loving marriage between a man and a woman, is the most pro-child institution we have. So if you love children, nurture your marriage first of all. It's the greatest gift you can give a child. We must stand up for that, because our children are hurting. Decades, decades of social science demonstrates that this is the most important thing we can do in terms of children's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. It's the family... it's the family.[134]

Colin Wright, an evolutionary biologist, who is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute, adds more pertaining to the intersex aberration.

> When biologists claim that sex is binary, we mean something straightforward: There are only two sexes….An organism's sex is defined by the type of gamete (sperm or ova) it has the function of producing. Males have the function of producing sperm, or small gametes; females, ova, or large ones. Because there is no third gamete type, there are only two sexes. Sex is binary.
>
> Intersex people, whose genitalia appear ambiguous or mixed, don't undermine the sex binary. Many gender ideologues, however, falsely claim the existence of intersex conditions renders the categories "male" and "female" arbitrary and meaningless….
>
> In reality, the existence of borderline cases no more raises questions about everyone else's sex than the existence of dawn and dusk casts doubt on day and night. For the vast majority of people, their sex is obvious. And our society isn't experiencing a sudden dramatic surge in people born with ambiguous genitalia. We are experiencing a surge in people who are unambiguously one sex claiming to "identify" as the opposite sex or as something other than male or female.
>
> Gender ideology seeks to portray sex as so incomprehensibly complex and multivariable that our traditional practice of classifying people as simply either male or female is grossly outdated and should be abandoned for a

[134] TFP Student Action, "Dr. Cretella on Transgenderism: A Mental Illness Is Not a Civil Right," November 15, 2017, https://tfpstudentaction.org/blog/dr-michelle-cretella-on-transgender-ideology (Accessed 7/15/21)

> revolutionary concept of "gender identity." This entails that males wouldn't be barred from female sports, women's prisons or any other space previously segregated according to our supposedly antiquated notions of "biological sex," so long as they "identify" as female.
>
> But "intersex" and "transgender" mean entirely different things. Intersex people have rare developmental conditions that result in apparent sex ambiguity. Most transgender people aren't sexually ambiguous at all but merely "identify" as something other than their biological sex.
>
> Once you're conscious of this distinction, you will begin to notice gender ideologues attempting to steer discussions away from whether men who identify as women should be allowed to compete in female sports toward prominent intersex athletes like South African runner Caster Semenya. Why? Because so long as they've got you on your heels making difficult judgment calls on a slew of complex intersex conditions, they've succeeded in drawing your attention away from easy calls on unquestionably male athletes like 2022 NCAA Division I women's swimming and diving champion Lia Thomas. They shift the focus to intersex to distract from transgender.
>
> Acknowledging the existence of rare difficult cases doesn't weaken the position or arguments against allowing males in female sports, prisons, restrooms and other female-only spaces. In fact, it's a much stronger approach because it makes a crucial distinction that the ideologues are at pains to obscure.[135]

Are you seeing why transgender manipulation of the body God gave them is counterproductive to their health and other well-being? Is there any doubt in your mind why God calls such tragedy *tôʿēbâ*?

Bryan Fischer cites poignant anecdotal accounts of famous people who have undergone the medical procedures to change their gender. The procedures did not turn out well in the sight of any of those who had it done to them.

Fischer refers to a stunning column by Stella Morabito at the Federalist in which she reveals the truth about transgender medical procedures that are being covered up. She discloses the facts that high numbers of transgender people deeply regret having undergone the procedures.

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[135] Colin Wright, "A Biologist Explains Why Sex Is Binary," *Wall Street Journal*, April 9, 2023, https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-biologist-explains-why-sex-is-binary-gender-male-female-intersex-medical-supreme-court-ketanji-brown-jackson-lia-thomas-3d22237e?st=76ceauhx2spbc4r&reflink=article_email_share (Accessed 04/10/2023)

She tells the stories of several whose lives have been destroyed, and now that they are down and have made public their enormous discontent with the huge mistake they made, they're being persecuted by the homosexual "community" that doesn't want this information disclosed. Have these persecutors no shame?! It's obvious they have no love for these transgender people; it's even more obvious they don't care for them. Morabito cites testimonies of those, all males, who've undergone transgender genital surgery, some recently and another many years ago.

One laments having only an empty scrotum that serves as his "vagina" and leaves him dissatisfied; he discloses how when he's sexually aroused he has a "scary" sensation that he has a penis; it's a phantom feeling that is completely unfulfilling. His decision to try to alter his genitalia did nothing to alter his DNA, and when his natural characteristics kick in, he is unable to do anything about it.

Another who tried to transgender (I use the word try, since like much else about homosexuality it is not what it claims to be, i.e., one does not truly trans [across, beyond] gender [the male or female division of a species]) failed and is miserable. A well-known athlete, he had the surgery done and now feels he "would have been better off staying the way [he] was—an intact person" and "know[s] deep down [he's] a second-class woman." He says he receives "a lot" of inquiries from people who are considering having the operation, and he says "I discourage them all."[136]

Here again, none of these people are truly "gay." Two of the four whose stories she tells, one male to "female" and the other female to "male," ended their lives in suicide as do many others.

Stella Morabito's column title ("Trouble in Transtopia"), subtitle ("Murmurs Of Sex Change Regret"), and caption ("Transgender people who regret their sex changes typically get buried in venom rather than loved") speak volumes to Christians called by God to speak his truth in love. Walking with Christ in deep and abiding awareness of how greatly he loves us, what he did for us on the cross, and how he has forgiven us, we are especially equipped to show love to all people, and especially those who've been victimized so severely, and who long to experience true love, the love of Christ that heals and provides unparalleled hope. They can, and many already do, experience that love in the church.

From a pastoral care perspective we should also keep in mind, and call people's attention to the reality, that truly loving those struggling with homosexuality ought to include a sense of urgency, especially concerning those who are struggling with transgender issues. Due to making irreversible decisions during a time of such fluidity of gender identity, other cases already exist where, sadly, the attempt to undo medical procedures and

[136] Stella Morabito, "Trouble in Transtopia: Murmurs of Sex-Change Regret, Transgender people who regret their sex changes typically get buried in venom rather than loved." http://thefederalist.com/2014/11/11/trouble-in-transtopia-murmurs-of-sex-change-regret/ (Accessed 1/21/2015)

restore one's original physical characteristics has been seen to be unrealistic if not impossible.[137]

While not a typical instance of sexual confusion, this classic case in the inset below of a tragic surgical error illustrates again both the unlikely ability to restore ablated genitalia and to transform a person's innate God-given gender identity. The anecdote also illustrates how scientists can misunderstand, misinterpret, and misapply their observations.[138]

In 1973 an account of a serious surgical error was published. A normal twin boy's penis was accidently cut off while a physician was attempting to repair a fused foreskin. Doctors told the parents to raise the boy as a girl and keep his past a secret, which they tried to do.

The case went into the medical literature where textbooks wrongly taught that infants are sexually neutral at birth until Dr. Milton Diamond of the University of Hawaii-Manoa and Dr. H. Keith Sigmundson of the Ministry of Health in Victoria, British Columbia reported that "far from being satisfied with his reassignment to girlhood, the boy renounced his female identity at age 14 and chose to live as a man, even undergoing extensive surgery to attempt a reconstruction of his ablated genitals."

The boy, referred to as "Joan" never identified as a girl. He would tear off girl clothes, refuse to play with dolls, and seek out boys rather than girls as friends. Instead of following his mother and put on makeup as she tried to model for him, he would imitate his father's shaving. At age 12 "Joan" began receiving estrogen treatment to grow breasts, but he disliked the hormone and its feminizing effects, was not attracted to boys, had no friends, and considered suicide. At age 14, still unaware of what had occurred so long ago, "Joan" refused to continue living as a girl.

"Finally confronted, her father broke down in tears and told ["Joan"] of the accident. Rather than being devastated, Joan was relieved. 'For the first time everything made sense,' the article quotes her as saying, 'and I understood who and what I was.'

"Joan became John, requested male hormone shots, had a mastectomy and began to try rebuilding his male genitals with skin grafts. After the treatments, John was accepted by his peers.

"At 25, John married a woman and adopted her children. Surgical reconstruction was only partially successful: much of his penis is without sensation, and though John is capable of having intercourse and orgasm" he is less interested in coitus than with the gladness that he is able to identify as a man. Dr. Diamond observed that "his head is on straight. And it is the head, Diamond added, that holds the primary sexual organ."

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[137] "Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective," May 27, 2014, p. 9.

[138] "Boy raised as girl now pleased to be a man: Surgical error didn't dictate course of nature," New York Times News Service, *Chicago Tribune*, March 14, 1997, Section 1, p. 15.

The bottom line: For those of us who are Christians, since God's Word, his special revelation, has said transgenderism (more accurately transsexualism) is wrong (see Chapter One in this book), that settles the matter for us. Sound science, both empirical and anecdotal, is simply that part of God's general revelation that we need to know in order to speak more persuasively to people who don't hold to the Bible as their standard but who are willing to consider the truth, especially when spoken in love. (Ephesians 4:15)

As we've been observing, careful science illustrates and sometimes explains much Biblical teaching. The eternally trustworthy Word of God, the Bible, can stand on its own. It does not need science to support it. In fact, scientific findings are not infrequently reversed by subsequent studies, but those that do prove valid and reliable, and that address related subjects, serve to provide examples, explanations, and applications of passages in the Scriptures. Why is homosexuality *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight? In addition to what we've already seen above, careful social science research reveals grave effects resulting from homosexual practice. *The homosexual lifestyle is also very dangerous to physical and emotional as well as spiritual health.*

Violence is significantly higher among homosexuals than in heterosexual relationships.

Contrary to the image of homosexuals as carefree and harmonious, e.g., "gay," an image fostered by the media, activists, and others, who are either caring but uninformed or deceptive, a considerable part of their relationships contain violence. Researchers have found violence is significantly more common in homosexual and lesbian relationships contrasted with heterosexual married couples.[139] Thus, except in a quote, I avoid using the word "gay" as a synonym for the word "homosexual" and its derivatives in order to not participate in misleading readers of this study, the church, or the rest of the world.

Personal as well as interpersonal violence is significantly higher in homosexual relationships than in heterosexual marriages. The infliction of violence on oneself in the form of suicide attempts is observed. Dailey writes,

> A twins study that examined the relationship between homosexuality and suicide, published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, found that homosexuals with same-sex partners were at greater risk for overall mental health problems and were 6.5 times more likely than their twins to

[139] Timothy J. Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14) See also the GLMA website, a homosexual website purporting to be an organization of "Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality." http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=691 (Accessed 04/10/13)

> have attempted suicide. The higher rate was not attributable to mental health or substance abuse disorders.[140]

Sound social science studies reveal very high levels of violence in both homosexual and lesbian relationships. Dailey discloses the following:

> A study in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* examined conflict and violence in lesbian relationships. The researchers found that 90 percent of the lesbians surveyed had been recipients of one or more acts of verbal aggression from their intimate partners during the year prior to this study, with 31 percent reporting one or more incidents of physical abuse.[141]
>
> In a survey of 1,099 lesbians, the *Journal of Social Service Research* found that slightly more than half of the lesbians reported that they had been abused by a female lover/partner. The researchers found that "the most frequently indicated forms of abuse were verbal/emotional/psychological abuse and combined physical-psychological abuse."[142]
>
> A study of lesbian couples reported in the *Handbook of Family Development and Intervention* "indicates that 54 percent had experienced 10 or more abusive incidents, 74 percent had experienced six or more incidents, 60 percent reported a pattern to the abuse, and 71 percent said it grew worse over time."[143]
>
> In their book *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence*, Island and Letellier postulate that "the incidence of domestic violence among gay men is nearly double that in the heterosexual population."[144]

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[140] R. Herrell, et al., "A Co-Twin Study in Adult Men," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 56 (1999): 867-874 in Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14)

[141] Lettie L. Lockhart et al., "Letting out the Secret: Violence in Lesbian Relationships," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9 (1994): 469-492 in Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14)

[142] Gwat Yong Lie and Sabrina Gentlewarrier, "Intimate Violence in Lesbian Relationships: Discussion of Survey Findings and Practice Implications," *Journal of Social Service Research* 15 (1991): 46 in Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14)

[143] William C. Nichols, et al, editors, *Handbook of Family Development and Intervention* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2000): 393 in Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14)

[144] D. Island and P. Letellier, *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence* (New York: Haworth Press, 1991): 14 in Dailey, "Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples." http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02. (Accessed 06/02/14)

The rate of "double that in the heterosexual population" is the lowest seen in careful related social science literature. Most studies reveal the rate as being at least two to three times that among heterosexuals.

Vernon J. Geberth, M.S., M.P.S., a former commander of Bronx homicide for the New York City Police Department, disclosed that homosexual murders are "relatively common and these murders may involve male victims murdered by other males or may involve female victims who are in some type of lesbian relationship and they are murdered by another female."[145] In 2005 Drs. Harnam Singh, Luv Sharma, and S. K. Dhattarwal agreed in the *Journal of Indian Academy of Forensic Medicine* that homosexual murders are not uncommon; they also reported that these murders may involve both sexes either as victims or as assailants.[146]

Janet Levy, Contributing Editor for *FamilySecurityMatters.org*, puts the matter in an international perspective. She cites research showing the same results in other countries.

> In a review of the available literature on the risks of the homosexual lifestyle by Dr. Joseph Zanga of the American College of Pediatricians (ACPEDS), findings suggest that homosexual relationships are far less stable and exhibit greater rates of violence than heterosexual marriages. The rate of violence between homosexual partners is two to three times higher than among married heterosexuals and the average duration of a homosexual relationship is two to three years. A study of close to 1,300 same-sex partnerships in Norway and over 1,500 in Sweden found that same-sex couples are 1.5 times more likely to divorce than heterosexual couples and lesbian couples were 2.7 times more likely to divorce over a similar time period.[147]

Dr. Bernard Knight, long-time Professor of Forensic Pathology in the University of Wales, was made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) for his services to forensic medicine. Involved in many notorious murder cases, he and Dr. Pekka Saukko, Professor and Head of the Department of Forensic Medicine at the University of Turku in Finland and editor of *Forensic Science International*, coauthored a pathology textbook entitled *Knight's Forensic Pathology* in 2004. Knight and Saukko concluded

As with heterosexual offenses, the cause of death in fatal cases is almost always some form of general trauma, such as strangulation or head injuries. Homosexual activity,

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[145] Vernon J. Geberth, "Homosexual Serial Murder Investigation," Practical Homicide Investigation, Vol. 43, No. 6, June 1995, http://www.practicalhomicide.com/Research/homoserial.htm (Accessed 1/8/2015)
[146] SEX RELATED HOMICIDES AND OFFENDERS -A MEDICO-LEGALISTS VIEW, Dr. Harnam Singh, Dr. Luv Sharma, Dr. S.K.Dhattarwal, *Journal of Indian Academy of Forensic Medicine*, 2005 ; 27 (3). ISSN 0971-0973 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_Murders (Accessed 1/8/2015)
[147] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

however, may be a parallel event; it is a fact that some of the most violent homicides seen by pathologists are among male homosexuals.[148]

The late Dr. William Eckert, an internationally regarded pathologist who was involved in major murder cases in the world, such as the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the Charles Manson murders, Josef Mengele, and the identity of Jack the Ripper, founded the *American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*. Regarding homosexual murders, Eckert wrote:

> Equally high is the number of homicides, many probably related to transient attachments, which often lead to suspicion, jealousy, and murder. When murder does occur it is exceptionally brutal with an overkill appearance... Overkill, as it is seen in homosexual and lesbian murders, is certainly a form of sadistic crime. In these instances multiple stabbing and other brutal injuries...are common findings....[149]

How does this violence compare to violent crimes in general? Michael Newton, a crime writer specializing in serial killers, researched that question.

> Homosexual slayers clearly have no monopoly on violence, but it is true that their crimes often display extremes of "overkill" and mutilation... On balance, it seems fair to say that while homosexuals sometimes fall prey to "gay bashing" violence by bigoted "straights," they are far more likely to be murdered by another homosexual than in a random hate crime.[150]

Other journal articles on the issue of homosexual homicides and overkill report similar findings. In 1996 *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology* published an article entitled "Homicide in homosexual victims: a study of 67 cases from the Broward County, Florida, Medical Examiner's office (1982-1992), with special emphasis on 'overkill.'" The abstract for the journal article summarizes the following findings:

> Forensic pathologists often state that homosexual homicides are more violent than those with heterosexual victims. Overkill or wounding far beyond that required to cause death is a frequently used descriptor of these deaths. We quantified the number and extent of injuries between homosexual and heterosexual homicide victims to determine whether one group suffered more violence than the other...Homosexual homicides are more violent than heterosexual homicides when one compares the mean

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[148] Knight's Forensic Pathology',(3rd Ed) Saukko P. and B. Knight (2004) Arnold Publishers, London, page 428 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_Murders#cite_note-6 (Accessed 1/8/2015)

[149] Tedeschi CG, Eckert W, Tedeschi LG, eds. Forensic medicine; vol 2. Philadelphia: WB Saunders, 1977:962 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_Murders#cite_note-6 (Accessed 1/8/2015)

[150] Michael Newton, *The Encyclopedia of Serial Killers*, p. 103, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_Murders#cite_note-11

number of injuries (fatal sharp, blunt, and total)/case and the extent of injuries on the body.[151]

A report from the United States Department of Justice in the Biden administration released in June 2022 discloses that domestic violence is significantly more common in LGBT relationships. The "Violent Victimization by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2017-2020" report shows the pervasiveness of anti-LGBT violence. After citing statistical evidence, the document concludes that in contrast to heterosexual couples, domestic violence is eight times higher among bisexual couples and over twice as high among lesbian and homosexual male couples.[152]

Do you truly love a homosexual? If so, how can you affirm, much less encourage that person to expose him- or herself to such danger? If you are a pastor, teacher, or other church leader, how can you say you are truly compassionate and caring for homosexual people by advocating they participate in such a dangerous pursuit? How can you dare to urge others in the church to encourage people to engage the extremely unhealthy and dangerous homosexual lifestyle? Read again Leviticus 19:16b-17:

> 16 "'Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the LORD.
> 17 "'Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.

If you are such a leader and have been advocating the acceptance of homosexuality in the church out of ignorance as to what that lifestyle involves, now is the time to repent and speak the truth in love. People respect a pastor or other leader who can admit mistakes, including confessing sins, and they forgive us when we ask for forgiveness. Tell them, "I just discovered more information about what this lifestyle involves. I'm sorry I spoke without being fully informed. In fact I've been misinformed. Sources I've trusted were untrustworthy. If we truly love people we cannot encourage them to engage in homosexuality."

By contrast the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the U. S. Department of Justice, reveals that "married women in traditional families experience the lowest rate of violence compared with women in other types of relationships."[153] Careful studies continually report that heterosexual marriage relationships have the least violence when contrasted with cohabiting relationships, including heterosexuals living together without marital

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[151] http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8838474?ordinalpos=3&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_DefaultReportPanel.Pubm quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_and_Murders#cite_note-6 (Accessed 1/8/2015)
[152] Michael Austin, "These Violent Facts About LGBT Couples Are So Real Even Biden's DOJ Forced to Admit Inconvenient Truth," *The Western Journal*, August 6, 2022.
[153] Timothy J. Dailey, "The Negative Health Effects of Homosexuality," *Insight*, Number 232, Family Research Council, Washington, DC, 6 March 2001, p. 15.

commitment.[154] Sprigg and Dailey add that "the highest rates of domestic violence among heterosexuals occur among those who are divorced, separated, cohabiting, or in sexual relationships outside of marriage; *married* women experience the lowest rates of domestic violence of any household arrangement."[155]

The violence in many homosexual relationships is seen in larger contexts that do extend far beyond the bedroom. The uninformed and misleading concept that what goes on in one's own bedroom is his or her own business and doesn't affect anyone else is not at all true and cannot withstand careful scrutiny.

The significant amount of violence in homosexual relationships accounts for the apparent rise in crime in Colorado. According to *The Denver Post*, in a news story on the annual crime report of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI), a 2.1% increase in violent crimes and a 1.8% increase in all reported crime occurred in 2013. The story added that "Rape crimes showed the highest percent change, up 41.3 percent last year to 2,903 reported. There were 2,055 rapes reported in 2012. The CBI says the rape increase doesn't represent a crime trend. Rather, it is the result of two offenses being added to data, forcible sodomy and sexual assault with an object,"[156] both of which are homosexual activities.

Homosexual partnerships are highly promiscuous and unstable.

Ongoing research shows the homosexual lifestyle to be characterized by a high degree of promiscuousness and instability; those who do enter civil unions are rare, and the unions tend to be short-lived in contrast to heterosexual marriage.[157] The average male

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[154] Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, "The State of Our Unions: The Social Health of Marriage in America 2002, Why Men Won't Commit: Exploring Young Men's Attitudes about Sex, Dating, and Marriage," p. 28. Timothy J. Dailey, "The Negative Health Effects of Homosexuality," *Insight*, Number 232, Family Research Council, Washington, DC, 6 March 2001, pp. 14-15.

[155] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 93. This benefit of marriage is another of many indicators that marriage is one of God's great gifts to women; they should hold out for the marital bond when their boy "friends" pressure them to move in with them and cohabit without that degree of commitment. We also see in this matter how helpful is the Bible's most realistic view of human nature. (See, e.g., Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7) Women make a huge mistake with lifelong implications when they give up the leverage of their virginity thinking their "lovers" will follow through with their promises for eventual marriage or some other type of commitment, but the men typically fail to keep up their end of the bargain. Once the guys have what they want, they don't see a need to do more. Withholding sex until after the wedding is the Biblical and time-tested means whereby women can have the level of lifelong love, true commitment, and security for which they long. Keeping her virginity until marriage is the most effective way a woman can truly tell whether a guy genuinely loves her and will commit to her, for if he does, he will not leave her if she insists they wait to wed until his track record on the issues important to her sufficiently assures her that the desired behavior is obviously part of his lifestyle. If he does leave, she knows he didn't truly love her and care for what is most important to her. She has saved herself a lifetime of disappointment, unfulfillment, and regret. (For more on the subject of heterosexual marriage see, Edward D. Seely, "Guidelines for Selecting a Marriage Partner," available on the author's website, www.fromacorntooak12.com.

[156] Colorado crime reports rose in 2013," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, July 2, 2014, p. 5A.

[157] The Family in America, New Research, December 2006, Online Edition, http://www.profam.org/pub/nr/nr.2012.htm#Homosexual_Unions:_Rare_and_Fragile, accessed April 10, 2007.

homosexual engages in sex with hundreds of others in his lifetime; the classic study of male and female homosexuality conducted by Bell and Weinberg disclosed that 43% of white male homosexuals had sex with 500 or more partners, and 28% had 1,000 or more sex partners.[158] Lesbians tend to have fewer partners (average 10) but their relationships do not last even as long as male homosexuals' do.[159] Even those couples who claim to be in a "committed relationship," think of commitment in a significantly different way from that of marriage. The American College of Pediatricians finds that "Homosexual partnerships are significantly more prone to dissolution than heterosexual marriages with the average homosexual relationship lasting only two to three years."[160] Few such relationships last more than two years, and Dailey adds that "all couples with a relationship lasting more than five years have incorporated some provision for outside sexual activity in their relationships."[161]

John Stott includes a quote by Dr. Jeffrey Satinover of one of the most carefully researched studies looking for any indication of stability in homosexual couples. In that study by two authors, who themselves are a homosexual couple, they found that "of the 156 couples…that had been together for more than five years, none had been able to maintain sexual fidelity…the expectation for outside sexual activity was the rule for male couples and the exception for heterosexuals."[162] Stott adds Thomas Schmidt's conclusion,

> Promiscuity among homosexual men is not a mere stereotype, and it is not merely the majority experience—it is virtually the only experience….In short, there is practically no comparison possible to heterosexual marriage in terms of either fidelity or longevity. Tragically, lifelong faithfulness is almost nonexistent in the homosexual experience.[163]

In answer to the question being raised in scientific and other circles, viz., are homosexual relationships equivalent to heterosexual ones, as many are trying to assert, the above data can be cited as evidence that the answer is no. Jones adds that one large study found

> that 28 percent of lesbians had had sex outside their primary relationship—comparable to the 21 percent of women in relationships with men and 26 percent with men in relationships with women. By contrast, 82 percent of gay men had had sex with someone other than their

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[158] Dailey, p. 3. Further, 79% stated that over half of their sex partners were strangers. Knight, p. 6. Dailey adds, "In their study of the sexual profiles of 2,583 older homosexuals published in the *Journal of Sex Research*, Paul Van de Ven et al., found that only 2.7 percent claimed to have had sex with one partner only. The…response given by 21.6 percent of the respondents was of having a hundred-one to five hundred lifetime sex partners." Dailey, p. 3.
[159] Wendell P. Karsen, "Same-Sex Marriage: A Rejoinder," Letter to the Editor, *Perspectives*, March 2005, http://www.rca.org/Page.aspx?pid=3544.
[160] http://www.acpeds.org/?CONTEXT=art&cat=22&art=50 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexual_Couples_and_Domestic_Violence (Accessed 1/8/15)
[161] Dailey, p. 4.
[162] Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.
[163] Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.

> main partner. However one construes such a striking difference in sexual monogamy, whether as a trivial stylistic difference or as indicative of something fundamental and pervasive, such a finding seriously challenges the equivalency hypothesis.[164]

Children raised in homosexual households do not do nearly as well as those raised in households with a mom and a dad.

The promiscuity issue is a key one regarding homosexuals' desire to adopt children. The pro-homosexual movement is trying to establish the concept in people's minds that children raised in homosexual households turn out as well or even better than those raised in traditional households. A significant problem is that they are using highly flawed "studies" to mislead people into accepting their fallacious argument.

For example consider the Australian "study" that was poorly done in violation of sound social science methodology but which received heavy and strongly misleading media coverage (read: promotion). The Australian study not only tries to show that children raised by homosexuals do as well as those raised by a mother and a dad with whom they live but that the children of homosexuals do better. As Katrina Trinko, managing editor of *The Daily Signal* and a member of USA Today's Board of Contributors, writes, "'Children of same-sex couples are happier and healthier than peers, research shows,' was the headline of a Washington Post story. 'Largest-ever study of same-sex couples' kids finds they're better off than other children,' proclaimed Vox, while NBCNews.com announced, 'Children of Same-Sex Parents Are Healthier: Study.' But the actual study is a little more, well, complicated." Trinko wisely turned to a social scientist who is highly regarded among his peers to check on the quality of the Australian study. Here is what she found:

> In an article published on Public Discourse, University of Texas at Austin professor Mark Regnerus takes issue with the study's method. [This is typically the Achilles Heel of scientific research.]
>
> The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Melbourne in Australia, found that "children in same-sex families scored better on a number of key measures of physical health and social well-being than kids from the general population," according to an article written by one of the researchers on The Conversation.
>
> But the sample surveyed in the study *chose* to participate. The Melbourne researchers didn't randomly select the first 500 same-sex couples they found, after checking for sufficient regional/income/educational diversity. Instead, they advertised the study – and couples found the researchers, not vice versa. Furthermore, the couples then reported on how their children were – and no outside party fact-checked those results, or evaluated the children independently.

[164] Stanton L. Jones, "Same-Sex Science," *First Things*, February 2012, p. 32.

> Talking about the couples who participated in the study, Regnerus sounds this note of caution:
>
> [P]articipants—parents reporting about their children's lives—are all well aware of the political import of the study topic, and an unknown number of them certainly signed up for that very reason. As a result, it seems unwise to trust their self-reports, given the high risk of "social desirability bias," or the tendency to portray oneself (or here, one's children) as better than they actually are.
>
> Ultimately, Regnerus argues, this study's methodology is so problematic the results aren't worth taking seriously. He concludes:
>
> Until social scientists decide to do the difficult, expensive work of locating same-sex attracted parents (however defined) through *random, population-based sampling strategies*—preferably ones that do not "give away" the primary research question(s) up front, as [this study] did—we simply cannot know whether claims like "no differences" or "happier and healthier than" are true, valid, and on target.
>
> It should come as no surprise the news media trumpeted a study with these findings. Unfortunately for readers, flawed reporting on a flawed study does a disservice to everyone.[165]

Contrast the preceding research that did not follow established social science practice with the following that has employed sound and well-established social science methodology. One of the crucial questions asked by those who want to allow a child to be adopted is how stable is the parents' relationship? The above figures show that homosexual relationships are not stable. Further, Jones cites one study that found that

> over a five-year period, 7 percent of married heterosexual couples broke up, compared with 14 percent of cohabiting male couples and 16 percent of cohabiting lesbian couples. They also summarize, without mentioning specific numbers, a more representative study from Norway and Sweden, which have sanctioned same-sex partnerships since the 1990s, reporting "that the rate of dissolution within five years of entering a legal union is higher among same-sex partnerships than among heterosexual marriages, with lesbian couples having the highest rates of dissolution." Their rendering underplays the magnitude of the actual findings, which was that gay male relationships are 50 percent more likely to break up than

[165] Katrina Trinko, "That Study Showing Kids With Same-Sex Parents Fare Better? Yeah, the Media Left a Few Details Out." http://dailysignal.com/2014/07/10/study-showing-kids-sex-parents-fare-better-yeah-media-left-details/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_term=headline&utm_content=140712&utm_campaign=saturday (Accessed 07/12/2014)

> heterosexual marriages, while lesbian relationships are 167 percent more likely to break up than heterosexual marriages.[166]

The homosexual tendency toward promiscuity and lack of commitment does not appear to be stemmed by "same-sex marriage." A growing number of homosexual couples who have "married" in states that permit "same-sex marriage," are already beginning to divorce. The Associated Press has uncovered the following developments.

> Supporters of Colorado's new civil unions law say a court ruling declaring a same-sex divorce final means gay couples married in other states can legally terminate their relationships in Colorado without uprooting their lives.
>
> Juli Yim and Lorelei Jones wed in Massachusetts in 2009, where same-sex marriage is legal. Yim said that relationship went sour and she found a new partner in Colorado….
>
> Gay rights advocates said other states also grant divorces to gay couples who were married elsewhere, but some require in-state residency to dissolve the relationship….
>
> Yim's was among seven dissolution cases filed during the first two months the new law was in effect. The other six are pending.[167]

Another important question pertaining to the adoption of children by homosexuals concerns whether the children are more likely to become homosexuals in such a relationship. Jones points to a small but statistically significant trend showing that children being raised in homosexual households "increases the occurrence of same-sex attraction from 2 percent to 8 percent…a four-fold increase is still a sizeable effect statistically."[168]

Further, while these data provide useful information, they do not include the substantial amount of research that conclusively shows that children do best with two parents of opposite gender. The most careful and sound studies consistently disclose that children need the unique qualities a mom and dad each bring to the nurturing family. Until recently homosexual activists have countered that these studies compared and contrasted children with a married mother and father with children from divorced homes and have said that it is better in homosexual homes. The following landmark study by sociologist Mark Regnerus destroys that argument.

Careful research reveals what many observers have feared concerning children raised in homosexual households. Peter Sprigg reports that

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[166] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 32.
[167] "First gay divorce finalized in Colo., Gay couples married in other states can legally terminate their relationships here," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, 07/31/13, p. A6.
[168] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 32.

> In a historic study of children raised by homosexual parents, sociologist Mark Regnerus of the University of Texas at Austin has overturned the conventional academic wisdom that such children suffer no disadvantages when compared to children raised by their married mother and father. Just published in the journal *Social Science Research*, the most careful, rigorous, and methodologically sound study ever conducted on this issue found numerous and significant differences between these groups—with the outcomes for children of homosexuals rated "suboptimal" (Regnerus' word) in almost every category.[169]

Sprigg cites the following significant differences between the two groups of children. The designation LM refers to children of Lesbian Mothers, and GF refers to children of "Gay" Fathers.

> Compared with children raised by their intact married biological parents (IBF), children of homosexual parents (LM and GF):
>
> - Are *much* more likely to have received welfare (IBF 17%; LM 69%; GF 57%)
> - Have lower educational attainment
> - Report less safety and security in their family of origin
> - Report more ongoing "negative impact" from their family of origin
> - Are more likely to suffer from depression
> - Have been arrested more often
> - If they are female, have had more sexual partners—both male *and* female
>
> The high mathematical standard of "statistical significance" was more difficult to reach for the children of "gay fathers" in this study because there were fewer of them. The following, however, are some additional areas in which the children of *lesbian mothers* (who represented 71% of all the children with homosexual parents in this study) differed from the IBF children, in ways that were statistically significant in both a direct comparison and with controls. Children of lesbian mothers:
>
> - Are more likely to be currently cohabiting
> - Are almost 4 times more likely to be currently on public assistance

[169] Peter Sprigg, "New Study On Homosexual Parents Tops All Previous Research," http://www.frc.org/issuebrief/new-study-on-homosexual-parents-tops-all-previous-research. (Accessed 07/06/2014)

- Are less likely to be currently employed full-time
- Are more than 3 times more likely to be unemployed
- Are nearly 4 times more likely to identify as something *other than* entirely heterosexual
- Are 3 times as likely to have had an affair while married or cohabiting
- Are an astonishing *10 times more likely to have been* "*touched sexually by a parent or other adult caregiver.*"
- Are nearly 4 times as likely to have been "physically forced" to have sex against their will
- Are more likely to have "attachment" problems related to the ability to depend on others
- Use marijuana more frequently
- Smoke more frequently
- Watch TV for long periods more frequently
- Have more often pled guilty to a non-minor offense

When comparing children of homosexuals with children of married biological parents, the differences in sexuality—experiences of sexual abuse, number of sexual partners, and homosexual feelings and experiences among the children themselves—were among the most striking. While not all of the findings mentioned below have the same level of "statistical significance" as those mentioned above, they remain important.

At one time, defenders of homosexual parents not only argued that their children do fine on psychological and developmental measures, but they also said that children of homosexuals "are no more likely to be gay" than children of heterosexuals. That claim will be impossible to maintain in light of this study. It found that children of homosexual fathers are nearly 3 times as likely, and children of lesbian mothers are nearly 4 times as likely, to identify as something other than entirely heterosexual. Children of lesbian mothers are 75% more likely, and children of homosexual fathers are 3 times more likely, to be currently in a same-sex romantic relationship.[170]

[170] Peter Sprigg, "New Study On Homosexual Parents Tops All Previous Research."

Sprigg concludes, "The articles by Marks[171] and Regnerus have completely changed the playing field for debates about homosexual parents, 'gay families,' and same-sex 'marriage.' The myths that children of homosexual parents are 'no different' from other children and suffer 'no harm' from being raised by homosexual parents have been shattered forever."[172]

These and the anecdotal data should be shown to our state and federal legislators. They should be urged to change adoption laws to permit adoption agencies to allow only carefully screened heterosexual parents to adopt children and especially to permit faith-based adoption institutions to operate according to their moral, especially Biblical, standard. The Roman Catholic adoption agencies in Massachusetts, which were forced to close rather than function contrary to God's Word, should be allowed to reopen and continue their previous excellent work placing children in homes where the children will thrive.

Janet Levy adds more.

> Extensive studies on child development over several decades affirm that the traditional family with one mother and one father is the best environment for raising children and promoting appropriate gender identity and heterosexuality. In a recent extensively referenced article posted on their website (www.americancollegeofpediatricians.org), the American College of Pediatricians (ACPEDS) cites the intuitive finding which supports the participation of both mothers and fathers in parenting because of their unique and qualitatively different contributions to children's overall development.
>
> According to the ACPEDS article, the "Psychological theory of child development has always recognized the critical role that mothers play in the healthy development of children. More recent research reveals that when fathers are absent, children suffer as well. Girls without fathers perform more poorly in school, are more likely to be sexually active and become pregnant as teenagers. Boys without fathers have higher rates of delinquency, violence, and aggression."

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[171] Loren Marks, "Same-sex parenting and children's outcomes: A closer examination of the American Psychological Association's brief on lesbian and gay parenting," *Social Science Research* Vol 41, Issue 4 (July 2012), pp. 735-751; online at: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0049089X12000580. Commenting on Marks' study Spriggs writes, "an important article published in tandem with the Regnerus study (by Loren Marks, Louisiana State University) analyzes the 59 previous studies cited in a 2005 policy brief on homosexual parents by the American Psychological Association (APA)…Marks debunks the APA's claim that "[n]ot a single study has found children of lesbian or gay parents to be disadvantaged in any significant respect relative to children of heterosexual parents." Marks also points out that only four of the 59 studies cited by the APA even met *the APA's own standards* by "provid[ing] evidence of statistical power." As Marks so carefully documents, "[N]ot one of the 59 studies referenced in the 2005 APA Brief compares a large, random, representative sample of lesbian or gay parents and their children with a large, random, representative sample of married parents and their children." Peter Sprigg, "New Study On Homosexual Parents Tops All Previous Research."

[172] Peter Sprigg, "New Study On Homosexual Parents Tops All Previous Research."

> The ACPEDS article goes on to cite research on homosexual parenting that reveals that children reared in homosexual households are more likely to experience sexual identity confusion and engage in risky sexual behavior. In a review of nine studies on the development of sexual orientation in childhood, Dr. Trayce Hansen found that children in homosexual households were seven times more likely to identify as a homosexual. Dr. Hansen affirms that sexual behavior is "largely socially learned" and that non-heterosexual parents would be more accepting of homosexual behavior than heterosexual parents.[173]

A striking study from Canada by economist Douglas Allen yields very valuable results. It is valuable first because of the strength of its research method. Contrary to most social science studies in this area of research (this one is from the economic literature), it was based on a large (20% of the 2006 Canadian census) and randomized sample. Christopher Rosik, Ph.D. explains first the significance of Allen's research design[174] and then the significance of Allen's findings.

> Such a large and random sample that is able to distinguish same-sex couples is critical for a number of reasons. Allen observes that the literature on child development in same-sex households is lacking on several grounds:
>
> First, the research is characterized by levels of advocacy, policy endorsement, and awareness of political consequences that is disproportionate with the strength and substance of the preliminary empirical findings. Second, the literature generally utilizes measures of child and family performance that are not easily verifiable by third party replication, which vary from one study to another in ways that make comparisons difficult, and which differ substantially from measures standardly used in other family studies. But most important, almost all of the literature on same-sex parenting (which almost always means lesbian parenting) is based on some combination of weak empirical designs, small biased convenience samples, "snowballing," and low powered tests.
>
> "Power" in this context is a statistical term for the ability of a test to identify actual differences. With small sample sizes, only the largest of

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[173] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

[174] Be sure to consider carefully the significance of the research plan and use that understanding to evaluate other social science studies, for many of them are so inadequate that they are useless. This common characteristic of social science research extends to studies in the field of education, where I've heard some university professors lament that "95% of the research in the field of education isn't worth the paper it's printed on!" While they are undoubtedly speaking in nonliteral terms, in my reading of a voluminous amount of literature in the field of education, I'd have to say that while the 95% designation may well by hyperbole, it's stating an important truth.

differences can be detected and there is a very real risk that many significant differences will be missed. This creates a serious bias in the direction of the "no differences" conclusion. Allen's review of 53 studies on same-sex parenting found almost all to be non-random designs and only two had sample sizes larger than 500. Many of these studies had samples sizes between 30-60. To place this issue in proper context, Allen noted that to properly test any hypothesis regarding gay parenting, a sample size of at least 800 is necessary. The author concludes, "A review of the same-sex parenting literature inevitably leads to the conclusion that it is a collection of exploratory studies."

Allen's use of the Canada census data allowed him to examine and control for many variables whose influences heretofore could not be clearly discerned. These include controls for parental marital status, family mobility (i.e., recent change in residence), child school attendance, and parental education. The study was also able to distinguish between gay and lesbian families and evaluate differences in gender between parents and children. This high level of analytical resolution constitutes a large step forward in the advancement of the same-sex parenting literature.

…the results on high school graduation rates suggest that children living in both gay and lesbian households struggle compared to children from opposite sex married households. In general, it appears that these children are only about 65% as likely to graduate from high school compared to the [married opposite-sex] control group—a difference that holds whether conditioned on controls or not. When the households are broken down by child gender it appears that daughters are struggling more than sons, and that daughters of gay [male] parents have strikingly low graduation rates.

The latter conclusions are worthy of greater clarity, because they are the first findings that can really address the effects of fatherlessness or motherlessness on boys and girls in same-sex households. These data indicate that the specific gender mix of a same-sex household makes a "dramatic difference" in the association with child graduation. Girls in lesbian households were only 45% as likely to graduate compared to girls from homes with both a mother and a father. More strikingly, girls from gay male households were only 15% as likely to graduate as girls from an opposite-sex household. A parallel comparison for boys in lesbian households found them to be 76% as likely to graduate as their male peers in opposite-sex households. Finally, boys in gay male households were found to be 61% more likely to graduate than boys in opposite-sex households. However, Allen added that the results for boys, unlike those for girls, were not statistically significant.[175]

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[175] Christopher Rosik, "Same-Sex Parenting and High School Graduation Rates: The 'no difference' mantra of mental health associations is failing the test of better research," http://www.narth.com/#!ss-parenting/c1ehy (Accessed 4/12/15)

Mark Regnerus comments on the Allen study:

> Three key findings stood out to Allen:
>
> children of married opposite-sex families have a high graduation rate compared to the others; children of lesbian families have a very low graduation rate compared to the others; and the other four types [common law, gay, single mother, single father] are similar to each other and lie in between the married/lesbian extremes.
>
> Employing regression models and series of control variables, Allen concludes that the substandard performance *cannot* be attributed to lower school attendance or the more modest education of gay or lesbian parents. Indeed, same-sex parents were characterized by higher levels of education, and their children were more likely to be enrolled in school than even those of married, opposite-sex couples. And yet their children are notably more likely to lag in finishing their own schooling.
>
> The same is true of the young-adult children of common law parents, as well as single mothers and single fathers, highlighting how little—when you lean on large, high-quality samples—the data have actually changed over the past few decades. The intact, married mother-and-father household remains the gold standard for children's progress through school. What is surprising in the Canadian data is the revelation that lesbian couples' children fared worse, on average, than even those of single parents.
>
> The truly unique aspect of Allen's study, however, may be its ability to distinguish gender-specific effects of same-sex households on children. He writes:
>
> the particular gender mix of a same-sex household has a dramatic difference in the association with child graduation. Consider the case of girls. . . . Regardless of the controls and whether or not girls are currently living in a gay or lesbian household, the odds of graduating from high school are considerably lower than any other household type. Indeed, girls living in gay households are only 15 percent as likely to graduate compared to girls from opposite sex married homes.
>
> Thus although the children of same-sex couples fare worse overall, the disparity is unequally shared, but is instead based on the combination of the gender of child and gender of parents. Boys fare better—that is, they're more likely to have finished high school—in gay households than in lesbian households. For girls, the opposite is true. Thus the study

> undermines not only claims about "no differences" but also assertions that moms and dads are interchangeable. *They're not*.
>
> Every study has its limitations, and this one does too. It is unable to track the household history of children. Nor is it able to establish the circumstances of the birth of the children whose education is evaluated—that is, were they the product of a heterosexual union, adopted, or born via surrogate or assisted reproductive technology? Finally, the census did not distinguish between married and common law gay and lesbian couples.[176]

Anecdotal accounts put flesh on the numbers.

The numbers are intellectually compelling. Anecdotal accounts that engage the heart flesh out the numbers and show what actually occurs in life situations. In just one example Dawn Stefanowicz renders a gripping account in her interviews, speeches, and in her moving book, *Out from Under: The Impact of Homosexual Parenting*, in which she vividly describes what it was like growing up with a homosexual father and his partners in a home characterized by secrecy, conflict, confusion and abuse.[177]

Dawn recounts that as a child she was at high risk of contagious sexually transmitted diseases as a result of sexual molestation (as will be seen further most homosexuals are actually bisexual) and the high risk sexual behaviors of her father and his multiple partners. The Canadian shared her personal story and her stand opposing "same-sex marriage" in a statement at a pro-family rally in Ottawa on Parliament Hill. The Catholic News Agency reported her statement as follows.

> Her father, who was molested by older males as a child, lived with depression, control issues, anger outbursts, suicidal tendencies and sexual compulsions. He died of AIDS in 1991.
>
> Stefanowicz, who cared deeply for her father, noted that growing up in a gay household exposed her to "bathhouse sex, cross-dressing, sodomy, pornography, gay nudity, lesbianism, bisexuality, minor recruitment, voyeurism, and exhibitionism." In addition, she said, "Sadomasochism was alluded to and aspects demonstrated. Alcohol and drugs were often contributing factors to lower inhibitions in my father's relationships."
>
> After two decades of exposure to these behaviors, she became insecure, depressed, suicidal and confused over her own sexuality.
>
> "I did not see the value of biological complementing differences of male and female or think about marriage. I made vows to never have children

[176] Mark Regnerus, "A Married Mom and Dad Really Do Matter: New Evidence from Canada," The Witherspoon Institute, Public Discourse, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2013/10/10996/ (Accessed 4/13/15)

[177] More information can be obtained at Dawn's website, http://www.dawnstefanowicz.org/.

since I had not grown up in a safe, sacrificial, child-centered home environment," she said.

"I can tell you that I suffered long term in this situation and this has been professionally documented … I witnessed that every other family member suffered severely as well … My gender identity, psychological well-being, and peer relationships were affected."

According to Stefanowicz, children should not be subjected to such an environment. "Same-sex marriage will put the human rights of the individual in a higher place than what is best for society, families and especially children."

Stefanowicz says her experience is not that uncommon. She said research and personal testimonies indicate that children do best with both a mother and a father in a lifelong marriage bond. "Children need responsible monogamous parents who have no extramarital sexual partners. Parental promiscuity, abuse and divorce are not good for children.

"Children need consistent appropriate boundaries and secure expressions of emotional intimacy that are not sexualized in the home and community," she wrote.

In addition, legalized same-sex marriage will provide "a direct legal entranceway of indoctrination, desensitization, personal and political recruitment of our vulnerable children by some gay activists within our schools while silencing all students who oppose the gay agenda.

"We have an obligation, for the sake of our children, to speak freely and to direct the laws of our land," she wrote.[178]

Now hear from a person raised by a lesbian. Katy Faust, offers more for us to increase our understanding of homosexual parenting and its effects on the children and the society. The caption of the original title is "Take it from the adult child of a loving gay parent: redefining marriage promotes a family structure in which children suffer."

She summarizes her story in a letter she sent to U. S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, frequently considered to be a "swing vote" on the court, prior to the June 2015 decision the court set for its decision on same-sex "marriage." Sadly, but not unsurprisingly, Kennedy ignored her plea, but I include it here for several reasons, including the strong and highly informative anecdotal testimony and the excellent model of how to write a letter to a government official. Such a letter will be influential in the minds and hearts of other officials, especially those who are able to suspend their biases and personal agendas to listen.

[178] http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/woman_raised_in_homosexual_household_speaks_against_samesex_marriage/ (Accessed 11/21/14)

With well-informed facts and heart-tugging experience, Katy constructed the following well written letter that also provides a good model for others in writing to government officials. I quote most but not all of it to provide insight into the realities of being raised in a homosexual household and their effects on the individuals involved and the broader society.

> Dear Justice Kennedy,
>
> June is nigh, and with it will come your ruling on the most contentious political issue of our time: marriage.
>
> I write because I am one of many children with gay parents who believe we should protect marriage. I believe you were right when, during the Proposition 8 deliberations, you said "the voice of those children [of same-sex parents] is important." I'd like to explain why I think redefining marriage would actually serve to strip these children of their most fundamental rights.
>
> It's very difficult to speak about this subject, because I love my mom. Most of us children with gay parents do. We also love their partner(s). You don't hear much from us because, as far as the media are concerned, it's impossible that we could both love our gay parent(s) and oppose gay marriage. Many are of the opinion I should not exist. But I do, and I'm not the only one.
>
> This debate, at its core, is about one thing.
>
> It's about children.
>
> The definition of marriage should have nothing to do with lessening emotional suffering within the homosexual community. If the Supreme Court were able to make rulings to affect feelings, racism would have ended fifty years ago. Nor is this issue primarily about the florist, the baker, or the candlestick-maker, though the very real impact on those private citizens is well-publicized. The Supreme Court has no business involving itself in romance or interpersonal relationships. I hope very much that your ruling in June will be devoid of any such consideration.
>
> **Government Should Promote the Well-being of Children**
>
> Children are the reason government has any stake in this discussion at all. Congress was spot on in 1996 when it passed the Defense of Marriage Act, stating:
>
> At bottom, civil society has an interest in maintaining and protecting the institution of heterosexual marriage because it has a deep and abiding interest in encouraging responsible procreation and child-rearing. Simply put, government has an interest in marriage because it has an interest in children.

There is no difference between the value and worth of heterosexual and homosexual persons. We all deserve equal protection and opportunity in academe, housing, employment, and medical care, because we are all humans created in the image of God.

However, when it comes to procreation and child-rearing, same-sex couples and opposite-sex couples are wholly unequal and should be treated differently for the sake of the children.

When two adults who cannot procreate want to raise children together, where do those babies come from? Each child is conceived by a mother and a father to whom that child has a natural right. When a child is placed in a same-sex-headed household, she will miss out on at least one critical parental relationship and a vital dual-gender influence. The nature of the adults' union guarantees this. Whether by adoption, divorce, or third-party reproduction, the adults in this scenario satisfy their heart's desires, while the child bears the most significant cost: missing out on one or more of her biological parents.

Making policy that intentionally deprives children of their fundamental rights is something that we should not endorse, incentivize, or promote.

The Voices of the Children

When you emphasized how important the voices of children with gay parents are, you probably anticipated a different response. You might have expected that the children of same-sex unions would have nothing but glowing things to say about how their family is "just like everyone else's." Perhaps you expected them to tell you that the only scar on their otherwise idyllic life is that their two moms or two dads could not be legally married. If the children of these unions were all happy and well-adjusted, it would make it easier for you to deliver the feel-good ruling that would be so popular.

I identify with the instinct of those children to be protective of their gay parent. In fact, I've done it myself. I remember how many times I repeated my speech: "I'm so happy that my parents got divorced so that I could know all of you wonderful women." I quaffed the praise and savored the accolades. The women in my mother's circle swooned at my maturity, my worldliness. I said it over and over, and with every refrain my performance improved. It was what all the adults in my life wanted to hear. I could have been the public service announcement for gay parenting.

I cringe when I think of it now, because it was a lie. My parents' divorce has been the most traumatic event in my thirty-eight years of life. While I did love my mother's partner and friends, I would have traded every one of them to have my mom and my dad loving me under the same roof. This

should come as no surprise to anyone who is willing to remove the politically correct lens that we all seem to have over our eyes.

Kids want their mother and father to love them, and to love each other. I have no bitterness toward either of my parents. On the contrary, I am grateful for a close relationship with them both and for the role they play in my children's lives. But loving my parents and looking critically at the impact of family breakdown are not mutually exclusive.

Now that I am a parent, I see clearly the beautiful differences my husband and I bring to our family. I see the wholeness and health that my children receive because they have both of their parents living with and loving them. I see how important the role of their father is and how irreplaceable I am as their mother. We play complementary roles in their lives, and neither of us is disposable. In fact, we are both critical. It's almost as if Mother Nature got this whole reproduction thing exactly right.

The Missing Parent

…This is about the *missing* parent.

Talk to any child with gay parents, especially those old enough to reflect on their experiences. If you ask a child raised by a lesbian couple if they love their two moms, you'll probably get a resounding "yes!" Ask about their father, and you are in for either painful silence, a confession of gut-wrenching longing, or the recognition that they have a father that they wish they could see more often. The one thing that you will not hear is indifference.

What is your experience with children who have divorced parents, or are the offspring of third-party reproduction, or the victims of abandonment? Do they not care about their missing parent? Do those children claim to have never had a sleepless night wondering why their parents left, what they look like, or if they love their child? Of course not. We are made to know, and be known by, both of our parents. When one is absent, that absence leaves a lifelong gaping wound.

The opposition will clamor on about studies where the researchers concluded that children in same-sex households allegedly fared "even better!" than those from intact biological homes. Leave aside the methodological problems with such studies and just think for a moment.

If it is undisputed social science that children suffer greatly when they are abandoned by their biological parents, when their parents divorce, when one parent dies, or when they are donor-conceived, then how can it be possible that they are miraculously turning out "even better!" when raised in same-sex-headed households? Every child raised by "two moms" or "two dads" came to that household via one of those four traumatic methods. Does being raised under the rainbow miraculously wipe away all

the negative effects and pain surrounding the loss and daily deprivation of one or both parents? The more likely explanation is that researchers are feeling the same pressure as the rest of us feel to prove that they love their gay friends.

Children Have the Right to Be Loved by Their Mother and Father

Like most Americans, I am for adults having the freedom to live as they please. I unequivocally oppose criminalizing gay relationships. But defining marriage correctly criminalizes nothing. And the government's interest in marriage is about the children that only male-female relationships can produce. Redefining marriage redefines parenthood. It moves us well beyond our "live and let live" philosophy into the land where our society promotes a family structure where children will *always* suffer loss. It will be our policy, stamped and sealed by the most powerful of governmental institutions, that these children will have their right to be known and loved by their mother and/or father stripped from them in *every* instance. In same-sex-headed households, the *desires* of the adults trump the *rights* of the child.

Have we really arrived at a time when we are considering institutionalizing the stripping of a child's natural right to a mother and a father in order to validate the emotions of adults?

Justice Kennedy, I have long admired your consistency when ruling on the well-being of children, and I implore you to stay the course. I truly believe you are invested in the equal protection of all citizens, and it is your sworn duty to uphold that protection for the most vulnerable among us. The bonds with one's natural parents deserve to be protected. Do not fall prey to the false narrative that adult feelings should trump children's rights. The onus must be on adults to conform to the needs of children, not the other way around.

This is not about being *against* anyone. This is about what I am for. I am *for* children! I want all children to have the love of their mother and their father. Being for children also makes me *for* LGBT youth. They deserve all the physical, social, and emotional benefits of being raised by their mother and father as well. But I fear that, in the case before you, we are at the mercy of loud, organized, well-funded adults who have nearly everyone in this country running scared.

Six adult children of gay parents are willing to stand against the bluster of the gay lobby and submit amicus briefs for your consideration in this case. I ask that you please read them. We are just the tip of the iceberg of children currently being raised in gay households….[179]

[179] Katy Faust, "Dear Justice Kennedy: An Open Letter from the Child of a Loving Gay Parent," Public Discourse, February 2, 2015, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/02/14370/ (Accessed 4/16/15)

The lifestyle of homosexuals is extremely unhealthy for themselves and others, including society.

As we've seen above, the context in which homosexuals are parenting their children is in a lifestyle that is extremely unhealthy, physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually. What kind of model is that for children to use in their own adult lives? Keep in mind that homosexuals are very promiscuous. Having multiple sex partners is one of two main reasons for the high rate of HIV infection among homosexual men. The other is the practice of anal intercourse, which facilitates the spread of such viral infection much more and more easily than vaginal intercourse. Peter Sprigg and Timothy Dailey point to an article in the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine*, one of the authors of which was Julie Louise Gerberding, who became Director of the Centers for Disease Control. The *Journal* article discloses that unprotected receptive anal intercourse is at least five times and as much as 64 times more dangerous than vaginal intercourse.[180]

Other research reveals that as a group, practicing homosexuals account for a significantly disproportionate number of cases in the ongoing epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, a finding that occurs not only in the United States but also internationally. Citing CDC reports, Sprigg and Dailey highlight the scientific awareness that homosexuals with STDs are two to five times more likely to not only acquire but also to spread HIV. The CDC attributes these high numbers to the tendency for men who have sex with men to have large numbers of anonymous sex partners, a phenomenon that tends to speed and extend transmission of STDs.[181]

According to the homosexual newspaper, *Washington Blade*, "'A San Francisco study of Gay and bisexual men revealed that HPV [Human Papillomavirus] infection was almost universal among HIV-positive men, and that 60% of HIV-negative men carried HPV.'"[182] A report by Dr. Andrew Grulich at the Fourth International AIDS Malignancy Conference at the National Institutes of Health disclosed that "most instances of anal cancer are caused by a cancer causing strain of HPV through receptive anal intercourse. HPV infects over 90 percent of HIV-positive gay men and 65 percent of HIV-negative gay men, according to a number of recent studies."[183] Robert J. Winn, writing on the

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[180] *Getting It Straight: What the Research Shows about Homosexuality*, Peter Sprigg and Timothy Dailey, Co-Editors (Washington: Family Research Council, 2004), pp. 71-72. This well-researched and -written book is available online at the Family Research Council website: http://www.frc.org. The article referenced is Mitchell H. Katz, M.D. and Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., "Postexposure Treatment of People Exposed to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus through Sexual Contact or Injection-Drug Use," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 336, no. 15 (April 10, 1997), 1097.

[181] Sprigg and Dailey, pp. 82-83.

[182] Dailey, p. 5.

[183] Dailey, p. 5. Sprigg and Daily cite a "paper delivered at the Fourth International AIDS Malignancy Conference at the National Institutes of Health reported that homosexual men with HIV have 'a 37-fold increase in anal cancer, a 4-fold increase in Hodgkin's disease (cancer of the lymph nodes), a 2.7-fold increase in cancer of the testicles, and a 2.5-fold increase in lip cancer.'" *Getting It Straight: What the Research Shows about Homosexuality*, pp. 70-71. The paper they cite was reported in the article "Studies Point to Increased Risks of Anal Cancer," *The Washington Blade* (June 2, 2000). Available at: www.washblade.com/health/000602hm. They also reference Richard A. Zmuda, "Rising Rates of Anal

GLMA website by and for homosexuals warns that HPV causes warts and can lead to anal cancer. Further, he reports that "recurrences of the warts are very common, and the rate at which the infection can be spread between partners is very high."[184] The London-based international organization NAM (from their National AIDS Manual), is an HIV information agency that states, "Since 1993 cervical cancer has been classified as an AIDS-defining illness," and "HPV, is the underlying cause of cervical cancer. Infection with HPV is very common and is quite widespread amongst women with HIV."[185]

Sprigg and Bailey cite a large CDC study that reveals the same results. In the study "conducted in sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics in five major U.S. cities, researchers found the rate of new HIV infections among men who have sex with men (MSM) to be nine times higher than among women and heterosexual men."[186] They also report that while anal cancer, a potentially fatal form of cancer, is relatively rare in the general population, it soars for men who have sex with men, and it doubles again for those who are HIV positive, resulting in a rate "roughly ten times higher than the current rate of cervical cancer," according to Dr. Joel Palefsky, a leading expert in the field of anal cancer.[187] Janet Levy, contributing editor to *FamilySecurityMatters.org*, reports that a "2009 study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimated that men who have sex with men are 50 times more likely to contract HIV than are heterosexual men."[188]

Statistics from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are instructive. Peter LaBarbera, president of the national organization, Americans for Truth, writes

> The FDA says that [homosexual men] are, as a group, at increased risk for HIV, Hepatitis B, and certain other infections that can be transmitted by infusion…since 1977 [they] have had a HIV prevalence that is 60 times higher than the general population, 800 times higher than first-time blood donors, and 8,000 times higher than repeat blood donors.[189]

These data should be kept in mind as periodic proposals arise to lift the lifetime ban on homosexuals donating blood to allow them to donate blood, such as a proposal the FDA

Cancer for Gay Men," *Cancer News* (August 17, 2000). Available at: *cancerlinksusa.com/cancernews_sm/Aug2000 /081700analcancer.*

[184] Robert J. Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13)

[185] http://www.aidsmap.com/cms1044649.aspx (Accessed 07/05/10). See also Winn, "Ten Things Bisexuals Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider." http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&PageID=1026 (Accessed 4/11/13) See also Sprigg and Dailey, p. 76.

[186] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 70. The results of the study they cite are published in "New CDC Studies Shed Light on Factors Underlying High HIV Infection Rates Among Gay and Bisexual Men," CDC Press Release (July 9, 2002).

[187] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 83.

[188] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

[189] James Brown, One News Now, http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=77432 (Accessed 08/25/08)

disclosed in December 2014 that it favors.[190] In the light of the above would you want to receive a transfusion of their blood?

It is important to be vigilant and to encourage others to be so as well concerning the pressure that homosexual activists are exerting to overturn the ban on homosexuals donating blood. An Associated Press report explains more.

> The U. S. gay-rights movement has achieved many victories in recent years—on marriage, military service and other fronts. Yet one vestige of an earlier, more wary ear, remains firmly in place: the 30-year-old nationwide ban on blood donations by gay and bisexual men….some activists are impatient at the prospect of a research process that's likely to extend over several years with an uncertain outcome….[What they're worried about is that] the ban "perpetuates the stigma that gay and bisexual men are dangerous to public health" [said Jason Cianciotto of Gay Men's Health Crisis, a New York-based nonprofit engaged in AIDS prevention and care]….
>
> The FDA [with attention to political correctness] says its policy is not intended as a judgment on donor's sexual orientation, and instead is based on the documented risk of blood infections, such as HIV, associated with male-to-male sex.
>
> According to the FDA, men who have had sex with other men represent about 2 percent of the U.S. population, yet accounted for at least 61 percent of all new HIV infections in the U.S. in 2010.[191]

Under the new proposal it is argued that screening has improved since the ban was implemented in the 1980s when people were dying of HIV/AIDS due to becoming infected from blood transfusions, one of whom was an upright member of the church my family and I served in Chicago. One stipulation of the proposal would be that the screening would remain in effect and MSM could not donate if they had sexual contact with another man in the preceding 12 months.[192] In social science self-report is considered questionable and low in trustworthiness. Yet, here is where Biblical anthropology, which discloses its realistic view of human nature helps in such decision-making. Since all people "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23), and since, as we've seen, homosexuals are extremely promiscuous, it is naïve to assume MSM will tell the truth as to their sexual activity in the last year. They don't even tell each other!

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[190] "U.S. moves to end ban on blood donations by gay men," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, December 24, 2014, 6A.
[191] David Crary, "Despite pressure, ban on gay blood donors endures," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, 09/16/13, p. B7.
[192] "A worthy goal: ending AIDS in 15 years," Reporter-Herald editorial, *Reporter-Herald*, December 16, 2014, 4A.

Another reason that HIV infection is high among homosexuals is that the truth about one being infected is not always told. A great danger in homosexual practice is that those who engage in such activity typically fail to let their sex partners know they may or in fact have HIV.[193] In spite of the fact that failing to inform a homosexual partner that one is HIV positive is a felony, a significant percentage do not do so prior to having sex. The failure takes place both in neglecting to disclose the infection and in lying about it. In the latter case the truth comes out only after the sex has occurred, thus transmitting the infection to the partner.[194] It is not surprising that truth and trust are lacking and replaced by lies when engaging in sin for such has come from Satan, the father of lies. (John 8:44; Romans 1:18-32) A contemporary example, one of a multitude of others, follows.[195]

In the summer of 2010 Terrance Williams, 21, met a man in Syracuse; they became friends, and some weeks later they began having sex. At first they used condoms, but then one night as his partner reached for one, Terrance took it from him. According to court records the partner asked four times if it would be safe for them to have "unprotected" sex. Williams assured him it was safe for them to do so, but he did not tell his partner that in December of 2009 he was diagnosed as HIV positive. In October 2010 Terrance told his (unnamed in the court documents) partner that he believed he might be HIV positive. In November the partner ended the relationship, and in February he learned he was HIV positive. Two months later Terrance admitted he had lied about his HIV status, writing to the partner, "i want to start by saying that i sincerely apologize for giving you hiv…i made my biggest mistake the night i said I didn't want to use a condom knowing my status but still being so deep in love with you that i wanted us to be one person…I was selfish and i was more so concerned with my own false happiness than you health." After reading Williams' confession, the former partner went to the police, which led to the court case.

Terrance and his partner, without knowing or admitting it if they did, drank Satan's Kool-Aid, and bought the lie that homosexuality could be considered right to do. Consistent with satanic deception that masquerades portraying evil as good, Terrance tried to experience the one flesh reality, which God created only for a man and a woman, with another man (as he said, "i wanted us to be one person). His spiritual illness has led to a life-threatening physical illness.

Did you notice Terrance's confusion on another Biblical matter? The problem is again due to the satanic deception that also afflicts many people, which has contributed to his involvement in the homosexual lifestyle: the confounding of love and lust. Satan the great deceiver has clouded many minds so they confuse lust with love. Recall Jesus'

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[193] Dailey, p. 2.

[194] http://widget.newsinc.com/_cfvp/playlist16x9_player.html?CID=11939&WID=12810&VID=23780344&freewheel=91062&sitesection=WXMI_hom_non_fro&external_url=http://www.fox17online.com/news/ (Accessed 08/18/12) See also Sprigg and Dailey, pp. 74-75.

[195] Emily Greenhouse, "HIV-positive body considered a deadly weapon?" Bloomberg News, *Reporter-Herald*, March 1, 2015, 4C.

proclamation in the Sermon on the Mount, "'You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'" (Matthew 5:27-28) The original Greek word translated lust is ἐπιθυμέω (*epithumeō*), which refers to a longing to do something that is evil in God's sight. The evil lust that motivates the adultery to which Jesus referred applies also to the lust motivating two men or two women to engage in the sex God has forbidden. That is not love.

Former homosexual and now leader in the ex-"gay" movement, Frank Worthen, who is a strong believer in and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, agrees that what homosexuals call love is not love. He observes that as a result of the new nature given by the Holy Spirit that results in a true faith in Christ Jesus and a true conversion, then

> [a]ttitudes have also changed, so that what was once called "love" is now seen as possessiveness. The ex-gay can agree with Paul, that he has been delivered.
>
> So there is now a new position in Christ, where the ex-gay is freed from sin by the atoning blood of Jesus on the cross.[196]

Here is more of what God's Word says: "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God." (1 John 4:7a) That statement negates homosexuality being equated with or motivated by love. God does not contradict himself. He does not in one place in his Word condemn something, calling it *tôʿēbâ*, and in another place say it is good, much less give it to the same people to whom he forbade it!

The love the Bible holds up as the highest form of love, ἀγαπάω (*agapaō*), and the love husbands are to give their wives, (Ephesians 5:25) is never linked with disobedience to God's will. Rather it is the doing of God's will. As we've seen, homosexuality is not in God's will; neither is it the love God requires. Jesus said, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21) Homosexuality is in direct opposition to, and rebellion against, the will of God, as we saw in Chapter One.

Some homosexuals claim to love God. In all sincerity ask, "Have you read John 14:21? How can you say you love God and at the same time reject and not obey his commands?" If the homosexual person wants to discuss the matter, by all means do so. However, don't allow yourself to be drawn into a hostile confrontation. (2 Timothy 2:14-15) He or she won't remember so many of your arguments, but he or she will continue to think about the question you raised long after your conversation ends. Pray that the Holy Spirit works in his or her mind and heart to help him or her make the changes needed to please the Lord.

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[196] Frank Worthen, "EX-GAY: Fact, Fraud or Fantasy?" http://www.exodusglobalalliance.org/exgayfactfraudorfantasyp49.php (Accessed 3/3/15)

Failure to disclose one's being HIV positive is not an act of *agapaō* love, which is characterized by concern first and foremost for the other person(s) involved in any circumstance. The failure to do so in a homosexual matter is motivated by a variety of factors including ignorance of their own condition, fear (of being tested and found positive and of the others' reaction), and deliberate, intentional withholding of the information. Sprigg and Dailey cite a survey of 3,492 young males 15-22 years old in JAMA reporting that 41% had "unprotected" MSM in the preceding six months. Sadly, but not surprisingly, 37% of those who were HIV-infected, but did not know they are, and 13% of the HIV-infected men who did know they are, reported "unprotected" anal insertive sex during the past six months.[197] Some homosexuals admit to deliberately having sex to infect others.[198] Regardless of motivation, it is considered in our society a crime when a person, knowing he or she is infected with HIV, engages in any actions that can infect another with HIV. For example, as stated in *Illinois Compiled Statues Annotated*, "A person who commits criminal transmission of HIV commits a Class 2 felony."[199]

HIV also correlates with a significantly higher skin cancer rate. Michael J. Silverberg, a research scientist in the division of research at Kaiser Permanente, writing for the National Cancer Institute reports, "According to study results, HIV-positive patients exhibited a 2.1-fold higher incidence rate of basal cell carcinoma…and a 2.6-fold higher incidence rate of squamous cell carcinoma…compared with HIV-negative patients in the same health care system."[200]

Homosexual behavior is linked to a host of other dangerous diseases. Winn explains that these STDs which occur in homosexual men at a high rate comprise both those for which an effective treatment exists, such as syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, pubic lice, and others, as well as those for which no cure exists, including herpes, and the aforementioned HPV, HIV, and hepatitis.[201] Some of these diseases include hepatitis A and C as well as B (a very serious and life-threatening disease), gay bowel syndrome (or GBS, a term the *Journal of the American Medical Association* uses to refer to such "sexually transmitted gastrointestinal syndromes" as proctitis, proctocolitis, and

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[197] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 73. I put "unprotected" in quotes to communicate the myth of "safe" sex. Condoms fail frequently for many reasons and therefore do not adequately protect against the transmission of HIV and other viruses. The JAMA article Sprigg and Dailey quote is Linda A. Valleroy, et al., "HIV Prevalence and Associated Risks in Young Men Who Have Sex with Men," *JAMA* 284 (July 12, 2000): 203.

[198] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 73.

[199] Illinois Compiled Statutes Annotated, Chapter 720: Criminal Offenses, 5/12-16.2 Criminal Transmission of HIV, Sec. 12-16.2 (3) (e).

[200] Michael J. Silverberg, "Higher nonmelanoma skin cancer rate found in HIV-positive patients," http://www.healio.com/hematology-oncology/melanoma-skin-cancer/news/print/infectious-disease-news/%7B829714E5-81B8-4FD5-BAE8-5ECEFFD0DC2E%7D/Higher-nonmelanoma-skin-cancer-rate-found-in-HIV-positive-patients- (Accessed 04/17/13)

[201] Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13) Winn adds that homosexual men are at risk for prostate, testicular, and colon cancer. See also Sprigg and Dailey, p. 75.

enteritis),[202] HIV/AIDS, anal cancer, and many others.[203] Many of the bacterial and protozoan pathogens that cause GBS are in feces and arrive in the digestive system from the mouth due to oral-anal sex.[204] Sprigg and Dailey explain that proctitis and proctocolitis are inflammations of the rectum and colon respectively that

> cause pain, bloody rectal discharge and rectal spasms. Proctitis is associated with STDs such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, and syphilis that are widespread among homosexuals. The Sexually Transmitted Disease Information Center of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reports that "[p]roctitis occurs predominantly among persons who participate in anal intercourse."[205]

Enteritis, an inflammation of the small intestine, occurs when fecal material enters the mouth. The symptoms, which make the person feel very ill, involve severe discomfort in the abdomen, cramps, diarrhea, fever, improper absorption of nutrients, and loss of weight. Citing a report by the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, Sprigg and Dailey disclose that some pathogens associated with enteritis and proctocolitis "appear only to be sexually transmitted among men who have sex with men."[206]

Concerning hepatitis, the GLMA website by and for homosexuals admits that "Men who have sex with men are at an increased risk of sexually transmitted infection with the viruses that cause the serious condition of the liver known as hepatitis. These infections can be potentially fatal, and can lead to very serious long-term issues such as liver failure and liver cancer."[207] The Hepatitis C virus can remain dormant in the liver for 30 years before manifesting itself.[208] Gonorrhea historically has been associated with genitalia, but now it is increasingly seen in the anal area due to anal sex and in the throat due to oral sex, and it is significantly higher in homosexual men than in heterosexual males.[209] Syphilis, another life-threatening disease, is acquired by homosexuals at a rate ten times that of heterosexuals and is associated with a two to fivefold increased occurrence of HIV.[210]

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[202] Dailey, p. 8.
[203] Some of the many others include condyloma acuminate, hemorrhoids, anal fistula, perirectal abscess, anal fissure, amebiasis, anorectal trauma, shigellosis, rectal ulcers, lymphogranuloma venereum. "The gay bowel syndrome: clinic-pathologic correlation in 260 cases," by HL Kazal, N Sohn, JG Robilotti, and WE Delaney, Annals of Clinical and Laboratory Science, 1976, Vol. 6, Issue 2, pp. 184-192.
[204] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 81.
[205] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 81. They reference *Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality* (Austin: The Medical Institute for Sexual Health, 1999), 55.
[206] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 81. *Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality*, 55.
[207] Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13)
[208] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 77. They reference "Hepatitus C: Epidemiology: Transmission Modes," *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report,* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998. Available at: *www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis /c/edu/1/default.htm.*
[209] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 78.
[210] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 79.

John Stott quotes Dr. Jeffrey Satinover's explanation that infectious hepatitis "increases the risk of liver cancer, of frequently fatal rectal cancer, and of a 25-30-year decrease in life expectancy."[211] Stott also cites Thomas Schmidt's even more explicit description of "seven nonviral and four viral infections which are transmitted by oral and anal sex…health problems [that] are rampant in the homosexual population because they are easily spread by promiscuity and by most of the practices favoured by homosexuals."[212] Stott there adds, "And these diseases are apart from AIDS."[213]

Karposi Sarcoma, relatively rare in most places and populations, so suddenly manifested itself in common complications in young males with AIDS to the extent that the American Cancer Society said that the phenomenon alerted physicians that a new disease had begun. Sprigg and Dailey reference Dennis Osmond's above-mentioned article in the Journal of the American Medical Society (JAMA) that reports research findings which suggest oral sex as the primary means of transmitting the Kaposi sarcoma-associated herpesvirus.[214]

As dangerous as HIV is, there is a greater danger due to its interaction with other health factors. Jay Lewis, Managing Editor of *Infectious Disease News* reported on the work of Ronald Stall, MD, professor in the department of behavioral and community health sciences at the University of Pittsburgh.

> "It may be a fallacy to say that HIV is the dominant, most dangerous and most damaging epidemic among gay men in the United States today," Stall said. "There are at least four other epidemics occurring among gay men that are intertwining and making each other worse. This is called a syndemic."
>
> Stall cited the population-based Urban Men's Health Study, which demonstrated that at least four other epidemics – substance abuse, partner violence, depression and childhood sexual abuse – may be affecting this patient population.
>
> "What do these other factors have to do with HIV infection?" Stall said. "The analysis further demonstrated that men who were most affected by this syndemic were also more likely to have recently engaged in high-risk sex and/or be HIV positive. Therefore, we now have these co-occurring psychosocial conditions that are intertwined and are making each other worse driving an infectious disease epidemic."[215]

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[211] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.
[212] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.
[213] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.
[214] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 82.
[215] Jay Lewis, "A multifaceted approach may be needed to reduce HIV risk in MSM: MSM often face a syndemic of psychosocial conditions that may be driving and exacerbating the HIV/AIDS epidemic in this population," http://www.infectiousdiseasenews.com/200803/reduce.asp, March 2008.

As indicated above, lesbians are also at high risk for sexually transmitted diseases. The GLMA website by and for homosexuals warns, "Lesbians can give each other STDs by skin-to-skin contact, mucus membrane contact, vaginal fluids, and menstrual blood. It is important for sexually active lesbians to be screened for STDs by a health care provider."[216] Sprigg and Dailey cite evidence showing that even lesbians in "exclusive sexual relationships" have just as high a risk factor as all women who have sex with women to infect one another largely due to past sexual relations with male homosexuals, bisexuals, and intravenous drug users.[217]

If you are a pastor, or other church leader, who are reconsidering the traditional Biblical teaching, stop, think, and pray. Challenge what you've been told to the contrary. Check out the sources. In the light of what is here disclosed, is this what you want to advocate for God's people, including your family and other loved ones, whom God has placed in your care? How is that truly loving? If you still wonder, keep reading.

Most homosexuals are bisexual.

Most homosexuals engage in sex with the other gender. Even the homosexual newspaper, the *Washington Blade*, "citing a 1998 study in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, reported that "the study's data confirmed previous scientific observations that most women who have sex with women also have had sex with men,'"[218] including a large proportion of lesbians who have sex with high risk men.[219] Katherine Fethers found that women who have sex with women are highly likely to report having had sex with over 50 males throughout their lifetime.[220] The Centers for Disease Control "confirms that young bisexual men are a 'bridge' for HIV transmission to women."[221]

The Family Research Council, referring to a study reported in the *American Public Health Journal,* notes that "not only are LGBTQ youth getting pregnant, they're getting pregnant more often than their heterosexual peers."[222] The FRC further elucidates the seriousness of the matter.

> These teens are not engaging in risky sexual behavior because they've been told such behavior is harmful, they've engaged in it because they've been deceived with a lie that you can engage in sexual activity outside of a monogamous married relationship safely.

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[216] Tonia Poteat, "Top Ten Things Lesbians Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=691 (Accessed 4/10/13)
[217] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 85.
[218] Dailey, p. 11.
[219] Dailey, p. 12.
[220] Katherine Fethers et al., "Sexually Transmitted Infections and Risk Behaviors in Women Who Have Sex with Women," *Sexually Transmitted Infections* 76 (2000):348 in Sprigg and Dailey, p. 84.
[221] Dailey, p. 12.
[222] Tony Perkins' *Washington Update*, "No Pregnant Pause for at-Risk Youth," Family Research Council, June 16, 2015.

> The CDC has reported that LGBTQ youth are much more likely to be at risk from unsafe sexual behavior than heterosexual youth. Sexual risk avoidance programs would be much more effective in protecting LGBTQ youth than would comprehensive sex ed programs that sanction all sorts of risky behavior.
>
> Sexual risk avoidance programs equip *all* students for strong and healthy living, teaching them how to set and achieve personal goals, and how to avoid consequences of risky sexual behavior, be it pregnancy, STDs, emotional hurt, or setbacks from life goals. These principles are true in heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual relationships -- if students do not engage in risky sexual behavior, they will not reap the negative consequences of such behavior, nor will society.[223]

Pastors and other church leaders, who are turning from the church's traditional interpretation of the Bible on homosexuality and teaching that this lifestyle is not contrary to Scripture and is permissible in the church, are leading people into great harm physically, emotionally, and socially as well as spiritually. How can doing so be called love, much less the will of God?!

If you have a loved one who has come out and says he or she is homosexual, consider carefully both God's special revelation (Chapter One) and his general revelation, part of which is disclosed in careful science as seen in this chapter on what homosexuality truly involves. Further, don't commit the naturalistic fallacy as discussed in Chapter Four. Remember the story of the loved one in the car headed toward a cliff and certain disaster; don't get behind the car and push. Rather, get in and help the loved one turn the car around.

Many dangers lurk in the lesbian lifestyle.

Lesbians are also likely to have had sex with an intravenous drug user, a very dangerous practice. Lesbians who have sex with women have a significantly higher prevalence of BV (bacterial vaginosis), hepatitis C, and HIV as contrasted with control groups.[224] The *Blade* also records that lesbians have greater frequency of cancer and higher rates of smoking, alcohol abuse, poor diet, and being overweight,[225] conditions associated with many serious and chronic diseases and disorders. Tonia Poteat writes, "Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women. Smoking and obesity are the biggest risk factors for heart disease among lesbians."[226] A study published in *Nursing Research* found that

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[223] Tony Perkins' *Washington Update*, "No Pregnant Pause for at-Risk Youth," June 16, 2015.
[224] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 86.
[225] Dailey, p. 13. *The Family in America: New Research, January* 1995, p. 4. See also Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13). Winn states that homosexual men "use tobacco at much higher rates than straight men, reaching nearly 50 percent in several studies. Tobacco-related health problems include lung disease and lung cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, and a whole host of other serious problems."
[226] Tonia Poteat, "Top Ten Things Lesbians Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=691 (Accessed 4/17/13)

lesbians are three times more likely to abuse alcohol and to suffer from other compulsive behaviors including with food, codependency, sex, and money.[227] Lesbians and bisexual women are significantly more likely than heterosexual women to drink alcoholic beverages more frequently and in larger quantities and are five times more likely to be classified as heavy drinkers.[228]

Is there any question why the federal government has banned blood donations from homosexuals? The ban in itself should be a sufficient red flag as to the dangers of this lifestyle.

Homosexuals and lesbians have a significantly higher incidence of mental health problems, including long-term depression, anxiety, sadness, conduct disorder, nicotine dependence, suicide ideation, suicide attempts, and nervousness to the extent of dysfunction with regard to the accomplishment of ordinary activities. Recent research in the UK reported by Health24.com, reveals that homosexuals are about 50% more likely to suffer from depression and engage in substance abuse,[229] not at all support for referring to that lifestyle as "gay." Further, caution is advised against speculating that anti-homosexual attitudes cause them to be unhappy, mentally ill, or to commit suicide; the evidence for such claims is lacking.[230] The homosexual lifestyle is highly stressful and diminishes the body's immune system and capacity for fighting the AIDS virus.[231]

The above studies and those which follow are only a sample of the many that yield similar results. These studies show strong and reliable results. Their sample sizes are typically very large, one of the means in social science research that lead to generalizable findings with a high level of confidence. The findings generally fit with other known and reliable knowledge in science, philosophy, and Biblical studies.

In sum we can see that homosexuals share many of the diseases that afflict heterosexuals who engage in sex outside of marriage commitments. Nevertheless, it is also clear that many of these diseases appear in homosexuals to a significantly higher degree, and some of the diseases are unique to homosexual practice. We thus see here a clear illustration and application of the explanation in God's Word that "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." (Romans 1:27) Moreover, heterosexual marriage partners who remain faithful to their spouse, abstaining from sex outside of marriage, are far healthier than

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[227] Dailey, p. 13.
[228] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 86. The study referenced here is Peter Freiberg, "Study: Alcohol Use More Prevelent for Lesbians," The Washington Blade, January 12, 2001, 21.
[229] http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=255614 (Accessed 09/20/08) See also Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13) See also Sprigg and Dailey, p. 89.
[230] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 89.
[231] Jones, "Homosexuality, the Behavioral Sciences and the Church," Wheaton College, unpublished and undated essay, p. 5.

either heterosexuals and especially homosexuals who are sexually active outside of heterosexual marital commitment.

With all this exceedingly grim health data descriptive of those who practice homosexuality, how can they and their lifestyle truthfully be called "gay" and, much less, normal? Is it becoming clearer why God reveals to us that homosexuality is *tôʿēbâ*? Read on.

Homosexual behavior negatively affects the society.

We've seen how homosexual practice harms individuals; it follows that the practice is also counterproductive to the wellbeing of society. Here's how.

It contributes to the premature death of those who do such acts and to the illness and death of others.[232] It therefore increases medical costs, and the society suffers the loss of those who could contribute jobs, other services, tax revenue, and much else to their local, state, and national resources and production.

Contrary to the contention of homosexual activists that they are just as responsible, temperate, and law-abiding as are heterosexuals, research illuminates them as having "a phenomenally high rate of illicit drug use…well in excess of the national average."[233] In fact use of both licit drugs (such as alcohol and tobacco) as well as illicit drugs (e.g., nonmedical psychotherapeutics, stimulants such as amphetamines and amyl nitrate ["poppers"], Ecstasy, inhalants, hallucinogens, and marijuana) is done with "far greater frequency" among homosexual men and women than average Americans, according to a survey done by William F. Skinner of the University of Kentucky.[234]

The widespread use of drugs by homosexuals is illustrated by Thom Munholland and is what led him to use meth and become hooked to the extent that he lost his job and home and became abused by so-called boy "friends." "'My addiction started partly because I was trying to figure out who I was. I didn't fit in with straight people because I was gay. I didn't fit in with the gay community because I didn't do drugs…so I did what I thought gay men do."[235]

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[232] Hogg RS, Strathdee SA, Craib KJP, O'Shaughnessy MV, Montaner JSG, Schechter MT. Modelling the impact of HIV disease on mortality in gay men. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1997;26**(3):**657–*61.* The authors state on the website of the *International Journal of Epidemiology*: "In our paper, we demonstrated that in a major Canadian centre, life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 21 years less than for all men." http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/30/6/1499.full#ref-1 (Accessed 06/01/14)

[233] *The Family in America: New Research, January* 1995, p. 4.

[234] *The Family in America: New Research, January* 1995, p. 4. See also Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13) Winn's pro-homosexual article admits that "Gay men use substances at a higher rate than the general population." See also Sprigg and Dailey, p. 73.

[235] Shelley Widhalm, "Touchstone Health Partners expands services: Agency works to make mental health and addiction treatment accessible, affordable and local," *Reporter-Herald*, December 1, 2014, 3A. Notice also Thom Munholland's disclosure of his identity struggle as a part of the confusion that catalyzed his

Sexual intercourse with people who have had sex with another or others, including drug users, infected with HIV puts one in jeopardy, even if the sexual encounter occurred many years ago. In an FDA blood donor suitability workshop, one of the panel members, Richard Steketee, M.D., addressing a question about a heterosexual in a committed relationship with a partner who had used IV drugs 10 or 15 years ago, said that "the prevalence of HIV in somebody who injected drugs 15 years ago is, you know, still not insubstantial."[236] In reference to the current epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, OBGYN physician, Dr. Joe McIlhaney has stated that the contagion is such that people who have "sex outside marriage with someone who has had sex before, will almost always get a sexually transmitted disease."[237] Dr. McIlhaney clarified his statement to mean that this is true unless the person who has had sex before has received treatment for any STDs he or she has contracted. McIlhaney explained that in engaging in sex with only one person outside a monogamous marriage commitment, one opens him or herself (especially women) to the sexual history of any and all others with whom that person has had sex and with whom the others have had sex.

Here is another harmful aspect of homosexual, including lesbian, promiscuousness. In the case of homosexuals who have had tens and hundreds even thousands of sexual partners the statistics are staggering.

These behaviors explain why studies show that homosexuals' life expectancy is significantly lower than that of heterosexuals. As would be expected from the preceding findings, premature death is also a part of the homosexual lifestyle.

> A study published in the *International Journal of Epidemiology* on the mortality rates of homosexuals concluded that they have a significantly reduced life expectancy: In a major Canadian centre, life expectancy at age twenty for gay and bisexual men is eight to twenty years less than for all men. If the same pattern of mortality were to continue, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged twenty years will not reach their sixty-fifth birthday.[238] Under even the most liberal

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decision-making. In both preventive and therapeutic programs for children and adolescents we should include help for identity development in Christ. One pastor recently included identity in Christ in a very important sermon series, linking our identity in Christ to our calling as Jesus' witnesses. (Acts 1:8) People in the church should have no trouble obtaining any help they need to "find themselves" or "figure out who they are."

[236] Richard Steketee, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Biologics Evaluation & Research, Blood Donor Suitability Workshop, November 23, 1998, http://www.fda.gov/downloads/BiologicsBloodVaccines/NewsEvents/WorkshopsMeetingsConferences/TranscriptsMinutes/UCM056297.pdf, p. 111. (Accessed 08/17/10)

[237] Joe McIlhaney, in an interview with James Dobson in the video "The Myth of Safe Sex" from the video series *Life on the Edge* produced by Focus on the Family, 1995. Many adolescents and college-age young adults "carry sexually transmitted viruses that have no known cures." Meg Meeker, M.D., Co-Host of Family Talk Radio and Physician in Residence at Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, in a letter to the ministry's supporters dated February 2014.

[238] Dailey, p. 16.

> assumptions, gay and bisexual men in this urban centre are now experiencing a life expectancy similar to that experienced by all men in Canada in the year 1871.[239]

"Accordingly," Knight observes, "in study after study, less than three percent of all homosexuals surveyed are over the age of 55."[240] Recall Dr. Jeffrey Satinover's finding mentioned earlier in this e-book that homosexuals experience a 25-30-year decrease in life expectancy.[241] ***Homosexuality is truly a physically, as well as spiritually, lethal lifestyle.***

Following an analysis of 25 earlier studies on sexual orientation and mental health, the medical journal *BMC Psychiatry* revealed that the likelihood of suicide rises over 200% if an individual has engaged in a homosexual lifestyle.[242] Those committing such a sad act can hardly have been referred to as truly "gay." Furthermore, this is not normal behavior. Can you see why God says homosexuality is *tôʿēbâ*? We'll see in Chapter Four, when we examine the homosexual activists' agenda, that they maintain it's OK to lie to accomplish their purposes. Using the word "gay" as a synonym for homosexual and the homosexual lifestyle is deceptive.

Therefore, to speak the truth in love, let's not perpetuate the myth and participate in deceiving people. To speak the truth, let's call them what they choose to be: homosexuals. To speak in love let's not call them by pejorative terms, for doing so is not speaking in love. We speak the truth in love in obedience to God. (Ephesians 4:15) We also realize that doing so is the most effective way to communicate: truth without love is harsh; love without truth is weak, ineffective, and even misleading.

Further adding to their "non-gayness," homosexuals also have above average incidences with eating disorders. Winn warns, "Problems with body image are more common among gay men, and gay men are much more likely to experience an eating disorder such

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[239] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 89. The quote is from Robert S. Hogg et al., "Modeling the Impact of HIV Disease on Mortality in Gay and Bisexual Men," *International Journal of Epidemiology* 26 (1997): 657. Hogg RS, Strathdee SA, Craib KJP, O'Shaughnessy MV, Montaner JSG, Schechter MT. See also http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/30/6/1499.full#ref-1 (Accessed 06/01/14) They lament that this research has been used by groups opposed to homosexuality to support their stand, and they assert that if the study were done today the expected life span of homosexuals would be significantly better due to advances in treatment of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The language of the posting clearly indicates that they have been pressured by homosexual activists and others applying the pressure of political correctness to try to remove a resource of the conservative opposition. Enough research evidence exists, however, for most people who can be objective to conclude that the homosexual lifestyle is fraught with many unhealthy practices that are counterproductive to health and that lead to and result in a significantly reduced life span. How can one love a person and affirm him or her in that very unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy lifestyle? http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/30/6/1499.full#ref-1 (Accessed 06/01/14)

[240] Knight, p. 6.

[241] Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 207.

[242] http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=255614 (Accessed 09/20/08)

as bulimia or anorexia nervosa."[243] Homosexual and bisexual men are more than nine times more likely to abuse alcohol than heterosexual men.[244]

Dr. Rick Fitzgibbons, a psychiatrist who is a member of the Catholic Medical Association, says

> there is evidence that homosexuality is itself a manifestation of a psychological disorder accompanied by a host of mental health problems, including "major depression, suicidal ideation and attempts, anxiety disorders, substance abuse, conduct disorder, low self-esteem in males and sexual promiscuity with an inability to maintain committed relationships.[245]

Janet Levy cites international research corroborating these findings corolating homosexual behaviors with seriously counterproductive health effects on youth, young adults, and older adults.

> A New Zealand study found that homosexual high school students and young adults had higher rates of depression, anxiety, behavioral problems and suicidal thoughts and attempts than their heterosexual counterparts. In their recent paper, "Health Risks: Fisting and other Homosexual Practices," Michelle Cretella, M.D., and Philip Sutton, PhD, citing liberally from medical literature, state, "In general, compared to heterosexually behaving adolescents and adults, having same-sex partners is associated with substantially greater risk for mood disorders, anxiety disorders, psychological distress, substance use disorders, for suicidal thoughts and suicidal plans, suicide attempts, unstable relationships and lower levels of quality of life." The emotional problems cited by Cretella and Sutton, as well as the likelihood of high levels of substance abuse, were consistent with the findings in the Sandfort study which was conducted in the Netherlands, a country with highly accepting views of homosexuality.[246]

The development of new anti-HIV drugs does not eliminate the above mentioned life diminishing and destructive effects of homosexual behavior. Drugs cannot be counted on as a cure-all, since the virus morphs into new strains that resist current drugs, and some homosexuals don't take the drugs or are unaware of them. One has to look no farther than Africa to see the devastating effects of AIDS on families and their society.

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[243] Winn, "Ten Things Gay Men Should Discuss with Their Healthcare Provider," http://glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=690 (Accessed 4/10/13)
[244] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 87.
[245] http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=255614 (Accessed 09/20/08)
[246] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

The cultural argument that homosexuals may be pushed to substance abuse and suicide due to anti-homosexual sentiment in the society is not valid. Empirical research has shown that there is no difference in homosexual health effects depending on the level of tolerance in a particular geographical entity. For example, homosexuals in both Denmark, which is highly tolerant of that lifestyle, and those in the U.S., both die on average in their early 50s, or a decade earlier if HIV/AIDS is the cause of death. By contrast, the average age of all residents of both countries is in the mid to upper 70s.[247]

The historic, global, and traditional understanding of the committed marriage and family relationship is that it is the stabilizing basis (humanly speaking[248]) of the society across cultures. Where marriages dwindle in number and in strength, society sees increases in crime, suicide, poor health, poverty, and academic failure.

Yet David Popenhoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead in their massive and groundbreaking research for The National Marriage Project at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, see indicators of positive trends. Furthermore they reiterate the observations of social scientists, philosophers, historians, and many others when they write of the institution of marriage being the basis of a stable society.

> Marriage is a fundamental social institution. It is central to the nurture and raising of children. It is the "social glue" that reliably attaches fathers to children. It contributes to the physical, emotional and economic health of men, women and children, and thus to the nation as a whole. It is also one of the most highly prized of all human relationships and a central life goal of most Americans.[249]

Yet it is not easy to draft, much less pass, legislation that protects the God-ordained marriage and family. Regarding the challenges in Illinois, Bowman records his observations.

> The broad scope of personal, family, community, social and religious interests which can be affected by sexual activities renders more difficult the problem of drafting legislation proscribing specific acts of sexual conduct. The Committee approached the problem from several basic premises: ...(4) protection of the institution of marriage and normal family relationships from sexual conduct which tends to destroy them....and the community's interest in preserving the monogamous marriage and family institution which is the current basis of our social and moral structure. The Committee considers the

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[247] http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=255614 (Accessed 09/20/08)

[248] We must always remember that our greatest help is in Christ who upholds and sustains all things by his sovereign power. See, e.g., Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3.

[249] David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "The Future of Marriage in America," The National Marriage Project, http://marriage.rutgers.edu/SOOU.htm. 5/22/00

> protection of these interests sufficiently vital to warrant criminal sanctions for their violation."[250]

See also the Colorado Family Institute's findings.

> "The family is the fundamental building block of all human civilizations. It is the original form of government from which all others come about either by choice or by force. Marriage holds all of society together through the socialization of men, the protection of women and the nurturing and education of children. The health of our culture, its citizens and their children are intimately linked to the wellbeing of marriage.[251]

One reason for this stability is that marriage between one man and one woman gives children both a mother and a father, which a multitude of research studies for many years, including recent studies some of which are included herein, show that children in such homes have significantly greater benefits than children who do not have an intact family with one mother and one father. For example, two other recent studies confirm that children raised in a family with one mother and one father "have better lives and rely less on government programs."[252] Both studies were released by the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) of the Family Research Council. In his presentation of the findings, Patrick Fagan, director of MARRI, referred to the impact of an intact family on society by saying, "Its power is massive." He also said "with what he calls the 'retreat of marriage' in modern society, scholars and others realize anew that the institutions of marriage and family are cornerstones of Western civilization."[253]

A mounting number of studies continue to show how extremely unhealthy and violent the homosexual lifestyle is, part of why God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*. Corroborating studies are continuing to be reported on the related subjects pertaining to homosexuality as well. However, what is contained herein is sufficient to support the message of this book. Many more could be cited, the most important and germane of which will be added periodically to the digital version of this book on the author's websites.

As we'll see in Chapter Four, part of the homosexual activists' agenda is to destroy God's plan for marriage and the family. Thus, society as we now know it would be devastated were they to succeed.

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[250] See for example Illinois Criminal Code of 1961, Division I, Title III, Part B, Article 11 Sex Offenses, Committee Comments 1961, Revised in 1972 by Charles H. Bowman.
[251] http://www.cofamily.org/about-cfi/ (Accessed 08/12/13)
[252] Penny Starr, "Intact Families—Not Governmental Social Programs—Most Beneficial to Children and Society, Group Finds." February 12, 2013. http://cnsnews.com/news/article/intact-families-not-government-social-programs-most-beneficial-children-and-society (Accessed 6/27/13)
[253] Penny Starr, "Intact Families—Not Governmental Social Programs—Most Beneficial to Children and Society, Group Finds." February 12, 2013. http://cnsnews.com/news/article/intact-families-not-government-social-programs-most-beneficial-children-and-society (Accessed 6/27/13)

Homosexual behavior negatively affects the health of other societies as well as of our own. Since homosexuals travel frequently and engage in sex with others in foreign countries, they are exposed to pathogens unique to these other cultures, and those from other nations bring theirs to the United States.

For Reflection and Discussion

Chapter Two

1. Cite at least three reasons why God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*.
2. Cite at least three homosexual practices that you can mention to anyone who asks you, "What's so bad about homosexuality?" (The difference between Question #1 and Question #2: Question #1 asks what it is about homosexuality that is detestable to *God*. The answer to Question #2 should be in terms of practices that are seen by the questioner as bad; he or she may not see as bad what God sees as bad, e.g., that homosexuality is first a rebellion against God and his will.)
3. Identify at least three behaviors of homosexuals you can mention to someone who tells you that homosexuals are "just normal people like you and me?"
4. What scientific data can you cite to give encouragement to a parent whose child has just "come out" as a homosexual?
5. What scientific data can you cite to counter the false homosexual assertion that children raised in homosexual households turn out as well or better than those raised in heterosexual households with both a mother and a dad?
6. From the scientific data, explain why the author says that the homosexual lifestyle is unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy.
7. How does homosexuality negatively affect the society?
8. In the light of the science revealed in this chapter what are the implications for pastoral care in the church?
9. Why should parents of daughters be concerned in schools where transgender boys attend? What should these parents do to protect their girls from sexual harassment and abuse? What should the girls do?

Chapter 3

Observations from Culture, Society, and Law

In the light of the preceding chapters it does not surprise us to observe a significant body of research disclosing the destructive effects of homosexuality on individuals and societies. These damaging outcomes include skyrocketing rates of diseases, domestic violence, crime rates, societal discord, and many others.[254]

As we've seen in our study of the Bible, marriage precedes the state and its government. As we also saw, God established marriage and, before Adam and Eve corrupted it, made it consist of one man and one woman. Noting this fact, the 2015 declaration developed and signed by Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars reminds all Christians that it is

> our responsibility to bear witness to the truth about marriage as taught by both revelation and reason—by the Holy Scriptures and by the truths inscribed on the human heart. These age-old truths explain why Christians celebrate marriage—the coming-together of a man and woman in a binding union of mutual support—as one of the glories of the human race. Marriage is the primordial human institution, a reality that existed long before the establishment of what we now know as the state.[255]

What did the early church observe about homosexuality since Romans 1:18-32?

Caution is required in examining history. Historiography and historical research, as all other writing, is subject to the bias of the author. Such is also true of art work, the artifacts of which disclose in some interpretations homosexual activity, but we should limit ourselves to what is most well attested.

The Early Church encountered homosexuality and its grim practice in the surrounding culture. A few excerpts from early Christian writing describe the context in which they proclaimed God's Word and witnessed to the Gospel of Christ.

> 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 practice magic, you shall not practice witchcraft, you shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill one that has been born. - Didache 2:2 (A.D. 90).

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[254] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[255] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

> ...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 to prostitution. And for this pollution a multitude of females and hermaphrodites, and those who commit unmentionable iniquities, are found in every nation...And there are some who prostitute even their own children and wives, and some are openly mutilated for the purpose of sodomy; and they refer these mysteries to the mother of the gods. - Justin Martyr, First Apology 27 (A.D. 151).
>
> For your gods did not even abstain from boys, one having loved Hylas, another Hyacinthus, another Pelops, another Chrysippus, another Ganymede. - Clement of Alexandria, Exhortation to the Greeks 2 (A.D. 190).
>
> [A]ll other frenzies of the lusts which exceed the laws of nature, and are impious toward both bodies and the sexes, we banish, not only from the threshold but also from all shelter of the Church, for they are not sins so much as monstrosities. - Tertullian, Modesty 4 (A.D. 220).
>
> [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 vigor of their sex is effeminated 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 skillful he is considered to be. Such a one is looked upon--oh shame!--and looked upon with pleasure…nor is there wanting authority for the enticing abomination…that Jupiter of theirs [is] not more supreme in dominion than in vice, inflamed with earthly love in the midst of his own thunders…now breaking forth by the help of birds to violate the purity of boys. And now put the question: Can he who looks upon such things be healthy-minded or modest? Men imitate the gods whom they adore, and to such miserable beings their crimes become their religion. - Cyprian of Carthage, Letters 1:8 (A.D. 253) [256]

The largest reservoir of resources revealing the history of homosexuality deals with Greece, which is not surprising. Dr. James B. De Young, Professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Western Seminary in Portland and author of *Homosexuality*, indicates that lifestyle practice seems to have been more prevalent among the ancient Greeks than within any other ancient culture.[257]

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[256] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[257] James B. De Young, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/27/15)

The late Sir Kenneth James Dover, distinguished British classical scholar, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and the author of *Greek Homosexuality*, explains more how it primarily was done. He states that the main form of Greek homosexuality

> was pederasty, a custom that seems to have been practiced mostly among the upper classes, in which an older man (the *erastest*) would make a young free boy (the *eromenos*) his sex partner, and become his mentor. This was regulated by the State as an institution. However, this practice was usually a supplement to marriage,[258] and thus is seen as being done by bisexuals. The practice of pederasty is mentioned in Homer's *Illiad*….[259]

Can you see more why God calls homosexual practice *tôʿēbâ*? It is not the new normal; it's the old evil. We see in the Bible that God is patient, long-suffering, aspects of his love. (Nehemiah 9:30; Jonah 4:22; Nahum 1:3; Peter 3:9; 1 Corinthians 13:4) But his love also produces justice and righteousness. Thus, for a time he does indeed withhold wrath, discipline, and judgment to allow people sufficient time to repent, including changing their ways.

We can understand confusion in the world; there should be no confusion in the church where we have God's clear Word in the Bible and the Holy Spirit working in and through the church corporately and in members' minds and hearts individually. We have been called out by God not to follow or conform to culture but to be salt and light to transform culture. (Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 12:1-2)

This struggle with some in the church who are trying to promote acceptance of homosexuality today, among God's people whom he has called to be holy to him, is not new. Listen to what the eloquent Archbishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom (ca. 400 AD), had to say as a result of his observations.

> [Certain men in church] come in gazing about at the beauty of women; others curious about the blooming youth of boys. After this, do you not marvel that [lightning] bolts are not launched [from heaven], and all these things are not plucked up from their foundations? For worthy both of thunderbolts and hell are the things that are done; but God, who is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forbears awhile his wrath, calling you to repentance and amendment.[260]

Let us pray that God continues to be patient with the United States and other countries heading in the wrong direction by not only permitting but approving the many aspects of homosexual practice in rebellion against his will, and that he gives us the help we need to change direction and honor him by doing his will. Let us begin by speaking up for the

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[258] Kenneth J. (K. J.) Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Harvard University Press, 1989, as summarized in
[259] James B. De Young, *Homosexuality*, p. 322, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/27/15)
[260] John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 3:3 (A.D. 391) quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/27/15)

Lord in our families, in our church congregations, with our neighbors, over lunch with co-workers, in letters to the editor of news media, on radio talk shows, and wherever else we have the opportunity. In Chapter Five we'll consider these and other ways to function more effectively in the high and holy calling God has given us to speak the truth…albeit in love.

The church is the main means through which God is redeeming his creation. If the church loses sight of its call to truthfully proclaim God's Word and of its moral bearing, how can it help society change and avoid the righteous judgment of God who is not only holy but holy, holy, holy? Edward Gibbon, in his classic *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, stated that marital faithfulness in the Roman Empire was virtually unknown, and that "The dignity of marriage was restored by the Christians."[261] If the church were to forget God's call upon it and capitulate to culture, our society would return to the horrific paganism of the Romans, Greeks, and even of the Canaanites. Think of what that would mean for women and children; even men would suffer.

Through the centuries nations and societies that have departed from the Biblical commands have suffered greatly. Historical research reveals

> societies that have embraced homosexuality have perished, whereas those that have upheld traditional values have endured. For example, ancient Rome's decline and its eventual fall in A.D. 476 were due in no small part to a growing tolerance of homosexual acts beginning in the Late Republic period ending in 27 B.C.[262]

Pertaining to the societal effects of homosexuality, and what the church could do to help, Justinian wrote in Novel 77, 358 A. D.

> …since certain men, seized by diabolical incitement practice among themselves the most disgraceful lusts, and act contrary to nature: we enjoin them to take to heart the fear of God and the judgment to come, and to abstain from suchlike diabolical and unlawful lusts, so that they may not be visited by the just wrath of God on account of these impious acts, with the result that cities perish with all their inhabitants. For we are taught by the Holy Scriptures that because of like impious conduct cities have indeed perished, together with all the men in them.[263]

In their brief overview of key writings in church history pertaining to marriage, the alliance of Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant writers in their March 2015

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[261] Edward Gibbon, John Bagnell Bury, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 478, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/27/15)
[262] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[263] Trans. in Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1955), 73-74, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)

declaration observed the following. Notice their focus on the positive contributions to society that traditional marriage makes in contrast to homosexuality.

> For two millennia, great Christian teachers have proclaimed the biblical understanding of marriage. In the early Church, Augustine defined the three goods of marriage. The first good is *children*: Marriage provides the fitting and proper context for us to fulfill our natural desire for sexual union, to respect the intrinsic possibility of fertility in that union, and to accept responsibility for the children that union produces. The second good is *fidelity*: As a social institution supported by cultural and legal sanctions, marriage encourages an exclusive commitment that expresses what is noblest in the human aspiration to solidarity and that calls us beyond the selfishness and self-centeredness that can erode, and ultimately destroy, social life. Augustine also identifies a third good, *permanence*: Marriage is a natural *sign* pointing toward a supernatural reality. He refers here to the mysterious way in which marriage creates an indissoluble bond that directs us toward God's covenantal fidelity. As the prophet Hosea said: "I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy" (Hosea 2:19).
>
> Marriage creates "one body," a new reality, ennobling the sexual union of a man and a woman by ordering it toward a common life that promotes the good of the couple, the family, and the community as a whole. Marriage creates a unique social union not based on blood relations or common descent ("a man *leaves* his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife"); thus marriage is also the primordial institution of human society. Martin Luther called it the "first estate," which precedes both Church and civil government. As such, the institution of marriage is a foundation of a just political order and the nursery of civic virtue, as spouses exercise mutual responsibility for raising their children.
>
> Luther also addressed the question of who can marry, stressing the complementarity of male and female:
>
> Therefore, each one of us must have the kind of body God has created for us. I cannot make myself a woman, nor can you make yourself a man; we do not have that power. But we are exactly as he created us: I a man and you a woman. . . . Each should honor the other's image and body as a divine and good creation that is well-pleasing.
>
> The Reformation pastor and theologian, John Calvin, understood marriage as a covenant based on God's covenant with us. Like Luther, Calvin held that God is the author of marriage:
>
> When a marriage takes place between a man and a woman, God presides and requires a mutual pledge from both. Hence Solomon in Proverbs 2:17

> calls marriage the covenant of God, for it is superior to all human contracts. So also Malachi (2:14) declares that God is as it were the stipulator who by his authority joins the man to the woman, and sanctions the alliance. . . . Marriage is not a thing ordained by men. We know that God is the author of it, and that it is solemnized in his name. The Scripture says that it is a holy covenant, and therefore calls it divine.
>
> The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council sounded similar themes in their teaching on marriage in the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*:
>
> God himself is the author of marriage and has endowed it with various benefits and with various ends in view: all of these have a very important bearing on the continuation of the human race, on the personal development and eternal destiny of every member of the family, on the dignity, stability, peace, and prosperity of the family and of the whole human race. By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory. Thus the man and the woman, who are "no longer two but one" (Matt. 19:6), help and serve each other by their marriage partnership; they become conscious of their unity and experience it more deeply from day to day. . . . Christ our Lord has abundantly blessed this love, which is rich in its various features, coming as it does from the spring of divine love and modeled on Christ's own union with the Church. . . . Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and enriched by the redemptive power of Christ . . . with the result that the spouses are effectively led to God . . . and together they render glory to God.[264]

As Christians we must inform and remind our government representatives in all three branches of the Biblical basis of marriage and its essential bearing on society's well-being. We cannot let the growing secularism in our society eclipse and even destroy the historic understanding of the relationship between traditional marriage and societal success; nor can we allow societal institutions to ignore God. We have an easy way to do this informing and reminding: We can begin by pointing to the first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence, where the Founders established this country on the basis of rights given by God.

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[264] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

Homosexuality is highly correlated with countries that worship false gods.

China illustrates this relationship.

Throughout the world we see a strong relationship between homosexuality and the worship of false gods, contrary to the will of the triune God who revealed himself to the Bible writers. David Greenberg gives another example, citing that male prostitutes in China were known to have their own god, Tcheou--Wang.[265] Examples of homosexual rebellion against God and his law concerning the worship of false gods, and outcomes of doing so are also seen in China. During the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.), Tao Gu wrote in his *Records of the Extraordinary*

> Everywhere people single out Nanhai for its 'Misty Moon Worships,' a term referring to the custom of esteeming lewdness. Nowadays those in the capital those who sell themselves number more than ten thousand. As to the men who offer their bodies for sale, then enter and leave place shamelessly. A law later enacted during Xhenghe reign (1111-1118) which punished male prostitutes with "one hundred strokes of a bamboo rod and a fine of fifty thousand in cash." However, it seems to have fallen into disuse over time.[266]

As we've seen, pederasty has through the centuries been part of homosexual practice. It has been so in China as well. In the latter part of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.), Xie Zhaozhe, (1567-1624) recorded in his encyclopedia, the Wu za zu (Fivehold Miscellany), "In today's Peking, there are young boys singers who go to all the gentry's wine parties, and no matter how many official prohibitions there are, everybody uses them."[267]

The famous Jesuit astronomer and missionary, Matteo Ricci, reported soon after he arrived in China in 1583 that male prostitution was allowed by law and openly practiced. He said

> there are public streets full of boys dressed up like prostitutes. And there are people who buy these boys and teach them to play music, sing and dance. And then, gallantly dressed up and made up with rouge like women, these miserable men are initiated into this terrible vice. [They never are "gay."]
>
> [He also wrote to his superior lamenting] "the horrible sin to which everyone here is much given, and about which there seems to be no shame or impediment." [Not long before his death in 1610, he grieved that such was] "neither forbidden by law nor thought to be illicit, nor even a cause

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[265] David F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, pp. 161-62, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[266] David F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, pp. 161-62, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[267] *http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality* (Accessed 11/13/14)

> of shame. It is spoken of in public, practiced everywhere, without there being anyone to prevent it."[268]

Conservapedia summarizes homosexuality in China during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

> Open sexual expression was expanded under the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.), but increasing moral disorder, and invasion by warriors who captured Peking in 1644, establishing the Qing Dynasty, worked to somewhat morally awaken China, and resulted in laws for moral reform. Chinese conservatives labored to restore the more chaste values of orthodox Confucianism, while the Manchu conquerors sought to discourage fornication, including sexual offenses between males. The second Qing Emperor, Kang Xi, was an esteemed ruler who was hostile to pederasty and child prostitution, and declared that he himself was not waited on by "pretty boys."
>
> In 1679 extensive legislation was written and confirmed in the Qing code of 1740, which made the abduction and rape of boys under twelve a capital crime, and penalized consensual sodomy with one hundred strokes of the heavy bamboo, and the wearing of the cangue (a flat wooden board) for one month. As in Biblical law, it appears that actually being caught in the act was required, and enforcement seems to have been rather selective. However, Kang Xi's own son and heir to the throne was found to be sexually involved with palace officials, and was executed.[269]

English Statesman, Sir John Barrow, comptroller to the Macartney Embassy of 1793, who later founded the Royal Geographical Society, recorded the following in his *Travels in China* (1806): "Many of the first officers of state seemed to make no hesitation in publicly avowing [homosexuality]!"[270] Barrow also wrote that the exclusion of women had the effect of

> promoting that sort of connexion which, being one of the greatest violations of nature, ought to be considered among the first of moral crimes - a connexion that sinks a man many degrees below the brute. The commission of this detestable and unnatural act is attended to with so little sense of shame, or feeling of delicacy, that many first officers of state seemed to make no hesitation in publicly avowing it. Each of these officer

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[268] Spence (1984), p. 220, quoted in *http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality* (Accessed 11/13/14)
[269] *Homosexuality & Civilization*, pp. 224-228,237-239, by Louis Crompton (pro homosexual) quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[270] Sir John Barrow, *Travels in China*. T. Cadell & W. Davics (London), 1804. Cited In Arno Kjrlen. *Sexuality and Homosexuality*. 1971, Norton, p. 229, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/28/15)

> (sic) is attended to by his pipe-bearer, who is generally a handsome boy, from fourteen to eighteen years of age, and is always well dressed.[271]

Eberhardt contends that "Chinese Buddhism considered homosexuality to be a minor transgression."[272] On the contrary, it doesn't seem to have been a part of Chinese folk religion, as "the Chinese were shocked and indignant at the homoerotic Tibetan rites practiced at the court of Shun-Ti Heissig, the last Mongul emperor in the fourteenth century."[273] During the Chinese cultural revolution (1966 -76), Mao's government considered homosexuality to be a social offense or a form of mental illness, and homosexuality is said to been punished more than in all previous times.[274]

How is homosexuality viewed in other countries?

As we've been seeing and will see further below, the United States and other countries in the Western hemisphere, where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has had a significant influence including an emphasis on grace and freedom, have provided the venue, forum, and fertile soil for the spread of ideas. Sadly, the demonic elements in countries where the Gospel has had an impact have used that venue, forum, and fertile soil for the spread of evil and unnatural ideas, including homosexuality. (Cf. Matthew 13:24-43) Still, the U. S. is only one of seven countries in the world where "same-sex marriage" is legal.

Yet, other countries where the Gospel has had a significant impact, as well as countries where the influence of the Gospel has been opposed, have resisted homosexuality and "same-sex marriage." Countries throughout the Middle East and elsewhere, where the majority of the people are Muslims, officially oppose homosexuality. However, I'm told by authorities, scholars, and others who are well informed about the religion of Islam that while Islam prohibits homosexuality, in practice it is rampant, though hidden, for the punishment of homosexual offenders in Islamic countries, especially those governed according to Sharia Law, is severe, including death.

This is no new observation. Many such reports have come down through history. For example

> A Dutch traveler among the Moguls (Muslims who ruled in India), wrote that male homosexuality "is not only universal in practice among them,

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[271] Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve*, p. 141, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[272] Wolfram Eberhardt, *Guilt and Sin in Traditional China*, University of California, 1967, pp. 29-32. Cited in David F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, p. 26l, note 101 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)
[273] Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, p. 161. Cited in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/28/15)
[274] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 3/28/15)

but extends to a bestial communication with brutes, and in particular with sheep."[275]

The pro-homosexual website, "Maps of World," records the following:

> Broadly, while the LGBT community the world over had been making inroads progressively into the mindsets of nations and their peoples, recent laws not really favoring these sections have been instituted in some countries bringing them once again back to square one. All this, despite the corporates and several countries around the world making LGBT development part of their prime CSR [corporate social responsibility] agenda.
>
> Several countries have since joined the bandwagon outlawing gay relationships, including in about 80 countries where it is criminal to have such relations and 5 countries, where it is definitely punished by death. In Saudi Arabia, any same sex sexual activity warrants death or life imprisonment. Yemen gives death penalty, Afghanistan - death penalty for any gay sex activity, Maldives - punishment up to death is awarded sometimes, Iran - illegal, death penalty, Sudan - death for the 3rd offence for men, 4th offence for women, and Mauritania - death penalty. In Nigeria too, sometimes death penalty is given.
>
> In countries where gays are frowned upon, they are usually dealt with disdain and their rights not included in the regular human rights regime. While the fight for their rights goes on with several hurdles on their way, the gays are not yet calling it a day. [276]

Africa

Egypt The pro-homosexual website, "Maps of the World," states that in Egypt homosexuality is illegal.[277] The UK, on the contrary, states that homosexuality is legal in Egypt but that homosexual acts in public are prohibited.[278]

Nigeria

In February of 2014 Nigeria passed measures outlawing homosexuality. That country established a 10-year prison term for anyone who joins or promotes any homosexual

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[275] Johan Stavorinus, *Voyages to the East Indies*, G G. Robinson (London), 1798, pp. 453-57. Cited in Greenberg, p. 180, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)

[276] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html. Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)

[277] https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/egypt/local-laws-and-customs (Accessed 10/23/14 and 1/11/15)

[278] https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/egypt/local-laws-and-customs (Accessed 1/13/2015)

organization.[279] "Maps of the World" reports that "[t]he new legislation totally bans same-sex marriages, forming gay groups and public display of same-sex affection - now same-sex couples could face up to 14 years in prison."[280]

Uganda

On February 24, 2014 in the African nation of Uganda, which is 41.9 percent Roman Catholic and 42 percent Protestant, President Yoweri Museveni signed into law severe penalties for homosexual behavior, including life imprisonment for those convicted of such acts and seven years for anyone even attempting such acts. Whether one views this law as being too harsh[281] or not, the law clearly demonstrates the Ugandan view of homosexuality as being unacceptable. Museveni used the word disgusting, bringing to mind the word *tôʿēbâ*.[282]

One of those who think the law should be revised is a Christian, Richard Cohen, Founder and Executive Director of the International Healing Foundation. He wrote a passionate plea to President Museveni imploring him to change the wording of the bill to avoid punishing people with unwanted same-sex attractions and who were trying to overcome them. He wrote, "I understand that a motivating factor behind this proposed legislation is the report of young children and those with disabilities being raped by HIV-infected persons. There is no doubt that this terrible behavior must be stopped. However, I believe that the bill, as written, is too broad in incriminating all persons who experience homosexual feelings...I recommend amending the language in the bill to be more specific regarding consequences for those who abuse and rape minors and disabled people, regardless of their sexual preference."[283] He also outlined positive preventive actions to be pro-active in the issue of homosexuality.

Western church officials, in particular Anglicans, have vocally articulated the conservative Africans' stance on the subject. When I was speaking at a pastors' conference in Uganda several years ago, at an afternoon tea break, the pastors made very clear to me that the African Anglican communion strongly opposed the position on homosexuality held and promoted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and many others in the Anglican churches in Western countries such as England, Canada, and the United States.

Such opposition continues to this day. The archbishops of Canterbury and York wrote an open letter to leaders of the Anglican Communion and the presidents of Nigeria and Uganda. Decision magazine reported Uganda's reply as follows:

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[279] "Anti-gay laws remain entrenched in many countries," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, January 17, 2014, p. A9. See also, Michelle Faul, "Dozens arrested for being gay in Nigeria," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, January 15, 2014, p. A7.
[280] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html. Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)
[281] http://www.comingoutloved.com/fact-or-fiction (Accessed 2/28/2015)
[282] "Uganda President Signs Anti-Homosexuality Bill," *Decision*, April 2014, p. 2.
[283] http://www.comingoutloved.com/fact-or-fiction (Accessed 4/21/2015)

> In a response, Uganda's Archbishop Stanley Ntagali pointed out that a resolution from the 1998 Lambeth Conference is still in effect, which states that "homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture."
>
> Ntagali added that it was the violation of that resolution by the Episcopal Church USA and Anglican Church of Canada that caused the Church of Uganda to break communion with those churches more than 10 years ago.
>
> Referring to continued Anglican waffling over whether or not Scripture actually forbids homosexuality, Ntagali added: "We sincerely hope the archbishops and governing bodies of the Church of England will step back from the path they have set themselves on so the Church of Uganda will be able to maintain communion with our Mother Church."[284]

One current report cites 81 countries throughout the world where homosexuality is illegal.[285] Most of them are in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The Associated Press adds that "[w]hile gay-rights activists celebrate gains in much of the world, their setbacks have been equally far-flung and often sweeping in scope….at least 76 countries retain laws criminalizing gay sex, including five where it's punishable by death."[286] These reports show how most people in the world view homosexuality as unnatural.

Asia

Bangladesh

Homosexual relationships are outlawed. The punishment for same sex violations is up to ten years in prison.[287]

China

In China a stigma against homosexuality still exists. Yet I'm told "the most popular TV show in China, especially among youth and young adults, is a Japanese production called *Anime*. Basically it's a cartoon where the students portrayed act like they are gay; the girls act like lesbians even though they have boyfriends, and the guys act like they are gay even though they have girlfriends. Among the youth and young adults, acting gay is seen as cool. They really aren't gay but they think it's gay to act that way. There is a lot

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[284] "Uganda President Signs Anti-Homosexuality Bill," *Decision*, April 2014, p. 2.
[285] "81 countries where homosexuality is illegal," http://76crimes.com/76-countries-where-homosexuality-is-illegal. Updated May 20, 2014. (Accessed 06/06/14) This is a homosexual website that closely monitors the developments in countries around the world as to their laws, policies, and actions concerning homosexuality. The list does not include other countries, such as Russia, where, the website claims, there is not a law against homosexual acts but where current procedures are being undertaken that demonstrate an official negative response to homosexual practice.
[286] "Anti-gay laws remain entrenched in many countries," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, January 17, 2014, p. A9.
[287] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)

of gender confusion due to the mixed messages. *Anime* is a type of animated TV program (like the Simpsons). *Anime* is the biggest influence in China among this age group."[288]

Another Chinese teacher informed me that research on sexuality in China came to the attention of the national government, and they revealed their findings to the Red Cross. The government was so horrified (her word) with these findings that they asked the Red Cross to promote training at the university level to educate university students to inform them and increase their awareness of the dangers of multiple sex, homosexuality, and other forms of sexual encounter before marriage. The research findings based on the number of infected AIDS patients indicate an expectation that in 10 years' time 1,000,000 AIDS-affected patients with a university degree and above will die of AIDS. The teacher lamented, "This means we are losing our elite groups." She added that "same-sex marriage" is being done in China, but it is not legal in Chinese law.

The pro-homosexual website, "Maps of World," reports that "while same-sex marriage is still forbidden, it is no longer criminalized. Open, gay strongholds and gay bars exist in Beijing and Shanghai."[289]

China does hold that homosexuality is not normal, and conversion therapy treatments have been implemented. The Chinese Psychiatric Association in 1989 defined homosexuality as a "psychiatric disorder of sexuality" in its "Chinese Classification and Diagnostic Criteria of Mental Disorders."[290]

In what is believed to be the first such court case a homosexual sued a Chinese psychological clinic for the treatments he received. The Haidian People's Court in Beijing ordered the Xinyu Piaoxian clinic in the western city of Chongqing to pay $560 for expenses incurred by Yang Teng when he underwent the clinic's electrical shock treatment therapy administered for the purpose of changing him into a heterosexual. According to Yang's lawyer, the court said there was no need for the shocks "because homosexuality doesn't need treatment."[291] In a phone interview Yang expressed surprise at the verdict but then concluded that the court's siding with him is a statement of support that homosexuality is not a mental disease that requires treatment.

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[288] A teacher who has taught in China in a phone conversation with the author on November 18, 2014. He says the main concern the government has with students is with promiscuity. He adds that the government thinks that upwards of 75% of the students were sexuality active at the time of the course he taught with his wife at Beijing University under the auspices of the Red Cross Society of China. In the light of the foregoing citation of the high degree of promiscuity among homosexuals, most of whom are bisexual, the government is correct to have that concern and address it with this course which was on life education. A section of the course, a marriage preparation course, was on what is true love, including sexuality.

[289] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)

[290] *Shanghai Star*, October 4, 2002, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality#cite_note-30 (Accessed 11/13/14)

[291] Dateline Beijing, "China gay wins suit over shock therapy, *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, December 20, 2014, p. 6A.

Notice the logical fallacy in the reasoning of Yang and his attorney. The court's reported judgment was against the clinic for employing shock therapy; Yang and his attorney commit the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion when they say the court was affirming the normality of homosexuality. While one may prefer the clinic not employ that form of treatment, such as the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH)[292] they are correct in viewing homosexuals as not being normal and as people who can be helped with proper therapy, as will be seen below.[293] What would be most helpful in therapy though would be to address the root cause of the matter…the sin and rebellion against God's will that is involved in choosing to engage in homosexual practice.

The court refused to punish the clinic. A companion suit against the search engine Baidu for advertising the clinic was dismissed.

Does this mean that people struggling to break free and to find hope in China have no help? Not at all. The church has always existed, and now the parachurch ministry, Exodus Global Alliance (EGA) is growing in its ability of ex-"gays" to reach out to and help others who are and want to be ex-"gay" themselves. Already in 1996 Melvin Wong, together with others, extending the work of EGA's predecessor Exodus International, began a ministry in Hong Kong. In 2003 under Melvin's leadership an ex-"gay" ministry in Taiwan joins Exodus Asia Pacific, and new ministries are started in Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Malaysia. He facilitates further growth after that.[294]

India

India bans same-sex marriages. A recent ruling of India's high court authorizes the punishment of homosexual practice by fine and prison terms.[295]

Malaysia

The law prohibits homosexual relationships. The punishment for same sex violations includes a fine, whipping, or two to twenty years in prison.[296]

Pakistan

Homosexual relationships are outlawed. The punishment for same sex violations is at least two years in prison.[297]

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[292] http://www.narth.com/news-watch/theological-issues/ (Accessed 4/12/15)
[293] For more on the widespread use of illogical reasoning and how to discern it see also below, Chapter 4, "The Homosexual Agenda and Logic."
[294] http://exodusglobalalliance.org/ourhistoryc87.php (Accessed 2/28/15)
[295] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)
[296] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[297] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)

Thailand

Homosexuals consider Thailand as "open and progressive." They rate Thailand as "highly tolerant…Bangkok is popular as the Gay Haven in Asia; the 1st LGBT Thai magazine was published in 1983."[298]

Australia

According to national statistics, 1.2% of adults identify as homosexual or lesbian. A closer look shows 1.6% of adult men identifying as homosexual and 0.8% of women as lesbian. As in the United States, most homosexuals are bisexual: 1.4% of women and 0.9% of men said they were bisexual.[299]

Australia has decriminalized homosexuality. The country did it state by state, beginning with South Australia in 1972, and the last state to do so was Tasmania in 1997. Over the last two decades an increasing pressure has been exerted on the states by activists to provide additional rights for homosexuals. Such legislation has included prohibitions against discrimination related to employment and accommodation on the basis of sexual orientation. Some states have recently altered their laws to give "rights" to homosexuals pertaining to superannuation (retirement), property, intestacy, and health.[300] Observers have noted that where states have made these modifications to their laws, the tendency has been to change more and more laws. Tasmania now allows adoption but not of strangers, only of those who are known.[301] Same-sex "marriages" are banned under the law in Australia.[302]

Christian ministries to homosexuals in Australia include the Exodus Global Alliance related ministries. Peter Lane began Liberty Ministry in 1978, and from 1978-1986 ministries to homosexuals multiplied and expanded into a coalition called Restoration Ministries in Australia and New Zealand. One year later the name was changed to Exodus South Pacific as the work was expanded to include an international coalition. In 1999 growth was again the motivation for the need to change the name to Exodus Asia Pacific to more adequately include new members in Singapore and the Philippines. In 2003 new ministries are added in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

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[298] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual orientation. (Accessed 10/23/14)

[299] The 2003 *'Sex in Australia'* survey of 20,000 people, with a special weighting to Sydney's homosexual centre. Conducted by the *Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society* (ARCSHS) at *La Trobe* University. Published in *Australian & NZ Journal of Public Health*, Vol 27 No 2 2003 ISSN 1326 020. http://www.saltshakers.org.au/issues/58-issues/homosexuality/199-statistics-homosexuality (Accessed 2/28/15)

[300] http://www.saltshakers.org.au/issues/58-issues/homosexuality/198-the-law-in-australia (Accessed 2/28/2015)

[301] http://www.saltshakers.org.au/issues/58-issues/homosexuality/198-the-law-in-australia (Accessed 2/28/2015)

[302] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)

Developing ministry occurs also in India and Sri Lanka. In 2004 Exodus International changed its name to Exodus Global Alliance.[303] Exodus East Asia was formed in 2008.

What does this rapid growth of so many ministries to homosexual people in so many nations so strongly indicate? Could it be that there is a great number of human beings who bear God's image, who see they are not at all "gay," and who have a great hunger and longing for hope to break free from slavery to a lifestyle that is extremely unhealthy and violent as well as unholy, indeed that is *tôʿēbâ*?

Notice also that these organizations are typically led by people who have left the homosexual lifestyle and now want to help others do so. Most if not all are Christians who sense a call from God to such a ministry, recognizing that the grip of homosexuality is so strong on those in bondage to it, due to the demonic influence primarily causing it, that only the power of the Lord Jesus Christ can break them free. While the pro-homosexual activists and their media supporters trumpet the fall of the very few staff members of these ministries who have succumbed to temptation and fallen back into homosexual practice, some divorcing and leaving a distraught wife and children in order to revert to a homosexual lifestyle, by far most of the leaders of these ministries do not return to homosexuality as is seen in the discussions pertaining to specific ministries throughout this book and in the same recurring names of key leaders in the ex-"gay" ministries over decades.[304]

An insightful explanation of why homosexuals hate the term "ex-'gays'" is offered by Frank Worthen.

> Why is it that the term "ex-gay" so threatens the gay community? It implies that one remains homosexual by choice. That the gay person need not continue in the homosexual lifestyle is an unsettling message. It is far easier to believe that there is no way out than to contemplate the rigors of the change process.[305]

Whitehead, whom we met earlier in our discussion of the twins studies, offers another reason why homosexuals are threatened by the term, "ex-'gay.'" He observes that "[t]he number of people who have changed towards exclusive heterosexuality are greater than current numbers of bisexuals and homosexuals combined. In other words, ex-gays outnumber actual gays."[306]

Worthen also explains why homosexual people who receive the new birth, the new nature from the Holy Spirit, and in faith turn to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and begin the sanctification process, the life-long growth and development in Christ-likeness, are

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[303] http://exodusglobalalliance.org/ourhistoryc87.php (Accessed 2/28/15)
[304] See, e.g., http://exodusglobalalliance.org/ourhistoryc87.php (Accessed 2/28/15)
[305] Frank Worthen, "EX-GAY: Fact, Fraud or Fantasy?" http://www.exodusglobalalliance.org/exgayfactfraudorfantasyp49.php (Accessed 3/3/15)
[306] NARTH Institute, "Identical Twin Studies Demonstrate Homosexuality is Not Genetic" http://www.narth.com/#!gay---born-that-way/cm6x (Accessed 4/12/15)

able to leave the homosexual lifestyle, become true ex-"gays," and help others do so without reverting to homosexuality.[307]

Europe

First the more positive news. In the following countries a legal marriage is considered to be only between a man and a woman: Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, and Ukraine. Same-sex "marriages" are not recognized in Albania, Greece, Italy, and Malta. In Serbia anti-gay protests have occurred.

England has a small percentage of homosexuals, including lesbians and bisexuals. Data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) disclose that a total of only 1.6% of adults in the United Kingdom self-identify in these three categories. Those figures break down into 1.2% identify as homosexual or lesbian while 0.5% consider themselves bisexual. Within the first category men outnumber the women two-to-one (1.6% of adult males identifying as homosexual contrasted with 0.8% of adult females identifying as lesbians. NARTH observes and comments on their website that "[t]he statistics show that the number of people who consider themselves as homosexual or bisexual is much lower than the figure widely cited by activists to the media."[308]

Sadly, a number of European nations have unwisely legalized homosexual unions and same-sex "marriages." They include Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Iceland, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and Spain.[309] Countries like Austria, Germany, Ireland, and Switzerland, have given legal recognition to only registered partnerships among those of the same gender.[310]

Most sadly, the Finnish people were misled by pastoral malpractice. It is another example of the unbiblical, misinformed, unwise, and misleading actions of pastors and other church leaders on this subject that is the primary concern of this book and the main reason for its existence. Finnish TV program, Yle Uutiset, reported that the country's state-supported Evangelical Lutheran Church was rapidly losing members over the pastors' promotion of a law to allow "same-sex marriage," more than 2600 in one day. The lead paragraph on the Yle website stated that "More than 2,600 members quit the church following comments by Archbishop Kari Mäkinen praising Finnish lawmakers' decision to revise laws to allow same-sex couples to marry."[311] So sad, and so unnecessary.

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[307] Frank Worthen, "EX-GAY: Fact, Fraud or Fantasy?"
[308] NARTH Institute, "Only 1.6% of Adults in the UK Identify as Gay, Lesbian or Bi-Sexual According to Government Report," http://www.narth.com/news-watch/theological-issues/ (Accessed 4/12/15)
[309] http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-26793127 (Accessed 11/29/14)
http://yle.fi/uutiset/finnish_parliament_poised_to_vote_on_same-sex_marriage/7657759 (Accessed 11/29/14)
[310] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[311] http://yle.fi/uutiset/lutheran_church_loses_members_over_archbishops_support_for_marriage_equality/7659441 (Accessed 11/29/14)

Blogger Reid Standish discloses the errant decision and rationale of the archbishop.

> Kari Mäkinen, the Archbishop of Finland's Lutheran Church became a major advocate for the same-sex cause, giving countless interviews and pushing for reform on the issue within the church. "For me, it is not a matter of opinion. It's a question of human dignity arising from the basis of the Christian faith," Mäkinen stated to *Yle,* Finland's national broadcaster, prior to Friday's vote.[312]

The archbishop bases his argument on "human dignity," as if that's the only or at least the most important matter. As explained herein, above and below, the Biblical account of man being created in the image of God, that each human is a bearer of God's image, means that he or she has dignity and should not be ill-treated, including treating the body with the disrespect it receives from homosexual practices.[313] But there is so much more to the issue than that, which church leaders must not ignore or fail to take into account in decision-making on this matter. These other key components of the issue are undertaken in this book.

Here we see a tragic example of the lack of careful thinking causing deep division in the church, the body of Christ. Church leaders, especially pastors and teachers, must think more completely. They should ask, "Where does this concept of human dignity come from? The only unshakable basis for it is in the Word of God. And what else does God's Word say about creation and homosexuality?

The chairperson of the Finnish Christian Democrats Party, Interior Minister Päivi Räsänen, who has been one of the most outspoken opponents of "gender-neutral 'marriage,'" the terminology used as the issue was argued in Finland, expressed deep disappointment by the vote of the Finnish Parliament to legalize "same-sex marriage." Even more disappointing to her is that her department will be partly responsible for implementing the new law.

Yet in reflecting on the matter, she has articulated a perspective that has occurred also to me. While my concern is that laws teach, and overtime future generations sometimes accommodate to unjust laws, nevertheless some laws are so egregious and counter to the universally perceived natural law and our God-given consciences (Romans 2:15) that with God's common grace to all and his special grace to those in his Kingdom, the vast majority of people (since homosexuals constitute such a small percentage of all populations) will still reject the homosexual lifestyle—neither will they value it—especially if the church prays and walks closely with the Lord, speaking the truth in love. Part of that truth is informing people of what homosexuals do, as we saw in Chapter Two, so they have an accurate understanding of this abysmal lifestyle.

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[312] http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2014/11/28/finland_becomes_an_unlikely_battleground_for_same_sex_marriage_debate (Accessed 11/29/14)

[313] See in particular Chapters One and Two.

Even if the homosexual activists achieve their objective of making "same-sex marriage" legal in a specific society, it will likely be a hollow, and sometimes a temporary, victory: temporary, since in some places changes in government may overturn decisions by political, including judicial, entities that don't represent the majority of the population they serve, and hollow since the legislation cannot always change values, feelings, and attitudes. As the old adage puts it in rhyme: "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." As Interior Minister Räsänen reflects,

> 'This is a deep question of principle,' she said. 'I believe that in the future a large group of Finns will continue to consider marriage to be a bond between a man and a woman, and that they will not consider relationships between people of the same gender to be marriages.'

A key part of the homosexual agenda is to force people to view homosexuals and their "marriages" as being equal to all other people and their marriages. A key problem they face is the natural aversion to restriction of freedom (which is part of the image of God all humans bear), especially when morality is involved, and the resultant "push back" where they still consider homosexuals and their "marriages" as "second class."

Help and hope for people struggling with homosexuality has been in place for a long time. Always in the church itself, and since the mid-1970s in the parachurch, Exodus Global Alliance ministries to homosexuals has been engaged since at least 1974. In that year a ministry to homosexuals in Holland called EHAH (in English: Evangelical Counselling for Homosexuals) was begun by Johan van de Sluis. In 1981-82 he reached out across Europe, and the response was so extensive that he began a European coalition of ex-"gay" ministries.

Russia

The pro-homosexual website, "Maps of World" reports that "Russia has become more vocal against gays in the recent past. Fine of 5,000 rubles ($156) is levied against forming non-traditional sexual set ups, as such relationships are not socially acceptable."[314] Another message is sent.

Middle East

Israel

The "Maps of World" website says "Israel is very progressive - Tel Aviv is rated as one of the most gay-friendly cities and is famous for its Annual Pride Parade and gay beaches. Tel Aviv is also known as the Gay Capital of the Middle East. Ranked as the

[314] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual bias. (Accessed 10/23/14)

best gay city in 2011 by LGBT travelers surveyed online." The website also says Israel has welcomed homosexuals "with open arms."[315]

Lebanon Homosexuals consider the country welcoming to them.[316]

Palestinian Territory Homosexuality is forbidden.[317]

Other Middle East Countries

Homosexuals face a grim situation in other Middle East countries. The homosexual-oriented "Maps of World" website states that "In several of the Middle East Muslim countries, death is the punishment for such relations. Middle East countries like Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Palestine, Jordan, Iran, and Iraq have banned gay marriages/activity. In Iran, it is punishable by death."[318]

North America

Canada and Mexico have legalized same-sex unions and marriages.[319] Canada's same-sex couples have had all taxation and government benefits since 1997 and legal same-sex marriage since 2005.[320] The situation in the United States will be discussed below.

South America

Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay allow homosexual relations and unions. Cuba has "opened up" to homosexuals.

The Honduras and Caribbean nations consider homosexuality taboo. They have had laws to that effect since 1936 and have expressed no interest in reconsidering the matter.[321]

Esly Carvalho, a Brazilian psychologist in private practice, began a ministry in the early 1980s. As soon as she translated an article she saw in *Christianity Today* that contained an interview with Frank Worthen, people began approaching her for help. Later that decade, catalyzed by the work of the Holy Spirit, the writing and other work of Esly Carvalho and others, multiple ministries began in Brazil. In 1994 she received permission to begin the organization Exodus Latin America, and later that year she and other key leaders began an ex-"gay" mission in Ecuador. Quito became the location of the headquarters of Exodus Latin America in 1998, and then in 2002 as the ministry expanded to Mexico the headquarters was moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico. In 2006 new

[315] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[316] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[317] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[318] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[319] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html (Accessed 10/23/14)
[320] Christopher Rosik, "Same-Sex Parenting and Graduation Rates," http://www.narth.com/#!ss-parenting/c1ehy (Accessed 4/12/15)
[321] http://www.mapsofworld.com/around-the-world/gay-laws.html Caveat: this website has a pro-homosexual bias. (Accessed 10/23/14)

ministries were begun in Chile, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Venezuela. Hope and help are growing on another continent for people who want out of homosexuality.

In this brief historical and geographical summary of homosexuality globally, we observe that cultures throughout the world reject homosexuality as being neither acceptable nor normative. Homosexuals typically constitute a very small percentage of a given country's total population; if that orientation and practice were seen as desirable and normal it would be the practice of most people; but it is not.

Due to the corruption of human nature following the disobedience of Adam and Eve, we see sin, including homosexuality, all over the world, but it has never been the accepted way of life. As Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton wrote for the majority opinion in the Sixth Circuit Court November 2014 ruling upholding the states' ban on "same-sex marriage,"

> …marriage has long been a social institution defined by relationships between men and women. So long defined, the tradition is measured in millennia, not centuries or decades. So widely shared, the tradition until recently had been adopted by all governments and major religions of the world.[322]

Views of Homosexuality in the United States and Its Laws

In the American colonies homosexual acts were a capital offense, and they were illegal in the U.S. until 1961, and in fact in some places they still are. The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in Bowers v Hardwick and John and Mary Doe in 1986 upheld a Georgia statute that made sodomy a criminal offense, punishable up 20 years in prison. The Court decided that the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment is "held not to confer [a] fundamental right on homosexuals to engage in consensual sodomy, even in [the] privacy of [their] home."[323]

Consider carefully Chief Justice Burger's concurring separate opinion. Notice how far back and wide ranging he goes to establish the key dimension of precedent in our legal system.

> I join the Court's opinion, but I write separately to underscore my view that in constitutional terms there is no such thing as a fundamental right to commit homosexual sodomy.
>
> As the Court notes…the proscriptions against sodomy have very "ancient roots." Decisions of individuals relating to homosexual conduct have been subject to state intervention throughout the history of Western Civilization. Condemnation of those practices is firmly rooted in Judeo-Christian moral and ethical standards. Homosexual sodomy was a capital

[322] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 7. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[323] *U.S. Supreme Court Reports*, 92 L Ed 2d, p. 140. See also pp. 148 and 149.

> crime under Roman law…During the English Reformation when powers of the ecclesiastical courts were transferred to the King's Courts, the first English statute criminalizing sodomy was passed….Blackstone described "the infamous crime against nature" as an offense of "deeper malignity" than rape, a heinous act "the very mention of which is a disgrace to human nature," and "a crime not fit to be named." …The common law of England, including its prohibition of sodomy, became the received law of Georgia and the other Colonies. In 1816 the Georgia Legislature passed the statute at issue here, and that statute has been continuously in force in one form or another since that time. To hold that the act of homosexual sodomy is somehow protected as a fundamental right would be to cast aside millennia of moral teaching.
>
> This is essentially not a question of personal "preferences" but rather of the legislative authority of the State. I find nothing in the Constitution depriving a State of the power to enact the statute challenged here.[324]

The State of Colorado passed Amendment 2 into its constitution, a provision that prohibits homosexuals' lifestyle as having protected status. With this amendment the constitution clearly indicated the public awareness and assertion that this lifestyle is not a normal alternative.

> Section 30b. No Protected Status Based on Homosexual, Lesbian or Bisexual Orientation
>
> Neither the State of Colorado, through any of its branches or departments, nor any of its agencies, political subdivisions, municipalities or school districts, shall enact, adopt or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices or relationships shall constitute or otherwise be the basis of or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status or claim of discrimination. This Section of the Constitution shall be in all respects self-executing.[325]

We see here an official legal stand against the justification and promotion of homosexuality in and for common practice. Sadly, a small number of unelected justices in the United States Supreme Court ruled that this amendment to the Colorado State Constitution, approved by the majority of qualified voters in the state, was unconstitutional. Nevertheless, the physiological and societal outcomes of homosexual practice explain the common rejection of homosexuality not only in these examples but throughout history worldwide, apart from its enormous and eternal negative consequences.

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[324] *U.S. Supreme Court Reports*, 92 L Ed 2d, pp. 149-150.
[325] Constitution of the State of Colorado, Article II Bill of Rights, Section 30b. http://www.michie.com/colorado/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp (Accessed 12/10/10)

In addition to its other functions, the law is a teacher. It follows that immoral and unjust laws teach immorality and injustice.

This is one of the main reasons why we should be very careful whom we elect to public office. Elections have consequences, and some elections have especially significant consequences. Much legislation that is enacted is hard to repeal and replace with better laws.

Discern the demonic influence operating behind the cultural and societal including legal system.

Further, the more people who emerge into adulthood without hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and maturing in a relationship with the Lord will be vulnerable to the leading of misinformed and misguided peers and others and to the leading of Satan and the demonic forces we are engaging in the cosmic warfare about which Scripture warns us. (Ephesians 6:10-18, note vss. 11-13; Revelation 12-20) Such people will turn to the laws of the land, some of which are most unjust, instead of to the true and authoritative Word of God for their guidance.

Concerning this cosmic warfare, to employ a sports analogy, mostly up to the 21st century we've been playing away games. America, with its strong home base, has been one of the great missionary-sending countries. I suspect that one of the reasons we've seen significantly more overt demonic activity in other countries and cultures, e.g., Africa, Asia, and Latin America, is due to the strong Biblical basis on which our country was founded. The pervasiveness of the churches, the visible manifestation of God's covenant relationship with his people, throughout our land has enabled us to experience considerable protection; Satan and his demon followers have been severely limited in what they could do. The faithfulness of so many Christians in our society has influenced even non-Christians to function with many similar values. Research in Scandinavia has shown that where the church is strong, crime is significantly less than in areas where the church is not so prevalent. In fact as has been observed by others, non-Christians want the benefits that come from the Biblical faith in and teaching of Jesus Christ, they just don't want to obey the Lord. They fail to see that the two, the blessings and the obeying, go together. When our children were growing up, most of their teachers were Christians even though they went to public schools. Now, however, with the obstacles put up by false government (the beast of the sea [Revelation 13:1-10]) and false religion (the beast of the land [Revelation 13:11-18], it has been harder, humanly speaking, to promote the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and we're seeing more evidence of the demonic forces at work in our country.

To continue the sports analogy, we're now playing more home games in the battle. We do have "home field advantage" but only if we hold true to the playbook, God's Word, and return to the basics, the disciplines, we've practiced long and hard and remember our covenant with God.

To use another analogy, America has always wanted to fight wars overseas so we wouldn't have to fight brutal wars on our land. Well now we have to fight the spiritual battle more at home. Satan and his demonic followers are bringing the fight full force into the church. This is the primary reason for this book: to help the church stay strong spiritually so it can accomplish the Lord's redemptive purposes in the society and throughout the world.

With the above documentation of the rejection of homosexual practice throughout history, some exceptions to the contrary notwithstanding, the attempt by homosexual activists and their sympathizers to discredit their opposition by such name-calling as "homophobic" is baseless, distorting, and deceptive. When whole cultures throughout millennia reject homosexuality, and when 98-99% of the population within our own country does so, it is not something personal. Neither is homosexuality normative and those opposed are "out of touch" or "on the wrong side of history." Just the opposite!

The rejection is of an ideology and an evil practice and is based primarily on God's Word that is rooted in his divine and holy character (Romans 1:20) and secondarily on the natural law that is written on human hearts and consciences. (Romans 2:15) Thus, the Bible states that people are without excuse for engaging in such suppression of the truth and lies, which the text classifies as wickedness. (Romans 1:18-20) Taking a closer look at what homosexuality actually involves¸ as we are seeing in this study, is it not understandable why God calls the practice detestable, *tôʿēbâ*, and wicked, an offense to his holiness, and offensive as well because it destroys people he has created and is counterproductive to his creation?

Colson highlights, what historians have concluded, that "History shows that widespread homosexuality manifests itself in the advanced stages of a society's decline." At the same time he lauds the courage of the Roman Catholic Church's call for "Christians to resist civil ordinances normalizing homosexuality."[326]

The liberal-oriented so-called "mainstream media," though none have close to the viewer- or listenership as do conservative stations in the U. S., have been slanting their writing to make it look like the trend in this country has changed to majority support for "same-sex marriage." However, they sometimes cite critics who point out what has been going on that makes it look like such a trend. As one reporter said,

> Opposition remains stiff in many places. Critics point out that most states still do not allow gay marriage and that in most of those that do, it was the work of courts or legislatures, not the will of the people.
>
> Only Washington, Maryland and Maine have approved gay marriage through a public vote, while residents of 30 states have approved constitutional amendments to ban it….

[326] Colson, p. 7.

> "I think the notion that it is a freight train of momentum has been greatly exaggerated and is just not true," says John Eastman, chairman of the National Organization for Marriage.[327]

The U. S. Sixth Circuit majority opinion provides an excellent legal rationale for limiting marriage to the traditional one man and one woman relationship.

The "freight train" was temporarily halted in November 2014 by the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which became the primary case that was appealed and led to the June 2015 SCOTUS decision. The Sixth Circuit majority opinion, written by Judge Sutton, wisely upheld the bans on "same-sex marriage" in the states within its jurisdiction (Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee) and cited in its rationale several key factors. I quote at length excerpts from Sutton's opinion in order for you to understand the careful rationale underlying the decision, and yet not only for your own comprehension, but so you can share it most effectively with others.

Though the SCOTUS failed to act correctly in its June 2015 decision, the issue is not necessarily settled once and for all. The Biblical, spiritual, and moral issues will always remain. Human laws cannot undo God's law. Also many related problems immediately reemerged, such as the First Amendment rights of individuals, business owners, churches, as well as Christian and other organizations, many of whom but not all are Christians, who refuse to provide wedding services for same-sex couples on the basis of not wanting to compromise their spiritual faith. To prepare for the next battle in this issue, we need to be well prepared with all the related information possible, thus I am including the fine majority opinion written by Judge Sutton.

We need to understand the soundest legal response to the pro-homosexual agenda, and it is presented in the following opinion, which addresses the primary arguments in that agenda, largely based on a faulty view of the 14th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, to which Judge Sutton thoughtfully, carefully, and extensively replies with precision.

> Our judicial commissions did not come with such a sweeping grant of authority, one that would allow just three of us—just two of us in truth—to make such a vital policy call ["about whether gay marriage is a good idea"] for the 32 million citizens who live within the four states of the Sixth Circuit.[328]

> [In Baker v. Nelson, 409 U.S. 810, 810 (1972) the U. S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling that a homosexual couple could not argue for legalization of their "marriage" on either Due Process or Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, nor could they argue on the basis of the Supreme Court's previous decision to invalidate the state's

[327] Denise Lavoie, "Tactics endure after ten years of same-sex marriage," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, May 16, 2014, p. 9A.
[328] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 8. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

(Virginia's) ban on interracial marriages where "'[I]n commonsense and in a constitutional sense,' the state court explained, 'there is a clear distinction between a marital restriction based merely upon race and one based upon the fundamental difference in sex.'" The Supreme Court rejected the homosexual couple's "challenge, issuing a one-line order stating that the appeal did not raise 'a substantial federal question.'"] This type of summary decision, it is true, does not bind the Supreme Court in later cases. But it does confine lower federal courts in later cases. It matters not whether we think the decision was right in its time, remains right today, or will be followed by the Court in the future. Only the Supreme Court may overrule its own precedents, and we remain bound even by its summary decisions "'until such time as the Court informs [us] that [we] are not.'"[329]

If a federal court denies the people suffrage over an issue long thought to be within their power, they deserve an explanation. We, for our part, cannot find one, as several other judges have concluded as well.[330]

Not one of the plaintiffs' theories…makes the case for constitutionalizing the definition of marriage and for removing the issue from the place it has been since the founding: in the hands of state voters.[331]

Original meaning. All Justices, past and present, start their assessment of a case about the meaning of a constitutional provision by looking at how the provision was understood by the people who ratified it. If we think of the Constitution as a covenant between the governed and the governors, between the people and their political leaders, it is easy to appreciate the force of this basic norm of constitutional interpretation—that the originally understood meaning of the charter generally will be the lasting meaning of the charter. When two individuals sign a contract to sell a house, no one thinks that, years down the road, one party to the contract may change the terms of the deal. That is why the parties put the agreement in writing and signed it publicly—to prevent changed perceptions and needs from changing the guarantees in the agreement. So it normally goes with the Constitution: The written charter cements the limitations on government into an unbending bulwark, not a vane alterable whenever alterations occur—unless and until the people, like contracting parties, choose to change the contract through the agreed-upon mechanisms for doing so. See U.S. Const. art. V. If American lawyers in all manner of settings still invoke the original meaning of Magna Carta, a Charter for England in 1215, surely it is not too much to ask that they (and we) take seriously the original meaning of the United States Constitution, a Charter for this country in 1789. Any other approach, too lightly

[329] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 13-14. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[330] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 17. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[331] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 17. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

followed, converts federal judges from interpreters of the document into newly commissioned authors of it.[332]

In trying to figure out the original meaning of a provision, it is fair to say, the line between interpretation and evolution [of words] blurs from time to time. That is an occupational hazard for judges when it comes to old or generally worded provisions. Yet that knotty problem does not confront us. Yes, the Fourteenth Amendment is old; the people ratified it in 1868. And yes, it is generally worded; it says: "[N]or shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Nobody in this case, however, argues that the people who adopted the Fourteenth Amendment understood it to require the States to change the definition of marriage.

Tradition reinforces the point. Only months ago, the Supreme Court confirmed the significance of long-accepted usage in constitutional interpretation. In one case, the Court held that the customary practice of opening legislative meetings with prayer alone proves the constitutional permissibility of legislative prayer, quite apart from how that practice might fare under the most up-to-date Establishment Clause test.[333]

From the founding of the Republic to 2003, every State defined marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman, meaning that the Fourteenth Amendment permits, though it does not require, States to define marriage in that way.[334]

Rational basis review. Doctrine leads to the same place as history. A first requirement of any law, whether under the Due Process or Equal Protection Clause, is that it rationally advance a legitimate government policy. *Vance v. Bradley*, 440 U.S. 93, 97 (1979). Two words ("judicial restraint," *FCC v. Beach Commc'ns, Inc.*, 508 U.S. 307, 314 (1993)) and one principle (trust in the people that "even improvident decisions will eventually be rectified by the democratic process," *Vance*, 440 U.S. at 97) tell us all we need to know about the light touch judges should use in reviewing laws under this standard. So long as judges can conceive of some "plausible" reason for the law—any plausible reason, even one that did not motivate the legislators who enacted it—the law must stand, no matter how unfair, unjust, or unwise the judges may consider it as citizens. *Heller v. Doe,* 509 U.S. 312, 330 (1993); *Nordlinger v. Hahn*, 505 U.S. 1, 11, 17–18 (1992).

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[332] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 17-18. (Accessed 3/7/2015) Consider the wisdom of Judge Sutton's hermeneutical principle in relation to contemporary discussions on the hermeneutics involved in interpreting the Bible.

[333] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 18. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

[334] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 18. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

A dose of humility makes us hesitant to condemn as unconstitutionally irrational a view of marriage shared not long ago by every society in the world, shared by most, if not all, of our ancestors, and shared still today by a significant number of the States. Hesitant, yes; but still a rational basis, some rational basis, must exist for the definition. What is it? Two at a minimum suffice to meet this low bar. One starts from the premise that governments got into the business of defining marriage, and remain in the business of defining marriage, not to regulate love but to regulate sex, most especially the intended and unintended effects of male-female intercourse. Imagine a society without marriage. It does not take long to envision problems that might result from an absence of rules about how to handle the natural effects of male-female intercourse: children. May men and women follow their procreative urges wherever they take them? Who is responsible for the children that result? How many mates may an individual have? How does one decide which set of mates is responsible for which set of children? That we rarely think about these questions nowadays shows only how far we have come and how relatively stable our society is, not that States have no explanation for creating such rules in the first place.

Once one accepts a need to establish such ground rules, and most especially a need to create stable family units for the planned and unplanned creation of children, one can well appreciate why the citizenry would think that a reasonable first concern of any society is the need to regulate male-female relationships and the unique procreative possibilities of them.[335]

One way to pursue this objective is to encourage couples to enter lasting relationships through subsidies and other benefits and to discourage them from ending such relationships through these and other means. People may not need the government's encouragement to have sex. And they may not need the government's encouragement to propagate the species. But they may well need the government's encouragement to create and maintain stable relationships within which children may flourish.[336]

What we are left with is this: By creating a status (marriage) and by subsidizing it (e.g., with tax-filing privileges and deductions), the States created an incentive for two people who procreate together to stay together for purposes of rearing offspring. That does not convict the States of irrationality, only of awareness of the biological reality that couples of the same sex do not have children in the same way as couples of opposite sexes and that couples of the same sex do not run the risk of unintended offspring. That explanation, still relevant today, suffices to allow the

[335] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 19. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[336] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 19-20. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

States to retain authority over an issue they have regulated from the beginning.[337]

Any other approach would create line-drawing problems of its own. Consider how plaintiffs' love-and-commitment definition of marriage would fare under their own rational basis test. Their definition does too much because it fails to account for the reality that no State in the country requires couples, whether gay or straight, to be in love. Their definition does too little because it fails to account for plural marriages, where there is no reason to think that three or four adults, whether gay, bisexual, or straight, lack the capacity to share love, affection, and commitment, or for that matter lack the capacity to be capable (and more plentiful) parents to boot. If it is constitutionally irrational to stand by the man-woman definition of marriage, it must be constitutionally irrational to stand by the monogamous definition of marriage. Plaintiffs have no answer to the point. What they might say they cannot: They might say that tradition or community mores provide a rational basis for States to stand by the monogamy definition of marriage, but they cannot say that because that is exactly what they claim is illegitimate about the States' male-female definition of marriage. The predicament does not end there. No State is free of marriage policies that go too far in some directions and not far enough in others, making all of them vulnerable—if the claimants' theory of rational basis review prevails.[338]

Fundamental right to marry. Under the Due Process Clause, courts apply more muscular review—"strict," "rigorous," usually unforgiving, scrutiny—to laws that impair "fundamental" rights. In considering the claimants' arguments that they have a fundamental right to marry each other, we must keep in mind that something can be fundamentally important without being a fundamental right under the Constitution. Otherwise, state regulations of many deeply important —from education to healthcare to living conditions to decisions about when to die—would be subject to unforgiving review. They are not. See *San Antonio Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1, 35 (1973) (public education); *Maher v. Roe*, 432 U.S. 464, 469 (1977) (healthcare); *Lindsey v. Normet*, 40 U.S. 56, 73–74 (1972) (housing); *Glucksberg*, 521 U.S. at 728 (right to die). Instead, the question is whether our nation has treated the right as fundamental and therefore worthy of protection under substantive due process. More precisely, the test is whether the right is "deeply rooted in this Nation's history and tradition" and "implicit in the concept of ordered liberty," such that "neither liberty nor justice would exist if they were sacrificed." *Glucksberg*, 521 U.S. at 721 (internal citations omitted). That requirement often is met by placing the right in the Constitution, most obviously in (most of) the guarantees in the Bill of Rights. See id. at 720.

[337] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 21. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[338] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 22-23. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

But the right to marry in general, and the right to gay marriage in particular, nowhere appear in the Constitution. That route for recognizing a fundamental right to same-sex marriage does not exist.[339]

That leaves the other option—that, even though a proposed right to same-sex marriage does not appear in the Constitution, it turns on bedrock assumptions about liberty. This too does not work. The first state high court to redefine marriage to include gay couples did not do so until 2003 in *Goodridge*.

Matters do not change because *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1 (1967), held that "marriage" amounts to a fundamental right. When the Court decided *Loving*, "marriage between a man and a woman no doubt [was] thought of . . . as essential to the very definition of that term." *Windsor*, 133 S. Ct. at 2689. In referring to "marriage" rather than "opposite-sex marriage," *Loving* confirmed only that "opposite-sex marriage" would have been considered redundant, not that marriage included same-sex couples. *Loving* did not change the definition. That is why the Court said marriage is "fundamental to our very existence and survival," 388 U.S. at 12, a reference to the procreative definition of marriage. Had a gay African-American male and a gay Caucasian male been denied a marriage license in Virginia in 1968, would the Supreme Court have held that Virginia had violated the Fourteenth Amendment? No one to our knowledge thinks so, and no Justice to our knowledge has ever said so. The denial of the license would have turned not on the races of the applicants but on a request to change the definition of marriage. Had *Loving* meant something more when it pronounced marriage a fundamental right, how could the Court hold in *Baker* five years later that gay marriage does not even raise a substantial federal question? *Loving* addressed, and rightly corrected, an unconstitutional eligibility requirement for marriage; it did not create a new definition of marriage.[340]

No doubt, many people, many States, even some dictionaries, now define marriage in a way that is untethered to biology. But that does not transform the fundamental-rights decision of *Loving* under the old definition into a constitutional right under the new definition. The question is whether the old reasoning applies to the new setting, not whether we can shoehorn new meanings into old words. Else, evolving-norm lexicographers would have a greater say over the meaning of the Constitution than judges.[341]

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[339] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 28. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[340] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 28-29. (Accessed 3/7/2015)
[341] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, pp. 29. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

Does the Constitution prohibit a State from denying recognition to same-sex marriages conducted in other States? …As shown, compliance with the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses in this setting requires only a rational relationship between the legislation and a legitimate public purpose. And a State does not behave irrationally by insisting upon its own definition of marriage rather than deferring to the definition adopted by another State. Preservation of a State's authority to recognize, or to opt not to recognize, an out-of-state marriage preserves a State's sovereign interest in deciding for itself how to define the marital relationship. It also discourages evasion of the State's marriage laws by allowing individuals to go to another State, marry there, then return home. Were it irrational for a State to adhere to its own policy, what would be the point of the Supreme Court's repeated holdings that the Full Faith and Credit Clause "does not require a State to apply another State's law in violation of its own public policy"? *Id*.

Far from undermining these points, *Windsor* reinforces them. The case observes that "[t]he definition of marriage is the foundation of the State's broader authority to regulate the subject of domestic relations with respect to the protection of offspring, property interests, and the enforcement of marital responsibilities." 133 S. Ct. at 2691 (internal quotation marks omitted). How could it be irrational for a State to decide that the foundation of its domestic-relations law will be its definition of marriage, not somebody else's? *Windsor* adds that "[e]ach state as a sovereign has a rightful and legitimate concern in the marital status of persons domiciled within its borders." *Id*. How could it be irrational for a State to apply its definition of marriage to a couple in whose marital status the State as a sovereign has a rightful and legitimate concern?

Nor does the policy of nonrecognition trigger *Windsor's* (or *Romer's*) principle that unprecedented exercises of power call for judicial skepticism. States have always decided for themselves when to yield to laws of other States. Exercising this power, States often have refused to enforce all sorts of out-of-state rules on the grounds that they contradict important local policies. See Restatement (First) of Conflict of Laws § 612; Restatement (Second) of Conflict of Laws § 90. Even more telling, States in many instances have refused to recognize marriages performed in other States on the grounds that these marriages depart from cardinal principles of the State's domestic-relations laws. See Restatement (First) of Conflict of Laws § 134; Restatement (Second) of Conflict of Laws § 283. The laws challenged here involve routine rather than anomalous uses of state power.[342]

[342] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 38-40. (Accessed 3/7/2015)

Judge Sutton next gives us an example of the type heterosexual marriages that would not be legal in Ohio. This statement also explains part of the rationale for the court making the decision it did.

> What of the reality that Ohio recognizes some heterosexual marriages solemnized in other States even if those marriages could not be performed in Ohio? See, e.g., *Mazzolini* v. *Mazzolini*, 155 N.E.2d 206, 208 (Ohio 1958). The only reason Ohio could have for banning recognition of same-sex marriages performed elsewhere and not prohibiting heterosexual marriages performed elsewhere, the Ohio plaintiffs claim, is animus or "discrimination[] of an unusual character." *Obergefell* Appellees' Br. at 18 (quoting Windsor, 133 S. Ct. at 2692).
>
> But, in making this argument, the plaintiffs misapprehend Ohio law, wrongly assuming that Ohio would recognize as valid *any* heterosexual marriage that was valid in the State that sanctioned it. That is not the case. Ohio law recognizes some out-of-state marriages that could not be performed in Ohio, but not all such marriages. See, e.g., *Mazzolini*, 155 N.E.2d at 208 (marriage of first cousins); *Hardin v. Davis*, 16 Ohio Supp. 19, 20 (Ohio Ct. Com. Pl. 1945) (marriage by proxy). In *Mazzolini*, the most relevant precedent, the Ohio Supreme Court stated that a number of heterosexual marriages—ones that were "incestuous, polygamous, shocking to good morals, unalterably opposed to a well-defined public policy, or prohibited"—would not be recognized in the State, even if they were valid in the jurisdiction that performed them. 155 N.E.2d at 208–09 (noting that first-cousin marriages fell outside this rule because they were "not made void by explicit provision" and "not incestuous"). Ohio law declares same-sex marriage contrary to the State's public policy, placing those marriages within the longstanding exception to Ohio's recognition rule. See Ohio Rev. Code § 3101.01(C).[343]

The majority opinion also disclosed that the court found no valid appeal to animus on the part of the plaintiffs. Animus (e.g., animosity toward homosexuals) is frequently charged but rarely proved. The majority ruled out other complaints as well, but enough has been included here to enable you to sense the court's rationale in addressing the main legal matters in the issue, which you can use in your conversations with others in this part of your answer to the question before us.

We appreciate Judge Sutton's insightful help, and the support of Judge Deborah L. Cook, that enables us to see more clearly the seriousness of the matter of homosexuality, the legal issues involved, and its far-reaching effects in our society. We're grateful to God for the careful and perceptive thinking they have done and the strength they've shown in taking the stand they have.

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[343] http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/14a0275p-06.pdf, p. 40 (Accessed 3/8/15)

They made the right decision; however, I must say that if you use the links in the footnotes, you'll see some errors the judge who wrote the majority opinion makes in some of his statements, likely due to his being unaware of some of the research recorded in Chapter Two of this book. For example, he speaks too positively about "gays" raising children.[344] Another concern I have is his explanation that the evolution of cultural values can at a point in the future affect judicial decisions. That would not only commit the naturalistic fallacy in logic but, infinitely more important, it ignores God's will in the question before us pertaining to homosexuality as indicated in the Bible, which historically has been the basis of our Constitution and legal system, as we've seen above.

Even more importantly, the judges' several references to the term "define marriage," should have included the statement that no government has the right to define marriage. Marriage is God's idea, and he defined and established it from the beginning of creation, long before any human government even existed (as we see in Genesis 2; cf. Jesus' teaching in Mark 10:6-7), even before one was needed, since Adam and Eve had not yet sinned (which is described in Genesis 3). As Franklin Graham has well said, "The court did not define marriage, and therefore it is not entitled to redefine it."[345]

This reality must be continually mentioned and taught today, especially since so many in our country have not been taught the Biblical basis of our nation's founding. Many are even unaware or ignore the statements in the beginning of the Declaration of Independence and the avowal in our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag that we are "one nation under God." The concept of being under God is a tacit recognition that we pledge to function according to his will and are accountable to him, two other concepts that are lacking in the consciousness of an increasing number of people today.

Yet, Judge Sutton's rationale in the court's decision reviewed here contains a considerable and remarkable amount of valuable insight; use what I've included on these pages, together with the other information in this book, as you engage the public square. Begin in your family and in the church, then wherever you have the opportunity.

Many if not most other countries around the world are not as confused as too many people in the United States, Canada, and some European countries. As we've seen above, elsewhere in the world the natural law prevails strongly. While that understanding is to be affirmed, the exceedingly harsh treatment of homosexuals in some places is unwarranted and should not be condoned. Some cultures appealing to the capital punishment for homosexuality in the Old Testament (Leviticus 20:13), still practice it today, e.g., in countries that practice Islam under Sharia law. However, the Bible must be interpreted as it was intended to be understood.[346]

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[344] Here is another example of why it is important to contact government officials and give them the most accurate information on the subjects they are addressing. Don't assume they know.

[345] Franklin Graham, "This Is a Defining Moment for Our Nation," July 7, 2015, letter to e-mail constituents of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

[346] See more below on Biblical interpretation, specifically related to the Leviticus texts on homosexuality, in Chapter Five in the section "What does all this mean for how God's people are to treat homosexuals?"

As with all other subjects, Christians can and should argue strongly on both the horizontal plane (from general revelation, as presented primarily in the second, third, and fourth chapters of this book) and the vertical plane (from special revelation, as presented primarily in the first chapter), as the Apostle Paul did, depending on who his audience was. In the former perspective we observe again in the words of the pre-politically correct poetic adage that "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." Force has never worked to change a person. Change, especially lasting change motivated by internally accepted premises, comes from within, not by external constraint. This is the approach of Christ Jesus and those who believe in and follow him: proclaim the Gospel of Christ and allow the person to be guided by the Holy Spirit to discern God's will in any matter and how to do it, knowing that God does not contradict himself: the Holy Spirit won't lead a person to do something contrary to what the Spirit led the Bible writers to say.

While nowhere near the majority opinion in the United States, despite media, public school, and other government efforts, clearly the thinking of many in the U. S. has declined a long way from Chief Justice Burger's concurring opinion above in Bowers v Hardwick and John and Mary Doe in 1986. This decline was described in a 1993 speech by sociologist and former Senator the late Daniel Patrick Moynihan as "defining deviancy down," by which he meant that a society can only tolerate the constant decline of moral values so long, and then it has to lower its standards to try to make sense of the situation. George Will explains.

> Moynihan said that when deviant behaviors—e.g., violent crime, or births to unmarried women—reach a certain level, society soothes itself by "defining deviance down." It de-stigmatizes the behaviors by declaring them normal [thus committing the naturalistic fallacy in logic, as will be discussed in Chapter Four]. And sometimes, Moynihan said, social problems are the result of "iatrogenic government." In medicine, an iatrogenic ailment is inadvertently introduced by a physician or medicine; in social policy, iatrogenic problems are caused by government.[347]

The same year (1993) Moynihan made his speech, columnist and physician Charles Krauthammer added to Moynihan's thesis and suggested the converse is also true: "that not only were we 'normalizing what was once considered deviant,' but we were also 'finding deviant what was once considered normal.'"[348]

Do you hear the prophet Isaiah reminding us of this day in terms that are not at all encouraging? "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." (Isaiah 5:20)

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[347] George Will, "Defining economic failure down," *Washington Post*, *Reporter-Herald*, February 5, 2015, 4A.

[348] http://spectator.org/articles/37376/defending-deviancy-down (Accessed 3/3/15)

Could homosexual practice, given cultural validity, destroy a country? Colson warns, "The further homosexual behavior is normalized, the more clearly those with eyes to see will recognize that our destruction is upon us."[349]

I appreciate very much Colson's insightful observations, powerful point, and strong warning. Yet, in the light of God's Word in which he reveals himself as sovereign and loving, I prefer to see these developments as a "wake up call" rather than as a signal of "game over." Since the Holy Spirit is with us, all things are possible. (Mark 10:27)

What can we do? Begin by praying that God removes the roadblocks to the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that the Holy Spirit gives more and more people the new birth and motivates more and more people to work with him in the sanctification process in their lives. Then talk about the data disclosed in this and in the preceding chapters, most of which those with whom you speak will be unaware but not completely surprised. The data make sense. See more of what we can do in Chapter Five.

Homosexuality negatively affects the society.

Considerable empirical evidence exists as a "wake up call" for those whose eyes are open and who are thinking. Much of this research was examined in Chapter Two, but some further observations should be made in the context of this discussion concerning the impact on society and the implications for the church.

Star Parker contrasts current demographic data with that of the 1960s. She observes that

> [i]t's through this lens that we should view the Obama administration mandate that employers provide free contraception and sterilization and its refusal to grant an exemption to morally opposed religious institutions.
>
> Our audacious president, as part of his ongoing enterprise to transform America, has gone beyond defining deviancy down. Abortion, sterilization, and sexual promiscuity have not just been redefined as normal. They are considered "reproductive rights" for which we all should foot the bill.
>
> In a Gallup poll done in 1969, 68 percent said pre-marital sex is wrong and 21 percent said it is not wrong. Few young women in 1969 would have felt comfortable to publicly declare they sleep around and it's doubtful that any politician or media personality would have condoned her behavior.
>
> By 2009, in response to the same question, 32 percent said pre-marital sex is wrong and 60 percent said it is not wrong.

[349] Colson, p. 7

> Are we a fairer and more progressive nation today, or have we defined deviancy down?
>
> If you think we're a better nation today because sexual promiscuity is viewed as normal and acceptable, so you must also be comfortable with the rest of the social developments that go along with this.
>
> Most notably, the transformation and breakdown of the traditional American family.
>
> In 1960, 72 percent of American adults were married. Today 51 percent are.
>
> The most dramatic transformation here has taken place in those communities most likely to be supporting Democrats and Obama - blacks and Hispanics.
>
> In 1960, 14 percent of white adults had never been married. The percentage of never married blacks and Hispanics then was not much different – 17 percent.
>
> By 2008, the percentage of never married white adults had increased to 23 percent. But among blacks it grew to 44 percent and among Hispanics 34 percent.
>
> If you see family breakdown as a negative development, so it is clear that defining deviancy down has had the most deleterious effects on those communities in which traditional institutions were weakest to begin with.
>
> As part of the process of defining deviancy down, the words don't change – only their meaning changes.[350]

Fifty years ago the number of children living in the same household with their parents was significantly higher than today. As the alliance of Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars report in their declaration, "Then, close to 90 percent of children lived with their natural parents; today fewer than two-thirds do. The birth rate has declined, and the abortion rate has climbed from less than 1 percent of live births to over 20 percent."[351]

Heritage Foundation's Ryan Anderson insightfully observes that "Marriage plays a fundamental role in civil society because it is characterized by sexual complementarity,

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[350] Star Parker, "Defining Deviancy Down," March 12, 2012, http://townhall.com/columnists/starparker/2012/03/12/defining_deviancy_down (Accessed 3/3/15)

[351] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

monogamy, exclusivity, and permanence."[352] Recall that none of these four characteristics or norms match the homosexual lifestyle or agenda.

Anderson's commentary on this debate in our society is wise and enlightening. It also indicates the urgency of engaging the public forum on this issue. His insights are worth quoting at some length, and I include them for your future reference as you join in helping people comprehend the serious implications of the ongoing decision-making on homosexuality and its related applications such as same-sex "marriage." Anderson also has well documented his assertions. They can be obtained by clicking on the link to his original article that is included in the footnote below.

> …marriage norms encourage men and women to commit permanently and exclusively to each other and take responsibility for their children.
>
> In recent decades, a revisionist view of marriage has eroded these norms. No-fault divorce was the first major trend to undermine a strong marriage culture. Now the effort to redefine marriage away from male-female complementarity has gone even further in abandoning the central characteristics of the institution. But if the law redefines marriage to say the male-female aspect is arbitrary, what principle will be left to retain monogamy, sexual exclusivity, or the expectation of permanency? Such developments will have high social costs.
>
> Whatever one thinks about the morality of sexually open marriages, multi-partner marriages, and by-design-temporary marriages, the social costs will run high. The marital norms of monogamy, sexual exclusivity, and permanency make a difference for society. These new words and the reality they reflect undermine public understanding of what marriage is and why it matters for society.
>
> …Marriage increases the odds that a man will be committed to both the children that he helps create and to the woman with whom he does so.
>
> Marriage, rightly understood, brings together the two halves of humanity (male and female) in a monogamous relationship. Husband and wife pledge to each other to be faithful by vows of permanence and exclusivity. Marriage provides children with a relationship with the man and the woman who made them.
>
> If a man does not commit to a woman in a permanent and exclusive relationship, the likelihood of creating fatherless children and fragmented families increases. The more sexual partners a man has, and the shorter lived those relationships are, the greater the chance he creates children with multiple women. His attention and resources thus divided, a long line

[352] Ryan T. Anderson, "The Social Costs of Abandoning the Meaning of Marriage," September 9, 2013, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/09/the-social-costs-of-abandoning-the-meaning-of-marriage (Accessed 3/9/15)

of consequences unfold for both mother and child, and for society as a whole.

Marriage is thus a personal relationship that serves a public purpose. According to the best available sociological evidence, children fare best on virtually every examined indicator when reared by their wedded biological parents. Studies that control for other factors, including poverty and even genetics, suggest that children reared in intact homes do best in terms of educational achievement, emotional health, familial and sexual development, and delinquency and incarceration.

The breakdown of marriage most hurts the least well-off. A leading indicator of whether someone will know poverty or prosperity is whether, growing up, he or she knew the love and security of having a married mother and father. Marriage reduces the probability of child poverty by 80 percent.

Marital breakdown harms society as a whole. A Brookings Institution study found that $229 billion in welfare expenditures between 1970 and 1996 can be attributed to the breakdown of the marriage culture and the resulting exacerbation of social ills: teen pregnancy, poverty, crime, drug abuse, and health problems. A 2008 study found that divorce and unwed childbearing cost taxpayers $112 billion each year, and Utah State University scholar David Schramm has estimated that divorce alone costs federal, state, and local governments $33 billion each year.

Recognition of marriage serves the ends of limited government more effectively, less intrusively, and at less cost than does picking up the pieces from a shattered marriage culture.

Someone might object: What does it matter if a small percentage of marriages are open, group, or temporary? Those arguments were made in the no-fault divorce debate in the 1960s, but the introduction of such laws had a dramatic impact.[353] After all, law affects culture. Culture affects beliefs. Beliefs affect actions. The law teaches, and it will shape not just a handful of marriages but the public understanding of what marriage is.

Ideas and behaviors have consequences. The breakdown of the marriage culture since the 1960s made it possible in this generation to consider redefining marriage in the law to exclude sexual complementarity. And that redefinition may lead to further redefinition.

Indeed, these new concepts make marriage primarily about adult desire, with marriage understood primarily as an intense emotional relationship

[353] The dramatic impact of divorce devastates not only the couple splitting up but their children, who suffer significantly negative effects not only as children but throughout their lives as adults. See the studies on adult children of divorce.

> between (or among) consenting adults. This revisionism comes with significant social costs.
>
> Redefining marriage to say that men and women are interchangeable, that "monogamish" relationships work just as well as monogamous relationships, that "throuples" are the same as couples, and that "wedlease" is preferable to wedlock will only lead to more broken homes, more broken hearts, and more intrusive government. Americans should reject such revisionism and work to restore the essentials that make marriage so important for societal welfare: sexual complementarity, monogamy, exclusivity, and permanency.[354]

Strong social science research reveals both the damaging effects of homosexuality once it becomes widespread and also the converse, the significantly higher degree of well-being in those societies that reject the practice of homosexuality by social disapproval and by law.

> We also see this today, both internationally and nationally. Internationally, those countries that preserve conservative social morality and family values are the leaders in both freedom and prosperity, while those that grant special rights to homosexuals lag in both areas. Nationally, in America's big cities, the "gayborhoods" have the highest rates of crime and other social dysfunctions and the lowest property values, whereas the reverse is true in neighborhoods in which socially conservative Christian churches are prevalent.[355]

The Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars who penned the March 2015 declaration have observed all the preceding cultural changes and agree that we have a wake-up call that is needed. What is especially alarming is the extent of the divergence from not only God's special revelation, upon which our nation was founded and in which most of us have lived, but also the extent of divergence from the natural law revealed in God's general revelation, which through the centuries and throughout the world has been universally recognized and upon which societies have been established and stabilized.

This divergence that has occurred primarily within the last decade has had significant and far-reaching negative effects, as seen above and also identified in the declaration. The scholars strongly cite why we cannot sit back and ignore these changes, as too often we did previously. In so doing they explain why "same-sex marriage" is such a serious threat to the well-being of human life in the future extending even to a fundamental loss of freedom. Again I quote at length for you to capture the essence of the reality they clearly perceive. This statement is especially important and valuable, for it interprets current cultural and societal circumstances in the light of God's Word and will.

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[354] Ryan T. Anderson, "The Social Costs of Abandoning the Meaning of Marriage," September 9, 2013, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/09/the-social-costs-of-abandoning-the-meaning-of-marriage (Accessed 3/9/15) For more on these redefinitions, and the logical fallacies in so doing, see Chapter Four.

[355] http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality (Accessed 11/13/14)

> In these circumstances, what the state defines as marriage no longer embodies God's purposes in creation. An easy acceptance of divorce damages marriage; widespread cohabitation devalues marriage. But so-called same-sex marriage is a graver threat, because what is now given the name of marriage in law is a parody of marriage.
>
> We are today urged to embrace an abstract conception of human nature that ignores the reality of our bodies. Human beings are no longer to be understood as either male or female. Our culture encourages us to exalt our personal desires and choices over the created order. Instead of freely accepting God's gift, we seek to dominate (and even alter) nature, constructing our own moral truths. The result is a deceptive pseudo-freedom that degrades our humanity. Genuine freedom is found in obedience to God's order: in freely choosing, as a matter of grace and moral habit, what is good and what makes for true beatitude.
>
> No one should doubt or deny what is at stake here. To sustain the fiction of same-sex marriage, the natural family must be deconstructed. Birth certificates will no longer list "father's name" and "mother's name" but "Parent 1/Parent 2," a change already made on certificates issued in some jurisdictions that recognize same-sex marriage. In this brave new world, the family—the institution on which our social order rests—is being redefined as a socially constructed unit, constituted by our sovereign will, not by nature itself. And if a "family" is anything I want or choose it to be, the corrosive individualism that already leaves too many people lonely and disconnected in twenty-first-century Western society is intensified.
>
> …Today, however, the most basic principles of family life are being reconstructed around exceptions. Because the male-female difference must be erased to make way for same-sex marriage, the procreative potential of the male-female union must be set aside as well. A child's parents are whomever legal documents designate as Parent 1 or Parent 2—or, as California documents now allow, Parent 3 or Parent 4. Thus, children are exposed to the risk of coming into the world as strangers, in which the biological [or adoptive] ties that form the natural family are arbitrarily broken. The law no longer recognizes the primordial, complementary natural roles of mother and father. The natural family as the fundamental context defining where we have come from and who we are is set aside. The family becomes a creation of the state, and where the family is a creation of the state, children become, in important legal respects, the property of the state.[356]

Children can therefore be taken away from parents, sometimes with only a call from a "concerned" relative or neighbor, as I've seen done in situations wherein I've had to

[356] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

counsel distraught parents, relatives, and others. Social workers have told me that children placed in foster care, even children from abusive and troubled homes, would typically rather be with their parents in their homes.

The declaration proceeds to identify other applications of the loss of freedom in the current cultural shift in the United States and elsewhere in the West where such movements are eroding traditional values, mores, and laws. They also cite how these new developments counterproductively contrast with God's Word and his will.

> The revolution in our marriage and family law, already well advanced, marches under the banners of freedom and equality. But these noble ideals are here gravely misapplied. When society systematically denies the difference between male and female in law and custom, our fundamental dignity is diminished, the image of God within us is obscured, unreality becomes legally established, and those who refuse to conform are regarded as irrational bigots. Further, as same-sex couples are granted the right to marry, they will inevitably assert a "right to children" as well. But children are a gift, not a right. Forgetting this adds powerful pressure for the expansion of radical forms of reproductive technology—such as sperm and egg donation along with surrogacy, which involves contracting with a woman for the carrying of a pregnancy for intended parents.
>
> Freedom itself is severely compromised when our speech about the difference and complementarity of male and female must be policed, and any dissent from the new orthodoxies assiduously suppressed. It is increasingly difficult to affirm that marriage is the union of a man and a woman without being ruled outside the boundaries of reasonable public conversation. And once opposition to same-sex marriage is judged to be discriminatory, no institution that declines to substitute unreality for reality will remain unaffected. Some individuals are already being censured and others have lost their jobs because of their public commitment to marriage as the union of a man and a woman.[357]

We see here again, how vital is our vocation, our call, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and keep people aware of God's transcendence and his immanence (Psalm 113), that he is sovereign and constantly with us; he's always in the picture. We need to show how he is not only in the picture but that he's *holding the picture*! Indeed if we don't speak out the very stones will cry out! (Luke 19:40)

When people lose sight of God and his importance, including his standard, our society falls into a humanistic relativism where everyone does what is right in his own eyes. Think for a moment what society will shortly look like and how that change will impact

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[357] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

you and your family if our nation ever comes to the point where it can't appeal to God's standard, his Word, in its governance…which standard the Founders of the United States used to construct the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Where the Impact on Society Becomes Highly Personal

We've reflected on scientific research including many statistical analyses. We've examined Biblical, theological, philosophical, and historical bases that establish the link between marriage consisting of one man and one woman and societal well-being. These sources also show the powerfully negative effects on society when marriage breaks down.

In his analysis of the U. S. Supreme Court's June 2015 decision on "same-sex marriage," Florida Family Policy Council President John Stemberger, who is an attorney, issued a very moving statement that illuminates how these broader principles, concepts, and data powerfully affect human flesh and blood. Here are some of his main points:

> …the highest court of our land ignored the rule of law and the will of 51 million people in over 38 states in an illegitimate act of raw judicial power and arrogance.
>
> Though countless millions of U.S. voters have defined marriage as between a man and a woman through the legitimate democratic process, a handful of judges in one decision today have disenfranchised them. The court deliberately ignored the plain meaning and legal history behind the Constitution and foolishly disregarded what is self-evident in biology, logic and the collective wisdom of human history…
>
> …we must have a clear understanding of what marriage is and why it is important to our culture, society and social order.
>
> We have only to watch the evening news to see the results of the breakdown of marriage and the family unit in our society. The tragic riots and mass illegal behavior that took place recently in Baltimore and other U.S. cities are examples of the consequences in a society when marriage and family structures break down or fail to form.
>
> Homosexual rights activists love to accuse people who believe in marriage as being "on the wrong side of history." However, the reality of what marriage is, will never be on the wrong side of history.
>
> The little boy in the inner city who longs to have a father in his life--that longing, will never be on the wrong side of history.

> The little girl with two dads who wishes she had a mother to help her understand the changes in her body--that wish, will never be in the wrong side of history.
>
> The unique and complimentary design and beauty of a man and a woman's body will never be on the wrong side of history.
>
> The teachings and books of every major world religion will never be on the wrong side of history.
>
> Natural marriage celebrates true diversity and gender inclusively when the two great parts of humanity come together and life springs forth and the next generation is born. These truths will never be on the wrong side of history.[358]

Providentially, Stemberger sees reasons for hope that the immoral direction of our country can be turned around. He concludes with observations that offer encouragement for the future.

> In the midst of this moral and legal madness we still should still have great hope for the future. Our country has recovered before from times of social, legal and political division and I believe we can again. After the Civil War, the civil rights movement, and other times, our country returned to its foundational principles of human dignity deeply rooted in the Christian tradition. Even in the case of Roe vs. Wade, while the loss of human life has been absolutely devastating, the good news is that America is turning back to her roots, finding her way home as it were, and is more "pro-life" today than it has been in recent decades.[359]

What are the implications for the church?

In spite of whether the culture agrees with the Bible or turns against the Bible, the culture is never the standard for the church, the people of God. The starting point in our reasoning is with God's Word, not trends in the culture. The church's calling from God is not to be conformed to but *to transform the culture*. (Romans 12:2; 1 Peter 2:9-12, esp. v. 12) Here is where we find the answer to the question before us:

> Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual

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[358] Deer Park Broadcaster, "FFPC: Ruling is devastating, but not the end," http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/deer_park/opinion/ffpc-ruling-is-devastating-but-not-the-end/article_2cb7f6ee-3c54-56b1-ac3d-f874691c4873.html (Accessed 07/07/15)

[359] Deer Park Broadcaster, "FFPC: Ruling is devastating, but not the end," http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/deer_park/opinion/ffpc-ruling-is-devastating-but-not-the-end/article_2cb7f6ee-3c54-56b1-ac3d-f874691c4873.html (Accessed 07/07/15)

> act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. *Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will*. (Romans 12:1-2; italics mine)

Test the Spirits: Distinguish between Scripture and the Culture.

We are not to identify with the culture. On the contrary, we are "aliens and strangers in the world," and God calls us to live in that uncommon way in order to engage the world, to attract them to the Lord's way, not to conform to the world's way. (1 Peter 2:11-12)

Neither is science the standard for God's people, his church. The Bible, God's special revelation, and true science, always agree, because true science is part of God's general revelation, and God does not contradict himself. Careful science illustrates and corroborates the Word of God, which is the ultimate authority for all Christians, and, though they don't now recognize it, for all other people as well. The adjective, careful, is vital. Many "studies" do not follow the established scientific method and thus produce spurious results (one cause of the curious disclosures reported in the press that sound strange and in opposition to the Bible, one way to tell whether what one is reading is true science). Keep in mind also that much of what science claims to be true at any given point in time is overturned by later science. God's Word, however, is true forever. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18)

Denominations deliberating on what stand to take concerning homosexuality must understand the information in these pages and especially that which urges adherence to God's Word no matter what the culture is saying and doing. The Lord has called us to be salt and light to the culture and to exercise leadership where he has placed us to serve him. We take our orders from him not from the society and the surrounding culture. It is lamentable when the media report denominational decisions such as has occurred in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which have voted to allow homosexuals "in committed relationships," an oxymoron as disclosed in this book, to be ordained. As or more worse is the rationale for such an unbiblical action when the decision is based on perceived changes occurring in the culture.[360]

Is such accommodation to the culture not what Jesus accused the church in Pergamum of doing? After affirming the church for the good it was doing, the Lord said

> 14 Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.

[360] "Churches face test after landmark vote, Lutheran decision on gays opens major debate among Protestants," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, August 23, 2009, pp. A1, 2.

> 15 Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
> 16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (Revelation 2:14-16)

The Greek word translated "sexual immorality" is *porneuō*, referring to any kind of sexual relations outside of marriage. The background to Jesus' reference to the teaching of Balaam is found in Numbers 14:37; 22-25; and 31:16 (where we are told of the Israelites' sinning in 25:1-5).

As the outstanding Lutheran Biblical scholar, seminary professor, and commentator, Richard C. H. Lenski, explains, the church in Pergamum had people in it who were committing the same sinful behavior as the Old Testament Israelites who succumbed to the pagan teaching of Balaam in order to obtain pagan favor for themselves, whose opinion they valued more than the LORD's.[361] The infinitives to eat (food offered to idols) and to commit sexual immorality in verse 14 express actuality, the linking of these two pagan practices, participating in a feast in honor of an idol and sexual immorality with temple prostitutes, practices the Israelites did following Canaanite idol worship in violation of God's commands. Lenski also points out that the two adverbs in the Greek, so and likewise, (only one of which typically occurs in contemporary translations but both of which are present in the ASV) identify those in the Pergamum church who hold to the doctrine and practice of the Nicolaitans with those mentioned in the previous verse who hold to the doctrine and practice of Balaam. Notice what follows.

"Repent therefore!" (2:16) As we saw above, the New Testament verb (from the root *metanoeō*) is a strong one, denoting much more than remorse or emotional regret, this repentance is a thorough change in thinking, attitude, and purpose,[362] meaning to turn against the previous orientation and proceed in the opposite direction in obedience to God's Word and will. Jesus commands the church to reject the teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans, the values of the surrounding culture, and follow Him; otherwise He will come and bring justice to the guilty ones. Lenski insightfully explains who needs to repent:

> Who is to repent? While the command is in the singular, the whole church is involved. Rightly so, for the guilt of tolerating errorists attaches not merely to the elder or the elders, but in varying degrees to the entire membership. This applies also to a larger church body. This does not in any way relieve the leadership; its guilt will always remain in its full intensity.[363]

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[361] Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation, p. 105. WORDSearch.
[362] *Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary, The* – Lambda-Omicron. WORDSearch.
[363] Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation, p. 107. WORDSearch.

The church today, especially in the highly individualistic and narcissistic West, notably the United States, needs to hear this message, which is a theme woven throughout God's Word. In Leviticus 19:17 we read, "Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt." Far from hatred or a hate crime, offering corrective feedback to a neighbor who is doing wrong is an expression of love, required by God, to help that person turn from wickedness and to avoid one's own culpability by failing to help the neighbor.

If our culture continues to move away from its Biblical basis we'll no longer be able to expect the support we've previously had in offering such admonition. Neither will we have an excuse (which we never really did have) for not saying anything to those doing wrong, due to the mistaken idea that in this culture they already, or soon will, know better. If our culture continues to distance itself from its Biblical roots, we whom God has called to be his witnesses in Christ will have to point to and rely on God and his Word as our authority as we engage the public square.

Recall also Jesus' teaching to his disciples, "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents [*metanoeō*], forgive him." (Luke 17:3) Paul states, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2) James adds "My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins." (5:19-20) The Scriptural way to do this is by speaking the truth in love.

Do Not Divide the Church, the Body of Christ.

Increasing the sadness and seriousness of a church judicatory making a decision contrary to God's Word are the results of that action. One of those actions is to promote schism (*schisma*, divisions; 1 Corinthians 12:25) and divisions (*dichostasias*, division, dissension; Romans 16:17-18; and *apodiorizontes*, Jude 18-19 NASB), which splitting of the church the New Testament teaches is wrong. Paul writes, "that there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another." (1 Corinthians 12:25 (ASV)

Related texts also expose the motivations, lack of caring for the rest of the body, and characteristics of those who make such dissension in the church. Not only is it not good that such schisms occur, causing so much harm to the church and its redemptive work for the Lord, but these divisions are a poor witness in the world, in particular when they appear in the secular media. Here is another reason why we need to strengthen our church education programs to teach the whole counsel of God, including first and foremost the Bible, as well as historic Christian systematic theology and church history. It is also why we need sound sermons, which will help overcome the Biblical illiteracy of so many and promote sanctification.[364]

[364] If your church doesn't use the lectionary as a liturgical guide, consider doing so in order to avoid the human temptation to focus mostly, or even only, on our favorite themes and the fads that regularly appear

What do you think went through the minds of those inside, but especially those outside, the church when they saw this headline and the following report?

> Presbyterian Church schism over gay ordination splits congregations
>
> More than 200 Presbyterian congregations nationwide have been torn asunder over the Presbyterian Church USA's new rules and the ordination of its first gay minister.
>
> The rift has resulted in lawsuits, sold churches, broken friendships and scattered congregations.[365]

Is that not *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight, the sundering of the body of Christ? We cannot make the mistake of saying such divisions are the cost involved in doing justice. (E.g., Deuteronomy 16:20; Micah 6:8) *Acting contrary to God's Word is not doing justice*, *and neither is causing unnecessary divisions in the church.* Of course God's people can disagree with one another; no reasonable person can be offended by such differences in opinion. But those matters do not cause schism, and if they ever do, it can be addressed with prayer and skilled leadership that with God's help will restore unity in the congregation. However, the church in all of its judicatories, local, regional, and national, should never make decisions that are contrary to God's Word and cause such dissention in the church. That such decisions are made is one of the main reasons for this book.

How should we respond to those who pursue their agendas that cause such divisions? Is there anything in the Bible that guides us?

Keep Away from Those Who Cause Divisions.

Consider what Paul counseled the church in Rome:

> 17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.
> 18 For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. (Romans 16:17-18)

So that people are not naïve on what is involved in the question before us, God's will concerning homosexuality, this book has been written. Much is to be said in illuminating

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in the homiletical and other literature, as well as in pastoral circles, thus depriving the people in the pews of important parts of Scripture they need to hear and on which they need to act. The lectionary guides the selection of Scripture texts so the main themes of the Bible that point to and are fulfilled in Christ Jesus are covered every three years.

[365] *Rapid City Journal*, "Presbyterian Church schism over gay ordination splits congregations," 05/11/13, http://rapidcityjournal.com/search/?l=50&sd=desc&s=start_time&f=html&byline=By%20Stephen%20Maggagnini%0AScripps%20Howard%20News%20Service (Accessed 06/06/14)

what the Apostle Paul is teaching in this text. For now, consider these crucial points Paul is making. In Lenski's interpretation of this passage, he observes that

> Paul's injunction is not to keep away only from total rejecters of the gospel—what Christians ever needed such a warning? His injunction is to keep away from believers who are errorists and teach falsely. Not only the exact duplicates of the errorists of Paul's day are to be shunned, as though no new ones could arise, as though new ones do not divide, tear, and set traps, as though all errorists new and old, great and small, are not related, all in the same class; but, according to Paul himself (15:4), "whatever things were written before, for our instruction were they written," his admonition is to be fully applied and not weakened or evaded.
>
> 18) The first word generalizes: οἱ τοιοῦτοι, "such," the ones Paul has met and any others who may appear. Paul characterizes all errorists according to their error, first as far as the Lord is concerned, then as far as the innocent Christians are concerned. "Not our Lord Jesus do they serve" does not mean—as though the verb were διακονέω—that they do not render him the benefit of their service, but that they are not acting the part of slaves [< δουλεύω (*douleuō*), be a slave, obey] who obey as slaves, obey without question every word of "our Lord Jesus Christ," to whom as *our* Lord all of us (you Romans and I) are slaves. In the next verse Paul has the contrast: "Your obedience" has become publicly known, i. e., you are slaves who do obey our Lord, and it is so evident, has been proved to such an extent, that all men who at all know you know that. As we have seen, many of the Romans were slaves to earthly masters; this word about obeying the heavenly Lord went home to them much more effectively than it does to us who have only heard of slaves…
>
> Note 1:1 and the fact that Paul's very first word introduces him to the Roman Christians, so many of whom were slaves, as "a slave of Jesus Christ," as one who absolutely, also in all his teaching and all his doctrine, obeyed "our Lord."
>
> It also casts light on the opposite dative: "but their own belly." The moment we understand that δουλεύουσιν refers, not to ministration and benefit, but to unquestioning obedience, the figure involved stands out with clearness. The old idea will be discarded: "they think merely of a luxurious life." This does not fit Phil. 3:19 nor this passage. It is not a fact that every errorist seeks an easy life, panders to his belly. In thousands of cases errorists choose a hard lot in life, work and suffer in order to propagate their errors, perhaps even die for them. The point to be stressed is obedience. In the case of every error a Christian ceases to render absolute slavelike obedience to the Lord and yields that obedience, not just to the errorists—Paul puts it drastically—but to their own belly, their own lower and lowest nature.

> It seems that Paul chose the word "belly" because of the fact of Eve's eating in obedience to Satan instead of refraining from eating in obedience to God. Paul defines what he means when he says in v. 19, τὸ κακόν, "that which is base," and when he goes still farther in v. 20 and speaks of "Satan." Some think that error is intellectual, and if it is a fault, it is only an intellectual fault, one that is on a high plane. That view is corrected here. It is the rebellion of a slave against the most blessed Lord himself, the acceptance of a slavery of the most depraving kind. Our obedience belongs wholly to him who is above, our true Lord, and never in any bit of teaching to our lower nature, here called "belly."
>
> How destructive even a little error may become for [those who are naïve] Paul has already indicated by the word σκάνδαλα [*skandala*, causes of offense, from which comes our English word scandal], "deathtraps," and we may compare Matt. 18:6 regarding the entrapment of one of these little ones who believe in me and the awful word Jesus adds to that. Since they are not prepared for anything evil, such defenseless Christians are readily "completely deceived" (ἐκ in the verb) by means of the type of speech which error of all kinds loves to use: χρηστολογία *chrestologia* speech that sounds good and serviceable, and εὐλογία *eulogia*, that sounds like blessing. Error sounds so beneficial and so pious: we shall benefit, we shall be better Christians, etc. It was the language Satan used in Gen. 3:5.
>
> Who has not heard that giving up Inspiration will make us understand the Bible far better; how dreadful it is that babies should be called sinners; how God could certainly not have created hell, and the like? Even where error has destroyed all truth the name "Christian" is constantly sounded, and the language of Christianity and its forms of service are retained, and "the simple" (A. V.) are caught. What if they are sincere, these self-deceived, and take their own poison—will the unwary, to whom that poison is sold as the best medicine, escape its effects because of sincerity?[366]

Calvin, as does Lenski, comments about the demonic influence on church leaders who teach and preach deceptively doctrine that is contrary to God's Word. Calvin calls them "ministers of Satan."[367] Since I don't know them well enough, I can only say that is true of some but may or may not be entirely accurate for others, depending on the individuals involved, but I can surely say that they are very misled and they should know better; I agree with Lenski, Calvin, and other scholars that someone who is proclaiming doctrine that is contrary to God's Word is certainly influenced by the demonic and playing into Satan's hand.

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[366] Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, pp. 917-921. WORDSearch.

[367] Calvin's Commentaries. Commentary on Romans. Chapter 16; Romans 16:17-18. WORDSearch.

He or she must be called out on this matter, for the sake of the body of Christ, for the sake of the world, and for the individual's own sake. If you are a pastor and/or teacher and have been supporting and/or promoting the pro-homosexual agenda and teaching contrary to the historic interpretation of God's Word by the church all over the world for four millennia until the present time, please repent and change your position and strengthen the body of Christ, that has placed you in a position of public trust. Teach the truth in love regarding God's will concerning homosexuality.

If you are a church member, whose pastor or teachers have been misinterpreting the texts examined in Chapter One and the other Bible passages quoted on these pages and have been teaching contrary to God's Word on this subject, please show him or her this book, pray for him or her, and urge him or her to repent and teach the truth, of course in love. Also, be watchful for pro-homosexual activists promoting their agenda to advocate for LGBT inclusion in every church, including therefore your congregation, in all 50 of the United States to change their position on homosexuality,[368] show them this book, pray for them, and urge them to repent and teach the truth in love as well. For further help, consider what Calvin adds in his interpretation of this text.

> **17.** *And I beseech you, etc.* He [Paul] now adds an exhortation, by which all Churches have often need of being stirred up; for the ministers of Satan are ever ready to take occasion to disturb the kingdom of Christ: and they attempt to make disturbances in two ways; for they either sow discord, by which the minds of men are drawn away from the unity of truth, or they occasion offenses, by which men are alienated from the love of the gospel.
>
> The former evil is done when the truth of God is mixed with new dogmas devised by men; and the latter takes place, when by various arts it is made odious and contemptible. He therefore bids all, who did either of these two things, to be observed, lest they should deceive and catch the unwary; and also to be shunned, for they were injurious. Nor was it without reason that he required this attention from the faithful; for it often happens through our neglect or want of care, that such wicked men do great harm to the Church, before they are opposed; and they also creep in, with astonishing subtlety, for the purpose of doing mischief, except they be carefully watched.
>
> But observe, that he speaks of those who had been taught the pure truth of God. It is indeed an impious and sacrilegious attempt to divide those who agree in the truth of Christ: but yet it is a shameful sophistry to defend, under the pretext of peace and unity, a union in lies and impious doctrines…Paul clearly shows, that he did not condemn all kinds of discords, but those which destroyed consent in the orthodox faith….
>
> **18.** *For they who are such, etc.* He mentions an unvarying mark, by which false prophets [cf. e.g., Matthew 7:15-23] are to be distinguished from the servants of Christ; for they have no care for the glory of Christ,

[368] This subject will be discussed further in the next chapter.

> but seek the benefit of their stomach. As, however, they deceitfully crept in, and by assuming another character, concealed their own wickedness, he at the same time pointed out, in order that no one might be deceived, the arts which they adopted — that they ingratiated themselves by a bland address. The preachers of the gospel have also their courtesy and their pleasing manner, but joined with honesty, so that they neither soothe men with vain praises, nor flatter their vices: but impostors allure men by flattery, and spare and indulge their vices, that they may keep them attached to themselves. He calls those *simple* who are not cautious enough to avoid deceptions.

What else can we say about how to keep away from those causing such divisions in the church? More will be said later, but consider now not welcoming representatives of groups with a pro-homosexual agenda to the local church council meetings or to the higher judicatories of the denomination of which your congregation is a part. In addition to the Bible, one denomination has concluded in at least half a dozen meetings of its General Synod, its highest judicatory, that homosexuality is incompatible with God's Word and is sinful. As of this writing it has agreed with a pro-homosexual organization within but not part of the official denominational structure to again take up the matter in this year's General Synod. Doing so is neither necessary nor, most importantly, is it in accord with the Bible. That pro-homosexual organization should have no standing in the denomination and should be discredited by all denominational leaders on every level.

Speak the truth (about homosexuality, what it truly is and involves and how that practice is in direct opposition to God's Word) in love but with firmness, and resolve to remain committed to the Biblical standard. In love point out the seriousness of the homosexual lifestyle and urge those who are in it to leave it for Christ's, the church's, the society's, and their own sake and offer help for them to do so. And plenty of effective help exists, as is discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Five.

For those who are pro-homosexual either as a result of misinformation and/or being misguided or due to love for a family member or friend who has "come out" as a homosexual, explain what is involved in homosexuality and ask the question: "When we see how extremely unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy homosexuality is, how is it truly loving for us to affirm, much less encourage, someone to embrace such a physically and spiritually lethal lifestyle?"

Biblically, the church must not treat the pro-homosexual initiative as a question of whether to revise its doctrine. It should treat the matter as a question of how it can most effectively provide pastoral care, speaking the truth in love.

In spite of the above approach and what follows, if pro-homosexual activists insist on disruption that threatens division, the church must use the principle Paul counseled in Romans 16:17-18 and 1 Corinthians 5:5ff. Excommunication with the hope and prayer that the person(s) involved come to their senses, submit to the Biblically-based authority of the church guided by the Holy Spirit, repent, and change their ways should be the next

step. What should not be done is capitulate to the demands of misinformed and misguided people who want a forum in which to persuade the church to disobey the Lord and his commands in Scripture.

Keep in mind a very important axiom in the sociology of group dynamics and in social psychology. When a group perceives a speaker is being mistreated or attacked, the sympathies of the audience go to the speaker. It is thus hard to have an honest debate on controversial issues, especially when many people are overly sensitive to vocal disagreement in such contexts. It is much more effective to have such forums where the issues are presented by a fair-minded and just teacher who is true and committed to God's Word and where a lecture/discussion (the method most adults prefer according to careful research) is undertaken decently and in good order peacefully. (1 Corinthians 14:40; Romans 12:16-21)

I have observed the result of such debates, including on the subject of homosexuality, even on a Christian college campus. Even where you would think academic freedom and the search for truth would prevail and facilitate a desirable result, it did not, and usually does not, occur. The aforementioned axiom of social psychology trumps the free and unhindered expression of truth. In church settings where Christians try to be hospitable and loving, their guests, seizing the opportunity, monopolized the presentation and make it difficult to counter with a compelling and forthright presentation of the Biblical truth.

I say the above for anyone planning such a program. If you see such an event advertised, or are invited to attend one, do so. Just pray before you go and while you are there, then speak the truth in love.

Use polling data to plan effective strategy not to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

When we look at polls, we need to remember that some are well done, but many are poorly done, and all can be manipulated to say what the interpreter wants them to say. Moreover, how should God's people, especially church leaders look at polls? In the light of Scripture and the task to which God has called us, how can we look at a poll and conclude (committing the naturalistic fallacy [explained in the next chapter]) that "This is the trend where our society and culture are heading, we need to get on board with it?"

Rather, does not our calling and the Word of God indicate that we should observe the polling data in order to be more fully informed as to what our task is and how we should more effectively plan to do our work as God's partners in his redemptive process? As Andrew Walker has clearly observed, "cultural credibility is a castle of shifting sand if

credibility comes at the expense of sacrificing biblical authority."[369] The Gospel of Jesus Christ has always been counter-cultural.[370]

How can one truly love another and affirm him or her to embrace a lethal lifestyle?

For those church and civic leaders who have had the sad occurrence of a friend or family member "come out" as a homosexual, is it not more loving to seek ways to help him or her overcome that challenge rather than support and encourage him or her to embrace a lifestyle that will sooner or later be very harmful? Which is truly the most loving decision the leader can make, for his or her loved one, for the community, for the church, and even for him or herself? Yes, and for homosexuals themselves!

If you see a loved one in a car heading toward a cliff and disaster, do you get behind the car and push? Perish the thought! You get in the car alongside the loved one and try to turn the car around or find some way to block the car to stop it from going over the cliff. To extend this analogy, what we have today is the situation where too many people see their loved one in the car but don't even see the cliff; that's one of the main reasons for this book: to point out the precipice just ahead for those who are motoring to oblivion.

In the light of the first three chapters of this book, how can one conclude that it is loving toward those who are homosexual, toward their families, toward those who are unsure of their sexuality, toward those struggling with unwanted and repented same-sex attraction, as well as responsible citizenship, to normalize homosexual practice in our or any other culture? On the contrary, is it not most uncaring, unloving, and even cruel to embrace and support what is destroying, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, those who engage in such practices…and often their loved ones, not to mention church congregations?

Allowing family love for one who has "come out" as a homosexual to blindly ignore, or to try to reinterpret, God's Word will not work. Even if one anaesthetizes him or herself with faulty "Scripture twisting," the horrible reality remains: that family member is embracing a physically and spiritually lethal lifestyle. How much better it would be to hold fast to God's Word and to the triune God, who alone is able to help the loved one come to his or her senses and abandon this practice God calls *tô ʿēbâ*.

How much does God's opinion count? Also, how can one try to justify placing those who affirm and engage in such practice in leadership in the church, especially ordained leadership, thereby misleading God's people? What will you say to God at the Judgment? (Recall James 3:1.)

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[369] Andrew T. Walker, "Evangelicals and the LGBT Community: What Does the Future Hold?" http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/11/14081/?utm_source=The+Witherspoon+Institute&utm_campaign=b47c382ecd-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_15ce6af37b-b47c382ecd-84093705 (Accessed 3/14/15)

[370] John Stott, *Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978). *Passim*.

How good it is to see Christians from different denominational traditions, that uphold the Bible as the trustworthy Word of God and their authority, coming together to elucidate and confront the current cultural changes and make a strong and clear clarion call to engage the public square in its policy-shaping conversations. Consider more of the rationale of the Roman Catholic-Evangelical alliance's declaration; study it so as to be able to explain it to others as you participate in these vital discussions in your family, in your neighborhood, in your church, in your workplace, on the plane, and elsewhere.

> As Christians, we must state, unambiguously, that same-sex marriage contradicts the Gospel. As we have noted, Holy Scripture teaches that marriage, as ordered by God, is a mysterious sign of the union of Christ and the Church. This sign is dependent on the profound complementarity of male and female. *A conception of marriage that allows for same-sex unions denies this element of difference, rendering it unable to signify the mystical union of Christ and his Church.* [Emphasis mine]
>
> As Evangelicals and Catholics committed to the Gospel's invitation to discipleship, we are acutely aware of many ways in which our broken lives need the healing and reconciling power of God's grace. Moreover, we share the widespread and proper desire of Christians today to repent of injustices against those who experience same-sex attraction, and to discern more effective ways for all single people to participate in the life of the Church. However, faithful Christian witness cannot accommodate itself to same-sex marriage. It disregards the created order, threatens the common good, and distorts the Gospel.
>
> We, Evangelicals and Catholics together, affirm the truth and the reality of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman, established by free and mutual consent and by God's action. This marital union is intended to be permanent and is fully consummated in consensual sexual intercourse open to procreation.[371]

The alliance made a strong point affirming the Biblically-based place for unmarried people in the church. Many reasons exist for thinking through the Bible's teaching about the single life, its contribution to the Kingdom of God, and managing the human sex drive in the context of singleness, not the least reason for doing so being to counter the culture's claim that sex is necessary for all people. Especially in the sex-saturated media-taught mindset of American and other Western countries, we need to be prepared to help people shape their premises concerning the subject of homosexuality, and other sex-related subjects, according to God's Word, including the premise that when God commands no sex outside of marriage as he has created the institution to function, he

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[371] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

provides what we need in order to comply. Regarding the single state, the alliance declared,

> We must also reject the contemporary presumption—which is widespread and even influences our churches in many ways—that human fulfillment requires the satisfaction of sexual desire. While the Bible calls all Christians to chastity, it also holds up the celibate life as one honorable vocation in light of the example of our Lord himself and his teaching that there are some who are "eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:12). Thus, with two thousand years of Christian tradition, we affirm that the integral development of the human person is possible without sexual intimacy. In the early centuries of the Church's history, the presence of men and women committed to a celibate life had already become a distinctive mark of the Christian community. Freely choosing celibacy or living the single life in faithfulness to Christ offers a unique kind of service to the Church and the world.[372]

What does all we've been examining in this and the preceding chapters mean for our society, and, since our society has such far-reaching influence globally, for many other countries if not the rest of the world? We must be discerning and vigilant. The other countries of the world are watching us closely. Wherever I travel in the world I'm asked about these matters, and I tell the people that the United States and other Western countries that were shaped largely or strongly influenced by the Gospel of Christ, are not the same as they once were. I urge people in these other countries to carefully discern what is wheat and what is chaff in Western culture, to weed out the chaff, and to not adopt Western culture wholesale as I see them doing.

We in the United States need to do the same. As Janet Levy has well-said,

> For these reasons, Americans must stand watch over every change, like the…"don't ask, don't tell" revision, that seeks to promote homosexuality and homosexual relationships as equivalent alternatives to heterosexuality and the traditional family. Such a stance is dishonest and has grave implications for the future of American society, as we know it. The subterfuge of the homosexual agenda, its indoctrination of children and its misrepresentation of facts and censorship of the truth is a serious threat to an institution that has been the very bedrock of civilization. Clearly, this is not simply a civil rights issue but a deceptive re-engineering of the underpinning of American culture.[373]

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[372] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

[373] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

For Reflection and Discussion

Chapter Three

1. How does homosexuality harm society?

2. What should we say to those who argue that the church should change its views on homosexuality in order to not be seen as "out of step with the culture" so we'll be able to reach more people for Christ?"

3. What do you say to someone who says that it is impossible for homosexuals to change and leave homosexuality?

4. What can the church do to help unmarried people feel more a part of the life and work of the body of Christ; to identify and value their spiritual gifts, talents, skills, knowledge, and wisdom; and to serve the Lord in ways that will most fully employ what they have to offer?

5. In what ways can singles, who are walking closely with the Lord in faithful obedience to his commands, offer a powerfully persuasive argument in response to the pro-homosexual assertion that everybody has to have sex and for those who are attracted to the same-sex it has to have its outlet with those of the same gender?

6. Compare and contrast the proper hermeneutics of interpreting the Bible and interpreting the U. S. Constitution. In what ways are interpreting the Bible and the Constitution similar and in what ways are they different?

7. What can you say to pro-homosexual activists who say "same-sex marriage" should be allowed in the United States, because the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment give them a fundamental right to marry?

8. What should we say to someone who thinks it isn't important to vote?

9. If your pastor, teacher, or another church leader advocates admitting homosexuals to church membership and/or to holding church offices, cite at least three reasons why you believe doing so is contrary to God's Word and is wrong.

10. In Romans 16:17-18 Paul tells us to watch out for and keep away from those who cause divisions in the body of Christ. As we seek to obey this passage in God's Word, what are the implications for what we should do and not do?

11. What do you say to someone who wants to have a debate in the church on homosexuality and have one or more practicing homosexuals make a presentation at the debate?

12. How does the Biblical understanding of love guide us in answering this book's main question?

Chapter 4

The Homosexual Agenda and Logical Fallacies

What is really behind the push for same-sex "marriage?"

Another means of discerning God's will is through the use of logic guided by the Holy Spirit. "'Come now, let us reason together,' says the LORD." (Isaiah 1:18)

One doesn't have to be extraordinarily perceptive to observe a coordinated effort among segments of our society that are coming together to promote homosexuality as normal. Is this coordinated effort a conspiracy? Well, let's check the dictionary and see if what is being done fits with that denotation. Merriam Webster defines conspiracy as "a secret plan made by two or more people to do something that is harmful or illegal."[374] I typically try to avoid emotionally loaded terms that tend to sidetrack effective communication, but we do have to admit that the coordination of the media, the entertainment industry, the public education establishment, and government in support of the agenda of homosexual activists is occurring. In fact pro-homosexual literature, some of which is referenced below, readily admits to and uses the term conspiracy.

Many analysts of societal trends offer such observations on radio talk shows and in print. Sound-bites of newscasts produced by several media outlets reveal the same terminology often being employed by the broadcasters of the so-called "mainstream media." It's quite evident that these segments of society are all beating the same drum, though many don't publicly acknowledge their coordinated effort; hence some secrecy is evident by more than two individuals concerning a societal phenomenon that is seen in this e-book to be very harmful, some dimensions of which are still illegal. That said, while a conspiracy is likely, I prefer to clear rather than muddy the water, so I'll stick with the term agenda, which is not only evident by careful observers, but it has been publicized as such, including in the book, *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear & Hatred of Gays in the 90s* by Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, who also admit to a conspiracy.

Watch for three Principles Used to Promote the Homosexual Agenda.

Kirk and Madsen cite three principles to use in promoting the homosexual agenda: desensitization, jamming, and conversion. ***Desensitization*** involves an indirect, low-key, and inoffensive approach whereby homosexuals are presented as regular people.

> If gays present themselves—or allow themselves to be presented—as overwhelmingly different and threatening, they will put straights on a triple-red alert, driving them to overt acts of political oppression or physical violence. If, however, gays can live alongside straights, visibly but as inoffensively as possible, they will arouse a low-grade alert only,

[374] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conspiracy. (Accessed 07/05/14)

> which, though annoying to straights, will eventually diminish for purely physiological reasons. Straights will be desensitized.
>
> We can extract the following principle for our campaign: to desensitize straights to gays and gayness, inundate them in a continuous flood of gay-related advertising, presented in the least offensive fashion possible.[375]

As is readily evident, this principle is still being played to the hilt. Each day the news media hammer biased "news" stories (that decades ago would have appeared on the editorial page) about how our culture is changing rapidly to approve "same-sex (usually read "gay") marriage." Those media narratives are followed by liberal judges overturning voter-approved bans on same-sex marriage, Hollywood movies portraying homosexuals in activities that do not reflect what they really do, and schools teaching that homosexuality is normal.

Jamming involves the repeated exposure to images that conflict with preconceived beliefs producing a cognitive dissonance in order to shame the unsupportive heterosexual, weaken his or her argument, and force him or her to change. In pejorative language Kirk and Madsen explain.

> The trick is to get the bigot into the position of feeling a conflicting twinge of shame, along with his reward, whenever his homohatred surfaces, so that his reward will be diluted or spoiled. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, all making use of repeated exposure to pictorial images or verbal statements that are incompatible with his self-image as a well-liked person, one who fits in with the rest of the crowd. Thus, propagandistic advertisement can depict homophobic and homohating bigots as crude loudmouths and assholes—people who say not only 'faggot' but 'nigger,' 'kike,' and other shameful epithets—who are 'not Christian.' It can show them being criticized, hated, shunned. It can depict gays experiencing horrific suffering as the direct result of homohatred—suffering of which even most bigots would be ashamed to be the cause.[376]

Here we have a clear example, actually several examples, of fallacious logic, which will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter, in particular the errors of *argumentum ad hominem*, attacking the person rather than the substance of his or her argument, and proposition without supportive documentation, which leads to unsound and invalid premises and conclusions. The quote also reveals hypocrisy. Homosexuals regularly accuse those who oppose their agenda as hateful and mean-spirited; it is not difficult to detect such connotation and likely motivation in many words in the preceding paragraph

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[375] Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear & Hatred of Gays in the 90s* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), p. 149. I am grateful to my former colleague and friend, the late Rev. Dr. Robert Geelhoed, Minister of Pastoral Care, at Christ Church of Oak Brook, Oak Brook Illinois for drawing my attention to this book and for a helpful synopsis of the book that he prepared for a course he taught on this subject at Christ Church.

[376] Kirk and Madsen, p. 151.

(see, e.g., “bigot,” “homohatred,” “homophobic,” “homohating,” “loudmouths,” and the others) and in their many other communications, print and verbal, that I’ve not only read but studied carefully. Nevertheless, if we are to love homosexuals and all others, even our enemies (Matthew 5:44), we who are believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot respond in kind, which would be counterproductive to our calling to facilitate God’s redemptive purposes.

Two other applications of jamming are readily observed. As is common in arguing with those on the Left, a typical tactic is constant jabber, especially when the pro-homosexual is asked a tough question he or she cannot answer. The response is to avoid answering the question and talk constantly so the opponent forgets what the question was or the conversation shifts to another topic. The goal is to dominate the discussion and not let the opponent ask the tough questions. Of course what we should do in such a case is politely ask the person to stop, and answer the question. When he or she resumes the tirade, stop him or her again and say, “You’re not answering my question; please answer the question.” Of course he or she won’t, but keep stopping the person and re-asking the question as long as necessary, but don’t overdo it. Do it just long enough to make the point to the person and to any others standing around that he or she is refusing to answer the question.

For at least four reasons, we can’t reach the point where we are perceived as stepping over the line between making a point effectively and badgering, even destroying, the other person. First, we’ll be seen as maybe speaking the truth, but not in love.

Also, recall the Apostle Paul’s admonition to Timothy: avoid irrational controversy. In this passage his principles provide helpful guidelines for what not to do and what to do in such circumstances.

> 23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because
> you know they produce quarrels.
> 24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to
> everyone, able to teach, not resentful.
> 25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God
> will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,
> 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the
> devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:23-26)

How can we tell when this situation occurs contrary to a philosophical/theological argument we should engage in the public square? Paul indicates that the key difference determining when to stop is when the other side is speaking irrationally and emotionally and the conversation has degenerated into unproductive and even counterproductive quarreling, such as in the jamming situation just described.

Third, if others are present and are listening, a sociological reality emerges. As discussed in Chapter Three, when a group of people perceives one individual as being put down, especially when losing badly, the sympathies of the group go more to the person they

sense as being attacked. So we don't want to win logically but lose psychologically. If our object is to win for Christ, and it is, we need to keep these principles in mind, and one other.

The outstanding Roman Catholic clinical psychologist, best-selling author, radio and TV host, husband, and father of ten, Dr. Ray Guarendi, has observed in his decades of practice an aspect of human nature we do well to keep in mind when debating those holding to a pro-homosexual position. He says that "most people are not convinced by logic and evidence; they are motivated by self-interest and personal desire."[377] Hence, as my mother used to say, "You can argue until you're blue in the face, and you won't get anywhere" with such people. Guarendi's principle explains why. As a principle, it will be helpful for us to keep this reality in mind in other conversations as well.

These Biblical and psychological principles also explain why often, "more is less." This recognition does not at all mean we shouldn't say anything. Far to the contrary. We are to speak up. Keep in mind what Jesus said when the Pharisees wanted him to rebuke and thus, at least in the matter of their proclamation of Jesus, silence his disciples: "'I tell you,' he replied, 'if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.'" (Luke 19:40) However, we need to develop the ability to sense when we've spoken enough. We don't want to commit the same error of those on the Left who don't stop talking.

One other observation should be included here. In a blog John Upchurch, senior editor of *BibleStudyTools.com* and *Jesus.org*, quoted Dr. James Emery White's perceptive insight on our contemporary cultural engagement concerning homosexuality.

> Let's not be naïve about the not-so-subtle agenda that seems to be creeping into the cultural discourse on such matters. For many, it is not enough for homosexuality to be allowed; it is not enough for it be accepted; it is not enough for gay marriage to be legal. The end game for some seems to be the penalization, if not criminalization, of any and all convictional opposition.[378]

The third principle Kirk and Madsen advocate, which they say should guide the homosexual agenda, they refer to as ***conversion***. Give careful attention to the words they use in their explanation of what they mean by conversion and how to implement this principle, including both the end they identify as well as the means to achieve that end.

> Both Desensitization and Jamming, though extremely useful, are mere preludes to our highest—though necessarily very long-range goal, which is Conversion.
>
> Please don't confuse *Con*version with political *Sub*version. The word 'subversion' has a nasty ring, of which the American people are

[377] Dr. Ray Guarendi interview on EWTN radio, March 11, 2015.
[378] John Upchurch, "Is It Wrong for a Christian to Attend a Gay Wedding?" Crosswalk.com, March 4, 2015, http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/is-it-wrong-for-a-christian-to-attend-a-gay-wedding.html (Accessed 3/7/15)

> inordinately afraid—and on the guard against. Yet, ironically, by conversion we actually mean something far more profoundly threatening to the American Way of Life, without which no truly sweeping social change can occur. We mean conversion of the average American's emotions, mind, and will, through a planned psychological attack, in the form of propaganda fed to the nation via the media.[379]
>
> In Conversion, the bigot, who holds a very negative stereotypic picture, is repeatedly exposed to literal picture/label pairs, in magazines, and on billboards and TV, of gays—explicitly labeled as such!—who not only don't look like his picture of a homosexual, but are carefully selected to look either like the bigot and his friends, or like any one of his other stereotypes of all-right guys—the kind of people he already likes and admires…. The image must be that of an icon of normality....
>
> The objection will be raised—and raised, and raised—that…we are exchanging one false stereotype for another equally false; that that our ads are lies; that is *not* how *all* gays actually look; that gays know it, and bigots know it. Yes, of course—we know it, too. But it makes no difference that the ads are lies; not to us, because we're using them to ethically good effect, to counter negative stereotypes that are every bit as much lies, and far more wicked ones; not to bigots, because the ads will have their effect on them whether they believe them or not.[380]

Here in this excerpt we observe more philosophical as well as Biblical problems. We see that though some homosexuals wince with the use of lies, they justify lying on the philosophically flawed principle that the end justifies the means. They offer no documentation in support of their proposition that their opponents (again pejoratively stereotyped as bigots) also lie, and they fail to justify philosophically how (even if it were true that their opponents lie) that two wrongs make a right.[381] At least they did not try offer Biblical support for that proposition, for as we've seen no such support exists in God's Word—none of the Scripture passages can be twisted that much.

Note the Strategies Used to Promote the Homosexual Agenda.

From these principles emerge strategies. Kirk and Madsen present several, some of which follow. Again, read carefully. Especially notice how the plan is to use the "moderate" (read liberal) churches to accomplish the homosexual agenda.

Also observe the continued pejorative use of *argumentum ad hominem* (*op cit*. below) in the undocumented assertions of hatred as motivating opposition to the homosexual

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[379] Kirk and Madsen, p. 153.
[380] Kirk and Madsen, p. 154.
[381] They here commit the logical fallacy of *tu quoque*. See the discussion of this flaw in rationality below in the section on logical fallacies. See also Chapter Five for how homosexual activists use lying to achieve their agenda goals.

agenda. That orientation is one of the reasons why this book emphasizes that we who believe in and follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ must demonstrate our love and also emphasizes how to begin doing so.

It does not logically follow that because someone disagrees with another that hatred is the motivation. Of course hatred is a motivating factor in some people, but that motivation is not typically true of Christians, especially of those maturing in Christ-likeness. Christians hold to the Bible as heir standard, and here is a key teaching of the Bible on the subject of hate:

> 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.
> 11 This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.
> 12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.
> 13 Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.
> 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.
> 15 Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. (1 John 3:10-15)

Be prepared to remind an opponent that disagreement does not imply hate. Just because you oppose some's ideas and agenda to implement those ideas does not mean you hate that person. Now contrast God's Word with Kirk and Madsen's word:

> [Kirk and Madsen urge homosexuals to "come out of the closet."] The more gay individuals who stand up to be counted, the more voting and spending power the gay community will be recognized to have.[382]
>
> …activists have concentrated their efforts on politics, meaning efforts to secure gay rights by conspiring with liberal elites within the legal and legislative systems.[383]
>
> …gays can use talk to muddy the moral waters, that is, to undercut the rationalizations that 'justify' religious bigotry and to jam some of its psychic rewards. *This entails publicizing support by moderate churches and raising serious theological objections to conservative biblical teachings. It also means exposing the inconsistency and hatred underlying antigay doctrines*. [Italics mine]

[382] Kirk and Madsen, p. 168.
[383] Kirk and Madsen, p. 170-171.

> …gays can *undermine the moral authority of homohating churches* [an oxymoron] *over less fervent adherents by portraying such institutions as antiquated backwaters, badly out of step with the times and with the latest findings of psychology*.[384] [Italics mine]

I've added the italics in these last two quotes to alert church leaders as to how they are being targeted and used by the homosexual activists in the advancement of their agenda. The last quote also indicates why this volume emphasizes adhering to our calling to proclaim God's Word as our highest and most important authority which is to guide our ways; we do not look to the pagan culture to give the church its direction.

Kirk and Madsen continue with their agenda and explain how to educate the American people by bringing their propaganda right into their homes in an unsuspecting but attractive manner. Showing their ignorance or disregard for the sovereignty and omnipotence of the Lord, they believe the greatest power is here on earth and it's in their hands.

> Against the atavistic tug of Old Time Religion one must set the mightier pull of Science and public Opinion (the shield and sword of that accursed 'secular humanism'). Such an 'unholy' alliance has already worked well in America against churches, on such topics as divorce and abortion. With enough open talk about the prevalence and acceptability of homosexuality, that alliance can work for gays.
>
> *Where* we talk is critical….recall that the visual media—television, films, magazines—are the most powerful image makers in Western civilization. For example, in the average American household, the TV screen radiates its embracing bluish glow for more than fifty hours every week, bringing films, sitcoms, talk shows, and news reports right into the living room. These hours are a gateway into the private world of straights, through which a Trojan horse might be passed.[385]

The authors also ignore the demonic dimension of this world, and they are playing into the hands of Satan and his followers, whom they cannot recognize due to the veil over their hearts and minds due to sin that can only be removed by Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:4) In such a condition they even fail to see aspects of God's general revelation, including in science which they value so greatly, which leaves them without excuse. (Romans 1:18-20) Neither are they able to distinguish true science from false "science," pseudoscience, which is another reason this book was written.

If the homosexual activists would think more deeply about the teachings of the Bible in contrast to the culture, and in contrast to how their partners treat them (as disclosed in Chapter Two), they would see that they are much better treated by

[384] Kirk and Madsen, p. 179.
[385] Kirk and Madsen, p. 179.

those whose nature has been regenerated, i.e., born again, and who are maturing more and more in Christ-likeness in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, rather than by those who are being led by Satan, whom Jesus called "the prince of this world." (John 12:31) True Christians sometimes sin and don't conform all their behavior to God's Word as he requires, but true Christians will still not treat homosexuals with violence; rather their modal means of relating will be in acts of love.

Further, as observed above, there is not one word in the Bible that teaches believers in and followers of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to hate anybody. To the contrary as seen throughout this writing the Word of God teaches, indeed commands, us to love all people (which is not to say that we are to love or affirm everything they do). Therefore, the term "homohating churches" is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms.

Watch for a Pro-homosexual Message Coming to Your Conservative Church.

The preceding approach to the "moderate churches," the low-hanging fruit, was step one in the agenda's plan pertaining to churches. In my experience working with liberal and conservative Christians in a half century of ministry, and in conversations with others in academe, I've observed that the liberals place such a high value on "getting out there and taking action to get things done" to serve the Lord that they typically don't engage in the more time-taking, cautious, careful, and complex thought process that characterizes conservative Bible study and theology in order to examine the consistency of a given subject with God's Word and historic Christian systematic theology. Conservatives' commitment to the Bible as the inspired Word of God and their highest authority as well as the standard of judgment to discern what is true and what is not, has caused them to resist conversion to the homosexual message.

However, the homosexual activists have found a weakness in some of the conservative churches. A considerable number of children and other relatives of these conservatives have "come out" as homosexuals. Due to their strong love for their young ones, they are allowing their relationships to trump their theology, are waffling to varying degrees on homosexuality, and are trying to find ways to soften, and often reinterpret, the Bible's teaching on the subject.[386]

Sadly, and very seriously, not a few of these people are pastors and other church leaders. I have also observed this phenomenon among people I know, one of whom I will mention shortly, who was president of one of his denomination's seminaries! It is especially grave when pastors, and other leaders among God's people, who have been called by God to proclaim his Word faithfully and have been ordained by the church in confirmation of that call and with expectation to do so, depart from the historic, and still the globally

[386] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," *Time*, January 26, 2015, pp. 46-48. This feature story contains some inaccuracies, not included in this book, which should be discerned when reading this report. Of course, such discernment should always be engaged in reading, listening to, and viewing the secular media.

predominant, interpretation of God's Word on this subject. It is instructive to observe throughout the Bible that God's strongest condemnations are directed against the leaders of his people, leaders who ought to know better. (Cf. e.g., 1 Samuel 2:27-36; 13:13-14; John 3:10; James 3:1) In fact most do know better; they, together with many others, are caving into their emotions and letting their affective relationships override their interpretation of sacred Scripture.

Aware of these developments, homosexual activists are now turning to the conservative, evangelical, denominations and congregations with a carefully planned, highly funded, and sufficiently staffed strategy. As *Time* magazine has reported,

> Consider the Reformation Project, a Wichita, Kans.-based effort by 24-year-old gay evangelical activist Matthew Vines to raise up LGBT-affirming voices in every evangelical church in the country. To reach that goal, he is training reformers in batches of 40 to 50 at regional leadership workshops who can go back to their home churches and serve as advocates for LGBT inclusion. The Reformation Project has staffers in three states, representatives in 25 more and plans for a presence in all 50 states by 2018.
>
> At the group's conference in Washington, D.C., in early November [2014], some 300 people came from some of the country's largest megachurches, including McLean Bible in Virginia, Redeemer Presbyterian in New York City and North Point Ministries in Atlanta. His funding has grown from $300,000 in 2014 to a projected $1.2 million in 2015, with help from furniture mogul Mitchell Gold, a secular Jew who is working toward evangelical change.[387]

Another report on the agenda of the homosexual activists' attempt to engage all churches appeared in the coverage of the February 2015 annual meeting of the National LGBTQ Task Force in Denver. The report begins by quoting Darlene Nipper, deputy executive director of the task force and an interfaith minister, who identifies as a lesbian and claims that LGBTQ people are "as much believers as anyone else."

The first question we must ask when hearing such statements is, "What is it that you believe?" Everyone believes something about religion, but few (Matthew 7:14) believe what saves them. (Romans 10:9) When people make this and similar assertions, they're giving us an opportunity, and making it easy, to engage them in a conversation about what they've just said. We usually don't have such open doors to discuss what someone believes. Let's remember Jesus' commission of us to be his witnesses (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; cf. also 1 Peter 3:15). Using this opening question will facilitate discussion of what they believe that compares and contrasts with what the Bible teaches.

Don't be afraid to engage them in discussion. When people make such statements they at least tacitly invite a response and many welcome it, especially if we respond with love

[387] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 46.

enveloping the truth. Always remember that the Holy Spirit is with you; you're not out there on your own. (Cf. Matthew 10:19-20) Recall also what John said. "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (1 John 4:4) Remember also "perfect love drives out fear." (1 John 4:18)

The report describes some of the Task Force's agenda.

> The five-day conference bills itself as the largest annual gathering of LGBTQ activists and organizers, with more than 2,000 attendees checked in so far...The agenda includes racial justice and AIDS.
>
> Religion was a special focus Thursday, with workshops, for example, on training ministers to guide conversations in their churches that recognize that LGBTQ people are part of their community. Nipper hopes more accepting churches will become active in the political campaign for gay rights.[388]

Notably and significantly one of the speakers was the Reformation Project's Matthew Vines. The article cites at length information about Vines' experiences as a homosexual who claims to be an evangelical Christian. Sadly, but not surprisingly, the article makes many of the common errors of most if not all secular coverage of this subject that I've seen, and as the footnotes herein reveal, I read voluminously, and have read far more on this subject than I've wanted to read. For example, it states that Vines said "he's found a silent minority of conservative Christians who question anti-gay rhetoric."[389] As usual, such statements are not backed up by any reliable scientific data, and these assertions are countered by the findings reported in this book. Further, as the Family Research Council (FRC) states, "**poll after poll shows public support for "same-sex marriage" is dropping** [emphasis theirs]."[390]

These findings are observed also by Left-leaning pollsters such as the Pew Research Center. As of this writing Pew's recent data indicate what they say could be a leveling off but which also show a decline in support for so-called "same-sex marriage." An Associated Press article reports that Pew's new poll of 2,002 adults (with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points) conducted September 2-9, 2014

> …found a 5 percentage point drop since February [2014], from 54 percent to 49 percent, in Americans who want legal recognition for same-sex relationships. The percentage of those opposed increased during that same period, from 39 percent in February to 41 percent last month.

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[388] Donna Bryson, "National LGBTQ Task Force conference examines religion," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, February 6, 2015, 5A.
[389] Donna Bryson, "National LGBTQ Task Force conference examines religion," February 6, 2015, 5A.
[390] Tony Perkins, President of the Family Research Council, in a promotional letter on November 17, 2014.

> The findings were part of a survey in which nearly three-quarters of Americans said religious influence in public life was waning and most saw that as a negative trend. About half of respondents said churches and houses of worship should speak out more on public issues.
>
> Nearly half of all the respondents said businesses that provide services for weddings, such as florists, should be allowed to deny service to same-sex couples if the owners have religious objections. The Pew survey also found the percentage of people who consider gay relationships sinful had increased from 45 to 50 percent last month….[391]

Not only conservative, evangelical, churches are being targeted.[392] The focus of the homosexual agenda is also on Christian college campuses. The group, Evangelicals for Marriage Equality, founded in Washington, D.C., plans to argue in those venues for evangelicals to at least support civil-marriage if not church approval of "homosexual marriage."[393] The FRC reports that together with others on the political Left, pro-homosexual activists are "even attempting to force Christian colleges (such as Gordon College) to adopt anti-biblical policies on homosexuality…or *lose* their accreditation!"[394] [Emphasis theirs]

Other professed conservative and evangelical organizations that have been developed to promote the pro-homosexual agenda in one form or another in conservative churches include the Gay Christian Network in Portland, Oregon, the Marin Foundation of Chicago, and Just Because They Breathe. The Marin Foundation is a nonprofit with a mission to "build bridges between the LGBTQ community and conservatives through scientific research, biblical and social education, and diverse community gatherings."[395]

Just Because They Breathe is a private Facebook group consisting of close to 350 mothers, who self-identify as conservative and evangelical, whose children have come out as homosexual, including lesbian. The group is run by Linda Robertson, whose son was a homosexual and died of complications as a result of a drug overdose. She and her husband, Rob, conduct a weekly Bible study group of about 40 LGBT adults in the Seattle area.[396]

The heart of any true Christian goes out to parents of children who have come out declaring they are homosexual (including lesbian), and especially to those who have lost a child tragically like the Robertsons did. But since, as we've seen, homosexuality is extremely unhealthy and violent as well as contrary to God's Word and unholy, is it not

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[391] Rachel Zoll, "Poll: Gay marriage support may be leveling off," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, September 23, 2014, 5A.
[392] I am not using this word "targeted" in a pejorative or hostile manner, rather in the sense of marketing and agenda-driven; by their own admission, as discussed earlier, the homosexual activists do have an agenda that has now moved to another level.
[393] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 46.
[394] Tony Perkins, promotional letter on November 17, 2014.
[395] http://www.themarinfoundation.org/about-us/mission/ (Accessed 2/22/2015)
[396] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 48.

much better for their children, and especially pleasing to God, for parents to instead be strong in the Lord, maintain commitment to God's Word, and in patient love gently encourage them to rethink their identity struggle, which we've seen above is fluid in the teen and young adult years, and lead them to embrace the spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally healthy and holy lifestyle of obedience to God to which he is calling them in Christ? As we also saw above, one of the means teens use as they try to figure out who they are, is push-back against childhood instruction; when they do so and meet weakness they feel insecure.

On the contrary when they push against loving strength that provides freedom to test and to think within limits they feel secure. With parental help to do this testing within the context of God's covenantal church community of commitment to his Word and will, reinforced by peers and adults, and yes children, who tell and live the old, old story in loving relationships, the young people typically emerge from the struggle with renewed strength and commitment to walk in Jesus' way. Further, as Family Research Council President Tony Perkins reminds us,

> Almost every generation has more liberal views than their parents as they enter adulthood, but that is not always permanent. Once young adults marry, have children and buy a house, they adopt more conservative social and economic views.[397]

Discern the Flawed Appeal to Science.

Along with the appeal to the church is an appeal, albeit a flawed one, to science and to logical reasoning. The latter we will address below in the section on logical flaws: *argumentum ad hominem* (circumstantial). Another way the homosexual activists try to convert people, church and non-church people, is to convince them that homosexuality is natural. The agenda stipulates that the message should be emphasized that there is a genetic basis for homosexuality.

> …the public should be persuaded that gays are *victims of circumstance*, that they no more chose their sexual orientation than they did, say, their height, skin color, talents, or limitations. (We argue that, for all practical purposes, gays should be considered to have been *born gay*—even though sexual orientation, for most humans, seems to be the product of a complex interaction between innate predispositions and environmental factors during childhood and early adolescence.) To suggest in public that homosexuality might be *chosen* is to open the can of worms labeled 'moral choice and sin' and give the religious Intransigents a stick to beat us with.[398]

This quote contains more reasons for the information in this book. For example, as we've already seen in Chapter Two, no scientific proof of a genetic basis for

[397] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 48.
[398] Kirk and Madsen, p. 184.

homosexuality exists. Moreover, even if any empirical evidence ever did show even the smallest indication of a biological inclination toward homosexuality (which is improbable as it would most likely have shown up by now), as is presented in this monograph such biology cannot trump theology based on God's Word: God has commanded celibacy outside heterosexual marriage. Obviously that command applies as well to heterosexuals, who also have strong sexual urges we need to control. There is no double standard in the Bible. One further observation you have already noticed in this quote: the authors could not resist another ad hominem: giving "the religious Intransigents a stick to beat us with." Sad.

> Thus, our campaign [agenda] should not demand explicit support for homo*sexual* practices,[399] but should instead take *antidiscrimination* as its theme. Fundamental freedoms, constitutional rights, due process and equal protection of laws,[400] basic fairness and decency toward all of humanity—these should be the concerns brought to mind by our campaign.
>
> The campaign should paint gays and lesbians as *superior*—veritable pillars of society.[401]
>
> Famous historical figures are especially useful to us…. By casting its violet spotlight on such revered heroes, in no time a skillful media campaign could have the gay community looking like the veritable fairy godmother to Western civilization.
>
> Along the same lines, our campaign should not overlook the Celebrity Endorsement.[402]

In these last two quotes we observe more flawed logic. They commit the logical fallacy called *argumentum ad verecundiam* (the appeal to authority). The authority in this case is the feeling many have regarding respect for those who are famous. We'll discuss this and the other logical fallacies that are typically used by homosexual apologists below.

> The best way to make homohatred look bad is to vilify those who victimize gays. The public should be shown images of ranting homohaters whose associated traits and attitudes appall and anger Middle America.[403]

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[399] The activists know that if most people knew what homosexuals actually do, they would not succeed in their agenda to convince the average person that homosexuality is anywhere close to normal, much less a valid alternative lifestyle.

[400] This statement is a reference to the Fourteenth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution and is one of the reasons why I quoted at length for you in Chapter Three Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton's majority opinion in the Sixth Circuit Court November 2014 ruling upholding the states' ban on "same-sex marriage."

[401] Kirk and Madsen, pp. 187-188.

[402] Kirk and Madsen, p. 188.

[403] Kirk and Madsen, p. 189.

Here we can agree but not for these reasons. Kirk and Madsen again commit the fallacy in logic of *argumentum ad hominem*. Attacking "ranting homohaters" does not discredit their ideas, which remain in place unaddressed. Hatred of homosexuals should look bad. It is bad. Those of us who love God cannot hate those who bear his image. Such hatred does exist in the culture; it must not be found in the church. Nevertheless, it is not only disingenuous but also illogical to conclude that disagreement with homosexuals and their agenda is equivalent to hate. We must be prepared to help the "homohaters" as well as the homosexuals to think rightly. To do so, we should be well equipped to engage them in dialogue, which is the purpose of this book.

Recognize the Goal to Destroy Marriage.

Some astute observers see the homosexual agenda as having the destruction of marriage as a goal and have warned that if homosexual behavior is normalized with the resultant societal approval of "same-sex marriage," there will be no end of aberrant legislation introduced, the first of which will be to permit polygamy. Such action is already being undertaken and with such specious argumentation it is unnecessary to critique it in this volume.[404]

Yet, what defenders of natural and traditional marriage have been trying to make known for some time, has now been disclosed by a lesbian journalist, Masha Gessen, whose revelation has been reported by Micah Clark, Executive Director of the American Family Association of Indiana. It has long been observed by many who support traditional gender relationships in general and marriage in particular that the homosexuals have a movement and, as we've been seeing, that they have an agenda. That observation has now been confirmed publicly, and we now know what the homosexual agenda is concerning marriage.

The attempt to legalize "same-sex marriage" is much more than the desire to be considered equal with heterosexuals. Clark warns that the agenda involves "the total *unraveling of marriage and uprooting traditional values from society*. (This will ultimately include efforts to silence and punish some churches that openly adhere to their religious teachings about marriage and sexual morality.)"[405] Gessen admitted the following in a radio interview.

> It's a no-brainer that (homosexual activists) should have the right to marry, but I also think equally that it's a no-brainer that the institution of marriage should not exist.[406]

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[404] See for example, Jillian Keenan, "Legalize Polygamy! No. I am not kidding." April 15, 2013. http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/doublex/2013/04/legalize_polygamy_marriage_equality_for_all.html (Accessed 04/25/13)

[405] Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage," 4/6/13 http://illinoisfamily.org/homosexuality/homosexual-activist-admits-true-purpose-of-battle-is-to-destroy-marriage. I first became aware of Clark's article by the reference made to it in James Dobson's May 2013 newsletter, "Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk."

[406] Masha Gessen in Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage."

Arguing as a Christian but on the basis of philosophy, thoughtful writer, Dr. Ryan T. Anderson, William E. Simon Fellow in Religion and a Free Society in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, shows how homosexuals actually don't think marriages exist, or that they should exist, that it's just a matter of contract law. In a July 2014 speech at Stanford University he said during the Q & A session,

> So it sounds to me like you're actually arguing for the abolishment of marriage. [Q & A male:] Nods (in the affirmative) And I think that's the logical conclusion of getting rid of the male/female aspect. And if you don't think marriage is about uniting male and female, husband and wife, mother and father, then you don't really think marriage exists. You think it's just contract law. [Q & A male:] Nods (in the affirmative) And that's actually one of the consequences, the second consequence that I had mentioned [in my speech] that if we go down this road it'll lead us down this line of thinking that we should just have contracts for consenting adults in whatever sizes and shapes.[407]

Notice the publicizing of misleading and false information.

As discussed above, the public *dissemination of untrue information and deception* is also part of the homosexual agenda. Gessen admitted that

> fighting for gay marriage generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage when we get there — because we lie that the institution of marriage is not going to change, and that is a lie.
>
> The institution of marriage is going to change, and it should change. And again, I don't think it should exist.[408]

How sad that this opinion is coming from a woman. God instituted marriage to be a magnificent blessing to both male and female, but it is easy to see by those committed to seeking the truth how it is a special blessing to, including protection for, women.

Be forewarned that this lying is not only done in philosophical and theological argumentation to advance the pro-homosexual cause. It is also done in practical matters, such as occurred in negotiations with a Denver area church, New Hope Ministries, that agreed to allow the family and friends of a recently deceased lesbian to hold a memorial service for her in the church's building. The church stipulated that the video to be shown at the service not show the lesbian kissing

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[407] Ryan T. Anderson, "What Is Marriage?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSRTUp1HRT4 (Accessed 07/26/2014)

[408] Masha Gessen in Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage."

her "fiancée." The lesbians agreed, but then later reneged on their commitment. The pastor of the church was informed of the betrayal, and the church refused to allow the service to be held in their building. The service was transferred to a nearby funeral home. The lesbian's family and friends were upset and made their feelings known to the public but did not disclose to the media that they failed to keep their agreement.[409]

Clark reports that Gessen reveals the homosexual agenda is that "they don't want to access the institution of marriage; they want to radically redefine and eventually eliminate it."[410] Clark cites evidence for his observation:

> When given the opportunity to marry, after laws have been struck down relatively small percentages of homosexuals actually bother to marry compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This raises question about the true need to unravel marriage for the "fair" extension its benefits. Only 12 percent of homosexuals in the Netherlands marry compared to 86 percent of their heterosexual peers. Less than 20 percent of same-sex couples already living together in California married when given the chance in 2008. In contrast, 91 percent of heterosexual couples in California who are living together are married.[411]

Of course these data are not surprising. We saw above how promiscuous homosexuals are, for example the average homosexual male having hundreds of sex partners. With that orientation why would they want to commit to one person for the rest of their lives? Of course they don't. Review the preceding and following discussions about "polyamory," "wedlease," and "throuples." Clark concludes:

> Clearly this is about cultural change and tearing down the traditional family ethic, since it seems that most homosexuals living together neither need nor desire to marry, though they do desire to radically change marriage.
>
> Gays and lesbians are free to live as they choose, and we live in a society which roundly applauds them doing so like never before in our history, but they do not have the right to rewrite marriage for all of society.[412]

The website from which Gessen's comments were obtained also gives a clue as to one source of such aberrant views of marriage: people who have come from homes where the parents' marriage has been in trouble. They are unaware of the countless married couples worldwide who have strong, stable, and satisfying marriages or they are unwilling to

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[409] http://www.newsmax.com/US/US-gay-funeral-video/2015/01/13/id/618418/?ns_mail_uid=20123767&ns_mail_job=1603445_01142015&s=al&dkt_nbr=vjjddegl (Accessed 1/27/15)
[410] Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage."
[411] Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage."
[412] Micah Clark, "Homosexual Activist Admits True Purpose of Battle is to Destroy Marriage."

admit that awareness if they have it. Here's just one example of how clueless the activists are about what constitutes the marriage state God designed and instituted:

> There's a wide diversity of opinion about the importance of marriage equality within the gay and lesbian community. And this diversity was evident at a recent panel discussion for the Sydney Writers Festival. The forum asked the provocative question: Why get married when you could be happy?[413]

Observe the enlistment of media support.

Another significant part of the homosexual activists' agenda is the *enlistment of media support including a widespread misuse of social media*. We've seen the former in a considerable number of above citations. This media support coincides with a significant change in journalism since the latter half of the 20th century. Previous to that time journalists were taught to carefully distinguish fact from opinion in their reporting. This separation is now no longer done. Readers of print journalism and listeners of radio and TV news must watch carefully for the blending of opinion with facts in several ways. Such blending occurs not only by using words that contain value-laden connotations but also in the writers' and editors' choice of what news articles and stories, and information about the subjects within those articles and stories, is omitted or retained in the final version of the report. Of course there is also the constant occurrence of statements that are unsupported by the facts and those that are just plain wrong, some intentional and others unintentional but all misleading. Those errors are usually not acknowledged, and the very few that are are only mentioned days later and in another part of the paper that most people miss.[414]

The globally popular social media are following suit. Facebook, has made changes that accommodate the homosexual plan.

> You don't have to be just male or female on Facebook any more. The social media giant has added a customizable option with about 50 different terms people can use to identify their gender as well as three preferred pronoun choices: him, her or them.
>
> Facebook said the changes…initially cover the company's 159 million monthly users in the U.S. and are aimed at giving people more choices in how they describe themselves, such as androgynous, bi-gender, intersex, gender fluid or transsexual.

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[413] Life Matters, "Why Get Married When You Could Be Happy?" 6/11/12 http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/why-get-married/4058506

[414] For more examples of media support of the homosexual agenda, see James Dobson, "Speaking the Truth in Love," http://www.drjamesdobson.org/articles/courage-in-the-home/speaking-the-truth-in-love (Accessed 9/21/2014)

> "There's going to be a lot of people for whom this is going to mean nothing, but for the few it does impact, it means the world," said Facebook software engineer Brielle Harrison, who worked on the project and is herself undergoing gender transformation, from male to female. On Thursday, while watchdogging the software for any problems, she said she was also changing her Facebook identity from Female to TransWoman.
>
> "All too often transgender people like myself and other gender nonconforming people are given this binary option, do you want to be male or female? What is your gender? And it's kind of disheartening because none of those let us tell others who we really are," she said. "This really changes that, and for the first time I get to go to the site and specify to all the people I know what my gender is."
>
> Facebook, which has 1.23 billion active monthly users around the world, also allows them to keep their gender identity private and will continue to do so.
>
> The Williams Institute…estimates there are at least 700,000 individuals in the U.S. who identify themselves as transgender, an umbrella term that includes people who live as a gender different from the one assigned to them at birth.[415]

Homosexual activists are also making use of the social media in a highly unjust, misleading, and vindictive method called "online astroturfing." In this scheme a small group of activists use advanced algorithms to release thousands of Twitter and other social media posts making it look like these angry reactions are from many local people who threaten to boycott a business or other organization unless it recants its support of a position the activists oppose. The business or other organization is misled and bullied into thinking that unless they make the change they'll lose too many of their customers.

Thus, when a baker refuses to make a cake for a homosexual couple, which would amount to participating in a celebration of their same-sex "marriage," the baker immediately receives this barrage of apparently hostile customers. But think about it; how could so many people be that aware within 24 hours of a private conversation between a baker and a potential customer?

Leading talk show host, the late Rush Limbaugh, explained how the system works. It was used on him, and he had his organization conduct an extensive investigation to uncover what was behind all the negative communications. They found out the thousands of complaining Tweets and other social media posts, directed to

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[415] Martha Mendoza, "Facebook offers new gender options," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, 02/14/14, p. A9.

Limbaugh's sponsors and others, were coming from only 10 people using these algorithms to generate all these messages, and the investigation yielded the names of the activists doing it and where they live. The investigation found that 90% of these messages were coming from outside the state where the sponsor conducted his or her business. Thus, the threatened boycott of the business was a big bluff; the people sending the messages wouldn't be customers in any case.[416]

So if you are ever on the receiving end of such a social media barrage, keep in mind where it's really coming from, a relatively small number of people. Don't be put off from speaking the truth in love by a small group who are speaking untruth with hate.

The homosexual agenda also involves education of the society in two significant ways through the entertainment media, i.e., *Hollywood and the theatre*, and through the public education establishment. We must always be aware, and help our children, grandchildren, the church, and as many others as we can to understand, that movies are instructional; help them be discerning. They always have been instructional. The relatively new term, infotainment (information + entertainment) has been well-coined to alert participants as to what they are exposing themselves to with these media. Authors, including scriptwriters, are teachers, and we need to help people interpret what they are saying, which is frequently contrary to God's Word.

Watch for the manipulation of social science research.

When social science research is conducted according to the established rigors of empirical inquiry, it can lead to credible and useful findings. Many fine social scientists are doing careful work that is producing helpful results, and a lot of these studies are included in this book. Nevertheless, even fine scientists can make mistakes and good research can be poorly reported.

A study of social science research methods shows how polls and other studies can be manipulated in many ways in each stage to obtain a desired result, including the shaping of public opinion. The scientific method consists of five to seven steps (depending on whether a couple of categories are included by themselves or incorporated into related steps). All but the last step are largely, though not entirely, objective. For example the step that discloses the researcher's plan can fail to include established procedures for producing the most accurate results, and even good plans can be interfered with unintentionally as well as intentionally.

The last step, or chapter in the report, is where the scientist tells us what he or she thinks are the significance and application(s) of the study's findings, which opinions of course are shaped by his or her philosophical biases and are quite subjective.

[416] The author heard Rush Limbaugh disclose this information on his radio program on April 1, 2015 and some of it also on a previous program.

Thus, even with research that has followed the established scientific method, when it comes to what the scientist claims to have found and what he or she thinks the findings mean for society, personal bias shapes what the science has discovered. It's the section, and usually only a summary of which that reporters and others see, which introduces further subjectivity.

Other safeguards and procedures designed to produce valid and reliable results exist, such as replication and peer review, but these are not always done, and not always done before media reporters, who typically have not been trained very much if at all in social science research, receive press releases summarizing the research. Further, when media reporters shape the findings according to their biases what their readers are told is sometimes far from what the research data warrant. Even polls that have carefully followed the scientific method can be and often are manipulated when it comes to reporting the findings; for example, data uncomfortable to the reporter are usually ignored and not even included or at best placed at the very end of a long article, where many if not most people don't see that information, because they only read the first part of the article. People reading the original report often don't hear of subsequent studies that refute the one they read.

An example of reporting bias is when Lavoie wrote, "What is undeniable, though, is a change in public attitudes. Recent polls show that a majority of Americans support same-sex marriage."[417] She fails to mention, however, what polls reveal this change, who conducted the polls, how rigorously the researchers conducted their study, and other polls showing a decline in Americans' support of "SSM."

We're now starting to see a decline in the media and government-hyped positive public sentiment. Also, it is important to remember that all homosexuals (including lesbians, bisexuals, and those who claim to be transgender) account for no more than three percent of the U. S. population, though the pro-homosexual agenda does all it can to make that number appear larger.

Who paid for the polls should also be disclosed, as the funding is often a factor in what results are "discovered" and how they are reported, even beginning with the scientist, who wants to please his or her funding source in order to obtain future contracts and grant money. As is often said, "Follow the money." Doing so may provide a clue as to why the study produced the results it did. Scientists are also sinners, and many, not wanting to disappoint the source of their funding, for present and future considerations, will compromise the truth. The system is also easily and often corrupted by scientists' cutting corners motivated by rewards of fame, money, and other motivations in addition to the worldview of the scientists and those reporting what the scientists say they found.

Further, even polls accurately done should be seen as snapshots rather than as video or motion pictures. Polls only describe part of what is at any given point in

[417] Lavoie, "Tactics endure after ten years of same-sex marriage," p. 9A.

time. That's why polls are frequently repeated, and why the results are sometimes different, such as those mentioned in this book that are showing a change of public opinion away from "same-sex marriage."

Some misuse of scientific data also occurs in the natural sciences, but it is more prevalent in social science. The above only scratches the surface as to how easily scientific studies and the reports of those studies can be flawed. Be vigilant. Those trained in research methodology can examine the researcher's plan and the rest of his or her report and find any limitations, flaws, and other departures from the established scientific method. Those without such training, indeed all of us, can and should compare and contrast the study's conclusions with the Bible, which is one reason why this book began with the Scriptural standard. If a study conflicts with God's Word, you know that the research has not carefully followed the scientific method, you know it's flawed, and you know which one to believe.

Watch for the attempt to control professional organizations.

Control of professional organizations is another part of the agenda. The pro-homosexual activists have managed to manipulate formerly regarded organizations to submit to political correctness and compromise their commitment to careful science, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and the World Health Organization.[418] The American Counseling Association has also revealed its similar bias.[419] Therefore, it is important for us to tell others to be cautious and discerning when these organizations make their official pronouncements. Since those holding to a left of center worldview head these and other similar organizations, they typically hire others of like mind, and the positions they take on social issues is shaped by that left-oriented bias. Even more important to keep in mind and mention to others is the nonrepresentativeness of the others in their field. For example, the American Medical Association (AMA) represents only 17% (some say 10%) of all physicians,[420] many of whom I know personally who, together with their cohort, do not accept many of the positions and policies of the AMA related to social issues.

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[418] See for example, Elijah Wolfson, "Texas Republican Party Adopts Discredited 'Reparative Therapy' for Gays" Newsweek, 6/9/14. View at http://www.newsweek.com/texas-republican-party-adopts-discredited-reparative-therapy-gays-254168. (Accessed 2/26/15) Beginning with the title, the article contains multiple inaccuracies and misleading statements, and it fails to include any of the fine studies that disclose the effectiveness of therapy and the reality as reported in this book that thousands of homosexuals worldwide want to and are successfully leaving the homosexual lifestyle.

[419] http://www.comingoutloved.com/fact-or-fiction (Accessed 2/28/2015)

[420] Sally Pipes, "Doctors And AMA Split Over Contentious Issue Of ObamaCare," 09/26/2011, http://www.forbes.com/sites/sallypipes/2011/09/26/doctor-and-ama-split-over-contentious-issue-of-obamacare/ (Accessed 06/06/14) http://docs4patientcare.org/_blog/Blog_and_News/tag/AMA/ 06/21/12 (Accessed 06/06/14).

If you are a professional and a member of your profession's organization, or a member of a trade organization, watch for indications that some may be trying to influence and gain control of the stands, communications, and policies issued by your organization or trade group. If you see any such developments, talk with others and with as many as possible let the leaders in your organization know you want to stop that movement. Don't delay; "nip it in the bud" is the old and wise saying expressing the truism that it's easier to stop something early on in its development than to change it once it becomes official policy.

Monitor the attempt to control the government.

Control of the government is another agenda goal. As Lavoie indicated above, the homosexual activists work to support lawmakers who help them accomplish their objectives and work to oust those opposed to their agenda. As long as the funding of public schools is administered as a monopoly under the government, public education, including curriculum content and the selection and retention of teachers, will be controlled by the prevailing secular philosophical bias and political correctness. While acknowledging God's sovereignty, we need to recognize that he allows human beings to exercise governmental authority albeit within limits. Thus, humanly speaking, until the monopoly is disbanded and parents are given true freedom, including with their tax dollars (such as with a tax credit) to choose which school they want their children to attend, including religious schools—until that time—needed, significant, and lasting change is not likely to occur.

To those who try to silence Christians on this matter by saying what they think we don't want to hear, that such credits, or vouchers if that method is used, would also apply to schools of other religions such as Buddhism or Islam, the easy answer is that Christianity has never been afraid of competition. God has called us to go into all the world to proclaim the truth in love. Many of us have been doing so by paying twice. We pay taxes supporting what has been widely and regularly reported to be a failing public school system that not only teaches many wrong values repugnant to us and to many other taxpayers, but neglects to teach important subjects the children and youth need to know. We pay again in tuition for our children and grandchildren so they can go to a private school. It's time to correct that situation. We'll return to this subject shortly.

Control of the professional organizations and the other public entities discussed in this chapter, notably the government and the education establishment, wields strong influence over grant money and publishing of research reports and books that reveal the truth about homosexuality. Such control results in widespread censorship of the truth. As Janet Levy points out

> Researchers such as Lorraine Day, M.D. in her book *AIDS: What the Government Isn't Telling You*, reports on the difficulties encountered in seeking funding for studies that are unacceptable to homosexual authorities. She describes the predicament experienced by researchers who

> attempt to publish research that is viewed as unfavorable to the homosexual agenda, as well as problems inherent in review committees comprised of homosexual scientists and gay rights activists. Grant funding, career advancement and recognition are contingent on "toeing the party line," Dr. Day explains.
>
> This censorship and skewing of research results has had unfortunate consequences. For example, the lack of data on the causes of pediatric AIDS is a result of deliberate censorship. Statistics are often presented in such a way that camouflages underlying problems. A report for World AIDS Day stated that 16 percent of adolescents have been infected through heterosexual contact rather than the more significant statistic that 84 percent of children with AIDS are infected through homosexual and bisexual sexual abuse.[421]

Monitor the attempt to control the court system and litigate.

Litigation and the court system is a key part of the homosexual activists' agenda strategy. Lavoie and others acknowledge this reality.

> Seventeen states and the District of Columbia have legalized same-sex marriage. Judges in seven other states have struck down bans on gay marriage, though officials are appealing.
>
> Opposition remains stiff in many places. Critics point out that most states still do not allow gay marriage and that in most of those that do, *it was the work of courts or legislatures, not the will of the people.* [Italics mine]
>
> Only Washington, Maryland and Maine have approved gay marriage through a public vote, while residents of 30 states have approved constitutional amendments to ban it.[422]

Here we observe an injustice, where a single judge, or a few on a panel, or a state legislature (where self-serving motives of legislators who want to be reelected) can overrule the will of millions of people who have voted to establish a law. This is not to say that all laws are just, but the ones here being overturned are laws based on a traditional morality that is observed in the natural law all over the planet and are consistent with the Word of God. One lesson to remember and communicate to others: elections have consequences.

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[421] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

[422] Lavoie, "Tactics endure after ten years of same-sex marriage." p. 9A. See also Colorado articles on July 10 and 11. Many more references can easily be made; my files are bulging, indeed overflowing, with such news reports. The ones here will suffice to support and to illustrate the point.

Many other injustices occur through litigation or the threat of litigation. The ACLU is a key player in this part of the agenda. Just a few examples suffice. A baker in Colorado was sued because he refused to bake a cake for a same-sex couple to celebrate their union after being married in Massachusetts. The baker, Jack Phillips, a devout Christian who owns the Masterpiece Cakeshop in the Denver suburb of Lakewood, cited his very objective and Biblically-based reason for refusing the same-sex couple's business as their union being in opposition to his religious beliefs. An administrative law judge found Phillips in violation of civil rights law, a decision that was upheld on appeal to Colorado's Civil Rights Commission. Phillips maintains the decision "violates his First Amendment rights to free speech and free exercise of his religion. 'I will stand by my convictions until somebody shuts me down,' he told reporters after the ruling."[423] He is considering an appeal to the Colorado Court of Appeals. Even if the baker's beliefs were entirely subjective, how is it just in a free country that supposedly operates according to the First Amendment, to force him against his free will to do something repugnant to him?

Further, the motivation of the homosexual activists is evident. They want to make this case for political and punitive purposes. If all they wanted was a cake, they could have obtained one from many other bakeries.

Nevertheless, we must keep in mind, and inform others, that homosexuals do not form a monolithic uniformed unanimity on this matter. In fact at least one outspoken homosexual, a baker, takes his cohort to task on the unfairness of forcing people to do something against their will that is not illegal. Reporter Kate Scanlon, who writes for The Heritage Foundation, found his Facebook post and filed the following story; listen carefully to his rationale.

> A self-described gay baker named Jesse Bartholomew has come out in defense of Christian bakers who decline to bake cakes for same-sex weddings.
>
> In a video he posted on his Facebook page, he said "they don't have to bake a cake for you."
>
> "I bake wedding cakes for a living, and I cannot tell you how disgusted I am with my fellow gay and lesbian community, that they would stoop so low to force someone to bake a cake for them who simply doesn't agree with them," Bartholomew said.
>
> A cake, Bartholomew said, is a very "personal" aspect of a wedding and shouldn't involve "force":

[423] Nicholas Riccardi, "Panel: Lakewood baker must make cakes for gay weddings," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, 05/31/14, pp. 1, 2A. Ironically, Phillips says he has been overwhelmed with so much business since this law suit became known publicly that he no longer makes cakes.

> *Personally, that wedding cake should be so personal to you and your wedding, just as the ring, just as the invitations, just as to everything in planning a wedding. That cake which costs hundreds—and the cakes that I bake can cost thousands—why would you want to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on a wedding cake and pay that money to someone who doesn't want to bake the cake for you? Are you stupid? That is your personal piece of your wedding. Your guests eat that. That cake is involved in your photos. That cake is taken in your mouth, and you eat it in your stomach. That baker has to spend hours perfecting that cake for you, for your wedding day. And if that cake isn't perfect, then it ruins your wedding.*
>
> Bartholomew said that anyone who forces someone to violate his or her beliefs is a bully.
>
> "There's no other bakers out there?" he asked.
>
> Forcing someone who objects to same-sex marriage to bake a cake for a same-sex wedding, Bartholomew said, is simultaneously bullying the baker and taking business away from someone who would "gladly" bake the cake.
>
> "It's plain and simple: you are bullying someone. You are forcing someone. You are being a Nazi and forcing someone to bake a…wedding cake for you when there are hundreds of other gay and lesbians that would gladly have your business. Shame on you."
>
> In another post earlier this month, Bartholomew wrote that he is disappointed that "another bakery has been forced to shut down and face lawsuit."[424]

A caption on his Facebook picture reads: "I'm a gay baker. I am disappointed that liberals and the LGBT community would stoop so low to bully a Christian baker because he or she simply refused to bake a same sex wedding cake. Freedom goes both ways. There are plenty of other bakeries and bakers to choose from."[425]

Again division and intolerance shows among the ranks. As of this writing he received 60 "Likes" and 129 "Shares," but even he as an avowed homosexual received at least one nasty response to his sense of fairness. In his post he states: "I made a meme because

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[424] http://dailysignal.com/2015/07/21/they-dont-have-to-bake-a-cake-for-you-baker-to-his-fellow-gays-and-lesbians/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailydigest&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRogsq%2FKZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4IRcpkI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 7/21/15)

[425] https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1091903760839082&set=a.258611287501671.84025.100000584050773&type=1&permPage=1 (Accessed 7/21/15)

some idiot was trying to call me a racist homophobic right winger because I support freedom of choice. He obviously didn't know that I'm a skilled pastry chef and well…figure out the rest."[426]

Bartholomew is not the only homosexual to come out for fairness and justice. Two lesbians, Kathy Trautvetter and her partner Diane DiGeloromo, who are founders of their own T-shirt printing company, are supporting Christian printer, Blaine Adamson's right to refuse pro-homosexual T-shirt orders.

Adamson turned down an order of shirts for the Lexington Pride Festival in 2012 but the Gay and Lesbian Services Organization of Lexington, which placed the order, lodged a complaint with the authorities, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission, which ruled that Adamson's company had "discriminated" against the homosexuals. Adamson was informed that he was legally bound to not refuse any future order from such a group.

Trautvetter and DiGeloromo have some significant observations to help people think more fairly and justly about this matter. Cath Martin writing for *Christianity Today* reports that these two *lesbian* business owners

> say people should not be forced to do something they don't believe in.
>
> Speaking to The Blaze, Trautvetter said that as a business owner herself, she "really felt" for Adamson, and that people should simply go to the companies that are happy to serve them.
> "There are a lot of people out there who would want to host your event or want to work with you and I would go with someone who wants to help rather than someone who doesn't," she said.
>
> After reading the article, Glenn Beck invited the two women onto his show to speak further about their views.
>
> "As a business owner, it struck a chord with me when I read the story because I know how hard it is to build a business," said Trautvetter.
>
> "It's very personal, you put your blood and your sweat and your tears into every bit of it. When I put myself in his place I immediately felt like, if that were to happen to us I couldn't create or print anti-gay T-shirts, I could see it from his side. I really felt for him. There's a lot of gay businesses and they would love to do business with everybody."
>
> DiGeloromo added: "We feel this really isn't a gay or straight issue, this is a human issue. No one really should be forced to do something against what they believe in, it's as simple as that. If we were to be approached by

426 https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1091903760839082&set=a.258611287501671.84025.100000584050773&type=1&permPage=1 (Accessed 7/21/15)

> an organisation such as the Westboro Baptist Church I highly doubt we would be doing business with them and we would be very angry if we were forced to do so."
>
> With the Hands On Originals verdict and similar cases across the US making headlines, Trautvetter said they were speaking out because they felt the "gap is widening" between those on opposite sides of the fence on human sexuality.
>
> "We want everybody just to at least get it a little closer," she said. "Let us understand each other because I put myself in Blaine's place and I hope some of the Christian right would do the same for us. Try and understand what our lives are like, it's not easy ... Now that the shoe's on the other foot I just felt like, I know what that feels like and we can't let that happen to the T-shirt company."[427]

While it is heartening to observe some homosexuals' concern for fairness and justice, which should help pass *and maintain* the First Amendment Defense Act (discussed in Chapter Five), nevertheless we must remember and work in the light of the reality that Baker Phillips is not alone in being attacked for maintaining his values and putting them into practice. People throughout the country who oppose promoting homosexuality are experiencing litigation persecution. Other bakers, the printer in Kentucky, a photographer in New Mexico, a student counselor in Michigan, a pizzeria in Indiana, a florist in Washington State, a fire chief in Atlanta, and a bed-and-breakfast in Vermont have experienced similar unjust litigation, the latter, a devout Roman Catholic, being bullied into egregiously and unjustly having to pay $10,000 to the Vermont Human Rights Commission and $20,000

> into a charitable trust set up by the plaintiffs. The inn agreed to make these payments to end this ordeal and the threat that the litigation posed to the owners' and their employees' livelihood…."The Wildflower Inn has always served—and will continue to serve—everyone in our community. But no one can force us to abandon our deeply held beliefs about marriage," said Wildflower Inn owner Jim O'Reilly. "Our beliefs haven't changed, but we do have lives to live, a family to love, a business to grow, and a community to serve. Small businesses like ours cannot match the limitless resources of the government and the ACLU. Ongoing litigation like this can cripple any

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[427] Cath Martin, "Lesbian couple are supporting printer's right to refuse pro-gay T-shirt orders," 10 November 2014, http://www.christiantoday.com/article/lesbian.couple.are.supporting.christian.printers.right.to.refuse.pro.gay.t.shirt.orders/42829.htm (Accessed 7/23/15)

> small business and the livelihood of its owners, so we're relieved to put this ordeal behind us."[428]

Of all the injustices that come from litigation over Christians' inability to go against the teachings of the Bible concerning homosexuality, the most unconscionable have arisen in regard to adoption and foster-care organizations. Such agencies in Massachusetts, Illinois, and Washington, D. C. have been forced to cease providing those services due to laws favoring homosexuals. The Heritage Foundation cites several examples, one of which follows:

> **Boston Catholic Charities, Massachusetts.** For more than 100 years, Catholic Charities in Boston, Massachusetts, had a successful record of connecting children to permanent families, placing more children in adoptive homes than any other state-licensed agency. Then, in 2003, the state began to recognize same-sex unions as marriages following a decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court. That decision, coupled with an earlier state policy on sexual orientation, forced all state-licensed adoption providers to be willing to place children with same-sex couples.
>
> Rather than abandon Catholic teaching that marriage is between one man and one woman and the conviction that children deserve to be raised by a married mother and father, Catholic Charities of Boston was forced to end their foster care and adoption programs. In the two decades before it ended those services, the organization had helped approximately 720 children to find permanent adoptive homes.[429]

To understand the serious, indeed heinous, results of Christian adoption agencies being forced out of business, thus requiring children to be placed in homosexual as well as heterosexual households, see the statistical and anecdotal research findings and their implications in Chapter Two in the section "Children raised in homosexual households do not do nearly as well as those raised in households with a mom and a dad." Contrary to the bogus claims of homosexual activists that children raised in homosexual households do as well or better than those raised in heterosexual households, strong research reveals the deception of such "studies" and discloses the reality that children raised in homosexual households actually fare very poorly contrasted with their peers raised in heterosexual households *on every significant measure*.

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[428] Alliance Defending Freedom, "Vt. government ends religious persecution of family business, admits Wildflower Inn acted in good faith, State human rights commission, ACLU finally call off attack on small bed-and-breakfast," August 23, 2012 http://www.adfmedia.org/News/PRDetail/7601?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Morning%2BBell

[429] Sarah Torre and Ryan T. Anderson, "Adoption, Foster Care, and Conscience Protection," January 15, 2014, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2014/01/adoption-foster-care-and-conscience-protection?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell140228. (Accessed 06/07/14)

Litigation together with just the threat of litigation and the logically fallacious thinking discussed above has led businesses such as Disney and Lockheed Martin to take on pro-homosexual and pro-same-sex marriage advocacy and to do it with their money, including reducing support for volunteer organizations that hold to traditional moral values. Volunteer organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) have followed suit, even though it means compromising their long-held and often-recited values, e.g., to be "morally straight." However, the BSA decision to admit homosexual boys who have "come out of the closet" is not likely for an indefinite period of time to be extended to adult leaders even though their current president says with political correctness that he would have affirmed such a decision had he been involved at the time. The scouting professionals, now headed by former director of the CIA and Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, are concerned about steady membership declines over the past decade and avoiding a flare up of the passions on both sides that could lead to a dissolution of the organization.[430]

An organization called the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is a highly funded[431] institution that is vigorously promoting the homosexual agenda. The Obama administration appointed the SPLC to a key advisory capacity in the U. S. Department of Defense (DOD) where it included its extremely left-oriented and radically anti-Christian stance into the military training manuals. This development resulted in U. S. Army instructors teaching that pro-family groups and others who oppose "same-sex marriage" are hate groups. Providentially, the Family Research Council and others succeeded in persuading the DOD to remove the SPLC's invectives about hate groups from its training manuals. More work still has to be done since the DOD still plans to use the SPLC as one of its resources.

However, the military is not the SPLC's only battlefield. The SPLC is also litigating a lawsuit against JONAH (Jews Offering New Alternatives for Homosexuality). One of the reasons SPLC is suing in this case is that JONAH is engaged in providing conversion therapy. JONAH operates on the basis of the sound research we've examined in Chapter Two that that homosexuality is not genetically determined and that change is not only possible but is occurring. This lawsuit should not even be admitted in court. How is it fair in a free country with a free market economy to shut down a service people need, want, and for which they are willing to pay?

Before examining another SPLC battlefield, public education, we need to consider one more aspect of the litigation issue. At its November 2014 meeting, the 42-member Council of Presidents (COP) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) heard Erik Stanley, Senior Legal Counsel for the Alliance Defending Freedom speak about current societal trends pertaining to homosexuality. He mentioned the vindication of the five Houston pastors he represented (*op. cit.*) and the growing likelihood that

> [n]ot only do traditional American Christians face legal challenges for their biblical view of marriage, but they now also may face local

[430] "Robert Gates: I Would Have Allowed Gay Adults in Boy Scouts," *Newsmax*, May 24, 2014.
[431] The SPLC has $281 million in endowments and raises an average of an additional $35 million every year. Tony Perkins, Family Research Council letter to supporters of May 23, 2014, p. 1.

> government officials who are increasingly sympathetic to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activism. Across the nation, some state and local governments are legislatively normalizing homosexuality and are *imposing a culture of androgyny under the guise of "gender equality." This includes efforts to give transgender people a legal right to choose which gender's public restroom they can use*.[432] [Emphasis mine]

At the COP meeting Stanley looked at the U. S. philosophically from a legal perspective. The LCMS *Reporter* added that "Stanley summarized the implications for LCMS Lutherans in today's litigiously sexualized environment, noting that a 'sexual liberty trumps all' philosophy is growing rapidly in the U.S. at the cost of religious liberty and freedom of speech."[433]

Be alert to the attempt to control the public schools.

Control of the public schools is a major part of the homosexual agenda. Before proceeding to explore this subject, it's important to keep in mind that many fine people, including not a few Christians, teach in the public schools. Nevertheless, the education establishment on all levels in this country is, humanly speaking (for God is always sovereign), in control of public education.

They have an agenda as well, which has been articulated in the Humanist Manifesto, which is available online. This document defines the philosophical orientation of public education, and it is the basis of the administrative decision-making, teacher philosophy and selection, and guide for curriculum selection.

Notice especially the Humanist Manifesto II, which disavows theism and starts with human reasoning and scientific research as the standard for reflection and decision-making, and the multipage single-spaced list of signatories at the end which constituted a virtual Who's Who in public education when it was written.[434] The later versions demonstrate that humanism is the philosophical basis of public education today. Without God and his Word as the standard for decision-making

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[432] Roger Drinnon, "Ministry excellence, domestic violence among COP topics," *Reporter*, January 16, 2015, http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/cop-topics. (Accessed 2/15/15)

[433] Roger Drinnon, "Ministry excellence, domestic violence among COP topics."

[434] http://americanhumanist.org/Humanism/Humanist_Manifesto_II. Humanism is often if not usually misunderstood and misused as a synonym for humanitarianism or anything that promotes a caring approach to human wellbeing. On the contrary, humanism is a nontheistic, and for many if not most atheistic, philosophy that actively promotes rejecting and replacing theism with a relativistic philosophy centered on mankind as the standard of what is right. On the horizontal plane the Achilles heel of humanism is the law of noncontradiction in the field of logic. The law of noncontradiction states that something and its exact opposite cannot logically both be true at the same time. Since humanism is relativistic (with its oxymoronic tenet that there is no universal truth, all truth being conceptualized as relative), with no higher standard to which to appeal in disputes, humanists force themselves into an intellectually compromised corner. For example, if someone says, "I believe in X," and another says, "I believe in non-X," the relativistic humanist says, "That's OK; we're both right," ignoring the law of noncontradiction. See the Humanist Manifestos I, II, and III, which are available online, the philosophical basis and orientation of many if not most but certainly not all public school educators.

and the determination of just action, homosexuals and all others can make up their philosophies and the agendas for implementing them without having to account for the discrepancy with the will of God…for now.

One of the main goals of the SPLC, which shares the humanistic philosophy, is to shape the public school system and inculcate its philosophy and teaching in education. Perkins documents the following (underlining his):

> In 2012, the SPLC spent over $13 MILLION on videos, teaching kits, activity guides, and "professional development" guides to help teachers create classroom environments that affirm homosexuality. In one project called "Queerness Meets Early Childhood Education," the SPLC solicited ideas for the best ways *to present homosexuality to children as young as preschool.* [Italics mine][435]
>
> Moreover, the SPLC encourages teachers to contact the pro-homosexuality activist organization, Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Educators Network (GLSEN), for more resources.
>
> The SPLC "anti-bias" *indoctrination begins in pre-kindergarten to redefine gender norms and establish the fallacy that homes headed by gay and lesbian couples are no different than the traditional nuclear family*. [Italics mine]
>
> "Teaching Tolerance" bills itself as a program focused on social justice, civil rights, multiculturalism, and education without bias. In reality, the program materials, sample curricula, and other resources push affirmation of the Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community.
>
> According to the SPLC's expanded definition of bullying, any communication or treatment that doesn't celebrate and affirm the LGBT lifestyle is considered abusive.
>
> Schools with policies that require simple neutrality on same-sex "marriage," for example, have been targeted by the SPLC for not being "inclusive" enough—and are sometimes threatened with legal action….

[435] There are many such programs being designed to train teachers for indoctrinating children and youth according to the pro-homosexual agenda and to provide them with the curricular resources for doing so. Another, designed to mitigate the concept of there being only two genders and to blur the distinctiveness of male and female, blurring identity-development in the process, has been exposed and documented by Focus on the Family. See https://www.truetolerance.org/2015/are-the-purple-penguins-coming-to-a-school-near-you/?utm_source=nl_fcoc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=247603&refcd=247603&crmlink=cta-2-read-more. (Accessed 3/9/15)

> Thankfully, there are champions of traditional morality who see through the ploy of the SPLC and are taking decisive action.
>
> In March [2014], a state lawmaker in Hawaii filed an ethics complaint against the Hawaii Department of Education for allowing the SPLC to conduct a pilot seminar on tolerance and diversity that discussed homosexuality by using stories about same-sex penguins and boys wearing dresses among other equally controversial topics.
>
> The lawmaker objected to teachers being paid by an outside group to promote their agenda. Money was essentially used to advance biased training with a political agenda that targets and marginalizes individuals who have moral or religious objections to homosexuality.
>
> …SPLC claims their "Teaching Tolerance" magazine reaches over 400,000 educators nationwide and over 50,000 copies of its film, "Bullied," have been distributed.[436]

Perkins invites anyone who finds SPLC materials in their local school to obtain copies of the material and send them to the Family Research Council. The address is 801 G Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

We've seen how in the identity-forming years of adolescence and young adulthood, the identity development of teen-agers in particular is fluid. Homosexual activists know that as well, and they want to influence that identity-development toward homosexuality, because they are constantly on the look-out for youth. As the homosexual activists, Kirk and Madsen, put it, "the game is youth and beauty: the object is to score sexually…."[437] They need to keep the supply of fresh young bodies coming. This is why it is so important for them to control the curricula in the schools as much as they can.

Janet Levy alerts us as to the far-reaching implications of this aspect of their agenda and to why we need to be especially vigilant on this matter.

> Social scientists have found that the more an environment sanctions or promotes homosexuality, the more homosexual behavior will be induced. According to psychologist Dr. Trayce Hansen who has extensively reviewed the research in this area, "Human sexual behavior is malleable and culturally influenced." She explains that the more normalized homosexual behavior is, the greater the propensity toward sexual experimentation. This normalization of homosexuality with help from the media and endorsement by school programs has led to an increased sexual confusion and increased frequency of homosexual behavior among youth.

[436] Perkins, Family Research Council letter of May 23, 2014, pp. 2-4.
[437] Kirk and Madsen, p. 313.

> Dr. Hansen reports that LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) curriculums cause confusion and interfere with normal gender identity development. She advocates general programs that teach tolerance for all those who are different, rather than programs geared specifically toward different sexual orientations.
>
> According to a study in Pediatrics, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, nearly 26 percent of 12-year-olds are uncertain about their sexual orientation. By the time these youngsters reached 18, only 5 percent were uncertain and only 4.5 percent expressed attraction to the same sex. Also, the study found that many young people who express homosexual attractions have had troubled childhoods and are in need of counseling. Several factors such as a desire for attention, a feeling of alienation or the effect of molestation can lead to homosexual behavior.[438]

What implications do you see for the church? Let your list include the need to monitor public school curricula and also to speak the truth of Jesus Christ and his love in our love for teens and all others. Church youth ministries should address this subject, of course with the prior communication with and approval of the parents, pastor, elders, and other church authorities. See Chapter Five for other suggestions.

Agenda Results

Throughout the preceding discussion we've observed several results of the working out of the homosexual activists' agenda. Those mentioned include outstanding Christian organizations that have had to discontinue services to thousands of children, their biological parents, and their adoptive parents due to the loss of their license, because they believe the Bible and sound empirical observation that children need a mother and a father, and the agencies cannot in good conscience turn the children over to homosexuals and others to be raised in a setting counterproductive to the children's well-being. The impact on the governmental agencies charged with having to take on the additional children and adults from the shutting down of the Christian agencies has been a huge challenge that is also negatively impacting the states and the nation and will for a long time to come.

Please mention this current situation to young mothers who are looking to place their children with adoptive parents, so they can give them to parents who will raise them well. Alternatives include adoption agencies in other states, preferably Christian agencies; finding an attorney who will help place the child in a good home; and privately arranging for placing the child in a home acceptable to the biological parents.

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[438] Janet Levy, "Exclusive: Tolerance or Gay Propaganda?" http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.5757/pub_detail.asp (Accessed 4/12/15)

Many fine teachers in the public schools have been unjustly censored and censured in the course of trying to teach the truth. Some have even been reprimanded by having a Bible on their desk. For just one example, a tenured New Jersey school teacher, Mrs. Jenye "Viki" Knox, was suspended for comments on a restricted portion of her Facebook page in which she referred to homosexuality as "perverted," "unnatural," "sin," and "immoral." She also drew attention to school-sponsored pro-homosexual activities, including in her post "a picture of a display at the school celebrating gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender history month."[439] She was defended by the ACLU but her own teachers' union, the New Jersey Education Association, declined to comment in her defense. What did she get for her union dues on this important matter?

Some public school students who are confused about their sexual identity are trying to change their gender. That highly complicated personal decision is also impacting significant school dynamics and resulting in politically difficult adjustments negatively affecting many students. Though small in number, by far the majority of the children in the United States, who have been making this change, are boys who want to identify, including dressing, as girls. As the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has found in its research,

> Gender dysphoria in both children and adults is reportedly more prevalent in males than in females. For adults identified as male at birth, the incidence reported in DSM-5 [*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition* (DSM-5) of the American Psychiatric Association] is between 0.005% to 0.014% (5-14 cases in every 100,000 males). For adults identified as female at birth, the rate is from 0.002-0.003% (2-3 cases in every 100,000 females). No global prevalence data is offered for gender dysphoria in children, but the ratio from many international studies again suggests a greater rate of occurrence in boys compared to girls (between 2 and 4.5 times as often for boys as for girls). In a final note on prevalence, however, DSM-5 indicates that Japan and Poland report more sexual dysphoria in females than in males. (No further information on any of the data is given and DSM-5 does not indicate either the sources of the research or its sample populations.)[440]

This change becomes a challenge when the child has to use the restroom. Which rest room does he/she use? And if it's the girls' room, how would the reader feel about his or her daughter using the room at the same time this still biological boy is in there? The fact that most homosexuals are bisexual is important to know and

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[439] "NJ Teacher's Husband Defends Wife As Rally Is Held Condemning Alleged Anti-Gay Comments," CBS New York, October 18, 2011. http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2011/10/18/activists-to-demand-union-high-teacher-be-fired-for-alleged-anti-gay-comments-on-facebook/ (Accessed 06/05/14) Jeanette Rundquist, "N. J. teacher accused of anti-gay Facebook posts may retire to avoid charges." May 17, 2012. http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2012/05/nj_teacher_charged_with_postin.html (Accessed 06/05/14)

[440] Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, "Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective," May 27, 2014, p. 3.

keep in mind for children, parents, school administrators, school boards, and government authorities.

Complicating the situation even more is the reality of bisexual attraction and the fluidity of identity development in the teens to mid-twenties. Think about the following story.

> In Colorado Springs' Florence High School, a transgender biologically male student has been using the girls' restrooms (as well as the boys' restrooms), and several girls have complained that this transgender boy is harassing them. They complained to their parents, who complained to the administration and to the school board. The school is denying that harassment is occurring, but an unspecified number of girls are sticking to their assertion. The parents were confronted by the school and admonished that if they persisted in their complaining they could be charged with hate crimes. The girls have been warned that they are in opposition to a sweeping 2008 Colorado antidiscrimination law and could face being removed from athletic teams and even be charged with hate crimes.
>
> The Pacific Justice Institute, a California law firm, is representing the girls and their parents, who are concerned that the rights of 400 to 500 teen-age girls are being subordinated to one homosexual boy. Further, the school told the girls that "if they didn't like sharing a bathroom with the boy, they could simply refrain from using those facilities at all." And so what are the girls supposed to do when they need to use the restroom? How is that safe for them? How is that fair? How is it legal? Moreover, how is it just and moral? Most of all, can you imagine even in a minute way, how offensive it is to God?

It should be kept in mind that this type of situation, which has been predicted, is a development that LGBT activists have insisted would not occur.[441] Further, the girls have been warned that they are in opposition to a Colorado antidiscrimination law and could face being removed from athletic teams and even be charged with hate crimes.[442] Stunningly but not surprisingly, the school told the girls that "if they didn't like sharing a bathroom with the boy, they could simply refrain from using

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[441] Kirsten Andersen, "'Transgender' boy accused of harassing girls in the restroom at Colorado school: school denies," October 17, 2013, http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/transgender-boy-accused-of-harassing-girls-in-the-restroom-at-colorado-scho (Accessed 06/05/14)

[442] Does that statement seem forceful, threatening, and like a personal (*ad hominem*) attack? If so you're perceptive of the logical fallacies continually being employed in homosexual activism. That statement is a form of *argumentum ad hominem*, the circumstantial use of that argument, but, as sometimes occurs, it was also used abusively by the school when it added the threat. Here the attempt was to attack the girls' stand, not by addressing its merits, but by threatening them with a weak interpretation of a questionable law that is hotly debated as to whether it is even a just law, much less whether it applies to the girls' situation. For more information on this fallacious reasoning, see the section below on logical fallacies.

those facilities at all."[443] This appalling attempt to resolve the matter is the application of an old concept.

The view that minority rights should prevail over the majority was argued in the 1970s in academe when I was a Ph.D. graduate student. This Colorado incident is just one example of the practical implications of such philosophical discussion. When we are in such conversations, we should speak up and let the light of Christ shine. Words are not just idle talk. Words that have dangerous implications when carried out to their logical, but not necessarily sound or correct, conclusion, should be challenged as early in their developmental formulation as possible.

One approach to a fair resolution of this type of situation was implemented at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina. A 22 year-old student, Andraya Williams, biologically a male but dressed as a woman, was apprehended upon leaving a women's restroom. According to media coverage the student

> was escorted from the campus by approximately six security guards, suspended, and informed that she would only be allowed to return if she would agree to exclusively use the school's gender-neutral restrooms.
>
> School spokesman Jeff Lowrance disputed Williams's claim, saying that she technically hadn't been suspended, adding in a statement to local NBC affiliate WCNC, "Central Piedmont, like many colleges and universities across the country, is beginning to recognize and understand the needs of transgender students. However, the college must balance these needs with those of the general student population."
>
> Williams's attorney, Sarah Demarest, claimed that one of the school's deans issued a demand that Williams "bring in medical proof of being a female if she wanted to use the female restroom."[444]

The fact that most homosexuals are bisexual is important to know for children, parents, school administrators, school boards, and government authorities.[445] With the

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[443] Andersen, "'Transgender' boy accused of harassing girls in the restroom at Colorado school: school denies."

[444] Parker Marie Molloy, "WATCH: N.C. College Security Confronts Trans Student Over Bathroom Usage," April 2, 2014, http://www.advocate.com/politics/transgender/2014/04/02/watch-nc-college-security-confronts-trans-student-over-bathroom (Accessed 2/14/15) Sadly, this article includes a significant example of media bias when it erroneously states that "[f]ear that allowing trans individuals to use the correct restroom will lead to a rise in bathroom assaults has been debunked many times over." I know of no such social science research that is authentic and respected, and that proved still to be the case when I fact-checked the link that supposedly supported that claim. The link was to a pro-homosexual website that offered no such study and only biased hype about the subject. In such matters remember the homosexual agenda item discussed above pertaining to the public dissemination of untrue information and deception.

[445] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 28. The Williams Institute study published in 2011 disclosed that 1.7 % of American adults are exclusively homosexual, 1.8% are bisexual, (3.5%) total. Thus, slightly more than

homosexual activists now ramping up the effort to establish laws (such as Colorado's Senate Bill 08-200 passed in 2008) and policies that allow transgendered students to use girls' and women's restrooms, a significant danger exists for serious sexual harassment of females, children as well as adults. We need to keep in mind, and tell others, that such unwanted invasion of privacy as we've just seen is already becoming more widespread in its occurrence.

The Florence High School case is not the only such transgender case in and beyond the public schools. One school official explained, "In Colorado, transgender people are allowed by law to access public or workplace restrooms designated for the gender that matches their [sexual preference] identity [not their biological identity]. That policy was affirmed in June 2013, when the Colorado Civil Rights Division ruled that a 6-year-old transgender male, now identifying as a girl, could use the facilities for girls in his/her school."[446]

Everyone needs to be concerned about this matter since it is transcending the elementary and secondary schools. The designation of gender-neutral bathrooms that transgender students can use is now being implemented in higher education, as we saw in the case involving Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina.[447] Cities are passing laws giving rights to transgender individuals to use the restrooms designated for either gender. Such legislation requires all businesses, e.g., restaurants, stores, theatres, and physicians' offices to allow transgender persons to use the bathrooms of the opposite gender, and the legislation fails to protect those businessmen and women who have morally objections and makes them vulnerable to litigation.

Opponents rightly object that such ordinances put women and children in danger.[448] As we've seen above, their concern is very much warranted and well-founded. Having access to women's restrooms gives cover to male predators, either those pretending to be a transsexual or a transsexual who is actually bisexual, as are most homosexuals. Of course the media, supporting the homosexual agenda, assert, wrongly, that the fear of sexual assault by transgenders "has been debunked many times over."[449] That assertion is untrue; it hasn't been debunked. And it occurs in many other places than in schools.

Furthermore, the injustices are mounting daily. In addition to those mentioned above and in the fact sheets on my website, city officials in Anchorage tried to shut down a

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half of homosexuals are bisexual. This fact was confirmed in a phone conversation with Peter Sprigg of the Family Research Council on 06/06/14.

[446] "Colorado school official backs transgender remark," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, December 7, 2013, p. A2.

[447] http://www.christianpost.com/news/billy-grahams-hometown-considers-transgender-bathroom-rights-opponents-claim-it-would-put-women-and-children-in-danger-134079/ (Accessed 2/13/15)

[448] http://www.christianpost.com/news/tickets-to-duck-dynasty-musical-available-thursday-robertson-family-so-blessed-to-share-story-133940/ (Accessed 2/14/15)
http://www.christianpost.com/news/billy-grahams-hometown-considers-transgender-bathroom-rights-opponents-claim-it-would-put-women-and-children-in-danger-134079/ (Accessed 2/13/15)

[449] http://www.advocate.com/politics/transgender/2014/04/02/watch-nc-college-security-confronts-trans-student-over-bathroom (Accessed 2/14/15)

homeless shelter that will not let males sleep next to women who have been horribly abused by, and who are understandably fearful of, men. The same is going on in jails and prisons; women prisoners are fearful of, and are, being abused by biological males claiming to be females and demanding to be incarcerated with females. Women are becoming pregnant in jails. Some are being beaten by biological male cellmates. How is that being just, fair, and loving, including compassionate? And this legal harassment is going on all over the country constantly, and is being leveraged by the validation and legitimacy provided by unwise, unjust, and unfair laws and rules. How much do you love your wife, daughter, granddaughter, niece, and other women in your life?

Family Research Council president, Tony Perkins, explains more of the injustice being perpetrated upon women in jails and prisons. Cruel and unusual punishment is against the law in the United States. Consider the following.

> The Wall Street Journal's Abigail Shrier tells one horrifying story after another about women who've been ordered to share cells with biological men (sometimes rapists) who weren't even on hormonal medication. "They're getting a full erection," one female inmate told her. "So you're locked in this room, 24/7, with a man and there's nothing you can do about it. If you tell the police you don't want to live with a man, or you're afraid or whatever, you'll get a disciplinary infraction. So you're basically punished for being scared." Rapes have gone up. Physical abuse is on the rise. Worse, every kind of criminal is mixed in together. "The people who've murdered their children are in the same room as the people who've stolen boxers from Walmart." In Washington State, Shrier wrote, one male inmate who won access into the women's prison under this accommodation was a serial killer *of women*.
>
> Groups like WoLF, Sovereign Women Speak, and other radical feminist groups have been furious at the impact on biological women in jails, who are being housed with men against their will. "One woman with a history of suicide attempts broke her own hand beating on the door [for help], and asked to be placed in solitary, rather than sleep a single night next to her new male cellmate," the organizations warned. Another woman "was punched in the face so hard by a new transfer that she couldn't chew for three days. He was taken away and released back in a different yard with no restrictions," WoLF's legal director said. "He was her cellmate. She had to sleep with him."[450]

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[450] Tony Perkins, "President's Prison Rule Cells out Women," *Tony Perkins's Washington Update*, September 17, 2021; https://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=WA21I20&f=WU21I05 (Accessed 9/18/21) Abigail Shrier, "Male Inmates in Women's Prisons: If Congress passes the Equality Act, California's dangerous policy would go nationwide," *Wall Street Journal*/Opinion, May 31, 2021, https://www.wsj.com/articles/male-inmates-in-womens-prisons-11622474215 (Accessed 9/18/21). WoLF stands for Women's Liberation Front, a women-only American non-profit organization founded in 2013 by Lierre Keith. Identifying as a radical feminist organization, it opposes transgender and gender identity legislation.

Christians are supposed to care about all people, including those in prison (cf., e.g., Matthew 25:30, 39-40, 43, 44-45) Here is another way the church should serve the Lord. Outstanding prison ministries are helping inmates in Christ's name in many ways; are they addressing this need of the incarcerated women in their important work?

Some homosexual women and some feminists are finally beginning to speak out against aspects of the transgender movement that are harming women so significantly. The unfairness (documented in the following URL) of allowing males who claim to be female to compete against females in sports, is causing women to lose not only the events in which they compete against biological males but to lose scholarships that enable them to go to college and the ability to excel in their sport(s).

Many homosexuals are opposing the inclusion of transgenders in women's sports. A coalition of well-known LGBT activists in women's sports, the "Women's Sports Policy Working Group," which includes the outstanding tennis record-holder Martina Navratilova, who is a self-professed lesbian, as of this writing is urging the Biden administration to limit the participation of transgender males in women's sports, rightly arguing it's necessary to protect the future of women's sports.

Other leaders in the United States are also opposed to the inclusion of transgender males in girls' and women's sports due to the unfair advantage the biological males have as a result of their genetic origin, which does not change. The strong biological basis of this reality is explained in many accurate sources, including in this document at this URL: "Save Women's Sports: New Research from Dr. Emma Hilton," https://savewomenssports.com/science.]

Author and self-professing feminist, Kara Dansky, argues that the true agenda of the transgender movement is to abolish sex. In her book, "The Abolition of Sex: How the 'Transgender' Agenda Harms Women and Girls," she both opposes the objective to destroy the concept of sex and the use of the term "transgender." Dansky asserts the term is an invented word that "has no coherent meaning whatsoever" and adds "every single person on the face of the planet, all 8 billion of us, are either female or male, and that's it."[451]

Psychiatrist Fitzgibbons' observation warns that the understanding of the stabilized traditional family being the basis of society, constantly supported by sound social science, is jeopardized by the attempt to normalize homosexuality. Indeed, this attempt underlies all that proponents are doing, and they acknowledge it. Sprigg and Dailey report that "Portraying homosexuality as harmless[452] is a key goal of homosexual

[451] Virginia Allen, "What You Need to Know About Real Agenda of 'Transgender' Movement," *The Daily Signal*, January 5, 2022. (Accessed 1/5/22)

[452] This word, harmless, is frequently used in the "same-sex marriage" issue. One example is in a ruling by Colorado District Court Judge Andrew Hartman who explained his decision that Boulder County Clerk Hillary Hall can ignore a federal stay on a ruling from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals overruling the ban

activists, as homosexual author Urvashi Vaid has admitted: 'We have an agenda to create a society in which homosexuality is regarded as healthy, natural, and normal. To me that is the most important agenda item.'"[453]

To the contrary, the reality, as Sprigg and Dailey point out is just the opposite "as was recently conceded by the homosexual newspaper *New York Blade News*: 'Reports at a national conference about sexually transmitted diseases indicate that gay men are in the highest risk group for several of the most serious diseases.…'"[454] That reality is not normal. Furthermore, it is *not harmless but harmful*, to the individuals involved and to the rest of the society, as the above pages document. In the light of all we've been seeing, should we even use the word "risk," which implies there is a possibility that one may escape the ravages of the homosexual lifestyle that operates in rebellion against God's will. Are you seeing more clearly why God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*?

***Discern the Use of Logical Fallacies*.**[455]

As we've been noticing, other tactics used in the homosexual agenda involve the common *employment of logical fallacies*. The field of logic, a subfield of philosophy, has identified many such errors in reasoning. The thinking put forth in logical propositions is referred to as an argument, to be differentiated from an argument in the sense usually meant when two or more people are having a spat over some matter. Arguments in logic are typically viewed as consisting of two types: inductive and deductive.

Each argument claims that its premises provide evidence for the truth of its conclusion, but due to their nature, only deductive arguments claim to provide conclusive evidence. An example of deduction includes syllogistic reasoning. Inductive arguments do not claim conclusive evidence for the truth of their conclusion; they settle for providing some evidence for and the probability of it, for example reasoning from analogy. Truth and falsehood are evaluations of the propositional statements in an argument; the terms valid and invalid refer primarily to deductive arguments whose premises provide conclusive evidence for their connection with their conclusion. The concept of soundness is referred to arguments all of whose premises are true.[456]

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on "same-sex marriage" by stating that he "found the licenses were harmless and an acceptable from of civil disobedience." Sadie Gurman and Colleen Slevin, "Third Colorado county issuing licenses: Pueblo Country joins Denver and Boulder counties on Friday," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, July 12, 2014, p. A2. Regarding marriage as the basis of society, see also http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

[453] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 69. For more on the homosexual agenda, see *The Homosexual Agenda: Exposing the Principal Threat to Religious Freedom Today,* by Alliance Defending Freedom legal organization President, CEO, and General Counsel Alan Sears and Vice President of Research Craig Osten (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003).

[454] Sprigg and Dailey, p. 69. The quote from the *New York Blade News* is by Bill Roundy, "STD Rates on the Rise," *New York Blade News*, (December 15, 2000), p. 1.

[455] Some parts of this section have been expanded and published on my academic and general websites in a paper titled, "Logic: A Primer on Common Logical Fallacies." See this primer for further information.

[456] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 9, 11, 311.

The philosophical nuances and intricacies of logic are considerably complicated. Consequently, and since logic is a secular field, Copi avers that the

> logician is not so much interested in the truth or falsehood of propositions as much as in the logical relations between them, where by the "logical" relations between propositions we mean those which determine the correctness or incorrectness of arguments in which they may occur. Determining the correctness or incorrectness of arguments falls squarely within the province of logic. The logician is interested in the correctness even of arguments whose premisses might be false.[457]

Here is where Christians can be of special help to enable people to think logically to the fullest extent. While the logician prefers to focus on the process, which is also important to the Christian, the Christian is also especially equipped with the information from God's revelation (special and general) to speak to the truth and falsehood of the premises of an argument's propositions. Thus soundness and validity are important to us. Two law professors put it this way in the context of the question this book is addressing.

> For us what counts about an argument is whether it is *sound*, i.e., whether its premises are true and its logic valid. If a line of thought about the morality of sex is reasonable today, it was reasonable in the time of Jesus or Plato or Abraham or as far back as we find men and women and their children. Whether arguments "work" persuasively in one era but not another is philosophically irrelevant, as any philosopher should take for granted.[458]

Logical fallacies are typically divided into two general types: formal and informal. Formal fallacies are usually discussed in connection with validity factors in deduction. Informal fallacies are grouped into errors of relevance, errors of ambiguity, and errors of presumption. The following errors are the most common and deceptive that are frequently used, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unwittingly, in reflecting on the subject before us. When one ignores these errors and engages in this fallacious reasoning, he or she neither speaks the truth nor does so in love.

Pay close attention to these flaws, for they regularly appear also in many other walks of life and thought, including in the media, in politics and political discussions, in classrooms, and in literature just for starters. If you learn, or review, them here, you'll be able to help people think more logically in other pursuits as well. So you may have a primer as to the most frequent errors in reasoning, I identify most of them with their technical Latin designation, but also provide their common name in English, define them,

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[457] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 11.

[458] John Finnis and Robert P. George, "Natural Law and the Unity and Truth of Sexual Ethics: A Reply to Gary Gutting, Public Discourse, March 17, 2015, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/03/14635/ (Accessed 4/17/15)

and give examples of their daily use. Logic texts typically contain a discussion of the fallacies, but since no universally accepted classification exists,[459] the following order is undertaken to fit within the framework of the discussion in this book.

Using Words without Proper Definition

As we saw above, using words without *proper definition* results in fallacious argumentation. Logical reasoning and argumentation (in the philosophical sense of a cogent explanation of one's viewpoint) demands definition of the words being used. Accurate understanding requires that the words the sender transmits mean the same to him or her as to the one who receives them. A definition explains the meaning of a word and also eliminates ambiguity. As Logician Irving Copi points out, fallacious arguments result from the unwitting use of ambiguous terms.[460] Such arguments also result from the intentional use of ambiguous terms.

Redefinitions

This axiom in the field of logic regarding the essential need for proper definition in reasoning raises a concern pertaining to the contemporary proclivity of people to employ words and terms as they see fit without feeling a need to let others know what they mean by these words and terms. They make up their own meanings, called stipulative definitions in logic, contrasted with dictionary definitions. When others hear those words and understand by them the standard meaning as recorded in the dictionary, but the one speaking the words means something else, communication breaks down with a counterproductive effect on relationships and the accomplishment of fruitful purposes. If such proclivity proceeds unabated, the end result will be the failure to communicate and the arrival at thoughtless absurdity.

The deliberate redefining of terms, which is rampant today, also frequently commits fallacious reasoning and logical error, as is done in the attempt to redefine marriage. We see such fallacies in terms such as "gay," "same-sex marriage," which is a self-contradiction, and "gay marriage," which contains contradiction and other logical flaws regarding definitions, such as vagueness, and being intentionally misleading.

Further, the rationale for redefining terms that involve aspects of culture rooted in history must be questioned and carefully considered before ever doing so. The Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant framers of the March 2015 declaration rightly state that such historic definitions as the transcultural and eternal realities instituted by God are not to be redefined. "As Christians…we must insist that our sexual desires, orientations, and proclivities do not provide a basis for redefining marriage."[461] These desires,

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[459] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, p. 50.
[460] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, p. 85.
[461] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

orientations, and proclivities are also a flimsy and inadequate basis for redefining anything else.

The time is coming, and now already is, when it will be imperative to temporarily halt a conversation and ask the person to define a word or term he or she is using before continuing. When the word or term is substantially different from its dictionary definition, it will be necessary to point that out for meaningful conversation to continue. One comment to introduce this clarification might be, "Are you aware that you are using this term in a fundamentally different way from how it has been historically used and is still so on the street? So I can understand what you are saying I need to know what you mean by this term." You are thus distinguishing the person's stipulative definition from the standard dictionary definition.

New Definitions

Ryan Anderson shows how the proclivity for redefinitions is mounting. The end result, if no resistance is offered, is meaninglessness and absurdity. Anderson writes

> There is no limiting principle for what will be classified as a sexual orientation or gender identity in the future. Indeed, Wesleyan College has extended the LGBT acronym and created a "safe space" for LGBTTQQFAGPBDSM: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Flexual, Asexual, Genderf..k, Polyamorous, Bondage/Disciple, Dominance/Submission, Sadism/Masochism.[462]

Be prepared to hear some or all of the following terms. Anderson, alerts us to four new ones.[463]

The first he lists in his insightful essay is "monogamish," a term introduced to Americans by homosexual activist Dan Savage in 2011. The word refers to a sort of monogamous relationship but with a homosexual spin on it meaning that the partners would agree that sexual infidelity is permissible in their partnership as long as they're honest about it.

A closer look at this term in the light of the homosexual lifestyle disclosed on these pages reveals why homosexuals would want such a relationship; it fits their typically promiscuous proclivity; but the newly coined term is inaccurate and misleading, even deceptive. The prefix "mon," from the Greek *monos*, means singly existent, alone, sole, only. The adjective suffix, "ish," means almost or approximately.

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[462] Ryan T. Anderson, "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Are Not Like Race: Why ENDA is Bad Policy," Public Discourse, March 15, 2015, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/03/14649/ (Accessed 4/17/15)

[463] Ryan T. Anderson, "The Social Costs of Abandoning the Meaning of Marriage," September 9, 2013, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/09/the-social-costs-of-abandoning-the-meaning-of-marriage (Accessed 3/8/15)

Imagine the attempt to live out this concept in real life: no assumption is made that one's partner will be committed and faithful, and no assurance is available that the sexual encounters of the partner will be with people who are disease-free. Further, the "relationship" goes downhill from there according to the problems identified elsewhere in this book. Worst of all the "relationship" is primarily rebellion against God's will!

Sadly, Savage extends his anti-Biblical rebellion against God to, and advocates this idea for, heterosexuals in their marriages. Disclosing his unwarranted, indeed errant, assumptions that humans don't want to, can't, and even shouldn't, commit to life-long fidelity to their spouse, he says heterosexuals also should give up striving for such a commitment. Does he think we are animals that can't control our impulses, urges, and temptations?

On the contrary, I thank God regularly that my wife and I saved sex for each other prior to marriage while: we were growing up, in our courtship and engagement, and all through our marriage while she was alive. Since her death, I remain celibate. God has commanded such faithfulness to him and to one's spouse. <u>It can be done</u>. It is simply obedience to God; it is being done by many others also; and all who do, experience countless and continuous blessings for doing so. That commitment was a major factor in our marital bond that gave us the special Biblical one-flesh relationship, shared history, unique and exclusive marital love to the core of our being that we will cherish forever and that continually causes me to sense she remains part of me in many vital, profound, and lasting ways. I testify that God's plan for marriage provides the greatest sense of fulfillment and joy possible in such a relationship. Sadness doesn't adequately describe what I feel when I see homosexuals and heterosexuals throwing away that great blessing God so wonderfully provides. Don't throw it away!

One of the criticisms of "homosexual marriage" that has been advanced from early in the conversation is that such a redefinition of true marriage as instituted by God would lead to all kinds of redefinitions that would so change the understanding of marriage as to obliterate the concept and render the relationship insignificant and meaningless, which as we saw in the preceding chapter is part of the pro-homosexual agenda. As seen elsewhere on these pages, polygamy has been suggested as the next step.

Well, leading in that direction is the concept of "Polyamory," literally "many 'loves.'" Far from the true love revealed in God's Word and discussed elsewhere herein, polyamory is crafted to deceptively connote and deceptively denote a euphemism for sex with many people in an amorphous relationship that is supposedly very open. This framework also leads to an unfulfilling and dissatisfying experience in the most intimate of human relationships to say the very least.

Similarly and expectedly, the silly term, "Throuple," was presented in 2012 to refer to a relationship somewhat like a couple but as a threesome. It is a polygamous or polyandrous arrangement depending on the genders involved. Of course in addition to all else the "throuple" may do, sex is a major part of it.

The fourth new term Anderson informs us of is "wedlease." The term was introduced in 2013 in advocacy of putting marriage in the form of a contract so one could get out of it without the messiness of (read: owning up to the responsibilities involved in) a divorce. Thus, like other contracts a marriage license would be temporary, more like a lease, time-limited with an opportunity to "re-up" or "move on." Supposedly, due to lack of careful thinking, "[t]he messiness of divorce is avoided and the end can be as simple as vacating a rental unit."[464]

Such wishful thinking, more typical of males, fails to take into account the very profound psychophysical and spiritual bond that occurs in the male-female one flesh relationship when sexual union occurs. That superficial thinking is also short-sighted, failing to look at life in the broad perspective, including the declining years. That shared history of growing old together is precious. Further, who will be there for you go cope with the possible challenges of the last days on earth?

The severing of that special one-flesh bond by divorce results in especially enormous pain. While that profound bond does not exist in homosexual relationships, some do experience enough emotional disharmony as to result in violence, as we saw in Chapter Two. Even the most superficial thought can discern the huge difference and disconnect between leasing a car and the profoundly evil concept of trying to lease a human being to use him or her and then throw that person away when finished with him or her—talk about abuse!

So, as one would lease a car or a home, he or she could lease human property to be used, and abused, as long as deemed desirable in this misguided and not carefully thought through concept, to say nothing of its evil rebellion against God's will. They opt for wedlease instead of wedlock. But let's look at these two alternatives more closely.

Social science research reveals that one of the most important human needs, Abraham Maslow observed it as indeed a hunger, is for love and to belong. Maslow and others see the two as going together.[465]

I have a question for you. Which of the following alternatives will meet the love and belonging needs of a healthy, normal, person in the fullest and most complete way? Which would meet your needs and longings most fully?

(1) Put yourself in a tentative "relationship" with someone who can toss you aside when he or she is finished with you, when he or she has no more use for you, becomes angry with you and doesn't like what you do, when he or she meets

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[464] Anderson here quotes Paul Rampell, "A High Divorce Rate Means It's Time to Try 'Wedleases,'" *The Washington Post*, August 4, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-high-divorce-rate-means-its-time-to-try-wedleases/2013/08/04/f2221c1c-f89e-11e2-b018-5b8251f0c56e_story.html

[465] Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Second Edition (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1970), pp. 43-45

someone else, when you don't earn enough, when you lose your job, when you become ill or disabled.[466] **or**

(2) Commit yourself to someone who commits to you, who vows "in the sight of God and these witnesses" to remain beside you "from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge myself truly, with all my heart."

One of the main reasons people select the wrong alternative is that they don't think about what lies ahead; so focused on the moment, they make decisions without considering the changes that are coming and all they mean. Of course no one can predict the future, but this is why we are wise to rely first of all on the only one who does know and control the future, the triune God, and also on the time-tested wisdom of previous generations who have shared what they've learned with those coming after them, especially those who have been obediently walking with the Lord Jesus Christ.

A much greater complicating factor enters when not only the dictionary standard is ignored but when the much higher and more authoritative standard of God's Word is ignored, disregarded, and even set aside with redefinitions in opposition to God's will as revealed in his Word. That disregard for the Biblical standard has characterized the secular culture and society as long as the church has existed, and it is our call to engage that culture and our society and not conform to it (Romans 12:2) but to facilitate transforming it. What is an enormous concern for us now is the disregard for the Biblical standard that is emerging in many church congregations, which is the main reason for this book. ***That there is confusion in the culture on the matter of homosexuality is understandable; there should be no confusion in the church***.

When confusion exists in the church, what encouragement does the world have, the world God so loved that he gave, at <u>huge cost including pain to himself</u>, his only-begotten Son to redeem his creation from such and all other evil? We are called to bring hope and help to the world, not to hinder it and to hasten it toward ill health, physically and, worst of all, spiritually. As we see especially in Chapter Three and elsewhere on these pages, all over the world and throughout history, homosexuality has been seen to be unnatural and abnormal. What are non-Christians to think, when they see the church, to whom they look for moral uprightness and from whom they expect the truth, when they see such confusion and caving in to the worst parts of culture? What did Peter say? (Review his comments about the pagans in 1 Peter 2:12.)

Unwarranted Use of Analogy (Or The Fallacy of False Analogy)

A common flaw in reasoning involves a misuse of similitude, comparisons and examples, i.e., analogies. The error typically occurs when superficially observing similarities in two

[466] Of course few if any would state in these terms what he or she would do to you, but I employ these terms to describe most realistically what would occur should you choose this option; you surely will feel this way, as many have told me in private counseling sessions in my office.

or more phenomena and concluding that because each entity shares a common aspect, or even more than one, therefore they are in the same class or are at least equal.

This fallacy of logic is often colloquially called comparing apples to oranges. "The fallacy of false analogy arises when one attempts to prove or disprove a claim using an analogy that is not suitable for the situation…It's a common type of fallacious claim; people frequently use misleading and inaccurate analogies to support their ideas and views."[467]

An example is where an advocacy group in a city in Colorado tried to persuade the city council to establish a proposed "identity and equity commission," also referred to as a "diversity commission," to support people of minority races and those with disabilities along with LGBTQ+ groups, which would be ignoring the essential aspects of these groups and illogically treating biological and ideological, specifically moral, issues equally with no distinction, making unwarranted generalizations, when key variables render them categorically distinct. The error often occurs in subjects pertaining to homosexuality and to so-called "same-sex marriage" also in the transgender movement in particular.[468]

Pittsburg Theological Seminary Professor Robert A. J. Gagnon told a reporter at *The Christian Post* that the strong declaration of the alliance of Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars, "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," offers help the church can use to correct this logical flaw in addressing the issue of homosexual "marriage." Gagnon explained to the *Post*

> that this document does not serve just a political purpose but also is designed to debunk analogies used by gay supporters who reason that since divorce and cohabitation is increasingly accepted in many churches, churches can accept homosexual marriages, as well.
>
> "This is a faulty use of analogical reasoning," Gagnon asserted. "One can't logically and reasonably move from limited accommodation in lesser offenses to full accommodation in greater offenses."
>
> [The *Post* also reports that] Gagnon agrees that affirming same-sex marriages is not a faithful Christian view.[469]

Other examples of the unwarranted use of a Biblical analogy should be considered. One frequently heard by pro-homosexual activists attempts to equate Jesus' eating with "tax collectors and 'sinners'" with an acceptance of practicing homosexuals today. They

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[467] Paul Elsher, "False Analogy (Logical Fallacy): Definition and Examples," *Fallacy in Logic*, https://fallacyinlogic.com/false-analogy-definition-and-examples/ (Accessed 1/6/2021; 4/26/2023)
[468] See also Mary Margaret Olohan, "Transgender Activists Strategize to Overcome GOP Wins With 'Race Class Gender Narrative,'" *The Daily Signal*, January 4, 2022. (Accessed 1/5/22)
[469] Samuel Smith, "Gay Marriage 'Graver Threat' Than Divorce, Cohabitation, Rick Warren, Other Evangelicals, Catholics Declare," *The Christian Post*, http://www.christianpost.com/news/gay-marriage-graver-threat-than-divorce-cohabitation-rick-warren-other-evangelicals-catholics-declare-133359/ (Accessed 2/14/15; 4/26/23)

argue on the basis of the superficial observation that because Jesus ate with sinners, he'd "surely" hangout with, be comfortable with, and accept homosexuals. The argument fails when the incongruence of the two phenomena is easily observed. The key element or factor at issue pertaining to the two sets of sinners is the behavior change to righteous living that Jesus requires. It occurred in the ones Jesus accepted, but such a behavior change is rejected by practicing homosexuals. We will explore this subject further in Chapter Five when we consider the question of whether homosexuals should become members of, and even leaders in, the church.

A common fallacious use of analogy involves the rejection by some of the Copernican heliocentric theory of the earth revolving around the sun. The analogy fails to take into account key elements in both phenomena that differ significantly enough they prohibit the intended comparison. Specifically, the Biblical texts those (but not all in) the church in the 16th century hermeneutically misinterpreted to oppose Copernicus were *narrative and descriptive* texts. The Biblical texts pertaining to homosexuality that some are trying to use by analogy are *commands* of God. No passage in the Bible requires a Ptolemaic or a Copernican cosmology. On the contrary the passages examined in Chapter One are commands and do require the rejection of homosexuality. Thus this analogy cannot be used to justify either the practice of homosexuality or the admission of unrepentant and practicing homosexuals in the church; hence, no "Copernican Revolution on the settled issue of human sexuality" as one writer "*feels*" (emphasis his), after talking to "a number of people."[470]

Another example of false analogy is the reference to the intersex phenomenon where a minuscule number of people born with a genetic defect causes them to have some aspects of male and female sex characteristics. Just because a tiny number of people are born with a biological physical disorder, does not provide a logical basis to verify and legitimize a nonbiological ideological disorder. For more on the phenomenon of intersex, which formerly was called hermaphroditism, and is now referred to as disorders of sexual development (DSDs), see the section below on the naturalistic fallacy.

Irrelevant Conclusion

This fallacy of logic is also frequently seen. People cite an outcome that homosexuals do and attribute it to a cause without documenting and establishing the connection between that cause and the outcome, thus committing the logical fallacy of ***irrelevant conclusion***. For example, a person disappointed in her denomination's decision to not accept a pro-homosexual policy proposal led her to engage in a protest because of the synod's decision, and "'for Andrew, who died of depression and suicide. Exclusion can have a big impact on mental health.'"[471] In this expression of her rationale, she is drawing an unsupported and unwarranted conclusion that the denomination's decision to maintain the Biblical basis for its policy to not include practicing homosexuals as members in good

[470] Chuck DeGroat, Unpublished White Paper, "Can We Disagree On Homosexuality Yet Remain Together?" p. 5.
[471] www.thebanner.org/news/2016/07/ontario-churches-lament-same-sex-marriage-decision (Accessed 7/4/16)

standing in its churches is a detriment to mental health that can lead to depression and even suicide.

Notice also the failure to include any responsibility for the sad outcome to the homosexual himself. As we've seen above, depression and suicides are linked with the seriousness of the effects of the homosexual lifestyle, which is not at all "gay."

Moreover, such depression and suicide cannot be used as a rationale for overturning the church's traditional practice in obedience to God's Word, which is the standard by which we are to live. In fact, the sad effects of the homosexual lifestyle occur as a result of disobedience to God's Word, which can be said for the negative effects of all human disobedience and rebellion against God. What all people should do, but frequently do not to our own detriment, is to ask God to help us put our lives ever more in sync with his Word and will. In so doing, we do and will avoid a host of spiritual, physical, psychological, relational, and other problems.

Further, as cited elsewhere in this book, male and female homosexuals want the church to speak the truth in love, thus giving them the hope and the help they need to become free of this lifestyle's grip on them and its counterproductive effects on their lives. As documented in these pages, the church's teaching the truth in love is helping thousands of homosexuals to break free.

Another example of this logical fallacy of the irrelevant conclusion, we've already seen in use when we considered the case in China of Yang Teng, a homosexual who sued the clinic that administered shock treatments in order to turn him into a heterosexual. When the court ruled in his favor both he and his attorney committed the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion when they said the court's decision was a judgment that homosexuality is normal and doesn't need treatment. But that's not what the court is reported to have said; the court stated that the judgment was against the clinic for the type of treatment it administered, not that treatment was given. People commit the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion when they present an argument or a rationale that is intended to establish a particular conclusion but then redirect it to prove a different conclusion.[472]

Unsound Premise

Another logical flaw we've seen above is the *unsound premise*. A premise that is wrong usually determines a conclusion that is wrong. Secular people arguing from a non-Biblical point of view, and thus without being able to appeal to the highest authority, God, have much more difficulty establishing the soundness of their premises. We who consider a given subject in the light of God's Word as our standard thereby have the rational basis for calling wrong that which conflicts with the Bible.

When homosexuals hear heterosexuals talk the truth about homosexuality, mentioning some of what you've read in the preceding pages, some assume heterosexuals hate them; they confuse disagreement with hatred. When accusations are made that straights engage

[472] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, p. 51.

in homohatred, or other epithets such as "homophobia," as we've seen above, and where no evidence is presented to support the accusation, the logical fallacy of the unsupported premise is committed. When the next mental step is taken and a statement follows such as, "Therefore all straights hate homosexuals," then another fallacy of logic occurs, the hasty generalization, which we'll examine below.

Pro-homosexual activists accuse Bible authors of ignorance about homosexuality. Where is their documentation? It is neither offered nor proven. They wrongly assume that the Bible is a human document and not the fully inspired Word of God. Contrary to the historical understanding and teaching of the church given to it by God, they do not hold that the Bible is indeed the infallible and inerrant Word of God that was written by authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit as to what to write (2 Timothy 3:16) and kept from error while they wrote. While humans were employed by God to write the books of the Bible, they wrote what he guided them to write.

Tu Quoque

One of the most common logical fallacies used in human communication today is called *tu quoque* (pronounced two-kwo-kwee, from the Latin: you also). It refers to a retort charging an adversary with being or doing what he criticizes in others.[473] An example regularly seen in politics is where one partisan, whose party is accused of a specific wrongdoing, quickly replies that the accuser's party does the same thing. That reply is an irrelevant and illogical argument that fails to address the original accusation. Even if the accuser's party does the same thing, which is not established by the rejoinder, such activity fails to justify the wrongdoing in the original assertion.

Tu quoque is an appeal to hypocrisy that is intended to relieve the user of this fallacy from having to defend his or his cohort's position or actions and in so doing put the other person on the defensive. As we saw above in our discussion of 1 Corinthians 6:9-20, homosexuals frequently point out how heterosexuals also sin and are included in the sin catalogues of Paul as well. When faced with this accusation, Christ's people can agree, as we did in our discussion of the Corinthian passage, that heterosexuals also sin, but at the same time we should point out that the phenomenon of heterosexuals sinning does not justify homosexual sin; indeed, as the old secular saying puts it, and with a clever wordplay, "Two wrongs don't make one right."

We should also clarify that not all heterosexuals commit sexual sins. Further, by identifying as a heterosexual, one is not ipso facto identifying with a practice that is rebellion against God's will.

We must state here that *it is not wrong to point out hypocrisy, if in doing so we speak the truth in love, when the motivation is for information and amelioration. The issue here is when the appeal to hypocrisy is done in the illogical attempt to justify and validate one's*

[473] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tu%20quoque (Accessed 4/6/15) For more information on *tu quoque*, see my free booklet on common logical fallacies, *Logic: A Primer on Common Logical Fallacies*. (Accessed 12/31/24)

own position. We believers in and followers of Jesus Christ who always desire the truth, should warmly invite people to share with us any corrective feedback we need to hear in order to serve the Lord more effectively. If someone throws a *tu quoque* at you, respond in words to the effect, "Tell me more. What have I done that looks to you like I don't do what I say? I need to know." We should keep in mind, however, that we don't have to believe everything someone tells us about ourselves, especially an adversary; but if something is said that may be plausible, before believing it and making any changes, ask two or three people, who have the courage to tell you like it is including your pastor and especially your spouse, if the feedback is accurate. Also, keep in mind that anything said about you does not validate the other person's logic or its soundness. That reality is important to tell him or her…in love…and not in retaliation to any, especially deserved, corrective feedback.

Here is what makes *tu quoque* a dangerously powerful though flawed argument: the fallacy sometimes contains an element of truth. When something is wrong, it is wrong for anyone who does it. What's true for the goose is true for the gander. When someone is accused of doing something wrong and then accuses his accuser of doing the same thing, he is making a point that must be acknowledged, *but that point still does not address the original premise*. If someone holds to a basic principle or truth, but fails to act accordingly, his or her failure to act according to the principle does not invalidate the principle.

The next question being raised is, "Is the principle unrealistic; i.e., is the bar set too high?" The correct answer is obtained by asking who set the standard? If it is a human standard, maybe it should be reconsidered. <u>BUT</u> if the standard is from God it must remain in place. It is his will, and we do not have the authority to change it. Instead we need to accommodate to it and help others do so as well. We live in his world; he owns it, knows all and what's best, loves us, and has the inherent right to say how his world will be run.

Heterosexual believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should also add that the homosexual's *tu quoque* accusation, when true, only shows how heterosexuals cannot throw stones; the homosexual's Judge is not the heterosexual. The Judge who set the standard that homosexuals are rejecting is the one to whom they'll have to answer truthfully.

Argumentum ad Misericordiam

Another logical fallacy is called <u>*argumentum ad misericordiam*</u> (plea for pity), i.e., arguing by an appeal to emotion, and other unsound and unwarranted assumptions. We see an example in the article by AP reporter, Lavoie.

> Supporters and activists routinely ask gay couples to meet with reluctant lawmakers to put a human face on same-sex marriage. They file lawsuits. They use unexpected allies—in some cases, churches—to spread their message.

> It's a strategy that has shown results,…
>
> We've really used a spirit of relentlessness," says Marc Solomon, the national campaign director for Freedom to Marry. "That's the way we've approached this entire movement from the get-go in Massachusetts and around the country."
>
> [An opposition was defeated by] intense lobbying by same-sex marriage supporters who asked gay couples to meet with their lawmakers and talk about what their marriages meant to them.
>
> Solomon, a leader of the campaign in Massachusetts, and several other veterans of that drive have been working in other states since then.
>
> They've worked to build support among lawmakers, oust others, and recruit business leaders and other prominent people to their side. In Indiana, executives of pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly and engine maker Cummins have argued against a proposed ban, saying it could hinder worker recruitment.[474]

The "human face on same-sex marriage" and the opportunity for "gay couples to meet with their lawmakers and talk about what their marriages meant to them" is expressed in emotive terms that evoke pity for their difficult circumstances. Of course the message is that lawmakers can change those circumstances by supporting the homosexual agenda, but the argument is not presented as an appeal to the intellect by a superior logic and cogent rationale but as an appeal to the heart. For another example of *argumentum ad misericordiam* recall also the discussion above in the section on the homosexual agenda where Kirk and Madsen urge the portrayal of homosexuals as victims: "the public should be persuaded that gays are victims of circumstance."[475]

It is not wrong to "put a face on" the results of injustice. Legislators pushing for passage of a bill to correct, or at least ameliorate, wrongdoing frequently bring in a person who has been victimized by the status quo. This procedure can make some important contributions to the decision-making process. Decision-makers more clearly understand the seriousness of the situation. This is especially helpful to men who typically reason from the left-hemisphere of the cerebrum and contemplate principles and factual data apart from the more relational and emotive dimension located in the right hemisphere.

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[474] Lavoie, "Tactics endure after ten years of same-sex marriage," p. 9A. Irrefutable evidence of such hindering of worker recruitment is lacking and of course was not included in this article. How extensive has been their search? Executives who make such assertions do so not based on unbiased and careful social science studies but on political correctness and the corporate fear of litigation. Not only flawed logic but flawed science characterizes the argument of the homosexual agenda. Lavoie's article also reveals in its title a subtle and misleading connotation that same-sex marriages endure as do heterosexual marriages. As noted above, homosexuals are notoriously promiscuous. By pointing to one or a few who have stayed together, they are unscientifically trying to generalize from a tiny and non-randomly selected sample.

[475] Kirk and Madsen, p. 184.

The presence of women in the discussion, and the inclusion of people who have been affected by the issue being addressed helps to "connect the dots," to bring the two hemispheres together.

Nevertheless, it is vital for everyone to be aware that a danger exists in this procedure that leads to fallacious reasoning and a false outcome. The danger is that the wrong message is sent, and that wrong message is rarely if ever pointed out in the decision-making process. The correct message is, "Folks, here you see the seriousness of the matter before us." The incorrect message that is sent is, "You must vote for the bill before you to correct and eliminate this injustice."

Another danger is that too many people allow their heart to rule their head. God's Word is clear that we must exercise a cerebral self-control, which is actually a fruit of the functioning of the Holy Spirit within his people. (Galatians 5:23)

This distinction must be made to avoid committing the logical fallacy of *argumentum ad misericordiam*. It is one thing to say that something is important; it is quite another to say that a given proposal is the best way to improve a situation and/or to correct or eliminate it. So when people are presented to us, who have sad stories to tell about how a particular situation has had a disastrous effect on them, we need to pay careful attention to the seriousness of their life condition while at the same time keeping in mind that the proposal the proponents are presenting to us *may well not* be the most effective, just, or morally right way, i.e., in accord with God's will, to resolve the issue. It is incumbent upon us who are called to speak the truth in love that we point out this vital distinction and act, as well as urging others to act, accordingly.

One more example will suffice. In his argument that church members should change the traditional practice of not allowing homosexuals to be members of the church with all the privileges of membership, DeGroat commits the logical fallacy of *argumentum ad misericordiam*, and in the process can't resist an *ad hominem* (accusing those holding to a traditional interpretation as being "naïve") to top it off when he writes the following in his essay.

> Judgments of those who are becoming progressive that include claims of "abandoning the truth" and "leaving orthodoxy" are naive, and miss the real life stories of men and women wrestling with this. Will we privilege one person's story over the next?[476]

Wrong question, especially in this case. As explained above, the standard for decision-making in the church is God's Word, not human experience (stories). As important as stories are for determining pastoral care and how to love and help people, they do not provide a standard for moral judgment and moral action. We haven't "missed the stories;" we just treat them in the right manner: as means for ministry, not as criteria for determining right and wrong. We'll return for more on both of these two subjects, moral judgment and moral action, in Chapter Five.

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[476] Chuck DeGroat, p. 8.

Argumentum ad Hominem (Abusive)

One of the most frequent fallacies in logic that is used to advance the cause of normalizing homosexuality and "same-sex marriage" by attempting to bring down the opposition is called *argumentum ad hominem* (literally, argument [directed] to the man). The argument appears in two ways.

The most common use of this false reasoning is in its abusive form. Comments are made to discredit and even remove an opponent rather than address the content and process of his or her thinking. This form of argument attacks the person instead of attempting to show how his or her reasoning is inadequate. Rather than demonstrate how a particular argument is superior to an opponent's rationale, an effort is made to disparage the person; such disparagement is often done by name-calling. The classic use of this logical fallacy in the issue of homosexuality and "same-sex marriage" is calling opponents homophobic or faggots. For several other common examples of this logical fallacy in the homosexual literature see the quote by Kirk and Madsen in the above section on the agenda principle of jamming.

An illustration of how serious and out of control this logical fallacy has become, is explained in an interview of Bret Weinstein a liberal college professor who became a victim of *argumentum ad hominem*. He talked about the Social Justice Warriors movement (SJW) that populates most college campuses today and the strategy they use to get their way or at least to appear to win arguments, even causing professors they perceive as not being liberal enough to lose their jobs, such as occurred with Weinstein, who was forced to leave Evergreen State College, a capitulation to the SJW, described in the interview as a small but growing and vocal minority, that cost the college half a million dollars. Political "correctness" is expensive! Weinstein observes that though the ideas of the SJW are "crazy to the point of absurdity," their strategic plan is effective, because it essentially involves an unrelenting and high-pitched invective of *argumentum ad hominem*. He explains how the SJW gets away with their flagrantly flawed and illogical assertions.

> In other words – no matter how silly and patently false their underlying arguments are, these students have learned to argue them in such a way that it is nearly impossible to refute them. All logical, counter-balancing points are dismissed with: "That's victim blaming!" "That's your white privilege speaking!" "You're using the language of the patriarchy!" "It's not the role of the oppressed to inform the oppressor!" Ad nauseum. This doesn't necessarily help them convert anyone to their cause, but it does give them the appearance of "winning" whenever they are in a showdown with the rational-minded. And that appearance alone may be enough to explain why more and more students – many of them who have felt

> victimized their entire lives for one (real or imagined) reason or another – are drawn to join the movement.[477]

Along with logic keep psychology in mind. When Christians are accused of being homophobic, Islamophobic, xenophobic or phobic in any other way that involves a value judgment, consider that the person hurling that accusation may well be engaging in what is called projection in the psychological literature and in common parlance. As is generally known, projection is the practice where one attributes to someone or something else an orientation, concepts, values, and/or attitudes that the projector has or actions that he or she does, typically as a coping mechanism to overcome guilt and anxiety. Thus, without committing the same error, it would be instructive to ask (not accuse) such people if the opposite isn't actually the case with questions such as, "Which of the facts I've presented do you think is untrue?" Also ask, "Can we focus on the facts without name-calling? Such character invectives do not disprove an argument."

Thoughtful and intelligent people perceive the inadequacy of *argumentum ad hominem* (both forms), which reminds them of a childish playground tactic. It tends to backfire on the user, whose argument is seen to be insufficient for persuasion, so he or she has to resort to personal attacks. In my observation the most intelligent people on both sides of the issue avoid such verbal abuse.

Christians who are maturing in the sanctification process, growing in Christ-likeness, have little if any fear. We are told throughout all of God's Word, both the Old and New Testaments, that we should not fear and why we don't have to ever fear: Because God is sovereign, almighty, everywhere present, and he loves his people; he takes care of us.

> 1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
> 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
> 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah
> 6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
> 7 The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah
> 8 Come and see the works of the LORD, the desolations he has brought on the earth.
> 9 He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with fire.
> 10 "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."
> 11 The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah
> (Psalm 46:1-3; 6-11)

[477] "Professor Explains Why Social Justice Warriors are Taking Over Academia," *Total Conservative*, November 26, 2017.

God is both transcendent and imminent. Because of the latter reality, he knows everything that is occurring in the lives of his people whom he loves; because of the former reality, he is fully capable of taking care of his people whom he loves. Why fear? Consider carefully the rationale for not fearing that the Holy Spirit led the Apostle Paul to experience and write:

> 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
> 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
> 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
> 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)

Because we need not fear anything, and don't fear, we are freed to love. See also Matthew 10:26-28; Luke 12:4-12; Revelation 1:17.

The Apostle Paul fearlessly and forthrightly proclaimed in love the truth God revealed to him. As a result he experienced many harsh and vindictive lashes from the forces arrayed against him, some which he lists in 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, but none of those deterred him, for he was protected, and helped to overcome them, by God. For example,

> 9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.
> 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."
> 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. (Acts 18:9-11)

Remember also what we read in the letter to the Hebrews:

> 5 …God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
> 6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" Hebrews 13:5-6 (NIV)

Christians not only read God's Word every day and allow God to shape our minds and hearts thereby through the work of the Holy Spirit in us, but we also sing his word. One of our time-honored favorites is the famous hymn to which Martin Luther put Psalm 46. Contemplate these words as you read them, and even sing along, to recall why you, as one maturing in Christ-likeness, don't fear and why you never have to be afraid.

1. A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
   Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
   For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
   His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
   On earth is not his equal.

2. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
   Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:
   Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;
   Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,
   And He must win the battle.

3. And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
   We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us;
   The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
   His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,
   One little word shall fell him.

4. That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth;
   The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth;
   Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
   The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,
   His kingdom is forever.[478]

It is thus illogical to hurl the ad hominem accusation of homophobia at anyone, much less at a Christian. It only discredits the one making the attack, and it does nothing to prove his or her argument.

Argumentum ad Hominem (Circumstantial)

The other main way this argument is employed is when an opponent ignores the question of whether his or her assertion is true or false and says that it should be accepted on the basis that the circumstances demand it. We've already seen examples of this appeal above in the school's response to the girls who were harassed by a transgender boy in their restroom and in the homosexual agenda section on discerning their flawed appeal to science.

In addition to a denial to the girls that the harassment is occurring, the school told the girls [without proof] that they were in opposition to a sweeping 2008 Colorado antidiscrimination law and could face being removed from athletic teams and even be charged with hate crimes. Here the attempt was to dispute the girls' stand, not by addressing its merits, but by saying they must accept the special circumstances of the situation in order to not be out of compliance with the school's interpretation of a state law that is being disputed.

Another circumstantial aspect of this case is the transgender boy's need to use the restroom he wants to use to fit in with his choice of gender. The *argumentum ad hominem* here is that the girls just have to accept the situation due to his special circumstance. Then the school issued an in-your-face threat, whereby the *ad hominem* (circumstantial) became abusive to the girls. The school tried to end the issue by

[478] Martin Luther (ca. 1529), trans. Frederick H. Hedge (1853), "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," public domain. http://library.timelesstruths.org/music/A_Mighty_Fortress_Is_Our_God/ (Accessed 3/26/16)

throwing the circumstantial argument at them instead of addressing the logical merits of their reasoning.

Kirk and Madsen come right out and state their logical flaw, but with the veil covering their hearts and minds, (2 Corinthians 4:4) it's understandable they may well not see the flaw. By the common grace God gives to all human beings, (e.g., Matthew 5:45) they may see the flaw, but sin motivates them to ignore it and hope we don't notice along with the rest of their misinformed, misguided, and misleading thinking. Recall the following comments they make, part of which was addressed above:

> …the public should be persuaded that gays are *victims of circumstance*, that they no more chose their sexual orientation than they did, say, their height, skin color, talents, or limitations. (We argue that, for all practical purposes, gays should be considered to have been *born gay*—even though sexual orientation, for most humans, seems to be the product of a complex interaction between innate predispositions and environmental factors during childhood and early adolescence.) To suggest in public that homosexuality might be *chosen* is to open the can of worms labeled 'moral choice and sin' and give the religious Intransigents a stick to beat us with. Straights must be taught that it is as natural for some persons to be homosexual as it is for others to be heterosexual; wickedness and seduction have nothing to do with it. *And since no choice is involved, gayness can be no more blameworthy than straightness*. In fact, it is simply a matter of the odds—one in ten—as to who turns out gay, and who straight. Each heterosexual must be led to realize that he might easily have been born homosexual himself.[479]

They attempt to validate their logically flawed appeal to circumstance by linking with an equally flawed appeal to science. But it doesn't work for those who've been informed about the flaws in logical reasoning. Even if it were true that their present situation were part of a circumstance they had little or nothing with which to do, that would not logically establish the truth of their argument. Again, it also commits the naturalistic fallacy. Further, they know no scientific proof exists for being born a homosexual. Their big fear is to be left with no other recourse than to admit their homosexuality is a matter of choice, for which they then have to assume responsibility. But that is what remains: the science does not work for them, and neither does logic.

As the perceptive reader can readily tell, the homosexual agenda consists of one logical fallacy after another. As he or she learns these fallacies, they will leap out in the reading of the agenda, for example the naturalistic fallacy, which will be discussed below.

The authors also play another victim, read *argumentum ad hominem* (circumstantial), card.

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[479] Kirk and Madsen, p. 184.

> …gays should be portrayed as *victims of prejudice*. Straights don't fully realize the suffering they bring upon gays, and must be shown: graphic pictures of brutalized gays, dramatizations of job and housing insecurity, loss of child custody, public humiliation, etc….
>
> Bear in mind that these arguments are no more than an appeal to rationality and as such would scarcely make a dent in an emotional condition like homohatred. What arguments can do, however, is suspend the straight viewer's rush to judgment just long enough to slip in front of her visual images that either arouse shame over her homohatred or else build favorable emotions toward gays.[480]

Their second assertion that "gays" should be portrayed as victims of prejudice also commits the logical fallacy of *argumentum ad hominem* (circumstantial). Claiming that homosexuals are mistreated does not validate their rebellion against God; or their lifestyle that is characterized by extremely unhealthy practices and violence that are neither normal nor typical of the other 97-98% of the population; or their agenda with its deceit. Speaking of the 97-98% figure, Kirk and Madsen throw careful science out the window and perpetuate the Kinsey 10% myth, preferring flawed and discredited "science" that suits their purposes, especially since many are unware of the more accurate science that shows how relatively few homosexuals there are in the country.

An anecdotal account which follows discloses a discussion between a psychologist and a delegate to an ecclesiastical trial of a minister who officiated at the wedding of his lesbian daughter and another woman contrary to the constitution of the denomination that holds his ministerial credentials. In response to a question the delegate raised, the psychologist asked the delegate if the minister's daughter couldn't find a suitable male spouse did the delegate think she should live alone. Here is another example of the circumstantial form of *argumentum ad hominem*. The clear, but logically flawed, argument is that the delegate should accept the minister's action due to the special circumstances of his daughter. The appeal is to circumstance; not to the rightness or wrongness of the decision, and especially without regard to God's will as revealed in his Word.

As Copi explains

> Arguments such as these are not *correct*; they do not present good evidence for the *truth* of their conclusions but are only intended to win assent to the conclusion from one's opponent because of his special circumstances. This they frequently do; they are often very persuasive.
>
> The connection between these two varieties of *argumentum ad hominem* is not difficult to see. The second may even be regarded as a special case of the first. For the second, the "circumstantial" kind, in effect charges the man who disputes your conclusion with inconsistency, either among his

[480] Kirk and Madsen, pp. 184-185.

> beliefs or between his preaching and his practice. And this *may* be regarded as a kind of reproach or abuse.[481] [Emphases his]

We also see in print and hear in audio and video media a related use of this fallacious thinking. It is sometimes referred to as "the blame game." It goes like this: "It's not my fault that [you fill in the blank] has occurred; it's the fault of my predecessor." Or "I don't have my homework; I did it but my computer crashed, and I lost it all [the contemporary equivalent of the previous 'but my dog ate it' excuse]." Or, "I'd really have my department humming, but I can't with this ridiculous budget limitation I've been given."

And there are thousands of other examples of the blame game going all the way back to the beginning, to the first human being, Adam. Audacious Adam, trying to bluff his way past the all-knowing God, not only blamed his wife but God too! In answer to the LORD God's question, "Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" Adam quickly double-blamed Eve and God himself saying, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." (Genesis 3:11-12) What Adam was trying to do was to shift guilt from himself to his wife, and even to God, by playing the "victim of circumstances" card. Of course it didn't work. God, who thinks with perfect logic and whose thoughts far transcend human thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9) knew even ahead of the fact what took place.

God also asked Eve, "What is this that you have done?" (a teaching method, for God already knew what she had done). In fact, God knew what Eve and Adam were going to do well before they did it, which is why he issued the warning to them of what would take place if they disobeyed him. (Genesis 2:17) Eve also played the blame game and tried to make the serpent (Satan) responsible saying, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:13) We see here two major Biblical motifs, or themes, that we need to recognize in this discussion.

The first motif is that Satan and the forces of evil are influencing and affecting the circumstances in which we live. We see that reality in the verses which immediately follow, where God curses the serpent/Satan. We see this motif recurring throughout the rest of the Bible.

The second motif we also see in this text and throughout the Bible is that though there are demonic, human, and other forces negatively affecting our circumstances, we are ultimately responsible for recognizing them, overcoming them by relying on God's all-sufficient help, and for acting rightly, because God is going to hold us accountable for what we do. He will hold us accountable directly (Romans 3:19) and indirectly through others to whom we must give account (e.g., government authorities [Romans 13:1-7], other leaders [Hebrews 13:17], and family leaders [1Timothy 3:4,5; Ephesians 5:21-33]).

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[481] Copi, pp. 55-56.

So the blame game doesn't work. Circumstantial and abusive *argumentum ad hominem* are illogical fallacies. Let's look at another common and deceptive flaw in reasoning.

Argumentum ad Verecundiam

Let us return to the anecdote mentioned in the discussion above, pertaining to the circumstantial form of *argumentum ad hominem*, in which an ecclesiastical trial was conducted. This denomination, which officially holds that homosexuality is a sin and that the practice is opposed to the teaching of the Bible, brought to trial one of its ordained ministers, who at the time was also president of one of its seminaries. This minister admitted to officiating at the wedding of his daughter and another woman, which is also contrary to the church's constitution. In the course of the trial, the defense called a psychologist to testify. In so doing, and in the psychologist's report of an anecdotal encounter with one of the delegates, at least six common flaws in logic occurred, one we'll consider in this section and the other five in the next.

The first was in having the psychologist testify in a theological court, which resulted in the fallacy of *argumentum ad verecundiam* (the appeal to authority), which takes place when an authority in one field is appealed to for testimony in another field outside his or her area of expertise.[482] In this case the psychologist was set up for this fallacious argumentation. He brought information pertaining to secular research on the psychology and biology of homosexuals, in particular their sexual orientation (which research as seen mainly in Chapter Two above is disputed). Assuming the information from these secular disciplines is accurate, which as we've seen is an assumption frequently unwarranted, it can be useful, including in some church education sessions, but the primary, and what should have been the sole, issue in the trial was what God's Word says about the issue and whether the minister on trial complied with the Scripture and the denomination's constitution or did not.

As I argue throughout this book, God's Word is to be our ultimate standard as to what we do, and sexual orientation is not determinative as to the behavior by which God will judge us. No matter what our orientation is, the Scriptural requirement involves what we do. Do we obey God or submit to our urges? Early in United States history the standard of the Bible was even the standard of secular law at least in several of the colonies. The colonies stipulated their laws in their constitutions, and then they concluded that if any of the above laws conflicted with the Bible, the citizens must follow the Bible which superseded the state law.[483]

Throughout the Bible God urges his people to follow justice and only justice. (Deuteronomy 16:20) Also throughout the Bible we see many texts warning us to not be

[482] This logical fallacy is also seen when a movie star or some other figure from the pop culture urges you to buy a product he or she is endorsing. The popular figure is held up as having an opinion that can be used authoritatively.

[483] You may wish to review the previous example of *argumentum ad verecundiam* cited above in the quote from Kirk and Madsen urging the use of media celebrities and other famous people.

a respecter of persons (KJV) translation of such passages as Exodus 23:3; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; 10:17; 16:19; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Psalm 82:2; Proverbs 18:5; 24:23; Malachi 2:9; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6; 1 Timothy 5:21; James 2:1, 9; 3:17) In order to follow justice and justice alone we must use God's Word as our standard to determine what is right in a particular matter and not the opinions of persons, even those of high reputation. (Galatians 2:6) This does not mean we should avoid consulting with people who have specific knowledge that is required on a matter, but those people should be chosen carefully and even then their opinion should be compared and contrasted with God's Word and followed as long as it is consistent with Scripture.

The Complex Question

At least five other logical flaws occurred at that trial at a break time. The anecdotal account discloses a discussion between the psychologist and a delegate, where the former asked the delegate if the minister's daughter couldn't find a suitable male spouse did the delegate think she should live alone? This is an example of what in logic is called the *complex question*. It is often called a trick question. On the surface it appears to be a simple yes or no question, but it is not; it hides one or more a priori unasked questions and has the effect of confirming the implied answer to the unasked question.

It's also a false dichotomy. Another example is the illogical question pertaining to transgenders (more scientifically accurately, transexuals): "Would you rather have a live daughter or a dead son?"[484] The implication is that if you don't let your confused son "transition," he will likely commit suicide, a canard that not only lacks sound science but where such suicides do occur, it is typically a result of the child having gone through a transition and then realizing the irreversible and lifelong consequences of what he has done and being distraught over the decision. Dr. Michelle Cretella writes, "Adults who undergo sex reassignment—even in Sweden, which is among the most LGBT-affirming countries—have a suicide rate nearly 20 times greater than that of the general population."[485]

One of the classic examples of this type of question is "have you abandoned your evil ways?" The implied but unasked question is, "Have you in the past followed a course of evildoing in your life?" This logical fallacy occurs when asking a prima facie simple, yes or no, question that masks a plurality of hidden a priori questions, and/or unwarranted assumptions, where a single answer is required.

Of course the most effective way to answer such a question is to refuse to answer it as a simple yes or no question and identify its several components. Often by answering one of the a priori questions, the rest of the question self-destructs, which is what the delegate

[484] Or, if the situation is reversed, "a dead daughter or a live son?"
[485] Michelle Cretella, MD, "I'm a Pediatrician. How Transgender Ideology Has Infiltrated My Field and Produced Large-Scale Child Abuse." *The Daily Signal*. https://www.dailysignal.com/2017/07/03/im-pediatrician-transgender-ideology-infiltrated-field-produced-large-scale-child-abuse/ (Accessed 09/13/22; 04/09/2023)

should have done. He could have explained that the minister's daughter had at least several other options than the one presented (living alone).

Nevertheless, none of that addresses the issue of how a behavior that God has commanded his people to not do can be right in his sight. (The perceptive reader who has a good handle on logical reasoning may also see the subtle inclusion of the fallacy of *argumentum ad misericordiam* [appeal to pity] mixed in with the complex question, another flaw in logic that obscures rather than clarifies and thus leads the conversation farther away from the main issue and the truth of the matter.)

A third logical flaw committed by the psychologist was in his use of a Scripture quote he attached at the end of the anecdote. Immediately after he recounts how the delegate fell for the complex question, he throws at him, and by extension any sympathetic reader, a quote from Matthew 23:4 (TEV) "As Jesus said of the Pharisees, who preached what they didn't practice, 'They tie onto people's backs loads that are heavy and hard to carry.'" Here we have another use of the circumstantial form of *argumentum ad hominem* whereby the professor is charging the delegate with an inconsistency between his belief and his practice. The flaw is the diversionary tactic that tries to discredit the delegate's behavior rather than the delegate's argument.

The fourth flaw is his use of an undocumented and unsound premise in his suggestion that the delegate is guilty of the Pharisaical hypocrisy in Jesus' quote. How does he know what the delegate's practices are? Further, when he misapplies the Scripture, he does not show how the delegate's faithful adherence to God's command not to engage in homosexuality is inconsistent with Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees' hypocrisy in not putting into practice the Rabbinical laws to which he was referring in Matthew 23:4.

The logical fallacies mount when trying to go against God's Word. Twisting one text raises problems with other texts. A fifth flaw in logic occurs in regard to the use of Matthew 23:4 to try to discredit the delegate's stand. When the professor uses 23:4, which concerns hypocrisy, as an attempt to discredit the delegate, he raises an irrelevant issue. The delegate is addressing the Biblical command to not practice homosexual relations, and the professor raises the otherwise important, but here irrelevant, matter of hypocrisy, thus committing the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion (*op cit*.).

Hasty Generalization

A *hasty generalization* occurs when someone makes a general rule from a single case[486] or only a few. In common parlance it's referred to as "painting with too broad a brush." It occurs when someone is observed doing something and the observer makes a general rule out of that one instance, stating that everyone in the same class of people does the same thing, without considering that what he or she observed may be atypical or one of such a few unrepresentative instances that it is impossible to accurately generalize to all people in that class.

[486] http://www.logicalfallacies.info/presumption/hasty-generalisation/ (Accessed 4/11/15)

One example of this fallacy that commonly occurs in the subject before us runs like this: "Sam and Bill are having affairs with women other than their wives, and each of them think homosexuality is sinful, even though their own Bible teaches that both are wrong in the same verse! That just goes to prove what I believe, 'All Christians hold to a double standard.'" Just because one or a few in a class do something, it is illogical to conclude that everyone in that class does it.

Sweeping Generalization

A *sweeping generalization* applies a generalization too broadly. It is the opposite of the hasty generalization, where a generalization is inferred on the basis of a single case or even of only two or three. The sweeping generalization involves taking a general rule, that may or may not be sound, and applying it to a specific individual or case in which, due to the specific elements present in the individual or case, the rule does not truly apply; the conclusion is not logical.

An example is given using the principle that children should be seen and not heard. Little Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is a child. Therefore, Wolfgang should not be heard. No matter what one thinks of the soundness of the major premise (children should be seen and not heard), the generalization is not true in this case. [487]

This argumentation employs widespread use of stereotypes. An example in the matter before us is when the assertion is made that straights are bigots. Sam is a straight; therefore, Sam is a bigot. Logic, especially flawed logic, cannot prove what is in Sam's heart and mind simply on the basis of his belonging to a certain class of people.

Another example comes from Critical Race Theory. The statement is made that "all white people are inherently racist." Such assertions are illogical stereotypes. Just because some can be shown to be racist, it does not logically follow that all are racist.

Argumentum ad Populum

The homosexual agenda necessarily employs other flaws in logic and assertions in its misuse of social science research. Another example of illogical reasoning used very often is called *argumentum ad populum* (arguing by appealing to the people and arousing their passions). It's the bandwagon argument that tries to win approval of an idea, concept, product, service, or whatever the proponent is trying to sell based on the thesis that everyone is doing it so you'd better "get with it" in order to not wind up left out, looked down upon, or cause dissension. The rationale is that this concept, etc., is so good and must be true because "50,000 Frenchmen can't be wrong." This approach is often accompanied by a passion-building sense of urgency: "do it now so this bad result [insert specific disaster here] doesn't occur." This argument is illogical, because it assumes that since so many people are doing something, that means it must be good for you too (thus also committing the naturalistic fallacy), which may not at all be true; further, no sound rationale is offered to verify the claim or justify its use. An example and application of

[487] http://www.logicalfallacies.info/presumption/sweeping-generalisation/ (Accessed 4/11/15)

this logical flaw is seen in the argument that if the church doesn't change its policy toward homosexuals in membership and leadership, people will (and the argument avers they already do) not perceive the church as welcoming and will turn away, harming the church and its outreach and growth.

The argument also attempts to portray the church as in danger of being viewed as backward, stuck in the past, and failing to "keep up with the times which are changing" and therefore the church should "get on the stick" and change too. The flaw in *argumentum ad populum* is the failure to put forth valid and sound premises as to why the opinion of those fabled 50,000 Frenchmen are correct on this matter.

It is important to not misunderstand this point. No one is saying the church should never change. The point is that a logical argument for a proposed change must be put forth with valid and sound premises. In the field of logic an argument based on the passion of a large number of people is neither valid nor sound.

This fallacious argumentation is frequently used also on a smaller basis. I have been in many meetings where especially a popular, or a highly positioned, committee (today called a team) member has said, "I feel [or sometimes with some others, "we feel"] strongly that we should do [such and so]." That's OK for him to say (it's always been a male; in the many meetings I've been in with women I haven't heard any woman make such an assertion), but his feeling strongly doesn't supply a valid and sound rationale to support his argument. Just because someone feels strongly about something does not prove it is logical or right to do, neither when he is joined by a few or even by many others.

One of many examples of the results of caving into the *argumentum ad populum* is the decision by the Women's National Basketball Association to conduct a marketing campaign to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) segment of the population.

> Amid a surge of public opinion on favor of gay rights in the U.S., the WNBA is launching a campaign to market the league to the LGBT community, becoming the first pro sports league to specifically recruit gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender fans to its games.
>
> With the marketing campaign, the WNBA is capitalizing on what it has known for years: The community makes up a significant portion of its fan base….
>
> The launch of the effort coincides with a surge of political and legal advances for the gay-rights movement in the U.S., and shifting public opinion behind many of those advances….

> "For us it's a celebration of diversity and inclusion and recognition of an audience that has been with us very passionately," WNBA President Laurel Richie said.[488]

Did you notice the link between logical fallacy and the agenda-driven misuse of social science research in the report of this rationale? In the attempt to link with populism, which can be and often is wrong, no sound research is documented to support the WNBA's statement of "shifting public opinion." Also, what does the WNBA mean when it says that it has known for years that homosexuals make up a "significant" portion of its fan base?" "Significance" in social science research is a technical term, and it typically is not used to refer to a number that is less than three percent.

What is for sure is that the public is not the authority to determine rightness or wrongness of an assertion. Neither does its passion supply a logically sound basis for a decision rationale, especially one that is in opposition to God's will.

The Naturalistic Fallacy

Another common error in logic that is regularly made, and is the basis of much flawed reasoning relative to the attempt to advance the homosexual agenda, is called *the naturalistic fallacy*. Such reasoning proceeds from the assumption that what is, is what ought to be. What exists by nature is just fine and therefore should remain as is.

Such an unwarranted assumption exists due to the failure to consider the enormous impact upon nature that occurred when Adam and Eve deliberately chose to disobey God. This understanding has to come through God's special revelation. God has to inform us of this spiritual situation; it's not something humans can figure out themselves. All humans can see the effects of sin and evil, but without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, they don't see the cause (sin, evil, and the demonic instigation). Indeed, God reveals these realities through the Scriptures. That disobedience, sin, against God not only corrupted human nature but profoundly affected all creation such that it groans in travail. (Romans 8:22)

The sin that has corrupted human nature, and that cannot please God, is explained in the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Rome.

> 1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
> 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
> 3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,
> 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in

[488] "WNBA to market to LGBT community," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, May 22, 2014, p. 1B.

us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.
5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.
6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;
7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.
8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.
9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.
10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.
11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.
12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it.
13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,
14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, *"Abba,* Father."
16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.
17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.
20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope
21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Here God's Word explains why nature, while still outwardly retaining much of its beauty, has been corrupted and cannot be a standard for us to use in determining what ought to be. Therefore, that one is a homosexual does not mean he or she ought to be so. As we saw in our study of God's Word pertaining to Creation, God made everything good and we do not see any homosexuality in the creation—just the opposite; we only see

homosexuality arising out of the sinful and corrupt human nature after Adam and Eve's disobedience and sin which resulted in such disharmony and displeasure to God.

We thus see that homosexuality was not included in creation. It cannot, therefore, be made acceptable, much less normative, for others simply on the basis that it exists. This mental mistake is the illogical attempt to leap from what is to what ought to be, stemming from an a priori thesis of the desire to normalize homosexuality.

Be alert for many uses of this fallacious argumentation in the homosexuals' articulation of their agenda and in their other statements. For example, when Kirk and Madsen claim above that "Straights must be taught that it is as natural for some persons to be homosexual as it is for others to be heterosexual; wickedness and seduction have nothing to do with it,"[489] they commit the naturalistic fallacy and a serious theological error.

Concerning the naturalistic fallacy, we've just seen that one cannot logically leap from "is" to "ought." Further, as we've observed throughout this book, their lifestyle is not at all natural, not even in the fallen nature since Adam's and Eve's disobedience, revealed also in the reality that they constitute no more than three percent of the population, and even if they were more prevalent, that would not make it right, especially when God says it is not only wrong but *tôʿēbâ*. The powerfully negative effects of sin and evil unleashed by Adam's and Eve's rebellion have seriously tarnished and corrupted the beautiful nature God created, but they have not totally destroyed it. Much of it still retains its beauty, but the *tôʿēbâ* of homosexuality is not part of it.

Speaking of God leads to the awareness of their theological error when they say "wickedness and seduction have nothing to do with it." Review Chapter One where we examined the most directly related sections of God's Word; wickedness has everything to do with the main reason why homosexuality is neither normal nor acceptable to God to whom we are accountable, and seduction is just one of many expressions of that wickedness.

Another application of the naturalistic fallacy is seen in the "I" of the LGBTQIA+ acronym. The I stands for Intersex, i.e., the minuscule percentage of the population who are born with abnormal sexual development. Formerly called hermaphrodite, intersex is also being referred to as disorders of sexual development (DSD). Disorders of sexual development are defined as follows:

> *disorders of sexual development (DSDs):* also referred to as *intersex*, and formerly referred to as *hermaphrodite***,** DSDs are congenital (biologically based) conditions in which the development of a person's chromosomal, gonadal, internal, and/or external anatomical sex is atypical**.** Some DSDs

[489] Kirk and Madsen, p. 184.

> are visible at birth. Others appear at later stages because of the malfunctioning of (estrogen or testosterone) hormones.[490]

The massive report (175 pages) delves deeply into the theology and the biology of LGBTQIA+ matters. The following table indicates the rarity of intersex disorders.[491]

Table 1. Selected Chromosomal and Hormonal Disorders of Sexual Development and Estimated Incidence

Chromosomal DSDs		Hormonal DSDs	
Name	Estimated Incidence	Name	Estimated Incidence
De la Chapelle Syndrome	1 in 20,000	Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome	1 in 20,000
Jacob's Syndrome	1 in 500	Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia	1 in 15,000
Klinefelter Syndrome	1 in 500	5-Alpha Reductase Deficiency	"very rare"[291]
Metafemale Syndrome	1 in 1,100		
Swyer Syndrome	1 in 80,000		
Turner Syndrome	1 in 2,000		

Three aspects of the intersex phenomenon are especially germane to this matter before us: scientifically, (1) they are very rare; (2) they are recognized as disorders; and Biblically, (3) they are not part of God's original creation (Genesis 1:27) but are part of the enormous post-fall aberrations due to the negative impact of Adam's and Eve's sin. (Romans 8:20-23)

With this understanding of reality, we can more easily see how the LGBTQIA+ activists' attempt to make LGBTQ behavior acceptable, because intersex conditions have a biological cause, commits the naturalistic fallacy and is an error in logic. As seen in Chapter Two, there is no genetic basis for the LGBTQ behavior, and intersex is a disorder. The attempt to reason from is to ought on the basis of intersex disorders is illogical, committing the naturalistic fallacy, and eminently unreasonable. In addition, intersex conditions are not in God's original design, not normal, contain undesirable dimensions that limit and prohibit normal functioning. Who, then, would desire such conditions? Intersex disorders do not provide a logical basis for normalizing LGBTQ+ ideology or behavior.

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[490] "Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality: Agenda for (CRC) Synod 2021," p. 61. https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/human_sexuality_report_2021.pdf (Accessed 3/11/2022; 4/10/2023). This report is the result of a five-year study of a carefully selected committee chosen to research this subject and report to the highest judicatory in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to aid the denomination in its decision-making on the LGBTQ+ issue. The composition of the committee included eleven members, all of whom "adhere to the CRC's biblical view on marriage and same-sex relationships.…persons from the following groups: an African American pastor, a Hispanic pastor, a Korean pastor, three faculty members from Calvin Theological Seminary, a same-sex attracted person, a chaplain, a philosopher, and a social scientist." (p. 3)

[491] "Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality: Agenda for (CRC) Synod 2021," p. 169.

Furthermore, such an attempt commits other fallacies of logic, such as the fallacy of false analogy (see above). Just because a tiny number of people are born with a genetic defect, does not logically verify and legitimize nonbiological ideologies.

Fallacies of Ambiguity: Division

The failure to discern significant differences of meaning in the use of terms frequently results in faulty logic. One of the most common and deceptively ambiguous flaws in this type of illogical thinking is called the *fallacy of division*. More than one form of this fallacy exists, but one often used in the subject before us is the presumption that what is true of the whole of a class must also be true for each of its constituent parts.

An example that Copi gives of this fallacy is the thought that since a certain company is very important, and since Mr. Doe is an official in that company, therefore Mr. Doe must be very important. It could be that Mr. Doe is about to be fired. Another example would be to assume that because a particular machine is very heavy, therefore each component of the machine is heavy. It could very well be that when all the parts of the machine are dissembled it is discovered that individually they are all quite light, but together they weigh a lot.[492]

Homosexual apologists try to take advantage of this fallacy of ambiguity, as do most pro-homosexual advocates, including of course the homosexuals themselves. When they argue according to the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal," and since all homosexuals are men,[493] therefore all homosexuals are equal to all other men they commit the division form of the fallacy of ambiguity. The fallacy in this ambiguous thinking is the failure to distinguish that while all people were created equal before God that does not mean they are equal before God in their values, which we've been examining throughout this volume.

Neither does it mean all people are equal in the sight of all other people, which is why human life loses value when God is ignored; our value comes from, is based on, and is upheld in him. We should also mention what we saw in Chapter One, that in creation God created everything and everyone good. It was only after Adam and Eve's disobedience to God that human nature and the rest of the world became corrupt.

The Undistributed Middle

To the foregoing identification of these common and deceptive mostly informal fallacies should be added an extremely common fallacy in deductive logic. It is called *the fallacy of the undistributed middle*.

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[492] Copi, pp. 75-76.

[493] Since the United States Declaration of Independence is an historical document that was written well before "political correctness" became vogue, and since it is still in effect, I'm here using the original language as do most other people in this illustrative case. In this usage of the English language the male noun was understood in its generic sense, referring to both genders.

The term, the undistributed middle, refers to what is called the middle term in the classic standard form categorical syllogism. Such a syllogism consists of three propositional statements about three categories, a conclusion and two preceding premises. The first premise is a general statement and is called the major premise; the second is a specific statement and is called the minor premise. One of the classic syllogisms is this one:

Men are mortal.
Socrates is a man.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

In a standard syllogism the predicate of the conclusion is called the major term (here, mortal), and the subject is the minor term (here, Socrates). The third, or middle, term (here, man/men), which does not appear in the conclusion, is the category in both premises that is shared to some degree by the major term and the minor term.

Each proposition in the premises makes an assertion about the degree to which one term (category or class of objects) is included in another, i.e., whether the one category is included in the other in whole or in part. In standard deductive syllogistic logic there are four different forms of categorical propositions. They can be symbolized as illustrated in the schematic section of the chart below, where S = Subject and P = Predicate.

It is also customary in logic to designate the four standard forms of categorical propositions with the letters ***A***, ***E***, ***I***, ***O***, which are presumed to come from the Latin terms "***A***ff***I***rmo" (meaning "I affirm") and "n***E***g***O***," (meaning "I deny"). Thus, ***A*** and ***E*** propositions are quantitatively universal (***A*** universally affirmative [as far as the quantity is concerned; not referring to morality of the class]), ***E*** universally negative), and ***I*** and ***O*** propositions are quantitatively particular, limited (***I*** being particularly affirmative, and ***O*** being particularly negative).[494]

Standard Categorical Proposition	Standard Schematic
1. All politicians are liars. (***A***)	1. All S are P.
2. No politicians are liars. (***E***)	2. No S are P.
3. Some politicians are liars. (***I***)	3. Some S are P.
4. Some politicians are not liars. (***O***)	4. Some S are not P.

The above paragraph and accompanying table introduce the technical term in logic called "distribution." Briefly, distribution refers to the degree to which a proposition designates the quantity of its two categories. A proposition is said to distribute a term if it indicates that all members of a category, or class, are included in or designated by the term. Thus, in the illustration above, the subject term, politicians, is distributed in both examples 1 and 2, since the proposition refers to all in the class of politicians in both cases. In example 2 the proposition states that the whole of the class of politicians is excluded from the class of liars. The proposition is also asserting that the whole class of liars is

[494] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 124-126; 158-159.

excluded from the class of politicians; thus, the proposition clearly asserts that of each and every liar, he or she is not a politician. In examples 3 and 4, the subject term is undistributed, since it is clear that the proposition does not refer to everyone in the category or class of politicians.[495]

We should again refer to the concept of soundness in logic. It is possible to have a valid syllogistic argument that follows the rules of logic, e.g., concerning distribution, where the conclusion is unsound, due to the unsoundness of one or more of the premises. Thus, in the illustration above a valid argument containing any of the four propositions could be made, but any argument with either of the first two propositions above would yield a conclusion that is unsound, since both of these propositions are unsound (i.e., contrary to popular but undocumented opinion, all politicians are not liars; some have been documented to be so, but not all).[496]

Briefly, in the summary in this table which follows, we see that ***A*** propositions distribute their subject. In the illustration the proposition is clearly referring to the whole class of its subject, politicians, thus the term politicians is distributed; but the proposition is not referring to all the members in the class in the predicate, liars, so the predicate term is undistributed. We've already considered above the second proposition, which is characteristic of all ***E*** propositions.

Standard Categorical Proposition	**Standard Schematic**	**Distribution of Proposition**
1. All politicians are liars. (***A***)	1. All S are P.	1. S distributed; P undis.[497]
2. No politicians are liars. (***E***)	2. No S are P.	2. S dis.; P dis.
3. Some politicians are liars. (***I***)	3. Some S are P.	3. S undis.; P undis.
4. Some politicians are not liars. (***O***)	4. Some S are not P.	4. S undis.; P distributed

As also indicated above, the subject in the ***I*** and ***O*** propositions is undistributed, since the quantifier, "some," clearly restricts the statement to certain but not all members of the class of politicians. However, a difference occurs in the two propositions regarding the class in the predicate. The ***I*** proposition also makes no declaration pertaining to the class of all liars. Therefore, the term is undistributed in the I proposition. Notice though that the opposite is true for the predicate term in ***O*** proposition. The proposition says nothing about all politicians, but it does say something about some members of this class, specifically that this *part* of the class of all politicians is excluded from the *whole* of the class of all liars in the proposition's predicate. Therefore, the predicate term is distributed. These characteristics of the above ***I*** and ***O*** propositions are true of all ***I*** and ***O*** propositions.[498]

[495] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 128-131.
[496] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 11, 273.
[497] The designation, "undis," stands for "undistributed."
[498] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 130-131.

The reason, again, why we're considering this subject is that the fallacy of the undistributed middle is very common, and it is quite so in the accusations slung by pro-homosexual activists against conservative Christians and other conservatives. With this understanding readers can watch for these accusations and be prepared to point out the flaw. For example, one argument containing this logical fallacy emerges like this:

> All churches are composed of heterosexuals.
> Most holders of a double standard are heterosexuals.
> Therefore, all churches are holders of a double standard.

This common assertion illustrates the fallacy of the undistributed middle. Let's analyze it for our future reference. Consider first the type of the propositions in the premises.

> All churches are composed of heterosexuals. (***A***)
> Most holders of a double standard are heterosexuals. (***I***)
> Therefore, all churches are holders of a double standard.

As we saw in the above explanation (see also the chart), the predicate term in both (***A***) and (***I***) propositions is undistributed. That is, it is not able to make a statement about all members of that class or category. The middle term in the predicate of both premises in the syllogism before us is heterosexuals. The first premise is an ***A*** proposition, and the second is an ***I*** proposition, which means that the term in the predicate of both, the middle term, is undistributed. This reality renders the conclusion invalid; the argument is invalid due to the fallacy of the undistributed middle term. In this case, since the middle term is undistributed one cannot logically conclude that all churches do what some members in that class of heterosexuals is accused of doing. Thus the argument is also unsound.

As Copi explains,

> It should be clear that any syllogism which violates this rule [that the middle term must be distributed in at least one premiss[499]] is invalid, by the following considerations. The conclusion of any categorical syllogism asserts a connection between two terms. The premisses justify asserting such a connection only if they assert that each of the two terms is connected with a third term in such a way that the first two are appropriately connected with each other *through* or *by means of* the third. For the two terms of the conclusion really to be connected through the third, at least one of them must be related to the *whole* of the class designated by the third or middle term. Otherwise each may be connected with *different parts* of that class, and not necessarily connected with each other at all…[the middle term must] connect the syllogism's major and minor terms. For it to connect them, *all* of the class designated by it must be referred to in at least one premiss, and this is what is meant by saying

[499] Premiss is Copi's spelling of premise.

that in a valid syllogism the middle term must be *distributed* in at least one premiss.[500]

Thus, the accusation that the church has a double standard, one rule for heterosexuals and another for homosexuals, commits the logical fallacy of the undistributed middle. It is not logical to argue that when one instance or even a few sins occur that the church as a whole is at fault.

When this assertion is made in an informal argument, with its unsound premise that Christians hold to a double standard, it commits another logical fallacy. As we saw earlier it commits the fallacy of the hasty generalization. It typically runs like this: "Sam and Bill are having affairs with women other than their wives, and each of them think homosexuality is sinful, even though their own Bible teaches that both are wrong in the same verse! That just goes to prove what I believe, 'All Christians hold to a double standard.'" Just because one or a few in a class do something, it is illogical to conclude that everyone in that class does it.

We should learn the basic principles and rules of logic in order to reason most lucidly and effectively, and so we can help others to do so as well, which will also help us speak the truth in love. One of the communicable attributes of God that he has given us, albeit in microcosm, when he created us in his image, is the ability to reason. We should use it as best we can in order to honor him and serve him as he has called us to do.

At the same time we should keep in mind God's revelation in his Word of the present condition of human nature and its limitations. As Billy Graham articulates it so well pertaining to evangelism, it also applies in the rest of our reasoning. "Prayer is crucial in evangelism: Only God can change the heart….No matter how logical our arguments or how fervent our appeals, our words will accomplish nothing unless God's Spirit prepares the way."[501] Let us pray for the people we are engaging in conversation for the Lord before, during, and after talking as logically as possible with them.

For Reflection and Discussion

Chapter Four

1. Talk now with your pastor, or if you are the pastor give thought now, as to how you will respond to the pro-homosexual agenda to contact every conservative church in the United States "to raise up LGBT-affirming voices in every evangelical church in the country."

    a. What will you say to them when they contact you?

[500] Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, pp. 179.
[501] Billy Graham, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Quote from a promotional piece for the movie *Heaven*.

b. What preparations do you need to make?

2. Select one item in the homosexual activists' agenda and indicate what you will do about it.

   a. For example, in your family? In your church? In your neighborhood? In a letter to the editor of your local newspaper? In your professional organization?

   b. Who will you alert to what is occurring in our society? How will you do so?

3. If your daughter, niece, or granddaughter were a student enrolled at a high school with a policy and attitude like that of the high school in Florence, Colorado, what would you do?

4. Select one of the logical fallacies, explain it to someone, and give an illustration as to where you've heard it (e.g., in the newspaper, on a talk show, on the Internet).

5. Which of the logical fallacies do you hear most frequently? Where do you hear it? (You don't have to divulge a person's name.) How will you respond, speaking the truth in love, when you next hear this fallacious reasoning?

6. Have a conversation first in dyads (groups of two) and then in the whole group.

   a. Begin in a one-to-one conversation and take turns explaining how you'll help someone reason more accurately when he or she commits one of the logical fallacies in your presence. Agree with the other person about which fallacy you'd like to work on, and one of you begin by telling the other, "Here's what I'd say…." Then give the other person time to add whatever comes to his or her mind that could also be said. If time allows, take up one or more of the other logical fallacies in the same manner, only with your partner starting the next discussion.

   b. If you're part of a group, after an agreed upon time, take turns sharing what you said so all can learn from each other and in the process develop the skills needed to articulate the most effective response possible in such situations. Ask a representative of each dyad to report at least one comment he or she made.

7. How should you respond to someone who accuses you of being hateful and homophobic?

Chapter 5

How Should God's People Speak the Truth in Love?

What can we do in society?

The fact that most of the news media, the government, Hollywood, and the humanistic and relativistic public education system, are all straitjacketed by political correctness and willfully withholding the above information from the citizenry of the United States and the rest of the world, is unconscionable. Considerable ignorance of this information is also evident, which is especially condemning of the education establishment that is charged with being a major source of facts and purports to be a forum to search for the truth, but as we've seen is failing to do so.

Keep God in Mind.

We must begin with God. We need to be very familiar with his Word in order to know his will and develop the worldview that enables us to discern truth from error, right from wrong, that which is good from that which is evil. One of my former professors and one of the administrators of the seminary from which I graduated preached one of the finest sermons on this subject, and I'll never forget it; the title says it all, "Saturate Yourselves with the Scriptures." He urged those of us participating in that worship service to daily read God's Word and pray so as to develop the mind of Christ and act accordingly. We need to do this so we can be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14) we are supposed to be. We cannot fail to function as the salt of the earth and become "no longer good for anything." (Matthew 5:13; cf. Jeremiah 2:5)

Concerning homosexuality we must include God and his will in the subject, for he is the one who instituted marriage, and if we don't mention him, we fail to witness for him, and we reinforce the secularist's thinking that we can adequately function without God being in the picture. Jesus said, "I tell you, if these [my disciples] become silent, the stones will cry out!" (Luke 19:40 NASB)

We do need at first and for the most part to speak in the language and with the documentation that those with whom we are speaking respect and consider persuasive. This is what the Apostle Paul modeled for us. (Acts 17:22-34) It's important to inform people of the truth obtained by empirical, scientific, means and to correct illogical thinking, but we need to also lovingly speak up (as Paul said, "Speak the truth in love," Ephesians 4:15) at least at the end of our remarks with a statement about God and his will on the matter. We cannot act as if God is not in the picture, when in fact he is holding the picture in his Sovereign hands!

Indeed, keep God's sovereignty and his other characteristics in mind, such as his love, justice, righteousness, holiness, omniscience (being all knowing), omnipresence (being everywhere present), and omnipotence (being all powerful). Thereby don't be deterred when it appears the opposition is overwhelming, for they cannot withstand God. Recall

the old saying, "One (you) plus God is a majority!" Then be greatly encouraged and tell others.

Pray.

What else can we, should we, do? Above all that follows pray. Don't be anxious, afraid, or discouraged. God emphasizes in his Word that the prayers of those who are righteous, believers in and followers of Jesus Christ, are powerful and effective. (James 5:16) Ask God what he would have you do; ask him to lead you to the area of his Kingdom wherein you will serve him most effectively. How will it please him for you to be involved?

Pray also for our nation, and the other nations of God's world, who are struggling with this matter. Let us pray that God extends and nurtures his kingdom throughout our country and the rest of the world. Theologically, his kingdom is his rule in human hearts and minds. Extending his kingdom comes through proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through which the Holy Spirit changes hearts and minds. Then the kingdom needs to be nurtured; the spiritual infants to whom the Holy Spirit has given the new birth, need to mature in Christ in order to serve the Lord effectively.

In the Early Church Justinian offered this prayer suggestion that you can use as a guide for constructing your own prayer.

> So may God the merciful, in abundance of pity, deem us worthy of his blessing, that we may all give thanks to him for the salvation of the penitents, who we have now bidden [to submit themselves] in order that the magistrates too may follow up our action, [thus] reconciling to themselves God who is justly angry with us.[502]

Witness for Christ.

Never lose sight of the fact that the only hope for our country, and for the rest of the world for whom and which we also care and are called to proclaim the Gospel, is that human hearts and minds are changed. That change does not come from more education, better trained teachers, new technology, or any other human factors, as valuable as good ones may be. Only the Holy Spirit can change hearts and minds and keep them changed. (John 3:3-10) For that change to occur and to mature, people need to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to be connected with a solid church that speaks the truth in love.

People not only need to hear the Word but to see it enacted. In Acts 1:8 Jesus says "You (pl.) will be my witnesses," and the word witness in the original Greek text is μάρτυρες transliterated martures, the etymology of our English word, martyr. In the first century A. D. that witness often involved, as it does even more in this century, literally losing one's life. Yet it can also mean backing up with action that involves a significant aspect

[502] Justinian, Novel 141 (344 A. D.) http://www.conservapedia.com/History_of_homosexuality#cite_note-30 (Accessed 11/13/14)

of self-sacrifice, such as that shown by the entire office of the clerk in one Tennessee country.

Decatur County Tennessee clerks resigned in mass protest to the SCOTUS decision on "same-sex marriage." *They left their jobs, with no other work already lined up, witnessing with powerful deeds that match their Biblical faith that says not to participate in such evil.* ***Talk about living out your faith in today's culture!*** Tony Perkins explains the development.

> Effective July 14, the Decatur County Clerk's Office will be virtually empty, as local officials look for replacements willing to do the Court's bidding. Despite the jam this puts him in, County Commissioner David Boroughs had nothing but praise for the clerks. "I'm proud of them that their faith is so strong and well-rounded that they feel they can do that," he told local reporters. Although none of the clerks have jobs lined up, Gwen Pope isn't worried. "I honestly believe God will take care of it." Like their colleagues in Texas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Alabama, their convictions come before their careers. In America's pulpits, thankfully, the two are still very much entwined. Churches across the country are showing a surprising amount of resolve on the marriage issue, an encouraging sign after so many swore off political engagement.[503]

When people see faith matched by deeds Monday through Saturday and not just on Sunday, they sit up and take notice. They see how important the words are when backed up by concomitant behavior. Such faithful action is easily noticed, because it is what people long to see, someone with the courage of conviction to live according to what he or she says; it is also easily noticed because it is relatively rare.

Recall what the Apostle Peter said, "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." (1 Peter 2:12) The root of the word translated "see" in the Greek is ἐποπτεύω (*epopteuō*), which means a careful watching, a scrutinizing observation over a long period of time. That is they are watching us carefully to see how genuine our words are, how important to us they are, in part to see whether and why they should be important to them.

Become more informed about the issues.

Keep learning any more you need (not necessarily want) to know about homosexuality, the homosexual agenda, and what is occurring in our society. Consult trustworthy resources such as the Family Research Council, Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk,

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[503] Tony Perkins, *Washington Watch*, July 7, 2015. The last sentence should not be used as a license to proclaim political views instead of an exposition of the Word of God, including the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, there are times when to adequately apply God's Word and lead people to do God's will, contemporary issues need to be addressed from the pulpit, in the classroom, and in Bible studies wherever they are held.

Catholic Answers, Focus on the Family, The Heritage Foundation, and the Ruth Institute[504] to cite only a few.

Talk with others.

Communicate with others as indicated below. When talking or writing to non-Christians who don't accept the authority of the Bible, use the very strong non-religious rationale. Recall and refer back to the information in Chapters Two and Four of this book. Another good source is the pamphlet, "77 Non-religious Reasons to Support Man/Woman Marriage."[505] Author Karl Keating, founder and president of Catholic Answers, the country's largest apologetics and evangelization organization, urges Christians to use non-religious language when engaging secular people. He points out that even basic philosophy is far superior to the secular arguments in showing how "same-sex marriage" is wrong. Polygamy has only been tried from time to time and has been short-lived when done.[506] I agree that we should draw on the extensive and superior general rationale of philosophical principles and scientific facts in presenting the case for traditional one man/one woman marriage when speaking and writing to those who do not accept the authority of the Bible, which is why I've included so much on science and philosophy herein, but I also include a comment toward the end of my presentation, which speaks of God and his will on the subject and cite the Bible as my source, for God has called us to be his witnesses.

Avoid forums and small groups designed to "discuss homosexuality" with proponents of "both sides."

Why? Isn't it good to hear what adherents of a controversial issue have to say and to hear it directly from them? Shouldn't we hear both sides in order to fully understand the matters before us and make the most well-informed decision possible in order to serve the Lord most effectively?

First of all, such questions commit the fallacy of the complex question. (See the discussion on this logical fallacy in Chapter Four.) At face value the question sounds logical and reasonable. Of course we need to know both sides in order to understand the issue, to defend the Biblical message most effectively, and to help homosexual people, whom God loves and wants in his kingdom and who bear his image, to be freed from their highly unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy lifestyle as well as teaching others to not mistreat them and speak the truth in love.

However, characteristic of complex questions is the presence of hidden and unwarranted assumptions that are at best due to ignorance and at worst to deception. One assumption is that the best way to obtain the truth and the most accurate information about an opposing position is to ask a proponent of that position. Such an assumption fails to take

[504] http://www.youtube.com/user/ruthinstitute.
[505] Jennifer Roback Morse, "77 Non-religious Reasons to Support Man/Woman Marriage," can be downloaded for free at http://www.ruthinstitute.org/77Reasons/index.html. (Accessed 6/4/13)
[506] Karl Keating, "Catholic Answers," EWTN Radio AM 1570 Loveland-Denver, 4:25 PM 6/4/13.

into account that the proponents will be sending their most skilled and motivating orators to present their position, but omitting its unbiblical, unscientific, and illogical flaws, and that position will not be adequately challenged for several reasons.

I have been present in such meetings on this subject and others even in academe. On the college and university level one would expect that a free flow of ideas in the search for truth would prevail. Not so. For several reasons decent people, especially in church settings, are unwilling to stand up and challenge speakers who are presenting factually false and misleading information. To let such information go unchallenged, is to facilitate the deceiving of attendees, a considerable percentage of whom are unable to discern what is true from what is false in such presentations. Since silence is tacit approval, these people not only go away with much wrong information, but they lack the understanding of and how to defend the Biblical teaching on the subject.

This misleading of the audience is especially true when only the homosexual position is presented (as a result of someone saying, "Let's just invite those representing the homosexual "community" to come and tell us what they believe and "hear them out."), which the guests typically do with an emotional harangue against the church, usually with other logical fallacies (e.g., generalization devoid of adequate documentation).

Further unwarranted assumptions include that there will be time in such forums to fully present the position in the Bible and the related supportive rationale that will help attendees become most well-informed and well-equipped to explain God's Word as he has called us to do. Looking at the number of pages and footnotes in this book strongly suggests otherwise.

Another unwarranted assumption is the idea that the opposition can and will present what we need to know more fully that a well-informed scholar who is committed to the truthful proclamation of God's Word. In the light of the above, opt for the latter, especially in church programming.

In more academic settings, be especially careful of the above factors and avoid such one-sided programs. If, especially in a secular institution, it is necessary to include one or more proponents of the LGBTQ+ lifestyle in such a program (the opposition usually wants more than one), plan carefully to have an equal number of people on the other side, who are courageous, well-informed, and prepared to articulate the information in this book, speaking the truth in love not rancor, and caring for LGBTQ+ people who, unless they change soon, are heading for serious, even life-threatening, health issues, violence, premature death, and most seriously, God's judgment. When God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*, detestable, abomination, to be abhorred, should his command to not do so be taken lightly and simply considered as one of several competing values that are equal? I urge everyone to reject such a disobedient, unrealistic, and unwise concept.

Should Both Sides Be Present on a Denominational or Church Commission?

This question regularly occurs when an organization, such as a denominational judicatory or church board is faced with having to develop a policy on a controversial issue. One such issue has arisen due to the pro-homosexual activist agenda to legitimize and permit homosexuals to be members in good standing, hold office in the church and at the denominational level, and to make policies that approve homosexuals in leadership positions.

In order to "study" and formulate a position paper for the related judicatory to use in its decision-making, some denominations and churches have unwisely decided to include representatives from the pro-homosexual activists and those representing the traditional Biblical policy that the denomination and church have had in place up to the present time. In addition to the flawed reasoning cited above, these judicatories say, "We need to hear from proponents of both sides. Just as we did with the issue of whether it is Biblical for women to hold office, we need to invite proponents who advocate each position on this official commission that will thoroughly investigate the matter and issue a report that will recommend a policy to resolve the matter. This rationale is deeply flawed.

It commits the logical fallacy of the unsound premise (*op cit*.). Just because a church or a denomination included proponents as well as opponents of allowing women to hold office, does not mean that both proponents and opponents of homosexuality in the church should participate on an official study and policy-recommending commission. The flaw in logic is the assumption that these two issues are similar; they are not.

The most important dissimilarity is that with regard to the women's issue, scholars on both sides were and are (the issue at this writing is still ongoing in some denominations and in many church congregations) committed to the whole Bible as being God's infallible, inerrant, and trustworthy Word of God. The issue is trying to discern what God's Word is teaching in each related passage with exegesis, not eisegesis. True and mature Christian scholars and church leaders interpret these passages in different ways, an example of what the Apostle Paul refers to in Romans 14:1ff. as "disputable matters."

Not so with the LGBTQ+ issue. Pro-homosexual proponents try to twist the texts of the Bible to say what they do not mean and come up with a teaching that is counter to the interpretation of those texts ever since they were written, some more than 4,000 years ago. Now, frustrated with trying to reinterpret the texts, these pro-LGBTQ+ proponents are stating in their position papers that the Apostle Paul was *wrong*, and that at least some of his letters should not be part of the Bible as well as some other Biblical passages!

Thus, we have here key reasons why pro-LGBTQ+ representatives should not be on a commission that is charged with the responsibility to study and propose a policy for a denomination or a church. To do so is to put in place a predictable result that produces a flawed, even destructive, policy recommendation, which has in fact occurred and which divides and results in destructive disunity in the church, contrary to the Lord's will e.g., John 17.

Help pass and protect the First Amendment Defense Act.

Even before the June 2015 SCOTUS decision to legitimize "same-sex marriage," Left-wing activists were calling for prosecution (the recipients call it persecution) of business and professional services related to the wedding industry. At the Supreme Court during oral arguments, the Obama Administration's Solicitor General, Donald Verrilli, answering a question by Justice Samuel Alito, acknowledged that "it is certainly going to be an issue" as he referred to the possibility that religious schools could lose their nonprofit tax status if they refuse to accept the redefinition of marriage.[507] Immediately after the court's decision, a *New York Times* columnist called for the end of non-profit tax status for churches, charitable organizations, and other religious institutions.[508]

Other activist organizations are demanding the elimination of tax-exempt status for Christian institutions. For example, Barry Lynn's Americans United for the Separation of Church and State is launching an initiative to destroy the tax relief for faith-based schools. Planning to begin with Christian colleges, Lynn's "Protect Thy Neighbor"[509] project promises to use the IRS and his legal, legislative, and communications teams as a weapon to force same-sex "married" housing on universities with traditional views on marriage.[510]

Lynn's organization admits that clergy are protected from the SCOTUS decision by the First Amendment, so they cannot be forced to officiate at weddings they consider unacceptable to God. Nevertheless they are willing to fight other Christians to restrict their freedom to exercise their religion in their business, professional, or other pursuits.[511]

> The decision is a win for clergy and their religious liberty. In *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court held that the Constitution requires states to license and recognize the marriages of same-sex couples.
>
> Notwithstanding the overheated rhetoric that followed the decision, no member of the clergy will be required to perform those or any other marriages. Clergy have the right under the Free Exercise Clause to decide whether or not to participate in any religious ceremonies, including marriage ceremonies.[512]

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[507] Sarah Torre, "How to Preserve Religious Freedom after Supreme Court's Activist Decision on Marriage," June 30, 2015, http://dailysignal.com/2015/06/30/how-to-preserve-religious-freedom-after-supreme-courts-activist-decision-on-marriage/ (Accessed 7/8/15)
[508] Sarah Torre, "How to Preserve Religious Freedom after Supreme Court's Activist Decision on Marriage," June 30, 2015
[509] http://www.protectthyneighbor.org/about (Accessed 7/9/15)
[510] "Libs Kick Off Tour de Rants," *Tony Perkins' Washington Update*, July 8, 2015.
[511] http://www.protectthyneighbor.org/faq#marriage (Accessed 7/9/15)
[512] http://www.protectthyneighbor.org/faq#marriage (Accessed 7/9/15)

How long they'll even agree to this interpretation of the First Amendment for clergy is not stated. These organizations are dedicated to limiting religious freedoms under the First Amendment. They show they will not give up until anyone opposed to "same-sex marriage" and other homosexual "rights" is forced to go against his or her moral or religious beliefs and serve, celebrate, or in other ways affirm homosexuality and so-called "same-sex marriage," thus losing the freedom previously enjoyed under the First Amendment.

As many observers predicted before the SCOTUS decision and now is occurring, a full-court press is being made to limit First Amendment rights for religious people. We must rise to the occasion and do so now. If this battle is lost, it will be very difficult to restore the lost liberty.

Providentially a bill to protect the First Amendment rights of individuals to practice their religion has been introduced into the U. S. House of Representatives by Representatives Mike Lee and Raul Labrador. The bill is called the First Amendment Defense Act (FADA), and it further specifies the rights that are protected under the First Amendment. It is very disappointing that, but neither surprising nor not understandable how, the Left-wing activists can be trying to impose their values on everyone else and eliminate anyone's right to practice his or her religion in the public square.

Furthermore, passing this law is only the first step. We must constantly always be vigilant to defend and support this law, for it will be challenged in court and attacked in many other manners. The demonic spiritual forces will not give up pushing their human cohort to destroy freedom to practice religion, especially Biblical beliefs, in public, and some want to limit what can be said and done in the home!

Key sections of the FADA include the following:

> Laws that protect the free exercise of religious beliefs and moral convictions about marriage will encourage private citizens and institutions to demonstrate tolerance for those beliefs and convictions and therefore contribute to a more respectful, diverse, and peaceful society.[513]
>
> SEC. 3. PROTECTION OF THE FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND MORAL CONVICTIONS.
>
> (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Government shall not take any discriminatory action against a person, wholly or partially on the basis that such person believes or acts in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one

[513] H.R.2802 - First Amendment Defense Act, 114th Congress (2015-2016), Sec. 2. (5), https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2802/text. (Accessed 7/18/15)

woman, or that sexual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage."[514]

(b) DISCRIMINATORY ACTION DEFINED.—As used in subsection (a), a discriminatory action means any action taken by the Federal Government to—

(1) alter in any way the Federal tax treatment of, or cause any tax, penalty, or payment to be assessed against, or deny, delay, or revoke an exemption from taxation under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 of, any person referred to in subsection (a);

(2) disallow a deduction for Federal tax purposes of any charitable contribution made to or by such person;

(3) withhold, reduce, exclude, terminate, or otherwise deny any Federal grant, contract, subcontract, cooperative agreement, loan, license, certification, accreditation, employment, or other similar position or status from or to such person;

(4) withhold, reduce, exclude, terminate, or otherwise deny any benefit under a Federal benefit program from or to such person; or

(5) otherwise discriminate against such person.[515]

(c) ACCREDITATION; LICENSURE; CERTIFICATION.—The Federal Government shall consider accredited, licensed, or certified for purposes of Federal law any person that would be accredited, licensed, or certified, respectively, for such purposes but for a determination against such person wholly or partially on the basis that the person believes or acts in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman, or that sexual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage.[516]

Ryan Anderson offers a good summary of the FADA. He states that "it would ensure that no federal agency will ever revoke non-profit tax-exempt status or deny grants, contracts, accreditation, or licenses to individuals or institutions for following their faiths' teachings about the nature of marriage as a union between a man and a woman…[He also

[514] H.R.2802 - First Amendment Defense Act, 114th Congress (2015-2016), Sec. 3. (a), https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2802/text. (Accessed 7/18/15)
[515] H.R.2802 - First Amendment Defense Act, 114th Congress (2015-2016), Sec. 3. (b) (1-5), https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2802/text. (Accessed 7/18/15)
[516] H.R.2802 - First Amendment Defense Act, 114th Congress (2015-2016), Sec. 3. (c), https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2802/text. (Accessed 7/18/15)

observes that the] FADA is good policy that limits the government and takes nothing away from anyone."[517]

As you talk with others about the importance of the passage and maintaining of this law, point out to or remind people that even fair-minded homosexuals are appalled at their cohort's attempt to take away the freedom to choose to serve homosexuals. See or review the accounts of such fairness in Chapter Four in the section, "Monitor the attempt to control the court system and litigate."

To stop and continue to prevent such a loss of freedom to serve God as he has called and continues to lead us to do, choose one or more of the ways listed in this chapter and join the battle for cleansing God's land of the evil that is growing. As we see in his Word and throughout history, God is patient, but his patience is not unending.

Remind others that God allows a country to do evil for only a limited amount of time.

When God sees a nation has reached the point of fullness of evil, God brings judgment. Recall what God said to Abram. "In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure." (Genesis 15:16)

What was "the iniquity of the Amorites?" Old Testament scholar Ronald Youngblood explains.

> Just how sinful many Canaanite religious practices were is now known from archaeological artifacts and from their own epic literature, discovered at Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit [today called Mina el-Baida, White Harbor]) on the north Syrian coast beginning in 1929…Their "worship" was polytheistic and included child sacrifice, idolatry, religious prostitution and divination (cf. Dt. 18:9-12). God was patient in judgment, even with the wicked Canaanites.[518]

Are not all these evils being done in the United States today? One might argue that child sacrifice is rare if at all done. However, I would counter that it is being done in an even more widespread way involving many more children than the firstborn that was typically the practice of the Amorites and other Canaanites. Since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, over 61,000,000 million babies have been torn apart, a huge number of whom science has

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[517] Ryan T. Anderson, "Want Religious Freedom? Then Let's Pass the First Amendment Defense Act." July 16, 2015, http://dailysignal.com/2015/07/16/want-religious-freedom-then-lets-pass-the-first-amendment-defense-act/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailydigest&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRogs6jBZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4IRMpjI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 07/18/15)

[518] Ronald Youngblood, "Genesis," *The NIV Study Bible*, Kenneth Barker, General Editor (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985), pp. 28-29.

proven were able to experience enormous pain, and which is still being done at the rate of over 4,000 per day and 1.6 million every year![519]

Recall our discussion in Chapter One that when we interpret the Bible we need to distinguish between principle and application of principle, and with respect to the Old Testament we must be careful to discern whether the application of a principle taught in a particular passage is intended to apply only to the period prior to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Consider carefully Calvin's commentary on this passage (Genesis 15:16). As far as the principle is concerned (God's patience until too much evil has been done and then judging the country that has gone beyond the limit), do you see any contemporary parallel?

> **16.** *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full* …this passage is remarkable, as showing, that the abodes of men are so distributed in the world, that the Lord will preserve quiet people, each in their several stations, till they cast themselves out by their own wickedness. For by polluting the place of their habitation, they in a certain sense tear away the boundaries fixed by the hand of God, which would otherwise have remained immovable. Moreover, the Lord here commends his own longsuffering. Even then the Amorites had become unworthy to occupy the land, yet the Lord not only bore with them for a short time, but granted them four centuries for repentance. And hence it appears, that he does not, without reason, so frequently declare how slow he is to anger. But the more graciously he waits for men, if, at length, instead of repenting they remain obstinate, the more severely does he avenge such great ingratitude. Therefore Paul says, that they who indulge themselves in sin, while the goodness and clemency of God invite them to repentance, heap up for themselves a treasure of wrath, (Romans 2:4) and thus they reap no advantage from delay, seeing that the severity of the punishment is doubled; just as it happened to the Amorites, whom, at length, the Lord commanded to be so entirely cut off, that not even infants were spared. Therefore when we hear that God out of heaven is silently waiting until iniquities shall fill up their measure; let us know, that this is no time for torpor, but rather let every one of us stir himself up, that we may be beforehand with the celestial judgment.[520]

In the Bible we see judgment occurring on two levels, the temporal and the eternal. Wickedness is judged here on earth as with the Amorites, and it also receives a judgment for eternity. Pertaining to temporal judgment, do not confuse forgiveness in Christ with

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[519] http://prolifealliance.com/ (Accessed 7/13/15)

[520] John Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis*, Volume 1, Chapter 15, Genesis 15:1-21. WORDSearch. Print version: John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, Trans. from the original Latin and compared with the French edition by The Rev. John King, M. A., Vol. I, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 418-419.

freedom from judgment. It is true that in Christ our sins are forgiven, both now and in the final sense forever at what is called the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46), but we still have to deal with the consequences of our sins. If we break the law by exceeding the speed limit, in Christ God forgives us, but we still have to appear in court and pay the fine. Murderers do come to Christ in jail but must still endure execution or life in prison with or without parole, depending on the laws of their state, all of which is part of God's will. (Romans 13:1-7) On the temporal level, judgment consists in the consequences of evildoing, as the Amorites received at the hands of God's people, the Israelites, when he gave the land of the Amorites and the other Canaanite nations to his people. When the evil of the Amorites reached its limit, God brought the Israelites into their land to exercise his temporal judgment upon the Amorites.

We always need to remember who God is and what he is like: he is not only holy, but holy, holy, holy (i.e., most holy in the Hebrew way of speaking), and he is just. In order to not compromise his justness, he must exercise judgment, but since he is love to the core of his being, he patiently gives people all the time they need to repent and eliminate the evil that contaminates their country, which harms countless people and offends God who loves those people who are harmed and will not ignore that harm; he will bring justice when the time is right in his sight and in the way that is right in his sight.

At the same time we always have hope in God's help. At the same time, he expects us to take action and do rightly in his sight, beginning with repentance that involves a lasting change in behavior, in order to avoid disaster. Remember what he said through the prophet Jeremiah:

> [7]If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, [8]and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. [9]And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, [10]and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it. (Jeremiah 18:7-10. For one application see the book of Jonah.)

Such judgment occurred in many other instances as well in the Old Testament. God also disciplined his own people. Notice how he used both other countries (such as Aram, modern Syria) and the Israelites (the northern kingdom) to discipline his own people of Judah. (2 Chronicles 28)

I have a question for you. With the increasing evil that has been occurring in the United States, could God be giving us a heads up, a warning sign, with the arrival and actions of Islam in this country? Islam proclaims, though does not adequately practice, a moral perspective that professes to abhor the decadence of the West and of the United States in particular. The religion of Islam is professedly anti-homosexual, and in some Muslim-dominated countries, as we saw in Chapter Three, homosexuality is punishable by death.

Islam has a worldwide goal and a goal for the United States of total domination. Muslims do not assimilate into the culture of a non-Muslim country. As Muslims grow in percentage of the population where they are living they change their behavior.

Author and publisher, Pamela Geller, drawing on Dr. Peter Hammond's book, *Slavery, Terrorism & Islam: Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat*, lists how Muslims change as they grow in percent of population until they reach 100% and how within stages they function differently in successively controlling maneuvers. Geller writes that when they reach only 5% of the area in which they live, then "[a]t this point, they will work to get the ruling government to allow them to rule themselves (within their ghettos) under Sharia, the Islamic Law. The ultimate goal of Islamists is to establish Sharia law over the entire world."[521]

Geller further observes the following developments.

> It is important to understand that in some countries, with well under 100% Muslim populations, such as France, the minority Muslim populations live in ghettos, within which they are 100% Muslim, and within which they live by Sharia Law. The national police do not even enter these ghettos. There are no national courts nor schools nor non-Muslim religious facilities. In such situations, Muslims do not integrate into the community at large. The children attend madrasses. They learn only the Koran. To even associate with an infidel is a crime punishable with death. Therefore, in some areas of certain nations, Muslim Imams and extremists exercise more power than the national average would indicate.[522]

When Muslims become the majority in any given area, they have been reported to institute "No Go" Zones and Sharia Law, a very severe and harsh limit of human behavior and loss of freedom within those areas. Such zones exist in Europe, especially in France, where a heavy influx of Muslims has been occurring in recent decades, though it is disputed as to how dangerous it is for non-Muslims to enter those areas. There are already "No Go" Zones in the U. S.,[523] where Muslims have taken over and do not allow others to enter. Are these a type of beachhead? That analogy uses an appropriate military term used to begin an invasion; historically Islam conquers countries by force. If all Americans cannot go in these areas, have Muslims effectively taken over part of our land, even if it's now only a tiny part?

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[521] Pamela Geller, "Muslim Immigration," http://pamelageller.com/atlas_shrugsmuslim-immigration/ (Accessed 8/5/15)

[522] Pamela Geller, "Muslim Immigration," http://pamelageller.com/atlas_shrugsmuslim-immigration/ (Accessed 8/5/15)

[523] See Ryan Mauro, "Muslim Enclaves U.S.A.: Building the American caliphate, one designated "no-go-zone" at a time," July 8, 2010, http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/65206/muslim-enclaves-usa-ryan-mauro (Accessed 7/13/15). The No-Go zones in the U. S. are not as yet as dangerous as the ones in other countries. No-Go zones already exist in France, The Netherlands, and Scandinavia. See also http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2006/11/the-751-no-go-zones-of-france (Accessed 7/29/15)

The degree to which these conclaves can accurately be called "No Go" Zones is questioned. However, in the light of the typical increase in controlling behavior exercised by Muslims as they gain more and more of a percentage of the population where they are living, as reported by Geller and Hammond cited above, it is realistically warranted to expect and be alert for an increase in such behavior in these zones in the United States, as is being observed in other countries.

This observation is formulated as a question. Some will immediately write it off, but are they people who simply discount anything in religion? Or, do any who have eyes to see what others miss see something else? Could God be giving an early warning sign to alert us to the reality that this country is off track and heading in the wrong direction, and if we continue on that wrong path, God will not be pleased, and his gracious longsuffering, his patience, is limited. Those with eyes to see, with spiritual discernment, and who have a knowledge of history, especially the history revealed in the Bible, may see a warning. Do you?

That said, we must also say that with God there is always hope. While his longsuffering patience whereby he permits evil for a period of time to allow people sufficient time to repent and turn away from that evil, he does not allow that evil to continue forever. As we've seen in our reflection on the Bible texts above, he brings it to an end when the time is right in his sight, and he has done so on a national basis by bringing a foreign nation to conquer the especially offending nation as a form of judgment.

Yet we observe that if a nation will repent God in his grace will withhold his judgment on that nation. Recall the account of Jonah.

Thus, there is still hope for the United States. However, for those with eyes to see, it is evident that the evil in this land has increased in alarming degrees, and it would be to our peril to ignore that reality. Let us add this matter to our prayers and work that we can overcome the evil in this land while God's patience permits us to do so.

And while we do so, let's be alert. As Jesus said, "Watch." (Matthew 24:4)

Contact the media.

Don't let "the other side" be the only view the general population hears. That's when they start thinking, "Well it looks like everybody is changing their (sic) thinking on this subject," which is not true, and even if it were true, accepting that occurrence as a fait accompli would be to commit fallacies of logic, e.g., the naturalistic fallacy, and to fail to do the work to which God has called us. Write in the opinion sections of newspapers, and call in to radio and TV talk shows. If you would like a sample "Letter to the Editor" to help as you construct your own for a newspaper or other publication, for use to summarize key points to include in a call in program, or for conversations, see Appendix B.

When we read articles in the press that are blatantly biased, a letter to the editor, whether it is printed (which is to be preferred) or not, puts the editor and staff on notice that people are aware of what they are doing, and readers do not approve. If you subscribe to the publication and write such a letter, that's even more significant.

An example of blatant media bias is the following excerpt from a piece written for the website of a Grand Rapids, Michigan TV Station. The underlined statements highlight just some of the writer's prejudicial views, which he otherwise fails to disclose up front. This is an example of an article that should receive a response.

> Gay High School Graduation Speaker's Invitation Rescinded
>
> Michigan high school graduation speaker, Dominic Sheahan-Stahl, uninvited because he is gay.
>
> 11:42 a.m. EDT, April 27, 2012
>
> MOUNT PLEASANT, Mich—
>
> High school graduation should be a time of optimism, family, and hopes for the future. But one Michigan school has turned it into a time of controversy. The Sacred Heart Academy's high school in Mount Pleasant has decided to rescind its invitation to their graduation keynote speaker, the older brother of one of the graduates and an alumnus of the school. So, why did they decide to not include this young man with strong ties to the private Catholic academy?
>
> Because they found out he is gay.
>
> Dominic Sheahan-Stahl was approached by the Sacred Heart Academy back in the fall to give the keynote address at the high school graduation on May 20… The school apparently learned about Sheahan-Stahl's sexual orientation after reading on Facebook about his engagement to his partner, Nathan. Starnes told Sheahan-Stahl's mother that due to the fact that he was gay and "had a picture and a status on Facebook that says so," he was no longer welcome to speak….
>
> "My speech was all about fear and how fear can stop you from making a difference in life," Sheahan-Stahl says in a video he made describing the experience and challenging the message Sacred Heart was sending.
>
> …They just picked the wrong person to do this do. I'm not here to fight. I'm here to inform."
>
> Even more surprising is that this move to keep a gay person from speaking at the school came one day after the same principal delivered an anti-bullying speech to the student body.
>
> This incident also comes on the heels of a recent visit from a Catholic bishop who gave a speech to the school seniors. The students asked the

> bishop about the church's stance on homosexuality, challenging the hostility the church has shown to LGBT people. While the bishop's responses about church doctrine on gay people wasn't surprising, the exchange caused a disturbance in the meeting, with some students even walking out on the Bishop….[524]

The article goes on to make more pro-homosexual statements in an article that is supposed to be a news report. After the headline, subtitle, and dateline the article becomes an editorial. In the first sentence the author gives his opinion of what high school graduation "should be" rather than reporting facts. The second sentence blames the school for starting a controversy when it was only exercising its right as a private institution to teach in accord with its mission, which its board and other supporters expect and hold it accountable to do. The student openly admits he was using the opportunity to challenge the school's values and argues that his purpose is to inform, read that as teach. What institution gives a forum, especially on such an occasion, to undermine its mission? Certainly not one established to serve God!

The writer then confuses the principal's prior anti-bullying speech with supposedly bullying the student by prohibiting him from giving the speech, clearly a non sequitur, and one committing the logical fallacy of irrelevant conclusion. The author then accuses the church of showing hostility to LGBT people without offering any evidence. Here we have an example of how especially in academe, which emphasizes intellectual freedom, many people confuse the teaching of objective knowledge with hostility simply because it is a message with which they disagree. When factual information, in this case the Biblical record some of which has existed for over 4,000 years and is consistent with human nature globally from time immemorial, is presented dispassionately with a sense of a call from God to do so, it cannot be fairly termed hostile. To make such a value judgment is to commit the logical fallacy of *argumentum ad hominem*, which, as discussed in Chapter Four, is an attack against, or other statements addressed to, a person concerning his or her character or circumstances, rather than addressing his or her argument.

Use social media.

Begin a blog. Use Facebook, Twitter, and other outlets. All the preceding are free. Consider establishing your own website, which requires a minimal fee. Let the nation and the world know of the Word and will of God on homosexuality and other especially important matters. If you have the time, engage the comments feature and dialogue with people who respond to you. You'll have another significant opportunity to speak the truth in love in your witness for Christ. If you don't have time now to respond to people, turn off the "Comment" feature until you can reply at some time in the future.

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[524] Matthew Makowski, "Gay High School Graduation Speaker's Invitation Rescinded," 4/27/12 http://www.fox17online.com/news/state/fox17-gay-high-school-graduation-speaker-invitation-rescinded-20120427,0,3718885. (Accessed 4/28/12)

Contact Our Governmental Representatives and Keep them Informed.

We should e-mail, phone, and visit our representatives in the local, including school board as well as the city or town council, county, state, and federal government. Attend town hall meetings they hold; take one or more friends, especially those with strength and courage to speak up, for support if your representative isn't inclined to listen to your point of view.

Express appreciation to government leaders when they do well.

In human learning research, one of the schools of the psychology of human development, the behaviorist school, bases its approach on reinforcement theory. An axiom in this theory is that behavior which is reinforced, or rewarded, tends to be repeated. Use this principle in helping government representatives to do what is right.

Write and/or call government officials when they do well, not only when they say or do something we don't like. We tend to remain silent when we approve what they do, thinking that, as the old saying goes, "silence is tacit approval." While that is typically true, our representatives and other public officials still need our encouragement when they do well, especially when the opposition berates them. They need our affirmation, which is a reinforcement of what they have done well, a reward for doing so, not only in person or by private letter but in the public forum, e.g., on newspaper opinion pages and call-in radio and TV talk shows. Nationally syndicated columnist, Cal Thomas, observes that

> The gays in the military and gay marriage issues are part of a broader attempt by liberals to restructure society. Social activists despise biblical morality (which heterosexuals could use a little more of, too), traditional values that have been proven to work when tried and numerous other cultural mores. This is not an opinion or a secret. The more radical activists have written and spoken openly about their intentions…. [The success they do have] is mostly because there are few leaders who wish to give voice to opposing points of view. They fear being shouted down, or being accused of "homophobia."[525]

Therefore, let's help them. Don't assume that "they knew what they were getting into when they ran for office." They are human beings with the same central nervous system we have; they feel pain just like we do. Let's thank God for calling those governmental leaders who are doing well and that they have responded to that call and stepped up to do this important work. While we're at it, let's also thank these representatives for doing so.

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[525] Cal Thomas, "Don't ask, don't tell or legitimize," *Reporter-Herald*, October 15, 2009, p. A-4.

When they do well, let's tell them so and thank them. They need our support, including especially our prayers, when they take a courageous stand on a contentious issue and are severely ganged up against by the biased media that unleashes a barrage of unfair, distorted, often vicious, and simply wrong press, radio, TV, and social media coverage. Let's let them know that they're not alone and that many people, even most, are behind them, standing with them. Encourage the leaders to stand strong, that many are behind them, and that they should not cave in or run. Remind them most of all to please God in the stands they take.

Let's show our appreciation for our representatives, especially when they do well. They receive heavy doses of negativity, some of which is deserved and some which is undeserved. Let's stand out by giving them affirmation when they do what is right. Then, they may be more receptive to hearing and listening to us when we need to give them corrective feedback. When we give that feedback we should include the factual information to back up what we are saying we want them to do. So you'll have that information on the subject of homosexuality is one of the reasons this book was written.

Speak proactively.

Of course it is very important to speak up when government officials, federal, state, county, and local, are considering legislation that is contrary to God's will and contrary to other wisdom. Obviously it is best to speak up when legislators are in the deliberative and formative stages of a bill's consideration while opinions and decisions are more easily influenced. Yet even after an unwisely written bill is wrongly passed into law, it is still good to work toward voicing disapproval to the legislators and in the media. We should also work toward promoting those in the next election who can and would be willing to make the desired changes.

What should we say in voicing disapproval of what elected and appointed officials say and do? Review the good model quoted above that was produced by Franklin Graham, President and CEO of both the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse, when President Barak Obama unwisely changed his mind and publicly voiced his support for "same-sex marriage."

Dr. Graham is correct. We must resist the contemporary postmodern relativism that drives the proclivity of people to attempt to redefine anything according to their biases and opinions. As discussed above the logical extension of this thinking will lead first (as it already is doing) to difficulty in understanding, then to a breakdown in communication, and ultimately to absurdity.[526]

[526] Such redefining of terms also frequently commits fallacious reasoning and logical error, as is done in the attempt to redefine marriage. We see such fallacies in terms as "same sex marriage," which is a self-contradiction, and "gay marriage," which contains contradiction and other logical flaws regarding definitions, such as vagueness and being intentionally misleading. For further information in addition to Chapter Four above, consult a book on logic such as the classic text by the late University of Michigan

Inform them of the more accurate percentage of homosexuals in the population.

Regarding government representatives, be sure to disabuse them of the false impression too many have that homosexuals constitute 10% of the population, a myth based on the flawed Kinsey studies in the 1940s and 1950s and perpetrated by the liberal media. Homosexual activist, Bruce Voeller, who claims to have originated the 10% number in order to convince politicians and the public that they are more numerous than they are, has written

> ...after years of our educating those who inform the public and make its laws, the concept that 10 percent of the population is gay has become generally accepted "fact." While some reminding always seems necessary, the 10 percent figure is regularly utilized by scholars, by the press, and in governmental statistics. As with so many pieces of knowledge and myth, repeated telling made it so…."[527]

"We used that figure when most gay people were entirely hidden to try to create an impression of our numerousness," Patrick Rogers quotes Tom Stoddard, former head of the Lambda Legal Defense Fund.[528] Here again we see as we did above that homosexual activists have no problem with lying to accomplish what they want to do. Be careful.

More accurate studies indicate that the number of homosexuals is less than three percent and may be as little as one percent.[529] Gary Gates, demographer-in-residence at the Williams Institute, a think-tank on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy at UCLA, offers an estimate in the same range. "Gates' best estimate, derived from five studies that have asked subjects about their sexual orientation, is that the nation has about 4 million adults who identify as being gay or lesbian, representing 1.7 percent of the 18-and-over population.[530] That's a much lower figure than the 3 percent to 5 percent that has been the conventional wisdom in the past two decades, based on other isolated studies and

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Professor of Philosophy, Irving M. Copi, *Introduction to Logic* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959).

[527] Bruce Voeller, *Homosexuality, Heterosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation*, Oxford University Press, 1990.

[528] Patrick Rogers, "How Many Gays Are There?" *Newsweek*, February 15, 1993, p. 46.

[529] J. Gordon Muir, "Homosexuals and the 10% Fallacy," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 31, 1993. Robert Knight, pp. 1-3. Recent studies suggest somewhat higher figures with considerable variance due to several factors emerging lately, including but not limited to: supportive and indoctrinational media (e.g., news, movies, radio, TV, and social), public school curriculums and instruction, government laws and regulations, flawed science, some church leaders, and confused peers. However, these studies do not adequately take into account the large number of LGBTQ+ people who are leaving that lifestyle. Most importantly, all such studies have limited value, due to the dangers of LGBTQ+ practice, including its being counterproductive to their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing, as documented in this fact sheet and my other writing. The field of logic offers a compelling rationale that overrides any degree of temporary popularity: the flaws of invalid argumentation, including illogical reasoning such as the naturalistic fallacy and others explained in Chapter 4 as to why LGBTQ+ should be avoided.

[530] Consider also the above cited findings of scientists such as Drs. Armand Nicholi and Lisa Diamond, a lesbian researcher, that the identity of teens and early adults is quite fluid; therefore, many in that 1.7 percent could still leave the homosexual lifestyle.

attempts to discredit Kinsey," reports The Associated Press, unable or unwilling to insert its bias in the last sentence.[531] Jones adds that Gates' findings suggest "that among adults in the United States, Canada, and Europe, 1.8 percent are bisexual men and women, 1.1 percent are gay men, and 0.6 percent are lesbians."[532] These figures are not new but parallel research data discovered for decades, and not only in the U.S. but internationally as well.[533] Gates also cites studies by the states of California and Massachusetts, concluding that for the first time a best guess estimate of the transgender segment of the population can be put at 700,000 adults or 0.3 percent.[534]

The official Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website records even lower figures. "Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) represent approximately 2% of the United States population."[535] The Christian Ethics Action Group, Salt Shakers, based in Melbourne, Australia, reports on the statistics page of its website that

> In July 2014... the official data - sexual orientation was included in the national health interview for the first time..."The National Health Interview Survey, which is the government's premier tool for annually assessing Americans' health and behaviors, found that **1.6 percent of adults self-identify as gay or lesbian, and 0.7 percent consider themselves bisexual**." That gives a total of **2.3% -** 1.1% said "I don't know the answer" or said they were something else."[536] [Emphasis theirs]

Urge more equitable funding of disease research.

Ask your representatives to follow justice in the apportionment of funding for disease research. Much more money is spent on HIV/AIDS research than on diseases that afflict many more people. To illustrate, Jeremy

> Shiffman's studies on global priorities for infectious disease control, for example, demonstrate that acute respiratory infections account for one fourth of the burden of disease in developing countries but have received only 2 per cent of global aid for health between 1996 and 2003. HIV/AIDS, by contrast, consumes 46 per cent of the global funding for health while being responsible for 'only' 31 per cent of the burden of disease in the developing world (Shiffman, 2006: page 415, see also Shiffman, 2008). The WHO [World Health Organization] Global Burden

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[531] "Demographer: US has 4 million adults who identify as gay," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, April 8, 2011, p. A6.
[532]Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 28.
[533] "Gay Population may be smaller than suspected," *New York Times* News Service, article given to me on April 15, 1993.
[534] http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/apr/7/study-sees-gays-as-17-percent-of-population/# (Accessed 09/21/2014). "Study sees gays as 1.7 percent of population," Associated Press, 7:05 p.m., Thursday, April 7, 2011.
[535] Quoted on http://www.saltshakers.org.au/about-us/about-salt-shakers (Accessed 2/28/15)
[536] Quoted on http://www.saltshakers.org.au/about-us/about-salt-shakers (Accessed 2/28/15)

> of Disease list of the ten most deadly diseases in developing countries also concludes that lower respiratory infections are the leading cause of death in developing countries (11.2 per cent of all deaths), followed by diarrheal diseases (6.9 per cent), HIV/AIDS (5.7 per cent), Tuberculosis (3.5 per cent) and Malaria (3.3 per cent).[537]

Many more examples could be given. Consider just these. The epidemic of diabetes kills more people each year than breast cancer and AIDS combined.[538] In 2010 the U.S. National Institutes of Health spent $1,199,000 on diabetes research and $3,407,000 on HIV/AIDS[539] even though there are nearly 24 million adults and children in the United States with diabetes, more than 230,000 of whom die each year,[540] contrasted with 16,605 who died of AIDS in 2008.[541]

In addition, the National Institutes of Health spends about six times as much of its research funding on AIDS as it does on Alzheimer's disease,[542] but AIDS patients do not outnumber Alzheimer's patients by that amount; in fact, they do not outnumber Alzheimer's patients at all. An estimated 5.4 million Americans in the U.S. have Alzheimer's and the number is growing.[543] However, the number of AIDs patients *in all of North America* in 2009 was 1.5 million.[544] Further, the Denver Post reports

> the Alzheimer's Association estimates that with the aging U. S. population we can "expect to see the number afflicted at least double—perhaps more than triple, from 5 million today to as many as 16 million by 2050. By then, Alzheimer's disease could cost the country $1.2 trillion a year in health care…."
>
> Alzheimer's—a debilitating and ultimately fatal brain disease…is the sixth leading cause of death in the U.S…Compared with other major diseases, Alzheimer's is underfunded, the association and researchers say receiving about $500 million a year, about one-tenth the funding for cancer research.[545]

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[537] http://www.infection-research.de/perspectives/detail/pressrelease/infections_disease_governance_a_globalised_yet_divided_world/ (Accessed 12/17/10)

[538] Bret Michaels for the American Diabetes Association in a radio announcement on 12/11/10, KCOL 600 AM at 10:50 AM (MST).

[539] http://report.nih.gov/rcdc/categories (Accessed 12/7/11)

[540] http://www.diabetes.org/for-media/2010/bret-michaels-raises-awareness-for-adm.html (Accessed 12/7/11)

[541] http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm#ddaids (Accessed 12/7/11)

[542] Lauran Neergaard, "Families urge action with Alzheimer's plan," The Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, September 19, 2011, p. A6.

[543] Neergaard, p. A6 and http://www.alz.org/downloads/Facts_Figures_2011.pdf (Accessed 12/7/11)

[544] http://www.avert.org/worldstats.htm (Accessed 12/7/11)

[545] Electa Draper, "Alzheimer's CU: Proposed study could be breakthrough," *Denver Post*, *Reporter-Herald*, July 25, 2014, p. 5A.

No one is saying that AIDS research should be discontinued. While there are treatments, no cure exists for those with HIV/AIDS. For the sake of the innocent alone, e.g., women infected by unfaithful husbands and many others, money should be spent on such studies. Other reasons validating continued research include the facts that 70% of people in the United States who have HIV don't have the disease in check; many are no longer receiving treatment for it. More than 1,000,000 Americans have HIV, and 50,000 more become infected annually according to the CDC.[546] In her report Lindsay Wise adds

> The CDC's study also revealed that younger people were more likely not to have HIV under control. Just 13 percent of people between ages 18 and 24 had suppressed the virus, and fewer than half had been diagnosed.
>
> "It's alarming that fewer than half of HIV-positive young adults know they are infected," said Eugene McCray, director of CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. "Closing that gap could have a huge impact on controlling HIV…."[547]

Clearly continued AIDS research is needed. However, in fairness to multitudes of others who are seriously ill, there should be equitable distribution of research money to find cures for all diseases and especially for those diseases that kill the most people.

Inform government representatives that <u>no</u> science proves a genetic basis for homosexuality.

Where applicable be sure to point out to governmental representatives, the media, educators, and others the logical flaw in the argument made by many that the homosexual activist movement is essentially the same as the civil rights movement where black Americans finally received equality in the United States.[548] In the latter case we are looking at a natural, God-given, racial characteristic that is not chosen. In the former case in direct contrast we see an unnatural, God-condemned, moral and spiritual condition that is chosen in spite of the deceptive efforts of the homosexual rights movement to distort the facts as explained above. Read again, carefully, Romans 1:18-32. The text clearly indicates that the decisions of those who do such evil are conscious choices in which their spiritually depraved minds motivate them to disobey God.

Furthermore, in addition to what was discussed earlier in this book, let your governmental representatives know that no sound studies, which are generally accepted

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[546] Lindsay Wise, "Many failing to keep virus under control," Tribune News Services, *Reporter-Herald*, November 26, 2014, 6B.
[547] Lindsay Wise, "Many failing to keep virus under control," November 26, 2014, 6B.
[548] For just one example see the subtle but very real attempt to legally link H. R. 998 "The Student Nondiscrimination Act" to civil rights legislation. See specifically Section 9 (a).

by credible social scientists, prove homosexuality is genetically based.[549] No evidence exists for any genetic link to necessitate homosexual orientation or behavior.[550] After a review of the literature, including much of it that pro-homosexual activists avoid, Karsen avers that

> evidence from brain studies, gene studies, identical twin studies, hormonal studies, childhood socialization studies, cross-cultural studies, environmental studies, and sexual behavior studies all show that genetic influence on homosexuality is, if existent at all, relatively weak in comparison with family, societal, and other environmental influences. Cultural norms, not some form of genetic determinism, play the dominant role in manipulating how and whether homosexuality will come to expression. Identical twins studies, for example, show that twins raised in identical environments can develop different sexual orientations, leading to the conclusion that choice does play at least some part in their development.[551]

Jones also indicates that even if a small biological component were to be present, which has not been scientifically established, it should not be considered compulsory; it is ***not*** determinative, which has been demonstrated by the field of epigenetics explained in Chapter Two.

The thinking about the degree to which biology effects homosexual orientation, and the related question of immutability (whether homosexuals can change), is key to the argument being used to try to normalize and validate homosexual practice and same-sex "marriage." If homosexual activists can show a biological connection they can appeal to racial cases as a legal precedent and argue that their cause fits within established legal precedent under civil rights legislation. A multitude of news stories report this approach.

One of the latest at this writing is the following Associated Press article on the Oklahoma case where the Tulsa County clerk refused to grant a marriage license to a lesbian couple. Alliance Defending Freedom senior counsel Byron Babione, who is representing the clerk, points out that the current state law limiting marriage to one man and one woman was

> passed by an overwhelming majority of the people.
>
> Babione said the legal team for Clerk Sally Howe Smith was encouraged by hard questions posed by the 10th Circuit in the Utah case last week,

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[549] Knight, pp. 3-5. Sprigg, *The Top Ten Myths about Homosexuality*, (Washington, D. C.: Family Research Council, 2010), pp. 4-13.
[550] Jones, "Homosexuality, the Behavioral Sciences and the Church," Wheaton College, unpublished and undated essay, pp. 7-12. See also the work by Dr. Elizabeth Moberly discussed in John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, pp. 217-18.
[551] Wendell P. Karsen, "Same-Sex Marriage: A Rejoinder." See also the discussion of the twins research in Chapter Two.

> saying they seemed tailored to their argument that a state's residents have the right to define marriage how they see fit.
>
> But lawyers for Mary Bishop and Sharon Baldwin can point to a tack taken by U.S. Circuit Judge Jerome A. Holmes, who questioned whether Utah's same-sex marriage ban was similar to Virginia's former ban on interracial marriage. The US. Supreme Court struck down that ban 47 years ago.[552]

But logically, and scientifically, that SCOTUS decision, which was about race, a genetically directed development, has no relationship to same-sex "marriage,"—unless the homosexual activists can demonstrate a genetic connection with homosexuality, which is what they are trying so hard to do. For all who can be objective, and especially for all who have a knowledge of the science involved, it is clear that the attempt to prove a sufficient biological basis for homosexual orientation has been unsuccessful. The necessary proof does not exist.

Take into account one other facet of the biological aspect of the question before us. Dr. Neil Whitehead and Briar Whitehead have considered the matter pertaining to culture. They conclude, "If homosexuality were significantly influenced by genes, it would appear in every culture, but in twenty-nine of seventy-nine cultures surveyed by Ford and Beach in 1952, homosexuality was rare or absent."[553]

The foregoing and following is useful for approaching governmental and other secular authorities who do not accept Scripture as their authority. For them we need first to argue on the grounds of true science and other insights from God's general revelation, e.g., the natural law and logic.

But for governmental authorities who are Christians and church leaders, we can add the following. In addition to what Jones has said, I would add that for society the science is informative, important, and useful but for spiritual matters it is ultimately moot. Since God has condemned homosexuality, cause does not matter as far as compliance is concerned. God says don't do it. Heterosexuals also are to control not only their physical inclinations toward sex but also their lust, which Jesus also called adultery. (Matthew 5:27-28) God says don't do that either.

Sound science, as part of God's general revelation, discloses and clarifies what is, but it cannot, as Jones attests,[554] say what ought to be and thus commit the naturalistic fallacy. For what ought to be we need God's special revelation, and he has given it to us in the Bible, in particular, concerning homosexuality, in the texts examined earlier in this book.

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[552]Kristi Eaton, "Court takes up Okla. Case: Denver appeals court hearing arguments today," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, April 17, 2014, p. 6A.
[553] "My Genes Made Me Do it - a scientific look at sexual orientation" by Dr. Neil Whitehead and Briar Whitehead quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Homosexuality_Statistics (Accessed 1/8/2015)
[554] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 33.

There we see that God requires those who will be in his kingdom to abstain from homosexual relations.

Inform government representatives and others that homosexuals can change, that many are doing so each day, and that they are remaining changed.

Can homosexuals change and abstain from such sexual behavior? This question in the literature is referred to as the question of immutability; specifically, is homosexual orientation immutable, i.e., unchangeable? Both the general revelation and the special revelation of God say that homosexual orientation is mutable, i.e., changeable, and it is possible for homosexuals to change and abstain from same sex sexual intercourse. Regarding the former, Jones cites research, including a study of his own with Mark Yarhouse of Regent University, which indicates that it is possible for one to change his or her sexual orientation, and to do so without increased psychological stress; in fact their study revealed "several small significant improvements in psychological distress associated with the interventions."[555] We can add that in Christ they will have a whole new and abundant life! (John 10:10)

Regarding God's special revelation in Scripture as we saw above, we are commanded to abstain not only from homosexual practice but from several other heterosexual practices that keep people from the Kingdom of God. He would not command us to do something we cannot do. It's nice to have additional evidence from part of God's general revelation that something which seems huge and undoable is in fact doable, but much more, it is good to read in God's special revelation that "I can do everything through him [the Lord] who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:13) He has commanded me to control my heterosexuality so that it occurs only within the marital bond. I not only can do that, with God's help I have always done it and am doing it. He does not require us to do something that we cannot do, especially with his help.

As always, and in particular at this point, general and special revelation complement each other. Jones observes what follows.

> Perhaps most important, those seeking change vary considerably in their intensity of motivation, in their resourcefulness, and in the context in which they try to change. Most of those seeking change and most of those who actually attain some level of change are highly religiously committed, and these individuals who believe in

[555] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 31. Such scientific evidence as Jones has found in his own study as well as in corroborative research does not stop the pro-homosexual media and homosexual groups, such as the "Texas Log Cabin Republicans [TLCR]," a homosexual advocacy group that claims to back conservative causes, from advancing their agenda and continuing to promote the discredited concept that change is not possible and that treatment causes harm. The TCLR opposes their party's "proposed endorsement of 'reparative therapy' [though they may stop fighting it for now] over worries that even tougher anti-gay language could be added to the party platform….[The chairman of the TLCR said] it may be better to adopt a longer-term strategy to educate conservatives on the harms of psychological treatments that seek to turn gay people straight." "Gay conservatives worry about Texas GOP platform," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, June 7, 2014, p. 8A.

> a God who intervenes in their lives are embedded in communities of care and are motivated by their core understanding of who they are as a person before God.[556]

Notice what he says about "those who actually attain some level of change are highly religiously committed." Throughout history Christians have observed that commitment to God and maturity in Christ are highly related to strength to make and maintain change. Jones also mentions "God who intervenes in their lives" and that they "are embedded in communities of care." The church, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27) specializes in such care. God works primarily in and through the church to accomplish these of his purposes as well.

Thus, is it any wonder why homosexual activists and their media cohort attack religion, especially Christianity? First of all, they vigorously oppose any thought of leaving the homosexual lifestyle. The rampant promiscuousness of that lifestyle requires a constant influx of more people with whom to have homosexual encounters; the need is for more bodies not less. Concomitantly, can you see how pro-homosexual pastors' and other church leaders' Scripture twisting is playing into the hands of the activists but is disobedient to God and counterproductive to the well-being of those he loves who are trying to be free of this destructive, indeed disastrous, lifestyle? What help do they offer for those desperately trying to overcome SSA and for those trying to leave the extremely unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy homosexual lifestyle?

As we've observed above many homosexuals are leaving that lifestyle, a fact unreported in the biased media. Others want to leave but feel trapped and need help. Urge lawmakers to not hinder them by passing anti-treatment laws as has been done in California and New Jersey. If you live in one of those or another state that has passed such laws, urge their repeal and give the reasons documented herein as to why to do so.

Further, we believers in and followers of Christ Jesus are called to reach out in love to all people. To those who are struggling with us to daily do what is right in God's sight, including former homosexuals who are truly also repentant and willing to come to the Lord and obey his commands, he does and will help us all by working directly in our hearts and minds and indirectly through the church, the body of Christ. We can be that community of care and resources to help homosexuals and all others make the changes they need to make according to God's Word and will. Far more than any solely human organization, the church can encourage and provide support for them in maintaining those changes. We'll return to this subject and discuss it more completely below.

In the light of the foregoing, mention to government officials, whether they are Christians or not, what Jesus told Nicodemus: for human nature, that is essentially inclined to do evil, that nature must be regenerated, reborn spiritually. That spiritual rebirth only comes in the faith in Jesus Christ through hearing the Gospel and by the grace of the Holy Spirit believing in the Lord. Then change occurs, change that lasts through maturing in Christ by engaging the church, regularly hearing God's Word, and in prayer together with the

[556] Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 32.

other traditional spiritual practices. Ask these officials to not make obstacles to the proclamation of Jesus, who changes lives always for the better by far. As them to eliminate obstacles that already exist.

Government officials need this information concerning homosexuality for the most realistic legislation not only pertaining to homosexual matters but to other current issues as well, e.g., gun control. Without a change in human nature, our representatives and the President can pass all the laws they want, but no significant change is likely to occur. ***Our society's best hope is for the government to remove the obstacles that impede people from hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, receiving the grace wherein they receive the new nature and are converted from evil to righteousness, and engage the means of maturing in Christ Jesus. Our national, state, and local governments should honor the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution and permit the free speech the Founders envisioned.*** Whether the officials with whom we speak will be persuaded depends upon many factors, including their own spirituality. But with faithful prayer and our words, the Holy Spirit will do mighty works, including in the halls of Congress and the state as well as other legislative bodies. It can help if others join us with this message in person or in writing. Never lose hope; God is sovereign, and "with God all things are possible." (Mark 9:23; 10:27)

Some governmental authorities "get it." Texas Governor Rick Perry said it well in a statement to the Commonwealth Club of California. Implying the mootness of the biological matter, in a response to a question in which he was asked whether he believes homosexuality is a disorder he declared, "I may have the genetic coding that I'm inclined to be an alcoholic, but I have the desire not to do that. And I look at the homosexual issue in the same way."[557]

Moreover, to reiterate, even if there were a genetic factor, the Biblical prohibition would stand; it is not conditional, and, as Jesus said, this commandment and the rest of the Law and the Prophets (the Biblical expression for most of the Old Testament) will continue throughout the present age: "I tell you the truth," he said, "until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18) God, who created us, knows every aspect of our whole being (Psalm 139), and he has still commanded that we are not to engage in that behavior. In fact the popular distinction between orientation and behavior has been seriously challenged by clinical and anecdotal research. Since God has commanded his people to not practice homosexuality, it follows logically that he knows, indeed he has created us so, we are capable of obeying him.

The same is true for heterosexual sins, such as adultery, which the Apostle Paul places right next to homosexuality in 1 Corinthians 6:9 as sins which keep people out of the kingdom of God. As strong as the urge to commit adultery may be for some, they are to

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[557] "Texas Governor Perry Compares Homosexuality to Alcoholism," *Newsmax*, June 12, 2014, http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/perry-compares-homosexuality-alcoholism/2014/06/12/id/576652/?ns_mail_uid=20123767&ns_mail_job=1572909_06122014&promo_code=qgvepw87 (Accessed 06/12/14)

overcome it, and with God's help they can avoid committing adultery. If they have done it, they can repent and refuse to keep doing it. And help exists in the body of Christ, the church, to enable them to do so.

Not a few homosexuals claim to love Jesus and that they are Christians. They claim to have searched long and hard to find a way to not engage in homosexuality. Then they recite a list of commonly held and expressed arguments (see the excerpt from the article "Where Have They Gone?" below) that they've received and adapted from homosexual activists and begin to reinforce their decision to engage the homosexual lifestyle. They are allowing themselves to be deceived and are deceiving others. Inform them of what is in this book—even give them the URL to it. Or give them a print copy of it.

Monitor military developments and urge just action.

The liberal-slanted Associated Press (AP) in an article on the repeal of the 1993 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in the military stated that "Allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military is a step toward equality, advocates say…Repeal means that for the first time in U.S. history, gays will be openly accepted by the military and can acknowledge their sexual orientation without fear of being discharged."[558]

The article omits and distorts many facts in the matter. For example, the AP doesn't say, as explained in this book, that homosexuals are not content to simply "acknowledge" their sexual orientation. They want to do much more: they want to act in the above ways and they want society in this country and worldwide to view their practice as normal. The AP also omits mention of the fact that all American citizens, including homosexuals, have civil rights according to existing laws. In addition, the article confuses and equates military admission with acceptance. The military services may be required to admit open homosexuals, but *no law can require normal people to accept as equally valid behavior that which is abnormal, unhealthy, dangerous, immoral, and contrary to God's will*.

The United States Declaration of Independence declares that "all men are created equal," but not one Founder and very few if any others in the past or the present have ever believed that all values are equal. The pro-homosexual activists certainly don't believe it, but they try to include their lifestyles by glossing over those words ambiguously in the Declaration to make it look like their lifestyles are equal with all other people, thus committing the division form of the logical fallacy of ambiguity, which we examined in Chapter Four. They'll only get away with it if we remain silent and don't point out the logical flaw.

It is necessary to monitor the military's enforcement of existing laws and regulations that protect service men and women from sexual harassment, not only heterosexual harassment but now homosexual harassment as well. If you know of any such harassment report it to your representatives in the federal government and ask them to

[558] "A step toward equality: Gays see repeal as a civil rights milestone," *Reporter-Herald*, December 20, 2010, p. A7.

follow through to see that justice is being done evenhandedly in the military and in the rest of our society as well.

Sexual assaults in the military occur more frequently than is commonly thought. And, they're occurring to men as well as to women. Consider what a Marine experienced.[559]

> Greg Nelson joined the Marines when he was 21 and shortly thereafter went out partying with some friends in Southern California. While partying he became very drunk. A man he didn't know offered to provide a place for him to recover in a nearby apartment. His "friends" encouraged him to accept the offer.
>
> Nelson remembers becoming sick and receiving some water with what looked like white specks in it and then the man offering him another glass that supposedly contained Motrin.
>
> Nelson's recall of what next took place is unclear to him, but he says he blacked out and then awakened feeling like he was "in a vegetative state." He says he does recall the man sexually assaulting him but being unable to move and blacking out again.

Corporal Nelson left the military in 2011. To his credit he has reported this incident and is willing to talk about it, which is uncommon.

> According to an anonymous survey released…by the Pentagon, nearly 1 percent of males in the U.S. military said they had experienced unwanted sexual contact, compared to 4.3 percent of women. That equates to about 10,500 men and about 8,500 women. Yet only 14 percent of assaults reported last year [2013] involved male victims.
>
> Afraid to be seen as victims or as weak or gay, men in the hyper-masculine military culture often don't feel comfortable reaching out for help or reporting sexual assaults. Over the past year, though, the services have increased efforts to reach out to male victims, urging them to come forward so they can receive treatment and so officials can go after perpetrators.
>
> The campaign urges troops to intervene in potential assault situations, and not just when the victim is a woman. Troops are pressed to report any assault, even ones prior to their enlistment or that involve civilian attackers.[560]

[559] Lolita C. Baldor, "Male sex assault victims slow to complain," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, December 9, 2014, 5B.
[560] Lolita C. Baldor, "Male sex assault victims slow to complain," December 9, 2014, 5B.

Here we have more evidence showing that homosexuality is dangerous. Help is available, including for those unjustly accused in trying to right the wrongs unleashed by the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell."

Lt. Cornel Christopher Downey observed two lesbian military officers engaging in intimate conduct in violation of Army regulations at a formal military ball at Fort Drum, New York, in April 2012. Downey, a 24-year veteran took immediate action to stop soldiers from photographing the lesbians' inappropriate actions, fearing the good order and discipline of his unit would be negatively affected, and he tried to stop the conduct of the two lesbian officers.

Instead of receiving commendation, Lt. Cornel Downey was ordered to face a hearing and was found guilty of assault and violation of "don't ask, don't tell." He was issued a negative Officer Evaluation Report, removed from the attendance list of the National War College, relieved of his command, passed over for promotion twice, and a separate board has convened to determine whether he should be forced to retire.

A federal law suit has been filed on behalf of Lt. Cornel Downey by the Thomas More Law Center. The Center argues that the proceedings against Downey violated both the U. S. Constitution and Army regulations.

This anecdote in the box above recounts how a highly decorated Army officer, who is a Christian, has been unjustly mistreated, placing his career in jeopardy.[561] We thank God that help is available for people such as Lt. Cornel Downey. With God's help these injustices will be discontinued.

Attend governmental meetings.

Attend local, county, and state governmental sessions and school board meetings debating homosexual issues and present the information in this volume that bears on the discussion. Take friends with you and be prepared for intimidation by homosexual activists, such as heckling and shouting down those who oppose them and their agenda, the blowing of loud whistles, and other disruptive tactics. Do not be put off; the triune God who is sovereign and almighty is with you. As the old saying goes, "God plus one is a majority."

We need to listen carefully and then speak in accord with God's Word, remembering who we are and how we are perceived by the world to whom God has called us to be his

[561] Chad Groening, "Army officer enforces regs on lesbians, gets canned." OneNewsNow.com Friday, November 14, 2014. http://onenewsnow.com/legal-courts/2014/11/14/army-officer-enforces-regs-on-lesbians-gets-canned#.VHABg8np_3B (Accessed 11/21/14) http://onenewsnow.com/legal-courts/2014/11/14/army-officer-enforces-regs-on-lesbians-gets-canned#.VK42PMlrj3B (Accessed 1/26/15)

witnesses. Be patient, kind, and not rude. Be assertive and firm but loving. Keep in mind that homosexuals are hurting—despite their public persona—they are not at all "gay." At such times, and always, recall the Scriptures, in particular these passages.

- "Speak the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15)
- "Those who are hot-tempered stir up strife, but those who are slow to anger calm contention. (Proverbs 15:18 NRSV)
- "To make an apt answer is a joy to anyone, and a word in season, how good it is!" (Proverbs 15:23 NRSV)
- "The wise of heart is called perceptive, and pleasant speech increases persuasiveness." (Proverbs 16:21 NRSV)

Monitor the public schools and urge officials to enforce the codes.

Urge governmental, including school board, officials to enforce the legal codes in their jurisdiction. For example, in the Illinois school code, Section 27-9.1

> (b) All public elementary, junior high, and senior high school classes that teach sex education and discuss sexual intercourse shall emphasize that abstinence is the expected norm in that abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only protection that is 100% effective against unwanted teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) when transmitted sexually.
> (c) All sex education courses that discuss sexual intercourse shall satisfy the following criteria:
> (2) Course material and instruction shall teach honor and respect for monogamous heterosexual marriage. [562]

If you live in Illinois and your child or children or grandchild or grandchildren[563] attend a public school, is this what he, she, or they are being taught when these subject matters are being presented class?[564] If not, present this information to the teacher. If no change

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[562] http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/ilstatutes/105/5/27/27-9_1 (Accessed 4/4/15)

[563] Deuteronomy 4:9 states "be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them." The principle the text teaches is that God is also calling grandparents to teach his Word and his will to their grandchildren; not only the parents are responsible to do this teaching. Especially since now public schools are intervening in the teaching of the children, the application of this Biblical principle is that grandparents as well as parents are to keep on top of what their children, who are first and foremost God's children, are being taught and not taught in the schools concerning whether it is in accord with God's Word and will or whether it is not. If not, corrective action must be taken. These are God's children, and he will hold accountable all of us who are responsible for them. How serious is God? He said this: "if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." (Matthew 18:6)

[564] It may not be so. Jim Daly, President and CEO of Focus on the Family, writes, "A mother in Illinois was shocked to discover recently that a program to make her child's school 'safe' and 'welcoming' included adding homosexual themed materials for kids as young as kindergarten!" *Family Focus*, August 2010, p. 2. Don't be shocked; be informed, alert, and vigilant. Such homosexual activism in the public

occurs, present it to the principal. If you are not satisfied with the response talk with the superintendent. If these steps don't result in compliance with the statute, take your case to the school board. You may not need to take all these steps, but if you do, you will likely see positive changes in the right direction. If you don't live in Illinois, check out your state's school code. If it is similar, facilitate its enforcement. If your state doesn't have such a code, or if it needs to be strengthened, work toward that goal.

Though many public school teachers and administrators have a liberal, humanist, and activist agenda, keep in mind that most teachers and administrators are very busy and not a few are decent people, a considerable number being believers in and followers of Christ. School personnel often if not mostly are increasingly burdened by and operate under the tyranny of the urgent, and such legal matters can "slip off their radar screen." Many have not been informed of the law or have been misinformed. Apply the Biblical principle of speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) as you take the above steps, starting with the teacher, to ensure they are teaching the truth—for the sake of your child(ren), your community, your state, and multitudes far beyond.

I have personally found that obeying, following the Biblical command to speak the truth in love, is not only pleasing to God but effective. Teachers, administrators, and school staff members have frequently been accosted and abused by their critics. When they perceive you have a critique to offer, their previous unpleasant experiences will likely cause a defensive shield to emerge that lessens listening and prepares them to defend themselves. Go to your meeting well prepared, but start your conversation by expressing appreciation for as much of what they've done as you can. (Proverbs 18:16) Then in love express your concern and desire for a specific change, which, I have found, with the Holy Spirit's help can and does disarm defensiveness and lead to positive outcomes.

Nevertheless, public school parents, grandparents, taxpayers, and other community members must remain vigilant as to what is being taught in the public schools, not only in the curricula but also in special programs. Here, as in monitoring government authorities, it is more efficient and effective to be proactive than waiting until a problem arises. Becoming involved as a volunteer with the school, or your child's or grandchild's class, enables you to keep informed while establishing relationships that facilitate being heard when you need to speak up and/or speak out. Schools, as other government agencies,

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schools has been going on for many years, and it's continuing as rapidly as the activists can push their agenda. California has passed a law that requires public schools to "incorporate the historical contributions of gays and lesbians into their lesson plans." Documenting the connection between such legislation and the agenda of the homosexual activists to normalize, validate, and make lesbian, so-called "gay", bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) behavior equal with normal sexual activity, "Equality California Executive Director Roland Palencia called the new law 'a monumental victory' for LGBT equality." *McClatchy-Tribune*, "Gov. Brown signs gay history bill in Calif." *Reporter-Herald*, July 15, 2011, B3. This article states that "due to budget cuts, the state won't create new K-8 [!] curriculum materials until 2015," but only the most naïve would think that teachers will wait for the curricular resources to arrive in 2015. The law says "lesson plans," and especially teachers who want to push this agenda will work this subject matter into their lesson plans at their earliest opportunity, and without curricular guidelines those lessons could go even farther. A grave danger for the whole country are the facts that in education and the mainstream media historical revisionism is vogue and that curriculum companies look to states like California, which buy a lot of curriculum, to use as standards for their textbook content.

give advanced notices to the public about proposals being considered, usually with a time for public comment online or in person, such as in a town hall meeting. Let us not neglect to use these opportunities.

In the field of education, the term curriculum has a broad and a more narrow use, in either case teachers have the opportunity to include books such as *Heather Has Two Mommies*, which was written in 1989 and added to New York City's Rainbow Curriculum reading list to promote homosexuality for four and five year-olds (though not all will admit to promotion as the motivation) and has been used in the New York schools as early as Kindergarten.[565] Such books are still being written in accord with the homosexual agenda; we need to be on the watch for them. If you become aware of one being used in a classroom, start with the teacher and ask him or her to not use the book in the class (acquaint him or her with the information in this book if need be). If the teacher resists, bring the books to the attention of the principle, the superintendent, the school board, and if necessary the media.

Special programs, also part of the curriculum in the broader sense, should also be on the radar screens of independent observers, for speakers come in and offer presentations to students on subjects, including on homosexuality, that are often hostile to the Bible and historic Christianity. Such occurrences come to light when students and parents complain. When called on such hostility, the speaker and his or her backers sometimes offer an apology, and sometimes instead a vigorous defense of what was said, but in either case the students have been taught information that is wrong and counterproductive to their health and safety, both physical and spiritual.[566] On such occasions it is important to follow through and inquire who invited this speaker, what vetting was done, with whose approval, for what purpose, and why?

Contact pro bono legal firms when unjust actions are observed.

Several legal firms and lawyers who are Christians step in to correct a situation where Christians and others who are told they can't do something that is within the law. Such situations are frequently resolved quickly with a letter from the attorney reminding the school administrators involved of the law. Not a few school administrators are glad to comply and need this legal notice in hand in order to counter the opposition such as the ACLU and its ilk.

Remember the homosexual activist agenda works on the old adage that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." They know that administrators in schools as well as businesses don't want trouble, so they often cave into vocal opposition before it turns into an uproar and draws negative press. In the schools when an administrator has a doubt he or she will consult the school board attorney, who is often a non-Christian, and the answer is "No, you can't allow that" when in fact the law does permit such activity. At those times seek the help of one of the Christian attorneys, or Christian law firms, or your legislators, and

[565] http://www.millvalleylibrary.net/blog/?p=2207
[566] See for example http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/30/columnist-dan-savage-stands-by-comments-on-bullst-in-the-bible/ (Accessed 4/30/12)

positive results typically occur. Many times all that is required is a letter on a law firm's stationery for the opponents to back down, aware that they have no legal basis to do what they are doing and would lose if the matter goes to court. Countless examples can be given where such developments have occurred.

For the second time in just one year a New York City high school denied a student request to begin a Christian club at the school. Liz Loverde, a fifteen-year-old student at Wantagh High School applied to start a Christian club called "Dare to Believe." When Liz and some friends approached the school principal, she was flatly turned down with an abrupt rejection and told they couldn't have it because the club would be called a Christian club.

At this point the students obtained the help of Jeremy Dys, Senior Counsel for the Liberty Institute, who represented them. The students were well represented; Liberty Institute, according to its website, is the world's largest legal organization dedicated solely to defending and restoring religious liberty in America.[567] Attorney Dys explained that the Equal Access Act of 1984 makes it illegal to deny students the right to form Christian clubs on their school campus.

Liberty acquainted Liz with the Equal Access Act, which she researched and explained to her school principal. The student stated her proposal for the club as follows: "Through 'Dare to Believe' Christian Club I want students to know that while they're going through these tough times, (depression, parents' divorce, self-harm, suicide, anxiety, bullying, etc.) Jesus Christ offers them another view of life; a view that is truly beautiful." Truly, this is a resource many young people need today.

Yet, pointing out the law was not enough! An intervention by Liberty Institute was required in order for the club to be approved. Providentially, Liberty reported on its website that the Wantagh Union Free School District school board announced its recognition of Liz Loverde's right to form a faith-based club on campus only days after attorneys sent a demand letter challenging a principal's wrongful rejection. The announcement went on to say that "school officials announced their intention to follow the laws that have been on the books since 1984 that guarantee the right of student religious groups – like "Dare To Believe" – to meet on campus as an official student club."[568] Sadly, Jeremy Dys stated that the Wantagh school is the second public school and the third time on Long Island that Liberty has had to threaten legal action in order to enable students to form such a club.[569]

Other legal organizations help overcome such opposition as well. Some examples include the following:

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[567] https://www.libertyinstitute.org/about (Accessed 1/6/2015)
[568] https://www.libertyinstitute.org/daretobelieve (Accessed 1/6/2015)
[569] http://www.onenewsnow.com/legal-courts/2014/11/19/students-denied-right-again-to-form-christian-club-at-ny-high-school#.VHATaMnp_3A (Accessed 11/21/14)

1. **Alliance Defending Freedom** began in 1994 when more than 30 well-known Christian leaders recognized the need for a strong, coordinated legal defense against growing attacks on religious freedom. Since then, according to their website, this legal organization has brought together thousands of Christian attorneys and like-minded organizations that work to advocate for the right of people to freely live out their faith in America and around the world. (http://www.alliancedefendingfreedom.org)

2. **American Center for Law and Justice** based in Washington, D. C., represents individuals and groups throughout the United States and with affiliate offices elsewhere in the world. Chief Counsel for the ACLJ, Jay Sekulow, and his staff take on legal matters involving local, national, and international issues, representing individuals and organizations. Jay testifies before Congress, the Supreme Court, and the United Nations. They undertake such issues as abortion, illegal governmental overreach, and persecution of Christians in the United States and abroad. (http://aclj.org).

3. **Christian Law Association** is a ministry serving Bible-believing churches and individual Christians in several ways, including providing free legal defense of those facing difficulties for the Biblical faith and free legal counsel to churches and Christians for their ministries. (http://www.christianlaw.org)

4. **Christian Legal Society** is the oldest Christian legal advocacy ministry for religious liberty in the United States with thousands of members in chapters throughout the country (http://www.christianlegalsociety.org).

Urge lawmakers to fund schools equitably.

Whether or not you are able to make the changes in your school that you want to see, consider one other possibility. The funding of public education has long been inequitable. As long as public schools are funded as they are now, they are a monopoly, which is out of sync with the free market system that characterizes our nation's value system and its concomitant antitrust and antimonopoly laws and policy. Schooling that is based on and funded directly by parental choice puts the control (humanly speaking) of children's learning in the hands of the parents instead of teacher unions, administrators, school board lawyers, and state and other governmental bureaucrats whose own agendas, values, and financial "needs" are often counterproductive to those of the parents and their children.

Urge your legislators to change the funding of public education to make it fairer for everyone and at the same time to promote competition that results in a higher quality product, such as with a voucher-type system. An even better system to request and for which to work is a tax credit system, whereby the taxpayer decides which school receives the money. In a voucher type system the government controls the money and can use it for the curriculum and other stipulations it chooses to make. Google for information on the problem Alaska had with a voucher system.

Inform government officials that the current tax system propping up public schools is unwisely ignoring sound psychological principles in human learning research, specifically reinforcement theory. A basic axiom of behavioristic psychology is that behavior which is reinforced, i.e. rewarded, tends to be repeated. When public education that is failing in so many ways, some of which are identified in this book, receives pubic money without appropriate controls, they not only have no incentive to change their ways, but they have a strong reward that motivates continuing their present practice.

Be prepared for strong opposition from the teachers' unions, but the arguments with which they have countered have all been answered more than adequately. There is no sound reason for not changing the way the schools are funded. In such a voucher-type, or preferably tax credit-type, system pro-homosexual curriculum legislation would not be imposed as is being done today. Rather such ideas would be subject to the free market, and parents who don't want their children taught homosexual values could ensure that outcome by having the means to place their children in schools more to their liking. Grandparents and other taxpayers who don't have children in public schools, but who still have to pay taxes, could direct their money to the schools they prefer, especially if a tax credit system is in place.

Also point out to government officials, especially legislators and administrations, that the families who suffer the most under the current system are the poor. Those who can't afford to send their children to alternative schools have to endure the teaching of values contrary to those of their family, church, and society. Many of these families are African-American and Hispanic who have a strong desire to have the freedom (and the means) to send their children to the school of their choice. Is there at least a hint of racism in the refusal of school and governmental authorities to adhere to the voices of those in these parts of our population who want a different, a fairer, funding mechanism for public education? In the light of the above, why then not provide it for them?

In the meantime, for those parents who must enroll their children in public schools, be sure to monitor what they are hearing and studying about in their classrooms. Talk with their teachers. Look at your children's and grandchildren's textbooks and talk with them about what they are learning, especially pertaining to social issues and most of all pertaining to any comments about God and religion. Look over, and work with your children, on their homework.

If you find a problem with your children's or grandchildren's textbooks or other materials, their teachers, or the school you have help in such places as Focus on the Family. See their "Parents Bill of Rights—for Public Schools," which also contains some good suggestions as to how to implement those rights.[570]

[570] This document can be located on the "True Tolerance" page of the website of Focus on the Family at http://www.truetolerance.org/2012/parents-bill-of-rights-for-public-schools.

Encourage mature believers in and followers of Jesus Christ to seek public office.

Pray that the Lord raises up from his people those who are maturing in Christ to seek public office on all levels. Such representatives in government will turn to the Lord for wisdom, guidance, courage, and direction in decision-making and in action. They are more likely to hold values consistent with those of the historic Christian church. They are also more likely to listen to you.

Be discerning; the words "maturing in Christ" are highly significant. Some people who call themselves Christians are hardly more so than in name only. Such representatives frequently hold views that are contrary to Scripture, e.g., concerning abortion, marriage, and homosexuality. Since elections have consequences, be especially alert at primary time. Find out what the candidates believe; where they're coming from, specifically their track record; and what they are saying they'll do if elected. Then, if they are elected, keep in touch so they remember the good they promised to do…and act accordingly.

When such Christians do run for public office support them in any way you can. Write supportive letters to the editor in your local media outlets. Call in to talk shows. Contribute financially if needed and if you can. Contact them and give them encouragement. If they are elected, continue to be supportive.

Recall frequently the words of John Jay, the first U. S. Supreme Court Chief Justice, who said, "…it is the *duty*—as well as the privilege and interest—of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers."[571] Billy Graham warned that "If America is to survive, we must elect more God-centered men and women to public office; individuals who will seek Divine guidance in the affairs of state."[572] Most of all remember and act on these words from God: "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan." (Proverbs 29:2 NRSV) Undoubtedly this is part of what John Jay had in mind when he uttered the above words.

We believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who of all people should know better, must keep in mind that even the Supreme Court is not our highest authority. First of all, even on the human level it is no higher than the executive and legislative branches of our trilateral government. The only way the Supreme Court is "supreme" is that it is the highest level ***within the judicial branch*** of government and is only the final authority in the sense that it determines the constitutionality of a law. The Supreme Court isn't even superior to the other two branches of the U. S. federal government, and it as well as the other two branches, all three branches, are **under God** as we in the United States pledge in our allegiance to our country.

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[571] John Jay in William Jay, *The Life of John Jay* [New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833], Vol. II, p. 376, to John Murray, Jr., October 12, 1816 quoted in David Barton, *America's Godly Heritage* [Aledo, TX: WallBuilder Press, 1993], p. 21.
[572] Kenyn Cureton, *Voter Resource Guide*, Focus on the Family and Family Research Council, 2008, p. 24.

Further, we must keep in mind that the nine justices on this judicatory are human beings, and therefore they make mistakes. We don't have to look any farther than the Dred Scott Decision in 1857[573] and *Roe v Wade* in 1973[574] to see that the U. S. Supreme Court not only errs, but it errs horrifically at times. This means that when the Supreme Court errs, the Congress can write another law to accomplish what it tried to do with the law that was determined to be unconstitutional.

We must also remember that political bias always exists among the members of the SCOTUS. It is possible for people of high spiritual and moral character to recognize and hold in abeyance their related bias in order to make a just decision, but how many of those people make it to the Supreme Court? The justices are appointed to their positions by the President of the United States and are confirmed by the U. S. Senate, and both the President and the Senate make their decisions based on their obvious ideological and political opinions. Thus, here we have another example of how elections have consequences—even very significant consequences! So errors of the Supreme Court can

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[573] This infamous case involved the issue of whether slave owners had the right to take their slaves into the newly opening up Western territories. Dred Scott was a slave, and the court ruled that he was not free, even though he had lived in two free states, Wisconsin and Illinois, because he was not considered a person, thus not a citizen. According to Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, a former slave owner who wrote the majority decision, Dred Scott was therefore the property of his owner. It is noteworthy to observe the opinion bias of the justices that strongly favored the slave states: five of them were from the South and a sixth, Robert Grier from Pennsylvania, was staunchly proslavery. http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/dred-scott-decision (Accessed 07/06/15) and http://www.ushistory.org/us/32a.asp (Accessed 07/06/15)

[574] Roe v. Wade, another infamous case that has resulted in enormous divisiveness within our country, refers to the 1973 SCOTUS decision that ruled that unborn children, who the proponents prefer to call fetuses, using the scientific term to try to further depersonalize the baby, are not living human beings. Now, however, with the availability of sonograms and other scientific instruments unavailable in 1973, the Biblical teaching that life begins at conception and is a developing and emerging human, a person, is far more certain to many people. In fact in most cases even before a woman knows for sure without a test that she is pregnant, the baby growing within her has a heartbeat, brainwaves, and his or her own distinct DNA that is different from his or her biological mother and father; thus the baby is not at all "an appendage attached to the mother" as pro-abortion proponents lie. Encouragingly, a growing number of teen-agers and young adults, who are keenly aware that they could easily have been aborted, are appalled by the gruesome and inhumane practice of abortion, the horrific procedures of which have been disclosed through insider information, secretly videoed conversations with abortionists (see e.g., the report by Megyn Kelly at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFIN24aI7uM [Accessed 8/7/15]), and litigation. With the photos of what takes place during an abortion, including the tearing apart of a fully human baby in the womb who feels pain, and in partial-birth abortions where all but the baby's head is out of the womb when killed by inserting instruments into the brain, abortion is clearly seen to constitute planned killing, which at the time of this writing is legal at any stage throughout the nine months of pregnancy. In the minds of reasonable people this planned killing is essentially the definition of first degree murder. See this definition at this URL: http://definitions.uslegal.com/f/first-degree-murder/. (Accessed 07/06/15) In the minds of reasonable people this procedure is infanticide, and it is appalling that the United States Government legalizes the procedure, and further cannot even pass a law to protect the life of babies that are born alive after botched abortions. Further, the great harm done to women during an abortion, some of whom die, which is covered up in many ways, is unconscionable. Speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), we Christians must at the same time say that in Jesus Christ forgiveness is a reality, but it cannot be an excuse for one having more abortions. (Romans 5:20b-6:23; John 8:11) Let us pray and assist in any way we can the movement that continues to grow in the attempt to change the laws concerning this great evil. For further information see http://www.catholic.com/browse/Pro-Life/all/all/all (Accessed 07/06/15) and http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/ (Accessed 07/06/15)

be corrected by elections of Congressional representatives (House and Senate) and the President.

As indicated above, the SCOTUS is neither the supreme authority over the whole government nor over our lives. Our country exists under the authority of God, even when some people do not acknowledge or respect his authority. And of course in the church we exist under the authority of God, and we look to God for our greatest help in adjudicating resolutions to even legal matters. This should always be the case within the church, as Paul told the church in Corinth.

> [1] If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints?
> [2] Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?
> [3] Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!
> [4] Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church!
> [5] I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers?
> [6] But instead, one brother goes to law against another—and this in front of unbelievers! (1 Corinthians 6:1-6 (NIV)

Notice the huge implication in these verses for how not only the Supreme Court but all other secular courts lack the wisdom to make the best decisions. This is one, and not the most important, reason why we should neither put our faith in the Supreme Court nor hold all its decisions as the final resolution of any matter, especially of decisions it makes that are unwise and unjust. This is only one reason why we have unjust laws in this land that need correcting. Let's redouble our efforts to make those corrections, for this is part of the calling of the church (e.g., Deuteronomy 16:20; Matthew 5:13-16), the main agency through whom God is working to redeem his creation.

Consider taking other steps.

In addition, the scholars at Catholic Answers have cited several additional and very practical steps to take, which I list here. The comments in brackets are mine.

1. Vote to preserve the true understanding of marriage in ballot initiatives. [Be sure to vote. Elections have consequences, some of them severe, long-lasting, and difficult to overturn. Many elections have been won or lost by one vote. Yours counts for many reasons, whether it decides an election, whether it adds to the message politicians receive as counts are tallied, and for the credibility it gives you in your family as a model for your children and grandchildren and for others who know you vote. It is especially important to be concerned about God's opinion. He expects us

to vote and also to be otherwise engaged in the improvement of his created order.]

2. Learn candidates' positions on marriage and on homosexual unions. Check their websites. Call their offices. Write them letters. Do your research well ahead of Election Day.

3. Vote for politicians who support marriage and who oppose giving legal recognition to any form of homosexual unions.

4. Vote against politicians who support same-sex unions of any form.

5. Remember the role of the courts. In recent years they have been used to force concepts and laws on the public that voters would never have approved. [Do you remember the people on the Left who in the 1960s—the 1990s screamed, "You can't impose your values on us?" They now, hypocritically, have no hesitation trying to impose their values on us who are not in their camp.] In most places where marriage has been redefined, this change has been imposed by the courts. Therefore, in judicial elections, use your vote wisely. Also, when voting for candidates who may appoint or confirm judges, make sure you vote for ones who will back judges who will not try to redefine marriage. [As you read your daily newspaper, or other news source, and see reports of activist judges rendering unjust decisions, keep a list of them in your file system to refer to at the next time they are up for election or renewal of their appointment.]

6. Apply these principles to officials on every level. It does not matter if these individuals are running for small, local offices. If they win lesser offices then they will have the opportunity to move up to more powerful ones. It is important to stop bad candidates at the lowest levels.

7. Educate yourself, your friends, and your acquaintances about this issue. Too many people are unaware of this issue and its importance. Hand this booklet out to others….[575]

[575] "Why Homosexual Unions Are Not Marriages," (San Diego: Catholic Answers Press, 2012), pp. 23-24. This booklet is also online in a digital format at http://www.catholic.com/sites/default/files/why_homosexual_unions_are_not_marriages.pdf. (Accessed 4/20/13)

When it comes to government, we cannot lose sight of the reality that God is sovereign over all, that government's authority is derived from God (which is acknowledged in the first two paragraphs of the U. S. Declaration of Independence), and that all people, corporately (including governments) and individually, are accountable to God. Governmental authority is derivative and not self-authorized. Without that understanding human freedom (which is part of the core of our being made in God's image) is in jeopardy of being restricted and suppressed, for governments that seek to rule without a sense of accountability to God and his will are led by their own human nature which is corrupt and inclined toward evil. (cf. e.g., Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 7:18-25) Then, not only will such a government treat its people unjustly, but it will keep restricting their freedom, not only in order to control evil or what it perceives as being evil but also what it perceives as being a threat to its purposes. This outcome is not only the logical extension of Biblical theology; we know of such occurrences when we take time to remember or read history and to look around the world yet today. We must forthrightly, diligently, and vigorously oppose all who try to ignore God, his Word, and his will, individually and in the government of our land. Proactively, we must be his witnesses as he has called us to be in Jesus Christ.

What can we do in the church?

It is understandable why there is confusion in the world concerning homosexuality; but there should be no confusion in the church. Thus, it is necessary that we, who are believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the truth, as well as being the way and the life (John 14:6), should speak up, lest the very stones cry out. (Luke 19:40) In fact, we are going to be held accountable if we don't speak up.[576]

But how do we speak up? What do we say? To whom do we say it? For God's answers to these questions, for his help these and in all other matters, and to be most effective, we first need to ask him.

Pray.

Begin by offering praise and adoration to the triune God for his countless blessings to you, to your family, to your church, to your country, and throughout the world. Ask God for forgiveness in Christ Jesus to clear away anything that is interfering with your relationship with him, so he'll listen to you. (Isaiah 59:2; James 5:16). Ask God to extend and nurture the number of people in his kingdom throughout this land and the rest of the world as well. It is only as the Holy Spirit gives the new birth, the new nature, to individuals that they can believe in Jesus Christ as their only Savior and Lord, which saving faith enables them to convert their orientation, which previously was away from

[576] Leviticus 5:1; 19:17; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19.

God, to an orientation to him that includes a desire to do his will. Then pray that all of us in Christ mature in his likeness, that we develop the understanding, wisdom, and empowerment to turn from immoral and wicked ways to walk in holiness to God and serve him ever more effectively as and where he leads us. Ask God to help you talk with others. Ask him to give you the opportunities, including preparing the others to be receptive to what you have to say, that he brings to your mind the words they need to hear, and that the conversation goes well in God's sight.

Tell teens the truth (of course in love).

Start where you will be most comfortable in such conversations, where you have the most opportunities, where you have the greatest likelihood of being heard, and where God has commanded that you teach his Word: in your family. Proactively we should teach our children and grandchildren (Deuteronomy 4:9), nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends God's Word and his will on sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular.

They need to hear this message from us before they hear it from the world, while they are hearing it from the world, and after they've heard it in and from the world. And they should hear it from their parents even before they hear it in the church, especially in a congregation where the leadership has been misguided on this issue.

Commenting on a Methodist pastor's published attempts to change the traditional teaching of the Bible and the church and to welcome the practicing homosexual into the fellowship of the church and not insist that he change his sexual activity, Charles R. Young, a physician, disagreed. Young said that the pastor's "accommodations to the person with homosexual impulses have extremely destructive implications for family life, for confused young people who might be drawn into homosexuality because of its…hiddenness and rebelliousness, and, most of all, for the individual himself who may have prematurely labeled himself homosexual."[577]

Some are saying that by teaching the traditional Christian moral message about homosexuality we are "turning off teen-agers," and they are leaving the church.[578] They are wrong, having committed the logical fallacy of irrelevant conclusion (*op. cit.).* They've observed some teen-agers leaving the church, or rather abstaining for the time being from church attendance, two very different matters, since I'm unaware of any who've asked the church board to actually remove their names from the membership roll, and have offered a reason for the teens' behavior that is irrelevant to their decision, which we'll examine further shortly.

We must remember that God calls us to proclaim his Word; we can neither ignore that calling nor change any part of it. (Revelation 22:18-19) Further, as we'll also see below,

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[577]Charles R. Young, M. D., "Myths and Dangers," *Christian Medical Society Journal*, May-June 1967, p. 22.

[578] David G. Myers, "The Church's Future in a Gay-Supportive Age," *Perspectives*, August/September 2012, p. 9.

teens don't want God's Word changed. They see more clearly than many adults the dangers and the audacity of doing so. Who do we think we are to change the Word of God that has been proclaimed and taught for thousands of years?

This audacity reminds me of my own youthful immaturity when I on a few occasions told my mother how I thought she was mistaken on a matter. She chuckled and said, "Oh how young you are…you're still wet behind the years!" As I matured, amazement surfaced in my consciousness regarding how wise she was.

Isn't that how God sees it? Recall what he said to Job (chapters 38-42; e.g., 38:2-12). As God helped Job understand, Job saw more clearly and said,

> [2] "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted.
> [3] You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?'
> Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me
> to know. (Job 42:2-3)

In addition to committing the naturalistic fallacy, they're communicating inaccurate information. As a former youth minister, then supervisor of children and youth ministers, and later a professor of youth ministry, I have not observed such an aversion to the true teaching of the Bible on homosexuality when done as advocated in this volume, i.e., to do so speaking the truth in love: again, as Paul explained being patient, kind, not rude. Further, as I still talk with teen-agers I find no such evidence of an adverse reaction among adolescents to the *faithful and loving* proclamation of the truth in God's Word concerning homosexuality. In fact the opposite is true.

It's no surprise to anyone who has had much to do with teen-agers: one of their great passions is disgust with hypocrisy. They are drawn to pastors, teachers, youth ministers, other leaders, and churches who speak the truth in love, the overarching theme of this book. (Ephesians 4:15, a passage that has no time or subject limit.) Teen-agers, as people of all ages, long to hear the authentic Word of God, its accurate interpretation, and its application to their daily lives. They, as all other humans want to hear the hope Jesus offers. And the Bible overflows with hope!

For just one example, look at the Roman Catholic Church to see how teen-agers are not turned off by the strong traditional message of the church. Our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters have done much if not most of the heavy lifting on the big moral issues of homosexuality and abortion, not to minimize the strong efforts of some, especially Evangelical, Protestant churches. What has been the response of Catholic youth to their denomination's stand on these issues?

Tom Hoopes, writer in residence at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, reports that

> Catholic youth movements have never been stronger. A movement's
> future is only as strong as its next generation, and so for Catholicism to
> have a future it has to have a youth movement. Catholicism does. Our

> most recent World Youth Day attracted 3.7 million — one of the 30-year event's largest gatherings ever.
>
> At home, we see a pro-life force largely led by young American Catholics, which dwarfs almost every other activist movement. Tens of thousands of Catholic young people descend on Washington each January for the March for Life, and you can add to that the young people at the 115 smaller marches for life throughout the United States and the nationwide life chain events in October.[579]

Those teens aren't turned off. And they're not leaving the church; they're strongly attracted to the church in increasing numbers and commitment.

Teens are especially interested in the subject of homosexuality. As we saw earlier, and will discuss more below, during the mid-teens to mid-twenties age range and for some even later, the key identity-development years, teens are wrestling with a range of raging hormones and sexual questions of considerable intensity. Now more than at any other time they want and need to hear the truth about this very deep and profound subject of human sexuality. And the opinion they most need and many most want to hear is God's.

As a former teen-ager myself, parent of teenagers, and professor of youth ministry at both the college and seminary level, I've observed in my experience what the soundest of the literature clearly indicates, that teens need at least one strong but trustworthy person, preferably more than one, and especially parents of both sexes, against whom they can push as they test what they've been taught in childhood to see how it holds up in their newly emerging mental capabilities, broader experience, and conflicting information to which they're becoming exposed. They sometimes recognize, though rarely admit, especially to their parents, that they have such a need. Teens are very vulnerable at this point in their lives as they go about the challenge of figuring out who they are and will be as adults for the rest of their lives. When they do this testing and find weakness, inability to defend the Bible's teaching, and parental willingness to compromise and even overthrow the values in which they've been raised, they feel insecure, lost, and uncertain of what is true. When they can push and test in this manner and feel solid, compassionate, and loving firmness they feel secure.

Ann's Story

That's what led Ann Polk, Executive Director of Restored Hope Network, out of homosexuality. Starting in early adolescence (about 12-13 on) Ann struggled with same-sex attraction. She was a lesbian in college. She didn't have a relationship with God during this time, but within six months in college, she began to sense the leading of the Holy Spirit that she would not find the love for which she was looking in lesbianism.

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[579] Tom Hoopes, "10 Signs Christianity Is on the Rise," Newsmax, April 7, 2015, http://www.newsmax.com/US/Christianity-on-rise-increasing-10-signs/2015/03/09/id/629134/ (Accessed 4/7/2015)

How was she able to break free of homosexuality? Ann explains, "I was vastly benefitted by my pastor who, when I told him I was a lesbian, told me what the Scripture says. He told me the truth and gave me a solid foundation for the rest of my life. That didn't make me mad at him; I knew he was telling me the truth. I didn't like what he said, but that didn't mean it wasn't true. I found the pearl of great price, and everything I had in my life was nothing in comparison with what Jesus had to offer me….I was 19. Jesus Christ changes lives and offers hope; you don't have to be stuck there."[580]

Thanks be to God for that pastor who was faithful to God's Word and spoke up! Look at how many people are being blessed as a result of his faithfulness.

Polk says to the church, "Extend a compassionate hand and a truthful hand. The church doesn't know what to say."[581] Which is one of the main reasons for this book.

How do we talk with teens?

Teens tell me that their peers are disengaging from the church but for many reasons, such as a perception of judgmentalism, including but not limited to the traditional view of homosexuality. In fact I'm told that what turns off their peers and others is much more how the Biblical message is conveyed rather than the message itself. The failure to discern this difference has led those mentioned above into the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion. They've wrongly concluded that some teens are not attending church because of the church's traditional Biblical stand on homosexuality, whereas I'm told to the contrary that what upsets some teens is the unkind and unloving way some Christians have taught the truth—not the truth itself. Most teens and others can accept the church's right to teach the Bible on this and all other subjects. They especially appreciate the church also giving them as much as possible reasons why they shouldn't do something, such as homosexuality, which is part of my purpose for this treatise. At the same time the teens tell me that if we teach the truth of the Bible in love, that's OK, even more than OK.

Lay all the cards on the table. Nevertheless, when giving such explanations it is always important to say that these reasons are likely some of the reasons why God forbids homosexuality. When he doesn't give reasons for what he says and does, we need to be careful to not put words in his mouth. Just the opposite: His words are supposed to be in our mouth! He has his reasons for why he says and does what he says and does, and because of the good minds he has given us we can figure out some things, such as on this subject before us. Chapter Two alone gives plenty of clues as to why God calls homosexual relations *tôʿēbâ*.

However, basically when he says don't do something, that's all we need to hear. We know that he is all-knowing and if he says, "Don't do this," we know it's in our best interests not to do it, whether he gives reasons or not. Just like when our parents told us

[580] Ann Polk, in an interview on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.
[581] Ann Polk, in an interview on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.

not to do something when we were little, they knew what we didn't, that we'd be hurt if we did it. Tell teen-agers the stories herein about homosexuals who are angry that they did not hear the truth and accordingly have been gravely harmed rather than helped. In fact Gary, who we met in Chapter One, is dead. At 42!

We should surely talk with people who are "coming out" and admitting to practicing homosexuality, in particular any in or associated with the church. Let's warmly and sincerely invite them to talk with us, where they can hear God's Word, which they most likely have not heard, especially not the whole message, that he loves them, though as with all of us not meaning he approves of all we do, and desires that they come to him who can meet their greatest needs, including healing.

It's very important to talk with those "coming out" as soon as possible, especially if they are young. Their decision is not at all necessarily final, and if they can engage a patient and loving person in Christ to help them transform their confusion into right thinking, with God's help they can change. Many are doing so. Give their very concerned parents the information in the section below that mentions helpful information and offers suggestions for them.

One reason their decision is not final is that, as we've been observing, their feelings and decisions are fluid at that point in their lives. NARTH reports that "A 1992 study in *Pediatrics* found that 25.9% of 12-year-olds are uncertain if they are gay or straight. The teen years are *critical* to the question of self-labeling…."[582]

That fluidity together with the science specifically in Chapter Two and other references throughout these pages graphically depicting the dangers of homosexuality, raises the urgency that we don't waste time talking with teens. Don't worry about what to say or how to say it. Begin by asking them if they know the Scriptures and the science concerning homosexuality. Include in your conversation the NARTH research revealing "that gay teens are especially vulnerable to substance abuse and early, high-risk sexual behavior."[583]

Be encouraged. Don't worry about turning the teen off; most are eager to know the truth, though if you are one of their parents, they may or may not let you know of their interest. They are trying to come across as grown up and sophisticated, therefore not a child anymore. But his or her very life is at stake here, so no matter how he or she reacts overtly, he or she will inwardly be glad, if not already today then some day in the future, that you loved him or her enough to speak the truth, and to do so in love.

Teen-agers need to hear the truth from their parents, pastors, other church leaders and relatives. Don't turn them over to others in the society and to the falsehoods, lies, and deceptions coming from the "prince of this world." (John 16:11) Keep in mind this wise

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[582] NARTH Institute, "The Three Myths about Homosexuality," http://www.narth.org/menus/myths.html (Accessed 4/12/15)

[583] NARTH Institute, "The Three Myths about Homosexuality," http://www.narth.org/menus/myths.html (Accessed 4/12/15)

counsel: "It does far more *harm* than *good* to tell a teenager that his or her attractions toward members of the same sex are normal and desirable. Teens in this position need understanding and counseling, not a push in the direction of a potentially deadly lifestyle."[584] At some point in the conversations, (have more than one) let the teens, especially those who are interested in history, know that the soundest science is simply illustrative of God's Word and the wisdom that has come down to us through the ages.

Raise the questions discussed above. Begin by asking if they know what they're getting into. Do they know what homosexuals do? Tell them what awaits them if they walk in that direction and the results as disclosed in the earlier chapters of this book.

When they sense our continuing true and sincere love and caring for them, together with the help of the Holy Spirit, there are ample reasons for confidence that if not right away, then over time, they will want to take another step toward the Lord's will concerning homosexuality. They will perceive, and over time have confirmed, that we do not want anything from them for ourselves, we're not going to use them, unlike the counterfeit "love," which the Scripture refers to as lust in the related passages, that they have been exposed to in the homosexual lifestyle, where they are used and abused for the self-gratification of the other(s).

From mature Christians they'll not hear disrespecting and pejorative put-downs; they'll never be called names. They'll not be bullied or badgered. Why? Because we who are God's people hear his Word that all human beings bear the image of God;[585] they are not animals or some other kind of lesser human being. When we look for God's image in human beings it transforms our perception of them. Moreover, this is one of the bases of our love for others, including homosexuals. We who love God can easily make the transition to loving those who bear his image! Does that sound like hate?

Thus we need to talk with teen-agers out of concern for their physical as well as their spiritual health. They need to know how dangerous to their health is the homosexual lifestyle.

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[584] NARTH Institute, "The Three Myths about Homosexuality," http://www.narth.org/menus/myths.html (Accessed 4/12/15)

[585] As stated in our above study of the Genesis creation account, theologians distinguish between the natural qualities in the image of God and the moral qualities of his image, the former having been obscured but not lost by sin. The moral qualities of true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness were lost by sin but are restored in Christ. (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10) Louis Berkhof, *Manual of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 129-130. The qualities in the natural image of God, even without the moral image, are sufficient for us to respect a homosexual if only because he or she bears the image of God—that reality alone is the basis for and enough to avoid all "'gay' bashing." Nevertheless, this reality does not imply condoning his or her sin any more than he or she is likely to condone our sin. As the old saying goes, "At the foot of the cross, we stand on level ground."

What else do teens need to hear?

Teen-agers need to know the causes of HIV/AIDS. Most teen-agers and young adults contract the disease from having sexual involvement with HIV infected men.[586] In September of 2010, *Reuters* revealed that "Nearly one in five gay and bisexual men in 21 major U.S. cities are infected with HIV, and nearly half of them do not know it."[587]

In addition, the *Journal of Adolescent Health* reported:

As of December 31, 2003, almost 38,500 cases of AIDS had been reported in adolescents and young adults 13–24 years old in the United States of America. Previous studies demonstrating that the risk of AIDS increased with the age at infection suggest that a large proportion of people developing AIDS in their third decade of life became infected with HIV as teens.[588]

The large number of young people infected is not the only concern; the number is rising. An abstract for an article in *The American Psychologist* acknowledged that "gay and bisexual male adolescents and young adults in the United States have been disproportionately impacted by the HIV pandemic" and that U. S. homosexual and bisexual adolescents and young adults have had a "steadily increasing rise in their HIV infection rates."[589]

The pro-homosexual publication, *The Advocate*, has admitted the following correlation between homosexuality and HIV infection in U. S. youth:

Gay boys and straight girls who are having sex for money, shelter, love - they are at risk. And our community, the gay and lesbian community - and I particularly fault gay men here - has done nothing to try to help our youth. Gay men view these boys as recreational toys to be used. I have heard many stories of HIV-positive men having unprotected sex with boys. They don't think it matters.[590]

Predators have carefully studied strategies for identifying and approaching confused and vulnerable teens, for example hanging out in transportation terminals looking for runaways. The *Journal of Adolescent Health* has revealed more about how youth are drawn into homosexual involvement and the resultant HIV infection.

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[586] "HIV infection and AIDS in adolescents: An update of the position of the Society for Adolescent Medicine," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 38 (2006) 88–91 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)
[587] http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/09/23/us-aids-usa-idUSTRE68M3H220100923 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)
[588] "HIV infection and AIDS in adolescents: An update of the position of the Society for Adolescent Medicine," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 38 (2006) 88–91 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)
[589] Sex isn't that simple: culture and context in HIV prevention interventions for gay and bisexual male adolescents, The American Psychologist, 2007 Nov;62(8):803-19 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)
[590] "America's Worst Kept Secret - AIDS is devastating the Nation's Teenager and Gay Kids are Dying by the Thousands," Victoria A. BrownsWorth, *The Advocate*, March 24, 1992, page 41, quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)

Gay male street youth, as well as non-lesbian female street youths, seem to be particularly vulnerable for emotional as well as sexual exploitation...

These relationships are often extremely damaging for a number of reasons. The "sugar daddy" usually presents himself to the youth in a loving caretaker role. For a street youth who has a past history of rejection and/or abuse, the promise of being loved and cared for is a compelling one. However, these relationships in many ways have similar dynamics to incest.

Many gay youths coming to YSD [Youth Services Dept. of Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Service Center] for services have long histories of being involved in a succession of "sugar daddy" relationships. Each of these is a cycle of falling in love, believing that life will now be wonderful forever and that this older adult truly loves the young person, discovering that in fact it is just sex that the adult wants, feeling the impact of one more betrayal, and ending up on the streets again. *The whole cycle lasts an average of 1-2 months, and the youth often becomes extremely suicidal at the end of each cycle*.[591] (Italics mine. Can you see another reason—in fact many more reasons—why God views homosexuality as *tôʿēbâ*?)

The medical journal, *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, explains more.

Another group at high risk for HIV infection is young men reporting sex with other men....Many young gay men tested in homeless youth centers reported exchanging money or drugs for sex, which may place them at high risk for HIV infection. Young men who are homeless or runaways who barter for sex with same-sex partners may not consider themselves gay and thus may be beyond the reach of prevention messages targeting the gay community.[592]

As we help people to understand God's Word, it is also important to help them understand their assumptions. Advocates for same-gender sex assume the struggle to remain celibate is too great, and God wouldn't lay that on anybody. One quotes Jesus' statement to the Pharisees who didn't practice what they preach and then "tie onto people's backs loads that are too heavy and hard to carry." (Matthew 23:4)[593] This response raises at least four significant problems.[594] The first is Jesus also said that those who renounce marriage because of his kingdom should accept that life without engaging in sex. (Matthew 19:11-12) The clear assumption is that life without sex is not only possible but that God commands his people who make that choice follow through on it. (See v. 12.)

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[591] Kruks, G. (1991) "Gay and lesbian homeless/street youth: Special issues and concerns," *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 12: page 518 quoted in quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)

[592] Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Volume 149, May 1995, page 527 quoted in http://www.conservapedia.com/Teenager_Homosexuality (Accessed 1/9/2015)

[593] Myers, "The Church's Future in a Gay-Supportive Age," p. 10.

[594] See also other problems where this text has been misused, as discussed above in Chapter Four.

The second problem is the unwarranted assumption that we can live this life without such difficulty. No Biblical warrant for this assumption exists. In well over half a century as a pastor, I'm aware of countless heterosexuals who are trying to be faithful to God, who have normal hormones and strong passions but do not have or cannot find a marriage partner of the opposite gender, and who engage the struggle as they "offer [their] bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is [their] spiritual act of worship" (Romans 12:1) until they find such an opposite gender partner or leave this phase of life to be with the Lord. Moreover, everyone trying to please God has struggles in order to do so.[595]

The third significant problem with the assumption that remaining abstinent is too heavy a load is a flaw in logic. To carry out that thinking is to commit the naturalistic fallacy, the unwarranted movement from "is" to "ought." Just because something is possible does not mean it ought to be. No logical basis exists for the movement from "is" to "ought." Thus, one cannot defy logic and try to reason that because someone can "lighten the load" and off put the sexual struggle by giving in, then that is what he or she should do, especially when the Scriptures, including those discussed above, prohibit such sexual activity. Most importantly, it is not good, and is even spiritually dangerous and ultimately disastrous, to leave God out of the picture and fail to consider his will in the matter. Consider again the helpful comments in the Roman Catholic-Evangelical Protestant declaration pertaining to managing the human sex drive in the context of singleness that we discussed at the end of Chapter Three.

The fourth problem is also a flaw in logic, committing the error of *tu quoque* described in Chapter Four. This is an accusation of hypocrisy, attacking an opponent by saying that he or she does the same thing, but in so doing the opponent's argument remains unanswered. Just because someone doesn't "practice what he preaches" does not invalidate the principle that is not being followed.

None of the teen-agers with whom I have ministered have been turned off by speaking the truth, even on homosexuality, in love. (Ephesians 4:15) None have left the church. Rather they are attracted to and engaged by that application of Christ's command to love. They want to hear more and learn how to do it themselves. Further, they tell me that their friends also are not turned off but attracted to that message. It makes sense. People of all ages, especially those in the church, are attracted to and approach the truth in love; they tend to avoid that which is false and painful.

Very few teens will not want to hear the information in this section, and elsewhere in this volume, pertaining to the dangers in homosexual practice. If you love young people, how can you keep the truth from them? If you love God, how can you keep the truth from those he loves? *Recall Leviticus 19:16b, "Do not do anything that endangers your*

[595] See the best-selling books *Every Man's Battle: Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Battle at a Time*, by Steve Arterburn and Fred Stoeker and also *Every Young Man's Battle: Strategies for Victory in the Real World of Sexual Temptation*, by Steve Arterburn and Fred Stoeker.

neighbor's life." I aver that endangerment would include withholding vital life-saving information from him or her.

An outstanding way to speak the truth in love to teens and college-age young adults was done and modelled by the Campus Ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in January 2015. They held a conference on the subject TABOO on the campus of St. Louis University. Just under 500 students from 100 colleges and universities throughout the U. S. attended. Homosexuality was one of the major subjects addressed at the conference, and with a theme/title like TABOO, the attention of the St. Louis University LGBTQ was captured. The *Reporter,* the official newspaper of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, describes what then occurred:

> The taboo topics piqued the interest of more than just Lutheran college students. On the final day of the conference, Saint Louis University's LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer) campus group, Rainbow Alliance, set up a table outside the lecture hall with a sign that read, "Our love is not taboo."
>
> The Rev. Eric Andrae, assistant chaplain at TABOO and LCMS campus pastor at various schools in Pittsburgh, along with Shana Ziolko-Marting, director of the Lutheran Campus Center at Northwest Missouri State University, took the group cups of hot chocolate on behalf of the conference attendees and served as a listening ear.
>
> "While Shana talked to a couple off to the side, I noticed that one of the tablers wore a pin stating, 'Sinner does not describe me,'" Andræ explained. "This gave opportunity for me to speak to the rest of them about the sinner-saint paradox."
>
> Throughout the congenial conversation, Andræ "affirmed that our ultimate and foundational identity is indeed in Jesus and under His grace — not in our sin, or our sexuality, our GPA, our job or any other factor."
>
> "I answered their understandable misunderstandings of us with the clarity of the Church, their pain with the compassion of Christ and their emotion with the loving truth of Law and Gospel," he said.[596]

What a great witness for Jesus Christ! These two Christians brought hot chocolate, on behalf of the Christians in the warm conference center, to people standing for evil values but who bear God's image and who were cold. They saw no hatred there, which may enter some conversations when they talk with others in their cohort; they will likely be less inclined to accuse conservative Christians of hatred toward them. The love Christ's people showed earned them the right to be heard. Words were sown that, Lord willing, some Apollos may water, and which God will make grow. (1 Corinthians 3:6) The words

[596] Adraine Heins, "LCMS college students tackle 'TABOO' topics," *Reporter*, January 15, 2015, http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/lcms-college-students-tackle-taboo-topics-2 (Accessed 2/15/15)

will likely be pondered, and with God's grace be acted upon positively. Does not this act of love in Christ also bring to mind an application of Matthew 10:41-42?

With further reference to the key issue of identity, the *Reporter* added that the conference cantor Paul Soulek, who serves as cantor at St. John's Lutheran Church and School, Seward, Nebraska, explained that

> "Just like planning music for a Sunday morning, music at TABOO was chosen for real people living real lives in a real sinful world...We sang of our sinfulness, Christ's free and full forgiveness, and prayed that God would strengthen us for lives of mercy and service."
>
> …"We sang of our ultimate identity, which is Christ!"
>
> [The *Reporter* also stated that on the final day of the conference, Rev. Marcus Zill, director of LCMS Campus Ministry and LCMS U, reminded] the college students that "You are not taboo to Jesus. You are not taboo because of Jesus. You, dear loved ones, are not forbidden in the kingdom of God. You are the body of Christ. Jesus is your groom. And, oh yeah, He is coming for you. Now *that* changes everything."[597]

We have here an excellent ministry and model for ministry to teens. The model includes a powerful integration of solid Biblical and theological truth with the psychospiritual development of the target population and a skillful application to significant current issues.

What else can we do for them and for all others? How should we relate to homosexual activists and sympathizers?

Commit to do whatever you can.

We must do all we can to facilitate the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in order to see positive and lasting change, the only hope of this country and the other countries with which we share this globe as well. Human nature doesn't change by itself; we need the help of the triune God. All the education, laws, and "do good" programs will not change corrupted human nature. But God can! If you need help in your witness for Christ, ask your pastor for a class on this subject.

Attend church worship regularly and other educational and fellowship opportunities.

If your local congregation offers Biblically-based worship and education classes and fellowship groups, attend as many as you can. Worship at least once a week. Roman Catholic churches offer worship each day. It's only through regular nurture in God's covenant community that we can grow in sanctification, maturing and strengthening us in

[597] Adraine Heins, "LCMS college students tackle 'TABOO' topics," http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/lcms-college-students-tackle-taboo-topics-2 (Accessed 2/15/15)

Christ to equip us for the most effective service in the presence of God who is Most Holy. In this way the Holy Spirit, working directly in our hearts and minds and indirectly through other followers of Christ, helps us avoid the mitigation of our faith development, and rather understand, commit to, and act on God's will in his Word.

Providing such discipling ministries will help us individually and corporately to facilitate a stronger church in the future. Outstanding sociologist, Mark Regnerus, maintains that the considerable number of Christians favorably inclined to a permissive accommodation to homosexuals and "same-sex marriage," are so due to changes in the church that began some time ago.

> To be sure, the sexual and relational standards of many Christians have already shifted. I'm not so naïve as to think that affirming same-sex marriage is the first significant change to take hold in their sexual and relational norms. More likely, the sexual morality of many churchgoing Christians shifted years ago, and the acceptance of same-sex marriage as licit Christian action follows significant change rather than prompts it.[598]

This suggestion would mean that the departure from traditional Biblical morality is not new and has its roots in such developments decades ago when not a few churches taught such nontraditional views of the authority of the Bible, situation ethics, and abortion to name only a few. Thus, we need to be actively engaged in making sure the teaching ministries of the church are using carefully selected curricula consistent with the Bible and selecting teachers and other leaders who are committed to the authority of the Bible and living their lives accordingly.

It is important to urge Christians to be members of a congregation where God's Word is proclaimed authoritatively and faithfully from the pulpit , from the classrooms, and in other contexts such as small group ministries. In these contexts relationships are developed that are formative in our lives.

Sociologists speak of the significant influence of reference groups. Reference groups are the small number of people, usually no more than the number of fingers on one hand, who we allow to have a part in the shaping of what we think, believe, and do. Our reference group includes our best friends. They should be in Christ. (Psalm 1; Proverbs 1) Regnerus sees the rise of so many in the church who are sympathetic toward homosexuality and "same-sex marriage" as due to the views of people in their reference groups and broader social circles pertaining to the question before us.[599]

Here we have another example of how many people allow their relationships to trump their theology. It is also another reason why we need to be careful what church we select, who the pastor is, his or her view of the authority of the Bible, the congregation's statement of faith as to who Jesus Christ is, and how seriously the members of the church

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[598] Mark Regnerus, "Tracking Christian Sexual Morality in a Same-Sex Marriage Future," Public Discourse, August 11, 2014, http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/08/13667/ (Accessed 4/16/15)
[599] Mark Regnerus, "Tracking Christian Sexual Morality in a Same-Sex Marriage Future."

ensure the teaching in the congregation is congruent with Scripture and is lived out in the life and work of the church.

Seek to listen and then raise the tough questions.

After you've listened carefully, be sure to ask those with whom you speak, who hold to a pro-homosexual position, if they know how dangerous and unhealthy as well as unholy the homosexual lifestyle is. Ask them how much they truly care about, even love, those they are encouraging to embrace such a lifestyle, and if so, how can they do so? As we have the opportunity, we should engage people who are advocating for such practice, pointing out the foregoing that shows what they are doing is neither normative nor healthy and, most importantly contrary to God's will…and why. This book has been written to supply the data you need to speak from an informed perspective.

Encourage pastors to address these concerns in sermons, youth and adult church school classes, and in articles in the church newsletter.

Urge them to maintain faithfulness to the Word of God in their sermons and in other teaching. Encourage them and the church board of your congregation also to resist those who would have unrepentant homosexuals become members of the church and become leaders in the congregation. We will return to this subject and consider it more fully below.

Also encourage your pastor(s) to not fear being taken into court or jeopardizing or losing their church's 501(c)(3) tax status due to faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God. They and you may have heard about some of the misguided, counterproductive, and illegal acts by local governments and other officials in several places in the United States, and are afraid of being taken to court if they speak out.

The IRS and other governmental agencies have misled pastors and other church leaders to think they cannot speak the truth from the pulpit or in other aspects of the life and work of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning social and political issues and candidates. That misunderstanding and false impression, which stems from an unconstitutional 1954 amendment to the § 501(c)(3) tax exemption for charitable organizations, that then Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson inserted to thwart his Republican challengers in Texas, is being successfully tested by the Alliance Defending Freedom.

Each year on what is called Pulpit Freedom Sunday, sermons address political issues and candidates and then are sent to the Federal Government. This has been done since September 28, 2008 when 33 pastors joined in the effort that has been growing steadily. The website states that in 2012 (the last figures mentioned) 1621 participants submitted sermons, and to this date the government has not challenged a single sermon.

Of possible reasons the government has not attempted to take a church to court for such proclamation, the most likely is its awareness of the unconstitutionality of the Lyndon Johnson amendment that is the basis of the threat of losing tax exempt status. They know

they would lose the case. To save the cost of litigation, and to leave in place the threat that still causes some churches to hesitate to speak out, the government is allowing the status quo to remain.

In order to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world Jesus said we are, and to do all else the Bible says we should, let us proceed to function in the high and holy calling God has given us without fear. God will take care of us as we do his work faithfully. One way he has already done so is by raising up the Alliance Defending Freedom, which is prepared to legally defend any church against any government threat to end the tax exempt status of the church for such sermons.[600]

Victory in Houston

One example of unlawful acts of government interference in the life and work of the church, in particular regarding pastoral sermons, how the church should respond, and how with the Lord's help the church can overcome the matter, occurred in Houston where lesbian Mayor Annise Parker and two homosexual city council members forced the passage of a non-discrimination ordinance, called the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO). The act gives special rights and protections to homosexuals and lesbians. One of the so-called "rights" in the bill was a provision, dropped in an updated draft of the ordinance due to a massive public protest led by pastors, which would allow transgender persons to use any public restroom they wish depending on with which gender they identify. Thus termed the "bathroom bill," the American Family Association reported that it

> passed despite vocal opposition by the Houston community, which was led by local churches and pastors. As a result of the mayor's aggressive homosexual agenda, citizens collected more than 50,000 signatures on a petition to put the issue before Houston voters. Under Parker's leadership, the city council rejected the petition on a technicality.
>
> …Mayor Parker and the City of Houston, fighting a lawsuit related to the ordinance, is demanding that five pastors turn over sermon notes and private communications with church members.
>
> The mayor is demanding that sermon notes, emails, videos, and any negative comments about homosexuality or the mayor herself, be turned over to her. If the pastors refuse, the mayor has threatened to charge them with contempt of court and possible fines or jail time.[601]

The mayor's demand was short-lived. Humanly speaking without reference to God's unseen but very active hand in the matter, (James 1:17) as a result of the massive protest

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[600] For more information on Pulpit Freedom Sunday, see the following and other helpful information at this URL: http://www.alliancedefendingfreedom.org/content/docs/issues/church/Pulpit-Freedom-Sunday-FAQ.pdf.

[601] American Family Association, "Lesbian mayor subpoenas sermon notes and communications from Houston pastors," AFA e-mail on October 16, 2014.

viewing the mayor's actions against the pastors as an affront to religious freedom, within two weeks Parker withdrew the subpoenas. As pro-homosexual *The Huffington Post* reported,

> (RNS) The mayor of Houston on Wednesday withdrew the subpoenas of sermons from five pastors who opposed an ordinance banning discrimination against LGBT people.
>
> …Parker said…the subpoenas became a distraction. They were aimed at pastors active in the movement to overturn HERO through a citywide vote.
>
> Parker, Houston's first openly gay mayor, said she made the decision after meeting with Houston pastors and then with national Christian leaders, including National Clergy Council President Rob Schenck.
>
> "They came without political agendas, without hate in their hearts...Parker said. "They simply wanted to express their passionate and very sincere concerns about the subpoenas."[602]
>
> Erik Stanley, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defending Freedom, called the subpoenas a "gross abuse of power."
>
> "We are gratified that the First Amendment rights of the pastors have triumphed over government overreach and intimidation," he said after Parker's announcement.[603]

Yet the matter did not end there. Family Research Council explains:

> The City rescinded the subpoenas in late October, but the litigation continued. Amazingly, three months ago a Texas district court judge ruled that the petitioners had failed to gather enough valid signatures to get the repeal measure on the ballot. Things looked bleak.
>
> Well, today [July 24, 2015], the Texas Supreme Court overturned that decision. The Court concluded that the City Secretary had certified the petition and that brought the "City Council's ministerial duty" to go through the repeal process into effect. The Court held that the Houston City Council must stop enforcement of HERO and reconsider the ordinance. If it does not repeal HERO by August 24, 2015, then by that date "the City Council must order that the ordinance be put to popular vote during the November 2015 election."

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[602] This quote is a fine example of what Peter said should occur when God's people "live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds…." (1 Peter 2:12)

[603] Lauren Markoe, "Houston Mayor Withdraws Sermon Subpoenas Following Outcry," Religion News Service, *The Huffington Post*, 10/29/2014 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/29/houston-mayor-sermon-subpoenas_n_6070650.html (Accessed 3/5/15)

> This is a tremendous victory for the rule of law in Houston. That said, this onerous anti-HERO of an ordinance is still on the books. The Mayor and city government had acted dishonorably to thwart the will of the people when they disallowed petition signatures, but, more dangerously, the subpoenas issued to the pastors were meant to intimidate political opposition and free speech.
>
> Fortunately, Texas has a state supreme court with sufficient honesty and integrity to call a halt to this political thuggery. Many states, however, do not. In the meantime, the people of Houston need to mobilize for the repeal vote that lies ahead. But for today, this is a vivid reminder of Galatians 6:9, "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."[604]

Victory in Idaho

The following issue is significantly different from the matter of pastors being protected from prosecution, and/or losing their church's 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, due to the content of their sermons in corporate public worship or in their teaching. Nevertheless, I include it for two reasons: (1) to offer a strong model for pastors taking a stand for the Lord on a moral issue that involves obeying God's Word in opposition to immoral, unjust, and unconstitutional laws, in particular on the question before us, and (2) to offer another application and model of the importance of standing up to the government and being able to win in so doing. Don't be deterred by the old but flawed adage, "You can't beat city hall." It's untrue; with God's help you can, and here is one case that shows how to do so.

A husband and wife pastoral team, Don and Lynn Knapp, with the help of God working through the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), have successfully stood up to and withstood city hall. Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, authorities caved too quickly to pressure from homosexual activists (some from Boston!), who complained that the Christian pastors who operate a wedding chapel ministry would not officiate at a wedding for them. The Knapps explained that their Pentecostal faith grounded in God's Word would not permit them to perform such a service, but the activists pursued the matter.

The Knapps are not "fly-by-nighters." They're members of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and they've owned their business, a popular wedding chapel called the Hitching Post, since 1989. Furthermore, the Hitching Post is neither a part-time involvement, nor is it an avocation; it is their life's work, which they sense is a calling from God.

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[604] *Tony Perkins' Washington Update*, E-mail to constituents on July 24, 2015.

Ten days after the Ninth U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned Idaho's constitutional amendment stating that marriage consists of the union of one man and one woman, the Knapps were approached by a homosexual couple who inquired about their conducting a wedding service for them. The Knapps respectfully declined due to their beliefs as Christians. Later that same day the Knapps' attorneys with ADF filed a lawsuit against the city.

The lawsuit filed was a federal lawsuit and with it was a motion for a temporary restraining order to stop the city from forcing the Knapps to violate their religious beliefs and to protect the ministers from prosecution.[605] That evening the pastors received another request about a same-sex ceremony.

The decision to file was wise, for the Knapps received notifications from a Coeur d'Alene attorney informing them that because the city has a non-discrimination statute that includes sexual orientation and gender identity, and because the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down Idaho's constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman, the couple would have to officiate at same-sex weddings in their own chapel. They were further informed that if they failed to comply with the statute they would face up to six months in jail and a $1,000 fine for each day they do not conduct same-sex services in their chapel. Thus, as Ryan Anderson calculates, just one week without compliance would cost the Knapps "three and a half years in jail and $7,000 in fines."[606] How's that for government compliance with the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which in political science theory supersedes state law? Do we still live in a free country?

Further, how can a government say that homosexuals' "rights" are superior to the rest of the population, which, as we've seen above is 97-98% of the country? Moreover, when a government entity seeks to give special privileges to homosexuals over others it commits an unprecedented injustice to the others, in this case two pastors proclaiming the true teaching of the Bible, *on which the Founders based the government of this nation*.

Before proceeding, I'll take some time to support that last statement and at the same time provide the information for you to use as you have need, and that need arises frequently today. David Barton, educator, best-selling author, and Founder and President of WallBuilders, a pro-family organization emphasizing our nation's history, "with an emphasis on our moral, religious, and constitutional heritage,"[607] documents how our country's Founders cited the Bible more than any other source in the shaping of our

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[605] Kelsey Harkness, "Q&A: Couple Look to Paul's Example in Resisting Order to Perform Gay Marriages," October 25, 2014," http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/25/qa-couple-look-pauls-example-resisting-order-perform-gay-marriages/ (Accessed 11/18/14)

[606] Ryan T. Anderson, "Government to Ordained Ministers: Celebrate Same-Sex Wedding or Go to Jail," October 18, 2014, http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/18/government-ordained-ministers-celebrate-sex-wedding-go-jail/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuqrOZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CTcdgI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 11/7/14)

[607] http://www.wallbuilders.com/SCHbioDB.asp

country including the ideas they put into the Constitution. Barton's research and writing shows that

> America's system of government was deliberately and intentionally built upon religion and morality; it has subsequently enjoyed unprecedented success. America is now the world's longest on-going constitutional republic, and to exist more than two centuries under the same governing document is an accomplishment unknown among contemporary nations. [Barton here cites the fact that while the United States has had just one government, France has had fifteen; and in just the twentieth century alone Russia has had four; Afghanistan five; and Poland, seven.]
>
> Significantly, each nation had access to the same body of political philosophies and writings when forming their governments; yet our Founding Fathers evidently selected ideas that the other nations chose not to accept. What were the sources of the Founders' successful ideas?
>
> Political science professors believed that this question could be answered by examining a broad spectrum of writings from the Founding Era with the goal of identifying the sources cited in those writings. The researchers assembled 15,000 representative writings from that period and isolated 3,154 direct quotes in those writings. At the end of ten years, they had traced the quotes back to their original sources, thereby identifying the most frequently-cited sources of the Founding Era. (The results of that study may be found in the book *The Origins of American Constitutionalism*.)
>
> The individual who was cited most often in the writings of the Founding Era was political philosopher Charles Montesquieu, with 8.3 percent of the quotes being taken from his writings. Legal scholar William Blackstone was next, with 7.9 percent of the quotes; and political philosopher and theologian John Locke was third, with 2.9 percent. These were the three most frequently-cited <u>individuals</u> during the Founding Era, but the single most-cited <u>source</u> was the Bible, with 34 percent of the quotes coming from the Scriptures.
>
> Significantly, that percentage is even higher when the source of the ideas used by individuals such as Montesquieu, Blackstone, and Locke are identified and included….Therefore, while thirty-four percent of the quotes in the representative writings of the Founding Era came directly from the Bible, many of the other quotes were taken from writers who, like Blackstone, had used the Bible to help arrive at their own conclusions. The Bible was far and away the most influential source of ideas in the Founding Era.

> Consequently, it is not surprising that the Constitution reflects many Biblical principles. For example, Isaiah 33:22 sets forth three distinct branches of government; the logic for the separation of powers was based on teachings derived from Jeremiah 17:9; the basis of tax exemptions for churches (exemptions originated by the Founding Fathers) can be found in Ezra 7:24; and there are many other examples of American government applying Biblical patterns and precedents.
>
> The Biblical underpinnings of America were so obvious to previous generations that in 1892, even the U. S. Supreme court had no difficulty in rendering a unanimous decision declaring:
>
> [N]o purpose of action against religion can be imputed to any legislation, state or national, because this is a religious people…. [T]his is a Christian nation. (In a footnote Barton cites *Church of the Holy Trinity v. U. S.* 243 U.S. 457, 465, 471 [1982].)[608]

This ignorance of our nation's history, much more of which needs to be said but not here, is due to several factors, not the least of which is the unwise and misguided decision in public education in the 1960s, under pressure from the Baby Boom generation many of whom saw no value in anything before they came along, to no longer require the standard number of history courses in high school. This was all done in spite of the warnings of numerous thinkers, such as the Spanish philosopher George Santayana (1863-1952), who famously remarked concerning the mistakes in former times, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."[609]

Which, as we've been seeing on these pages, is occurring before our very eyes. Providentially, the ADF is not ignorant on this matter, nor are the Knapps. As Don explains,

> The city of Coeur d'Alene made it clear at least three times this past year — both publicly and twice privately to me — that we would be breaking the law if we declined to conduct a same-sex ceremony. I was told we could face criminal prosecution, with a jail sentence of up to six months and/or a fine of up to $1,000 each time and each day we declined to perform a same-sex wedding ceremony.
>
> If someone was told by the government that he or she would be prosecuted and face up to six months in jail and up to $1,000 in fines for exercising

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[608] David Barton, *America's Godly Heritage* (Aledo, TX: WallBuilder Press, 1993), pp. 22-25. This small book is a valuable resource for information that will equip you to answer many questions about the Biblical basis of our nation and its Constitution. It is also available on DVD.

[609] https://images.search.yahoo.com/images/view;_ylt=A0LEV70yHvpUuR4AoEYnnIlQ;_ylu=X3oDMTB0ZjNuMHJ1BHNlYwNzYwRjb2xvA2JmMQR2dGlkA1lIUzAwM18x?p=george+santayana+quotes&back=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.yahoo.com (Accessed 3/6/2015)

> their First Amendment rights, they would not wait around to see if the government made good on that threat. They would file a lawsuit to protect their freedom and avoid jail and fines. And that's what we did here.[610]

The ADF motion argued that the city's action "violates [the Knapps'] First and 14th Amendment rights to freedom of speech, the free exercise of religion, substantive due process, and equal protection."[611] That suit jarred the city government to think at least a little more clearly.

It quickly began to backpedal and try to "clarify" what the first attorney said. Though the Knapps and their ADF attorney, Jeremy Tedesco, had written and verbal communications from the city before them, City Attorney Michael C. Gridley weakly attempted to explain that the Knapps' law suit was based on a "misperception" and that he had no intentions of "threatening" and "imprisoning" them.

As Kelsey Harkness observes, "With these conciliatory words, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, backed off enforcing its nondiscrimination ordinance against the ministers, Donald and Evelyn Knapp."[612] The matter is over in a victory for them. However, more work still needs to be done to provide justice for other profits and non-profits.

Gridley added that a complicating issue was the fact that the Hitching Post is a for-profit business. He first tried to stipulate that if it were a non-profit it would have been readily allowed, which sounds disingenuous with his insistence that the subsequent allowance for the Knapps only applies to the Hitching Post and not to any others even though he is aware of and has in mind the Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision in 2014.

This distinction neither surprised nor deterred Tedesco. The ADF attorney said in an e-mail to *The Daily Signal*:

> The left's unequivocal (and incorrect) position is that for-profit companies cannot exercise religion, and thus are not entitled to any religious exemptions in these types of nondiscrimination laws. The

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[610] http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/25/qa-couple-look-pauls-example-resisting-order-perform-gay-marriages/ (Accessed 11/18/14)

[611] Ryan T. Anderson, "Government to Ordained Ministers: Celebrate Same-Sex Wedding or Go to Jail"http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/18/government-ordained-ministers-celebrate-sex-wedding-go-jail/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuqrOZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CTcdgI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 11/7/14)

[612] http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/30/city-says-ministers-dont-have-to-wed-same-sex-couples-but-heres-why-its-not-over-yet/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuKjMZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CT8plI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 10/30/2014) As noted above in the text, the issue is over for the pastors of the Hitching Post chapel but more work has to be done to make the law available for all for-profit religious organizations.

> city consistently expressed this same position before and after we filed suit. But the massive public outcry has pressured the city to alter its position and recognize that people do not abandon their faith when they open a business.[613]

Keep in mind four key factors that help overcome unlawful injustices.

Notice four key aspects of this case involving what was done to obtain vindication and victory in this case. First, the two pastors remained true to God's Word, linking their faith with obedience to the Word. "The Apostle Paul spent quite a bit of time in jail for his faith, so who am I to feel like I have any right to avoid the same thing?" Don Knapp said during the couple's exclusive interview with *The Daily Signal*. "We can't go against the teachings of the Bible and break our ordination vows," Evelyn "Lynn" Knapp adds.[614] God has always said throughout the Bible that he will bless obedience to him. (For just a few texts see Deuteronomy 11:27; 28:1-14; Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 7:15-23; John 14:21.)

Second, notice that, as Paul used the Roman legal system to accomplish God's purposes (e.g., Acts 22:25; 25:10-12), God's people today can effectively work through the legal system. In Coeur d'Alene, working within the laws of the land, the Lord employed lawyers who hold to his authority, in this case the Alliance for Defending Freedom, to vindicate and give victory to his faithful people. Further, they used the system fully; they went after the city with a federal lawsuit. God's people know how to play hardball, and with his help they can win.

Third, God also worked through what ADF attorney Tedesco called a "massive public outcry" that pressured the city to alter its position. Those of us who have been what Jerry Falwell called "The Silent Majority," have to cease being silent. We need to speak up, otherwise the vacuum is filled by undesirable elements. (Cf. Jesus' statement in Matthew 12:43-45 in the spiritual dimension of life.)

Silence is considered tacit approval. When the government only hears from the one side, often far fewer than the silent majority as in the Coeur d'Alene case, the ancient secular proverb kicks in: "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." When you need to speak out, don't hesitate to gather with others in ad hoc or in more permanent groups.

In regard to how the Lord works on the horizontal level, also recall what he said to Paul when the apostle was in Corinth.

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[613] http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/30/city-says-ministers-dont-have-to-wed-same-sex-couples-but-heres-why-its-not-over-yet/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuKjMZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CT8plI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 10/30/2014) See comment in the text above.

[614] http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/25/qa-couple-look-pauls-example-resisting-order-perform-gay-marriages/ (Accessed 11/18/14)

> [9] One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.
> [10] For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:9-10)

Carefully observe that the first reason God told Paul not to be afraid is that he was with Paul. The second is that he has many people in the metropolis, through whom he is accomplishing his purposes.

Fourth, we must be prepared to act both proactively and reactively. As Anderson writes, we must be citizens who "must work to prevent or repeal laws that create special privileges based on sexual orientation and gender identity. We must also insist on laws that protect religious freedom and the rights of conscience."[615]

Be hospitable to homosexual unbelievers.

Welcome even admitted homosexuals to *attend* the worship services and other programs of the church, if you think they will do so without disruption, intimidation, or advocacy of their lifestyle. The church should never display any pro-LGBTQ+ signage, ,flags, or other promotion of their cause.

As LGBTQ+ people hear Christians speaking the truth in love, they will experience the opposite of what our opponents wrongly say about us; they will see we do not hate them or any other human beings. We are called to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his love to the whole world, beginning in our families and in our community, including the church. We function under the command Christ gave to his followers to love everyone. We know that no one is ever attracted to Christ Jesus by hate; only love attracts people to the Lord. Their attendance will enable them to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and facilitate the Holy Spirit's call to faith and obedience, directly and indirectly through others. As homosexuals hear God's Word and the Holy Spirit acts on their minds and hearts, they will have an opportunity to change.

However, such welcoming does not mean failing to teach the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), including admonition to change. (E.g., Luke 17:3; John 8:11; Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 3:16; James 5:19-20; Leviticus 19:16b-17b) Attendance is thus valuable but significantly different from membership with its affirmation, privileges, and opportunities for influence, including leadership.

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[615] http://dailysignal.com/2014/10/18/government-ordained-ministers-celebrate-sex-wedding-go-jail/?utm_source=heritagefoundation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=morningbell&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuqrOZKXonjHpfsX56e8tXaGylMI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CTcdgI%2BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrLBMa1ozrgOWxU%3D (Accessed 11/7/14)

Leaders: Lead.

Those of us who are called and ordained to lead God's people, in particular pastors and elders, together with other teachers, church staff members; college, university, and seminary professors; and denominational officials on all levels, must keep in mind and help the church to know God's Word pertaining to the evil in the LGBTQ+ lifestyle (cf. Chapters One and Two above); to point it out and avoid it; to never affirm it; and to develop the courage to speak and act against it in the church and in the public square. We so lead by word and example. We cannot let Christ's sheep go astray, which many will do without our strong leadership. The Lord takes this matter very seriously; never forget James 3:1.

Such leadership is easy. All we have to do is correctly answer the question, "Whom am I trying most to please: God or fellow human beings?" For further clarification: "Whose opinion counts most to me: God's or fellow human beings?" Listen to God's answer throughout the whole Bible, e.g., 2 Corinthians 5:9-10.

At the same time, be careful here. Keep in mind that some people try to become part of a church to change it, and that occurs in other contexts and regarding other issues having nothing to do with homosexuality. Some try to change a church's doctrinal positions.

Attendance involves development of relationships; concerning fellowship we need to ask who are they? If they are homosexuals who are repentant and who desire to be freed from that lifestyle and function according to God's Word and will, they should be warmly welcomed and nurtured.

However, if they are homosexuals who claim to be Christians do not fail to remember what the Holy Spirit led the Apostle Paul write in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 and what Jesus said in Matthew 7.

> 9 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral
> people—10 not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral,
> or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to
> leave this world. 11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate
> with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or
> greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a
> man do not even eat. 12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside
> the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those
> outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you." (1 Corinthians 5:9-13)

In verse nine, the Greek verb "do not associate with" is συναναμίγνυμι, *sunanamignumi*, also denoting not to mix together and keep company with (from σύν, *sun* with + μίγνυμι, *mignumi*, to mix, mingle, blend). Here we have another place in Scripture where the major motif of holiness reemerges. As discussed in other sections of this book, the church is called by God to be holy to him, for he is holy; indeed, he reveals himself to be

holy, holy, holy, the threefold repetition being in the Hebrew language the way the concept of greatest and most is expressed. (Leviticus 19:2; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8) The church must not disobey God's Word and engage in companionship with, much less confer membership upon, those committed to a lifestyle in rebellion against God, both behaviors of which would constitute tacit approval of grievous sin specifically stated in the Scripture.

Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:21-23) In the church, the body of Christ, we cannot participate in deception and mislead people into the thought that they can commit themselves to a sinful lifestyle that God condemns and be OK. To do so would be counter to our calling, would make us culpable as well (Leviticus 19:17b), and it would be very harmful to those who are disillusioned and disobedient. We will examine further implications of this matter below.

A former homosexual, who is now in Christ and no longer living the homosexual lifestyle, has a new identity.

When it becomes evident that a homosexual person has experienced the new birth from the Holy Spirit that has resulted in saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the person has indicated a desire for growing in "unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, (Ephesians 4:13) then we see he or she has a new identity. He or she **is** "in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!"

Yes, the one who was a homosexual is not so any more. No longer engaging in same-gender sex, he or she has a new identity. This is why Frank Worthen emphasizes the importance of helping the former homosexual see him or herself as having a new identity in Christ. And who can do that better than the church?! Indeed the church offers by far the greatest help and hope in Christ Jesus! Worthen writes that in ex-"gay" ministry it is important to

> attempt to change a person's identity, the way a person looks at himself. It is not biblical to use our past sin as our God-given identity. We encourage the former gay to drop the label "homosexual" from his life.
>
> However, we do not ask him to become dishonest about his struggle with homosexuality. He is a Christian who has a homosexual problem, rather than a homosexual who believes in Christ Jesus. It is our hope that a person struggling with homosexuality will come to a place of wholeness in Christ.
>
> The ex-gay knows that something has definitely happened in his life. Change has come. Perhaps the most important change is that he has come

into agreement with God that homosexuality "misses the mark" which is the definition of sin. Attitudes have also changed, so that what was once called "love" is now seen as possessiveness. The ex-gay can agree with Paul, that he has been delivered.

So there is now a new position in Christ, where the ex-gay is freed from sin by the atoning blood of Jesus on the cross. God now views that person through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Becoming ex-gay does not guarantee that there will be no stumbles. Daily, each Christian needs to be delivered from tempting thoughts and sexual availability. He knows that Jesus will deliver him from these things, because Christ has already begun the change process in his life. When one has already seen the hand of God at work in his life, it is easier to trust God and to rely on Him in times of trouble.

"I will yet be delivered." The ex-gay person sees his homosexual responses diminishing and has the confident hope that he will be fully delivered in the future. But nowhere does the Bible promise that a person will come to the place where they are never again tempted. In fact, the Scriptures promise just the opposite: the Christian faces a lifetime of trials and temptations.

We must rejoice in our trials, for they build Christian maturity. The former homosexual who enters into temptations also rejoices, for he has seen God deliver him and he knows that each time God provides that way out of the temptation, he becomes stronger in his faith.

Let no one deceive themselves by thinking that leaving the homosexual lifestyle is an easy thing to do. It is extremely difficult. It is only when we totally give up and say, "Lord, I can't do it on my own", that we allow God the opportunity to come in and begin to remake our lives. The process is slow and the gay person encounters much in the way of spiritual warfare. The enemy does not allow anyone to easily slip out of his control. Indeed, the ex-gay person passes through the fire.

How do we, those of us who are ex-gay, bear up under such a label? First, I have never found anyone who is enthusiastic about the label. It is a scar on the side and nail prints on the hands. It is insufficient identity and a poor trade-off for the former identity of being a homosexual. Again, just as it is not valid to use our sin as our identity, it is also not valid to use our former sin to form our identity. We are Christians who were formerly homosexuals. We may be Christians who still struggle with homosexuality, but we are first and foremost Christians. We are the property of Jesus Christ, no longer our own.

> Why then the label "ex-gay"? What purpose does it serve: It is our witness to the life-changing power of Jesus Christ. It is the ray of hope that flickers within the gay community that homosexuality is not a terminal condition. In itself, it says, "There IS a way out!"
>
> What does "ex-gay" mean? It is a statement of fact: I am no longer the same. God has changed me, He is changing me, and He most certainly will continue to change me.[616]

Does that testimony of one who has gone through the fire and come out of it well with God's help (cf. Isaiah 43:2, 5) not warm your heart toward these brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus?! Surely when we see their identity in Christ we should welcome them into the full hospitality of the Lord's church. (Another reality we must remember—whose church it is—His, not ours!)

Worthen makes an excellent point when he says, "just as it is not valid to use our sin as our identity, it is also not valid to use our former sin to form our identity. We are Christians who were formerly homosexuals." Thus one should not use the term "Christian homosexual;" it is a contradiction in terms, and an oxymoron. In Christ we reject and repent of sin, we don't incorporate it into our identity.

The true Christian is a believer in and follower of (i.e., obedient to [John 14:21]) the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and is not a "Christian" in name only. Therefore he or she identifies with Christ and not with that which is sinful, all of which is abhorrent to God. Not only homosexual sins but heterosexual sins and all other behaviors God calls sinful are to be rejected by his people.

All sins need to be repented, including mental behaviors.

Furthermore, not only sinful behaviors overtly done need to be repented but also behaviors that should have been done but weren't (sins of omission as well as sins of commission) and evil thoughts, e.g., the lust of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 5:28, thus committing adultery. That word Jesus used, ἐπιθυμέω *epithumeō*, is a strong word with many applications. Concerning the subject before us, we need to repent even of the sinful desires that surge up within us, not matter who we are. (Psalm 19:12-13; Colossians 3:5; James 1:13-15)

Look closely at this passage from James.

> 13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;
> 14 but each of you is tempted when you are dragged away by your own evil desire and enticed.

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[616] Frank Worthen, "EX-GAY: Fact, Fraud or Fantasy?" http://www.exodusglobalalliance.org/exgayfactfraudorfantasyp49.php (Accessed 3/3/15)

> [15] Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (James 1:13-15 TNIV)

Now look again at verse 14 in the light of the Biblical teaching that all of us humans have a sinful nature. (Psalm 51:1-5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18, 23; 7:7-25) Our nature is corrupt and leads us (thus we are leading ourselves), dragging ourselves away by our own evil thoughts and desires and enticing ourselves, the Greek word for which is δελεάζω *deleazō*, which also means lure and entrap.

Verse 15 reveals that this thinking involves a process that contains a cause and effect relationship between engaging the thoughts, the desires once they are conceived, and the deathly deeds which they bring forth. Thus the desires, including attractions, that arise and tempt us, whether they are wanted or unwanted, are evil and we need to repent of them. This is true of all of us, whether we are heterosexuals or homosexuals. We've all had thoughts that would make the devil blush.

Thus, the thinking process is also a behavior. When one is thinking, he or she is actually doing something; he or she is not doing nothing. Mental activity is an activity. One of the clearest examples is mathematical calculation mentally (in contrast to using a calculator, though even there mental activity is necessary). The process of mentally adding numbers is no less a behavior than writing down the answer and performing the other actions required to make use of that calculation. Educators spend much time planning to teach and in the teaching process to help students learn to think rightly, knowing that thoughts issue forth in acts.

Part of the healing process is repenting all sin, overt and covert including mental.

Concerning unwanted same-sex attraction (SSA), Owen Strachan has explained this matter well.

> The language James uses to describe the workings of desire is not neutral. He describes each step of the process of sin-formation in moral terms. Sin first emerges when the sinner allows himself to fall prey to "his own lusts," not those of someone else.
>
> James teaches us that our sinful action was indeed an act of the will. We allowed ourselves to be "lured and enticed" by our own fleshly desire. This is a chilling metaphor. We are not harmlessly drawn out-of-bounds when we allow ourselves to be tempted. Instead, we are "dragged away" in a "violent sense"…We are not hauled off by someone else's volition. We are the agent here…Whether or not we are fully conscious of this process (which often occurs very quickly), we act as our own tempters and enticers.
>
> …we regularly act as our own worst enemy.

We are disordered by the fall, but the truth is bleaker still: as the Reformers recognized, we are sinful at our core. Sinful instincts cause us to tempt ourselves.

The form of self-temptation described in James 1:14 is a manifestly different form of temptation than what Jesus experienced when in the presence of Satan. James is mapping out for us what *internal temptation* looks like; this is a temptation that is itself sinful, for we lure ourselves to sin. Jesus never did this to himself.

Temptation is thus not exclusively external to us nor exclusively internal. We surely face the enticement of sin from factors outside of us—Satan, the harlot, even our friends and family (Job 2:9). Such allurements are a common part of the Christian experience. We in no way sin by being tempted in such ways. There is no repentance needed when the harlot calls to us or Satan whispers to us. There is no guilt that should overtake us in such scenarios, which will regularly occur. We need not repent when temptation attempts to ambush us, as it regularly does.

But this is not the only way we face temptation…we also tempt ourselves. As sinners, we "lure and entice" ourselves to hunger after that which is forbidden. We cannot flatly say, therefore, that temptation is morally neutral.

This desire seeks something off-limits without respect to degree of desire. The married person who is not our spouse is completely closed to us as an object of desire, unlike our own spouse. We may be drawn toward marrying a person of the opposite sex, but this does not enfranchise our lusting after such persons. Sexual passion is only appropriate in the context of marriage.[25]

There is thus a fundamental difference between opposite-sex attraction and same-sex attraction. One has a proper outlet; the other does not. One is acceptable if consecrated to God and not allowed to manifest in lust; the other is never acceptable. Thus we come to an important conclusion: if the object of the desire is wrong, then the desire is wrong. It is not only wrong to physically engage in homosexual acts, but to desire them. Homosexual conduct is univocally considered immoral in Scripture…. There is no deviance from this portrait. If it is wrong to physically commit a homosexual act, it can only be wrong to desire that act. There is no God-glorifying outlet for a desire that fails to honor God.

It may be that such desires are few and fleeting or that they constitute a regular pattern. The frequency or the intensity of same-sex desire is not the issue. It is the experience of same-sex desire just like the experience of heterosexual lust or unrighteous anger in one's heart that calls for

> confession and repentance on the believer's heart. The term "orientation" cannot thus absolve a person from their moral duties before the Lord. If it refers to a pattern of illicit sexual attraction, then it demands a consequent pattern of Godward confession and repentance.
>
> This is the takeaway of "total depravity" or some concomitant formulation for the believer. Sin is not our master, but it is our companion. When we are pulled toward it through fallen desire, we should repent. The whole of the Christian life, Luther reminds us, is repentance. Repentance is not the exception, then. It is the rule.
>
> Some people who have engaged the conversation over "gay Christianity" have argued that this reality, if true, breeds discouragement.[617] It surely can. These passages force us to confront in a fresh and deadly serious way the specter of our immorality. We are worse than we know. We are more sinful than we like to admit in polite society.
>
> The bogeyman in our day, as in every era, is not one particular sin. It is not SSA. SSA is just one aspect of the much larger problem: indwelling sin. People with SSA are not a special group…They are just like every other believer who faces temptation of varying kinds. They do not need a special dispensation to deal with their lust; they do not need a different gospel. Every believer should lead a life of continual repentance of both act and desire. Every believer will find unbelievable power and fresh forgiveness in the gospel of grace. There is one enemy of us all: sin. There is one conqueror of that sin: Christ.
>
> …We must battle the flesh, putting it to death, but we will also know significant victory as we embrace the cruciform power of salvation…This speaks to the work of the pastor. He must lead his people to see that they cannot trifle with sinful desire or act, but must put both to death by the power of the gospel (Col 3:5).[618]

Homosexuality is a sin. Yet it is not the unforgiveable sin. (Matthew 12:31) Thanks be to God, including our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that none of us in him are what we were. (Ephesians 2:13; 5:8; Titus 3:3)

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[617] That is what sin does. Thanks be to God he has provided relief and refreshment (two of the meanings of the Greek word translated "rest" in Matthew 11:29.

[618] Owen Strachan, "A Referendum on Depravity: Same-Sex Attraction as Sinful Desire," http://www.printfriendly.com/print?url=http://cbmw.org/uncategorized/studies-a-referendum-on-depravity-same-sex-attraction-as-sinful-desire/ (Accessed 4/21/15)

Welcome home!

When God promises to be with us, including former homosexuals who have repented and who are committing to reject that lifestyle, in the Isaiah passage (43:2, 5) and throughout the Bible (cf. Matthew 28:20), he does so not only directly but through the body of Christ, the church. When, as Frank Worthen tells us, brothers and sisters in Christ cry out, "Lord, I can't do it on my own!" ***we must be there for them***! We reach out with open arms and say, "Welcome home!"

Provide pastoral care.

The pastoral care department in your church can help those struggling with same sex attraction and/or who are trying to permanently leave the homosexual lifestyle. If you have such people in your congregation, neighborhood, family, or workplace, begin a support group for them.

Consider that our formerly homosexual brothers and sisters in Christ are not only receivers, but also, as all other brothers and sisters in Christ, givers; they have much to offer in the church, the body of Christ. To cite just a few examples, they have the gifts the Holy Spirit has given and will give them as believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus. (See the gift lists in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4.) These gifts will help greatly to shape their new identity in Christ as they have joy in developing and using them to serve the Lord.

If they sense God's call to do so, and the church confirms that sense of call, they can help facilitate a pastoral care support group and other ministry for those trying to overcome SSA and homosexuality. The sense of God's call is essential. Just because they've had the history they have, does not mean God is placing them in such a ministry. We should not make assumptions about where they should serve, just as we should not do so with any others; it's God's call. As with all other potential leaders, they should go through the process of discipleship nurture, leadership selection, and continuing education. Those who are called to serve in these ways will have much to offer.

They know what it is like to suffer and come through the fire; they can help the rest of us prepare for and come through the fires ahead of us by sharing what they have learned about how to overcome strong temptations. Relatedly, they also offer a powerful testimony that it is indeed possible to make a major lifestyle behavior change. They've done it; we can too, as needed, with God's help.

Moreover, they recognize, much more clearly than many Christians, where these temptations come from. Too many straight Christians are ignorant of the spiritual warfare in which they are engaged, and unaware they are already on the battlefield without much if any armor. Our former homosexual friends in Christ can help us see more clearly the demonic forces we're all up against and what we need to do to be more effective for Christ.

What is there to keep these ***former*** homosexuals from membership in the church? When they make the same profession of faith in Jesus Christ and fulfill the rest of the requirements of your congregation for membership in full standing, as all others do, it is important they're admitted to membership—in the words of church polity—in "good and regular standing."

Should the church ordain pastoral and elder candidates who confess they have a same-sex attraction but do not practice homosexual behavior? Read carefully how Dr. Steve Curtis, a Ruling Elder in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), has answered this question.

> **Considering the Outcome**
>
> Hebrews 13:7 calls us to consider the *outcome* – the trajectory and fruit – of a leader's life. What does it produce? What kind of faith does it display? And crucially, is it a faith that others should imitate?
>
> A leader whose life reflects an ongoing identification with desires that Scripture calls "contrary to nature" presents a confusing model for the flock. Even if celibate, the *outcome* of such a way of life may fall short of the progressive sanctification that Scripture holds forth as normative for believers, and especially for leaders.
>
> By contrast, Paul could say with confidence, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). This is the standard for gospel ministry: not perfection, but a life so evidently formed by Christ that others may safely follow.
>
> **A Call to Faithful Discernment**
>
> This is not a call to harshness, but to holiness. Not to exclusion for its own sake, but to fidelity to God's Word and the good of His church. Every believer is called to fight sin, to walk in repentance, and to grow in Christlikeness. But not every believer is called to be a model for the flock in the office of elder.[619]
>
> Hebrews 13:7 invites us to remember, to consider, and then to imitate. Immediately following, we are anchored by this unchanging truth: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). This verse is not disconnected; it is the foundation for the discernment we are commanded to exercise. The standard by which we evaluate leaders is not defined by cultural shifts or pastoral pragmatism, but by the unchanging character of Christ Himself.

[619] In the Bible, pastors are elders who have a call from God to a special function of the eldership. See "Leadership and Administration in the Church: Balancing Task Accomplishment and Caring, PPT," especially Slides 101-102.

> Because Christ does not change, His design for holiness does not change. Because His truth does not evolve, neither do the qualifications for those who would represent Him before His people. The call to transformation, the pattern of godliness, and the nature of faithful leadership remain fixed in Him.
>
> Therefore, when we "consider the outcome of their way of life," we must do so in light of the unchanging Christ. A faith worthy of imitation is one that increasingly reflects *His* likeness, not one that settles into ongoing identification with desires He calls us to put to death. The closer a leader's life corresponds to the enduring holiness of Christ, the more confidently the church can obey the command: "imitate their faith."[620]

All of us Christians, and at the head of the line pastors, elders, and other church leaders, are called to "get rid of…every form of malice [κακία (*kakia*, badness, depravity, evil, trouble, wickedness]." (Ephesians 4:31; cf. 1 Peter 2:1,9-12, esp. v. 11, "abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.") Very significantly, the verb translated "war against" in the original Greek is στρατεύομαι (*strateuomai*), which is in the present tense, denoting durative, continuing, action; we don't ever let down or give up. It is also in the Greek middle voice, which denotes the need to accept personal responsibility, in this case for rejecting the sinful desires that war against one's soul. We're engaged in a matter that concerns and belongs to us, the meaning of the Greek middle voice—not the active voice which would mean we're doing something to or for another, and not the passive voice which would mean we're being acted upon and thus not responsible for our sins—clearly indicating that we have responsibility to serve God in his call upon us and can't shift the responsibility to someone else to do what God has called us to do, or blame anyone else for our failing God's call upon us, i.e., to be holy and qualified to credibly "declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (2:9) We must protect our souls from demon-driven desires so we can glorify God and accomplish his purposes in his call upon us to be Christ's witnesses, a very important part of his plan to redeem and restore his creation.

The unsurpassed Greek scholar, R. C. H. Lenski, explains more.

> Αἵτινες [*Haitines*, "which"] is both qualitative and causal…: these lusts are of such a kind and for that reason campaign against the soul like a στράτευμα [*strateuma*] or army. The verb used is not πολεμεῖν [*polemein*], "to war," but στρατεύεσθαι [*strateuesthai*], "to engage in a campaign," and personifies these fleshly lusts which intend to capture the soul in order

[620] Steve Curtis, "The Question of Imitable Faith in Ordination," *The Aquila Report*, May 7, 2026. (Accessed 05/11/2026)

> to enslave and to destroy it. The appeal of this relative clause is one of spiritual self-interest.[621]

These "sinful desires" Peter points out using the word ἐπιθυμία (*epithumia*), which means desire, long, crave, and, as Lenski correctly translates it: lust. (See also Matthew 5:28.) Can you see now how such SSA *epithumia* endangers the soul of the one with such sinful desire and how that person will also not help but endanger parishioners and others?

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul commands (the mood of the verb: ὀνομαζέσθω [*onomazesthō*, (not) be named] is imperative) "sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not be even be named among you, as is proper among saints," (Ephesians 5:3 ESV) *And especially so for the leaders of God's people*.

James adds, "…get rid of all moral filth…." (1:21) Continuing to harbor SSA feelings is not getting rid of all moral filth. Church congregations and denominations should NOT ordain and place in leadership positions people with SSA. Ecclesiastical judicatories that are charged with the responsibility to examine and vet ministerial and other church leader candidates must address this question and not credential candidates who have SSA.

Should the church permit membership and leadership for avowed, unrepentant, and practicing homosexuals?

Let's first consider the question of membership. Can you see the **huge** difference between admitting to membership in the body of Christ a repentant former homosexual, one who has renounced the rebellion and disobedience of that lifestyle and who has also committed to and is demonstrating living a Christ-like life, and admitting an unrepentant homosexual who openly espouses and continues in homosexual practice, which as we've seen above is a flagrant in-your-face rebellion against the God into whose Most Holy presence and sanctuary he or she wants to come and on a regular basis? How long do you expect God's patience will last in that setting?

Further, what hope does the church offer the homosexual, including lesbian, who desperately wants to leave that unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy practice if the church welcomes them to membership as they are? If you have any doubt, listen to the furtive plea coming later in this chapter from the lesbian who implores the church to not compromise God's Word on this matter. On their part what incentive do unrepentant homosexuals have to change, much less help others change, if they have all they want without having to do anything different, and what motivation and influence does the church have to help homosexuals make the changes the Lord requires for all who would come into his kingdom?

The desire for practicing homosexuals is not to change or encourage change. Just the opposite: they want affirmation of their chosen lifestyle *as they are*.

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[621] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966), p. 106.

Here is why the issue of identity is key: if homosexuals in your midst are unrepentant activists who want to change the church, remember such Bible passages as 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13. Do "not associate with sexually immoral people." (v. 9) See also v. 11., "you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral….With such a man do not even eat." The principle of separation, rooted in holiness to God, who is Most Holy, is replete throughout the Bible; it is what Biblical scholars refer to as a major motif, a key theme woven through God's Word. For just a few examples, see Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 17:7; 19:19; 21:21; 2 Corinthians 6:14. All people are permitted in our worship and in the educational programs of the church, but not all as members and certainly not all as office holders.

To confer membership upon people is to connote and denote that they represent the group of which they are a part and that they share the state, values, condition, position, status, and dignity of the group of which they are a part.[622] As such, membership conveys commonality and communicates to a group and those outside the group that the member has acceptability and credibility with the others in that group, in this case a church. Thus, in the sight of all who know or know of this new member, the church is viewed as sharing his or her characteristics and values. In the words of the old secular saying, "Birds of a feather flock together."

The people in and outside the church even receive a message about what the Lord is like, the values of which he approves, and the people who are a part of his body. This reality requires us to be especially careful of who is admitted to church membership.

Some like to object that when Jesus was here on earth he ate with "tax collectors and 'sinners.'" (Matthew 9:11) These objectors try to apply such texts to indicate that Jesus would approve of homosexuals in the church. Be careful to discern the significant difference existing between what the Lord did, and what we do, when reaching out to people and proclaiming the Gospel and what he expects of people before they become part of his kingdom. When Jesus heard of the criticism of the Pharisees about his eating with "tax collectors and 'sinners,'" he said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:12-13) Part of what he meant is that he was calling those who were most in need and most receptive to his message. Did he expect them to change? Recall he called them "sick." A physician wants his patients to change and become well.

Jesus removes any doubt that he was reaching out to these people with the expectation of behavior change when he told and explained to the chief priests and the elders The Parable of the Two Sons.

> 28 "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to
> the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'
> 29 "'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

[622] Merriam-Webster Dictionary, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ship (Accessed 5/30/2014)

> 30 "Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.
> 31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.
> 32 For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him. (Matthew 21:28-32)

Here, then, is our answer to the pro-homosexual activists seeking to persuade us that Jesus would accept into his kingdom the unrepentant and practicing homosexuals on the basis of a flawed analogy referring to his eating with "tax collectors and 'sinners.'" These activists not only commit the logical fallacy of the unwarranted use of analogy, but they fail to notice or acknowledge Jesus' pointed teaching in the respective texts that behavior change is connected with the righteousness that is acceptable to him and required of those who would be in his kingdom.

Those of us who have sat for countless hours in church council sessions where we've met with and approved new members have considered whether there is anything in the candidate's life that would prohibit him or her from becoming a part of this congregation in the body of Christ. When no such matter is disclosed, the candidate is accepted for membership.

The credibility of the church is transferred to the members, which is part of the agenda of homosexual activism that seeks to communicate to society that homosexuality is normal and that they "fit in" with organizations of average people, even with the last bastion of societal acceptability, the church. Further, to confer membership on homosexuals signifies that the church approves of those relationships. The church is saying they approve of that lifestyle; thus, there is no discipline of the homosexual member(s). This message is officially conveyed in the authorized church records with the words that he or she who has just been received is "a member in good standing." Such membership thereby sends the message to the whole congregation and to the surrounding community and beyond that it approves of the member, including his or her lifestyle, *in contradiction to God's Word, which contradiction is heresy*. Such a message is not only confusing to the congregation and to the community, it misleads both, which is very serious.

Not only is the church and the cause of Christ harmed but the individual also is harmed. When a homosexual member of the church does not receive corrective feedback and is not disciplined, he or she assumes that the church approves of that lifestyle. Not only the homosexual, but anyone else aware of the matter, concludes that there is no need to change his or her behavior, even though it is obviously disobedient to the clear teaching of Scripture. The result brings much unnecessary and counterproductive confusion in the church as well as disharmony—the exact opposite of the peace Paul said should characterize the church. (1 Corinthians 14:33; Romans 12:18)

Other serious ramifications also occur in the matter of avowed and unrepentant homosexuals having the privilege of membership in the body of Christ. Since these consequences are involved with the question of permitting publicly open homosexuals to hold leadership positions in the church, we'll now turn to that question.

Should avowed and active homosexuals be leaders in the church?

Compare what Jesus told the church in Thyatira, "Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols." (Revelation 2:20) Remember this text the next time someone criticizes you for being intolerant. If you are standing up for maintaining the truth in the church, especially if you are speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), you have solid backing in this passage and throughout Scripture.

In the Thyatira case the church leaders permitted a woman in the congregation to teach false doctrine to a following within the congregation that involved a false use of freedom including *porneusai*, a Greek word used only in 1 Corinthians and Revelation, referring to sex outside of marriage, any kind of sexual relations. What kind of sex in this situation is not specified, but Jesus uses this occurrence at Thyatira to show how the failure of the church leaders to discipline the woman doing that false teaching was resulting in the church being misled.

We must not stand by and say nothing while misinformed and misguided people commit the same sin today. To do so makes us culpable as well. (Leviticus 19:17; Revelation 2:20)

Consider those in the church who are struggling with unwanted and repented same-sex attraction and those in the church who are repentant ex-"gays." Practicing homosexuals are threatened by and have a strong contempt for the whole concept of ex-"gay." How are homosexual leaders in the church going to provide the needed empathy and pastoral care for those wrestling with unwanted and repented SSA and those who are ex-"gay?" Moreover, how are homosexual leaders in the church able to teach (which always rightly includes modeling, e.g., "practice what you preach") concerning morality and Biblical commands?

Many Roman Catholic, Protestant, and other church people are rightly concerned and upset when they hear about the harm to the church caused by homosexual clergy. These church members are not only angry with those clergy but even more so with the ecclesiastical authorities who've abrogated their sacred charge and responsibility to examine clergy candidates and protect the redemptive cause of Christ, the church as a whole and his people who have been abused in particular, and the world God loves and is working through the church to redeem. These ecclesiastical authorities are charged with the responsibility to examine candidates for ordination, and one of the examinations is called "fitness for ministry."

In the history of the church this examination is one of the ways the denomination verifies that a candidate has truly received a call from God to lead His people. The people trust this examination process is being done so they can place their trust in their clergy. Jesus clearly indicates that Jezebel's holding of the prophetic office was due to a self-calling, not to a call from God.

The ecclesiastical authorities have been given a sacred trust that the people want to feel confident is being undertaken seriously and carefully. In all the Bible, theology, church history, and other classes I've taught for half a century, I have never seen such rapt, indeed riveted, attention as in those classes when I've explained the process of the calling, examinations for licensure and ordination, continued oversight, and procedures for church discipline of pastors and other church leaders. God's people, the body of Christ, have a powerful vested interest in the vetting and supervision of their leaders. They are now aware of another huge concern: not only their eternal security but also their physical and emotional security is at stake. They crave certainty that their leaders are credible and walk close to and with God.

It is not enough that the ministerial prospects have achieved sufficient academic excellence in their college and seminary studies; they need to demonstrate that they have the calling and accompanying spiritual integrity and maturity to teach God's Word and proclaim Christ in Word as well as in deed. Nevertheless, sadly, their examiners have many times failed to understand their task and to rigorously complete it as they should. This failure has not occurred in Roman Catholic churches alone. Reports occasionally surface of occurrences of harm in Protestant churches, as has taken place in Roman Catholic churches, though on account of the Balkanization of Protestantism such reports don't usually reach the broader population, unless the name of the church leader is widely known.

Also problematic is the lapse within some groups in church congregations which are tasked with the responsibility of hiring church ministry professionals, who do not have to be examined for their positions by a higher church judicatory, since they are not to be ordained. Yet the congregation depends on the search committee and the board of elders and/or other authorized persons within the congregation to adequately find and examine these leaders who will have much interaction with children, youth, and adults often in one-to-one settings, the interpersonal dynamics of which can lead to inappropriate, even sinful, acts if the leader is not well screened, is poorly trained, and is not spiritually mature. While such instances are relatively rare, as with the clergy, they also are not usually widely known due to the Balkanization of Protestantism. But would such instances not increase with unrepentant homosexuals in charge?

Recall what occurred in the Roman Catholic Church with *homosexual clergy, the presence of whom was even in violation of church doctrine*. That global denomination with a hierarchical ecclesiastical polity is very visible and receives much publicity. From what I've read and heard, including from daily contact with Roman Catholic media for many years, it appears that our friends in Christ in that denomination also went through a period in the mid to latter part of the 20th century when during the screening process

some laxity occurred and homosexuals, as well as some sinful heterosexuals, slipped through that church's vetting process and became priests.[623]

As frequently occurs with everyone, sin begets sin. When their sexual abuse of children and others occurred, instead of implementing church discipline and immediately defrocking these priests, their ecclesiastical superiors moved them to other parishes where they did more damage. Years, sometimes many years, later the children and their families sued the church with the help of lawyers who knew much about how to reap huge judgments in litigation but who either know and/or care nothing about the Scripture that clearly says God's people should settle their differences out of court:

> [1] If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? [2] Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? [3] Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! [4] Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! [5] I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? [6] But instead, one brother goes to law against another--and this in front of unbelievers! [7] The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? [8] Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)

My point should not be missed. I'm not saying that none of the victims need help in recovering from a traumatic childhood experience that has severely impacted their lives and that may be long lasting. Yet the Word of God in the preceding passage is clear, and there is no exceptional clause that applies to the situation under discussion. The Holy Spirit, speaking through Paul, is saying that within the church are fair-minded people who, led by the Spirit, have the wisdom to adjudicate a just resolution to the situation without taking it to the secular courts where ungodly people will be participating in the litigation without concern for the mind of God on the matter. Moreover, the basic and most serious part of the problem is not monetary but spiritual, and the secular courts have no clue as to how to address that crux of the matter. One tragic result is the bankruptcy

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[623] On Tuesday, May 6, 2014 the Vatican reported that 848 priests were defrocked and another 2,572 were sanctioned for sexual abuse since 2004. Most of the cases occurred between the 1950s and 1980s. While that number, 3,420, is a very large number, and unacceptable, it is essential to note that number is still a very small percentage of all the Roman Catholic priests worldwide (413,418). John Heilprin and Nicole Winfield, "Vatican: 848 priests defrocked since '04," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, May 7, 2014, p. 7A. "The Vatican defrocked 848 priests from 2004 to 2013, for cases of sexual abuse." *Rome Reports*. http://www.romereports.com/pg156753-the-vatican-defrocked-848-priests-from-2004-to-2013-for-cases-of-sexual-abuse-en (Accessed 06/05/14) Asia News, "Growth in Number of Catholics Worldwide, Along with Priests and Deacons," *Catholic Online*. https://www.catholic.org/news/international/europe/story.php?id=50927 (Accessed 06/05/14).

of whole dioceses with the loss of many services valuable to the society and the rest of the world in addition to the church.

And it all began with allowing homosexuals to have leadership positions within the church, as a result of another failure to adequately screen those who would be ordained to speak for God. It should be remembered by all that all this trouble has been caused by a relatively small percentage of priests, but that fact should not obscure the huge damage that has been done to God's people and to his redemptive work…unnecessarily. Using George Santayana's wise guideline, let's not be uninformed about the mistakes of the past and thus repeat them. Let's learn from what occurred in the Roman Catholic Church and not repeat the errors in any more Protestant churches. What makes anyone think that Protestant homosexual clergy will function differently from Roman Catholic homosexual clergy? If one or a few can be found who aren't molesting children, teens, and other adults, that doesn't mean they won't, and it doesn't justify going against God's Word. That rationale is even illogical, committing the fallacy of hasty generalization. (See Chapter Four.)

I hasten to point out that Protestants also have similar situations where a small percentage of ordained and unordained church leaders have committed sexual sins, again unnecessarily; let us not increase the number of clergy who are living in and advocating sin. What do we say to God for doing so?! Is this being a shepherd of and feeding Jesus' sheep? (John 21:15-17) In the light of the revelations of high promiscuity among homosexuals, and the rebellion against God that constitutes homosexuality as we saw in Chapter One, how is placing homosexual clergy in charge of Christ's sheep not putting those sheep in the charge of wolves (Matthew 7:15)?

What do we say to people in the pew who know better? The main purpose of this book is to help church officials to decide on all matters pertaining to homosexuality in accord with God's Word and not according to political correctness and other cultural trends, which frequently contradict the Word. We must not let culture trump Scripture. It can never do so in the long term; it should not be allowed in the short-term either.

In the light of the foregoing, and the other information in this volume, how can one justify placing homosexuals in leadership in the church, whereby they would influence people to value what God calls an abomination and harm many people in the process? Their very presence in a leadership position would be an unspoken affirmation of their lifestyle and what they do, including what they advocate, and would influence others to affirm, value, and participate in that lifestyle in disobedience to God. Jones observes that "it does seem clear that the view of behavior embraced by a society shapes subsequent behavior. This is another reason why the decision of your church on this matter is important; it will be part of shaping our culture."[624] Which is precisely what has been occurring, as I've heard people say as they mention what they've heard in the wrongful teaching of many pastors today. When I hear these comments, I sadly recall Jesus'

[624] Jones, "Homosexuality, the Behavioral Sciences and the Church," Wheaton College, unpublished and undated essay, p. 11.

question to Nicodemus, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?" (John 3:10 NRSV)

Remember: no double standard exists in the Bible.

As we've seen, some accuse the church of a double standard. This accusation is easily refuted by looking at both our standard and our practice.

There is no double standard in the Word of God which is the basis, standard, and main content of what the church teaches and does. In God's sight heterosexual sins are just as evil as homosexual sins, and we see that in Paul's "sin catalogues," e.g., 1 Corinthians 6:9, heterosexual sins are listed right next to homosexual offenses; in fact, heterosexual sins are listed first, thus giving them emphasis as discussed previously. As an ordained pastor for over 55 years I am aware of churches, including ones I've served, that have disciplined church members guilty of heterosexual adultery when that became known.

The same is true elsewhere in Scripture, e.g., in Ephesians 5:3-7. There Paul states,

> But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with [*summetochoi*, partakers with, casting one's lot with, sharing with] them.

Thus, those who engage in these lifestyles, who are not in God's kingdom, are not righteous in his sight. They therefore cannot even become seedlings, let alone oaks, of righteousness. (Isaiah 61:3) How can the unrighteous lead people to righteousness? Even if a homosexual leader were to not engage in promiscuity, would not what he or she stands for mitigate, undermine, and lead people to avoid rather than approach the strong teaching of the Bible on homosexuality? How, then, could such people as leaders in the church grow and help others grow in Christ and effectively serve God? Where in the Bible do they or their congregants have any confidence that such leaders' prayers will be heard by God, who throughout the Bible holds the leaders of his people to a higher standard?[625] But we are called to sanctification, (1 Corinthians 1:2) to movement from being an acorn to an oak of righteousness!

Thus, there is no double standard in the Bible. Neither is there in a church which preaches, teaches, and submits to the Bible as its ultimate authority and the basis of its calling, life, and work. Throughout the centuries in historic Christian theology, one of the marks of a true church is called *the administration of church discipline*. These

[625] See, e.g., Genesis 39:7-10; Numbers 20: 6-13; 1 Samuel 2:27-35; 3:11-14; Proverbs 15:29; Isaiah 1:15; 59:1-4; Luke 12:48; John 3:10; 15:16; James 3:1; 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12.

congregations conduct church discipline when necessary, even to the extent of excommunication as described above for those who are behaving as "openly unrepentant sinners."[626]

Pro-homosexual advocates argue that it is wrong to hold homosexuals to a double standard and prohibit them from membership in a church, as well as ordination and installation into a church ministry, while allowing other sinners to hold church office. If they said "it *would be* wrong to hold homosexuals to a double standard," we can all heartily agree.

The problem with this accusation is that they say "it *is* wrong to hold homosexuals to a double standard," meaning that such a double standard exists. To make that point they have to do more than show that heterosexuals sometimes fail to live up to the Biblical standard of the church. They have to show that the church, as a whole, not only an infraction in a local congregation, in regular practice turns a blind eye to adultery, fornication, incest, and other sexual acts condemned in Scripture. When heterosexuals commit sexual sins they are violating the standard that is in place for them. There is no standard, written or otherwise, that says sexual sin is OK for heterosexuals but forbidden for homosexuals. Such heterosexual sinning is as abhorrent to the church as is homosexual sin.

Their argument about the wrongness of a double standard, while sounding reasonable without further reflection, is misleading, which becomes apparent with further thought. The argument camouflages crippling errors in their rationale.

First, such argumentation commits the flaw in logic we've identified and discussed in Chapter Four called *tu quoque*, the pointing out of someone else on the other side of an argument doing the same thing. Showing how an opponent is not adhering to his or her philosophy neither discredits nor disproves the rationale of his or her argument. Most importantly it does not prove any fault in the Scripture.

Pointing out how someone regularly does not act according to what he or she believes only illuminates his or her sin and possible hypocrisy. It does not establish a double standard of the church or its Scriptural basis, nor does it invalidate or render untrue the person's belief.

What solely and sinful human being has always acted in accord with what he or she believes? Not even the Apostle Paul! (See Romans 3:23; 7:14-25.) Ask such people, "Do you believe we need speed laws? Have you ever driven over the speed limit? Does your exceeding the speed limit and disobeying the law at times ever invalidate the law or your correct belief that we need speed laws, and that they must be obeyed and enforced?"

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[626] *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), pp. 228-230. See also *The Book of Church Order, The Reformed Church in America* 2010 Edition (New York: Reformed Church Press, 2010), pp. 75 ff. *The Book of Church Order* is available online at http://images.rca.org/docs/bco/2013BCO.pdf. (Accessed 05/31/14)

Neither does a tu quoque accusation against heterosexual adultery validate the homosexual position. It is illogical to draw that conclusion. In the words of the old secular saying, two wrongs do not make a right. Attempting to discredit an opponent in any manner, even if I were successful in proving him or her wrong, does not verify my premise; it does not logically prove the correctness of my position. The correctness of my premise must be established on a solid basis, which the field of philosophy, the subfield of logic, shows is done through reasoning that demonstrates soundness and validity. Beliefs grounded in the Word of God have such soundness and validity.

Second, the accusation that the church has a double standard, one rule for heterosexuals and another for homosexuals, in addition to possessing an unsound premise also commits the logical *fallacy of the undistributed middle*, as presented and explained in Chapter Four, where we saw how their reasoning is an invalid argument. It is not logical to argue that when one instance or even a few sins occur that the church as a whole is at fault. While their argument has been discredited with the laws of logic, it is also readily observed and dismissed by the average person, who gives it any thought at all: he or she calls it "painting with too broad a brush."

Since, as the Bible teaches, e.g., Romans 3:23, all humans are sinful, there have been some who have committed grievous sexual sins. Nevertheless, it must also be acknowledged that it is a small percentage who have done so and where such serious sins have become known, they have typically been addressed according to Biblical commands.

Third, in so arguing pro-homosexuality advocates also fail to observe Biblical teaching regarding sin and the sins Paul points out in particular. In such texts as 1 John 3:6 we read that "No one who lives in [Jesus Christ] keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him." Though all humans including church leaders sin, church leaders especially must not be living in a state of chosen, intentional, and continual sin—either homosexuality, heterosexual adultery, or any of the other sins the apostle lists, as we saw above in our study of 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. In addition to homosexuality, the apostle includes heterosexual adultery in his list of sins that keep one from the kingdom of God, thus stating that such heterosexual sin is also unacceptable for individual Christians as well as their leaders. The Greek words in the text cover all types of sexual sin. There is no double standard in the Bible.

Fourth, as explained above the historic Christian church has in place systems that bring to light and discipline heterosexual offenses. It is being done. It has occurred in churches I've served whenever such offenses have taken place. If pro-homosexual advocates are aware of heterosexual sins that should be disciplined they should make them known to the appropriate church authorities. There is no such double standard in the church. Where violations do occur, Scripture says they should be brought to light and dealt with in the manner God indicates in his Word and in the Biblically-based constitution of the denomination of which the church is a part.

And they are. In every church of which I've been involved, directly or indirectly as part of a higher judicatory, the prescribed procedures for discipline have been administered. Are there some congregations where people conducting sexual sins are not held accountable as they should? Sadly, yes, for a time.

Some congregations allow such sins to occur before acting as the Bible and the denomination's policy commands. But the congregation typically acts to try to help the offending person to repent and change his and/or her ways. Usually a lot of time is spent in private with such persons that others, including pro-homosexual critics, do not see. The church does typically address the matter, though not always as quickly as it should. But that does not validate the accusation of a double standard; it only raises the question of whether a particular church is acting according to its standard, which has been in place for a long time, as rapidly as it is required to do so.

Regarding repentance in the Biblical sense it does occur. Regular members and clergy who have fallen into sexual sin, when confronted in love and counseled, have repented (repent > *metanoeō* as discussed above) and not only expressed appropriate contrition but also the commitment verified by faithful action over time. Such change is commendable and an acceptable basis for reinstatement.

So let us engage criticism warmly, speaking the truth...in love. The church is the first to confess that we are not perfect. That is why we're not afraid of or threatened by corrective feedback. It's also why in traditional Christian worship services, as we come together into the sanctuary of God who is Most Holy, we quickly, early in the liturgy of our worship, confess our sins before the holy, holy, holy and at the same time all-loving, including merciful and gracious, God. Not only are we not perfect, we are unable to see as we are seen. (1 Corinthians 13:12) If your church does not have a prayer of confession, immediately followed by a passage from God's Word assuring you of your pardon in Christ, ask the pastor to reinstitute that ancient practice that is right in the Bible and which worshipers long to hear, relieving them of their sin and replacing their guilt with the peace that transcends all understanding and comes only in Christ's redemption of us for whom he, in the most wonderful expression of love ever, suffered in great agony and died in our place. We need to hear those immeasurably comforting words assuring us of God's forgiveness of us, that Christ's righteousness is credited to us by faith. (Romans 4, esp. vv. 23-25)

Maybe some people, including those disaffected from us, see something about us that we don't see. We don't need to automatically accept their criticism, but we should listen, do a self-check to see if what they say could be true, and also ask others if they see the same thing. Do they agree with our critic? If others agree, let's thank them (including the first critic), repent, and make the appropriate changes. While we're at it, let's make this process a positive witness for Christ, expressing gratitude for helping us grow more Christ-like and serve him more effectively. Functioning in this manner enables us to develop the mind of Christ, including a Christ-like humility that helps us interact in the public forum more as the Lord would have us do. Andrew Walker has well summed up this part of the matter:

> At the same time, having convictional kindness as our guide, Christians must not accept the principles of the sexual revolution, which ground identity in the adrenal rush of sexual climax. We must unremittingly insist that sexual fulfillment is found within the permanent and exclusive union of one man and one woman. We must ground sexual practice and human flourishing together, within a holistic worldview that incorporates biblical depth and application toward political order. Lastly, we must not apologize for the gospel. We must call sinners to repentance, but heed that call ourselves as well.[627]

Compare the applicable principle Paul uses in addressing another type of unbiblical sexual sin, a heterosexual one, when the church at Corinth became aware that a man was living in an incestuous relationship with his stepmother. (1 Corinthians 5:1-5) This text will be examined further below, but as we do we must begin by clarifying an accusation often thrown at the church both by those outside the church, and by not a few who have been misled, or who have not thought carefully enough, in the church.

Be prepared to correct the canard of being accused of judging.

Is the Church Never to Judge?

Judgment is what scholars call a major motif (subject or theme) in the Bible, and it's also an especially important concept outside the Scriptures. The judgment of which the Bible speaks is both on the vertical plane, primarily with regard to God's judgment, and on the horizontal plane, involving the judgments God wills his people to make. Thus, it is also a vital concern as well in the New Testament.[628] As we briefly consider this subject, we'll see in the representative and related texts examined that the issue is not whether to judge or not to judge *but how* that judgment is to be done according to God's Word and will; it is clear that the church's judging is to be done in love since God cares, and therefore we care, for the spiritual, physical, emotional, and social well-being of the people involved.

You may hear people accuse you of judging or being judgmental, which is also making a judgment. Many like to quote Jesus' statement, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." (Matthew 7:1) People who sling this statement at Christians often do so with the hope that they can slide under that quote to free themselves from wrongdoing and the attendant guilt by eliminating or at least silencing a source of discomfort. When these people issue this misapplication of Jesus' words ask them, "Have you read what Jesus went on to say in Matthew 7 and other related passages of God's Word on this subject?"[629]

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[627] Andrew T. Walker, "Evangelicals and the LGBT Community: What Does the Future Hold?"
[628] *Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary, The* – Zeta-Kappa. WORDSearch.
[629] See, e.g., John 7:24, where Jesus also said, "'Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." The verb the Lord used when he said we should judge with this kind of judgment is ʿκρίνατε (*krinate*), which is in the second person plural, active voice, and in the imperative mood, thus a command. Jesus' followers are not to ignore wrongdoing but are required to make a righteous judgment.

See, e.g., Luke 6:37 and its context. "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." As we see in this verse, especially in the light of the following, esp. vss. 43-46, Jesus is not talking about the vital importance of discerning, including pointing out, right from wrong and other Scriptural teaching such as the need to admonish one another (e.g., Leviticus 19:17; Colossians 3:16) and church discipline (e.g., Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5). The judging Jesus condemns is, as Lewis Foster writes in his note on this Luke 6 passage in *The NIV Study Bible*, the "unjust and hypocritical judging of others."[630]

> "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briers. 45 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.
> 46 "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:43-46; cf. Matthew 7:15-23)

To begin with, we distinguish between alerting a fellow member of the church about the contrast between what he or she is doing and God's Word, **not** between what he or she is doing and my opinion on the subject. Thus, the issue is sin and not personal preference. To say nothing when admonishment is needed is not only unbiblical but also to actually share in another's guilt (e.g., Leviticus 19:17b). In Matthew 18:15 Jesus says, "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over." The Greek word rightly translated sin in the NIV is ἁμαρτάνω (*hamartanō*), which means sin.[631]

This word is sometimes rendered in modern versions of the Bible as "does something wrong" (e.g., New Jerusalem Bible and God's Word Translation), "wrongs you" (e.g., J.B. Phillips New Testament), or "hurts you" (e.g., The Message), which are less than desirable English terms that do not necessarily convey Jesus' teaching that sin is involved. Maybe I think someone has done something wrong to me, but my opinion doesn't make it wrong; it could only seem that way to me, in which case how do I know whether or not I ought to confront this person? Just because I feel hurt, and proclaim that I'm "offended," or "that's offensive," doesn't mean the other person has sinned. Maybe

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Also, the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write that "The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment." (1 Corinthians 2:15) We are called by God to correctly discern right from wrong and to address the latter, everywhere and especially in the church. Making this kind of judgment is an act of caring, love, that tries to help someone else stop and avoid doing something that is counterproductive and/or dangerous to his or her well-being and that of others. This type of judging is another way we speak the truth in love. For more, see this brief (3:45) video clip at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3_sTNxNZf0. (Accessed 02/09/2022)

[630] Lewis Foster, Luke, *The NIV Study Bible*, General Editor, Kenneth Barker (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985), p. 1550. For more on Jesus' condemnation of hypocrisy, cf. Matthew 23.

[631] *Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary, The* – Alpha-Gamma, WORDSearch.

I'm taking the matter too personally. Jesus is *not* saying that every time I'm offended when someone does something I ought to go chase him or her down and have it out. Again, I am not the standard, which, as we'll see, is what Jesus is saying in Matthew 7.

Further, to see someone doing something wrong, that is factually harmful, and say nothing, is also wrong and makes the one saying nothing culpable. It is also unloving. For example, when a confused child thinks he or she was "born in the wrong body" and wants to begin identifying and dressing as the opposite sex; taking puberty blockers and other hormones that have irreversible, lifelong, and life-damaging effects; and even considering life-destroying surgical interventions, to say nothing is to contribute to their self-destruction, which many deeply regret. It is a form of enabling harmful behavior. If only someone had stepped up and explained what they were considering doing was wrong and why, speaking the truth in love while doing so, many, many lives could have been spared from unwise and foolish decisions.

As we see throughout this book, God's Word is clear that we must love one another (e.g., John 13:34-35; 15:12,17), including always speaking the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15) Doing so sometimes means, to use David Augsburger's (*op cit*.) insightful term, "care-fronting," lovingly talking with someone about his or her behavior that is harmful, rather than saying nothing and enabling that person to harm him or herself and others.

Another aspect of life involving such care-fronting, *due to having made a loving judgment*, occurs in the caring that all Christians, not just pastors, should do to help people who are engaging in destructive behavior. One outstanding example of such pastoral care is reported by John Stonestreet and Kasey Leander in a brief review of apologist Alisa Childers' book, *Live Your Truth and Other Lies: Exposing Popular Deceptions That Make Us Anxious, Exhausted, and Self-Obsessed*. Here is a key point:

> The point of these verses [in Matthew 7 and John 7:24], she concludes, is not to prevent moral discernment, but to help believers instead judge "carefully, rightly, humbly, and without hypocrisy." Childers then offers a powerful illustration from her time with ZOEgirl, when her struggle with body image eventually led to a secret eating disorder of binging and purging.
>
> > *On some tour in some town somewhere, I shared a hotel room with one of my bandmates. She is a sweetheart—gentle, deeply intelligent, and thoughtful. … She was also a natural peacemaker, and confrontation did not come easily to her. So when she worked up every last bit of courage to ask me what I was doing in the bathroom, it surprised me. And it also made me angry. To put it lightly, the conversation didn't go well. I not so politely invited her to stop "judging" me and back all the way off. That didn't stop her. …*

> *Looking back, am I thankful that my bandmate "judged" me? That she dared confront me about the self-harm I was guilty of? Absolutely! She was the catalyst that first brought the darkness into the light. To this day my eyes mist with tears when I think about how much she loved me to do such a difficult thing.*
>
> Childers' example not only calls Christians to do similarly difficult but right things, it reveals the consequences of relativism when lived in the real world. What begins as a desire to not judge others turns into the narcissistic demand that no one, under any circumstances, judge *us*. But that also renders healing and forgiveness impossible. After all, with no way to say that we've been wronged, neither is there means or reason to forgive those who harm us. Any culture that rejects objective morality lacks any way to counter evil.[632]

But sin is a "horse of a different color" and is the crux of what Jesus meant. Sin has a standard other than my feelings and opinion about the matter. When the other person has actually sinned, that is violated a commandment in God's Word that negatively affects me, then I am to go to that person and privately talk with him or her about what he or she did and in a loving manner (e.g., John 13:34-35 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-7) try to resolve the matter while at the same time preserving our relationship.

We need to prepare ourselves in order to explain to those who accuse us of judging others how they are misunderstanding Jesus' statement in the first verse of Matthew seven about judgment in the Bible. This often-used criticism of those of us who oppose the homosexual agenda misinterprets and misapplies this Biblical text and in many other places ignores or misuses Biblical hermeneutics (*op cit*.).

We also need to help fellow Christians, including clergy and other church leaders to speak rightly on this matter. For example, while we can agree and strongly affirm Roman Catholic Pope Francis in his insistence that the church cannot be "swayed by passing fads or popular opinion," and that marriage is between a man and a woman and should last until one dies, we must disagree with his next statement (if what he is reported as saying is true, which we must keep in mind is frequently not the case in today's flawed journalism) that the church doesn't judge and that the church is a mother who doesn't point fingers or judge her children.[633] That statement conflicts with the Bible's teaching as will now be seen more fully.

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[632] John Stonestreet and Kasey Leander, "Things Jesus Really Didn't Say: Author's book reclaims truth from the empty slogans that dominate our culture and our thinking." https://www.breakpoint.org/dont-judge-and-other-things-jesus-really-didnt-say/, Breakpoint, Colson Center, August 17, 2023. (Accessed 08/17/23)

[633] "Pope asserts marriage is forever at start of family meeting," *Reporter-Herald*, Associated Press, October 5, 2015, p. 7A.

Matthew 7:1 ff.

What is Jesus actually saying in Matthew 7:1 ff.? The context (v. 5) clearly communicates that he is condemning the practice of some who hold themselves up as the standard of right and wrong on a particular matter and who act hypocritically. He is not condemning the practice of anyone using God's Word as the standard for discerning right from wrong, which discernment is in fact a type of judgment.

In many places throughout the Bible, God's people are told to distinguish between good and bad deeds and between people who do what is right and those who do what is wrong and to act in such ways as to be separate from the bad deeds and from people who commit to doing wrong; i.e., to be holy, uncommon and separate, to God. Notice within the same passage, Jesus tells us to watch out for, and how to identify, the false prophets. That's making a judgment. (Matthew 7:15-20) See also 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (where here as well as elsewhere we are told to make judgments within the church); 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Philippians 3:2; 1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:20-22; and 1 Timothy 5:20, which, the context (5:19) indicates, applies to church leaders.

Regarding the subject at hand, speaking the truth in love about homosexuality is not to commit the hypocritical or self-righteous judging Jesus was condemning. Note verse five which establishes the context of the passage. *The Bible teaches God's people to make judgments about what is right and wrong to do; however, the standard of judgment for those who believe in and follow the Lord Jesus Christ is not our own opinions but the Word of God.* In Matthew 7, Christ tells us to "Watch out for false prophets," which requires us to make a judgment, based on such people's deeds, the observable and measurable actions that contrast with the commands of God in the Bible. Jesus informs us that "by their fruit you will recognize them." (v. 20)

So what is Jesus saying when he tells us in Matthew 7:1 to not judge lest we be judged? He is saying do not judge using your own standard, and do not do it hypocritically. We thus need to use God's standard in our judging and live consistently in that manner ourselves. But read on; there's more in God's Word on this important matter.

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

To cite just a few other Scripture passages that clarify the matter of judging, see also 1 Corinthians 5:12 where the Apostle Paul admonishes the church ("you" is plural) to *judge* (same word in the original Greek that Jesus used) the behavior of their fellow congregants that it conforms to God's will as he reveals it in his Word. The apostle wrote to Timothy saying that "All Scripture is God-breathed [inspired] and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16 TNIV) Such rebuking and correcting involves making a judgment according to observable and measurable behavior that is objectively in contrast to God's written Word.

In addition, Paul explained to the church at Corinth what we must also remember, that the spiritual person making Scriptural judgments with the guidance of the Holy Spirit who dwells within him or her individually (1 Corinthians 6:19) and within the church (1 Corinthians 3:16) is not subject to any human judgment by people who neither regard nor are guided by the Holy Spirit. Paul is saying they are not qualified to judge you.[634] So just do what God tells you to do in his Word and don't allow the criticism of others to cause you to cave, cower, dissuade, and divert you from your calling to proclaim his Word.

Further, there is no text in the Bible that supports silence on the matter of homosexuality. Rather, many passages state that God's people must speak up when they see especially a member of the covenant community engaging in behavior that is condemned in God's Word. For example, "You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin, you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself." (Leviticus 19:17 NRSV) Notice that God's Word here stands in 180° contrast to Western society's concept of hate, which responds to reproof with the comment, "That's hateful!" What God is saying in Leviticus 19:17 is that it is hateful to <u>not</u> reprove someone when he or she is acting contrary to God's will.

Why? The answer becomes clear when we broaden our perspective to see God in the picture, where he always is. God, who reveals himself in the Bible, shows that while he is all love (1 John 4:8), he is also not only holy but also holy, holy, holy, (Revelation 4:8) the Hebrew way of saying most holy; i.e., he is separated from sin and evil which, near term and long term (including eternal), harms people who bear his image and whom he loves and desires to be in his kingdom. To not reprove one's sin is to interfere with his or her relationship with God. Moreover, to fail to reprove is to bring guilt upon oneself for facilitating that person's getting into trouble with God, which is not at all loving, not at all speaking the truth in love.

Jesus said, "Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive." (Luke 17:3) Paul added, "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently."[635]

The Holy Spirit, speaking through Paul, also said that we should "admonish one another with all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16) and "admonish the unruly, encourage the

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[634] W. Harold Mare in his commentary on 1Corinthians 2:14-15 in the *NIV Study Bible New International Version*, Kenneth Barker General Editor (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985), p. 1737. "The non-Christian is basically dominated by the merely physical, worldly or natural life. Because he does not possess the Holy Spirit, he is not equipped to receive appreciatively truth that comes from the Spirit. Such a person needs the new birth…One who does not have the Spirit is not qualified to judge the spiritual person. Thus believers are not rightfully subject to the opinions of unbelievers." As Leon Morris explains, "It is God who gives the final verdict…Paul is insisting that the man whose equipment is only of this world, the man who has not received the Holy Spirit of God, has not the ability to make an estimate of things spiritual." *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), p. 60.

[635] Galatians 6:1; See also James 5:19-20; Leviticus 5:1.

fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone." (1 Thessalonians 5:14 NASB, NRSV)[636] Admonishment involves making a judgment, but for Christians it always is to be done by "speaking the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15)

In 1 Corinthians 5:1, the first two words, one of the ways the Greek indicates emphasis, are the adverb, *holōs* (commonly), and the accompanying verb, *akouetai* (is being reported), meaning this was no rumor; it was public knowledge. Thus, Paul admonished the church in Corinth to excommunicate the man to discipline and to teach, but notice the rationale: he was publicly committing an ongoing grievous sin [in the Greek of verse one, *porneia* (sexual immorality)], which should have filled the congregation with grief, since they are holy to God (cf. Ephesians 5:3, "among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality [*porneia*], or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people"). Putting the man outside the church would expose him to the buffets of Satan so that he could come to his senses, repent, be restored, and live righteously for Christ.[637] When the Corinthian church was not only condoning but being proud of this incestuous behavior (5:2), the sinner (wrongly) concluded the church was affirming what he was doing, since silence is typically interpreted as tacit approval. He was receiving no corrective feedback from the congregation, or in Biblical terms no admonition, and thus saw no need to change his behavior.

Moreover, others in the congregation and in the surrounding community were receiving the wrong message: that this behavior must be acceptable; Paul says in effect, "No way! Put him outside of the protections of the covenant community and let Satan's abuse of him give him a wake-up call that will help him come to his senses and make the changes he has to make, 'so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.'" (5:5) Such a "tough love" discipline also sends a strong message to the church, and all surrounding the church who are aware of the matter, that this sinfully aberrant behavior is unacceptable to God and his people. This discipline protects the whole church from the moral corruption and compromise of its holiness, calling, and effectiveness that mitigates accomplishing God's redemptive purposes for his creation in and through the body of Christ. Without this message being sent, people in and outside the church, reading between the lines, hear another message and think: "Mmm, if ole Joe is doing it, and nobody is saying anything, it must be OK."

Recall the principle Jesus used when referring to the catalytic effect of leaven: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1 NASB) Paul made the same point to the Corinthians:

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[636] See also Acts 20:31; 27:9 (NASB); Romans 15:14 (NASB, KJV); 1 Corinthians 4:14 (NASB, NRSV); 1 Thessalonians 5:12 (KJV; NRSV).

[637] In order for such restoration to occur, it is important for some time to elapse before full reinstatement so the church can be sure that the repentance (*metanoeō*), involving not only sorrow for, but a mental, emotional, and behavioral rejection of, the sin has occurred. That repentance, Biblically, involves a complete 180˚ turning away from the sin that now characterizes the person's lifestyle, and that he or she is consistently living accordingly. Track record tells; it offers evidence that the repentance is genuine and that professed change does exist. As even in the secular world, words need verification. Your church may have other established Biblical guidelines for reinstatement that should be followed.

> 6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens
> the whole lump *of dough?*
> 7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are
> *in fact* unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.
> 8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the
> leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of
> sincerity and truth.
> 9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;
> 10 I *did* not at all *mean* with the immoral people of this world, or with the
> covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go
> out of the world.
> 11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother
> if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a
> drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.
> 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those
> who are within *the church?*
> 13 But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED
> MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES. (1 Corinthians 5:6-13 NASB)

We must note that the word Paul uses in verses nine and eleven that is translated "immoral" is *pornos*, the same word as we discussed above that includes all kinds of sexual relations outside of marriage. God designed marriage to be between one man and one woman, and the Bible is clear that remains his will. The church must remember who it is and what it has been called to do. As one pastor observed, "The church cannot win anyone to Christ if it lives its life in the gutter."

Thus, we see in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 9-13 clear teaching that an unrepentant sinner should not be welcomed into the church's full membership. Even the old secular proverb recognizes that "one bad apple spoils the barrel."

The Reformer John Calvin explains Paul's statement in 5:9 (that the Corinthians should "not associate with sexually immoral people") as meaning "what he had already enjoined upon them — that they should refrain from intercourse with the wicked. For the word rendered *to keep company with*, means to be on terms of familiarity with any one, and to be in habits of close intimacy with him."[638]

In the Greek the verbs are clearly in the second person plural whereby Paul calls upon the church to judge someone within it who grievously disobeys God in a flagrantly public manner, thus corrupting the church that allows such behavior by a member as well. (Cf. Leviticus 19:16b-17b) Lenski explains

> When Paul speaks of himself (singular) in the first question he does so
> only in order to exemplify. Therefore he now adds "you" (plural), the

[638] John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, 1 Corinthians, Vol. 1, Chapter 5, WORDSearch.

> Corinthians. "Do not you judge those within whereas those without God judges?" That is, indeed, the true state of affairs. "Those within" are all those who profess the name of Christ with us and call themselves our brethren. We ourselves belong to those within. And all of us are judged by our brethren, namely as to whether we really belong within or not, whether we really are the brethren we profess to be.
>
> In his question Paul merely states the fact that we do thus judge each other; yet this fact implies our right to judge thus. The evidence on which we judge is that of lip and life, word or profession and actual conduct. Christians never have the right to judge a member's heart. *Herzensrichterei* is interference with God's prerogative. If either the profession of the lips or the evident conduct of the life violates the faith, and if all efforts of the church which has applied the law and the gospel have failed, the sinner must be judged as no longer belonging within. Thus to judge those within, to determine who rightly belongs within and who does not, is our only business. It is ours in the nature of the case since no true congregation could be organized or could continue to exist without this judging.[639]

Lenski correctly interprets and applies this passage in 1 Corinthians 5. Do you see the love in this passage and in Paul? This judgment is not primarily punitive; it is caring: caring for the individual involved, caring for the church, and caring for God and his redemptive purposes in and for the world. As we saw above, God has chosen to make his main means of redeeming his creation to be through the church, and for the church to be useful for him it must be holy to him. (Isaiah 41:24; Jeremiah 2:5) As we've seen in the preceding pages, homosexuality is not holy.

We need one another to help us stay holy. We must be open to and even inviting of corrective feedback, yes loving judgment, when needed.

In fact that feedback, the truth in love, is comforting. It is very comforting to know that my brothers and sisters in Christ care for my well-being and are walking along with me, watching me, and helping me stay on track, the one Jesus mentioned—a narrow road that leads to life—the one that only few find. (Matthew **7**:14) To know that if I step out of line they'll gently and lovingly with compassion, nudge me back on the right path is a comforting and reassuring sense of well-being, well-being that is physically, emotionally, relationally, and especially spiritually healthy. Doing so shows that they love and care about me. And I also need to be prepared to do the same for them in accord with these Scriptural guidelines.

In verse 12 the Greek verb Paul uses for the judging of what we Christians do as members of the church is *krinō*, which means, depending on the context, judge, separate, distinguish, decide between, approve, give judgment, condemn,

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[639] *Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, p. 231. WORDSearch.

punish.[640] Here, in this passage it means to judge in the sense of contrasting the behavior of those in, not those outside, the church with God's Word and distinguishing what is acceptable to God and in accord with his will, and what is disobedient to God's Word and will. Lenski continues, contrasting the concept of judgment pertaining to those outside ("without") the church.

> 13) The situation is entirely different regarding those without. We certainly do not need to judge those that are without, for they do not even attempt to come in. God will attend to them, and it is our business to leave them in God's hands. When Paul says in 6:2 "that the saints shall judge the world" he by no means forgets that he has just written that we have no business to judge those without. He is here speaking of disciplinary judging. The world or those without are not subject to the discipline of the church and to judging connected with discipline. It is God alone who disciplines the world with judgments.[641]

One of the Greek verbs usually translated "encourage" in the New Testament is παρακαλέω (*parakaleō*) which also means exhort and call for (Acts 28:20). See such passages as 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9 (in which the word "refuting" translates *antilegontas* which means "speak against," "contradict," and "refute" (NIV—Do any of those acts not involve making a judgment?); 2:6, 15 (where Paul also says to *elenche*, which means to refute, convict, reprove [NIV]—How can you do that without making a judgment?), to cite just a few.

We should also take note that *parakaleō* and *elenche* in Titus 2:15, and *parakaleō* in Titus 2:6 are commands (they are in the imperative mood in the Greek); God is saying this is not an option for us. Does that therefore mean those who don't want us to make any judgments in the church are committing heresy? What do they do with 2 Timothy 3:16?

Since we live by grace and all need it, I'm willing to say that this heresy of most is unreflective, i.e., insufficiently thought through, and unintentional though sometimes cowardly, but none the less culpable. Heresy by any other name does not smell sweet. Relatedly but on another matter, do you hear Jesus' words to Nicodemus, "You're Israel's teacher and do you not understand these things?" (John 3:10) Having said that though, let us urge them to be more careful in their thinking, teaching, and accusing, for what they are saying is wrong and misleading, whatever their motivation. Let us also remind them to be courageous, because Christ Jesus has overcome the world (Greek: νενίκηκα [*nenikēka*], "I have conquered" John 16:33), and he has told us he will be with us always. (Joshua 1:5; Matthew 28:20) Also, we encourage one another when we come together and when we model courage. (Cf., e.g., Acts 28:15; Philippians 1:14)

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[640] *Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary, The* – Zeta-Kappa. WORDSearch.
[641] *Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, p. 231. WORDSearch.

Of course Paul teaches us how to make the judgments we are supposed to do: by speaking the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15) I know some in the church historically, and I myself, have at times struggled to keep speaking the truth and loving in balance. But I've also found that when I've had to confront people (or better "care-fronting" them as David Augsburger so well urges[642]), maintaining this balance is effective, and the other persons involved are typically appreciative. In fact people watch us and want us to speak up in such a way when warranted. *There is considerable comfort in knowing brothers and sisters in the Lord are watching over me and are unwilling to let me go too far out of line without speaking to me.* One way to facilitate this feedback is suggested in Appendix E.

Further, the noun form of this verb (*parakaleō*) is *paraklētos*, occurring only in the Bible in the Gospel by John and in his first letter, and is the word Jesus uses for the Comforter, the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom he and the Father will send. (John 14:16; 15:26) But is the Holy Spirit just a comforter? In John 14-16, which I refer to as the Holy Spirit's job description, Jesus says that one aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit is to "convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment…." (16:8-11) Is that comfort? In many ways, Yes!

For just a few consider that for believers it is a great comfort knowing that God is at work in the world in his plan of redeeming his creation; nothing is spinning out of control, as many wrongly perceive. Also, for those the Holy Spirit does convict of guilt and sin and for whom he gives the new birth that issues forth in saving faith, that results in a huge comfort! Just ask new believers in Christ who readily say what a great comfort it is to be freed from the world's ways in which they were trapped until freed by the Lord. Certainly the righteousness in Jesus' work and going to the Father, and taking us with him, is indeed comforting, especially as seen in regard to the eternal implications of what Christ Jesus has accomplished.

1 Corinthians 11:27-34

The Apostle Paul also informs us that the failure to attend to the right administration of the sacrament of holy communion has serious, even deadly, outcomes. After admonishing the church in Corinth as to how they were eating and drinking the Lord's Supper in very unworthy ways, he said this to them:

> Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. [28]A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. [29]For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. [30]That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. [31]But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. [32]When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.
>
> [33]So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each

[642] David Augsburger, *Caring Enough to Confront* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1981), p. 10.

other. [34]If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions. (1 Corinthians 11:27-34)

So, here again, we are to make judgments. We are to judge what behavior is appropriate for us and what is inappropriate. Furthermore, since we are to watch out for our brothers and sisters in the Lord, we should admonish them when they are sinning (not when they do something I don't like, i.e., when it is only a matter of personal opinion), so they, and we (Leviticus 19:17), won't need to experience a much more serious judgment.

The more I think about this topic, the more I wonder if there isn't a correlation between the proclivity of many in the church to only hear what makes them feel good[643] (cf. 2 Timothy 4:3) together with the drum beating about not making judgments **and** the noticeable lessening of maturity in Christ (contrasted with many in the past, our forebears who knew and applied the Scriptures and historic Christian systematic theology so well). Do you older readers remember these great saints ever talking so much about how we shouldn't judge? I don't have such a recollection. I know they sometimes overstepped and spoke too harshly, but I surely do miss their solid wisdom, knowledge of God's Word, discernment, and admonition.

That said, we must keep in mind, as acknowledged above, that all people sin and fall short of the glory of God, and we will be held accountable for such deeds. This proclivity of human nature to sin, and since even the regenerated, reborn, human nature has remnants of the old sinful nature still hanging on, we do sometimes sin. (Romans 7) This is why we need to nurture our faith and constantly seek to mature in Christ-likeness. If a Christian sins and judges someone wrongly, he or she should repent and ask forgiveness of the other person and of God and then redouble his or her effort to not recommit that sin. (James 5:16; 1 John 2:5-6)

Yet as we have also seen above, it is disingenuous, mistaken, and misleading of fellow Christians to accuse the church of making judgments it has been commanded by God to do. The church must be discerning at all times, especially in this age; we need to help one another to stay on the narrow road that leads to life so that none of us veers off onto the broad road that leads to destruction. (Matthew 7:13-14) Is that in itself not making a judgment? And, is it not truly a caring expression of love for that brother or sister in Christ to do so?

Furthermore, can you see the love in such speaking of the truth, a love that brings great comfort and assurance? Owen Strachan can, and he observantly points out what occurs when churches lose sight of God's Word and the connection between truth and love.

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[643] See the insightful article, "Pleasure: The Greatest Idol of Our Time," by Calvin Theological Seminary Professor of Philosophical Theology in the Fall 2014 issue of the *Calvin Theological Seminary Forum*, pp. 3-6, which is available at http://www.calvinseminary.edu/wp-content/uploads/forums/Forum%2010-14.pdf. (Accessed 02/11/2015) Cooper offers an informative analysis of our contemporary U. S. culture with profound theological implications and applications.

> Tragically, some professing evangelicals believe that their affirmation of sin is loving. It is no such thing. The worst position in the world is one in which you sit unchallenged in your depravity, with no one to call you to repentance. City Church and other congregations are laying down the true gospel and preaching a Jesus whose death makes no offense, presents no rebuke, effects no transformation. It leaves no mark and causes no scandal. This is an affirmation-only gospel.[644]

Speaking this truth in love is part of the caring God's people do for one another. We need to hear the truth so we stay on the narrow way, but we need to hear it in love, especially when it comes in the form of corrective feedback, so we can overcome the pain of admonition and be motivated to make the necessary changes.

Thus speaking the truth in love helps the recipient. It also helps the giver. Most of us who have to speak up and tell someone something he or she doesn't want to hear don't really want to do it. We hope someone else will tell the person. We put it off. We try to think of reasons why maybe we don't need to say something, at least not now. We know how the other person is likely to receive what we have to say. Remember Proverbs 18:16. "A gift opens the way for the giver…." Your love, including speaking in kindness and gentleness, is a great gift! A gift we all need. And it does facilitate receptivity, especially when preceded with prayer.

Romans 14:1-15:13

Someone may quote these verses from Romans 14 and try to use them to stop you from making appropriate judgments.

> "Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters." (v. 1)
>
> "Who are you to judge someone else's servant?" (v. 4)
>
> "You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat" (v. 10)
>
> "Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way." (v. 13)

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[644] Owen Strachan, "City Church and the Affirmation-only Gospel," March 18, 2015, http://cbmw.org/public-square/city-church-and-the-affirmation-only-gospel/ (Accessed 4/20/15)

If this is all we read of this chapter and of the rest of the Bible, we'd never want to object to anything anyone does! Yet, that is not the case in this chapter or, as we've seen on the preceding pages, elsewhere in God's Word.

Well then, how do we accurately interpret these verses? Beginning with the hermeneutical principle of context, we need to consider carefully what subject Paul is addressing in this passage. Lenksi has stated it well.

> Justification by faith enables the Christian to take the correct view of all adiaphora. It leads him to treat the overscrupulous and thus weak brother with helpful forbearance; and it leads the weak brother to refrain from judging harshly the well-informed stronger brother. Through this effect justification by faith creates harmony and unity among believers. The value of this section for all time is thus apparent.[645]

Lenski correctly indicates that Paul is addressing the subject of the "disputable matters" (v. 1) whereby true believers in and followers of Jesus Christ may hold to differing interpretations concerning specific passages of the Bible that do not pertain to the core requirements regarding salvation and redemption or other aspects of God's Word and will. Thus, texts such as Romans 10:9 would not be a "disputable matter." In the fields of Biblical studies, theology, and liturgics the adiaphora (< Greek, *adiaphoros*, indifferent) refer to those texts, subjects, rites and ceremonies that are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word and therefore may be done or not as individually desired. Therefore, believers may differ in their understanding of God's will pertaining to the issue.

As we see in the very first verse of the chapter, Paul is speaking precisely about such adiaphoric matters. "Accept those whose faith is weak without quarreling over disputable matters." (Romans 14:1 TNIV) Disputable matters are not commanded one way or the other by God, but homosexuality is—we are told very clearly not to do it—as we saw our examination of the texts in Chapter One.

Verses 4, 10, and 13 above command us to not judge someone in the disputable matters. He or she is free to make those decisions in accord with his or her walk with the Lord (v. 2 and *passim*). The "someone else" in verse four is God; we are not to judge one of his servants on disputable matters.

It should also be noted that pro-homosexual writers argue that the "disputable matters" in Romans 14 also pertain to Scriptures (specifically the first and fourth [or in some traditions the third] commandments). They thus try to put the commandments such as in Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; and Romans 1:26-27 on the same level as "disputable matters." A commandment from God is not disputable; it is nonnegotiable.

Further, a closer look at the Romans 14 text, shows that the people to whom Paul was referring knew what the text meant; the point of difference is with how they were living

[645] Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, WORDSearch, p. 811.

out the texts. That is, we here have another instance where we see the importance in hermeneutics to discern the difference between principle and application of principle. For example, the differences in applying the principle of the Sabbath commandment is what Paul is referring to in verse five.

Therefore, the pro-homosexual appeal to the "disputable matters" referred to in Romans 14 is invalid. This chapter provides no Biblical basis for a church to permit its members to practice homosexuality.

Review and Summary of the Judging to Be Done in the Church

1. As human beings who are sinful and fall short of the glory of God, whose regenerated (reborn) nature still has remnants of sin attached that incline us to disobey God, we need each other in the church to help us stay on the right path in order to serve God most effectively and model such behavior for others. (Romans 3:23; 2 Timothy 3:16)

2. The judging we are to do involves sin, not simply disagreement with someone doing something we don't like. (Matthew 18:15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Romans 14:1 ff.)

3. The standard of judgment is God's Word, the Bible; the standard is not oneself. The judging we are to do involves the application of God's Word to all of us in the church, including ourselves; there is no room in the Bible for hypocrisy. We must "practice what we preach." (Matthew 7:1-20; 23)

4. We are called to make judgments in the sense of discerning what is acceptable behavior in accord with God's Word and addressing the matter with those who are behaving contrary to God's Word. (Leviticus 19:16b-17b; Matthew 7:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Philippians 3:2; Colossians 3:16; 1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:20-22; 1 John 4:1)

5. Love is the main motive for judging, and the judging we are called to do must always be done in love for the accomplishment of God's redemptive purposes including maturity in Christ. It is done to help not to hurt. It involves compassionate caring for fellow believers, keeping in mind that we, too, are sinners, and our judging is not done with an attitude of superiority. (1 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 4:11-16)

6. The judgment in the church of sinful behavior that has become public knowledge (not rumor), involving church discipline, is done by the official board of the congregation, and where necessary higher judicatories within the denominational structure. It is always done in love with the goal of saving the person. (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)

7. It is disingenuous, mistaken, and misleading of fellow Christians to accuse the church of making judgments it has been commanded by God to do.

8. If a Christian sins and judges someone wrongly, he or she should repent and ask forgiveness of the other person and of God and then redouble his or her effort to not recommit that sin. (James 5:16; 1 John 2:5-6)

9. Knowing brothers and sisters in Christ are looking out for us and will speak up if we step off the right path is a very comforting and reassuring sense of being cared for and loved, by them, and by God who has called us to do such caring for one another.

10. Christians are not to judge the world, those outside the church; God judges the world. (1 Corinthians 5:9-13, esp. v. 13)[646]

Caring Judgments Outside as Well as Inside the Church

We've been reflecting on how observing certain behavior in the light of God's Word, we are able to recognize it as displeasing to God, counterproductive to the well-being of the person doing those acts, and harmful to others as well. Such physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually negative, harmful, and dangerous behavior if not admonished is exacerbated and becomes destructive. A letter advice columnist Amy Dickinson received is illustrative.

> DEAR AMY I love my friend "Charlene," but she is the very definition of high maintenance.
>
> She drinks way too much—every day—and sleeps with strangers she meets in bars. The problem then becomes that she thinks she is in a relationship with them, and is then crushed when things don't work out.
>
> She is extremely sexual and is very vulnerable. She is desperate for an authentic and loving relationship but men have used, abused, and taken advantage of her. She ignores every piece of advice I give her but then she expects me to be a shoulder to cry on when her life falls apart.
>
> I try to be supportive and non-judgmental because she really is a beautiful person. She has been there for me through some tough times, but this friendship has become draining.
>
> She wants me to drink with her, but I won't, because she has a problem.

[646] The author has expanded upon this section and published it all in a separate paper entitled, "Should Christians Never Judge?" The discussion in this separate paper applies not only to LGBTQ+ issues but to all other aspects of life where it is important, indeed vital, to know how to discern between right and wrong and then to speak the truth in love to obey and honor God and for others' benefit.

> She is in counseling but constantly uses me to vent and cry to. I love her dearly, but I don't want to be that listening ear anymore. It's exhausting but I feel guilty and terrible for feeling this way. *–Bad Friend*[647]

Sadly, by not living in accord with God's Word and will, "Charlene" is destroying herself. The sexual sins she is committing are harming her in many ways,[648] including, but not limited to guilt, loss of self-worth, and depression. To cope with these and other devastating dimensions of her destruction, she has addicted herself to several means of escape, including alcohol, aberrant sex, and the affirmation of a "friend," who knows she is not doing well, even "bad" by her own admission.

"Bad Friend" has failed "Charlene" by choosing to follow the culture's canard to be "non-judgmental," the very opposite of what "Charlene" needs. By refusing to recognize the sin and evil in her friend's sexual activity and make the judgement that this sexual behavior is wrong, not right, "Bad Friend" is enabling, aiding and abetting, facilitating, "Charlene's" self-destruction.

"Charlene" needs to hear in loving and caring words from a trusted real friend that what she is doing is against the will of God who truly loves her, created her in his image that she bears, and has provided redemption for her in Jesus Christ, who alone can restore, cleanse, purify, and free her from her addiction to these counterproductive behaviors. The true friend can then lead and support "Charlene's" way out of evil and to the Way (John 14:6) to recovery and a new life in Jesus Christ. "Charlene" may or may not do so at once. She may decline and/or reject the life-saving admonishment, misperceived as another wound even though given in love. "Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy [including a "Bad Friend"] *are* deceitful." (Proverbs 27:6 KJV) And definitely not helpful; indeed, they are just the opposite!

"Bad Friend" can become a real and most helpful friend by making this true judgment and "speaking the truth in love." She could be a catalyst for Christ, a channel through whom the powerful working of the Holy Spirit can facilitate "Charlene's" regeneration and sanctification in Christ and the new and eternal life in and with the Lord. Remembering that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father…" (James 1:17), she can have the wonderful blessing that comes with the realization the triune God has worked through her to heal "Charlene."

Both "Charlene" and her friend can become transformed. Functioning in these ways, the friend herself will receive renewed strength, overcome feeling drained, and become highly encouraged, knowing she is leading her friend to the Lord and the all-powerful help he alone can give. If any further human assistance is needed, "Charlene" should see

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[647] https://www.denverpost.com/2022/08/04/ask-amy-high-maintenance-friend-is-a-drama-drain/ (Published and Accessed 08/04/2022; Accessed 08/18/2023) If you access this column and read her answer, you will observe that some of what she advises is not in accord with this book.

[648] See my sermon in Appendix D—"Why Are Sexual Sins So Significant?"—in addition to related information throughout this book for an explanation of why sexual sins are so devastating.

a Christian pastor who faithfully proclaims God's Word and who can recognize whether "Charlene" needs another counselor, one who is a faithful follower of Jesus Christ and who will offer counsel in accord with God's will. All these true friends will with God's help provide the ongoing support "Charlene" needs to live the new life to the fullest that Jesus came to provide. (John 10:10)

Urge your church leaders to offer courses on historic Biblical hermeneutics, how to interpret the Bible.

As we've seen throughout this book, the Bible, historically proclaimed to be the Word of God, is the basis of all we believe and our highest authority for what we believe. Other official church documents are often helpful for understanding and applying what the Bible teaches to contemporary concerns and issues, but they are only to be followed to the extent they conform to God's Word.

How do we know what the Bible means, so we can apply it to our daily lives and so we can check on the conformity of these other documents to Scripture? We first need to know and understand the time-honored rules of literary, and especially Biblical, interpretation and how to use those rules in order to correctly understand and apply God's Word to our lives and the life issues we face.

We also need these courses in the church so that we can help others to have this knowledge and develop these skills. As we've seen in Chapter Four and elsewhere in this volume, the pro-homosexual activist opposition is vigorously promoting its agenda. Almost daily we read of even venerable institutions in our society, such as even medical schools, capitulating to the cultural shift shaped by the agenda. These institutions are composed of individual human beings who read and listen to others and make decisions; some of those decisions have serious consequences for other individuals and eventually for the society and a whole culture.

> …Drexel University's College of Medicine announced this week that they are starting a Transgender Fellowship Training Program at their teaching hospital. The program – the first of its kind anywhere in the country – will educate plastic surgeons and urological surgeons on the finer points of the transgender transition. There, directed by Dr. Kathy Rumer – a veteran of more than 400 sex reassignment surgeries – a new generation of doctors will get the tools they need to meet the growing demand for sex changes.
>
> …
>
> And that is what worries us. When we have surgeons and psychiatrists blindly following the left down the path of "Nothing is real, do whatever you want," people are going to get hurt. The studies are as clear as they

> can be: Sex changes lead patients down an unhappy road of depression and suicide.[649]

Some of these medical professionals, who have joined the pro-homosexual movement, at one time were, and some still are, part of a church congregation. If they had the opportunity to take an adult class or course on historic Biblical hermeneutics, or were in conversations with one or more fellow church members who had such instruction, they and others in their field may not have been misled into promoting such transgender programs that cause the destruction of human lives. They may have even been able to speak up and act in their profession to steer decision making away from doing such harm.

Classes and courses on Biblical hermeneutics are essential for helping people correctly understand and interpret God's Word on most other aspects of their life and work. Urge those responsible for the educational ministry in your church to offer such learning opportunities as soon as possible.

Urge your pastor and church board to oppose "homosexual-, or "same-sex marriage."

If there is any question as to their stand on this issue, speak to them as soon as possible. If a pastor in your congregation is teaching an unbiblical position on the subject of homosexuality, speak or write a kind letter to him or her and explain why that position is contrary to God's Word and counterproductive to the well-being of all people involved and the broader society.

If the pastor will not change his or her position, follow the procedures Jesus listed in Matthew 18:15-17:

> 15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.
> 16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'
> 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Following verse 17 in this case would lead you ultimately to the church council, the board of elders. *But before* appearing at a meeting of the board, important preparation should be undertaken.

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[649] "Progress? Medical School Announces Transgender Training Program," posted 26 November 2017. http://patriotnewsdaily.com/progress-medical-school-announces-transgender-training-program/ (Accessed 11/29/17) See also the evidence elsewhere in this book in the discussions on transgenderism.

The place to start, as mentioned above, is with prayer seeking God's wisdom, guidance and direction. Pray and talk individually and with a like-minded leader on the board, especially one whose opinion is valued. With his or her help talk with other members of the board, and others in the congregation whose opinions are valued by the church members. Keep in mind that in most congregations not every opinion leader is serving in an official capacity in an elected position; don't overlook key people in the broader membership.[650]

Offer a Bible study or a seminar on this subject. Ask these leaders to talk with the pastor and urge him or her to recant his or her position and teach the truth in God's Word in love. This may be enough to resolve the matter. However, sometimes it is not enough.

If that is the case, then with several of like mind with you, bring the matter to an official meeting of the board of elders and ask for them to take a stand based on Scripture as presented in this book and the many other Biblically-based and scientifically sound sources included herein. Begin your presentation with prayer for God's wisdom, guidance, and direction in the deliberations in which you'll be engaged. Then speak the truth in love, no harsh words—they're not necessary—in fact they're counterproductive.

However, if the board will not oppose the pastor and take the proper corrective action, and if your congregation is part of a denomination that holds to the Bible faithfully, you can contact the next highest judicatory in your denomination, for example the presbytery in a Presbyterian denomination. If your denomination uses an episcopal polity, contact your bishop. Then work your way up the proper procedural steps in your church government.

If you don't find a Biblical solution to the matter in this way, you have a decision to make which many other Christians have had to face: Do I stay in my congregation? This is not an easy question to answer. Many hesitate to leave their church home for several reasons, not the least of which is that the church is always people; the building, while certainly not insignificant, is secondary to the family and friends in the Lord whom one cherishes and who are often closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24) Further, pastors and other church staff members come and go, but the church is primarily the people who remain, some of whom with their families have been members of that congregation for generations.

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[650] For more information that will help you at this point, see my essay "Defusing Fear of Innovations: Facilitating Change in the Church," available on my website at http://www.fromacorntooak12.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Defusing-Fear-of-Innovations-Facilitating-Change-in-the-Church.pdf and on my academic website at https://www.academia.edu/35711642/Defusing_Fear_of_Innovations_Facilitating_Change_in_the_Church. In this essay I draw on the Bible; sound research in the field of communication, the subfield of diffusion of innovations; some related literature; and many decades of experience. The paper was written to give guidance for the implementation of new ideas, programs, and services with a broad range of applications, not specifically to resolve such conflicts as under consideration on these pages; however, the principles in this study will be helpful for accomplishing your purposes if this stage in the process becomes necessary.

Nevertheless, how long can you hold out and expose yourself, and your family, to teaching that is contrary to God's Word? Further, pastors and teachers willing to change the historic interpretation of the Bible on homosexuality feel free to do so with other passages and subjects as well. If it looks as though the present church leadership is going to remain in place indefinitely, and you cannot effect the change you seek, you may have to take further steps.

If you find, as a result of your communications with the pastor and the church board that they will not change, you can do what many do, sometimes with success, and inform them that you (and the others standing with you) will redirect your financial giving and tithes to other church organizations that do their work in accord with God's Word. Such a stand does cause church pastors and other leaders to think more carefully about the matter. Very sadly, for some people money is more persuasive than theology that is true to the Bible. As *Time* reported, it may help the cause of those who oppose the pro-homosexual movement to know

> that for many evangelical pastors, admitting support for gay marriage is often perceived as career or legacy ending. The risks are high, and rejection has real consequences. Seattle's East Lake [Community Church] has lost 22% of its income and 800 attendees in the past 18 months, and it anticipates that those numbers may continue to climb….some pastors have a 'fear that their congregation will split—as many have—and revenues in the form of tithes from conservative families will be lost, fear of being deemed heretical and losing their denominational affiliation and accreditation, and fear of losing their 401(k) as a result.'[651]

Yet, sometimes pastors and other church leaders, usually more for personal reasons, steel themselves against opposition and become recalcitrant and unbending. This is why many church members are leaving such churches and the denominations of which they are a part. Some as we've just read are splitting the congregations of which they have been members. Unless the congregation as a whole can leave the denomination, as some, such as Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in Menlo Park, California have done, I recommend not splitting congregations.

As we've seen above, the New Testament strongly condemns divisions in the body of Christ, the church. (Cf. e.g., 1 Corinthians 12:25) Ever since Martin Luther was forced out of the church, which he did not want to leave, thus starting the Protestant Reformation, Protestant churches have become more and more Balkanized, which more harms than helps the church and its mission for Christ. If you and those of similar mind must leave your congregation, rather than start another rival church, consider joining a congregation that faithfully proclaims God's Word and is located in as close proximity to where you live and work as possible.

If you are in a denomination in which a group or organization is attempting to change the policy in your denomination to allow homosexuals to be members, and to be admitted to

[651] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 48.

church office and ordained, I urge you to stay and engage in the debate. With fervent prayer, joining with others committed to the authority of the Bible and its historic interpretation as explained on these pages, and using all the Biblical and ecclesiastical means available in your church polity, stay and do all you can to keep your denomination true to God's Word. Don't give up. If you and others, including whole congregations, secede, that makes it much more likely the denomination will make the Scripturally wrong decision on this and other issues that impact God's redemptive purposes.

Only as a last resort, and if you are in a denomination that has approved homosexual membership, leadership, and same-sex "marriage," and where the preaching, teaching, and church education curricula are all attempting to indoctrinate you, your children, your grandchildren, and others, only then consider leaving the denomination. For your own spiritual, psychological, and even physical health, you may need to do so—even your congregation, as in the case of Menlo Park Presbyterian church. But for the sake of the body of Christ, do all you can to avoid this loss.

Remember that since we're all sinful and fall short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23) we won't find a perfect church. No Bible-based Christ-centered church has ever made that claim, nor will one ever do so until Jesus returns. Nevertheless, some matters are Biblically much more important than others, and what you need to look for is a church where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is faithfully proclaimed and where the Bible is the ultimate authority. In such a church you, your family, and your friends will thrive.

Always keep in mind the broad perspective, including the spiritual realities ongoing in the cosmos. The word cosmos in the Greek means world, and as used by the Apostle John, it involved the world with all its sin and evil that God still so-loved that he sent his only-begotten Son to redeem at such a huge cost to Himself. That same author wrote the Book of Revelation where after graphically describing the evils of this age in the first eleven chapters, he makes a great turning point in chapter 12. From chapters 12-22 he discloses the invisible but very real cause of the evils revealed in the first part of the book, the demonic forces in opposition to and at war with Christ and his church.[652]

In John's vision he sees the Beast of the Sea, symbolizing false government, and the Beast of the Earth, symbolizing false religion, in cooperation with each other. (Revelation 13) Here is another reason we need to do all we can to keep the body of Christ pure and speaking the truth in love on the mission to which the Lord has called us. Do we not usually have the most influence in our position as members *within* the body, rather than speaking from outside? Just humanly speaking, do not the members of any organization sense more affinity with, as well as more openness and receptivity to, those within their organization rather than with and to those on the outside?

Again, my plea is to not give up too quickly in the struggle for what the church decides on this matter. You have the facts on your side, which I've tried to provide in this book; you have the strongest argument. Moreover, you're not alone; many are willing to be

[652] William Hendriksen, *More than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), p. 134.

persuaded to understand and to act on the truth. Most importantly, everything is possible with God!

Join with other believers in Christ when you can to speak out most effectively.

Whether you and your friends are regular church members, church leaders (including ordained and/or unordained), or both leaders and nonleaders, engaging in the activities in this chapter with others, especially in a public forum, will send a message in the service of Christ Jesus that, humanly speaking, will be more noticed and indicate more widespread agreement. You'll also be able to support one another when the attacks come, that inevitably will as we stand for the Lord and speak his truth, even when we do so in love. (2 Timothy 3:12) We'll discuss more below about how to prepare for and function in these attacks.

It helps to bring together people from several denominations, which facilitates the above with the additional benefit of communicating that Christians in different denominations love one another and cooperate with each other, witnessing to the unity in the church of Christ that is a reality. Christians will always believe in "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," (Ephesians 4:4-6) even though, as reasonable people will understand, in the church as in a family, some true Christians, who agree on the core Bible passages pertaining to salvation, can disagree on the interpretation of specific Bible texts and still love one another. (Romans 14:1 ff.)

At the same time we recognize that false prophets periodically arise and lead people astray. (Matthew 7:15-23) Having the support of fellow Christians helps counter the arguments of these false prophets, and as bystanders see the strength of the brothers and sisters in Christ speaking the truth in love, they often are persuaded and strengthened to speak out as well for the Lord.

Are all pastors and other church leaders who do the Scripture twisting discussed in this book false prophets? Many of us know these leaders, and some have been friends for decades. It has come as a surprise, even a shock, to hear of their stand or recent change of mind on this matter. Are they false prophets? To make this accusation about such people, especially when you know they have expressed a commitment to Christ for many years, may not be possible to say with certainty, especially not as an individual. This type of evaluation and judgment has historically been done by the church corporately, following established ecclesiastical procedures. Yet in such cases as you have the opportunity, pass this book or certain facts in it to your friend. Ask him or her to reconsider his or her position in the light of the information herein. If your friend will not change, then ask what is the difference between his or her affirmation of a viewpoint contrary to God's Word and that of the false prophets about whom Jesus and Paul spoke? Ask the question sincerely, speaking the truth in love. The Holy Spirit can use such questions raised in love powerfully.

Pastors can do much when working together with other pastors.

A strong and powerful message was communicated when 50 Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars and pastors, including Rick Warren, joined together to formulate and sign an eight-page declaration to send it to as wide a segment of the public as possible. The declaration, entitled "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage" was written by the alliance called Evangelicals and Catholics Together and was published in the March 2015 edition of the prestigious and scholarly religion journal, *FIRST THINGS*, a publication of the interreligious Institute on Religion and Public Life. The Institute was established in 1990 by Richard John Neuhaus, Chuck Colson, and others to combat the concept of secularism that believes there is no place for God or other theistic ideas in public conversation and in the construction of public policy, one way to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Highlights of the message have been cited elsewhere in the applicable sections of this book. Note carefully the concluding statements, particularly pertaining to the implications for our engagement of the subject of homosexuality, particularly the oxymoron of "same-sex marriage," in the public forum.

> We must say, as clearly as possible, that same-sex unions, even when sanctioned by the state, are not *marriages.* Christians who wish to remain faithful to the Scriptures and Christian tradition cannot embrace this falsification of reality, irrespective of its status in law.
>
> A society that seeks to erase the difference between male and female in marriage is asking us to believe something we know *is not* true and *cannot* be true. If the truth about marriage can be displaced by social and political pressure operating through the law, other truths can be set aside as well. And that displacement can lead, in due course, to the coercion and persecution of those who refuse to acknowledge the state's redefinition of marriage, which is beyond the state's competence.
>
> The same exaltation of false freedom used to justify abortion—the liberty to redefine the very nature of the human person—is now at work in the revolution of same-sex marriage. When the autonomous will of man dictates morality—and even reality—life will be defined for the benefit of the powerful and at the expense of the weak, the order of creation will be violated, and the Gospel itself will eventually be declared an enemy of society. And if Christians discard the most fundamental, visible, and universal fact of our bodies—that we are created male and female—we can no longer confess the words of the Creed: "I believe in one God, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."
>
> We thus face a difficult and dangerous situation. A society that identifies the two parties in marriage as Spouse 1 and Spouse 2 has lost sight of a deep truth of human nature. We must do everything in our power to distinguish this falsification of marriage from its true form as the lifelong

> union of a man and a woman…Whatever courses of action are deemed necessary, the coming years will require careful discernment. All Christians and men and women of good will must work to rebuild the culture of marriage and live lives that attest to the joy and beauty of marriage. On this basis alone can we succeed.
>
> This will not be easy. The proponents of these so-called marriages are powerful, and they do not hesitate to use the tools of calumny to defeat their opponents. Keeping in mind the obligation to speak the truth in love, we must find ways to distinguish true marriage from its distortion, and we must do so without abandoning the public square. We owe our fellow citizens a socially engaged witness to the truth about marriage, which, with the family, is the unalterable foundation of a healthy, humane society.
>
> The time is approaching—indeed, in some instances it has already arrived—when Christians in this country will suffer abuse for upholding the truth about marriage. We encourage our fellow Christians to stand firm in obedience to Christ, for that obedience is the most compassionate service we can offer society. In doing so, we must strive to heal the wounds of a confused and broken culture, to foster human flourishing, and to honor the God who created human beings in his own image, male and female. For Christ said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). *Soli Deo gloria*.[653]

Speak up when parachurch organizations waver on homosexuality.

Speak up also on other matters crucial to Biblical truth. Be encouraged that change is possible and regularly occurs with God's help. As *Time* reported

> When World Vision U.S., an evangelical humanitarian organization based in Seattle, announced in March [2014] that it would recognize employees' same-sex marriages, it lost more than 10,000 child sponsorships in 48 hours and promptly reversed its decision. When Dan Haseltine, the lead vocalist of the widely popular Christian based Jars of Clay, tweeted in April [2014], "I just don't see a negative effect to allowing gay marriage. No societal breakdown, no war on traditional marriage," the evangelical blogosphere went ballistic, forcing him to issue a clarification that he had "communicated poorly" and "unintentionally wrote that I did not care about what scripture said."[654] When Evangelicals for Marriage Equality

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[653] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

[654] Here is a classic example of why it is important to learn and remember to use logical thinking and not commit fallacious reasoning such as *argumentum ad verecundiam* (the appeal to authority) discussed in Chapter Four, which takes place when an authority in one field tries to speak authoritatively in another field outside his or her area of expertise. Such speaking out of place is commonly done, and if the person doing so isn't aware of the fallacy, at least we should be aware of the reality; we should not accept their opinion

> launched in September [2014], three prominent evangelical magazines—*Christianity Today*, *Relevant* and *World*—did not let the group buy advertising in their pages.[655]

Here are just three examples of change that occur when we speak out. Now with the Internet, including e-mail and the social media, we have more opportunities than ever before for our voices to be heard. Many doing so together with God's help facilitate good results.

Speak the truth in love; expect opposition, and when it comes maintain your commitment to the Lord who will strengthen you.

Both those who have been reading this book from the beginning, and those who have been using it as a reference book, reading only those sections that speak to the matters they most need to address at this point in time, have certainly seen the main theme woven throughout the volume: "Speak the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15) As we've observed time and again, when we uncover what goes on in the homosexual lifestyle, the truth is very grim. It is not pretty; neither is it at all "gay." When we speak this truth, as kindly and gently as possible, we are attacked as being very unloving and even hateful. That *argumentum ad hominem* (*op. cit*.), which is motivated by a demonic source, only misleads the least perceptive of those who hear it.

Surely, none of us who are informed as to what homosexuals truly do (as disclosed in Chapter Two), especially none of us who walk with the Lord, want to think about this grim subject, much less confront people about it. I can't say I've enjoyed writing this book; it is a heavy subject, and the parts dealing with homosexual behavior are very unpleasant. Yet it is out of love that you and I are moved to consider the subject and try to help people honor God with their body. (1 Corinthians 6:20)

We do so out of love for the Lord who loves the world so much that he suffered excruciating pain and agony to redeem the people for whom he gave his life so we could enter the presence of God who is Most Holy. (John 3:16; Hebrews 10:19-25; Matthew 27:50-51) For the reasons identified above, such unbiblical unions as those oxymoronically called same-sex "marriage," are counterfeit mockeries of and rebellions against God's creative intention, models of disobedience to his will, and attempts to legitimize and normalize homosexuality that mislead younger as well as older people into lifestyles that are destructive to themselves and to society.

Also, we speak the truth out of love for God, who has called us to do so, and for his church, the body of Christ, for all the people from every nation, tribe, people, and language whom he has called together to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We proclaim this Gospel of Christ Jesus in word and in deed, and the actions address people's daily needs: physical; safety; love, belonging, additional

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with the same level of appreciation for what they do in their field; and we should help our family and others to make that distinction.

[655] Elizabeth Dias, "A Change of Heart: Inside the Evangelical War over Gay Marriage," p. 46.

emotional; spiritual; and others. We thus speak the truth in love to protect the church, to help it stay holy and healthy so it can accomplish the mission to which the Lord has called it. Recall what one Lutheran pastor said, "You can't reach people for Christ if you live your lives in the gutter." As indicated in the introduction, the church needs to know the truth so it doesn't mislead those with unwanted and repented same-sex attraction and those who are into full-blown homosexuality into thinking it is an OK lifestyle. It's definitely not OK. God revealed that thousands of years ago, and people are seeing in aspects of his general revelation yet today that it is a very destructive lifestyle—unhealthy, unsafe, and unholy—which is not at all good—neither is any of it "gay."

The church has never been afraid of opposing beliefs in society or anywhere else in the world. That we would be opposed in the mission God has given his church and to which Christ has commissioned us has been well known since Adam and Eve fell, unleashing the force of sin and evil that extends through the cosmos. Knowing the extent and severity of our opposition, Christ has given us all we need, and he has still commanded that we love all people, even our enemies. (Matthew 5:44) So we don't hate; we don't need to. We don't become angry; we don't need to. We've read the book; we know who wins in the end: Christ Jesus, and we're on his side.

At the same time we're called to model what the Lord commands. Resist the attempt of those in the church who try to justify such homosexual unions, especially leaders who should know better but who usually if not always have a family member or close friend who is a homosexual when they support such aberrant "marriage." Their argument is not only contrary to the Bible, it is a carelessly cruel contrivance that leads to death, physical and spiritual, often of the very people they are trying to help. If you see someone, especially a loved one, doing something that is going to harm them, do you encourage them to do more of it, or do you try to lead them out of it and seek treatment?

Prepare for persecution, and overcome it in and through Christ.

Be prepared to be persecuted for your stand. If you are faithful, the attacks will come, especially on controversial subjects, and especially on the subject of homosexuality. If you haven't begun to do so yet, begin now to *view harsh and unkind criticism as* ***an affirmation and not as a failure and in so doing experience joy***.

Especially those of us who are older, but still most people yet to an extent and for many reasons, have grown up wanting to please others: parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers, authorities, and most other people. That's still generally important; Paul says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18) Yet, as the apostle also indicates in this verse, it's not always likely, even when trying to speak the truth in love, because many people don't want to hear the truth…no matter how it's communicated.

One of the pro-homosexual activists' favorite responses to our efforts is to attack, especially with *argumentum ad hominem*, their preferred terms being bigot, hate-filled,

homophobe, and their derivatives. Sometimes they use even more dangerous means. Therefore, God has prepared us and given us encouragement.

> 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
> 13 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
> 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,
> 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
> 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,
> 17 so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:12-17 TNIV)

When persecution comes due to teaching the truth in love, we have affirmation that we are on the right path, evidence that others see us as believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can even sense we are blessed in the persecution!

Jesus always alerted his disciples to what was coming, and why, for those who remained faithful to him.[656] "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." (John 15:19) Wow! What a wonderful reason to be hated! How comforting!

Comforting?! Yes, but don't think I'm into some kind of weird sadomasochism. Healthy normal humans resist rather than seek pain. But strong believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ are willing to stand up and be counted with Christ no matter the cost. When that cost involves persecution and the suffering that comes with it due to our identification with Christ, we do have a very real comfort, albeit one the world cannot comprehend. But we can.

We need to observe one other very important aspect of Jesus' statement, "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own." This means be careful of wanting to be and being popular in the world! This is why Jesus also said, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets." (Luke 6:26) What a woe! That is terrible! How horrible to belong to the world and not to belong to God! Nothing could be worse than to be popular for a little while and suffer for eternity! That's no deal! We are not, or should not be, in any popularity contests. Let's take a personal assessment of and for ourselves. *If we don't have any enemies, are we not visibly enough identifying with Christ*?

[656] See also Matthew 10:16-42.

This doesn't mean we should ever try to make enemies. Again, as Paul said, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18) But living at peace with everyone is much different from agreeing with everyone or being agreeable to everyone. The waffler who caves whenever challenged, the person willing to compromise his or her faith to please others, is of little use to God for accomplishing his redemptive purposes for his creation.

As we live our lives in love, the agape form of love that is patient and kind, not jealous or boastful, not arrogant or rude, and in the other agape ways as Jesus commanded, we will be liked by unrighteous as well as righteous people. That has much value; to begin with it gives us relationships within which people are inclined to listen to us.

We shouldn't go out of our way looking for trouble such as trying to badger or provoke people. Sooner or later the trouble usually comes to us just due to our trying to obey the Lord, even by just doing what is good to improve conditions in this fallen world. There will come times when the unrighteous are going to say and do things to which we have to respond. On those occasions we'll be watched to see how we respond. We will do so in agape love, but we will have to take a stand, and that stand must be with Christ Jesus. It's then that we'll be rejected and persecuted by those opposed to Christ. *But the good news is that we'll be accepted by Christ and his true church, and the Lord, working directly in us and indirectly for us through his people, will help us with all we need*. It doesn't get any better than that!

Being so prepared helps us understand, endure, and overcome, rejoicing in the privilege to serve the Lord when the attacks occur. Always remember what he said just before letting us know we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world:

> 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.
> 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)

Jesus' teaching informs us it is possible to view our persecution with joy, and the Thessalonian church is on record that it did. "And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit…." (1 Thessalonians 1:6 (NRSV)

Expect lesser or stronger forms of persecution, but with the early church rejoice if you receive either. Our basic and primary preparation for persecution of any kind, a continual preparation, is through daily prayer, Bible reading, and weekly worship and supportive fellowship in a church based on the Bible that preaches Christ crucified, resurrected, reigning, returning, and ruling forever.

Thereby we can retrain our minds to view hate mail, accusations of being homophobic, and other forms of vilification as positive and not negative, because we can understand

what's going on and why; it all makes sense. Yes, they can be upsetting, unpleasant, and even painful, but let's choose to view them as positive affirmations of our sharing in Jesus' suffering and that we are on the right track, a source of great joy when we keep in mind our place in God's plan.

> 12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as
> though something strange were happening to you.
> 13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you
> may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.
> 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for
> the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.
> 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of
> criminal, or even as a meddler.
> 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise
> God that you bear that name.
> 17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it
> begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the
> gospel of God?
> 18 And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the
> ungodly and the sinner?"
> 19 So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit
> themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good. (1 Peter 4:12-
> 19)

We can expect persecution in our struggle to prohibit "same-sex marriage" from becoming the law in our land. For just one example of such oppression in the state of Washington, homosexual activists published the names of all who signed Initiative I-1192 (a petition that would put the issue on the ballot for voters asking them to define marriage as between one man and one woman and prohibit marriage for same sex couples), and the activists urged their membership to track down and harass the signers of I-1192. That harassment could be a reason why the supporters of I-1192 weren't able to obtain enough signatures for putting the initiative on the ballot in 2012.[657]

So how are we to function when the attacks come?

First remember what the Lord Jesus said. "But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven,..." (Matthew 5:44-45a NRSV) Some homosexuals are enemies. As we observed in Chapter Three, part of the homosexual activists' agenda is to destroy God's institution of marriage. But other homosexuals, many in fact, are hurting and hoping for a way out; others are at varying points in between.

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[657] Eugene Delgaudio, Public Advocate of the U. S., e-mail on 8/16/12. http://www.thenewstribune.com/2012/07/02/2202700/one-man-and-one-woman-initiative.html.

At this point it is important to keep in mind that there is not a monolithic structure among homosexuals. This is one reason I do not refer to "the homosexual community." Homosexual people have significant differences. For just a few examples, some are activists with an agenda to make "same-sex marriage" legal, while other homosexuals do not want "same-sex marriage" legalized; some are engaged in political efforts in opposition to other homosexuals, e.g., on economic principles; some homosexuals just want to be left alone "to do their thing." The word, "community," is frequently misused to apply to other groups who really lack the unity, sociogeographic proximity, and common purpose that sociological entities typically designated as a "community" encompass. The usage of the word community constitutes one of those redefinitions that sound nice but are essentially meaningless. What is "the homosexual community?" Are we to believe that all homosexual people think the same, have the same values, share the same religion, live within a certain geographical proximity, and have the same goals? Where's the community?

This understanding does not ignore the reality that some have organized with an agenda that has obtained the media support we've previously observed which makes them look much more numerous and influential than they are; they still constitute three percent or less of the American population, and as we've seen, they're losing sympathy in the broader society. We also need to keep in mind the implications of such activism, which have been considered throughout the book. Nevertheless, in speaking the truth in love, we need to treat people as individuals who may or may not fit the media-driven stereotype of homosexuals or other biases either.

We speak the truth to the homosexual as kindly as possible because we love him or her, and we are extending God's love to him or her; therefore, we don't want to see him or her hurt. Nevertheless, expect that truth expressed in love to often be misunderstood and not well received. Especially those who don't have eyes to see or ears to hear (Deuteronomy 29:4; Ezekiel 12:2), likely will not see what we say and do as loving. Just as a parent disciplines a child out of love (Proverbs 13:24), and the Lord disciplines those whom he loves (Revelation 3:19), or a physician gives a shot or medicine to a patient that the latter needs but may not at all enjoy, these treatments are done out of love and caring for the well-being of the other person.

Jesus' prayer for those who were killing him that the Father forgive them because "they know not what they do," (Luke 23:34) recalls to our mind his persecution by the hands of those he loved, which is a forerunner of, but much more severe than, the persecution we typically receive when we speak the truth in love. Jesus showed us how to treat people who persecute us for speaking the truth in love. That is our calling from God; it's in our job description, and when we receive the vindictiveness of being accused of hatefulness, just the opposite of what we're trying to do, we need to respond in love, not in kind. We know what that love looks like; Jesus and Paul told us and showed us. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) We can do that! In fact we not only can do it, millions of Christians all over the world are doing it far better than many know. The temptation would be to lash out in

anger, but that is neither our calling nor is it effective. Anger is not a motivator. But love is.

We will also do well to follow Paul's charge to Timothy:

> 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.
> 25 Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,
> 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:24-26 TNIV)

> 1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:
> 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.
> 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.
> 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.
> 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:1-5 TNIV)

Does any of the above sound hateful to reasonable people?

This language, and that on the preceding pages, is not at all hateful and unloving as pro-homosexual advocates frequently accuse us, often in pejorative and ad hominem ways. This language is speaking the truth in love, out of concern and caring for those who are considering, or already engaged in, a lethal lifestyle.

Another way to handle persecution is to do what Samaritan's Purse and Billy Graham Evangelistic Association President, Franklin Graham, does: he shrugs it off. Referring to the secularists and the humanists who have taken over the country while too many Christians haven't been paying attention, he told the Oklahoma State Evangelism Conference in January 2015 that "The secularists and the humanists … you mention the name of Christ, they jump all over you…I get jumped on all the time. I don't really care."[658]

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[658] Michael F. Haverluck, "Franklin Graham: Secularists have taken control of America," *OneNewsNow.com*., February 4, 2015, http://www.onenewsnow.com/culture/2015/02/04/franklin-graham-secularists-have-taken-control-of-america#.VN7k-y5cBVc (Accessed 2/13/15)

He is greatly concerned about the change in our country, the movement away from its Biblical foundation, and he rightly believes the "only hope for this country is for men and women of God to stand up and take a stand" for Jesus Christ. He reminded his listeners and the rest of us that, "secularism and communism are the same thing. They're godless. They're antichrist." His message is timely and on target. We need a "wake-up call;" maybe the stark contrast of the homosexuality movement and what it stands for that is so contrary to God's Word will cause people to see what is going on and become active, jumping out of the "frog in the kettle" phenomenon. We need to wake-up soon; Graham warns that "America will be judged for its disobedience and repudiation of God's Word."[659] All who know God's Word know it's coming; the question is when, and is it wise to delay becoming involved?

Again, how can we truly love someone and affirm, much less encourage, that person to embrace, a lifestyle that is unhealthy and violent as well as unholy? To say the least, such an uninformed response is very **un**loving and not at all helpful to the individual involved, to his or her family, to the church, to the society, and indeed to God's world he is in the process of redeeming, at great cost to himself in the most wonderful demonstration of sacrificial love ever, in and through his only-begotten Son Christ Jesus.

Christ has commanded us to love all people, even our enemies. We need to be alert to help people who may be confused by our love. Let us clarify that *our love for all people, including homosexuals, motivates us to reach out to them so they do not destroy themselves; no one should confuse our love for people with condoning their behavior*. Jesus, who is our model as well as our only Savior and Lord, loved all people but one doesn't have to read far in the four accounts of the Gospel and the Book of Acts to see that he didn't approve of all people's actions.

Jesus showed love and compassion for the woman caught in adultery, but when he said "neither do I condemn you" he immediately added "Go now and leave your life of sin." (John 8:11) Applied to the current issue of "same-sex marriage," the Catholic Answers booklet, "Why Homosexual Unions Are Not Marriages," has spoken well in saying, "The compassion that must be shown to those who suffer homosexual temptations does not mean misleading them into thinking that the union of two men or two women is a marriage."[660] As we saw above, many passages of the Bible require us to speak out in love to those who are engaged in wrongdoing (e.g., Leviticus 19:16b-17b; Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:16; James 5:19-20).

What should we do with all this information? As emphasized throughout this book, utilizing the information, we should speak the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15)

We've been talking throughout this book about the importance of speaking the truth in love. How are you doing on speaking the truth in love? Are you sure that you love as well as you think you do? Since the Bible, (1 Corinthians 13:12) other people especially

[659] Michael F. Haverluck, "Franklin Graham: Secularists have taken control of America."
[660] "Why Homosexual Unions Are Not Marriages," (San Diego: Catholic Answers Press, 2012), p. 21.

those close to us, careful social science, and on occasion our consciences tell us that we don't come across to others as well as we think we do, some years ago I developed a brief questionnaire to help me see if others thought I was doing as well as I thought I was doing on the behaviors that 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 define as being the agape form of love that Christ commanded. (Matthew 5:44; John 13:34-35) Needless to say, I didn't get a perfect score, but then I wasn't expecting one anyway; but I keep trying. If you would like to use that instrument to check how you're doing, it's in Appendix E.

Use opportunities to inform homosexuals and others that homosexuals can change and be healed, and explain why.

Be prepared for strong opposition to this message by those with an agenda for promoting the myth that such change and cure is unnecessary, impossible, and even harmful when tried. As the Bible discloses, this opposition is part of the broader and invisible cosmic conflict between the demonic forces fighting God's will and his people in the essentially spiritual warfare in which we are engaged.[661] We need to teach people about this spiritual battle in which we are engaged corporately and individually. Give people the awareness and the protection and the strategy they need to win the war. Whether indwelling individuals directly, or externally influencing people, Satan's and his demonic followers' main objective is to undermine God's purposes and take glory from Him.

Concerning the myth that change and cure is not necessary, impossible, or harmful, inform or remind these people that "with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26; cf. Philippians 4:13) He never issues a command requiring his people to do something they cannot do with his help, and he is helping many leave the homosexual lifestyle and remain away from it.

One of the first ways homosexuals are opposing the Biblical and traditional view of their lifestyle in the U. S. and around the world is by trying to normalize it through such means as calling evil what is good and what is good evil (Isaiah 5:20), e.g., using "gay" as a synonym for homosexual, which is deceptive. As we've seen above, homosexuals are not truly gay. As we also saw previously, homosexuals admit that lying is part of their agenda. Thus, this lie, a cruel hoax that causes death and suffering to those who are drawn into this sad lifestyle that embraces evil, we recognize as having originated in Satan, the father of lies. (John 8:44) *We, who have been given ears to hear and called by God to proclaim and live the love of Christ in his Gospel of life, cannot remain silent and watch the devil and his minions lead people God loves to their physical, emotional, and spiritual destruction and death. How <u>unloving</u> it is to remain silent or, worse, to advocate such a life-threatening lifestyle.*

To enable us to speak up most effectively we must inform ourselves and others of the research and realities mentioned herein, as well as the plethora of other facts, the inclusion of which space does not here permit. Among those very important facts include

[661] Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-11; Revelation 12-20. Recall also our examination of the creation passages of God's Word that include no reference to homosexuality and that the very opposite is God's will for human sexuality.

the large and untold (in the so-called "mainstream media") number of former homosexuals and lesbians who have been healed and now live as heterosexuals, and others who are trying to leave homosexuality. Such anecdotal accounts do not in themselves prove that all homosexuals will be healed, but they do prove that homosexuals can be healed, that many have been healed, and that many others want to be healed, as I have observed in my ministry. They need us to help not hinder them.[662]

Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, a psychiatrist, examined research reported in medical journals and in the popular press. He found that many studies purporting to show homosexuals can't change were flawed. In his book, *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, he sets forth evidence that homosexuals can change. He explains the manner in which psychology, biology, choice, and habitat, interconnect and produce deeply imbedded patterns of sexual behavior. He has produced a model that is based on scientific including psychological understandings of habit, compulsion, and addiction. He calls homosexuality "one of the many forms of soul sickness that is innate to our fallen nature."[663]

Dr. Donald Tweedy, a professor of psychology and a clinical psychologist, has personally counseled nearly 400 homosexual men and women for more than 30 years. His vast experience convinced him that, contrary to the politically correct agenda, "homosexuality is a learned behavior that can be successfully treated."[664] He explains that during the 1950s through the early 1970s he noticed a success rate between 60-75% in terms of changed attitudes and performance among his clients, but that rate of success began to decline, and continued to do so, following the mid-1970s due to the cultural shift resulting from the movement to make homosexuality normal in contemporary thinking led by what he calls, "'pseudo-scientific' literature which says that homosexuality is an inborn trait, such as left-handedness."[665]

Tweedy acknowledges the ongoing challenge of those trying to overcome homosexuality, but he likens it to the lifelong challenge of dieters. As the latter likely never lose their desire for a hot fudge sundae, so the former may not lose their desire for same-sex intimacy, although they can learn to control their attitudes and behavior,[666] just as heterosexuals must, and can, and in fact do. Similarly, as many bound in other addictions, such as alcohol, drugs, and heterosexual illicit sex, can and are freed from their bondage, but they not infrequently experience a continual struggle to avoid such personally and corporately counterproductive behavior, so also homosexuals can and do

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[662] In addition to the other anecdotal accounts included in this book, see the moving story of Christopher Yuan and Angela Yuan in his book, *Out of a Far Country: A Gay Son's Search for God. A Broken Mother's Search for Hope*. (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Water Brook Multnomah, 2011) http://www.christopheryuan.com/mobile/index.html. See also his testimony on You Tube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drKBGqPBZLg. (Accessed 4/24/15)

[663] *Jeffrey Satinover, Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).*

[664] Frank York, "There is Hope for the Homosexual," *Focus on the Family Citizen*, August 1988, p. 4.

[665] York, p. 4.

[666] York, p. 4.

turn from that lifestyle in spite of the struggle.[667] *We cannot demean human beings and treat them as animals who cannot control but must indulge their urges*.

Dr. George Rekers, the author of *Growing Up Straight—What Every Family Should Know about Homosexuality*, and an expert in childhood sexual identity disorders, has done extensive research on homosexuality for the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), has worked with the Department of Neuro-Psychiatry at the University of South Carolina, and has treated more than 500 homosexuals as a clinical counseling practitioner. He maintains that homosexuality is a treatable sexual identity disturbance—as long as certain necessary factors are present throughout the treatment process.[668]

These factors have been published by the NIMH and include the following regarding the homosexual: (1) young with only a few sexual experiences (change being more difficult but not impossible with age); (2) a strong religious motivation or a strong social support system, including family and church to facilitate change; (3) no other mental disorders; (4) involved in a subculture within his or her society that contains sanctions against homosexual behavior; and (5) successful completion of treatment. Rekers observes a 90% success rate when these factors are in place.[669]

The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) reports similar findings, important information for all leaders, including government representatives, to know concerning the contentious matter of therapy, especially before passing any more laws prohibiting conversion therapy for adolescents.

> Psychotherapists around the world who treat homosexuals report that significant numbers of their clients have experienced substantial healing. Change has come through psychological therapy, spirituality, and ex-gay support groups. Whether leading married or committed celibate lives, many report that their homosexual feelings have diminished greatly, and do not trouble them as much as they had in the past.
>
> The keys to change are *desire, persistence,* and a willingness to investigate the *conscious and unconscious conflicts* from which the condition originated. Change comes slowly, usually over several years. Clients learn how to meet their needs for same-sex nurturance and affirmation without eroticizing the relationship. As they grow into their heterosexual potential, men and women typically experience a deeper and fuller sense of themselves as male or female.
>
> If some homosexuals do not wish to change, that is their choice, yet it is profoundly sad that gay-rights activists struggle *against* the right-to-

[667] Sprigg, *The Top Ten Myths about Homosexuality*, pp. 8-13.
[668] York, p. 5.
[669] York, p. 5. See also Jones, "Homosexuality, the Behavioral Sciences and the Church," Wheaton College, unpublished and undated essay, pp. 12-13.

> treatment for other homosexuals who yearn for freedom from their attractions.[670]

Bud Searcy, director of New Creation Ministries in Fresno, California, lists several other elements he has found in his counseling that are essential for any successful ministry to homosexuals, and they include: (1) unconditional love; (2) the information that what they are doing is damaging to their lives and to the will of God for them; (3) hope in Jesus Christ; (4) encouragement to discontinue all former relationships with homosexuals and at the same time establishment of new non-sexually orientated relationships; (5) prayer, including how to pray, how to study the Bible, and involvement in a local church; (6) learning how to have healthy, same-sex relationships.[671] A considerable number of other organizations, such as Restored Hope Network, True Freedom Trust, and others described below, exist as well to help free homosexuals from the not at all gay lifestyle that binds them in bondage.

One of these organizations is headed by Ann Polk, author of *Restoring Sexual Identity: Hope for Women Who Struggle with Same Sex Attraction* and Executive Director of Restored Hope Network, a coalition of 50 ministries across the U.S. helping people who are seeking to leave homosexuality. Many of the leaders, including Ann, have left homosexuality.

What does all this mean for how God's people are to treat homosexuals?

The Bible is very clear. We are to love them as our Lord has commanded us to do for all people. The special Greek word for such love is *agape* which is defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 as being patient, kind, not arrogant or rude, not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth, always protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres. Jesus commanded such love even for our enemies. (Matthew 5:44) We can do that! Properly interpreted, there is no text in the Bible that supports "gay bashing."

Again, be careful to employ established hermeneutical principles in the interpretation of all Bible texts. For example, in Leviticus 20:13 where God says, "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." We must understand this death sentence was to be carried out at that point in history when the Israelites were in a theocratic relationship with God. Remember, a key hermeneutical principle here is to distinguish between principle and application of principle. The principle is clearly stated in the first sentence of the verse; the application in the second sentence. As God progressively revealed in the Scriptures his plan of salvation through the centuries, the principle in this passage remained but the application was modified due to the coming of Jesus Christ and the new covenant in him. Compare and contrast Leviticus 20:13 and Leviticus 20:10 with John 8:1-11.

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[670] National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), "The Three Myths about Homosexuality," http://www.narth.org/menus/myths.html (Accessed 4/12/15)
[671] York, p. 5.

God has called his people to participate in his redemptive purposes in Christ. He is working in and through his covenant people to redeem his creation, including all individuals who will respond to his grace. Indeed, he wants all people to be saved. (1 Timothy 2:4) Human beings are inclined toward that which gives them joy, e.g., the love of others; people are inclined to move away from that which induces pain, e.g., meanness, hostility, and rejection. These realities suggest our witness should be in the context of *agape*. We will be more effective if we love in accord with Jesus' command. There is no justification for hate speech or hateful acts toward homosexuals or anyone else, which not only would disobey God's commands but would cause people to avoid rather than approach us and what we have to offer.

We must remember that we are all sinners. (Romans 3:23) Therefore, my sins prohibit me from "lording over" anyone else; in fact since I am a teacher, I will be judged more strictly, (James 3:1) a fact that would have me living in stark terror if I were not credited with and covered in Christ's righteousness. No one of us can throw stones at another sinner, as even the unrighteous Pharisees and teachers of the law testified by dropping their stones and refusing to throw them at the woman caught in adultery. (John 8:1-11; note v. 11.) This text is the answer to those who say, "Jesus accepts everybody." It would be more accurate to reply to them that it's not true that he accepts everybody, see, e.g., what he says to the hypocrite Pharisees in Matthew 23 and what he said about how the final judgment will occur in Matthew 25:31-46, but he does love everyone. Further, the answer, based on v. 11, should also include, "Yes, ***but he loves them so much that he doesn't want to leave them that way***." He calls them to change; he expects growth and development, maturity in relationship with him. (Ephesians 4:11-15)

***We are commanded to love in the highest form of love: Notice the implications*!**

I have received undeserved grace; how can I do anything but the same for others in gratitude to God?! Remember, "…God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) God did not require us to change before loving us, even to this huge extent!

Recall also Jesus' summary of the Law and the Prophets: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:37-39) Give careful attention and act on these aspects of the summary of the Law:

- First of all notice that these are commandments. Jesus did **NOT** say, "I've got an idea, try this; it might work." Neither did he say, "I have a couple of suggestions; try them if you think of it, if you feel like it, if you like the other person, or if you can work it into your schedule." No! These are *commandments*, as Jesus says in verses 38-40. We don't hear that word very much in this period of paralyzing political "correctness," but we have a great need to do so. The Greek word the Lord uses is ἐντολή *entolē*, which means command, order, decree, injunction.

Therefore, we are required to do them, and we will be held accountable for how we have done so.

- The Greek word for love that Jesus uses in each case is *agape*. Jesus, who is most realistic, is *not commanding us* to love people, including homosexuals, who are not doing God's will, *with the emotive affection and fondness of friendship* expressed in the other main word for love in the Bible, *phileō*. Jesus *rather* is directing us toward expressing that *higher* form of love, *agape*, which is more about behavior than emotion; by doing the behaviors, sooner or later accompanying affect follows. If we will love in the *agape* manner, and with the concomitant attitude *agape* evokes, there is no way anyone can truly charge us with being hateful or unloving toward homosexuals, and with the Holy Spirit's help we may even attract some to the Gospel of Christ Jesus who can free them from the bondage to that very unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy lifestyle.

- Observe carefully other implications of this Great Commandment, the summary of the Law.

    - The commandment begins with God and loving God. The many people who are extremely unwise and think they can remove God, who is everywhere, sovereign, and all-powerful, to cite only a few of his characteristics, from schools, from all government operations, from the media, and from all other parts of life, such people are harming not helping society. All good comes from God (James 1:17), and in order to have the command to love people, much less the accountability to require and do it, God must be acknowledged and obeyed. Otherwise, there is no unassailable authority that can withstand the secularist who could deny anything good. If everyone is equal and there is no higher authority above us to whom to appeal, the greatest principles could not have superior status that is irrefutable, indomitable, and incontestable. But since God is always in the picture, since he owns and operates the cosmos, and since he has given us his Word and the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of his triune being, we can and must refer and defer to him, functioning according to his will for the best outcomes on any and all occasions.

    - Look again at the second commandment, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." (v. 39) Recalling the statistics from the science revealed in Chapter Two, we observe that homosexual practice is extremely unhealthy and dangerous, as well as unholy. Specifically pertaining to this commandment, we saw that the medical journal *BMC Psychiatry* revealed that the likelihood of suicide rises over 200% if an individual has engaged in a homosexual lifestyle and 41 percent of transgendered Americans have attempted suicide, a rate more than 25 times higher than the population at large! It follows, therefore, as we also saw, that psychiatrists find and report that homosexuality produces low self-esteem.

Thus some questions arise that we should ask, indeed, that we must ask, of those who affirm and even advocate the homosexual lifestyle:

- Since our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, how likely is it that homosexuals who have a low or no self-esteem will be able to love (truly love, in the *agape* manner, not lust for) others?

- How can any Christian participate in affirming, much less encouraging, someone to embrace a lifestyle that fails to produce the love Christ has commanded?

- How is it loving to affirm, much less encourage, a person our Lord commanded us to love to engage in a lifestyle that is extremely unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy?

- How is it loving to affirm, much less encourage, a person Christ commanded us to love to engage in a lifestyle that reduces his or her self-esteem and thus makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for him or her to love as he or she should do?

- Since many, if not most Christians including church leaders who are pro-homosexual advocates, have loved ones who are LBGTQ, in the light of the preceding pages in this book, instead of affirming their loved ones' LBGTQ practice, *would it not be more truly loving* of them to take the Biblical steps needed over time in order to develop their relationship with those loved ones, explain God's Word and will, pray for and with them, and do all else possible, to lead them ***away*** from the road to destruction on which they are currently traveling, rather than to affirm, encourage, and guide them on that road and thereby share in their guilt (Leviticus 19:17)?

- What will you say to the Lord, when he calls us all to account in the final judgment? (Matthew 25:31-46)

The *Los Angeles Times* cited a study in 2011 which found that 81.9 percent of lesbian, "gay," bisexual or transgender students "reported being verbally harassed, 38.3 percent reported being physically harassed and 18.3 percent reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation."[672] It is important to keep in mind that this study was done by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, the findings thus being susceptible to their bias. It is also significant that no mention was made of the sample number—81.9% of what? 10? 50? 100? 1000? We need to remember as discussed above that the number of all homosexuals in the U. S. is very low—less than 3% and maybe only 1% of the whole population. Nevertheless, no

[672] "Other Views: The Los Angeles Times on bullying," *Reporter-Herald*, June 19, 2013, A4.

homosexual, not one, should be harassed, especially assaulted. Such abuse is against the law in our society, and it is against God's will as we've been seeing in this volume.

In the world where sin and evil are extensive, such abuse of homosexuals will occur, as it does for many others, but it should never come from us who believe in and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, who are his people called to be holy to him. We should never engage in abusiveness toward people who are homosexual, or anyone else. For the more we love as Christ has commanded, the more we will be seen as different (from the world), the people whom God is calling us to be (e.g., 1 Peter 2:9-12; see esp. v. 11), and that difference is winsome.[673]

This difference from the world, being uncommon, is part of what is meant by our calling to be holy to God. Compare John 13:34-35, where Jesus' primary reference is to loving fellow believers, but in the broader context of what Jesus said as recorded in Matthew 5:44, his will is that we love everyone with the *agape* form of love, "so that you may be children of your Father in heaven," (NRSV) that everyone will know we are Jesus' disciples, and so he will draw all people to himself. (John 12:32) Remembering that Jesus' words in John 13:34-35 are a command[674] makes it easier for us to do the *agape* form of love (including being patient, kind, not rude). By expressing such love to others, we will stand out and earn the right to be heard for the Lord.

Most of us are used to following commands. Those of us who've had the privilege of having an earthly father, who gave us commands (especially when backed up with the necessary enforcement if required, the awareness of such enforcement alone typically being enough to discourage disobedience), have found it helps in obeying the command. Those with a military and police background have had the same experience, likewise those who have had supervisors at work who issue policies and reinforce them with regular and special reviews and, if necessary, compensation adjustments or dismissal, all of which makes it easier to carry out a command. Thus, it helps to know that God will call us to account for how we treat other people. The concern this reality triggers in our hearts and minds is essentially what is meant by the Bible's term, "the fear of God."

Here again we see in his Word what God's will for us is concerning homosexuality. Our love should be expressed in deeds and in words by what we do and do not do. For example, we followers of Christ should act like him and never engage in "gay bashing" or bullying. Similarly, when we see people bullying a homosexual, let us speak up and in the name of Christ call upon those perpetrating the harassment and abuse to stop. One good and generally effective way to begin is to simply ask the perpetrators, "What are you doing?" If they do say something and/or persist, ask them "Why are you doing this?"

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[673] The Biblical word holy denotes being separated (to God) and uncommon.

[674] The occasion at which Jesus gave this command was during the Last Supper. That supper occurred on Thursday during Holy Week, which in Christian tradition has been called Maundy Thursday. Maundy is from the Latin word, *mandatum*, which means command.

Just asking people to think about what they are doing, and why, is often enough to motivate them to cease what they are doing at least for now. Often people who engage in such hostility do so emotionally with passions that snowball and keep building and becoming more and more aggressive without thoughtful restraint. Such reflection as I'm suggesting brings to their consciousness the awareness that they have no reasonable explanation that is likely to be acceptable to the one(s) asking the question. Sometimes raising the question, which causes them to think about what they're doing convinces even themselves that they should not act that way. As Francis Schaeffer used to say, sin is nonsense. Then, if they still keep doing it say, "Stop it; that's wrong!" Obtain help if needed. If it's a really dangerous situation, call for help right away.

Social science researchers in the field of education write of the importance of fostering an approach tendency rather than an avoidance tendency in students toward their studies. What we do can attract or repel students, whereby they tend either to engage in what we are teaching or turn it off and avoid it. The same is true in our witness for Christ. Let us never act with hostility in word or deed toward homosexual people, who are part of the world that God so loved that he gave his only-begotten Son that they might believe and not perish but have eternal life. God prefers to change people, not to destroy them or to see them destroy themselves. (1 Timothy 2:4)

We must here again observe the importance of "speaking the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15) We do not "water down" the Bible's teaching to make homosexuals or anyone else feel good, as some church denominations are doing in disobedience to God's Word and will. Many will reject what we have to say, but if we speak and act in love, we will not unnecessarily cause the Biblical message to be rejected. I can accept rejection because of the content of my message; I don't want rejection because of the <u>way</u> I said it or acted.

That said, be prepared to be accused of using hate speech, being hateful, hate filled, haters, full of hate, and probably other terms using the word hate directed toward us. This is commonly done, and those opposing us are undoubtedly being told to use this approach to silence us by appealing to the desire most people have to be liked. But we "march to a different drummer." If it is most important, infinitely moreso, to be loved by God rather than by people, especially than by those disobeying God whom we love most of all, the hatred of others will be most easily managed. We who have committed ourselves to Christ and his service know that we will suffer at times in his service. (2 Timothy 3:12-17; 1 Peter 4:12-19) It comes with being a witness for the Lord in a fallen world.

We should not try to be liked by everyone, an ill-advised and false desire to which many have clung in the past. Rather recall again what Jesus said, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets." (Luke 6:26) Rather than value being liked by everyone, an unrealistic as well as unworthy goal, let us choose to embrace the persecution that comes with identifying with Christ, and see that ill treatment as a privilege to suffer with our Lord. See what the Apostle Paul says in Philippians 1:29 where the NRSV has correctly captured the sense of the original Greek

in this translation of the verse: "For he [God] has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well…."

At the same time let's do much more. Let's not only embrace the opportunity to suffer, but use it as a transformative opportunity to show people how Christ has changed us and is working in us redemptively. Instead of succumbing to anger and hostility, let us calmly defuse the hatred toward us with expressions of love and care for the homosexual(s) and their sympathizers attacking us, for caring is what this is all about. There are probably a million other things we'd rather be doing (healthy people aren't masochistic; we don't enjoy pain), but because we love God and care about him and his calling to participate with him in his redemptive purposes, and because he cares for these people, we care. Doing so will likely be quite new to them and disarming.

During the encounter pray for God to activate the fruit of the Spirit with an extra measure of his grace in your heart and mind. Ask for all nine and for him to strengthen you. (Galatians 5:23-24)

Next, ask your adversaries calmly and sincerely, "What are you doing?" and then pause. Don't say anything until they answer. Raise the question, "Why are you so angry?" Also ask, "Are you aware of the results of what you are doing and want others to do? Do you know how unhealthy and dangerous, physically, emotionally, relationally, and especially spiritually your lifestyle is?

In our suffering we don't need to just grin and walk away. Neither should we. For this reason Tony Perkins, President of the Family Research Council, said in his debate with Chris Matthews on MSNBC's Hardball, "to know the harm that homosexual behavior has on society and, more importantly, on individuals…and then to be silent about it—*that* is hateful."[675]

What can we do further that may, with the Holy Spirit's help, cause some to think and act differently in days to come? Questions are powerful communication tools.[676] Here are some possible questions you can raise in addition to the others mentioned:

1. "You have accused me of hate toward homosexuals; how can you observe what is in my heart? How do you know what my motivation is?"

2. "Are you making an unwarranted assumption; namely, that it is not possible to intellectually and philosophically examine and evaluate ideas and practices, and

[675] Tony Perkins, Family Research Council, Washington, D. C., in a constituent letter January 2011, p. 3.
[676] Human learning research on brain activity in healthy normal people when asked a question explains why questions are powerful tools for teaching. It is beyond the scope of this e-book to pursue that subject in its fullest, but suffice it to say for now that people can blow off and quickly forget propositional and declarative statements, but questions linger for a long time after the original conversation concludes and those involved have gone their separate ways. Again, there is a reason for that phenomenon. Let's use it for the Lord. In fact, recall how frequently Jesus used questions to teach. They are highly motivational, causing a mental disequilibrium that is uncomfortable until the question is adequately resolved. Engage people with thoughtful questions.

warn people of the dangers of some ideas and practices, without being hateful? Are you aware of the dangers in the homosexual lifestyle?[677] Are you assuming it is wrong to warn someone of the dangers of doing certain things? Are you assuming the reason for doing so is because of hatred, assuming the motivation cannot be that one cares about that person's well-being?"

Isn't it just the opposite, love, which motivates someone to warn another person of danger? In fact God tells us to do so in his Word, lest we share in that person's guilt, and we are to do so without hate. (Leviticus 19:17) The New Testament takes the process a step farther and says that we who are spiritual should restore the person gently, and in so doing we need to be careful ourselves lest we are tempted to sin in some way. (Galatians 6:1; cf. Luke 17:3; James 5:19-20)

3. "Where do you see hatred in anything I've said? Please point it out to me, for our Lord has commanded us who believe in and follow him that we love one another and that hate is not to be part of our life." (Matthew 5:43-44 [love for everyone, including enemies]; John 13:34-35 [love for fellow Christians]; 1 Corinthians 13, esp. 4-7 [love for everyone]; 1 John 3:14-20 [one of the many passages throughout the Bible that command God's people to love others, this passage states that "anyone who hates a brother is a murderer" and that we are not to "love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."])

4. "How is calling me a name discrediting the logic of my argument?"

5. Also appeal to the objective and historical facts about the Bible being God's Word: "How am I being hateful by quoting from the Bible, parts of which were written between two thousand and thirty-four hundred years ago, the main message of which is love, the love of God for us and the love he commands we show toward others? I didn't write those words, but I believe them because the Holy Spirit has led me to do so and because the global church has believed the Bible is God's Word for thousands of years." It would be good to be prepared to cite some additional reasons why you believe the Bible is God's Word and is trustworthy.[678]

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[677] Don't assume your adversary is aware of the dangers in the homosexual lifestyle. In my observation most people tend to listen only to those who agree with them. They are open mostly or only to those whose talking points reinforce their opinions, choices, and actions. Thus you may need to inform them of what is on the pages of this book; it might all be new to them. Which is why the book was written.

[678] A few you can mention are the following: Jesus affirmed the Old Testament (Matthew 5:17-18); eyewitnesses to Jesus' Resurrection and other events wrote the New Testament, and Paul identified many eyewitnesses who were still living and urged skeptics to talk with them (1 Corinthians 15:3-8); the Bible contains an extraordinary number of fulfilled prophecies; historical writings and archeological findings confirm Scriptural statements; the first Christians and countless believers to this day chose death rather than deny Christ; Jesus' own brother, James, who was an unbeliever before Jesus death, became a believer after the Resurrection; only truth could have survived the bitter opposition of the first century A.D. Further explanations of these reasons for believing that the Bible is the trustworthy Word of God can be accessed in the Prolegomena section on the Christian Theology page of my website at www.fromacorntooak12.com.

To "speak the truth in love," we must always hold these two realities together and in balance. Sometimes some Christians speak the truth but harshly and in anger. In addition to disobedience of this Biblical command, anger does not motivate;[679] rather it has the opposite effect: it repels the recipient rather than draws him or her to the angry one and to that one's ideas and values, even when those ideas and values are superior. Normal human beings naturally avoid pain, including the emotional pain induced by someone's anger.

We all have steps yet to take in the sanctification process, but some of us have significant strides to take in this matter. Let's work on it right away. However, this text does not mean we cannot or should not "call a spade a spade." When we point out that homosexual activists, in particular those who claim to be Christians, engage in Scripture twisting in order to distort the teaching of the Bible and reinterpret God's Word to teach the opposite of what it plainly says, and has been so understood for millennia, that illumination is done in love to preserve the physical and eternal lives of those whom God, who is Most Holy, loves. It is the manner in which we speak this truth that is important, and that manner should be in love, i.e., patient, kind, not arrogant, or rude.

Some other Christians love without speaking the truth and in so doing encourage people to engage in activities that will bring them much harm…and therefore not truly loving them at all. These other Christians are so loving they can't bring themselves to speak the truth people don't want to hear, but need to hear for their salvation and other well-being, because they're afraid to hurt the feelings of those doing wrong. In so doing they hurt the ones they love far more than any momentary pain that would come from knowing the truth, pain ultimately eclipsed by gratitude.[680]

Think of Gary, who we met in Chapter One. Instead of dying at 42, he might be alive today. Do you recall how he felt at the end of his life when he thought about no one telling him the truth about homosexuality?

The Bible clearly states that *the manner* in which we speak is important.[681] As we've seen, *God's Word informs us that people will reject us and the message we're proclaiming, but let it be due to the message and not the manner of our presentation. Let them see our, and especially God's, love for them in the truth we are teaching. Let us be faithful to our calling to proclaim the Gospel of Christ in love.*

What can parents and other loved ones say and do that is helpful and not helpful?

Concerning the latter first, of particular concern today is the proclivity of parents and other family members to change their views of homosexuality when they find out a child or other loved one has "come out of the closet" and is openly admitting that he or she is "gay." In virtually every case Christians who change their minds and switch their thinking on the subject do so due to their strong love and fear for the future, both now

[679] James Dobson, "Shaping the Will without Breaking the Spirit," Focus on the Family videocassette.
[680] Proverbs 27:5-6; Psalm 141:5.
[681] See, e.g., Galatians 6:1.

and eternally, for their child, other relative, or friend. Permitting their heart to overrule their head, they allow affection to trump the Bible in their minds through unwise thinking. Further, they typically try to reinterpret the Bible on homosexuality and marriage, thus attempting to make the Bible say something it doesn't and ignoring thousands of years of the historic church's interpretation of God's Word. This does not help their child or other loved one reject homosexuality; just the opposite, it affirms the young person in a destructive lifestyle.

Many who make this switch rationalize their decision by saying words to the effect, "Well, this is the 21st century; we have to admit that times are changing and change with them." Using this rationalization they fail to see they are embracing a logical flaw, called the naturalistic fallacy, which is reasoning from is to ought. Just because something is occurring does not mean it ought to occur or that it is right. Further, citing survey evidence and sound research in his bestselling book, *Marriage under Fire*, psychologist Dr. James Dobson has pointed out that "not only do most Americans believe and support the traditional definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman only, but that this position isn't losing ground—it is gaining even greater support!"[682]

That said, we should never minimize or neglect to empathize with these parents and other loved ones when a son, daughter, or someone else very close to them "comes out" and says he or she is "gay." The pain they feel must be excruciating. What can we say?

Well, to begin, start by listening to them and sharing their sadness. Remind them of God's love for them and for their loved one who is confused and has gone astray. Assure them that God will continue to work on their son, daughter, other family member, or friend. Encourage them to pray for him or her, keep loving, and reach out in all ways possible; don't burn any bridges or close any doors.

"Parents should first not overreact," advises author, former lesbian, and Executive Director, Ann Polk, of the Restored Hope Network. "Ask [your child] why you think you may be gay? Do you admire someone so much that you are confused with your feelings? Don't jump to conclusions. There is a huge machine in public education that is pushing that feeling into the identity of a homosexual identity. Parents should love their child and speak the truth. Push back softly in love."[683]

Polk also suggests parents who have a child who says he or she is "gay," can say in a calm way, "Well, remember we don't have sex outside of marriage." Give them time to think all this through.

Encourage the parents to not give up their commitment to love and obey God and submit to his Word and his will. If the parents are inclined to try to reinterpret the Bible and engage in Scripture twisting, as kindly, graciously, and lovingly as possible mention that doing so *will not help but hinder* their loved one who is engaging the homosexual lifestyle. Share any relevant information from that which is above or follows that will

[682] James Dobson, "Building a Marriage that Lasts," Family Talk E-mail Letter 7/21/2011.
[683] Ann Polk, in an interview on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.

enable them to see how *unloving* it is to affirm someone's choice of that lifestyle. Ask them to encourage their loved one to seek help from organizations and counselors who are able and willing to assist homosexuals who want to be free of that form of sexuality, e.g., those mentioned in this book. Assure them that hope exists, and the earlier they seek help, the higher the likelihood they can overcome homosexuality. But it's never too late or impossible to change with God's help.

Another encouraging comment you can make, especially if the child is in his or her teens or early twenties, is to explain that young people in this stage of life engage the process of shaping their understanding of who they are as individuals. They are forming their identity. Then mention the research cited above of Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., M.D., a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital, and a practicing psychiatrist, who holds that sexual identity is not completely formed until the teen years and even into the early 20s; some say even later. Tell the parents and other loved ones of Psychologist James Dobson's above comment about Freud, who said "there is a homosexual period in puberty when the object of sexual interest is not yet fixed, there is a developmental process they're going through, and they are confused at that time. If you only have one set of voices that they hear and don't hear the other side when they're trying to develop their identity, they are trapped."[684] So be part, the most important part (as parents are), of the other side to give your child hope and help.

[684] James Dobson in a discussion on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014.

Before we go further, consider this thought: Allowing one's love for a family member who has "come out" as a homosexual, to blindly ignore, or to try to reinterpret, God's Word will not work. Even if one anaesthetizes him or herself with faulty "Scripture twisting and fallacious logic," the sad reality remains: that family member is embracing a physically and spiritually lethal lifestyle. How much better it would be to hold fast to God's Word and to the triune God, who alone is able to help the loved one come to his or her senses and abandon this practice God calls *tôʿēbâ*. The confused family member most needs true love from one who is strong and faithful in and to the Lord, not someone who weakly and readily caves in and compromises the truth when the confused one pushes, hoping to find strength against which to push.

How much does God's opinion count to you? How important is doing his will to you? Remember what Jesus said, "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me…." (Matthew 10:37) We must acknowledge and not minimize the torturous agony parents of a homosexual feel when a child they deeply love informs them of his or her decision to engage in homosexual practice. Nevertheless, and much more, is it not infinitely better to obey God, to put him, his opinion, and his will first, and, using the information in this book, speak the truth in love and facilitate the working of the Holy Spirit on the loved one's mind and heart all the while pleading with the Spirit that he leads him or her out of the bondage to sin and destruction to which he or she is otherwise headed. If you saw a loved one who is blind walking toward a cliff, would you not race to stop him or her before falling over the brink? Is there any doubt as to which will be best for the loved one? God will not only help the loved one; he'll help the faithful parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle as well. Be faithful; don't be afraid. He will help you. He has promised to do so, and he keeps his promises! (Isaiah 43:2, 5)

Once you have decided whose will is most important to you, the road ahead becomes much clearer. Your objective is more certain: to help the loved one think rightly and choose to do the Lord's will. Now you need to decide how to proceed. Begin with prayer and God's Word. Then consider which of the resources on these pages will be most helpful for accomplishing that objective.

Refer as well to the above mentioned report of Dr. Lisa Diamond, a lesbian researcher at the University of Utah, who found that the homosexual and bisexual identities are the most fluid; heterosexual identity is the most solid. "Why? asks Ann Polk, the former lesbian, author, and Executive Director of Restored Hope Network. She answers, "The homosexual identity is not part of the Creator's design, but the heterosexual identity is the Creator's design and intention for human beings. Jesus Christ changes lives and offers hope; you don't have to be stuck there."

Another human (yet, since it's good, and from his general revelation, it's from God) factor exists as a reason for hope. An NIH longitudinal study reveals that 85% of

children who identify as gay when they are 16 no longer identify as gay by age 17. Recall Whitehead's similar finding in the discussion above in Chapter Two in the section on "Teenage Sexuality and Homosexuality."

In sharing this encouraging finding, it is helpful to note that longitudinal studies, studies done over a period of time, are considered among the strongest in social science research. Try to find a report of this study in the so-called "mainstream media," which I again say often obscures more than reveals the truth, not only by what it says wrongly but by what it omits partially and even entirely. This reality, while disappointing, is not surprising in the light of what was discussed above in the section on the homosexual agenda and the media's role in it.[685] Help teenagers understand, discern, and evaluate what they read in newspapers, in magazines, on the Internet, on TV and Radio, and in the movies. Help them compare and contrast that information against God's Word as their standard.

Drs. Dobson, Meeker, and Ann Polk point out another social phenomenon of which parents and other loved ones should be aware: "Political correctness makes heroes out of people who claim to be 'gay.' In the homosexual 'community' and their inroads to youth in the public schools, when someone struggles with [his or her] sexual identity they affirm that 'You must be gay,' and once they make that affirmation they do not accept any change or counseling; you cannot leave."[686] Be sure to notice the similarity of this procedure to that of cults. One of the characteristics of a cult is the warm affirmation it gives to vulnerable and often young people, and then, when they're hooked, they're restrained in many ways from leaving.

As we've seen above, some acknowledge that the homosexual lifestyle is very difficult to break away from, but it's not impossible. In fact a rarely published reality is that many people are leaving homosexuality *and are not returning*. *Neither does it harm homosexuals to engage in therapy to heal them*. Wendell Karsen quotes Bob Davies, currently Ministry Director of University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, and former Director of Exodus International, North America, stating "I challenge any social worker who thinks change is impossible to talk to our ex-gay leaders. Change is not a theoretical possibility – it is a daily reality for thousands of people, some of whom left homosexuality over 25 years ago."[687]

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[685] Concerning the sexual confusion in youth, and the media's role in it, compare the situation in China described above in Chapter Three.

[686] Quote from their comments in a discussion on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk radio program, August 11, 2014. Compare the situation in China concerning making heroes out of homosexuals, one example of which is described above in Chapter Three.

[687] Wendell P. Karsen, "Changing Sexual Orientation: A Rejoinder," *Perspectives*, May 2005. http://www.rca.org/Page.aspx?pid=3088. This article was published in response to an article "Changing Sexual Orientation? A Look at the Data" by David Myers and Letha Scanzoni in the April 2005 issue of *Perspectives*.

Tell People about Encouragement from Ministries to Homosexuals, Ex-"Gays," and Men and Women with Unwanted and Repented Same-Sex Attraction.

International Healing Foundation

Richard Cohen, a psychotherapist and Founder and Executive Director of the International Healing Foundation, agrees that it's possible to leave homosexuality; he's done it himself and helped thousands of others, men and women, worldwide to do so. Cohen, also a psychotherapist and a prolific author, has "a tremendous success rate helping men and women with unwanted same-sex attraction (SSA) fulfill their heterosexual potential, and parents reconcile with their SSA children."[688]

He was born and raised in the Jewish faith and early in his life became a homosexual. As a result of meeting some Christians with whom he developed relationships involving true love, he was able to leave the homosexual lifestyle and has been happily married since 1982. He and his wife have three children.

Exodus Global Alliance

In the 1970s a ministry to ex-"gays" that came to be called Exodus International, had its origin in the U. S. in a ministry to homosexuals begun by an organization called Love in Action. It was originated by Frank Worthen in 1973. It caught on quickly and he was one of several who just three years later began a coalition of ex-"gay" ministries called Exodus International, North America. Ever since, Frank has been instrumental in helping such ministries become established throughout the world.[689]

Exodus International, North America closed its offices in 2014. Yet the many churches and ministries throughout the country who joined the Exodus International network continue in their ministry. Some formed new networks, including Hope for Wholeness network and Restore Hope Network. Thus, there continue to be ministries in the U. S. who are called by God to share their positive experience of Christian faith and life transformation with LGBT people.[690]

The global work of Exodus International, including related organizations worldwide, has continued to grow rapidly and extensively throughout the world under a different name since 2004, Exodus Global Alliance (EGA). As people across the globe, who are struggling with same-sex attraction or who are already in the homosexual lifestyle, hear of EGA, they begin chapters in their own country.[691] Here is the truth of the Gospel in and with the love it is expressing in the all-sufficient power of the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest help and hope of homosexuals and of all other people, directly from the website

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[688] http://www.comingoutloved.com/fact-or-fiction (Accessed 2/28/2015)
[689] http://exodusglobalalliance.org/ourhistoryc87.php (Accessed 2/28/15)
[690] http://exodusglobalalliance.org/howwegotstartedc88.php (Accessed 4/21/15)
[691] An historical overview of EGA and the countries in which chapters have been established is published at this URL: http://exodusglobalalliance.org/ourhistoryc87.php (Accessed 2/28/2015) See also Chapter Three in this book.

of the EGA. I quote at length so you can grasp the strong and practical Biblical theology that is the basis of this excellent organization and so all people, especially those struggling with unwanted SSA and those who are homosexuals who want to leave that lifestyle, can be encouraged by these words from those who've been there!

> Exodus Global Alliance has three missions:
>
> 1. Proclaiming that faith in Christ and a transformed life is possible through the power of Jesus Christ for people who experience same-sex attractions and people involved in homosexuality.
>
> 2. Equipping Christians and churches to uphold the Biblical view of sexuality while responding with compassion and grace to those affected by homosexuality.
>
> 3. Serving people affected by homosexuality through Christian fellowship, discipleship, counselling, support groups, conferences and other forms of Christian help.
>
> Exodus Global Alliance is guided in these missions by the following principles from Scripture.
>
> God clearly says in Scripture that He loves all people and that every person is born with the dignity of being made in God's image. Scripture also says that every person is born with the devastation of sin. The primary impact of sin's devastation is that we are born spiritually dead. The devastation of sin also includes sinfulness in our sexual relationships: every person will be tempted to use sexuality in ways that are in conflict with God's intention. For some people the temptation will be sexual intimacy with the same gender. Homosexual activity and expression are outside of God's design. Homosexual behavior, not the feelings or the temptation, is sinful. The most important problem of those impacted with homosexuality is not sexual, but spiritual – they are spiritually dead and need life, they need a change of spiritual orientation rather than a change of sexual orientation.
>
> God has good news for people who experience same-sex attractions and people involved in homosexuality. Becoming alive in Christ and His disciple is offered to everyone. The redemptive power of Jesus Christ is equally available to all people, including those involved in homosexuality. God's redemptive work raises us from the dead, giving us spiritual life, frees us from the power of sin, and changes us in ways that may not always be clear to the outside world, but are always powerful and real to the changed man or woman.
>
> The grace of God offered in Jesus Christ is not merely forgiveness for one's sins but also supernatural life – Christ's own Life as our life; this results in life empowered by the Holy Spirit. When we believe and rely on

Jesus' work, rather than our own, for our relationship to God and our daily life, then God's power comes upon us and works in and through us. We are changed, renewed, transformed. We are given new identities, that of beloved children of God. And having His very nature, we rejoice in doing His will in all areas of life.

Change is not a formula or a program. Change occurs through a relationship with Jesus as a result of being made a new person by God. This is accomplished by the work of Jesus. Jesus removes our sin and sets us free from sin's power. And Jesus himself becomes our life – we receive his very nature. When we understand and believe we are new people, we can then experience such fundamental change that Scriptures describes life in Christ as being born again.

By freedom we mean that we are no longer under the bondage of any sin; instead, we are free to experience who we are in Christ, and who Christ is in us. This leads to a willing submission of one's sexuality to the Lordship of Christ and integration of our sexuality with our faith. Understanding we are beloved children of God leads to a desire to live in such a manner that is coherent with the nature of Christ in us.

Some claim that homosexuals must change their sexual orientation in order to be accepted by God; others say that such change is not only unnecessary, but also not possible. Exodus Global Alliance believes that the Bible shows us that there are only two kinds of people as far as God is concerned: those who were born in Adam and are spiritually dead; and those who were re-born in Christ and have been made alive by the life of Christ.

This supernatural change then results in many changes including a change in the way we define ourselves, changes in the way we express our sexuality, changes in the social structures and activities that we use to support our identity and changes in our feelings so that they do not control or rule our lives. All of these are external reflections of new life in Christ.

For some, this transformation may include a change in unwanted sexual desires. For others, it may mean the grace to live in obedience in spite of ongoing urges to do what God forbids. Either way, Scripture gives believers assurance that those who walk in the Spirit will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

The church is God's first choice for reaching and transforming people. The Body of Christ, both local churches and individual Christians, is to reach out to all people. This includes people involved in homosexuality and people who experience same-sex attractions, reaching them with the love of Jesus Christ as exhibited by Jesus himself in his ministry on earth. We seek to encourage and equip churches to share a redemptive biblical

worldview and be committed to being inviting places of worship for those impacted by homosexuality.

In addition, the church has a key role in helping people experience new life in Christ and its attendant freedom and change. God uses the fellowship, discipleship, worship and prayer of Christians in a local church to enable us to know and experience the new life in Christ. People impacted by homosexuality should receive the same fellowship and discipleship as any other person so that they too can know and experience new life in Christ.

Because people want help and support in their life in Christ, Exodus provides a diverse set of services and resources for individuals, as well as family and friends. These services include Christian fellowship, Christian discipleship, support groups, personal Bible study, individual and pastoral counselling, Christian publications, on-line groups, seminars and conferences. Some of these are provided by Exodus. Some of these are provided by a network of churches, local ministries, and individuals. The particular services and resources vary from place to place according to the gifts of the people in ministry.[692]

Encouragement from Historic Christian Systematic Theology

The preceding statement is an excellent synthesis of many essential points in this book. Thoughtful and perceptive readers, who are also familiar with historic Christian systematic theology, likely observed that the above statement from the EGA contains the first five of the six main doctrines in systematic theology. These six doctrines constitute the six major themes that recur throughout the Bible. As a theologian, I'd like to briefly review the six doctrines and key components of each. Far from obtuse esoteric philosophy, notice how eminently practical and helpful is our theology. The components include, but of course are not limited to, the following:

1. **Theology**, all the Bible teaches about God, including who he is (e.g., triune, sovereign, personal, transcendent and immanent), what he is like, and how he is involved with his creation, specifically with regard to himself, that while he is essentially love to the core of his being, that love issues forth in his other characteristics or attributes, including being Most Holy, righteous, and just.

2. **Anthropology**, all the Bible teaches about mankind, including who we are and what we are like, that God created human beings in his image (and what that means, as discussed above) and that they were good, but that humans disobeyed God, ignoring his warning of what would occur if they did, resulting in a disastrously destructive four-fold disharmony: between oneself and God; within oneself; with and among other human beings; and

[692] http://exodusglobalalliance.org/exodus-international-c1447.php (Accessed 3/9/15)

throughout God's creation. Prior to this disobedience homosexuality does not occur; it was not in God's original plan in his creation. It only occurs after Adam and Eve's rebellion against God's will.

3. **Christology**, all the Bible teaches about who Jesus Christ is (e.g., the only-begotten Son of the Father, thus the Second Person of the triune God, that he has two natures, being 100% human and at the same time 100% divine, thus with pure love coming from the core of his being); what he is like (e.g., that he did not sin and kept the entire law perfectly and that he loves and died for all people, but that his death is efficacious only for those who truly believe in him); what he came to do (e.g., how he is God's only provision for reconnecting humans with God, that his righteousness is credited to those who believe in and follow him); and that he is coming again to complete God's plan of redemption. Christ's sovereign power is sufficient to transform the life of any sinner, including homosexuals; Christ's sovereign power can pull any human being out of any condition. Christ Jesus has defeated Satan and bound him so he is powerless to stop the spread of the Gospel through all nations and to all people. Salvation is available to all who believe in and follow Christ.

4. **Soteriology**, all the Bible teaches about the process of salvation (> Greek, *soter* = to save), including the application of Christ's work in the lives of individual people by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the triune God (e.g., providing the regeneration, new birth in Christ that brings a human being out of death into eternal life and helping the believer grow in sanctification, maturing in Christ-likeness), and the Spirit's provision of specific gifts for and fruit of ministry that glorifies God and accomplishes his purposes. Part of what this means for those who've been struggling with homosexuality is that they have a new nature; the old has gone, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17) including a new identity and freedom in the power of the risen and reigning Christ! This doesn't mean for any of us that we instantly become all we should be; sanctification is both positional and progressive. Belief in Christ Jesus as our Savior and Lord places us in a new position, holy to God, but we need to develop in that holy state in cooperation with the Holy Spirit in a life-long maturation process in Christ. Is it easy? Not always. Is it possible? Yes with God's help! He helps us directly through his Holy Spirit, and also through his church.

5. **Ecclesiology**, all the Bible teaches about the church (> Greek: *ekklesia* = church > *ek* [out of] + *kaleo* [to call]), those saved individuals who are called out by God and gathered together as his church whom he will employ as the main means through whom he will work to accomplish his redemption of his creation. The church is both an organism, the body of Christ consisting of his believers united in and called to serve God, and an organization, as the many individuals organize to accomplish with planned

purpose what they could not do individually. Through worship, learning, and nurture the church grows more Christ-like and serves the Lord ever more effectively. Pertaining to homosexuals, the EGA says it well:

> the church has a key role in helping people experience new life in Christ and its attendant freedom and change. God uses the fellowship, discipleship, worship and prayer of Christians in a local church to enable us to know and experience the new life in Christ. People impacted by homosexuality should receive the same fellowship and discipleship as any other person so that they too can know and experience new life in Christ.

With this standard framework of historic Christian systematic theology for comparison, you can thus readily see how all of the first five doctrines are included in their logical order in the Exodus Global Alliance's articulation of its excellent ministry principles. Consider now the sixth historic doctrine and how it helps us facilitate God's ministry with homosexuals now and after they cease to be homosexuals, even if they still struggle with SSA and/or the impact of past homosexuality.

6. **Eschatology**, all the Bible teaches about the end (> Greek: *eschaton*, last), involving several main categories, including inaugurated and future, individual and corporate, i.e., the latter referring to a human being's own personal end (specifically what occurs when he or she dies) and the end of history (specifically what occurs at the end of time when Jesus' returns in his Second Coming)? This subject is important for many reasons, including first of all because it's part of God's Word and that a key aspect of this doctrine for everyone, and homosexuals in particular, is *hope*. A study of the Biblical teaching in eschatology is primarily about the great hope we have in Christ, and it's not entirely a future hope but one that is already being experienced in part, resulting in what Hoekema calls "an inaugurated eschatology,"[693] indicating that some aspects of the Kingdom of God (cf. Luke 17:21) and the end times are already here, blessings currently being enjoyed by the redeemed community in Christ, but not yet in their fullest, the completion of which is yet to come.

While this doctrine is often considered last, it is not an afterthought or a peripheral or less important concept as is often maintained by many people who focus only on certain parts of this teaching of the Bible. The first indication of the essence of eschatology, and that it is a major doctrine and theme throughout God's Word, is already found in Genesis 3:15, when God in judging Satan reveals in rudimentary form his plan in Jesus Christ to undo the tragic effects of Adam and Eve's disobedience: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 1-3 is the preface of the Bible and essential for understanding all the rest of God's Word. Everything following chapter three is an

[693] Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, pp. ix, 1, 17-18, 126-127.

explanation of the unfolding of God's plan to redeem and renew his creation, culminating with Revelation 21-22.

As theologians Anthony Hoekema and Jurgen Moltmann have observed, eschatology is at the core of Christian theology and the plan of God's redemption and renewal of his creation. In his classic text, *The Bible and the Future*, Hoekema writes, "PROPERLY TO UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL ESCHATOLOGY, WE must see it as an integral aspect of all of biblical revelation. Eschatology must not be thought of as something which is found only in, say, such Bible books as Daniel and Revelation, but as dominating and permeating the entire message of the Bible."[694] [Emphasis his]

Hoekema then quotes Moltmann as follows:

> From first to last, and not merely in the epilogue, Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present. The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of the Christian faith as such, the key in which everything in it is set...Hence eschatology cannot really be only a part of Christian doctrine. Rather, the eschatological outlook is characteristic of all Christian proclamation, and of every Christian existence and of the whole Church.[695]

As the outstanding New Testament scholar, William Hendriksen emphasizes in his excellent commentary on the Book of Revelation, *More than Conquerors*, which contains the theme of Revelation in its title, the Apocalypse was written to give hope to the heavily persecuted church at the end of the first century. Writing under guard as a political prisoner on the island of Patmos where he was sent in 95 A.D., the Holy Spirit led the Apostle John to write to the church that was being severely oppressed by the vicious Roman Emperor, Domitian.

John wrote Jesus as telling the church to be and remain faithful, to loyally, steadfastly, and resolutely oppose the demands of emperor worship and the other evil from Satan and his followers. To get that message past the Roman guards and across the Aegean Sea to the mainland, he had to write in cryptic language, the meaning of which was well known among God's people at least since the time of Daniel but viewed as gobbledygook to the Roman censors. Hendriksen says the theme of the book "is the victory of Christ and of His Church over the dragon (Satan) and his helpers. The Apocalypse is meant to show us that things are not what they *seem*."[696] [Emphasis Hendriksen's] The theme in the text itself is seen throughout the book but nowhere clearer than in 17:14, "They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers."

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[694] Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, p. 3.
[695] Jurgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 16 quoted in Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, p. 3.
[696] William Hendriksen, *More than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*, p. 8.

What great comfort to the church undergoing such horrific persecution! What great comfort to those today experiencing martyrdom in many places throughout the world today. What great comfort and hope for homosexuals and people struggling with SSA, longing to be free from enslavement to demonic and human abusers, passions, lusts, diseases, violence, and other dangers!

Virtually all Christian denominations adhere to these six doctrines and present them in the systematic presentation which shows their logical progression and interconnection in a framework that is easily understood and explained in many ministry settings, such as teaching, preaching, and in a witness for Jesus Christ, though each church will also include its denominational distinctives within the six main themes. Even churches that place minimal emphasis on the intellectual and written articulation of Biblical doctrine, preferring to emphasize the heartfelt affective dimensions of God's Word and their application, still explain the great truths of Scripture including these six main themes in their logical progression. For more on these six doctrines of historic Christian systematic theology, see my PowerPoint presentation, Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions, Including God's Answers to Our Great Questions of Life—for Now and Eternity.[697]

The Exodus Global Alliance has asked, "Please pray that God would enlarge, protect and make our ministries fruitful for His kingdom." Let us pray that prayer for the EGA and for the global church!

Inform government representatives of these successful ministries, of the many people who want to and are permanently leaving homosexuality, and that sex change therapy is needed, desired, effective, and should not be banned.

While it is true that anecdotal research is limited in its generalizability, it is powerful in documenting what is possible. That is why such stories are included in this book and numerous others can be cited.

Those of us who hold to the teachings of the Bible and who are of like mind with the position herein espoused need to speak up. Many don't "get it," largely due to being unaware of the facts, which is why this monograph is being written.

We need to remember that elections have consequences and that our legislators need to be informed. California lawmakers, who have been misinformed, wrongly concluded "that therapies designed to change sexual orientation for those under the age of 18 were outside the scientific mainstream and have been disavowed by most major medical groups as unproven and potentially dangerous."[698] In fact as seen earlier in this section just the opposite is true. Recall the work cited above by Jeffrey Satinover, Donald Tweedy, George Reckers, and others together with the NIMH finding that a key and necessary factor related to successful treatment is the age of the homosexual: the younger

[697] This PowerPoint program is on the Christian Theology page of my website: From Acorn to Oak 12 at https://fromacorntooak12.com/theology/.
[698] Lisa Leff, "Supreme Court upholds ban," Associated Press, *Reporter-Herald*, July 1, 2014, p. 2A.

the person is and with only a few sexual experiences. This reality is why legislation banning sex change therapy is very mistaken, counterproductive to homosexual young people and society, and should be vigorously opposed.

Such therapy is not at all dangerous or outside careful science, even though some scientists cave to political correctness in order to preserve their funding and accomplish other self-serving objectives, and much of it is successful, especially when the subject is motivated to change. Further, California State Senator, Ted Lieu, in cooperation with a sympathetic Associated Press, spewed hubris and *argumentum ad hominem* with the following:

> "The Supreme Court has cemented shut any possible opening to allow further psychological child abuse in California," state Sen. Ted Lieu, the law's sponsor, said Monday. "The Court's refusal to accept the appeal of extreme ideological therapists who practice the quackery of gay conversion therapy is a victory for child welfare, science and basic humane principles."
>
> The law says professional therapists and counselors who use treatments designed to eliminate or reduce same-sex attractions in their patients would be engaging in unprofessional conduct and subject to discipline by state licensing boards. *It does not cover the actions of pastors and lay counselors who are unlicensed to provide such therapy through church programs.*"[699] (Italics mine)

We can and should be grateful to God that this unjust and ill-founded law does not apply to the counseling and teaching ministries in the church, but that awareness must increase our vigilance. The law is a sad development in the opposite direction that would benefit homosexual people and, now contrary to what many want, provide significant help. Liberty Counsel, a Christian legal aid organization, together with others who support such therapy,

> had challenged the law….They argue that lawmakers have no scientific proof the therapy does harm.
>
> "I am deeply saddened for the families we represent and for the thousands of children that our professional clients counsel," Liberty Counsel Chairman Mat Staver said in a statement. "The minors we represent do not want to act on same-sex attractions, nor do they want to engage in such behavior."[700]

[699] Lisa Leff, "Supreme Court upholds ban," July 1, 2014, p. 2A.
[700] Lisa Leff, "Supreme Court upholds ban," July 1, 2014, p. 2A. Liberty Counsel notes that the Court's California ruling has no bearing on the Counsel's case in New Jersey vs. a similar unwise law, which they hope will enable them to obtain another hearing in the Supreme Court.

There is encouraging news pertaining to this issue: some states are addressing means to reject attempts to implement a change therapy ban. The Colorado Senate with its new and small Republican majority stopped a bill sponsored by Democrats that was passed by the House that would have banned therapists from the treatment of children to try to change their sexual orientation or gender identity.[701]

Christopher Doyle, a Virginia licensed psychotherapist and the Director of the International Healing Foundation, who has admitted to struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions and "gay" sex himself, reports that committees in the Virginia state house and senate for the second year in a row have voted down activists' attempts to ban such therapy.[702] He testifies that

> it wasn't until I formed strong bonds with a church men's group that I realized I'd been filling the missing pieces of my masculinity in gay sex. At the time, I was very attracted to men, and had no problem finding suitable guys with whom to have casual sexual encounters, but this left me empty. I wanted to be close with my male church friends, and the more we connected, the more my heart healed from the years of rejection with the popular, athletic guys in school [which rejection he explains facilitated his connection with homosexuality].[703]

Doyle, states that the American Psychological Association went on record in 2008 with its conclusion that people are not born "gay."[704] He insightfully points out the incongruity that while homosexual activists

> promote equality for transgendered youth seeking to change their biological sex, they're adamantly opposed to those seeking to change their sexual orientation. One hundred years of psychological research published in peer-reviewed journals documents that some individuals can and do experience change from homosexual to heterosexual. But because of the politically incorrect nature of that reality, most readers will never be aware of those scientific facts.

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[701] "Republicans reject ban on youth gay conversion," *The Denver Post* and wire services, *Reporter-Herald*, April 9, 2015, p. 9A.

[702] Christopher Doyle, "Virginia Becomes First State in 2015 to Reject Change Therapy Ban," February 2, 2015, Voice of the Voiceless. http://www.voiceofthevoiceless.info/virginia-becomes-first-state-in-2015-to-reject-change-therapy-ban/ (Accessed 3/3/15) Voice of the Voiceless (VOV) is a growing organization dedicated to supporting people with unwanted same-sex attraction and others trying to live as ex-"gays." VOV encourages others struggling to stay away from the homosexual lifestyle by informing and affirming them that it is indeed possible as many have done. The organization is drawing heavy fire from pro-homosexual activists who don't want that idea advanced.

[703] Christopher Doyle, "Virginia Becomes First State in 2015 to Reject Change Therapy Ban," February 2, 2015, Voice of the Voiceless. http://www.voiceofthevoiceless.info/virginia-becomes-first-state-in-2015-to-reject-change-therapy-ban/ (Accessed 3/3/15)

[704] Christopher Doyle, "Virginia Becomes First State in 2015 to Reject Change Therapy Ban," February 2, 2015.

> [Doyle argues from personal experience, from his practice, and from the APA finding that] "[t]herefore, taking away the right of parents and families to make choices about sexuality and mental health counseling is harmful."[705]

We thus need to resolutely oppose the activists' insistence that this orientation cannot be changed. In the same breath we must be compassionate and helpful wherever possible, recognizing that "the homosexual is in the power of a destructive, demonic force, either possessed or at least highly influenced and guided by, such malevolent spiritual powers in opposition to God's plan and will."[706] It is essential that we continually recall the Biblical teaching that the sinful and evil doings in our age are linked with the cosmic warfare going on behind what is observable. (Ephesians 6:10-18; Revelation 12-20)

Here is where the church is so necessary. Nowhere in secular society will this message be heard. Thus we see another reason why the church must vigorously oppose confusion on this issue within itself. Our message, God's message of hope for healing, will be mitigated if it is sent with the sound of an uncertain trumpet. (1 Corinthians 14:8) And in the church congregations caving to the culture, they will offer no hope for a way out and a cure. How does that help people who desperately want to overcome their unwanted SSA and to break free of the diseases, dangers, and spiritual destruction of homosexuality?

As Dr. Rekers has said, "The person with a problem with homosexual lust or homosexual behavior problems needs divine forgiveness; Christian sympathy and prayer; supportive encouragement…from parents and friends; and proper counseling or psychotherapy, or help from an effective Christian ministry to homosexuals."[707]

Former homosexual, Mike Haley, writes that

> our ultimate authority specifically calls homosexuality sin in Leviticus, Romans, and 1 Corinthians. But we also know that God never condemns sin without giving hope, as He did regarding this issue in the writings of Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:11, where Paul states about people, including homosexuals, "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."[708]

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[705] Christopher Doyle, "Virginia Becomes First State in 2015 to Reject Change Therapy Ban," February 2, 2015
[706] E. Earle Ellis quoted by Joseph Bayly, *Christian Education Trends*, October 10, 1975.
[707] York, p. 5.
[708] Mike Haley, *101 Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2004), p. 188.

Nancy's Story

Former lesbian, Nancy Davis, found the way out of homosexuality by learning about and following Christ. *Chicago Tribune* columnist, Anne Keegan, tells Nancy's story:

> NANCY DAVIS WENT to City Hall Wednesday with her Bible under her arm.
>
> Discreetly tucked into her briefcase, it was out of sight but handy in case she needed it. And Nancy Davis, 25, figured that on this trip to City Hall, she would need it.
>
> For Nancy was heading for the second floor—where the city council chambers are, and where two opposing groups [one supporting a gay rights ordinance and the other opposed to it] were jammed in the hall glaring and chanting at each other….
>
> There was a time when Nancy Davis would have walked over and stood with the pro-gay rights group. That was when Nancy Davis used to come to City Hall fighting for gay rights.
>
> In 1976 she came to City Hall and demanded she be given a marriage license so she could marry another woman. When she and her gay lover could not get one, they sat down and refused to budge.
>
> And when evening came and the building was closing and Nancy and her lover had not moved an inch, they were arrested. Nancy was 22.
>
> She was charged with criminal trespass and she went to prison for eight months in her fight for gay rights. While in prison, she went on a hunger strike for gay rights.
>
> "I WAS GAY FOR four years and I was active," she said. "I was among the leaders of the gay community in Chicago. I picketed, I protested, I carried on. I wrote a book about the homosexual life. I let everyone know I was gay.
>
> "I argued for our constitutional rights, and my philosophy was that homosexuality was superior to heterosexuality and that homosexuality must prevail.
>
> "I believed there'd be a revolution over gay rights, and I was waiting for it. I was totally immersed in the gay lifestyle. I lived in the 'gay ghetto' on the North Side, and I didn't have one friend who was straight."…

She went and stood, this time, behind the wooden barriers with the people who are fighting against [the gay rights ordinance]. People with crosses around their necks and Bibles in their hands. She says she belongs to the other side now.

"I found religion," she said, "and I've gone straight. I know both sides of the issue now, and I don't want to see this bill passed. I say we're all protected under the law now….

"Homosexuality…is a kind of lifestyle. I think now that that lifestyle is a dangerous one—a destructive, desperate one that alienates you from society. It alienated me.

"I think this bill would only further alienate homosexuals. It would create a special category just for them. It would be making them even more different, marking their difference to a greater degree.

"We are all supposed to be equal. Why start making some people special? What will we have next? A bill of rights for left-handed people? Where does it stop?"

NANCY DAVIS says she ceased her gay lifestyle a year ago because she was "saved." And because of what she did, and because she says she knows others who have done the same thing, she thinks "homosexuality is a learned condition that can also be unlearned. It is not a permanent thing."…

"I say it is the quintessence of rebellion.…But even more important to me is what the Bible says, and the Bible says homosexuality is a sin, and I believe that now."…

Advocates for both sides were in the council chambers waiting to see what would happen to the bill.

And Nancy Davis waited outside the hall, with a handful of people who could not get seats in the chamber. Some of them were very much for the bill and some were very much against it.

Slowly, they began to approach each other and then mingle. And talk. And then to argue. And even shout.

As the words get louder and the voices angrier, with neither side giving in, Nancy Davis reached for her briefcase and pulled out her Bible.

As the bill was being deferred inside, Nancy stood outside, listening no more to the heated arguments going on. Or to the jeers. Or the taunts.

She opened up her book and read the scriptures instead.[709]

Truly demonstrate Christ's love and care for homosexuals.

No Christian maturing in Christ can be much less remain untouched by Nancy's story. Or the others told in this book, including a powerful story coming up shortly. As the church called to be ambassadors of Christ who've been given a ministry of reconciliation, (2 Corinthians 5:17-21) we must engage this ministry wherever we have the opportunity, and when it involves those with unwanted SSA or homosexuals, we care for them. This is our identity and our raison d'être.

As seen throughout this volume, these fellow human beings who also bear God's image are hurting; they are not gay, no matter how much the activists and the media would like to mislead us. They are not gay; they are cruel even to each other, as Kirk and Madsen admit:

> How cruel we gays can be!...unless we have a young, handsome face and tight body, and dress in fashionable clothing, the minute we step through the door of a gay bar we learn who the real queerbashers are: us.
>
> The gay bar is the arena of sexual competition, and it brings out all that is most loathsome in human nature. Here, stripped of the façade of wit and cheer, gays stand nakedly revealed as single-minded, selfish sexual predators…and enact vignettes of contempt and cruelty that make the Comte de Sade look like a Red Cross nurse.[710]

Thus, homosexuals are not only engaging a spiritually and physically harmful lifestyle but also an emotionally damaging one. Far from hating them, how can we not be moved with Christ's compassion for those divine image-bearers who are mired in the mud of moral decadence and pain: spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally. Many are longing for help. Let's not let them down, much less the Lord! As the homosexual who came to God in the healing service I referred to in the beginning of this book, and many others, testify, they want to be healed. We have much to offer them.

We have to look no farther than the Bible for realized hope in the healing of the sin of homosexuality and the afflictions it perpetrates upon all who engage in it. That is not to say that truthful and wise Christian counseling cannot help,[711] but the power of God in

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[709] Anne Keegan, "Activist crosses line from gay to God," Close-up, *Chicago Tribune*, Thursday, September 13, 1979, Section 1, p. 5.

[710] Kirk and Madsen, pp. 312-313.

[711] I wish it weren't necessary to add the adjectives, truthful and wise, before the term "Christian counseling." To do so should be a redundancy; however, sadly, some counselors who claim to be Christians are confused on this subject. I'm not necessarily saying they are not Christians, but when they give affirmation and encouragement to the homosexual lifestyle and don't try to inform adherents of that lifestyle as to its opposition to God's Word and will concerning it, then these "counselors" are either in rebellion against God or, if they are Christians, they are functioning in a less mature level of the

and through Jesus Christ is our only hope, since we are fighting the spiritual forces opposed to God. The "rebellion" to which Nancy Davis referred, whether she realized it or not, is in its most profound and underlying dimension, a rebellion against God and his will. Those trapped in the sin of homosexuality need the spiritual healing and freedom from sin that only Christ can provide. We see that healing was evident already in the first century A.D.

As Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32) The truth is in Jesus, who also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) As we've seen in this volume, the truth is not in the secular political correctness that conceals rather than reveals the truth and, in the case of homosexuality, destroys life. We are called to speak the truth in love.

True love cares for others' well-being. How can it be called "loving" to affirm a lifestyle, and encourage a loved one to participate in it, that is counterproductive to a person's health and safety and is likely to cause him or her to die prematurely? We do not love someone by glossing over and concealing from him or her the harsh realities of something he or she wants to do. As Frank York has well written, the political correctness of the mass media in which they try to normalize homosexuality "is an unrealistic view. It is needlessly condemning many homosexual men and women to a lifestyle that can lead to death."[712] It is not only unrealistic and needlessly condemning; it is cruel. The destructive results of homosexuality are undoubtedly among the reasons why God doesn't want people to engage in that behavior.

When you know and care about someone, he or she becomes more than a statistic or a stereotype. This is a person whom God loves, with whom he desires to have fellowship forever, and for whom his only begotten Son died in great suffering. However, before that fellowship can occur those who practice homosexuality, just like the rest of us, must be changed in Christ.

Of course many abhor the Bible's teaching. Yet, passion never trumps principle. As Christians we are called to proclaim and obey God's Word. Doing so on this issue will take considerable courage on certain occasions. Persecution often follows obedience. (2 Timothy 3:12-17, 1 Peter 4:12-19) For example, you will likely be called homophobic. Let your love and your calm explanation of the Biblical passages demonstrate the

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sanctification process and unwittingly hindering rather than helping their homosexual clients to become free of this physically unhealthy and dangerous as well as spiritually unholy and dangerous lifestyle. In the light of the above in this book, as with teachers of God's people, would Jesus not say to those who counsel (a type of teaching no matter what theory of counseling psychology they employ) his people what he said to Nicodemus, "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?" (John 3:10) That said, some Christian counselors are excellent and offer wise and very helpful counsel; nevertheless, if you or a loved one need a counselor, do wherever possible seek out a Christian, who, in pointing his or her client to the Lord's help, has more to offer than a secular counselor, but obtain a referral from a trusted pastor or other Christian who holds to the teaching of the Bible as God's Word and our ultimate authority.

[712] York, p. 4.

unwarranted nature of that accusation, strengthen your statement, and so honor and glorify the Lord.

We have nothing to fear. Fear is not the motivation of the believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:31-32) Of course, part of his teaching is that "not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of the pen, will by any means disappear from the Law [including Leviticus 18 and 20] until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18) We've already seen that he has commanded us to love all people, even our enemies. The Holy Spirit led John to write that "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." (1 John 4:18) Some Christians who are not mature, who function in elementary levels of sanctification, fail to show the love the Lord requires, but that does not justify labeling all Christians and others who adhere to the Biblical teaching about homosexuality as homophobic. The issue is an objective, rational, studied conclusion as to the teaching of God's Word regarding his will contrasted with this lifestyle that is counterproductive to human well-being. The attempt by many to discredit that conclusion by name calling is a diversionary tactic discerned by careful thought as a devious indication of the weakness of the homosexual's argument.

Another reason we don't have to fear is that we know God is sovereign, he loves us, and that he will bring all things to a just conclusion when Jesus returns. (Matthew 24; Revelation 20-21) Were those realities the only ones, that would be enough to eliminate any worry or fear. The mindset of the faithful in Christ is that "If God is for us, who can be against us?...in all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." (Romans 8:31; 37. See 8:28-39.) Clearly, fear is not a motivation for opposition to homosexual practice; the motivation of Christ's followers is truly love.

We need to listen in love and dialogue with those who are struggling with homosexuality, especially those who are trying to change. Some claim to be in Christ, whether they are or not will be seen in their fruit (Matthew 7) over time of repentance and rejecting homosexual practice, the same as a reformed heterosexual who no longer commits fornication or adultery. Some who are trying to overcome homosexuality are truly trying to find hope. When they appear in our worship and other services the church offers, what will they hear?

A lesbian penned a poignant open letter to the church that not long ago appeared on a blog and raises some important questions we followers of Christ need to hear and on which we should act. Here is an excerpt.[713]

[713] "An Open Letter to the Church from a Lesbian," Justin Taylor: Between Two Worlds, blog. http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2013/03/21/an-open-letter-to-the-church-from-a-lesbian (Accessed 4/18/13)

When the word "homosexual" is mentioned in the church, we hold our breaths and sit in fear. Most often this word is followed with condemnation, laughter, hatred, or jokes. Rarely do we hear any words of hope. At least we recognize our sin. Does the church as a whole see theirs? Do you see the sin of pride, that you are better than or more acceptable to Jesus than we are? Have you been Christ-like in your relationships with us? Would you meet us at the well, or restaurant, for a cup of water, or coffee? Would you touch us even if we showed signs of leprosy, or aids? Would you call us down from our trees, as Christ did Zacchaeus, and invite yourself to be our guest? Would you allow us to sit at your table and break bread? Can you love us unconditionally and support us as Christ works in our lives, as He works in yours, to help us all to overcome?

To those of you who would change the church to accept the gay community and its lifestyle: you give us no hope at all. To those of us who know God's word and will not dilute it to fit our desires, we ask you to read John's letter to the church in Pergamum. "I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore!" You are willing to compromise the word of God to be politically correct. We are not deceived. If we accept your willingness to compromise, then we must also compromise. We must therefore accept your lying, your adultery, your lust, your idolatry, your addictions, YOUR sins. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Do you sense her pain? Here is a person who is trying hard to do what is right in God's sight and break completely free of the hammerlock homosexuality has on her. She is crying out for help. Further, she is going about presenting her case in a very effective and skillful way: raising the tough questions that we, too, need to answer. If one of the readers of this book knows this person, or anyone like her, please tell her about Ann Polk, Nancy Davis, and the other former lesbians who've broken the bond of same-gender sexual addiction. The tone of her message, and what she says, makes me want to think she is like the scribe in Mark 12:34 to whom Jesus said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." She may even be in the kingdom of God. These are the homosexuals whom we should welcome into the church, to participate with us in worship, in the study of God's Word, and the church's loving hospitality.

Nevertheless, a necessary part of her situation that she did not mention is whether she is still engaging in homosexual practice. While she did say, "thank God, we are not what we were," that doesn't necessarily mean she isn't doing it any more, as much as I'd like to think, and I hope and pray, she isn't. While not at all impossible, as some wrongly say, homosexuality is very hard to break out of once one engages in that lifestyle; she seems to be genuinely trying to do so, and she is pleading for help to overcome it.

Let us help these people and not hinder them! Let us neither hurt nor endanger them! (Leviticus 19:16b-17b) In order to do so, let's demonstrate to them the love of Christ. Let us help them to not only see our love but to feel loved by us. Let us reach out to her and others to facilitate an approach tendency toward Christ and his Gospel rather than an avoidance tendency.

To use one of her analogies, as she apparently knows, in the Apostle Paul's sin catalogues, e.g. 1 Corinthians 6:9, adulterers are included right along with homosexuals as those who won't inherit the kingdom of God. Nevertheless the key in God's Word is not that people have done these deeds but that they have *repented and are no longer doing them*.

While I don't see an overt articulation of that repentance and commitment to not doing what she has been doing, it is possible such repentance and commitment exists, since she is an attendee of church worship and knowledgeable of the Bible. How many others know of Christ's word to the church in Pergamum? I do hear a plea for hope that sounds as though she may be headed in the right direction. I'd like to think for her sake that's true, and she is absolutely right in chastising the liberals, who want to water down the Bible, as offering no hope. On the contrary, for those who are trying to break free from and to avoid homosexuality, ***let us help them, not hinder them***.

Here we see another reason why churches that are changing their message are not only wrong in opposing the Bible but also *wrong in failing to offer hope for change in Christ*. Some misguided organizations of homosexuals who claim to be Christians are even spending considerable sums of money to market and promote acceptance of homosexuality, such as the group, "Gays in Faith Together" (GIFT) who spent $4,500 for a billboard in Grand Rapids, Michigan to disseminate their view. Moreover, they plan to expand their campaign and purchase ad space on city buses.[714]
The love (*agape*) in which we are to relate to those who are homosexual and to all others is discerning and wise. *Agape* love welcomes all people, homosexuals included, to attend the services of a Christian congregation. In this way they can hear God's Word and receive the possibility of the new birth and the new life that comes in Christ. As John Stott points out,

> At the heart of the homosexual condition is a deep loneliness, the natural human hunger for mutual love, a search for identity and a longing for completeness. If homosexual people cannot find these things in the local "church family," we have no business to go on using that expression. The alternative is not between the…physical relationship of homosexual intercourse and the pain of isolation in the cold. There is a third option, namely a Christian environment of love, understanding, acceptance [though not of course of homosexual practice] and support. I do not think there is any need to encourage homosexual people to disclose their sexual

[714] Darren Cunningham, "New Gay Outreach Billboard in GR Could Stir Controversy, April 3, 2012 http://www.fox17online.com/news/fox17-new-controversial-billboard-in-grand-rapids-20120403,0,3003134.story (Accessed 04/04/12)

> inclinations to everybody; this is neither necessary nor helpful. But they do need at least one confidant to whom they can unburden themselves, who will not despise or reject them, but will support them with friendship and prayer; probably some professional, private and confidential pastoral counsel; possibly in addition the support of a professionally supervised therapy group; and (like all single people) many warm and affectionate friendships with people of both sexes. Same-sex friendships, like those in the Bible between Ruth and Naomi, David and Jonathan, and Paul and Timothy are to be encouraged.[715]

Prepare to answer additional questions.

How do I respond to the assertion that churches with the policy of life-long celibacy for those outside marriage, requiring not engaging their sexual orientation, has been "causing obvious harm and has not led to human flourishing?"

This question is from one who has been confronted by someone making a pro-homosexual assertion rather than asking a pastoral care question such as, "How can we best help a homosexual person to manage his or her sexual urges in a way that will be in accord with God's will?" Since the assertion indicates that the one making this statement already has his or her mind made up on the matter, offer the following brief responses and then invite the person to continue the dialogue if he or she wishes. If interest exists in further discussion, use the information on the preceding pages to reply.

First, mention that this statement makes a causal assertion which reputable social scientists avoid, recognizing that in the nonlaboratory context of society there are too many intervening variables that cannot be controlled, as in a lab setting. Therefore, scientists studying human behavior content themselves to trying to find the degree to which the relevant variables contribute to a particular pattern of behavior. Therefore, one cannot say with certainty that any specific factor "caused" such a particular outcome.

Second, mention that self-control is required of heterosexuals too. Heterosexuals have strong urges and temptations throughout their lives but God helps us overcome them. (1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:18; 4:15) In addition, self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:23) We who bear the image of God, are far superior to the animal world; we can control our sexual urges, especially with God's help.

Third, pertaining to the part about human flourishing, we can say that Jesus came that we could have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10) Of course the word life in the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to John refers to eternal life, but that eternal life begins to a very real extent now for those in Christ. (Luke 17:21) Also, meditating on and ***obeying*** God's law brings much joy. (Psalm 119:97-112; cf. many other passages throughout the Bible)

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[715] John Stott, *Our Social & Sexual Revolution*, p. 219. Nevertheless, this love does not affirm and reward sinful behavior by bestowing church membership, and certainly not leadership, to homosexuals who are unrepentant and openly living that lifestyle, as some denominations are doing.

At this point in the conversation, remind those who wrongly assert that Jesus is not on record as offering an opinion about homosexuality that he very strongly affirmed the Law and the Prophets, the former being that part of the Old Testament wherein is found Genesis and Leviticus. (Matthew 5:17-20) Jesus' statement also contains the other passages in God's Word that we examined in Chapter One which condemn homosexuality. As mentioned in the pages above, because the Old Testament was the Bible for the church of that day, he did not need to restate everything that was in the OT; his strong affirmation of the whole OT was enough to clearly teach where he stood on the subjects therein. In the short time he was here on earth he focused on those passages that taught who he was and what he came to do. (Mark 7:24-30)

Fourth, we should challenge the assumption and assertion that obedience to God's will ever causes harm to someone, except for the persecution God has told us we can expect from obeying his will. (2 Timothy 3:12) The exact opposite is true: "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones." (Proverbs 3:7-8) Further, Psalm 38:3 indicates that sin has a negative effect on health.

Concerning true harm, point out also that even pagans who avoid homosexuality and other unhealthy practices will have better health over time than homosexuals. Review Chapter Two and the grim scientific findings showing how extremely unhealthy and violent is the homosexual lifestyle. Now that is harm!

Fifth, with grave concern mention the spiritual harm that comes with homosexuality, both now and in the future. As far as now, ask how people who are in rebellion (as discussed in Chapter One) against God can expect to mature in Christ and serve God acceptably to him?

As for the future, point to the Scriptures such as this passage:

> 9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God?
> Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor
> adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders
> 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers
> will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

You will immediately receive a harsh response along the lines of asking you whether you believe, or accusing you of saying, that homosexuals are going to hell. We can say to that charge words to this effect: "I cannot, and therefore do not, judge who is going to hell. But I can say this much: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and the rest of the Bible warns that people who continually and unrepentantly disobey God, repeating the same sin God condemns, do not find any encouragement in God's Word that they are or will be in his kingdom unless they repent and reject their previous practice." Mention the meaning of repentance as discussed above, involving not only a since sorrow for sin but a 180˚ turn around away from that sin.

Never in arrogance (which is not love [1 Corinthians 13:4]) and with every ounce of compassion speak the truth in love. Include that it is not enough to say you're a Christian if you're committed to disobeying God with a lifestyle in rebellion to him. Jesus said,

> 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.
> 21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
> 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'
> 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' (Matthew 7:20-23)

We cannot affirm people, homosexual or heterosexual, who are living a lifestyle in rebellion to God. That is extremely dangerous. This is not my judgment or yours, it is right here in the text. And we must speak this truth…albeit in love.

It is also important to immediately say that we take this stand because it is Scriptural, and we proclaim it because we love people and care about their present and future well-being. Offer to help the homosexual to find the hope and any assistance he or she needs to overcome the bondage of their lifestyle. Recall the discussion above for such sources of assistance.

If it would help, for full disclosure we can point out one more aspect of this situation. We can also say we'd rather be talking with him or her about many other subjects, but in the light of God's Word on this subject, we also speak this truth as lovingly as possible to avoid our own culpability. "'Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.'" (Leviticus 19:17b; cf. the related passages as presented in the pages above)

What do I say and do if I'm invited to a "gay wedding?"

First, ask yourself some key questions.

What is the purpose of a wedding—any wedding?
What does my mode of dress indicate?
What am I communicating, i.e., what message am I sending, just by my presence at a wedding?

As you answer those questions, in the light of what you've read on the preceding pages, and especially as you pray, the answer to your questions likely will emerge rather quickly. The questions necessarily focus on the basic principles which should be considered in answering the questions. Additional factors relating to the individuals involved may be useful to include in how you implement your decision, however the

personal should not override the principial regarding what you decide as to whether to attend.

What is the purpose of a wedding—any wedding?

In his excellent blog post, "Is It Wrong for a Christian to Attend a Gay Wedding?" John Upchurch quotes Denny Burk, Professor of Biblical Studies at Boyce College, who wisely and succinctly summarizes the purpose of a wedding.

> A wedding is a public recognition of a union, and those in attendance are there to help celebrate and add their assent to the union. There is a reason that the traditional ceremony includes the bit about "let him speak now or forever hold his peace." The witnesses are not merely spectating. Their mere presence implies their support of the union. Because our Lord has told us not to celebrate or approve sin (Isa. 5:20; Rom. 1:32), Christians should not attend gay weddings.[716]

Those who attend provide support for the couple who are marrying, not only that day but throughout their lives as they think about who was at their wedding. You're not coming just for the music and the cake.

Also consider the vows the couple makes in a traditional Biblically-based wedding ceremony. Both the bride and the groom make their vows "in the sight of God and these witnesses." What it means to be one of these witnesses is that those in attendance are there to observe the vows before God and to use that witness to hold accountable either or both spouses if he, she, or both decide at some time in months or years to come to "throw in the towel" and violate their vows. (Leviticus 19:17b; Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 3:16; James 5:19-20) If you have been such a witness in the wedding of a heterosexual couple who later decided to divorce, did you speak to them about the seriousness of their decision in the sight of God who said, "I hate divorce," (Malachi 2:16) and did you plead with and encourage them to reconsider their decision, seeking the help of a pastor who holds to the Bible as our ultimate authority? Are you prepared to speak up in the actual ceremony of this homosexual couple to say that they should not be marrying since they are thereby disobeying, even mocking, God? (See again Chapter One.)

What does my mode of dress indicate?

Usually people dress up for a wedding. Typically, they wear either their best clothes or, especially those in the wedding party, even rent first-class fashions, tuxedos for men and

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[716] John Upchurch, "Is It Wrong for a Christian to Attend a Gay Wedding?" http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/is-it-wrong-for-a-christian-to-attend-a-gay-wedding.html (Accessed 3/7/15)

luxuriant dresses for women. What does that clothing signify? What message is sent? The message is respect.

Look no farther than the court room for confirmation of that message. Every wise defense attorney has his client, even those who have never come within a mile of a suit, dress in such clothing, including with a tie! when going to trial. And when the judge enters the room the bailiff loudly exclaims, "All arise!" as a show of respect.

Historically people have dressed up for all important and respectable occasions. They have done so to go to worship at church, sensing that when they enter the sanctuary of the Owner of the universe who is holy, holy, holy they should show respect, and when going to funerals to show respect for the one who has died. Traditionally they have also done so for meetings with the CEO of their company and for company awards dinners; to attend the theatre; to enjoy an evening at dinner and a ball; and for other festive events for which society has stipulated a value and requirement of a higher order of dress to communicate respect for and adherence to those values.

Is this the message you would want to send by attending a ceremony of two homosexuals marrying? What would you be respecting? Now consider the following related question.

<u>What am I communicating, i.e., what message am I sending, just by my presence at a wedding?</u> Respect and approval.

Think of what these two people of the same gender are doing, and the message they are communicating, during this ceremony. They are saying, even though not using these exact words, "We don't care what you say, God; we're getting married anyway!" So they conduct a counterfeit of the real thing. Do you want your attendance to communicate that you *respect* what they are doing and saying? Do you want to be a part of such a ruse?

The baker in Denver didn't even want his cake to attend. And rightly so, for by logical extension it would have represented him and his approval and celebration of the event.

In the light of the preceding chapters, especially the first two chapters, is respect the message you want to send on such an occasion? What is respectable about disobeying God and engaging in the highly unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy activities that constitute homosexual practice? Review just the first two chapters of this book and write down by this question anything you see about homosexuality that is revealed by the Bible (God's special revelation) and true science (part of God's general revelation) that is respectable.

Upchurch again quotes Burke:

> …Can we work alongside them as colleagues at our places of business? Can we offer real friendship and love?...yes, and yes. But we may not attend their wedding. We should vigorously pursue other ways to love our

> gay friends and neighbors that don't include compromise on issues of truth. No one relishes the conflict that comes with declining such an invitation. It's a tough call, but it is the right call….[717]

Upchurch points to another important parallel that helps answer this question. He draws our attention to what Old and New Testament scholars refer to as the major motif (a theme that reoccurs throughout both testaments) of marriage as an analogy God employs to teach about his relationship with his church. For just a few examples, consider these:

> For your Maker is your husband—the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. (Isaiah 54:5)

While the words "marriage," "husband," or "wife" don't occur in the following passage, God, speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, clearly refers to his church as his wife, as we see in such related words as "committed adultery" and "scattered your favors," an analogy involving sexual sins that included homosexuality, (Deuteronomy 23:17) referring to worship of false fertility cult gods, and "divorce." Verse 20 unmistakably elucidates the marriage motif in this passage.

> 6 During the reign of King Josiah, the LORD said to me, "Have you seen
> what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and
> under every spreading tree and has committed adultery there.
> 7 I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she
> did not, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it.
> 8 I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away
> because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had
> no fear; she also went out and committed adultery.
> 9 Because Israel's immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land
> and committed adultery with stone and wood.
> 10 In spite of all this, her unfaithful sister Judah did not return to me with
> all her heart, but only in pretense," declares the LORD.
> 11 The LORD said to me, "Faithless Israel is more righteous than unfaithful
> Judah.
> 12 Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "'Return, faithless Israel,'
> declares the LORD, 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful,'
> declares the LORD, 'I will not be angry forever.
> 13 Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the LORD
> your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every
> spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,'" declares the LORD. (Jeremiah
> 3:6-13)
> 20 But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been
> unfaithful to me, O house of Israel," declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 3:20)

[717] John Upchurch, "Is It Wrong for a Christian to Attend a Gay Wedding?" http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/is-it-wrong-for-a-christian-to-attend-a-gay-wedding.html (Accessed 3/7/15)

Being a major motif, the theme continues in the New Testament. Indeed, as the Apostle Paul states clearly,

> 21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
> 22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.
> 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.
> 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
> 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
> 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,
> 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.
> 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.
> 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church--
> 30 for we are members of his body.
> 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."
> 32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:21-32)

The Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant scholars in their March 2015 declaration correctly assert that by this analogy "In Christ Jesus, marriage serves as a redemptive sign that the great chasm separating creature from Creator has been bridged, and the original unity intended by God has been restored, both among us and between humanity and its Creator." They next state that while they don't agree on the status of marriage as a sacrament, they do "affirm strongly and without qualification, following the clear testimony of Holy Scripture, that *marriage is a unique and privileged sign of the union of Christ with his people and of God with his Creation—and it can only serve as that sign when a man and a woman are solemnly joined together in a permanent union.*"[718] [Emphasis theirs] Excellent! Well said!

Upchurch skillfully uses this motif to answer the misleading question many raise, trying to link and transfer Jesus' eating with tax collectors and other social undesirables to homosexuals, even though there is no record of Jesus including homosexuals on such occasions. Their argument runs like this: since Jesus ate with the hated tax collectors and

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[718] "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

others of disrepute, why shouldn't we welcome the socially undesirable homosexuals of our day?

First of all, as we've discussed above, Jesus' interaction with such individuals did not condone their behavior. As we observed with the account in John 8 of the woman caught in adultery, he told her that he didn't condemn her, but he also told her to go and leave her life of sin. (v. 11)

Upchurch turns to Peter Ould, an ex-"gay" Anglican priest, who explains why we can't include a same-sex "wedding" in the same category as eating with Matthew and his friends.

> …Marriage is a God-given ordinance that speaks to more than just the love between two people. Biblical teaching on marriage shows us that the union of a man and woman is the icon of the union of Christ and his church. The Book of Revelation envisions the great wedding feast at the end of time, the union of the Bridegroom and his bride.
>
> So doing marriage incorrectly is an act of idolatry. It's a rejection of both the ordinance God has given and the meaning of that ordinance. Since the gender of the participants in marriage is important, mixing those sexes up destroys the point marriage was meant to represent. How can a Christian be involved in such a thing?[719]

And what is the difference between this idolatry and the idolatry God condemned in Jeremiah's words? In both cases one aspect of this evil that is so serious is that it renders those in the church who do this evil unfit for accomplishing God's redemptive work through them, which reduces them to worthlessness. As Jeremiah said (and affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 5:17-19), "They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves." (Jeremiah 2:5; cf. Isaiah 41:24; 2 Kings 17:15) Let us always remember our calling from God and not become worthless, useless to him, and of no value to the people struggling with unwanted SSA and homosexuality, in the high and holy calling God has given us, the mission to facilitate the accomplishment of his redemptive purposes.

For all the reasons above I would say "No. I can't attend." If you need further reasons, they go all the way back to the Introduction.

Questions: What do I say as a pastor in the following circumstances?

Pastors are involved in many if not most of the matters addressed above, and I've addressed those issues there since everyone in the church is involved to a greater or lesser extent. However, some issues pertain especially to pastors, and thus I include them here.

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[719] John Upchurch, "Is It Wrong for a Christian to Attend a Gay Wedding?" http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/is-it-wrong-for-a-christian-to-attend-a-gay-wedding.html (Accessed 3/7/15)

1. *How do I respond to assertions, and avoid making them myself, that homosexuality is a less important distraction keeping us from more important issues*?

   In church judicatories, sometimes in the local church's council, and in other contexts, such as the denomination's highest agency or synod, I hear comments are made like "We can't allow ourselves to get bogged down in this issue of homosexuality and its related matters; we have a lot of work to do. We have evangelism programs to develop, churches to build, curricula to produce, mission thrusts outside the U. S. in other parts of the world that we can't lose sight of, and a lot of other matters that are as or more important; we can't allow ourselves to be distracted with this issue."

   The first reply to this statement is to question and critique the assumptions behind what is being said. I suggest we reflect on for ourselves and say to others the following in response:

   "Do you understand why God calls homosexuality *tôʿēbâ*, detestable, abominable, to be abhorred? The first reason is because it is a rebellion against God and disobedience to his will." Then refer the person to Chapter One of this book for support as to why homosexuality is such a rebellion and disobedience against God.

   After saying that ask, "Since obedience to God and his will constitutes what Biblical scholars refer to as a major motif, or theme that occurs throughout the whole Bible, in fact that is on every page of Scripture in one form or another, and since homosexuality constitutes rebellion and disobedience to God, tell me how that is not more important than these other matters?"

   Next cite one or more of the many Biblical texts that indicate God doesn't hear the prayers of the disobedient but only the prayers of the righteous.

   "When one will not listen to the law, even one's prayers are an abomination." (Proverbs 28:9 NRSV) At this point ask the person or people with whom you are speaking, "Would you like to guess what Hebrew word is used in this verse that is translated abomination (detestable in the NIV)? Yes, it is *tôʿēbâ*!" Then refer him, her, or them to the discussion of Leviticus 18:22 in Chapter One in this book.

   [As a result of their rebellion (Isaiah 1:2) God declares to his people] "When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers I will not listen…Stop doing wrong, learn to do right!" (Isaiah 1:15-17)

   "Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1-2)

"We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him." (John 9:31 NASB)

"Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. (James 5:16 NRSV)

Now ask, "If obedience to God and his will is a prerequisite to his listening to and acting on our prayers, how can we ignore the rebellion of homosexuals (thus sharing in their guilt [Leviticus 19:17b]) and expect success in these other matters from which you don't want to be distracted?"

Clearly, some subjects are more important than others. And some precede others in logical order and in urgency.

Yet, when the pro-homosexual activists persist in prolonging a decision by a church council or denomination on this subject, there does come a point when the matter has to be resolved, and it must be resolved in accord with God's Word. When all possible ways to thus resolve the issue have been exhausted, then the council or denomination has to draw the line and separate from those choosing to disobey God. The decision should be made in love with the prayer that the disobedient may come to their senses, repent (recall the above, and see the following, discussion on repentance involving permanent rejection of the wrongdoing), and return to the true church that is trying to live as God has commanded. And if they do repent and return, they should be welcomed back with loving open arms and with a prayer of thanksgiving to God!

2. *Should a pastor serve the Lord's Supper, also called Holy Communion and the Eucharist, to a homosexual*?

We must clearly keep in mind that this question pertains to *unrepentant* and practicing homosexuals. As we've observed above, many people who have a same-sex attraction, regret, repent of, and reject that attraction and want to obey God and do not engage in the homosexual lifestyle. They repent of their desires and any previous sinful homosexual acts, including lustful fantasies (cf. the principle Jesus applied in Matthew 5:28 to everyone), and they keep from doing homosexual acts. Technically, these people, though having a same-sex attraction, are not homosexuals, because they are not having sexual encounters with others of the same sex. These believers in Christ who repent in the Biblical meaning of the word, i.e., express sincere sorrow for the sin, and commit, along with asking God's help, to not repeat the sin and are indeed in obedience to God refraining from homosexual sins, may receive the Lord's Supper along with the rest of us who have sinned, who similarly express sincere sorrow for and reject our sins and commit, including asking God for his help, to avoid such sins in the future.

However, some pastors mistakenly believe that serving the Lord's Supper to homosexuals, who have not repented in the Biblical sense of regretting and vowing to

not repeat the acts, will give them an entre to further ministry with the homosexuals. Doing so is unwise and wrong for several reasons.

- First of all, regardless of what the minister thinks, the unrepentant homosexual and others view being offered and partaking of the body and blood of the Lord by a homosexual is an affirmation of him or her and his or her lifestyle—that he or she is OK. Not only by being allowed and even welcomed to partake of the elements, but in other ways do homosexuals and lesbians receive the message that they are acceptable, accepted, and what they most want, equal.

  Some church leaders may quickly reply, "But, Jesus said to celebrate his supper in remembrance of him, and except for Jesus, all the others who were sitting around the table doing so were sinners, including Judas, who betrayed him. Therefore, why shouldn't homosexuals be given the Lord's Supper?" The clear answer to that question is that all the other disciples were repentant of their sins, and the one who didn't repent, Judas, was told by Jesus that it would be better for him if he hadn't been born! Further, Judas was allowed to do what he did, because he uniquely was the perpetrator of the betrayal that resulted in Jesus' death and resultant resurrection, which Providentially led to the completion of God's plan of redemption, including the forgiveness of our sins. That one atypical act of Judas' involvement in the Lord's Supper cannot be used as a generalization to apply to all, an illogical rationalization that commits the naturalistic fallacy explained in Chapter Four.

  A basic axiom of the behaviorist school of human learning research explains why homosexuals and others draw this conclusion, i.e., that by being allowed and even welcomed to partake of the Eucharistic elements, they are acceptable, accepted, and what they most want, equal. The axiom is: behavior that is reinforced, or rewarded, tends to be repeated. Thus, when homosexuals, and anyone else living a lifestyle contrary to God's Word and will, receive the sacrament, they perceive that they, including their lifestyle which is inseparable from them, are being rewarded by the church and the pastor (and also, they infer, by God!) and thus have no indication or message that they are doing wrong and no reason to stop doing what they are doing.

  However, the homosexual's consuming of the bread and wine, the body and blood of the Lord, fails to consider how the Lord views the disobedience, indeed rebellion against God's will, of this individual, specifically that his or her lifestyle is *tôʿēbâ* (again, detestable, abominable, to be abhorred) in God's sight. Here we see how important and why Jesus in his summary of the Law said to put God first. "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' [38]This is the first and greatest commandment. [39]And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [40]All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:34-40) Recall our discussion above that we need to begin with God; then we know what is right and what is wrong, ***and why***.

- Thus, very seriously, serving Holy Communion to a homosexual dangerously ignores the teaching of 1 Corinthians 11:27-31 and harms rather than helps the homosexual or lesbian. Consider carefully once more this passage from God's Word.

> So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. [28]Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink of the cup. [29]For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. [30]That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. [31]But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. (1 Corinthians 11:27-31 TNIV)

We must observe, understand, explain, and act rightly on this text. In addition to what we've considered above, especially notice the following important points God is revealing through the Apostle Paul.

a. To begin, as we read in verse 27, anyone eating the bread or drinking the cup unworthily is guilty of sinning against the Lord! The behavior is *tô ʿēbâ*, and the lifestyle is *tô ʿēbâ*. This reality is true about God's will, as we've seen throughout this book, and it's true of human beings. What mother would be pleased if her son or daughter broke one of her rules, came to the mother and expected all his or her privileges but did not express sincere sorrow for breaking the mother's rule, and refused to comply going forward?

   Unrepentance is being unworthy. Recall our previous discussion that in the Bible, repentance, μετάνοια, *metanoia*, means regret and rejection of the sin. To partake of the Lord's Supper without such repentance, including sorrow and rejection of the practice and lifestyle of homosexuality, is to eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, which has serious results, as we see in the next verses.

b. In verse 29 we read that "those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves." The Greek word the TNIV translates as "discerning" is διακρίνω (*diakrinō*), discern, distinguish, make a distinction, judge. The text is saying that the unrepentant sinner, failing to discern the body and blood of the Lord from ordinary bread and wine, and partaking with total disregard of the Lord's abhorrence of the sin (in this case homosexuality) is eating and drinking as a hypocrite (about whom Jesus had strong words of condemnation, e.g., Matthew 6:5; 23:15, 25, 27); the sinner is in effect thumbing his or her nose at the Lord and saying, "I'm doing this anyway; I'm equal to all these others in this place!" Homosexuals are more concerned about equality than theology.

c. But that is not the last word on this subject, for the text says that in so doing he or she is bringing judgment on him or herself, and the very next verse explains one way that judgment occurs: "That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep." We see here and elsewhere in Scripture that God judges both in this phase of life and at the end, when Jesus comes in his Second Coming to conduct the final judgment (Matthew 25:31-46). In God's judgment in this phase of life, he sometimes uses phenomena in the contemporary age here on earth for the judging, for example as he used Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt and his "innumerable troops" to judge King Rehoboam for his and all Israel's unfaithfulness and abandonment of the law of the LORD. (2 Chronicles 12:1-12) In Chapter Two above and elsewhere throughout this book, we've seen how extremely unhealthy and violent is the homosexual lifestyle, and how many homosexuals die twenty to thirty years earlier than the average person.

d. The last two verses are "a wake-up call" alerting us to remember God's will and to act accordingly so as to spare ourselves from condemnation with the world in God's judgment. If we'll judge ourselves, we won't come under God's judgment, but when those of us in Christ do experience a judgment, it is for our own good; God is disciplining us so we'll avoid final condemnation.

- Does all this sound like a valid rationale for allowing homosexuals to partake in the Lord's Supper? If the above has not convinced you, consider these aspects of the matter:

a. Since God has commanded us to love all people, how is it loving to allow, much less encourage, a homosexual to eat and drink judgment on him or herself (verse 29)? How is it loving to participate in such a result?

b. We sometimes have to explain, or remind people, that on certain occasions it is ***not*** loving to give them what they want; in fact, it might be most *unloving*! Again, a multitude of analogies from parenting apply, e.g., no parent who truly loves his or her child will allow him or her to play with a loaded gun, even if the child pleads with the parent, and even if the child makes the common accusation, "You don't love me, because you won't give me…." Surely, in the case of disobeying God, it is most unloving to give in to a homosexual's or lesbian's desire to eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord's body and blood, thus facilitating his or her eating and drinking judgment on him or herself. (1 Corinthians 11:29)

This point, about how at times it can be unloving to give people what they want, can even be argued from just careful science, which is why I wrote Chapter Two. Again, raise the question which is a major theme throughout this whole book: how is it *loving* to affirm, much less encourage, someone God loves to embrace a lifestyle that is extremely unhealthy and dangerous, as well as unholy?

c. *Certainly God is not pleased when the leaders of his people sin and disobey his commands*. See, e.g., how angry God became with Moses, the leader of his people, who disobeyed and did not circumcise his son. On his way back from Midian to Egypt to lead God's people out of slavery to the promised land, God stopped Moses and was going to kill him for his serious disobedience, but his wife, Zipporah, quickly grabbed a flint knife and circumcised their son, which obedience averted God's wrath. (Exodus 4:24-26)

Pastors should also remember the many other passages throughout Scripture where God holds teachers and other leaders especially accountable for their sins, since people watch us and follow our example. (Cf., e.g., Numbers 20:12; James 3:1.) Our judgment will be especially serious if we intentionally lead people astray and away from God and doing his will.

But neither do God's people want their leaders to disobey God's Word and his will. Just the opposite! They want and need to see us whom God has called to be the leaders of his people to model in our lives the obedience to God's Word and his will; they want to not only be taught God's Word and will but to see it lived out in our lives. They want *to see* that it *not only **can*** be done as God has prescribed *but also **how*** to do it. They long for and are willing to follow a leader who has courage and is genuine in his or her living out and practicing what he or she preaches; they are not so inclined to respect, much less follow, a leader who is a hypocrite. Much more, God is not pleased with such disobedience.

d. How do you plan to explain to God why you have led these homosexuals, whom he loves (even though he requires them to change their behavior before accepting them into his holy, holy, holy, as well as his most gracious and all loving, presence) to sin against the body and blood of the Lord (verse 27) and bring judgment on themselves, thus making yourself guilty? Remember Leviticus 19:17, "'Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.'" The basic and primary meaning of this text is similar to Matthew 18:15 ff. pertaining to the resolution of interpersonal conflict in a way that will please the Lord. In a situation where someone has sinned against you, you should not allow bad feelings including hatred to well up and nurture them within you but admonish the person so as to not incur guilt yourself because of him or her.

Yet, look again, carefully, at the second sentence in Leviticus 19:17. Do we not see a principle articulated here that has other applications, to other sins, as well? That is, when we fail to rebuke such a person, we share in his or her guilt. Who wants to bring on him or herself this guilt, much less add to it by leading someone to sin against the body and blood of the Lord? That is not a pastor's calling as an ordained servant of the Lord who, rather, is to do his or

her best (the Greek word means diligently) to present him or herself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, and who correctly handles the word of truth, God's Word. (2 Timothy 2:15)

e. This rationale, that is to disobey Scripture and offer the Lord's Supper to a homosexual or lesbian with the hope he or she will be open to having a relationship that will give him or her receptivity to the pastor's teaching, and even lead to the desired behavior change, is unwarranted. In addition to being sacrilegious, giving the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ, to anyone with a lifestyle in defiance of the Lord's will is also unrealistic.

   To use another analogy, a woman has the strongest likelihood of influencing her male suitor before the wedding and initiating sexual relations. He is most motivated to agree to what she wants before then, but to make sure he is sincere and that the behavior is truly part of his lifestyle, she should bide her time. Many men will say, "Oh sure, I'll do that," but the promise is only words until it is acted out in behavior over time. Once he has everything he wants, her bargaining power, her leverage, is largely gone; she also better have his commitment in writing, e.g., the marriage license, and in the wedding service in the sight of God and the human witnesses, the pastor and the invited guests.

   Similarly, once a homosexual or lesbian can partake of the Lord's Supper without true repentance, metanoia, which involves sincere regret and rejection of the homosexual and lesbian lifestyle, and which is observed over time to give evidence of sincerity and true and lasting change in accord with God's will, what motivation does he or she have for such change of mind, heart, and behavior when he or she is receiving all he or she wants in the body and blood of the Lord?

   Does this mean that some homosexuals will dislike us, turn us off, reject us, leave our church, and cut off communication with us? Sadly, yes, but that is not our fault. If all of our contacts with them have been in love and in accord with God's will, and they still leave, we will have done all we could, which is what God requires of us. He neither desires that, nor is pleased if, we go against his will to try to reach out to sinners for him. God wants all of his people, and especially the leaders of his people, to obey him. And he will bless us for doing so!

- We cannot disobey God's Word and will in order to achieve any good goal. To do so is to follow the folly exposed by the Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Do not be that man!

- One more acknowledgment needs to be made here. I've had people say to me, "Well, would you single out homosexuals and not allow them to partake of the

Lord's Supper but then allow single people who are cohabiting, greedy (idolaters), or slanderers to partake of the Lord's Supper?" I have immediately answered no, because the Scripture is clear, e.g., in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and Ephesians 4:25-5:21, that all these sins and others are listed together as those which keep people out of the kingdom of God. I quickly say that if I were the pastor of a church and knew of such people who wanted to partake of the Lord's Supper, I would talk with all of them individually, teach them the Scripture, and advise them to abstain for a period of time until we could evaluate their behavior to see if the necessary change has been made.

Now, it is imperative to recognize and keep in mind an essential aspect of this teaching. This policy is employed with people who engage in these specific sins that are mentioned in God's Word and that are part of the sinner's lifestyle.

We are not talking about sins done once or a few times, repented of, and are discontinued. We are also not talking about sinlessness; otherwise, none of us could partake of the Lord's Supper, and that is neither what the Lord desires or requires. All of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) His Supper is for us who admit to our sins, who express sincere sorrow for and repent of them, and who resolve to not repeat them, asking the Lord for his help in these lifestyle changes that will enable us to serve him more effectively, as his witnesses whose words match our deeds.

3. *Should a pastor baptize a homosexual or a homosexual's child*?

I've been asked this question by several church members. They called me and said, "Our pastor just baptized the baby of a lesbian and her 'wife.' Isn't that wrong?" In my response to their question, I included the following in my explanation.

First of all, in that church, as in the denomination that has ordained me, in order for the baptism of a child to occur, at least one of the parents must be a member in good standing of the church, so that the parent (preferably both parents) can promise to raise the child in accordance with God's Word, including teaching the child in word and in deed the meaning of baptism and its application in life. The question requiring that promise is asked of the parent(s) at the time of the baptism. To be a member in good standing requires adherence to God's Word, and as we've seen above, the lesbian living that lifestyle is by definition not qualified to have her baby baptized.

Furthermore, the lesbians raising that child, who was born of the one mother by artificial insemination, will not be motivated to truthfully teach the whole counsel of God, all of his Word, especially those texts of the Bible discussed above in Chapter One and in the other verses cited and explained throughout this volume. In so doing, the child's baptism will be mitigated and become virtually meaningless and ignored.

The sacraments are means of grace, which all God's people need. Nevertheless, they are not mechanized instruments that automatically provide God's grace, especially

when done in disobedience to God's Word and will. Furthermore, they are not to be used in the unwarranted manner that this pastor and others unwisely rationalize, thinking that doing so in such circumstances will give them an opportunity to work with the parents who are engaging in such serious sin that they will possibly give up their sinful ways and turn to the Lord. For the above reasons, including the reinforcement theory of behavioral science, explained in the previous section pertaining to a related question on serving the Lord's Supper to homosexuals, such unwise rationalization is baseless as well as being disobedient.

In addition, the pastor who performed the baptism contrary to God's Word and sound reasoning, also disobeyed church polity; he did not submit the name of the lesbian mother (whose "wife" is not a member of the church), to the board of elders for approval of the baptism. Though the lesbian mother grew up in the church, and is a member, by virtue of her lifestyle and unbiblical relationship with another lesbian, she is not a "member in good standing."

For the above reasons, she should not have been rewarded with her request; she should be brought under church discipline, and the decision about baptism should have been withheld pending progress in her church discipline. Again, in accord with the Biblical theme of this book, it's all about love. The purpose of church discipline is redemptive love, doing what is necessary to help and not hurt people. As much as we can, we try to help them not hurt themselves and others, especially for eternity!

4. *<u>As a pastor, what do I say to a homosexual couple who wants me to officiate at their wedding?</u>*

From the foregoing it is clear that homosexuals (distinguished from believers in Christ who have the spiritual gift of singleness; from those who have an unwanted same-sex attraction they are actively repenting of and resisting in Christ; and from those who have left homosexual practice, renouncing and repenting from it) are engaging a lifestyle that is *tôʿēbâ* in God's sight. It is a flagrant "in your face" disobedient rebellion against God's clear commands in his Word. Further, it is a very unhealthy and dangerous as well as unholy lifestyle. If we love God and the people he loves, how can we affirm them in a lifestyle that, sooner or later, will kill them, or significantly reduce their quality of life, or, by far the worst of all, keep them from the kingdom of God? And then celebrate that rebellion?!

One of the basic guidelines a pastor can use in deciding difficult questions, both as to the *<u>content</u>* of the answer and for summoning the *<u>courage</u>* to give the correct answer, especially when the answer is one that will not be well received by those involved, is to remember his or her ordination and what it means. Remember who you are, your identity. After proper examination, prayer, and deliberation with the leading of the Holy Spirit, the church judicatory that ordained you, declared to the world that they agree you have been called by God to be ordained in his calling of you to represent and serve him as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament, or a similar designation within your denomination.

As we go about the multitude of mundane responsibilities we have daily, it is easy for us pastors under pressure to lose sight of the magnitude of our calling. Especially at times like this, when such questions are brought to us, our decisions are rightly perceived as coming from God. We need to remember that.

When the question involves a wedding, agreeing to officiate at a wedding is interpreted by the couple, all in attendance, the whole church, and the rest of the community and the world that God approves of this union, and that the clergyperson approves of the couple and their decision to marry. When a pastor officiates at a wedding, he or she represents God and blesses the couple, the blessing actually being from God.

This blessing is done is in several ways in the traditional Christian wedding. Remember the words of the liturgy at the very beginning. The pastor opens the service by saying that

we are assembled here in the sight of God and in the presence of this company [later during the vows called "witnesses"] to join this man and this woman in the bonds of holy marriage; which is an honorable estate, instituted by God when he said that a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be one flesh. It was confirmed by the words of our blessed Savior; hallowed by his presence at the marriage in Cana of Galilee; and compared by St. Paul to the mystical union between Christ and his Church. It ought not, therefore, to be entered into lightly or hastily, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God.

These two persons have come to be joined into this holy estate. If any[one], therefore, can show just cause why they may not be joined together, let him [or her] now declare it, or else hereafter hold his [or her] peace.

I charge you, each and both, as you shall answer to him before whom the secrets of all hearts are open, that if either of you know any reason why you may not lawfully be joined in marriage, declare it now. For be well assured that if any persons are joined together contrary to the Word of God, their marriage is not blessed of God nor is it lawful in his sight.[720]

God's blessing also occurs in the Declaration "according to God's holy ordinance of marriage" in which the minister says, "I pronounce you husband and wife; in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." [Then] addressing the congregation, "What therefore God has joined together, let no[one] put asunder. Amen."[721]

[720] *Liturgy and Psalter*, Gerrit T. Vander Lugt, Editor (New York: The Board of Education of the Reformed Church in America, 1968), pp. 119-120.
[721] *Liturgy and Psalter*, Gerrit T. Vander Lugt, Editor, p. 122.

Another way God's blessing is given is during a brief homily, beginning by congratulating the couple on their wisdom and commitment to marry, affirming this step, and offering encouragement and commentary from God's Word on how to live most effectively and fully in their marriage in the Lord. A message faithfully proclaiming and explaining a passage in God's Word and clearly applying it to daily circumstances in their life together as husband and wife is seen and greatly appreciated (especially by all the other couples present, who've been married for some time and who are listening even more intently) as the Lord speaking to them in a very powerful way!

God's blessing is clearly observed in the prayers at a traditional wedding service. Knowing that "[t]he prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective," (James 5:16 NRSV) the couple and all others believe the blessing being requested is already occurring. Here is another reason for the pastor to be careful to walk in the way of the Lord and to never speak as a trumpet giving an uncertain sound. (1 Corinthians 14:8)

Clearly God's blessing comes in the musical renditions offered during the service. Especially in the singing of Biblical psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) that are applicable to weddings, the blessing is unmistakable.

Of course one other way the people perceive God's blessing in a traditional Christian wedding is during the Benediction. The words are based on or right from God's Word, e.g.,

> The Lord bless you and keep you:
> The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you:
> The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. AMEN.
>
> Or,
>
> The peace of God that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. AMEN
>
> Or,
>
> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.[722]

Is this the message God is giving you to send to the same-sex couple and all these other people who will be attending? As a servant of God, called to proclaim his Word and witness to Christ, in the light of what has been disclosed and discussed in this book, can you in good conscience before God agree to perform this function?

[722] *Liturgy and Psalter*, Gerrit T. Vander Lugt, Editor, p. 124.

Here is how serious this matter is. When God makes it clear that homosexuality is tôʿēbâ, and a minister purporting to speak for him gets up and offers one of these benedictions over a homosexual couple who is standing there defiantly in rebellion against God's will, are you not committing blasphemy?! How are you not trying to make God speak with a forked tongue? How are you not using God's words against him?

Remember always that God does not contradict himself. And, he despises hypocrisy. He won't say one thing in his Word and another purportedly from him in the liturgy of the wedding service or through someone claiming to speak in his name. As one ordained to speak for God, we need to be very careful. Indeed God has issued us a warning to that effect: "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." (James 3:1)

I realize what I have just said is not at all politically correct. That is as it should be. Neither were Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, Peter and many others who proclaimed and taught his Word in the Bible. God did not call me or any other pastor to speak what is politically correct. Neither did he call me to be liked by everyone. He called me to speak his truth…albeit in love.

God has called us to a wonderful ministry; let's not blow it. We have a privilege to lead his people, and in the case of weddings many who aren't, at least not yet, his people, to come to know more of God, who he is, what he is like, and what he is doing in this world. We can lead people to him, as he works through us! Especially as we are faithful to him.

Therefore, I would say No to the question of a same-gender couple asking whether I would officiate at their wedding. How I would, and suggest you, do so follows.

In love explain your calling from God and why you must not intentionally and willfully disobey him. In love (i.e., as Paul defined *agape* in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, including being "patient, kind, not arrogant or rude" and with a gentle tone of voice where they can hear, see, and feel your care and compassion) also explain how, because you care for them, you can't affirm and lead them into a lifestyle that is unhealthy, dangerous, unholy, and counterproductive to their physical, psychological, and above all spiritual well-being. Ask them how long they have been involved in homosexual practice and if they know the dangers for their physical and spiritual health. Use this opportunity (you may not have another); maximize the time you have for the Lord.

Keep in mind your main purpose: to be faithful to God. Your main purpose is not to achieve their agreement with you on everything you are explaining to them. That agreement is not impossible, but it's not likely, at least not at that meeting, and maybe not ever. Besides, it's God alone who regenerates the human heart and mind, brings conversion, and declares justification. All we can do is faithfully explain his Word

and in love its application to the question they've raised and other related implications. Raise the tough questions that will remain with them long after they leave your office, and which may motivate them to return for an opportunity to continue the conversation. Such questions include, "Are you aware of the dangers of this lifestyle?" "Do you know that God loves you?" "Do you know why God doesn't want you to engage in sex with someone of the same gender?"

Above all, help them to come to faith in Christ, or if they can affirm, what I call the bottom line of the Christian faith, Romans 10:9. (Can they say they believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him physically from the dead?) Help them learn how to grow in Christ, to mature in him, and then offer to help them leave that lifestyle. Turning to their greatest and most effective resource for hope and help, be sure to ask them to pray with you before they leave, if they are willing to do so (and if they aren't that will tell you something important); offer to meet with them again; and pray for them in the days ahead.

5. *When a denomination has made a decision to ordain, or allow already ordained, homosexual or pro-homosexual activist church leaders, including bishops, pastors, elders, and deacons to function as "members in good standing," as leaders within the denomination and/or within a specific congregation, and to have their credentials officially held by that denomination, is it right to remain within that denomination*?

This question is raised after all that can be done has been done by those who are committed to the historic traditional interpretation of God's Word on this matter. They have tried to oppose such a decision, and the denomination and/or congregation has chosen to try to reinterpret and replace Biblical teaching, including the commands, with this unbiblical practice, as explained in Chapter One, and has been implemented as official church polity. The denomination is thereby replacing Biblical correctness with "political correctness," and conforming to rather than transforming the surrounding culture. (Romans 12:1-2)

The seriousness of the question is evident in the light of the strong teaching throughout the Bible, especially in this case the New Testament, that the church should be one, unified, undivided, obedient, and holy. (Cf., e.g., Matthew 5:19; John 14:21; 17; Acts 15; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 1,3,11; Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 4-5; 1 Thessalonians 5; Jude 1:17-25) As seen in these and other passages, the Lord does not look favorably upon those who divide his body, his church.

At the same time, we have this question before us pertaining to a situation where the division of denominations and individual congregations therein has already occurred to the extent that apostate leadership teaches and practices unbiblical falsehood pertaining to LGBTQ+ behavior and has the support to continue doing so. Often those reprobate leaders and their ilk are in the minority, but loopholes in the church polity permit them to retain their hegemony in at least a significant part of the denomination, thus requiring those remaining faithful to God and his Word, who are frequently the

majority, to have to decide whether to stay or leave, since the loopholes do not permit them to exercise church discipline on those disobedient to God.

Taking the relevant passages of Scripture into account, including those in this section and others in God's Word, we can say the following in answer to this question:

a. First pray for the Lord's help. We can do nothing righteous and effective without his involvement. (Cf., e.g., John 15:1-8)

b. Gather together with others of like mind, who are faithful to God and his Word. Meet and plan together how to best overcome the evil being committed in the denomination and/or church congregation. Then carry out those plans with constant reliance upon the Lord.

c. Speak to the apostate leaders and their supporters and try to help them see the errors in their teaching, how they are functioning contrary to the Bible, as explicated above in Chapter One. We must speak up, so we do not share in their guilt. (Leviticus 19:17b) We must do so always speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15); never hating anyone (Leviticus 19:17a); never engaging in slander (Leviticus 19:16a; 1 Corinthians 6:10); and never threatening anyone, including not ever endangering anyone's life (Leviticus 19:16b).

d. Point out how extremely unhealthy, violent, and spiritually destructive, the LGBTQ+ lifestyle is, as documented in detail above in Chapter Two, in Chapter One, in Appendix D, and elsewhere throughout the book. See also the brief paper entitled, "Homosexuality: An Abbreviated Fact Sheet for Speaking the Truth in Love." Ask how advocating such an unhealthy, violent, and spiritually destructive lifestyle is loving? If those leading your denomination and/or in your congregation resist you with hardened hearts and resolutely continue to teach and practice doctrine and behavior that God has called *tôʿēbâ* (an abomination, detestable, to be abhorred), then it is time to consider leaving the denomination and/or the congregation.

e. Some may ask, "Is that causing division in the church?" One reply to that question, could be, "Has not the division already occurred and been perpetrated by those disobedient to God's Word and his will?" Here we have an example of the need to help people think more carefully, including in matters of cause and effect. In this case, who has caused the division, and who is prohibiting healing? Further, consider these passages from his Word: Psalm 26:4; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 2 Timothy 2:19; Titus 3:10; and 2 John 8-11 among others. See, e.g., 1 Corinthians 5:9ff., where the Apostle Paul says, "I have written to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people…you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral…." At the end of this passage, Paul tells the Corinthians to "[e]xpel the wicked man from among you." (5:13) Since, the majority of the Corinthians in the church were not prohibited by any loopholes in their polity, they could expel

easily, especially with the apostle's divine authority saying to do so in this particular case.

Always remember a fundamental principle of hermeneutics, Biblical interpretation: carefully distinguish between principle and application of principle. Since the basic principle in these passages is to not associate with evildoers and the evil they value, stand for, and promote, Paul told the Corinthians that the proper application of that principle for them was to expel the wicked man from among them. This is true also for all churches and is the basis for the historic practice of church discipline.

So, since you, and others of like mind, have done everything you could do to cause the apostates in your present church and denomination to change their behavior, and they have hardened their hearts and would not comply, then it is necessary in order to follow the basic principle to not associate with evildoers, including not supporting their goals with your giving and other help, that you pray and seek the Lord's guidance about leaving that church and denomination. Lord willing, affiliate with and support another congregation and the denomination of which it is a part, that is faithful to God and his Word, wherein you can more effectively serve, including worshiping him, in accord with his high and holy calling to extend and nurture his kingdom.

Epilogue

Not long after that healing service during which I met and prayed with the homosexual fellow in the story with which this book began, I invited him to meet with me in my office so I could follow up on how he was doing and to see if I could be of further assistance. He came in and told me that he was trying to break free from that lifestyle but that it was difficult. As we've observed above, many homosexuals report the same experience. This is why we need to act with true love toward them as Jesus taught. Inform and admonish the unrepentant and their ill-informed and unwise supporters. Encourage those trying to change to seek the Lord's all-sufficient help, directly, and indirectly through his people, to overcome this destructive way of living that is opposed to the will of God as clearly revealed in the Bible. We must not fail them. Most of all we must not fail God!

Karsen offers a fine summary of the matter.

> In conclusion, the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testaments, clearly, consistently and emphatically teaches that all forms of same-sex sexual relationships under any circumstances and at all times, are sinful and destructive behaviors that result in dire consequences. At the same time, the Bible majors in the Good News that God's grace, forgiveness, power (to resist and even to change) and hope are available to all who have

> "sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" in this respect or in any other respect.[723]

Of course, is there a better summary with which to conclude than that which the Lord gave us in the summary of the law?

> 34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got
> together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this
> question: 36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"
> 37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all
> your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest
> commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as
> yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two
> commandments." (Matthew 22:34-40)

Much more could be said, but what we've seen is sufficient to understand what God's will is pertaining to homosexuality. We've looked at what it means to truly love homosexual people in a way that helps rather than hinders them. Let's speak the truth in love, and in the process loving not only them but God! (John 14:21)

For Reflection and Discussion

Chapter Five

1. Franklin Graham says that (humanly speaking) our country will not turn away from the wrong direction in which it is heading until Christians again become active in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and speaking out when evil is proposed. Identify at least one action you can do and will commit to doing that will resist the spread of evil in our society and contribute to the turn-around of our country to its historic Biblical roots and please God?

    a. Who do you know who would do well and should consider running for public office on any level? (E.g., HOA Board, School Board, City Council, State House or Senate, U. S. Congress, U. S. President) Why can't you contact this person and encourage him or her to do so?

    b. Should *you* consider public service by joining a political party and/or running for any of the above offices or serving in some other capacity, e.g., volunteering to help people who would do, or are doing, well in public office, especially those who are mature Christians? Ask God if

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[723] Wendell Karsen, WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE, Unpublished paper, Western Theological Seminary, February 2006.

you should. Ask those with whom you are discussing these questions. Ask a pastor at your church and at least one fellow church member.

c. What can you do to support, including holding accountable, public servants? Consider those who have spoken well in their campaigns but who are weakening and compromising values and commitments once in office.

d. For other suggestions, see my essay, "What Does the Bible Say about a Christian's Moral Responsibility in the Culture?" on the Current Issues page of my website at www.fromacorntooak12.com.

2. Select one of the opportunities for engaging the issue of homosexuality in our society and explain what you would like to do.

3. How can you explain to people that the U. S. Supreme Court is not supreme in all matters? Cite at least two reasons, at least one from the Bible and one from the U. S. Constitution.

   a. How does that understanding help overcome discouragement when the justices err and help begin corrective procedures?

   b. What are some of those corrective procedures that can be taken?

4. What can you do to help teen-agers learn the truth about homosexuality?

5. The church has been accused of having a double standard, one for homosexuals and another for heterosexuals. Cite at least two reasons, one including at least one passage from the Bible, and another from established church practice, that prove the church does not have a double standard.

6. How does homosexual practice offend God?

7. Cite at least one Biblical and two scientific reasons that refute the mistaken and misleading message of pro-homosexuals that treatment of people for homosexuality is useless at best and harmful at worst?

8. What do you say to church and non-church people who say "You must not judge?"

9. When you are persecuted for speaking the truth in love, what resources from the Bible and elsewhere can you draw on for comfort and strength? Identify at least three.

10. Cite at least three reasons why it is **un**loving for the church to affirm, much less encourage, a person to embrace, or continue in, the homosexual lifestyle and practice. Include in your answer how the church actually harms a homosexual by affirming homosexuality as a normal, valid, and equally acceptable alternative lifestyle.

11. Identify at least three ways (a minimum of one divine and two human) that the church offers hope and help to people who struggle with unwanted and repented same-sex attraction and homosexuals who want to leave the homosexual practice and lifestyle.

12. What are the implications of the information in the present and preceding chapters for the church?

    a. Should homosexuals be welcome to attend worship, education classes, and other programs in the life and work of the church? Why?

    b. Should unrepentant and practicing homosexuals be admitted to church membership?

        1) What message would be conveyed by opening membership to those who verbally and behaviorally oppose the teaching of God's Word?

        2) What evidence from the Bible can you give to support your answer to these questions?

    c. Should unrepentant and practicing homosexuals be permitted to hold church office?

        1) What message would be conveyed by opening leadership positions to those who verbally and behaviorally oppose the teaching of the Bible, the basis of the church's decision-making, individually and corporately?

        2) What evidence from the Bible can you give to support your answer to these questions?

        3) How would admitting *anyone* who advocates admitting unrepentant and practicing homosexuals to hold church office affect the life and work of the church in the future?

            a) What would the church be like and be doing in 10 years?

            b) What would the church be like and be doing in 25 years? 50?

13. How does God want us to treat repentant former homosexuals who are trying to obey his commands?

a. May they become members of the church?

b. May they hold office in the church?

14. How are we to relate to unrepentant and practicing homosexuals?

    a. What do we say to them out of concern for their physical and spiritual health?

    b. What do we say to them and to pro-homosexual activists in the church about the division they are causing in the church? How do we begin the conversation?

15. What do you say to a pastor who feels he or she should officiate at a same-sex "wedding?"

16. What do you say if you are invited to attend a "gay" wedding?

17. If you are a pastor, what do you say if you are asked to officiate at a "gay" wedding?

Additional Resources for Further Information

The above is only a brief introduction to the issues involving the truth about homosexuality. For further information on this subject check the excellent resources in the Ministry Resource Center at Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary (www.calvin.edu/library/mrc). There are books, file articles, and journals that contain solid research and sound Biblical interpretation. One outstanding book, written by a former homosexual, is *101 Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality* by Mike Haley. For other trustworthy sources of information see the Family Research Council (http://www.frc.org), Family Talk (http://drjamesdobson.org/Default.aspx), and Focus on the Family (http://www.focusonthefamily.com). For those clergy who need further information for pastoral care, including competent therapists for referral, who will uphold Biblical and historic Christian theology for pastoral care, they can consult with the American Association of Christian Counselors (http://www.aacc.net/resources/find-a-counselor/).

Appendix A

The Search for Truth and the Work of Paul Cameron and the Family Research Institute

As a pastor, and as a college and seminary professor, both before and since I retired, I have always sought and proclaimed the truth. I specialized in the educational aspect of the ministry serving churches for 37 years. For several years during that time I taught several courses as an adjunct instructor at Western Theological Seminary in Holland Michigan. Following the 37 years in the church, God called me to teach as adjunct professor of education at Calvin College and as adjunct professor of educational ministries at Calvin Theological Seminary for the last five years before I retired. In the academy as in the church I applied vigorous and thorough research practices in order to obtain the truth and teach it. I've done this not only in the United States but in pastors' seminars in Africa, Asia, Mexico, and Russia.

In that search for the truth the Bible has been my standard, the criterion upon which all other findings are compared and contrasted. My background in social science research, including my Ph. D. in curriculum research from Michigan State University, has been very helpful in many ways, not the least of which is being equipped to discern what is sound social science research and what is substandard research, much of which is so flawed that it cannot considered credible.

Sadly, even some fellow believers in Christ too frequently allow their hearts to rule over their minds, often when loved ones have "come out" as homosexuals. Understandably, but unacceptably, in a desperate attempt to find a way to justify homosexuality with its accompanying practice, they close their minds to scientific data that oppose their assumptions, premises, and objectives.

In historic Biblical Christian systematic theology the distinction is made between general revelation and special revelation. The latter is the written and personal Word of God fulfilled in and through Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, the Second Person of the triune God. (Exodus 19:9; Psalm 12:6; 18:30; Matthew 5:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). The former is the revelation that God discloses about himself and his creation, insufficient in itself for salvation, but very valuable instruction for humankind that God has supplied and which he requires us to know. (Psalm 19:1-2; Romans 1:19, 20; 2:14, 15) This information comes to us through our own eyes and the other senses as well. As such, careful scientific investigation yields valuable data that are part of God's general revelation, *when done carefully and rigorously according to the established scientific method*.

As a pastor and a scholar my goal is to identify the truth and make it known to the church so that we can make it known to the world. I cannot allow a secular organization with a politically "correct" bias to keep from the church scientifically verified truth, part of God's general revelation. God expects his people to know the truth and use it to accomplish his purposes, as he has called us to do. The church is the main means

through whom God is working to redeem his creation. At the same time, as a scholar with a background in social science research, I do recognize the challenge to social scientist Paul Cameron's reputation that the American Psychological Association has done so I'm including his relevant findings in this appendix.

Making the truth known to the world is a challenge. As the Bible teaches, the people of the world, who have not received the new birth in Christ, have a veil covering their minds and hearts. This veil is why first and foremost the Gospel of Christ has to be proclaimed to extend the number and nurture of God's people in his kingdom. (2 Corinthians 3:14-16) The veil covering the minds and hearts of the non-Christian together with the unregenerate human nature resists much truth, especially that which conflicts with his or her premises and worldview. The veil is only removed when one turns to Jesus Christ and believes in and follows him as his or her Savior and Lord. (1 Corinthians 3:14, 16; Romans 10:9)

Regrettably, many educational institutions are dominated by a liberal philosophical orientation that filters out sound research data that doesn't fit with their philosophy. That filtering process operates proactively by refusing to fund research that could come up with opposing findings and retroactively by ignoring and failing to cite such research that conflicts with the prevailing philosophy, e.g., in this case the desire to justify the homosexual lifestyle. Compounding that regret is the operation among liberal faculty members on even not a few Christian college campuses of a corporate cultural practice that ridicules conservative scholars whose scholarship questions the message of the liberal professors.

This has been the case with the research of Paul Cameron of the Family Research Institute (FRI). In the 1980s Cameron had a falling out with the American Psychological Association, which put him out of their organization in the attempt to discredit him. Other professional organizations followed suit. In my pursuit of the truth, it has been my practice to read and listen to both sides of an argument, subjecting both to scrutiny: in science by examining how well studies followed the established scientific method, and in all cases by subjecting the documents to the ultimate standard, i.e., God's Word. Is this study, report, newspaper article, etc. consistent with or contrary to the Bible?

In so doing, I have carefully read much, though not all, FRI literature and the arguments of those opposed to FRI and Cameron in particular. What I observe is that he has written with a tone that tends to alienate the opposition as much by his affect as by his data. Nevertheless, his research data frequently compare with that of other respected social scientists. In my observation, though Cameron's writing tends to be expressed in harsh and impolitic terms, the criticisms leveled at him tend to be passionate and biased rather than objective and even-handed.

As with most criticisms of scientific researchers whose work supports the traditional Biblically-based view of homosexuality and its expressions, the critics of Cameron fail to mention key aspects of the Family Research Institute's work. For example, much of

Cameron's reporting is of a review of the literature; that part is not his own empirical study.

Similarly, in my reading of many, though not all, of the FRI publications, I've found very little in Cameron's research reports that is not found elsewhere. In a few cases I've read an opponent's rebuttal that has raised a question that may be debatable, so I've eliminated it from my quotes of Cameron. That which has been eliminated, which does not appear in other reports from sources in good standing with, though not necessarily liked by, so-called "mainstream organizations," is quite minor and does not significantly affect the conclusions of this volume or the Biblical argument pertaining to homosexuality and its practice. For example, a question has been raised about Cameron's statement that even a gerbil was found in the colon of a homosexual. A critic who investigated and then challenged Cameron's source for that datum raised what appeared to be an adequate question as to whether the assertion about the gerbil was sufficiently supportable that I decided to not include it with the lengthy list of other items that homosexuals have used in their rectums to achieve sexual stimulation in a very abnormal manner. However, I subsequently discovered the gerbil practice in other well-documented research, and I put it back in the text above.

Though Paul Cameron has had a falling out with the American Psychological Association, his research data frequently compare with that of other respected social scientists. Thus Cameron's significant data that I believe to be consistent with sound research from other sources, that make sense, and that will be helpful to the church for the use of God's purposes, are here included in Appendix A of this volume.

What do homosexuals really do?

All the following behaviors are done by homosexuals, who behave similarly throughout the world, though it is not implied that every homosexual engages in all these acts. However, the percentage of those who do is significant. In a review of the literature, the Family Research Institute (FRI) found that almost all homosexuals engage in fellatio (oral stimulation of the penis, with ingestion of semen in about half); 80% admit to rimming; 90% have had anal sex, and about 2/3 do it regularly; 70% report having sex with strangers; 37% have engaged in sadomasochism (torture for sexual "fun").[724] These examples are some of the reasons why God looks at homosexual practices as *tôʿēbâ*.

Homosexuality is counterproductive to health.

As mentioned earlier, the rupturing of the colon issues in semen (including HIV and other infection) and fecal matter entering other parts of the body and producing negative health outcomes, which has also been observed by Cameron and his associates. They report their findings in "Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do," p. 2.

[724] "Born What Way?" Family Research Institute, 1993, pp. 4-5

The homosexual lifestyle contains significantly more violence.

Utilizing national data from the University of Michigan, the Kaiser Family Foundation, the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the U.S. Bureau of Justice, Paul Cameron of the Family Research Institute discovered the contrast in rates for domestic violence between the two types of couples. He found that male homosexuals accounted for 9.7% of such violence, a rate seven times higher than that of non-homosexual males, while lesbians accounted for 1.9% of domestic violence a figure nearly double the rate for non-lesbian women. Again, such data hardly fit the definition of what is traditionally, typically, and truly gay, and for those who can be objective, the data negate the presentation of homosexuality as normal.[725]

In a study of all cases of sexual assault investigated by the Department of Defense from 2007 through 2009, a statistical analysis indicates that homosexual men and lesbians were at least 3 to 9 times more likely to be investigated for sexual assault on other members of the U.S. military than were non-homosexual service men and women.[726] These incidences have occurred while open homosexuality in the military was prohibited.

As I indicated above, NAMBLA and other global homosexual organizations readily admit in their literature their agenda priority to legitimize sex between adults and children. Cameron has also observed this admission.[727] Corroboratively, reviewing many international studies, the Family Research Institute's (FRI) research reveals that "homosexual acts were involved in 25% to 40% of the cases of child molestation recorded in the scientific and forensic literature."[728] FRI found that "accounts of disproportionate homosexual teacher molestation appear throughout the scientific literature."[729]

As indicated in the text above, homosexuals engage in group sex, sadomasochism, bondage, and bestiality.[730] Kinsey found that 20% of homosexual men and 7% of lesbians had sex with animals.[731] Consistently, FRI's research discovered that 17% of homosexual men and 10% of lesbians reported sex with animals. This finding of Kinsey is one that thus appears accurate. We should keep in mind, however, that much of the Kinsey research is flawed and generally discredited among those considered the most responsible and reliable researchers in social science. As Muir discloses, Kinsey's work was criticized early by other scientists, including Abraham Maslow, and "The Centers for

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[725] *Psychological Reports*, 2003, 93, 410-416.
[726] http://www.familyresearchinst.org/. Accessed 06/25/10.
[727] "Child Molestation and Homosexuality," Family Research Institute, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1993, p. 6. "In 1980 the largest Dutch gay organization (the COC) 'adopted the position that the liberation of pedophilia must be viewed as a gay issue…[and that] ages of consent should therefore be abolished….In 1990 COC achieved a significant victory: lowering of the age of consent for homosexual sex in Holland to 12 (unless the parents object, in which case it goes up to 15)."
[728] "Child Molestation and Homosexuality," Family Research Institute, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1993, p. 2.
[729] "Child Molestation and Homosexuality," Family Research Institute, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1993, p. 3. See also Robert Knight, pp. 6-7.
[730] Paul Cameron, Kirk Cameron, and Kay Proctor, "Effect of Homosexuality upon Public Health and Social Order," *Psychological Reports*, 1989, pp. 1167-1178.
[731] "Born What Way?" Family Research Institute, 1993, pp. 4-5.

Disease Control has also stopped using the Kinsey data for national projections."[732] However, the discrediting of Kinsey's writing hasn't stopped many from irresponsibly using his flawed data in their publications.

As with all who commit to an evil lifestyle, an essential selfishness subsists. Some homosexuals admit to deliberately having sex to infect others,[733] which, as discussed above is a felony.

Homosexuals typically die much younger.

In the body of the text above I mentioned that homosexuality contributes to the premature death of those who do such acts and to the illness and death of others. Cameron discussed his findings on this subject in "Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do," pp. 4-6. He cited his findings after an FRI study of 6,516 obituaries in 16 homosexual journals across the United States over a 12 year period reveals that the median age of men dying from AIDS was 39; the median age of homosexuals dying from all other causes was 42. The median age of death for lesbians was 45.[734] As Knight adds, only one percent died of old age (65 or older).[735]

This finding on premature death parallels a 2007 study by Paul and Kirk Cameron of the Family Research Institute that homosexuals live an average of 24 years less than heterosexuals, a much greater occurrence than even smoking, which reduces the human lifespan by an average of one to seven years.[736] These statistics are not just recent developments. The FRI reports a similarly shortened lifespan among homosexuals studied in the scientific literature from 1858—1992.[737]

Paul Cameron's obituary study has drawn extensive rebuttal. Those in opposition point out that such an approach does not take into account the difficulty of knowing who is homosexual and who isn't in an obituary and that many homosexuals and lesbians who've died did not have an obituary for several reasons including not wanting one, they were not activists, and their family not wanting them to be revealed as homosexuals. They claim that Cameron's data are not representative, since it is a nonrandom sample.[738]

However, the rebuttals fail to note some significant aspects of the FRI study of obits. First of all the 6,516 obituaries were from 16 homosexual journals. Also, Cameron doesn't claim that the study is a random sample. But a large sample size can be significant even if it's not random, and Cameron's study included a sample of 6,516. Many if not most samples contain a much smaller number. To compensate as much as possible for nonrandomness, such studies have as high a number as they can obtain. Well over six thousand in a sample is not insignificant. Further, the FRI study also contained a

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[732] See J. Gordon Muir, "Homosexuals and the 10% Fallacy," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 31, 1993.
[733] Cameron, *Psychological Reports*, pp. 1167, 1173, 1178. See also Sprigg and Dailey, p. 73.
[734] "Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do," pp. 4-5.
[735] Knight, p. 6.
[736] http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=255614 (Accessed 09/20/08)
[737] "Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do," p. 5.
[738] http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty_sites/rainbow/html/facts_cameron_obit.html (Accessed 06/02/14)

review of the scientific literature from 1858—1992, a period of 134 years,[739] which corroborated their findings.

Cameron's critics fail to mention one other key factor. Due to the very small percentage of homosexuals and several other factors, including the difficulty of identifying them and the self-report method of much of this research, all studies of homosexuals have the problem of sample representation. Highly regarded social scientist, Stanton Jones, provost and professor of psychology at Wheaton College, has referred to sample representativeness as "the Achilles heel of research into the homosexual condition."[740] Jones is referring to homosexual research in general with no reference to Cameron or the FRI. In Jones' excellent essay he examines key contemporary studies on homosexuality; again and again he points out the nonrepresentative samples, thus the inability of the study to claim it represents homosexuals generally.

Homosexuality negatively impacts society.

Careful research has shown that homosexuality has a negative impact on society. Cameron et al. found bisexuals and homosexuals self-reporting more frequent higher engagement in such socially disruptive behaviors as cheating in marriage, making obscene phone calls, arrests, shoplifting, and tax cheating.[741] Physicians, nurses, orderlies and other medical personnel are at risk from serious and sometimes life-threatening infection. The rare form of airborne scarlet fever that occurred in San Francisco in the mid-1970s began among homosexuals. The Family Research Institute findings indicate that "With the rise of these new contagious diseases, homosexuality not only raises our medical costs, it also increases the hazards of medical care…and eating out."[742]

As I said above, in addition to its other functions, the law is a teacher. The Family Research Institute predicts that the more our society tolerates and encourages homosexuality, "we can expect that more of our youth will try [it]."[743] Of course, that occurrence is precisely one of the goals of the homosexual activists. FRI cites Christopher Hewitt's statistical analysis showing that "societies that accept homosexuality have more of it and those that disapprove of…it have considerably less of it."[744]

No evidence exists that homosexuality is biologically based.

Consistent with the other research reported above, regarding the finding that there is no genetic basis for homosexuality, Cameron concurs. In its review of the literature, the Family Research Institute adds

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[739] A review of the previous literature for the past 50 years prior to a new study is considered sufficient in social science research.
[740] Stanton L. Jones, "Same-Sex Science," p. 28.
[741] Cameron, *Psychological Reports*, pp. 1177-78.
[742] "Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do," p. 6.
[743] "Born What Way?" p. 6.
[744] Ibid.

> a body of scientific evidence that suggests that homosexuality is adopted by people who are confused, sexually adventurous and/or rebellious. This evidence suggests that sexual orientation is flexible, not immutable. And the evidence comes from the largest studies on the subject, conducted by researchers on both sides of the gay rights debate.[745]

Religion resists homosexuality.

As discussed above, hope exists for people in the homosexual lifestyle who want to leave this very unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy practice. In addition to the greatest reason for hope, the Biblical teaching that "I can do everything through him [the Lord Jesus Christ] who gives me strength," (Philippians 4:13) science observes that the presence and absence of religion in general is significantly correlated with the rejection and practice of homosexuality. Even "Kinsey reported 'less homosexual activity among devout groups whether they be Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish, and more homosexual activity among religiously less active groups.'"[746] A Family Research Institute study "found those raised in irreligious homes to be over four times more likely to become homosexual than those from devout homes. These studies suggest that when people believe strongly that homosexual behavior is immoral, they are significantly less apt to be involved in such activity."[747]

Further, their children are less likely to be confused as they develop their emerging identity formation as to who they are. Those who are raised in a home where they see their dad and mom as believers in and followers of Christ Jesus, faithfully proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in word and in deed, loving and caring for each other, and loving and caring for their children in the special way that male and female parents are uniquely created to do, those children have a solid standard and criterion of truth, a stable model over against which to "test the spirits" they encounter in the world. They thus are able to avoid the confusion that makes some adolescents "come out" at least for a while.

Many who "come out" as adolescents receive publicity about it. But the many who as they proceed to complete their identity formation leave the homosexual lifestyle, receive no publicity regarding their decision.

As we've seen above, many acknowledge that the homosexual lifestyle is very difficult to break away from, but it's not impossible. For those who engage in a small number of homosexual acts early in life, it is easier to discontinue doing so, and many do, as much as a third in one study.[748]

Throughout my career I have tended to highlight research data that are generally acceptable to most in the academic community wherever possible. Nevertheless, when I

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[745] "Born What Way?" p. 3. See also p. 5, and "What Causes Homosexual Desire and Can It Be Changed? Family Research Institute, 1992, pp. 2-3.
[746] "What Causes Homosexual Desire and Can It Be Changed?" p. 4.
[747] Ibid.
[748] "What Causes Homosexual Desire and Can it Be Changed?" p. 5.

come across scholarship that is sound, true, and consistent with God's special revelation in the Bible, but which is bypassed by the "mainstream" academic community due to its not supporting the "party line," I must present it to my students and to the broader church in whatever venue, the pulpit, the classroom, and in writing that I can do. Thus, when Paul Cameron and his associates, one of whom is his son, come up with research that is consistent with other sound research, and makes sense, I cannot keep these findings from the church. That would be morally wrong. Moreover, it would be a violation of and in disobedience to my call from God to proclaim his truth in love—through his special revelation in Christ Jesus and the Bible—and through his general revelation, including in careful, not flawed, scientific research.

So I can adhere to my principle of using research that is acknowledged by the widest range of academic scholars as possible, and still not keep from the church, and from the rest of the world, the findings of other scientists, whom the more politically correct academics have rejected, I have put Cameron's findings in this appendix. I want the liberal academics to know I am aware of their concerns and that I have studied both sides of the matter thoroughly, but I much more want the church, the body of Christ, to have the whole truth in order to most adequately carry out its calling from God through whom he is accomplishing the redemption of his creation. We must facilitate, not interfere with, his work to redeem the homosexual people he loves by keeping the truth from them. On the contrary, we must speak the truth, *all the truth*, *in love*.

Appendix B

Sample Letters to the Editor of a Newspaper

As we engage the public forum, one place to consider beginning is with a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, either the print or the online edition, or both where available. One advantage is that you have the opportunity to carefully construct what you want to say. Draft your letter, then let it lay for a while, e.g., from half an hour to a day, and then come back to it as you have ideas that emerge in your mind. When you are ready to send it off you'll be giving it a good, if not your best, effort. The only major downside to such letter writing is that the newspaper usually has a word limit, which is often frustrating. When dealing with complex and profound issues, it is difficult to do more than scratch the surface in 350 words, or whatever your paper has set as the limit.

As I've indicated in the body of this e-book, don't be upset when someone responds to your letter harshly, and probably with personal ad hominem attacks. That is the favored approach of the opposition, both the human and the spiritual beings opposed to God's people and who are trying to silence us. Let not your heart be troubled but rejoice! As Paul prepared Timothy, "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted…." (2 Timothy 3:12) But recall his encouragement: "Yet the Lord rescued me from all [of the persecutions he endured]," and he'll take care of all our needs in this regard. (2 Timothy 3:11) Further, as you write and respond in love, your message will be disarming, draw people to what you have to say, be influential, and discredit your accusers. This is not only a logical deduction, but it is what I've experienced.

When we speak out for the Lord and suffer for doing so, count it all joy that we can serve him. Even that negative response is an indication that our message has been received and heard, and it's solid evidence that we belong to the Lord and not to the world with its evil; think about that reality: it's greatly comforting! That response gives us another opportunity to speak up for the Lord in love and calmly, rationally, and winsomely (not for all but for many) set forth a cogent articulation of the Biblical message that the Holy Spirit can use where and with whom he will to accomplish his, indeed the whole triune God's, redemptive purposes. See also Matthew 5:11-12 and Luke 6:23. To be able to leap for joy when we are persecuted for speaking the truth in love for Jesus, we need to remember we are speaking up for him and acting accordingly; also, it helps greatly to keep in mind that pleasing God should be our greatest desire, objective, and accomplishment. (Cf. such passages as 2 Corinthians 5:9; Colossians 1:10; Ephesians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1.)

Here are a couple of sample letters I've written that you can use, as much or as little as you wish, as a basis for constructing your own. After the first letter was published, someone wrote a very critical letter accusing me of hate speech. People who read it readily and rightly saw that the writer had missed my whole point in the first letter, and they offered to me unsolicited but very appreciated encouragement with their observation that I wasn't being hateful at all, just the opposite. A month later (our local newspaper

has a 30-day requirement that one cannot reply sooner—but which gives ample time for a thoughtful answer) I sent in the second letter to which there was no further response.

Letter #1 (This first letter was a response to a previously published letter in which a woman pleaded for someone to explain the Biblical teaching in Leviticus 18 and 20 on homosexuality and why we still uphold those laws but not others in the same book.)

To the editor:

Many people ask how to interpret the Bible, specifically the Book of Leviticus, concerning homosexuality. To begin the Bible is God's revelation of who He is and what He requires in the redemption of His creation corrupted by the first humans' disobedience. While God's essence is love, since He is Most Holy, He requires all who would enter His presence be holy.

God called together and *patiently over time* taught a people how they must live to effectively accomplish His redemptive work through them. Thereby God overlooked *for a time* certain behaviors common in the world, e.g., polygamy, while still affirming His will for marriage between one man and one woman.

We must distinguish between principle and application of principle. In the O.T. we see the principle that adultery is contrary to God's will, but the application of the principle that involves stoning to enforce the legal principle was temporary, as we see in how Jesus treated the woman caught in adultery. Christ fulfilled the temporary and provisional applications in the O.T. that are no longer binding (e.g., animal sacrifice) for the church. Similarly, we interpret the texts pertaining to homosexuality. Both testaments disclose the principle that homosexual practice is clearly contrary to God's will. Yet in the New Testament, reaching out in love to help people change in Christ replaces the O. T. death penalty.

Biblically, "same sex marriage" is an oxymoron and opposes God's will for marriage. Careful social science research reveals why God declares homosexual practice "detestable." (Leviticus 18:22) Such practice is a very unhealthy and dangerous, as well as unholy, lifestyle. After examining the research on what homosexuals actually do, and the shortened lives that tragically result, which cannot accurately be characterized as gay, it cannot be considered an act of love to advocate for that lifestyle, much less make it normative, and we begin to see why God disapproves so strongly.

Far more could and should be said, but space doesn't allow. For the rest talk with a pastor who faithfully proclaims the Bible as the true Word of God, trustworthy, and our highest authority.[749]

Edward Seely

[749] Published in the *Reporter-Herald*, April 14, 2013, p. A4.

Letter #2

To the Editor:

Last month I wrote explaining how to interpret the Bible on some difficult texts pertaining to homosexuality. Lest anyone else misunderstands as one person did, I wish to clarify some key points, especially since a full explanation requires far more than 350 words.

First, be sure to read the whole Bible, not just a few parts of it. When texts are hard to understand, consult a pastor who holds to the Bible as God's infallible Word and our highest authority.

As I said, the Bible reveals God's essence is love. Yet, it reveals that he is also Most Holy. Throughout his Word God commands all who would enter his presence to be holy, because he is holy.

Jesus commanded that we love all people, even our enemies. Paul defines that love; some of the words he used include being "patient and kind, not envious or boastful, arrogant or rude."

When we examine the voluminous social science research on homosexual practice and see how unhealthy, dangerous, and unholy it is, if we are to love homosexuals and others as God would have us do, we cannot encourage them to engage this lifestyle, much less make it normative and a model for others.

A lesbian believer in Christ who is trying to overcome homosexuality has written a poignant post that has gone viral on the Internet. She writes:

"To those of you who would change the church to accept the gay community and its lifestyle: you give us no hope at all. To those of us who know God's word and will not dilute it to fit our desires, we ask you to read John's letter to the church in Pergamum…You are willing to compromise the word of God to be politically correct. We are not deceived. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

If we truly love God, and homosexuals, we will be true to His Word. I know of many who want to leave and avoid homosexuality; let's help and not hinder them.[750]

Edward Seely

[750] Published in the *Reporter-Herald*, May 20, 2013, p. A4.

Appendix C

Seven Things I Wish My Pastor Knew About My Homosexuality

The Witherspoon Institute
Public Discourse

Ryan T. Anderson
Founder & Editor
Serena Sigillito
Managing Editor

"Seven Things I Wish My Pastor Knew About My Homosexuality"

by Jean Lloyd
within Marriage

December 10th, 2014

May I make two requests? Love me, but remember that you cannot be more merciful than God. It isn't mercy to affirm same-sex acts as good. Don't compromise truth; help me to live in harmony with it.

Over thirty years have passed since same-sex attraction rushed up from deep within my twelve-year-old frame. This attraction was unbidden and unwanted, yet simultaneously forceful and compelling.

As a Christian, the conflict between my sexuality and my faith would become the deepest and most intense of my life. Now in my forties, I've gone from being closeted to openly lesbian to celibate to heterosexually married. The fact that I need to qualify my marital union as a heterosexual one reveals how much the cultural landscape has changed in that time—just as much as my own personal landscape has, though in very different ways.

During my upbringing, I heard a few fiery sermons on homosexuality. These days, I hear declarations of love instead. They make me shout for joy. Amen! It always should have been so! At the same time, however, many pastors have begun accompanying this love with an eschewal of Biblical sexual morality as oppressive, unreasonable, or unkind. Hence, loving homosexual persons also comes to entail affirming and encouraging them in same-sex sexual relationships and behaviors.

Although I appreciate the desire to act in love, this isn't the genuine love that people like me need. Love me better than that! Thomas Aquinas scholar Josef Pieper put it this way:

love is not synonymous with undifferentiated approval of everything the beloved person thinks and does in real life. . . . [nor is it] the wish for the beloved to feel good always and in every situation and for him to be spared experiencing pain or grief in all circumstances. "Mere 'kindness' which tolerates anything except [the beloved's] suffering" has nothing to do with real love. . . . No lover can look on easily when he sees the one he loves preferring convenience to the good.

Loving me with this kind of love is neither quick nor easy. But knowledge and truth can help us both stand against the growing tide of moral capitulation. In light of this, here are seven things I wish you knew about homosexuality.

1. I wish you knew that just because I didn't choose this orientation, it doesn't follow that I was "born this way" or that "God created me gay." While genetics influences these traits, there is not a fixed predetermination. It is not hardwired like eye or skin color.[1] I can look back and understand where it came from in my own life. Of course, others' experiences may be different from mine. But ultimately, the etiology doesn't matter. Same-sex sexual activity is outside the design and will of the good plan of God. To claim otherwise requires ignoring Scripture, historical Christian authority, and natural law. So I need help in living chastely, regardless of how my same-sex desires came to be.

2. I wish you knew a better way to help me honor my body by living in accord with the Creator's design. I *was* born this way: female. God did create me a woman. Please don't fall into the gnostic dualism that divides my spiritual life from the life I now live in my body. Christ became incarnate; my very body is now part of His body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. To act against its design in same-sex sexual action harms the dignity of my body. For my homosexually attracted brothers, same-sex sex harms their bodies even more because of their physiological design and the physical effects of going against that design. These bodies will be raised again. They matter.

3. I wish you knew that you aren't helping me follow Jesus either by demanding that my attractions change or by not allowing them to change. No one can promise me that my attractions will change. Jesus certainly didn't. But don't deny me that possibility either. (Especially if I'm an adolescent!) Both secular science and human experience attest to sexual fluidity and the potential for change.

4. I wish you knew a better way to define "change." Over many years, my experience of same-sex attraction went from being a continual fire to an occasional flicker. A man who still experiences same-sex attraction but is happily married to a woman, where he saw no possibility of a heterosexual relationship before, has indeed changed.

5. I wish you knew that I should be credited with the same moral agency and responsibility as everyone else in the Christian community. If unmarried heterosexuals are called to celibacy and are presumed in Christ to have the power to live out His commands, then so should I be. To treat me according to a different standard is to lower my dignity before God. I too am called to be holy.

6. I wish you knew that God teaches more about homosexual conduct than "Don't." He *does* teach that, but the truth about the body, sex, and the design and *telos* of creation reveals so much more.

7. I wish you knew that it honors neither God, nor me, to apologize for His plan or design. I appreciate empathy for the pain my misdirected longings may cause, but God is not arbitrarily withholding something good from me. He is showing me what leads to life and human flourishing and is keeping me from that which will harm me. "Let love be without dissimulation." Love me and tell me the truth.

May I make two requests? Continue to love me, but remember that you cannot be more merciful than God. It isn't mercy to affirm same-sex acts as good. Practice compassion according to the root meaning of "compassion": *Suffer with me.* Don't compromise truth; help me to live in harmony with it.

I'm asking you to help me take up my cross and follow Jesus.

Jean Lloyd, PhD, is a teacher and a happily married mother of two young children.

[1] Understand the significance of the twin studies. Identical twins should have 100 percent concordance for sexual orientation if it is genetically predetermined and involves no post-natal factors. In fact, these concordance rates are quite low. See, for example, Bailey, J. M., Dunne, M. P., & Martin, N. G. (2000). "Genetic and environmental influences on sexual orientation and its correlates in an Australian twin sample." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *78*, pp. 524-36.

http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/12/14149/ (Accessed 4/13/15)

Appendix D

Sermon: "Why Are Sexual Sins So Significant?"

NOTE: This sermon was first delivered at Christ Church of Oak Brook in Oak Brook, Illinois. Permission is granted to use it in any way that may be helpful to your church or in any other venue in which you are proclaiming God's Word.

Why Are Sexual Sins So Significant?
Rev. Edward D. Seely, Ph.D.
Leviticus 18:1-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20
Text: 1 Corinthians 6:16 "The two will become one flesh."

INTRODUCTION

A. On our recent church history tour I was speaking with a European who was wondering why we in the United States make such big fuss over moral issues. He said almost word for word what you and I have heard many others say, "What's the big deal about adultery?! It's no bigger sin than gossip and all the others!"

1. If that's so, why don't the newspapers report on page 1 when a movie star or some other celebrity gossips, as they do when such a person "has an affair?"

2. The answer media people give to that question is that we are much more interested in, and likely to purchase a paper about, such a person committing adultery or fornication than if he or she is gossiping.

3. Clearly, there is something about sex that taps deeply into the core of our very being.
   a. Furthermore, we ignore this reality at our peril, as we read in our text.
   b. To hold to the fashion that sex sins are "no big deal" or even "not sins at all," as many are wont to say, is
      - to listen more to the prince of this world
      - than to the Owner and Ruler of the universe
        - who made us as we are,
        - who knows us thoroughly,
        - whose image we bear,
        - and who has called us to be holy, <u>as</u> <u>he</u> <u>is</u> <u>holy</u>.

4. It is, therefore, understandable how the world can be confused about this issue, indeed why some acts should even be called sins, but there should be no confusion in this regard in the church. "Do not be deceived," Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6:9.

B. Why, then, are sex sins so different, treated by God in his Word with special attention?

1. To phrase the question in this way makes certain assumptions which need clarification to frame our reflections in the moments ahead.
    a. First, God has not told us all his reasons for the commandments he has given us.
        1) When he tells us not to do something, we simply trust he knows better and then obey him. (Trust and obey, as we just sang; there's no other way.)
        2) This is easily understood on the human plane: parents often establish rules the reasons for which children cannot always understand, but they trust the parent loves them and has their best interests in mind.
    b. Second, in this short time we obviously cannot say all that could be said on this subject.
    c. Third, while God wants all people to keep themselves from such behaviors, his commands are given to his people, to the church, for several reasons, one of which is to more effectively accomplish the calling, the mission, he has given us.
        1) Life would be much more enjoyable in our society if everyone obeyed God's commands. You have to look no farther than the person whose spouse has just left him or her for another to support that assumption; countless other examples could easily be given. This is why the Psalmist said that the commands of the Lord, far from being onerous, are "more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb…in keeping them there is great reward." (19:8-11) In Psalm 119 from the depths of his soul he cried out, "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long….Your commands make me wiser than my enemies [and] I have more insight than all my teachers". (vss. 97-99)
        2) God has given this awareness to his people who he commands to live in these ways for a number of obvious reasons, one of which is to more effectively accomplish the calling, the mission he has given us.

2. Thus, the Holy Spirit has revealed to Moses and Paul, as well as to other writers of the Bible, vital aspects of this subject, and it is important, especially in this day in our culture, that we examine them closely—and act on them!

3. Why, then, are sex sins so significant?

I. They defile the one who does them. (Leviticus 18, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

A. All these commands are based on who God is, on what kind of God we have, the character of the God with whom we have to deal.

1. The commands in our Old Testament text are framed within the statements, "I am the LORD your God."
2. Further, at the end of the passage we read is another command: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

3. Friends, the holiness of God is an awesome matter.
    a. At the heart of the word holy is the concept of separateness from that which is evil. God, who is holy, will not fellowship with sin. (1 Corinthians 6:13b-20 [cf. Isaiah 59:2; 1 Peter 3:7)
    b. When the prophet, Isaiah, was given a vision of God (chapter 6) he was awestruck and referred to the LORD not just as holy but as holy, holy, holy. The only way the Hebrew language has for expressing the superlative is to repeat a word three times. Thus, Isaiah is saying the LORD is Most Holy, i.e., he is uncommon, most pure and separate from evil.

4. In this light we are better able to understand our New Testament text.

B. Follow along with me in the text if you will: The Apostle Paul begins, "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God?"

1. The original Greek word translated "wicked" means "unrighteous," that is, those who have not been credited with the merits of Christ's righteousness.
    - The following behaviors are habitual, as part of a lifestyle of continuous disobedience; they display evidence that the person has not had the new birth, the new nature, and identified with Christ.

2. Paul goes on to give examples of the unrighteous people who will not inherit the Kingdom of God:
    a. the sexually immoral: The Greek word here is *pornoi*, from which our word pornography comes, is often translated fornicators or fornication, and refers to all forms of sex outside marriage;
    b. idolaters:
        1) It is noteworthy that Paul includes idolatry in the middle of a list of sexual sins. Why did the Lord lead him to do that?
        2) I suggest this might be one way of indicating that at the core of sexual misconduct is a spiritual problem, which is why many people see nothing wrong with sex outside a marriage commitment.
        3) Remember other places in Scripture, e.g., in the Prophet Jeremiah (e.g., 3:6-20) when God accuses his people of worshipping false idols, he uses the metaphor of committing adultery, thus sending a powerful message that they are not worshipping and following him.
    c. Adulterers: self-explanatory;
    d. male prostitutes and homosexual offenders: on this matter I refer you to my comments in the current issue of the Newsletter; [all of which are contained in this book]
    e. thieves: the Greek word (*kleptai*, the basis of our word, kleptomania) means petty pilfering, including shoplifting.
    f. greedy,
    g. drunkards,

h. slanderers,
i. swindlers.

C. Again, these are habitual behaviors characteristic of a lifestyle in opposition to God's will, therefore precluding the one who engages in such from the kingdom of God.

1. Now notice something very important: Paul next says, "And that is what some of you **were**."

2. Three clear and unmistakable points leap out at us:
   a. It is possible to change.
   b. Reformed sinners will be saved.
   c. These behaviors are not approved by God: they are sins to be avoided by people holy to him.

3. "But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."
   a. "But" is a big word in the Bible, often as here showing the huge and eternally significant contrast to follow.
   b. The words washed, sanctified, and justified can be seen as three different dimensions of the same spiritual experience. The outstanding Princeton theologian, Charles Hodge, following the Reformation giant, John Calvin, writes, the "idea is that they had been converted, or completely changed. They had put off the old [nature] and put on the new [nature]. Their sins, considered as filth, had been washed away; considered as pollution, they had been purged or purified; considered as guilt, they had been covered with the righteousness of God."

4. Further, that this occurred "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" means to be done in his authority and character, through his all-sufficient power and contrastingly different moral being.

5. Note also that this change has come "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."
   a. Here we have another New Testament text where all three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned together and involved in our salvation.
   b. Depending on the context the word God sometimes refers to the Father, as here, and sometimes to what is called the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
   c. The new nature that produces behavior and work pleasing to God in contrast to the catalogue of sins Paul has just listed, comes from the operation of the Holy Spirit in the authority and character of the Lord Jesus Christ.
   d. You see, there is no excuse for continuing in these sins.

1) In this age of biology people are looking for genetic causes for so much of human behavior, including these sins.
2) Now that the human genome has been mapped, there is still no scientific evidence of any genetic cause to these or other sins. I don't expect there ever will be any, but the question is a moot one anyway.
3) The clear teaching of the Bible is that these sins are
   a) against God's will
   b) defile those who do them,
   c) and are able to be overcome in the power and character of the Lord Jesus Christ.
   d) Yet, while the defilement of sin can be overcome in Christ, the consequences of sins usually remain.
      1- For example, though Samson was forgiven by God, the blindness that resulted from his disobedience remained for the rest of his life.
      2- Thus, sins, and sexual sins in particular,

II. endanger the one who does them. (1 Corinthians 6:12, 13, 18)

A. Human beings crave freedom, and Americans especially. One didn't have to listen long to convention reports this past week to observe how deeply people feel about freedom.

1. The Corinthians were no different. The value system of the cosmopolitan metropolis of about 650,000 people was pagan to the core. Over a thousand cult prostitutes plied their trade with those who came to worship Artemis, the goddess of love.
   a. When Paul was in Corinth he preached the Gospel of true freedom in Christ, that in contrast to all other religions they did not have to earn their salvation by doing certain things, to appease angry and capricious gods, especially not the immoral things that were part of their religion.
   b. The Corinthinans heard the first part (about freedom) but missed the last point (about immorality).

2. Focusing on the freedom they were lax on certain matters which Paul is addressing in verses 12 following, quoting from them in his reply.
   a. Misapplying the principle of Christian freedom, the Corinthians say "everything is permissible," but Paul gently leads them beyond, beginning with a point they can understand: expediency, e.g., not all things (speaking of matters that are not intrinsically wrong) not all of them are beneficial.
      - That is, there are some things that are not expressly forbidden for a believer, but because of their results it is unwise to do them. He thus easily establishes that freedom has its limits.

- How much more, then, is it expedient to avoid practices that are intrinsically wrong and downright dangerous!
- One does not have to look far for a contemporary example.
    1) Illustrations of sexual sins against the body abound with the many sexually transmitted diseases (50 at last count) which are epidemic in our country and elsewhere in the world today and some of which were in Paul's time.
        a) Two of the most common and most dangerous STDs today are chlamydia and the human papillomavirus (HPV).
        b) OBGYN specialist, Dr. Joe McIlheney has observed that the contagion is such that people who have "sex outside marriage with someone who has had sex before, will almost always get a sexually transmitted disease." Dr. McIlhaney clarified his statement to mean that this is true unless the person who has had sex before has received treatment for any STDs he or she has contracted.
        c) However, people usually do not know they have an STD. Furthermore, strong research evidence exists to show that males and females often lie about their past and ongoing sexual experiences.
        d) The phenomenon of babies being born with syphilis has increased 20 times just since the 1970's. When untreated, syphilis appears to go away but reappears after age 50 resulting in dementia.
        e) HPV causes cancer and many other serious effects. Until recently it caused more deaths than AIDS.
        f) Since God loves the people he created, and since he knows and wants to spare them (us) the trauma resulting from certain behaviors, it is easy to see why he would provide laws, the following of which would prevent such anguish.
    2) Many other examples could be given were time available. To cite just one example: significantly higher levels of depression.
    3) When such sins are discovered those who practice them experience an often excruciating distress.
        - In one office cameras were installed on top of each computer terminal to allow employees to send video e-mail messages. A woman, who was having an affair with a married co-worker, decided one day to send him a spicy message. So she turned on the camera and went into a striptease while vividly describing the night they would have during their illicit rendezvous at their favorite hotel.

- A major problem developed, however, when she mistakenly clicked on the wrong distribution list as she went to send the message. Instead of transmitting it to her paramour, she sent it to 480 people throughout the company!
- Freedom does have its limits; not everything is beneficial, Paul writes. Sin is destructive and God wants to spare his people from such torment.

b. Next, the apostle helps the Corinthians see that as a Christian he will not allow himself to be controlled by anything. One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is self-control.
c. Then he takes up an argument the Corinthians had advanced from analogy: in essence, fornication is as natural as eating.
   1) Paul points out the flaws in this logic with dispatch: there is no such connection between the body and unmarried sex as exists between the stomach and food.
   2) Both the stomach and food are temporary; the Lord will do away with both of them. (v. 13) To those who mock, advise them to keep the eternal perspective: God will bring an end to the current age. Life is much more than "eat, drink, and be merry."
d. The misuse of freedom has caused human beings disaster ever since Adam and Eve, not only for individuals but corporately as well.

B. Sexual sins also endanger and cost our whole society.

1. The national news media are beginning to report on the high cost to society of STD's…and of divorce.
   - You and I pay for the sexual sins people commit. For just one example as seen in the annual publication, *Medicare & You*, we read the following in the section, "Sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening and counseling:"

> Medicare covers STI screenings for chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and Hepatitis B. These screenings are covered…for certain people who are at increased risk for an STI when the tests are ordered by a primary care doctor or other primary care practitioner. Medicare overs these tests once every 12 months or at certain times during pregnancy.
>
> Medicare also covers up to 2 individual, 20—30 minute, face-to-face high-intensity behavioral counseling sessions each year for sexually active adults at increased risk for STIs. Medicare will only cover these counseling sessions if they're provided by

> a primary care doctor or other primary care practitioner and take place in a primary care setting (like a doctor's office)….
>
> You pay nothing [as an individual receiving the treatment, but society surely pays] for these services if the primary care doctor or other qualified primary care practitioner accepts assignment.[751]

- How much divorce would there be if adultery were not practiced?!

2. The state of Illinois recognizes the threat in extramarital sex.
   - Adultery, fornication, incest, and many other deviant sex acts are listed in the Illinois Criminal Code as sex offenses. The code includes a statement about "the community's interest in preserving the monogamous marriage and family institution which is the current basis of our social and moral structure." (Division I, Title III, Part B, Article 11)
   - Monogamous heterosexual marriage is the norm for our state and is what the Illinois School Code requires our public school teachers to teach their students in sex education classes. (Cf. above 9.c.) In fact, "…common law marriages are not recognized in Illinois; cohabitation alone can never result in a valid marriage;" (750 ILCS 5/212 Prohibited Marriages)

3. We should support our teachers on this matter. Cohabitation is a disaster. I'll not repeat here what I've written in a *Newsletter* article but just note that those who cohabit rather than marry typically experience significantly higher levels of
   - conflict,
   - violence,
   - insecurity, and
   - ill health, among many other sad outcomes. They also
   - break their relationships much more frequently
     - during cohabitation (when this happens trauma similar to divorce is felt),
     - and if they marry, they are much more likely to divorce.
     - According to a recent study by sociologists at the University of California, Irvine, reported in the July issue of *The Family in America: New Research*, cohabitors are also much more likely to be unfaithful to their partners, whether they marry or not.

[751] Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, "Sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening and counseling," Medicare & You 2016, p. 63.

4. In his book, *The Death of Outrage,* William Bennett wisely writes, "The act of sex has complicated and profound repercussions. To deny this, to consider it to be something less special and powerful than it is, is a dodge and a lie. Sexual indiscipline can be a threat to the stability of crucial human affairs. That is one reason why we seek to put it under ritual and marriage vow."

C. Paul explains in our text that "all other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (v. 18)

1. He or she thus endangers him or herself in the ways we've just been considering and in other ways we'll examine in a moment.

2. These other ways involve how God created our body. To use our body in ways contrary to God's will is also to

III. hinder our relationship with the Lord. (Leviticus 18, 19:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:13b-20; cf. Isaiah 59:2; John 15:1 Peter 3:7)

A. In verse 13 ff. Paul gives us information about the human body that is crucial to the issue before us and necessary to know for our own sexuality and in order to help others avoid peril.

1. He says, "The body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."
   a. The word he uses for body is *soma*, from which we obtain our word somatic.
   b. This word for body refers to the whole personality in relationship with God. The Bible portrays a person as being a holistic entity so that his or her body and spirit are one. A person's *soma* is not simply an external part of him or herself; he or she doesn't just have a body but is a body that is animated with his or her spirit, the life principle which controls the body.
      - The words soul and spirit are used interchangeably in the Bible.
      - The holistic body is the essence of the human being's personality, not just an accidental or inferior appendage to be mistreated.
   c. The body has been designed to be related to Christ, including being the dwelling place of his Spirit, i.e., the Holy Spirit. This is **not** to say that Christ and the Spirit are the same, the whole being of God belongs to and is shared by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
   d. But it is the Holy Spirit who comes to dwell with one who believes in Christ.
      1) This reality is what Paul is referring to when he says, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?" and "he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit."

2) Further, Paul asks in verse 19, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God." HERE NOTICE TWO VERY IMPORTANT REALITIES:
   a) First, the word "body" is singular and refers to <u>you personally</u>, not plural meaning the whole church is the temple of the Holy Spirit, as in chapter 3:16 when he used a similar expression. That is, the Holy Spirit dwells <u>with</u> <u>you</u> in your soma, your body, your person as a whole.
      - Thus, your body is a temple of the <u>Holy</u> <u>Spirit</u>. **Think of that for a moment! I'm going to stop to let that thought <u>and</u> <u>its</u> <u>implications</u> seep deeper into your mind and heart!**
        - **Think: as one who trusts and obeys Christ, the Holy Spirit dwells within you.**
        - **What does that mean for**
          - **your purpose in life?**
          - **what you do and don't do and why?**
   b) Second, when Paul says your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, he uses the special Greek word, *naos*, which refers to the holiest part of the temple, the sanctuary where God dwelt. Paul did not use the word, *hieron*, which referred to the whole temple complex with its buildings and courts.

2. Now, this body of yours, Paul continues, is highly esteemed by the Lord, who took on a body for himself thus bringing great honor and dignity to the human body. You're known to an extent by whom you associate with, right?! This fact should be especially so for us who walk with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, Jesus' body was resurrected, as a first fruit of our own body's resurrection.
   - Therefore, we ought not deprecate and mistreat our body; it should not be abused.
   - **Nor should it be united with evil!**

3. The apostle quotes from the Old Testament, the creation account in Genesis 2, and explains that in the sexual union a man and a woman by God's design become one flesh.
   a. This unique bonding is a psychophysical and spiritual gluing of the two people together.
   b. It has been described well by educator, theologian, and pastor Donald Joy in the quote on the front of our worship folder today.
      - "The mystery of human attachment is so profound that it can't be understood merely in psychological terms. It includes biological, psychological, spiritual, even ethical dimensions. By pair bonding, I refer to that exclusive, lifelong, mutually attaching relationship that a woman and a man form one new entity, while

each retains individuality and integrity as a separate, distinct person. They together form a 'persona' both greater than, and different from, the sum of the two parts."

c. The shredding of this bond is the basis of the enormous pain in divorce as the two that have become one are torn and ripped apart.
d. But how beautiful this oneness is when done according to God's plan!

B. We are thus to honor God with our body (v. 20).

1. The actual word translated honor in the NIV is literally glorify.

2. One of the leading Bible scholars of our time and one I especially appreciate, Leon Morris, writes, "The prime motive in the service of the Christian must be not the accomplishing of purposes which seem to him to be desirable, but the glory of God…[and the tense of the Greek here clearly indicates that] Paul does not want the command to glorify God to be taken as something that does not matter. There is an urgency about it. Let there be no delay in obeying." We glorify God when we obey his commands. In so doing we testify strongly to the world regarding the One to whom we belong.

3. We honor God by teaching and modeling for our children that reserving sex for marriage, and in so doing obeying God's will, witnesses to our creation as bearers of his image (demonstrating our significant difference from and superiority to animals with their sex drives, most of which do it with any female available.)

C. Now contemplate in the light of what we've just been considering what happens when one engages in fornication, adultery, or prostitution.

1. If the person is a believer, he takes a temple in which the Holy, Holy, Holy, Holy Spirit resides and unites it with someone else in an unholy alliance that offends the very God of the universe!

2. "Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute?" Paul immediately answers his rhetorical question with a thunderous response: *me genoito*! "Never!" in our NIV translation, but it is a powerful exclamation in the Greek which the English words, "may it not be," only remotely convey.

3. "Do you not know," Paul continues, "that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh. But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit," a reference to our mystical union with Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the bodies of believers.

4. We can now see what is especially significant about sexual sins.

IV. They also thwart our calling. (1 Corinthians 6:20 b)

A. I am really talking about our identity here.

1. Paul says, "You are not your own; you were bought at a price", a very steep price: the suffering of the Son of God.

2. The Heidelberg Catechism, a product of the Reformation, puts it this way:
   - "What is your only comfort, in life and in death? That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that he protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him."

3. We have been saved for his service.
   a. This is our calling, the Latin word for which is *vocare*, the basis of our word vocation.
   b. In the Bible and in historic Christian theology our vocation is to be Christ's witnesses, to live and speak of him and his plan of salvation, including what he has done for us, and to extend God's kingdom.
      - Two courses being offered this fall will be especially helpful to you in this regard: one by Elder Bruce Buteyn and the other in Sherri Adam's ministry. The insert in the September Newsletter and the education office will have further information.

4. If this is our message, our method must be congruent.
   a. As Dr. Harley Swiggum, author of the *Bethel Series*, has said, "You can't attract people to Christ if you're living your life in the gutter." It just doesn't work. It's a colossal disconnect and causes us to fail the Lord.
   b. "Be without reproach," Paul tells Timothy to admonish his people.
      - Not long ago a fellow came to my office and asked me to officiate at his wedding. In our discussion he revealed to me that he and his fiance were living together to save money. He hastened to tell me that they were not engaging in sex. Now I've been around long enough to know that a very strong likelihood exists that that wasn't true.
      - I said, there is another problem with what you are doing. Even if you aren't having sex, the neighbors and your friends and relatives

who know you are a Christian, and whom you have the greatest opportunity to reach for Christ, know what you are doing, and it looks to them like you are doing what men and women, who live together as you are, do in fact do. Is not what you are doing undermining your witness?

- I shared with him Paul's admonition to Timothy and what he wrote to the Ephesians in the 5th chapter: "…among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality (*porneia*, the same word in our text), or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."
- Do not compromise your calling.
- To strengthen his witness for Christ this person told me he would leave and move in with a relative until the wedding. And he did.

c. How are you doing in withstanding the temptation to engage in sexual immorality?

V. If your friend or loved one needs support, God provides all-sufficient help to overcome sexual sins and all others. (1 Corinthians 6:11-20; 10:13)

A. If sexual sins are not a temptation for you,

1. Thank God and

2. Pray for others you know who are tempted. Remember that the prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective, as James wrote.

B. If sexual sins are a temptation and/or if you have committed such a sin,

1. "Flee from sexual immorality," Paul writes to the Corinthians and to us. (V. 18) The verb is in the present imperative Greek tense which means to do so continuously and repeatedly.
   a. We know where we're vulnerable; for the Lord's sake, let us not play with danger. The wise person thinks ahead; as much as possible avoid letting dangerous situations even occur.
   b. Avoid flirting. Many misunderstand mixed messages.

2. Remember we are created by God with a natural attraction to the opposite gender. When a sexually mature man and woman (including teen-agers) are together alone, there is a dynamic that is present which, if naively ignored or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally, can and often has led to disaster.

3. Turn to the Lord for help.
   a. Rely on him who will provide all you need to overcome temptation. A few chapters following our text for this morning Paul wrote, "No

temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so you can stand up under it." (10:13)

- Remember, you are not an independent contractor, you belong to God who loves you and bought (redeemed) you at a great cost to himself. (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) He wants to help us; pray for him to help overcome temptation when it arises, and keep on asking!

b. The Lord understands. As we read in Hebrews 4, "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (vss.15-16)

c. If you have fallen into sin, repent and remember Jesus' gracious words to the woman caught in adultery, "Go now and leave your life of sin." (John 8:11)

d. Commit or recommit yourself to obeying the Lord.

e. Commit or recommit yourself to practicing the spiritual disciplines, especially

1) reading Scripture daily

2) praying for all involved and affected by your decisions and actions. For example, if you are sexually attracted to someone who is married, pray also for his or her spouse and for their marriage. Pray, and not just once, for God's help to overcome the situation.

- Pray also for the holiness and purity of the church, that we all may witness for Christ with holy lives that honor and glorify him. The world is watching us to see if what we say is genuine and authentic, i.e., backed up with actions. (1 Peter 2:12)

4. If you're a teen-ager with raging hormones, follow the model of Joseph, who was likely a teen-ager himself when the beautiful wife of Potiphar, propositioned him repeatedly when no one was around.

- Remembering who he was he said, "How…could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" Follow his thinking and what he does as in chapter 39 of Genesis; ignore the portrayal in Webber and Rice's *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

5. Turn to others for help and be open to help from unexpected sources.

a. Paul often told the churches to "encourage one another and build each other up." (E.g., 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

b. He told the Corinthians to "submit to [those in the church who were mature] and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it." (1 Corinthians 16:16)

c. Sometimes God's people have to admonish one another (e.g., Colossians 3:16) so as to avoid sharing in one's guilt (Leviticus 19:17b), but it should be done always in love (Ephesians 4:15).

6. Much more could be said on this subject.
   - For those of you who would like to join me to discuss this sermon, to hear more, or to document what I am saying, I invite you to meet in Room 260 next Sunday at 9:30. It'll be in the calendar in the *resources* section of your worship folder next Sunday.

CONCLUSION

A. Let all of us pray for the holiness and purity of the church, the people of Christ called to be holy, set apart for being his witnesses, effectively backing up our words with corresponding deeds.

B. Remember whose you are, and that you belong to him, who paid a high price to redeem you from slavery to sin.

C. Therefore, honor, glorify, God…with your body.

A suggestion: Consider adding in future uses of this sermon the following quote from the declaration, "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," of the alliance of the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestants in February 2015:

Our sexual acts have spiritual and moral dimensions; they are not merely physical or biological. The Old Testament often uses sexual imagery to describe how well or how poorly we are living our relationship to God (marital fidelity, nuptial joy, fertility, harlotry, sexual defilement, and childlessness). For good or ill, our sexual acts affect the image of God we bear. What we do sexually either honors or dishonors the imprint of the divine that is uniquely borne by human beings. As Jesus teaches, this is even true of sexual desire: "Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Thus Christians, instructed by the Lord, have, from the earliest days of the Church, taught an ethic of sexual self-discipline, recognizing that sex involves our souls as well as our bodies.

http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2 (Accessed 3/12/15)

Appendix E

How Loving Am I? A Self-Check (with Help)

The main purpose of this book has been to provide another resource for us to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and to do so in particular on the subject of what God's will is concerning homosexuality. The preceding pages contain much information pertaining to the truth on what God's will is about this subject. Included in the book also has been information on what the love he commands (Matthew 5:44; John 13:34-35) involves. We saw that the Holy Spirit, speaking through the Apostle Paul, defines that love for us in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. So I trust the book has supplied the information we need to be loving in all circumstances, and in particular pertaining to our conversations with homosexual people and others about God's will concerning homosexuality.

But knowing is only the beginning. As we've seen God expects, indeed requires, us to put into practice in our daily lives the love he commands his people to do. It is thus first and foremost behavioral; affect follows.

Since the Bible (1 Corinthians 13:12), fellow human beings, and our consciences on occasion, inform us that there is a disconnect between how we perceive ourselves and how others see us, many years ago I brought together God's Word and social science in the form of the questionnaire below to bridge that gap for us.

HOW LOVING AM I?

(According to I Corinthians 13:4-7; NASB, RSV, NIV)

	Characteristics of Love	Little or No Performance				High Performance
1	Is patient	0	1	2	3	4
2	Is kind	0	1	2	3	4
3	Is not envious	0	1	2	3	4
4	Does not brag	0	1	2	3	4
5	Is not arrogant	0	1	2	3	4
6	Is not rude	0	1	2	3	4
7	Does not insist on own way	0	1	2	3	4
8	Is not easily angered	0	1	2	3	4
9	Keeps no record of wrongs	0	1	2	3	4
10	Does not rejoice in wrongdoing	0	1	2	3	4
11	Rejoices in the truth	0	1	2	3	4
12	Bears all things	0	1	2	3	4
13	Believes all things	0	1	2	3	4
14	Hopes all things	0	1	2	3	4
15	Endures all things	0	1	2	3	4

I've listed the behaviors included in the definition of *agape* love as recorded by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. This is the same word for love that Jesus used when he commanded his disciples to love in the Matthew and John texts. The words are drawn from the three modern English translations indicated. I used the Greek text to decide which of the translations to place in the chart/questionnaire; for each I chose the English translation that I believe comes the closest to the meaning of the original Greek word.

Drawing on social science I've placed alongside each of these behavioral aspects of love a Likert scale that we can use to evaluate how well we are actually doing in living out this love the Lord expects of us whom he has called to be his witnesses. Obviously, four is the objective, but in the light of Romans 3:23 we are neither surprised nor discouraged with a score less than four.

I suggest you start out, as I did, by giving a copy of this questionnaire to family and friends who are strong enough to give us the feedback we need to hear rather than necessarily what we'd like to hear. When you give it to others, be sure to tell them not to sign their name; we genuinely want their completely honest feedback in order to help us grow in Christ and serve him more effectively. When they hear that they are doing this for the Lord and that your motivation is for that purpose, they'll feel more comfortable in providing accurate rather than flattering but counterproductive responses.

If you want to see how you're doing outside the friendly confines of family and kindred spirits, give a copy of this questionnaire to others. I've given it to classes I've taught. If you are up for it, consider giving it to some homosexuals with whom you work or with whom you have other connections, especially those with whom you've been discussing this issue. Ask them not to sign their name but to put it anonymously in your mailbox, on your desk, or in some other location where you'll find it. As they see your commitment to maturing in Christ-likeness, it may have a significant effect on your future conversations and relationships with them.

May God bless us all as we try to become ever more like Christ Jesus. Let us continue to ask for God's help to speak the truth in love always, and in particular as we try to answer the question of what is his will concerning homosexuality.

This book started out as an essay that was first published in an abridged form as an article in the August 2000 issue of the *Christ Church Newsletter* at Christ Church of Oak Brook in Oak Brook, Illinois. Periodic updates have led to the present version. The article was part of an ongoing series of theological subjects in a column called "From Acorn to Oak" which appeared monthly in the *Newsletter*. Copyright © 2000, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2021 by Edward D. Seely. Permission to copy and distribute with acknowledgment in whole or in part worldwide is granted.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Edward D. Seely, Ph.D.



Edward Seely is a retired pastor and college and seminary professor. He was born and raised in New York State and ordained in 1966 in the Reformed Church in America, the oldest Protestant denomination in the United States with a continuous ministry since 1628.

He served churches professionally in the Midwestern United States for 37 years, specializing in the educational aspect of the ministry, during which time he also taught as Adjunct Instructor in Religious Education at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan. During his years in church ministry he worked as a minister of education, including youth work in the early years of his ministry and as a supervisor and mentor of youth ministers. Most of his ministry in the church was in adult education and as a worship leader. His integration of historic Christian systematic theology with church ministry was, and continues to be, a hallmark of his work.

He's traveled widely, including conducting teaching tours to the lands of the Bible and church history in the Middle East and Europe as part of his work for over 24 years as Minister of Education at Christ Church of Oak Brook in Oak Brook, Illinois, which conferred upon him the honor Pastor of Education Emeritus. He's taught at pastors' seminars in the United States throughout most of his ministry and also in Africa, Asia, Mexico, and Russia.

The last five years before retiring in 2007 he taught in Grand Rapids, Michigan as Adjunct Professor of Education at Calvin College and in the education department at Calvin Theological Seminary, where upon retirement he was granted the honor of Adjunct Professor in Educational Ministries Emeritus. In addition to teaching general education courses at the seminary, he taught youth ministry there and at the college, where he was also ministry advisor for students who wanted to study for professional ministry. While at Calvin he also served as founder and Manager of the Ministry Resource Center with the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. The Ministry Resource Center is a permanent special collection of The Hekman Library and is jointly sponsored by Calvin College and Calvin Seminary.

He's written several books and contributed to several other books. His published books include *Teaching Early Adolescents Creatively* (Westminster Press). He has written chapters in several other books and many articles and essays in both the popular and scholarly literature, including a two-year column, "Tips for Teachers," in *The Church Herald* and an ongoing column, *From Acorn to Oak*, in other church publications.

He and his wife, Carol, were married over 48 years until her death when the Lord brought her home to heaven. He is grateful to God for her; Carol was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, partner in life and ministry, and his best friend, volunteering countless hours in the churches they served together with their family and at Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, where Carol also had a volunteer ministry teaching English as a Second Language to international students as she did in Chicago at Christ Church of Oak Brook for most of a quarter of a century. They are the parents of two children and two grandchildren.

His priority remains their family, serving in his local church home, and continuing to write. His writing includes aspects of church education ministry and a manual for teaching Christian worship in and for the church, as part of his continued relationship with the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship as a research associate. He has taught this manual in Africa, Mexico, and other countries in the two-thirds world. He has several other writing projects, including his two websites, www.fromacorntooak12.com or www.edwardseely.com and an academic website at https://seelyedward.academia.edu/. He's active in other services for the global church in the extension and nurture of God's kingdom. He regularly engages means of participating in dialogue with others in the public square, locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.

Dr. Seely has been active in interdenominational church and civic work. He was elected to membership in the scientific honor society of Phi Kappa Phi and the educational honor society of Phi Delta Kappa.

Dr. Seely received his B.A. degree in English from Hope College in 1963 followed by degrees at Western Theological Seminary—1966 B.D. (M.Div.), Theology; Western Theological Seminary—1970 Th.M., Religious Education, Systematic Theology; Michigan State University—1980 Ph.D., Curriculum Research.

Tags: Adoption; AIDS; Bible; bisexual; children; church; church leadership; church membership; creation; culture; discussion questions, ex-gay; Exodus Global Alliance; free book; gay marriage; genetics; gift of singleness; God's will; government; HIV; homosexual agenda; homosexuality; hope; identity; Jesus Christ; judging; lesbians; LGBTQ; logic; love; marriage; moral action; pastors; questioning; same-sex marriage; same-sex wedding; parenting; sacraments; science; society; SSA; STDs; teachers; teen-agers; third way; transgender; truth; violence; wedding attendance; youth

Description: This book is the second edition of the first volume published in 2015. It contains much additional information for church leaders and others to speak the truth in love about homosexuality in the church and in society. The truth about the LGBTQ+ lifestyle and agenda is explained in the light of God's special revelation in the Bible and God's general revelation, a key aspect of which is in careful scientific research in the natural and social sciences. (Cf. Romans 1:20)