

“Is Homosexuality a Sin?”

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“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, practicing homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. Some of you once lived this way. 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 (NET)

Have you ever heard the phrase, “don’t shoot the messenger”? Well... in this column, I want to be a messenger and share with you what the Bible clearly teaches about God’s standards of how we should live. We are fresh off an election where the three states of California, Arizona, and Florida voted to affirm marriage as solely between a man and woman. There is no doubt that those who believe the Bible is God’s instructions for mankind had a lot to do with the outcome of these ballot measures. There are some who think the Bible isn’t specific enough and ask if the God of the Bible really does condemn the practice of homosexuality.

It can be said that from the very beginning God’s original design has been for a man and a woman only to participate in marriage (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:6-9 KJV). Later, during the giving of God’s covenant to the nation Israel, God clearly condemned the act of homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13). Because these specific commands were revealed under the Old Testament (OT) to Israel, they don’t directly apply to us NT believers today (Romans 6:14). All the different *case* law found in the OT was given to the theocratic nation of Israel (Deut 4:7-8; Psalm 147:19-20) and so we must look to the NT for clarity and our final authority. I quoted the Corinthian passage above to show that there is definite consistency between the OT and the NT in that God still clearly condemns the act of homosexuality in the NT (also 1 Timothy 1:10; Romans 1:20-32 NKJV). Nevertheless, there are many people today, including some who profess to be Christians that deny the clear teaching of the Old and New Testaments. Yet Paul warns us that there is risk of being deceived when we fail to read clearly what God has spoken (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Now at this point, I want to lovingly chide my Christian brothers and sisters who, having rightly proclaimed boldly that homosexuality is sinful, have also unfortunately made it look like homosexuality is the only sin under heaven! It is in these situations when a few well meaning Christians have unfortunately not followed the clear command to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15) and end up bringing unnecessary animosity to the cause of Christ in spending a disproportionate amount of time on this single sin.

Is homosexuality a sin? The Bible is crystal clear as the above passages show, but so is fornication (sex before marriage), adultery, thievery, etc. We would do well not just to proclaim God’s standards against all these vices, but also to proclaim the hope that is found in a relationship with Jesus the Messiah. Notice that Paul doesn’t end the passage with condemnation, but also reminds the Corinthians that they had been washed clean by Jesus and the Spirit of God. These were things that described their previous life, but they have since been forgiven and their relationship with God restored. If you are one who struggles with homosexual or other sexually immoral thoughts (ie. pornography), Jesus wants to lovingly extend forgiveness to you and to help you have victory in these circumstances. It doesn’t mean that all of these thoughts or feelings will immediately go away, but instead that Jesus will stand with us in them (2 Cor 12:9). If you are interested in finding help, you can get more information from those who have successfully repented and abandoned the homosexual lifestyle by the power of Jesus Christ at www.exodus-international.org. Have a blessed week!