

*What science and
Scripture say about
homosexuality.*

**ADVICE TO THE GAY CHRISTIAN, MY
BROTHER IN CHRIST, FROM AN OLD
HETEROSEXUAL**

By Bill Grover

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"a God of love and same gender sex?"

ADVICE TO THE GAY CHRISTIAN

MY BROTHER IN CHRIST,
FROM AN OLD HETEROSEXUAL



BILL GROVER

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To paraphrase Augustine:

If what I have said in this book is of You, O God, may it be acknowledged by those who are yours; if anything is of my own, may it be pardoned by those who are yours and by You (On the Trinity XV: XXVIII: 51).

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This book uses the intext method of documentation wherein after a source's last name, appearing either in the paragraph or in parentheses, the date of publication, and a page number of the reference is provided in the text itself not in a footnote. Example: (Grudem 1994:345). Full publishing information on all sources is found in Works Referenced.

4. THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Lord Jesus

It is observed by Furnish that Jesus did not address the issue of homosexuality, and Furnish assumes, therefore, that homosexuality was not a matter of much concern for the church (1994:13). Helminiak claims that in Matthew 15 -- where the context is the question asked of the Lord as to why his disciples did not wash their hands before eating--demonstrates that Jesus was only concerned with the “purity of the heart” and that he rejected Jewish Law (2000:70):

Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone. (Matthew 15:17-20 ESV).

So, can no inferences about same gender sex be made from Jesus’ references to human sexuality? Yet, I think such cannot be convincingly argued. That Jesus said that one’s unwashed hands do not defile but instead one’s evil thoughts and acts are what defile a person, does not prove that the Lord, therefore, was unconcerned about sexual sin. This particular Scripture passage, itself, condemns sexual immorality. The Lord revealed his position on sexual sins not by not abrogating the Law on divorce but intensifying it in Matthew 5:27,28:

You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that anyone that looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (ESV)

Wold discusses this point with erudition (1998:166). He observes that Jesus’s teaching on adultery differed from the

permissive Jewish teaching of his days, as by Hillel. However, it should be clarified that lust in Matthew 5:27, 28, that is, *epithumia*, means more than observing that a woman is attractive. It involves a “passion” and “longing for” a sexual relation with her. (Liddell and Scott: (1989:292).

Furthermore, note Jesus’ words in Matthew 19:4, 5:

Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female...For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh (Net Bible).

This passage introduces “creation order” into the equation of how the Bible views same gender sex. Montoya suggests that homosexual acts are sinful because they violate the plan of God (2000:155-168).

But can it be demonstrated that “God’s plan” was heterosexual intercourse only? I think it can. Kevin De Young alludes to the fact that a woman’s body was created as the man’s sexual complement (2015:27). Of course, one may counter that procreation was the intended goal of God at that time to populate the earth, and so that accounts for the two sexes. However, the present topic is Jesus’ teaching on human sexuality, given long after the need to replenish the earth, and it is he who cites from Genesis two.

So, it is Christ the Creator, himself, (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2) who makes male/female, conjugal relationships to be the divinely ordered, only biblically approved, context of sex. The Levitical Holiness Code, Jewish pseudepigraphic literature of the intertestamental period, and the first century works of Josephus, and Philo’s, all would suggest that Jesus certainly would be aware of homosexuality,

yet he did not condone it. He instead expressed approval only of two gender marital relationships.

Yet, Furnish disagrees with such a conclusion on the basis that Jesus' topic was divorce not homosexuality (1994:23). However, it does not seem that applying Jesus' words to the question of homosexuality is unwarranted generalizing. The phrase "one flesh," used by Jesus, as Carson (1984:412) explains, is a testimony to human kind as God created us originally. Same gender sex cannot contain the divine image which requires both male and female counterparts. Observe Genesis 1:27:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female created he them. (KJV)

Further, arguing for homosexuality on the justification that Jesus did not explicitly condemn homosexuality is a non-sequitur. We should note that Christ did not condemn abortion, bestiality or incest either, and one should not build a positive case for homoerotic behavior on what Christ did not say. Our Lord's silence on a practice is not an approval of it.

I believe that the Christian homosexual should note that Jesus' taught that the Holy Spirit would reveal God's will through his apostles (John 15:12, 13). As will be demonstrated, the Apostle Paul denounces both homosexuality and heterosexual immorality in several of his letters. I think we believers need to conform our sexuality to those prohibitions made by the Lord through Paul.

Our Lord Jesus made commandments, and he expects his people to follow them. Our obeying the Lord, even in our sexuality, demonstrates our discipleship:

Then Jesus said to those Jewish people who had believed in him, **IF** you continue to follow my teaching you are really my disciples... **IF** you obey my commandments, you will remain in my love... You are my friends **IF** you do what I command you (from John chapters 8, 14,15 NET BIBLE).

Obviously, these Scriptures would require both Christian heterosexuals and homosexuals to live in ways which closely adhere to the sexual prohibitions required by the New Testament. My objective is not to point the finger at homosexuals as the only possible transgressors; I note that we heterosexuals are equally liable to commit sexual wrong. The responsibility of obedience is on all of us. If God is not in control of how we think and act sexually, then we are not allowing God to be our LORD. Our love of and faith in God require obedience to God including a rejection of both impure thoughts and acts. Can we not now, dear reader loved of God, regardless of our sexual orientation, renew our vow to live for Christ all areas of our lives even one in which we may be sorely tempted? He gave so very much for us. Recall, just as one example, his agony in the garden:

Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will but yours be done...And in his anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. (Luke 22:42, 44 NET BIBLE).

Our Lord Jesus' life was one lived without normal aspirations, conveniences, and it lacked certain personal relationships which the majority of us in America expect and enjoy. The reader may be surprised that a prominent and learned evangelical has even opined, "Jesus quite likely desired sexual intimacy" (Robert V. Rakestraw, Professor of Theology, Emeritus, Bethel Theological Seminary, 2016:32). In my opinion, Rakestraw may, in fact, be correct. But as Christ was without sin (Hebrews 4:15), he certainly never

lusted for sexual fulfillment in a manner deemed inappropriate in Scripture.

Our Lord Jesus, while being true God, in his Incarnation became, as well, without losing any divinity, a true man. He exists in two complete natures, as man and as God (Acts 2:22; John 20:28). Yet our dear Lord Jesus with a singular purpose lived unmarried, and with Spirit endowed determination, putting aside the normal goals associated with being truly human, “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” to die for my sin and yours (Luke 9:51 KJV). He did so without the encumbrance of a wife despite the Mormon apostle, Platt’s teaching that our Lord had multiple wives (2009:159, 160). It is this Jesus, who endured these limitations who, in return, asks us to carry whatever crosses are ours. That even includes crosses composed of sexual abstinence.

At the same time, I would convey an incredibly incomplete characterization of the loving Lord Jesus if I failed to omit a focus on the great grace of our Savior. I have above agreed that many heterosexuals too struggle with unholy sexual desires and/or acts, and I do mean to include Christian believers in that category. I have already given two examples of that in a church near me. And the news is filled with such reports both of Roman Catholic priests and of Protestant clergy and volunteer workers. These must be judicially punished if laws are broken, and sin must be not ignored by the Christian community. But consider with me the incredible graciousness of the dear Savior in John 8:3-18 toward an apparent heterosexual woman.

Note that this passage very likely is not original, that is, was not included by John when he composed his Gospel account. The reader should be aware that there are ongoing

researches into thousands of ancient copies of the Greek New Testament, quotations in early church fathers, and very early translations as into Latin and Syriac, from the Greek; these researches are made in order to discern the correct readings of the original writings (the autographa) of the New Testament. Consequently, the believer should be assured of the reliability of the Greek text behind his English translation of the New Testament.

A very helpful compilation of the results of this research is made by Metzger (1985:220-223) who informs us that the pericope of the woman caught in adultery in John 7:58-8:11 probably was not originally in John but was added in some manuscripts after John wrote. The passage is absent in the very early Greek copies of John, namely papyri 66 and 75.

Yet, Morris feels that the story truly portrays the character of Jesus (1971:883). And the Net Bible's lengthy textual discussion on the passage leaves open the question that it is possibly an authentic oral tradition. Further, Hendricksen believes that this episode did take place and cites evidence that Papias, a disciple of John, was aware of it (1953:35). Augustine (On Adulterous Marriage 2.7.6 and Tractates on the Gospel of John 33:6-7) also deemed the passage canonical.

So, given these acknowledgements, observe that John 7:53-8:11 reads:

The scribes and the pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the acts of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So, what do you say?' This they did to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first

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to throw a stone at her.' And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, 'woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, neither do I condemn you; go and **and sin no more.**' (ESV)

You may observe that in the narrative a woman is caught in adultery and is taken to Jesus by Pharisees who were testing his commitment to the Mosaic prescription of putting to death parties engaging in adultery. Note Leviticus 20:10:

And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (KJV)

But Jesus' reply was that only one without sin should stone her; of course, no one hurled a rock at her. Then the Lord told the woman that he did not condemn her either. Does this not demonstrate the great grace of Jesus? Yet the story ends with the Lord telling her to "sin no more." Yes, believing heterosexuals should know whether they are committing sexual sins and should cease in the doing of these.

And Christian homosexuals should not allow the confusion generated by the likes of Boswell, Heminiak, and Gay Christian 101 to cover the fact that there is not one single word in Scripture which condones same gender sex. Do not be deceived!

Is there pardon for transgression? Of course! Should we, therefore, sin so grace may abound? Of course, we should not (Romans 6:1). Lust, not surrendered, severs love for God. Salvation and sanctification in the Lord Jesus Christ is more than churchiness; it is even more than becoming expert in

theology (which domain I dearly love); it is obedience to God. We **all** must go “**and sin no more.**”

Paul and Leviticus.

Before seriously considering Romans 1, the passage which is strenuously discussed on both sides of the homosexual debate, I think it will helpful to estimate the apostle Paul's understanding of how the prohibitions in the Holiness Code relate to Christian behavior. Insight into this will be provided by observing how Paul's pedagogy corresponds to the Mosaic regulations. In doing this I follow Gagnon's insightful comparisons (2001:121, 122).

Paul's reliance on the Levitical Holiness Code is exhibited in several ways. First, it should be noted that Leviticus 18:8 condemns incest with the wife of one's father, but Paul prohibits the same in 1 Corinthians 5. That suggests there is a relation between Leviticus and Paul. Second, Paul's notation that some transgressions are worthy of death (Romans 1:32) may relate to the death penalty in Leviticus 20:13. Third, his use of the word *aschemosyne* (unseemly) in Romans 1:27 is the very word used 24 times in the Greek Translation of the Hebrew in Leviticus 18 and 20. (The Septuagint or LXX is a Greek translation of the Old Testament made a couple of hundred years before Christ; Paul regularly uses it in his letters).

We can also note in the immediate literary context of 1 Timothy 1:10 that Paul references the Law. While the word *nomos* is used with several meanings in the New Testament, here it must have the Mosaic Law as its referent given that Paul alludes to those wishing to teach the Law in 1:7. And the

apostle states that the Law's position on a number of vices in 1:10 is "sound teaching" (Caragounis p.42).

One cannot in good judgement, I believe, conclude that the apostle does not conform some of his teaching about sexuality to Mosaic commands and prohibitions. It seems to me that we should be able to digest the idea that the New Testament does selectively elicit from the Law some regulations to which believers today must adhere in order to remain pleasing to their God. Observe, just for example,

Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' this is the first commandment with a promise. (Ephesians 6:1 ESV)

Paul's command has Exodus 20:12 as its referent. Thus, when Old Testament regulations are repeated in the New Testament, Christians are obliged to obey them. Therefore, if Levitical prohibitions against homosexuality are echoed in Paul's writing, they, too, should be observed and followed.

A fourth evidence of Paul's use of Leviticus will be noted in a discussion, in a following section, on the origin and meaning of Paul's term *arsenokoitai* (a male bedding a male) will further substantiate my opinion on Paul's use of Leviticus.

Portions of the Levitical Holiness Code clearly are replicated in Paul's teaching, and that fact makes Leviticus applicable to a discussion of homosexuality despite the naysaying of some, (as Helminiak, 2000:66) who aver that it has no place in deciding modern sexual mores+.

Romans 1:24-27

Therefore God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity, to dishonor their bodies among themselves. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God gave them over to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged the natural sexual relations for unnatural ones, and likewise the men also abandoned natural relations with women, and were inflamed in their passions for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves due penalty for their error. (Net Bible)

I would like to attempt a refutation of these seven incorrect assertions regarding this passage: (1) that only pederasty not homosexuality in general is Paul's topic, (2) that by "unnatural" Paul meant not doing what is natural to that particular individual, (3) that lusting in any sex act was Paul's referent, (4) that it was male dominance that Paul wished to uphold, (5) that Paul's subject is heterosexuals acting like homosexuals, (6) that were Paul aware of committed, consensual homosexual relationships, he would not condemn homosexuals and, (7) that modern knowledge about the causes of homosexuality should temper our adherence to Pauline positions on the subject.

To proceed:

(1) Was Paul's topic pederasty?

Pederasty in Roman and Greek cultures is discussed at length in Scroggs (1989:29-43). He describes in some detail the several sorts of relationships in these ancient civilizations as voluntary encounters between an older man and a younger man or youth, slave prostitution, and the effeminate call-boy. Scroggs later asserts that pederasty is all that Paul condemns in Romans 1 (p. 117).

A review of Scroggs' exposition reveals that he believes that as Paul is using Hellenistic Jewish criticisms against Gentiles (as Philo in *Contemplative Life* 59-62), and given that only pederasty was the homosexual practice in Greek and Roman thought, this writer opines that only pederasty can be Paul's topic in Romans 1:27. My own reading of Yonge's translation of Philo (1993:703) does show Philo of Alexandria to have expressed strong negative views against men having sex with boys.

But, I nevertheless think Scroggs errs in limiting Romans 1 to pederasty: First the text in Philo also mentions, unfavorably, "men" loving other "men" in VII:59. Second, Scroggs' own review of Gentile homosexuality admits to adult male on male sex: "...adult males voluntarily entered into a primarily romantic relationship in which the older partner expected to ,and did, receive sexual gratification" (p. 32) Third, as seen in a previous section and below too, Paul conforms to his homosexual sexual prohibitions to the Levitical Holiness Code, but that Code does not reference pederasty. Therefore, in my view, Paul in Romans 1 was not only referencing homosexual acts on male children.

(2) What did Paul mean by "unnatural"?

Boswell argues that natural law was not fully developed in the time of Paul, therefore the apostle in Romans 1:26, must refer to the "personal nature of the pagans in question" not to natural law (1980:14). That could lead one to understand Romans 1:26 ("contrary to nature" ESV) to be acting contrarily against one's own nature-i.e., a heterosexual committing a homosexual act. However, Hayes (1986:184-214) provides us with a number of references from Greco-Roman moral philosophy to argue that homosexuality in

Paul's time was *para phusin* (against nature) and Hays concludes that by *kata phusin* (according to nature) Paul means the created order.

It can be demonstrated that by Paul's time homosexual sex was deemed contrary to natural law. In my reading of the Testament of Naphtali, I note in 3.4 that Sodom changed the order of "nature." "Nature" is not meant by Naphtali the nature of the Sodomites but nature as a universal law. And in Philo, Special Laws III:39, I read that men having sex with boys is "contrary to nature" These references show that Boswell on Romans 1: 26 is incorrect.

Further, a number of respected expositors of the New Testament Scripture also reject the view that *kata phusin* in Romans 1 has the nature of the pagan transgressor in view. Moo avers that "nature" includes an appeal to the divine order (1996:115). Dunn states that "natural order" is Paul's meaning (1988:64). And Cranfield defines it as "in accordance with the intention of the Creator" (1975:125). Consequently, in my opinion, Paul is not saying that heterosexuals were committing homosexual acts against their nature; Paul is saying that homosexual acts are contrary to the natural way that God intended sex to be done.

(3) Was Paul's prohibition only against lust?

It has been argued in the literature that Paul is not condemning homoerotic activity per se but instead wants to prohibit lusting between uncommitted persons. Wink offers that opinion: "...the relationships Paul describes are heavy with lust; they are not relationships of genuine same-sex love" (Yet, the term "lust" has been used in a good way as in 1 Timothy 3:1 wherein a man is desiring to become an elder).

As Burk wisely states, it is the object of desire, not just the degree of it, that determines whether desire is good or bad. (Transforming 2005:46). But while in Romans 1:27 the referent is sexual desire, yet, it is not that the apostle is condemning all sexual longing as wrong. Note the apostolic advice in 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 wherein conjugal love is encouraged and lust for one's own spouse of the opposite gender would not be improper:

But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife the conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband for the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourself to prayer; but then come together again., so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self- control. (ESV)

Thus the Pauline proscription for sex has its context in marriage between a man and a woman. But Wink's assertion (1979: no page number), that Paul in Romans1 is only condemning homosexual activity which is not between genuine lovers, is just not supported in the text. What the men wrongly did, as versel:27 clearly states, is that they left "the natural use of the woman." It is absolutely a non- issue whether the men truly were affectionate one toward another. The point is that their sexuality was exhibited in an unnatural way. As Chrysostom observes, the text shows men to be committing acts contrary to nature and not engaging in legitimate intercourse (Homilies on Romans, 4).

(4) Was the issue only a man being subordinate?

The issue of male dominance in the writings of Paul is a hotly contested topic. One can note what many see as Paul's placing the authority of the male over the female, in marriage and church leadership, and doing so due to the order of creation and deception of Eve in the Edenic transgression. Women are said to be under masculine authority in marriage and ecclesiastical roles. This opinion, called Complementarianism, is based on texts as Ephesians 5:22 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12:

Wives submit to your husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the Church...Let a woman learn quietly with all submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. (ESV)

[Note that elsewhere as in Genesis 3:17, Romans 5:12, and 1 Corinthians 15:22 Adam is faulted too for his part in the Fall.]

Others, taking the Egalitarian view of female roles instead, reject the conclusion that the New Testament teaches the woman is to be subservient to the man; these argue that Paul teaches that in Christ the issue of gender dominance is removed in Galatians 3:28, that the apostle allowed women in Gospel proclamation, and permitted women to prophesy in church gatherings according to Galatians 3:28, Philippians 4:3, and 1 Corinthians 11:5.

There is neither Jew nor Greek neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus;...I ask you also, true companion, help these women who have labored side by side with me in the Gospel...every wife that prays or prophesies...(ESV).

The reader is advised to proceed very slowly in endorsing one of these two views as the materials are very broad and the argumentation is very complex.

Some as Punt (2007:970) note the view that what Paul is condemning in Romans 1 is one person dominating another especially when both are men. Men are not to be dominated like women are. Rogers carries this theme over to women dominating in sex too saying that women taking the role of men on other women (Romans 1:26) was shameless because in the cultures to which Paul wrote each gender had its own place (2006:78)

So, do we do well to suppose that Paul is not inspired by the divine Spirit, when he sets out for his readers in Romans 1 ethics for them to follow, but instead draws his precepts from the culture of his readers? That is preposterous. What Paul is doing in Romans chapter 1 and 2 is detailing the sins of the societies to which he is writing.

He does more of this in passages as 1 Corinthians 6:18-20:

Flee sexual immorality! Every sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral persons sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit in you, and you are not your own. For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God with your body. (NET BIBLE)

Paul's pedagogy in Romans 1 is not a concession to the social morality of his readers; it is an insight into the righteous standard of God. And, as shown above, doing what is "natural" in Romans 1 means doing sex the way God intended it be done. But it is possible that Paul used "natural" in other locations to reflect a culturally conditioned norm.

The apostle argues in 1 Corinthians 11:14 that “nature itself” (KJV) teaches that a man should not wear long hair. Fee thinks that Paul using *physis* here refers to “custom” (1987:527), however, Barrett and Bruce disagree taking it to reference the natural world not social practice (Barrett 1987:256; Bruce 1971:108). But even were Fee correct, kindly note that Paul sometimes uses the identical term with different meanings, even a soteriological term as “saved” as in 1 Timothy 2:4, 15:

Who will have all men to be **saved** (sōthēnai)...she shall be **saved** (sōthēsetai) in child bearing. (KJV)

I understand that the first use of “saved” references spiritual salvation; the second physical.

Yet were Fee correct that in 1 Corinthians 11:14 Paul bases his prescription for shorter hair on men on cultural norms then present, does that not suggest that the apostle’s requirement regarding hair length is tied to changeable social morality not on divine law? After all, the same passage requires women to wear veils which requirement is not adhered to in western society.

So, following this path of thought, might it not be surmised that perhaps male on male sex is deemed base by Paul only because of his first century Jewish upbringing, and given that modern non-Jewish conservatives have not experienced a similar ethical climate as had Paul, that we should not be expected to follow his view on homosexuality any more than we require women to wear veils?

But such a conclusion disregards what has already been evidenced, and further will be, that in the matter of homosexuality the apostle is guided not by his Jewish

upbringing, only, but by the principles of the Levitical Holiness Code which departs not from the much older narratives of homosexual transgressions in Genesis. God's view on homoeroticism has not changed from the time of Abraham (Sodom) through the time of Moses (Leviticus 18 and 20) to the time of Paul. And, to dilute timeless divine precepts with twists of modernity is to grasp at the place of God.

(5) Was Paul only condemning heterosexuals committing homosexual acts?

Boswell insists that it is manifest that what Paul is describing in Romans 1 are homosexual acts committed by heterosexually oriented persons (1980:109). Boswell argues this from the larger context which is that Gentiles have rejected their calling by getting off the path of obedience to God. So, must we conclude that as the larger passage describes changing to unrighteousness that unrighteousness in the immediate context means changing by not acting in accordance with one's true sexual orientation?

But not only is it not evident that Paul is aware of the difference between heterosexual and homosexual orientations in the sense of there being biological or psychological factors of influence-- and I also note that lack of comprehension in reading relevant portions in the Pentateuch, Naphtali, and Philo-- but the text in Romans 1 says nothing that indicates that those males were acting contrary to their sexual orientation. So what Paul is judging as unrighteousness must be any sexual activity among like genders. I can appreciate Boswell's motivation, who was himself a homosexual, to couch his own sexual preference in Scripture, but I don't see him as being at all successful.

(6) Would Paul have endorsed homosexual, loving relationships if he had known of these?

If it's true that Paul had no awareness of homosexual orientation, then can it not be reasonably believed that were he enlightened on this, that his attitude toward homosexual acts would be modified? And so, should we not go further to the assumption that Paul's diatribe against homosexual activity as a perversion would be toned down with the reception of such learning? Should we not agree with Paul that homoerotic behavior outside of a committed, loving relationship may be wrong, but if true love is involved, how can one suppose that the God, who is love, would object to that? I think that logic errs.

Note that is Christ who does not provide the caveat that if the married man looks lustfully at a woman other than his wife, it is okay if the two genuinely care about each other:

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:29 (ESV).

Nor did Paul in discussing fornication (1 Thessalonians 4:3) allow it to be acceptable if the two participants share a genuine fondness.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who know not God. (ESV)

But if Jesus and his apostle Paul demonstrate such rigidity toward certain heterosexual behavior, then why should it be assumed that the Lord and his apostle would become so flexible were the illicit sex occurring among homosexuals?

This writing of mine repeatedly admits the biblical and contemporary fact that both homosexuals and heterosexuals may be guilty of unholy behavior. In that important aspect we are very much alike.

But it can be countered that homosexuals in love would be under no suspicion of transgression were the two married and faithful to each other. So why, then, should any evangelical church not let the homosexual lovers marry? At issue, however, is that God has defined marriage as being between a man and a woman. I fail to see how this gender stipulation on marriage cannot be observed given its prescription both in Genesis and, as well, in the sayings of Christ:

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2: 24 ... But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Mark 10: 6, 7 (ESV).

I do confess that I can feel the frustration that the Christian, evangelical homosexual likely is feeling. You desire sexual fulfillment, but it is unscriptural even if you are permitted to marry one of like gender. While I emphasize with the homosexual, I still suggest abstinence. Each us has his or her own cross to bear; that cross may be sexual abstinence. You are not unique in that. Later I will relate how one remarkable homosexual has successfully borne that incredibly heavy cross.

(7) Would Paul have changed his opinion of homosexuality had he become aware of modern research on its causation?

Via implies that had Paul been knowledgeable of scientific findings regarding the causality of homosexuality, then the apostle would have acknowledged the naturalness of homosexual love (2003:15). However, the believer, regardless of sexual orientation, should acknowledge that God speaks his mind through the prophets and apostles in both Testaments according to 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; 3:2:

All Scripture is breathed out by God profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and training in righteousness...For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit...the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles. (ESV)

Nor is it required that these revelators of the books of the Bible fully comprehended the ramifications of the counsel of God given through them. The coming of the Messiah was prophesied in the Old Testament, for example, yet many details regarding his advent were not then apparently understood. And the second coming is predicted in the New Testament, but no man knows the day or the hour of it. In like manner, the apostle Paul is inspired to make known the divine will on a practice even if he is not fully aware of the causes which induce that practice. Paul can forbid fornication by heterosexuals too, but he surely had an incomplete knowledge of the biological, psychological, and social etiology of the differences among people in sex drives.

1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners (*malakoi*), practicing homosexuals partners (*arsenokoitai*)... Sexually immoral, practicing homosexuals (*arsenkoitai*). (Net Bible)

Ling informs his readers that in 2008 the publishers of the New International Bible were sued, unsuccessfully, for sixty million dollars because they used the word “homosexual” in their translation (2013: no page number). The Michigan attorney who sued said that he suffered anxiety, loss of self-esteem, and an inability to re-establish family bonds due to this translation. No one should wish to emotionally injure another person by an incorrect translation of the Bible, but neither should a believer concur with changing or confusing the meaning of the Holy Spirit inspired text, thus thwarting the purposes of God. So, what do these two Greek substantives actually mean? As usual, opinion in the literature is divided between those whose understand homosexuality to be biblically permissible and those who believe it is sinful.

malakos (singular form of *malakoi*).

The basic meaning of this adjective is “soft” or “weak” and occurs in Matthew 4:23 (“affliction” i.e, a physical weakness) 11:8 (“soft” clothing), and Luke 7:25 (“soft” clothing), but it is nowhere else in Paul. Boswell insists that this word is never used in Greek to refer to gay people or even for homosexual acts (1980:106). But, Boswell errs in this regard, for writing in the same century and in the same language as Paul, Philo uses *malakia* (in the female gender the ending of the noun changes) in his description of those young men who make themselves as women for sex with other males by “changing their manly character into an effeminate one” (Special Laws III 37-39). This meaning is also found in BAG which references texts in Dionysius and Chrysostom to support that definition (1957:489).

Arsenokoitai

Gay Christian 101 informs its gay readers that *arsenokoitai* cannot possibly mean “homosexual” because the word is not used in that way in any extant Greek manuscript. Sometimes, when hearing or reading such sophomoric drivel, one feels he just must say, “Big Duh!” That the term is not used in the literature before Paul is, in fact, actually evidence that Paul coined it himself from the Holiness code in the Greek Septuagint of Leviticus 20:13 wherein, as I read Brenton’s edition of the Greek Old Testament (1998:156), the words “*arsenos koitēn*” appear exactly side by side and occur in the context of a severe condemnation of male on male sex. As De Young concludes, “It seems quite likely that Paul coined a new term which he virtually derived from the LXX of Lev 20:13” (1992:217).

Again, for the data in this particular paragraph, I owe a debt to Gagnon’s research (2002:320, 321). He argues well that the early church fathers understood *arsenokoitai* to reference male on male sex. See Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 6:1; Origen, *Expositions on Proverbs* 7:74, and Irenaeus, *All Heresies* 5.26.22-23. Gagnon also informs that the compound noun is translated in Latin, Syriac, and Coptic versions as men having sex with men (p. 322).

Further, in reply to Gay Christian 101’s self-serving assertion, I reply, that each of these highly qualified experts in biblical Greek, whose writings defining the terminology of the Greek New Testament are in my small library, understand *arsenokoitai* to refer to male on male sex:

* Brown. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1969:560).

* *The Analytical Greek Lexicon*. (1977:53)

* Arndt and Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (1959: 109).

* Thayer. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1889:75).

* Kubo. *A Reader's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1975:152).

* Bullinger. *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*. (1975:22).

* Zerwick and Grosvenor. *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (1996:508).

* Rogers and Rogers. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (1998:359).

* Abbott and Smith. *A Manual Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. (1948:61).

Whom do you think is more knowledgeable on the meaning of the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament? These very accomplished experts I've referenced or the very deceptive Gay Christian 101?

Rogers, on the other hand, asserts that the meaning of this compound noun is vague and cites both Brian Blunt and Dale Martin as his experts. While Rogers is aware that *arsen* (male) and *koitai* (bed) have often been understood as male bedding males, he notes that Martin disagrees with this position as linguistically two parts of a compound word need not have anything to do with the meaning of the individual parts.

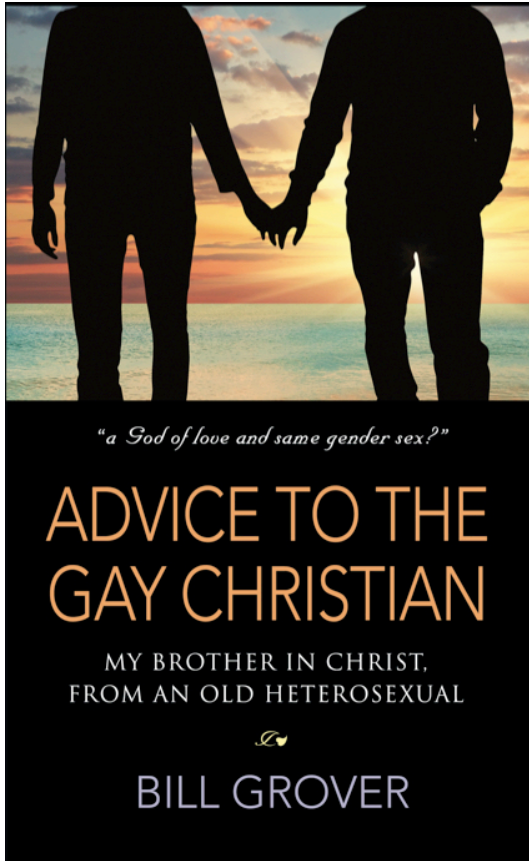
“Understand,” for example, does not mean “standing under” (2006:74). But perhaps we should rather think that modern English practice does not prove the meaning of Paul’s Greek semantics?!

I read in Morrish’s concordance of the Greek Septuagint (1976:139), that *koite* occurs about 45 times in that Greek translation of the Old Testament. In Leviticus 20:13, in its future tense, it refers to a male having sex with another man as is done with a female:

And whoever shall lie (*koimethē*) with a male as with a woman, they have both wrought abomination (Breton’s translation 1998: 156)

It appears to me that Grenz (1998:57) has made a mistake in saying that *koite* in the *Septuagint* is “the usual euphemism for the emission of semen and hence a Greek term for seminal emission. I think the noun rather more often simply means “bed” as in Genesis 49:4, Job 7:13, and Daniel 2:28. It is correct that Leviticus 18:21 references “sperm”, but the Greek used there is *sperma*.

With respect to Martin’s position, in my opinion, given no other convincing theory on the origin of the term, Paul who, as has be shown, made precepts which concurred with the Holiness Code, and who frequently relied on the Greek translation of the Bible of his time, likely coined the term himself to indicate men having sex with men wherein *malakos* references the passive partner and compound word, *arsenokotai*, the active partner.



*What science and
Scripture say about
homosexuality.*

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