

# What does God's Word say about homosexuality?

## Part 1b

### Opening Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, our ever sure defense against temptation and sin, we thank You that You love us enough to give us Your Ten Commandments by which to live and to call us to account for those sins, offering to us the comforting words of the Gospel of forgiveness and life and salvation. Use us as models and messengers of that message of Law and Gospel, of sin and grace, of failure and forgiveness. We ask this in the powerful name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!

### God's Word and God's Law

Before we look at the verses from Scripture that deal with the topic before us, it will be helpful to have a refresher course in the three types of Law that are contained in God's Word.

**CEREMONIAL:** These are the laws that were given to the Children of Israel, God's chosen ones. They were given for a specific group of people, at a specific time, and for a specific purpose. These laws are not meant for all people of all times.

**CIVIL:** The civil law was also given to the Children of Israel. The civil law had a different purpose than the ceremonial and dealt with different matters, especially those matters that pertained to government and citizenship. They too were not meant for all people of all time.

**MORAL:** The moral law is unlike the other two. It is not for a particular culture or people, but it is for all people. In fact, it was written on our hearts when we were created. The moral law can also be described as the natural law. That does not mean that by nature we want to keep the Law. Instead, according to our sinful nature, we desire to break the Law all the time. It is called the Natural Law, or Moral Law, because this is the way God created the world to operate.

It is this Moral Law that we deal with in the references below as we talk about the verses from Scripture that form and inform our understanding about homosexuality. What are those verses?

**Leviticus 18:22–24**

**Leviticus 20:13**

**Romans 1:26–27**

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11**

**1 Timothy 1:9–10**

What is made clear in the references above? \_\_\_\_\_

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**What does God's Word say about homosexuality? Part 1b continued**

We are happy to assure the repentant who are struggling against this sin that they have complete forgiveness through the blood of Christ. When Christ died for all of the sins of the whole world, He gained forgiveness for homosexual deeds, for homosexual desires, and for the inborn sinful nature that produces these sins (**1 Corinthians 6:11**).

With that said, let us look at the promise of the Gospel, which we will flesh out even more as this study progresses.

Sometimes this message of repentance and forgiveness is hard for us and others to hear, so we choose to say nothing. Sadly, without the speaking and hearing of the message of the Law and God's condemnation of all sin, there is no chance of repentance and the opportunity to share the soothing message of the Gospel and forgiveness of sins. Yes, it may sound as if we are trying to beat the person up regarding their sins, but only as they and we see our sins and repent of them, do we have the opportunity to know the comfort and assurance of the Gospel. If they (and we) do not see the hope of the Gospel or hear the message of forgiveness, they can very easily abandon all hope, especially as Satan tries to assure them that there is no hope for they are too bad or unlovable for God or anyone else to love. Before we get to that point or allow others to get to that point and believe those lies of Satan, let us flesh out the Good News and the promise of the Gospel, given to us through faith in the One who was "fleshed out" for us: taking on our flesh and blood to be like us in every way, except without sin, so that He could make the complete payment for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

What does God say to each of us, no matter what our sin is or how great or many we think them to be, in **1 Corinthians 6:11**? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is that important to us? \_\_\_\_\_

What a blessing from God it is when we, as redeemed sons and daughters of almighty God, are able to assure the repentant who are struggling against this and all sin that Christ died for the sins of the whole world and has earned complete forgiveness for all who believe! When Christ died for all of the sins of the whole world, He gained forgiveness for homosexual deeds, for homosexual desires, and for the inborn sinful nature that produces these sins (**1 Corinthians 6:11**) and every other sin, yours and mine included.

**Important Note**

Even though the expression of homosexual behavior IS a sin, the same is true of every other actual sin. Giving into the temptation and desire to drink too much IS also an actual sin. The same would be true of every other temptation and sin. The giving in to any temptation by thought, word,

or deed is where all sin takes place. Our Lord dealt with temptation all the time and was without sin. (See **Matthew 4:1-11** and **Hebrews 4:14-16**.)

Remember, the struggle with or temptation toward homosexual behavior is not an actual sin. It becomes an actual sin when we give into and act on the temptation. To give you one other example that may hit a little too close to home: Enjoying fine food (or any food for that matter) is not a sin until one eats himself to sickness or unhealthy weights or obesity. Then it is an actual sin.

How is this made clear in **1 Timothy 1:8-11**? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Is this true for everyone caught in sin, no matter what that sin may be? \_\_\_\_\_

"OK," you might say, "homosexuality is a sin. Those things Paul talks about with Timothy are sins, but I have never slapped my parents, murdered anyone, committed an adulterous act, or perjured myself in a court of law. Does this penalty still apply to me?" \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
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You will hear many times in this study that we dare never overemphasize one sin over another, and we dare never make any sin unimportant, even if it is my favorite one and the one I am addicted to. In fact, we should care more about all sin, and all people caught in those sins, including those hard sins to deal with like gossip, over-eating, lack of exercise, over-consumption of alcohol, use of tobacco products, and the like — sins that we no longer consider sins and thus don't deal with because they are sins I enjoy or sins that the members of my family are trapped in.

With that said, understand also that there are sins that are more dangerous than others, as Paul reminds us in **1 Corinthians 6:18-20** when he says: *Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

How does **Ezekiel 3:17-21** apply to everyone (us included) whom God has called to reach out to those caught in sin?

What is the bottom line from God's Word that cuts to the heart of the matter when we stop arguing back and forth? See **James 1:13-15**. \_\_\_\_\_  
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# For further study

Rev. Dr. A. L. Barry wrote a "What About..." pamphlet dealing with Homosexuality. This pamphlet along with many other pamphlets dealing with other teachings of the Bible and the church can be found at <http://www.lcms.org/belief-and-practice>

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has created a document entitled: "A Plan for Ministry to Homosexuals and Their Families" that lists five goals for ministry to homosexuals and their families. I share those five with you here and encourage you to read the complete document at <http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=508>.

## Goal One

To confront the individual with his or her sinfulness and call him or her to repentance.

## Goal Two

To assure the repentant sinner of forgiveness in Christ.

## Goal Three

To help the individual to rely on Christ's love and strength to abstain from homosexual behavior.

## Goal Four

To assure him or her of the acceptance of the church.

## Goal Five

To help the individual bear his or her burden without fear of recrimination and rejection by his or her sisters and brothers in Christ.

## What does God's Word say about homosexuality? Part 1b continued

Again, the conclusion, based on these passages of Scripture and despite popular opinion, is that homosexuality is contrary to the express will of God for His creation and is a sin. Let's approach this bottom line once again from another angle that may be helpful. How do **2 Timothy 4:1–5** and **Proverbs 27:7** play into this? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some examples from your own life? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some of these things that Satan, the Great Deceiver (**Revelation 12:9**) and the Father of Lies (**John 8:44b**), uses to tempt and lure and entice?

These things include: The sinful nature we are born with (Original Sin) and resulting weaknesses in our body and mind; the temptation of the world around us; the temptation and encouragement to sin by those around us, including at times our own brothers and sisters in Christ; our own sinful desires that James talked about; and, the direct temptation of Satan himself, the Great Deceiver (*And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world — he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.* Revelation 12:9), and the Father of Lies (*"When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."* John 8:44b).

All of these things Satan uses to lead us to sin, be it homosexual sin or whatever sin afflicts us.

Here again is how Pastor Michael Goeke says it as he shares with us a little more of his story:

"When we don't deal with the realities of life in the light of God's Word, we will revise God's Word to 'fit' our experiences. Head knowledge alone won't suffice when our feelings grow too strong — so we will take our feelings and make God's Word align with them, instead of allowing God's Word to enlighten — shine light on — illuminate — give meaning to — our experience. Growing up, I was able to avoid homosexual behavior for a season because I knew right and wrong. But I was not in a place where I had the freedom to be honest about my struggles, bring them into the light, and allow God to help me work through them. When the feelings got too strong, the 'right' and 'wrong' weren't enough — and I found teachers who would teach according to my feelings.

"My journey back was about being honest with others and with God and seeing how my identity had been messed up by what I felt and what others said about me as well as how I was searching for identity where I would never find it as a child of God. In that honest, real place, Scripture shined a light on and informed my struggles rather than the opposite."

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"As we saw in 2 Timothy 4:3–4 [*For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths*], I was so hungry for acceptance and understanding and identity and affirmation that even the sin of homosexual expression tasted sweet — it was poison, but I was so hungry that I didn't care. The false intimacy of sex with other men tasted sweet then — but now, the God-ordained intimacy/friendship with men that He designed for us tastes so much better, and I no longer crave the poison because I am 'full' with RIGHT relationships, with my wife and with other men in godly friendship."

So, what are we called on to do in **2 Timothy 3:16–17**? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am so tempted to qualify and quantify and categorize sins, especially when I am trying to justify my sins to myself and to You. It is so easy to look at the speck in my brother's or sister's eye, while striving with all of my might to see past the log that is in my own eye. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, working through Your Word, help me to see and to deal with the log in my own eye and the sin in my life, so that I may repent of that sin, confess it to You and the one I offended, and hear Your Word and their word of forgiveness. Restore me to a right relationship with You and with them so that I may then help others to see their sin and their need for forgiveness and a restored relationship with You and their fellowman. In the all-atoning name of Jesus I pray. Amen!

### Closing Hymn

"Preach You the Word" (LSB #586; LW #259)

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