

## Who Gets to Speak for God?

In recent decades homosexuality has gone from being illegal and taboo to legal and culturally accepted this is lauded as a victory for human rights. There are some, however, who seem to be resistant to progress - the church. Granted, many churches and Christians have embraced homosexuality as compatible with their faith and practice, but others have not. The question becomes, what does the Bible teach about homosexuality anyway?

### Claim #1: The Bible Hardly Even Mentions Homosexuality!

It is true that homosexuality does not fill a huge portion of the Bible's teachings, yet it is spoken about more often than you might think. It's discussed in Sodom where the men of the city want to rape angelic visitors. Similarly in Gibeah where the men of the city try to rape another man. When Israel drove out the inhabitants of Canaan, homosexuality is named as one of their sins. In the time of the Israelite kings, we have male cult prostitution an established practice. We see a prohibition against it in the Old Testament and numerous times in the New Testament. It's said that Jesus never taught against homosexuality but Jesus did. In Matthew 19 Jesus defines marriage between one man and one woman as the only God-ordained relationship for sexual intimacy.

### Claim #2: The Old Testament Commands are No Longer Binding

Leviticus 18:22 says, "you shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination (see also Leviticus 20:13). Everyone would agree that these commands in Leviticus are clear, but do we follow them today? Doesn't it also tell us not to eat pork or shellfish and not to wear mixed fabrics? Aren't some Christians hypocrites then?

Before we dismiss Leviticus, Jesus, and the apostles quote from this book and did not dismiss it. What must be asked is why would Jesus, the apostles, and Christians today obey some of the commands in Leviticus and ignore others? The answer is simple. Some commands in Leviticus have been repealed by God himself late in the Bible. God has made a number of covenants with his people and the new covenant, inaugurated by Jesus, changed the ceremonial and cultural portions of God's law. Jesus in Mark 7 declared all food clean (no more prohibition against pork or shellfish). Priests, Jewish customs of dress, circumcision, festivals, and Sabbaths, have all been repealed in the new covenant. However, the sexual ethic has never been repealed anywhere. God's moral law remains unchanged. In fact, his sexual ethic is repeated rather than repealed under the new covenant.

## Why Not Simply Personally Disagree and Not Judge?

While this is a common position among Christians, we can't be more loving or tolerant, or accepting than God is. God loves us in such a way that he desires to do something about sin, not leave us in it. It would be unloving for me not to warn you about danger when I know that what you're doing is going to bring great harm to you.

The truth is God is holy and just, meaning no sin can be tolerated in his presence. Whether pride, gluttony, lying, or homosexuality. The truth is that every single person has the same problem. Our sin (in its various types and degrees) separates us from the relationship with God that we were created for. God's love is demonstrated, not by changing his standards or redefining sin, but by sending his only Son Jesus to die and take the penalty that we rightly deserve. Your sins, no matter how small or great can be forgiven because God has intervened for you. Everyone everywhere is now called to turn from their sin and believe this good news,

All of us are going to face God in terms of judgment. He has arranged the terms of peace, not us. He knows when you will die and face him, we do not. Do not delay. Our lives are so very short and our lives are so precious to us. Do not ignore God speaking to you through his word but come to Jesus that you might have life, forgiveness, and the promise of being one of God's children for all eternity in his paradise.

If you have any other questions on this or other topics, we would love to hear from you, may God grant you grace.



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## Is God Against Homosexuals?

What Does the Bible Really Say About it?



### Claim #3: Homosexuality? What About Your Pride, Greed, and Gluttony?

1 Corinthians 6:9-19 says, "Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God" (see also 1 Timothy 1:8).

We can all see that this new covenant text condemns a wide range of practices. Do Christians make too much of homosexuality when there are so many other sins? Perhaps. Our culture has made homosexuality a big deal and while it's certainly not the biggest sin or an unforgivable sin, it is a sin nonetheless. To say the Bible doesn't call homosexuality a sin would be dishonest. All sin is sin.

### Claim #4: God Nowhere Condemns Committed, Loving, Homosexual Couples

Romans 1:26-27 says, "For this reason, God gave them up to dishonourable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and when consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error."

This description of the sin of homosexuality is sometimes said to describe pederasty (men having sex with boys) but it clearly says "men committing shameless acts with men." Others claim that the "unnaturalness" is when heterosexuals engage in homosexual activity. Again, no such indication comes.



### Claim #7: Christians Are on the Wrong Side of History!

Homosexuality is now accepted and continues to grow in its acceptance. Are Christians just behind the times on this? In response, are there any trends in the world today that you are against? How about increased wealth for the rich and poverty for the poor? The rise of terrorism? Increased fossil fuel development? The truth is everyone is against certain trends today and supportive of others. Yes, but weren't Christians supportive of slavery, flat earth, and a geocentric universe? Didn't they defend these things with the Bible and think that the Bible was clear on those things?!?

from the text but rather is imposed on it. Others claim that in Bible times there were no committed, loving, monogamous homosexual relationships so these prohibitions do not apply to today's partnerships. Again, this claim has no historical basis. Historical records show that homosexuality, including committed, loving partnerships, have been around for a long time, well before and during the time when these words were first written.

### Claim #5: How Can You Be Against Love?

Why are Christians so judgemental and against love? Why should you get to say who should and shouldn't love one another? The fact is, we all make judgments. We all would agree that a child and an adult, or a daughter and a father would be a wrong relationship - no matter how much they loved one another. The key is to define what love is.

We can't be more loving or tolerant or accepting than God, right? How does God define love? God shows his love in that while we were still sinners Jesus died for us (Romans 5:8). John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." What these texts are saying is that God demonstrated his love by dying for sin, not denying it. He provided rescue from our sin, not leaving us in it.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must lovingly warn all sinners and point them to the forgiveness and promise of change that God offers.



As you examine the truth behind these claims, however, there really isn't much there. The Bible uses sunrise and sunset, and so do you, but I'm not going to fault you for not being more accurate by saying, "That's a nice earth rotation!" Second, Galileo and Copernicus were lauded by the church. Their opposition came mainly from Aristotelian philosophers. Galileo himself said that he fell out of favor with the Pope, not because of his science, but because he portrayed the Pope unfavorably in one of his books. Third, with regard to slavery, it's true that the southern states defended the practice, but this was by no means the universal understanding.

### Claim #6: But I'm Born This Way!

I'm not going to argue that homosexuality is a choice rather than something you are born with. The simple fact is, we all are born with desires and impulses. Some of which we embrace, and some of which we fight against. To have a desire or impulse doesn't make it right and sinful.

We all wrestle with the desire to lie, to be angry, to steal, to be unfaithful to the ones we love, to quit our jobs or school, but we don't identify ourselves by these desires, rather we wage war against them (1 Peter 2:11)

How do we know which of our desire are right and which are wrong? We'll either interpret them through our culture's values or through God's values. Only God's values will lead to the good of all mankind.



In fact, Christians throughout the centuries have called for the abolition of slavery and it was abolished because of Christians and the Bible. This is much different from homosexuality where it has been universally understood to be prohibited by God until only very recently.

