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Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

—Proverbs 18:10

Homosexuality

For four years, I lived in Ithaca, NY. It’s a progressive college town, in the liberal Northeast. It had, at the time, one of only three mayors in the entire nation who were actual members of the Socialist party.

Ithaca was well-known as a “gay friendly” town, and one simply got accustomed to confronting homosexuality at every turn. Most in the town were quite proud of it.

But it is an indication of just how successful the modern homosexual agenda has been, to see homosexuality tolerated and even celebrated in a small Southern community like Lake Wales.

I have wanted to preach on it for a while, but feel that some things are not appropriate for discussion in services, especially with kids present. As the apostle Paul said, “it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret” (Eph. 5:12). Sometimes, airtime lends credibility.

Still, I don’t think it is beneficial to avoid the topic. In fact, in the previous verse Paul said, “do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them” (v. 11).

For the sake of space, I am going to leave aside all discussion of public policy issues, and whether or not it is beneficial in a free republic to expect government to enforce morality. I am also going to leave aside all mention of the formidable homosexual agenda and its efforts through media, programming, education, questionable science, and litigation, to bend the populace toward acceptance. These are important topics, but I will limit myself simply to a question that trumps all of the above: What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

Homosexuality in the Bible

God's will toward homosexuality is crystal clear. In Genesis 1:27 God created man "male and female" and decreed in 2:21–25 "a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife." God designed them to be sexually compatible; and moreover, that they would be perfect counterparts in a family relationship (2:18) and naturally capable of reproduction.

Romans 1:22–28 suggests that homosexuality arises from a rejection of God. The Apostle Paul says,

God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

And this, by the way, was nothing new in Paul's day. Homosexuality had become so rampant in the ancient valley of Sodom that God was forced to destroy the place with fire and brimstone. And that is just 19 chapters into the Bible; just 10 chapters after the flood!

God said plainly in the Law of Moses,

You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion. Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled (Leviticus 18:22–24, *cf.* 20:13).

And, God declares in the New Testament,

Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9–10).

And Paul was not out of his element when he said this. Archaeological discoveries make it clear that the Greek cities Paul preached in were a lot more like Ithaca than Lake Wales. Paul knew about homosexuality very well, encountered it often in an atmosphere of acceptability, even celebration (many powerful men, officials, and Caesars publicly kept boys or young men for their indulgence). Yet, Paul still prohibited it. He demanded repentance of it; in the next verse he said, “Such were some of you, but you were washed...” (1 Cor. 6:11).

Christian Homosexuals?

Most homosexuals and progressives simply dismiss the Bible as out of date or wrongheaded. That’s fine; at least that is consistent.

But some wish to maintain a homosexual lifestyle and still cling to Christianity. There is, for example, a book entitled *Just As I Am; A Practical Guide to Being Out, Proud, and Christian*. It is only through the craziest exegetical somersaults that one can justify homosexuality with the Bible; but that doesn’t stop them from trying. Their ranks now include many large denominations, such as the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans, who approvingly ordain openly homosexual pastors. How is this justification accomplished?

One way is to play the culture card; to suggest that the Bible is a product of its culture and has no moral authority to speak on modern life. This is not a fair approach to Scripture on many counts. The Bible is inspired and eternal. To reject a negative passage requires one to reject all positive passages on the person and mission of Jesus Christ.

Another way is to try to read homosexuality into a handful of passages. Sure, one can view 2 Samuel 1:26 with kinky overtones, as David remembers Jonathan, “your love to me was more wonderful than the love of women.” But that’s not at all what David was suggesting. Some even try to get something crass out of the scene between Jesus and John, “there was reclining on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). These efforts are just stupid, because they ignore the greater context of the passages already cited.

Another way is to redefine God’s condemnation of homosexuality as a condemnation of denying one’s self; that is, to view homosexuality like reversed polarity on a magnet—everything must now be viewed backwards. For example, Lev. 18:22 says, “you shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female.” “Well,” the argument goes, “I am a homosexual. So, for me to lie with a male is not to lie with a male as one lies with a female. It’s the opposite. So actually, for me, to lie with a *female* would be a perversion, because it’s denying my true nature. For me, engaging in a heterosexual act would be sinful.” Sorry, but this is just not a legitimate approach to Scripture, or frankly, to the dictionary. Homosexuality has a clear definition, and it is that act which the Bible condemns; not orientation, but behavior. Nor does God create one who must sin (1 Cor. 10:13, James 1:13–15).

I am sorry to say, this must be discussed openly. Progressives are making great inroads, and our culture continues to decline. We must teach ourselves and our children what the Bible says. —*John Guzzetta*

Quote of the Week:

“An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it so!” (Jeremiah 5:30–31).