

WHAT THE

Bible

TEACHES ABOUT

Homosexuality

A Response to Revisionist,
Pro-LGBTQI+ Theology

Teller Books

LOGOS  LIGHT

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TELLER BOOKS

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What the Bible Teaches About Homosexuality: A Response to Revisionist, Pro-LGBTQI+ Theology

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ABOUT THE IMPRINT

The mission of LogosLight™ is to reintroduce time-tested values and truths to modern debates on political, economic, and moral issues. The imprint focuses on books and monographs dealing with society, ethics, and public policy.



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ABBREVIATIONS

English Translations of the Bible:

ASV.....	American Standard Version
BBE.....	Bible in Basic English
Darby.....	Darby Bible
ESV.....	English Standard Version
ISV.....	International Standard Version
KJV.....	King James Version
MKJV.....	Modern King James Version
NIV.....	New International Version
NKJV.....	New King James Version
RSV.....	Revised Standard Version

Books of the Bible:

1Ch.....	1 Chronicles
1Co.....	1 Corinthians
1Jn.....	1 John
1Ki.....	1 Kings
1Pe.....	1 Peter
1Sa.....	1 Samuel
1Th.....	1 Thessalonians
1Ti.....	1 Timothy
2Ch.....	2 Chronicles
2Co.....	2 Corinthians
2Jn.....	2 John
2Ki.....	2 Kings
2Pe.....	2 Peter
2Sa.....	2 Samuel
2Th.....	2 Thessalonians
2Ti.....	2 Timothy
3Jo.....	3 John
Acts.....	Book of Acts
Amos.....	Book of Amos
Col.....	Colossians
Dan.....	Daniel
Deu.....	Deuteronomy

Ecc.....	Ecclesiastes
Eph	Ephesians
Est	Esther
Exo	Exodus
Eze.....	Ezekiel
Ezr	Book of Ezra
Gal.....	Galatians
Gen.....	Genesis
Hab.....	Habakkuk
Hag.....	Haggai
Heb.....	Hebrews
Hos	Hosea
Isa.....	Isaiah
Jas.....	James
Jer.....	Jeremiah
Job.....	Book of Job
Joel	Book of Joel
John.....	Gospel of John
Jon.....	Jonah
Jos	Joshua
Jude	Book of Jude
Jdg.....	Judges
Lam	Lamentations
Lev	Leviticus
Luke	Gospel of Luke
Mal	Malachi
Mark.....	Gospel of Mark
Mat	Gospel of Matthew
Mic.....	Micah
Nah.....	Nahum
Neh.....	Nehemiah
Num.....	Numbers
Oba.....	Obadiah
Phm	Philemon
Php	Philippians
Pro.....	Proverbs
Psa.....	Psalms
Rev	Revelation
Rom.....	Romans
Ruth.....	Book of Ruth

SonSong of Solomon
Tit.....Titus
Zec.....Zechariah
ZepZephaniah

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

A growing number of commentators, including both scholars and even self-proclaimed Christians—have espoused the teaching that the Bible is either silent on the question of homosexuality, or, where it is not silent, it embraces, tolerates and accepts homosexuals and the homosexual lifestyle. While there are some accounts in the Bible such as the story of Sodom and Gomorrah or the law given in Leviticus 18:22 that have historically been viewed as prohibiting homosexuality, the revisionists teach that these verses in fact say nothing about homosexuality. They have been mistranslated, misquoted or misunderstood. In fact, the Bible teaches us to embrace the full spectrum of sexual orientations, so they say. The loving God who inspired the Bible allows sexual relations between same-sex couples and permits transgenderism and bisexuality within the context of loving, committed relationships.

Some Christian revisionists go a step further. They concede that the Old Testament in fact prohibited homosexuality, but the prohibitions of the Old Testament law have no place in the new covenant of grace, and therefore should have little bearing on the conduct of contemporary Christians. As for the apparent prohibitions of homosexual conduct in the New Testament, these are mostly based on mistranslations that misunderstand the original text. The term “homosexual” used in Paul’s Epistles has no

modern English equivalent, and is best rendered as the sexual exploitation of “effeminate call boys,” not homosexual relations between two men or two women in committed, loving relationships.

It is not a narrow segment of Christians who embrace this revisionist theology. Many mainstream Protestant churches have embraced these teachings in droves. Prominent intellectuals at leading divinity schools, including at Harvard, Princeton and Yale, embrace this theology, rejecting traditional teachings on heterosexual, monogamous marriage in favor of unions between any and all people, regardless of their gender, sex or sexual orientation.

Revisionist church leaders and intellectuals have offered abundant arguments advocating for the abandonment of traditional teachings on marriage as outdated and based on historic prejudices. This book stands as a refutation and response to the revisionists. Standing on the solid ground of the Scripture, it scrutinizes the arguments of the revisionists and responds to them point-by-point. It critically examines and refutes the teachings of the most prominent proponents of pro-gay theology, including the Rev. Dr. Mel White and the Rev. Elder Don Eastman of the LGBTQ Religious Archives Network.

In reality, as this book will demonstrate, an honest reading of the Bible leads to the unequivocal conclusion that homosexual relations are prohibited by God and are characterized as sin. Seeking to correct the course of revisionist theologians, this book aims to set the Christian church back on the correct course of orthodox Christian doctrine in regards to the historic and consensual teachings of the Christian Church on gender, sex and marriage.

CHAPTER 2. THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN'S TEACHINGS ON HOMOSEXUALITY

The Human Rights Campaign, in its article, “What Does the Bible Say About Homosexuality?” written by Myles Markham,¹ argues that poor biblical scholarship is at the heart of the claim that homosexuality is forbidden by God. However, what quickly comes to light upon reading the article is that it is in fact the Human Rights Campaign’s article, not the views of traditional Christianity, that is the result of poor, or shall we say absent, biblical scholarship. The Human Rights Campaign’s article is riddled with erroneous assertions. When alleging a claim is supported by some biblical text, the author provides biblical verses that run directly contrary to rather than support the proposed assertions. Overall, the article’s overall assertion that what is forbidden in the Bible is sexual violence, not committed, loving homosexual partnerships, is given no valid biblical support.

The article opens with a discussion of six passages that address homosexuality and proceeds to state:

While the six passages that address same-sex eroticism in the ancient world are negative about the practices they mention, there is no evidence that these in any way speak to same-sex relationships of love and mutuality. To the contrary, the amount of cultural, historical and linguistic data surrounding how sexuality in the cultures of the biblical authors operated demonstrates that what was being condemned in the

¹ Myles Markham, “What Does the Bible Say About Homosexuality?” Human Rights Campaign Foundation, available at <<https://www.hrc.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality>>.

Bible is very different than the committed same-sex partnerships we know and see today. The stories of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) and the Levite's concubine (Judges 19) are about sexual violence and the Ancient Near East's stigma toward violating male honor. The injunction that "man must not lie with man" (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13) coheres with the context of a society anxious about their health, continuing family lineages, and retaining the distinctiveness of Israel as a nation. Each time the New Testament addresses the topic in a list of vices (1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:10), the argument being made is more than likely about the sexual exploitation of young men by older men, a practice called pederasty, and what we read in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans is a part of a broader indictment against idolatry and excessive, self-centered lust that is driven by desire to "consume" rather than to love and to serve as outlined for Christian partnership elsewhere in the Bible. While it is likely that Jews and Christians in the 1st century had little to no awareness of a category like sexual orientation, this doesn't mean that the biblical authors were wrong. What it does mean, at a minimum, is that continued opposition toward same-sex relationships and LGBTQ+ identities must be based on something other than these biblical texts, which brings us back to a theology of Christian marriage or partnership.

There are multiple issues with these arguments, including:

- The article claims that the account in Judges is concerned with the ancient Near East's stigma toward violating male honor. The text offers no citation to support this assertion. In fact, the ancient Near East, like the modern Near East, is far more concerned about violating female honor and preserving women's virginity than it is about male honor and virginity, to the point where in many Near East countries, honor killings are committed against women accused of fornication.
- The article claims that each time the New Testament addresses homosexuality in a list of vices (1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:10), "the argument being made is more than likely about the sexual exploitation of young men by older men." This claim has no textual support whatsoever. 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10 clearly reference "men who have sex with men" and those "practicing homosexuality." There is not a single reference to young or old men in either of the texts.
- The article claims that "what we read in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans is a part of a broader indictment against idolatry and excessive, self-centered lust that is driven by desire to 'consume'

rather than to love and to serve as outlined for Christian partnership elsewhere in the Bible.” This claim is directly contradicted by the very text it sets out to interpret. Romans 1:26-28 pronounces God’s judgment on women who “exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones” and men who “abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another.” These verses are followed by a litany of sins that have nothing to do with consumption, including “envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice” (Rom 1:29) and gossip, slander, hatred of God, insolence, arrogance, boasting and disobedience of parents (Rom 1:30).

The penultimate paragraph of the article goes on to emphasize the importance of love, empathy and compassion, regardless of gender, in the Christian walk. It states that Christian partnership “creates an opportunity to live out God’s love. While some kind of difference seems to be important in embodying this metaphor, understanding that all our differences can lead to empathy, compassion, good listening, sacrifice, and what it means to ‘love our neighbor as ourselves,’ there is scant evidence that it is our biology or our views of gender that are the required difference.” No orthodox Christian would disagree with this. Christians support love, and believe that men can and should love both men and women, and that women can and should love both men and women. A man or woman can love one woman or one man or more than one man or more than one woman. Ideally, all Christians would love all of humanity. It is not love that Christians oppose. Rather, it is the homosexual acts prohibited by the Scriptures that orthodox Christians oppose.

CHAPTER 3. HOMOSEXUALITY: NOT A SIN, NOT A SICKNESS?

A. OVERVIEW

Rev. Elder Don Eastman, in his article, “Homosexuality: Not a Sin, Not a Sickness Part II ‘What The Bible Does and Does Not Say...’”² espouses the view that the Bible, when properly read, does not characterize homosexuality as a sin or a sickness. Rev. Eastman’s article contains countless fallacies and mischaracterizations of scriptural teaching, the most serious of which are presented and refuted herein.

B. SODOM AND GOMORRAH’S SINS WERE NOT RELATED TO HOMOSEXUALITY

Rev. Eastman raises a series of points to suggest that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was not related to homosexuality. Each of his points is presented herein and refuted in turn.

1. Prior Judgment on the Cities

Rev. Eastman writes:

² Rev. Elder Don Eastman, “Homosexuality: Not a Sin, Not a Sickness Part II ‘What The Bible Does and Does Not Say...’” Religious Institute (1990), available at <http://religiousinstitute.org/denom_statements/homosexuality-not-a-sin-not-a-sickness-part-ii-what-the-bible-does-and-does-not-say>.

First, the judgment on these cities for their wickedness had been announced prior to the alleged homosexual incident.

God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18 was not linked to their attempted rape of Lot's guests in Genesis 19. God makes clear that his judgment related to Sodom and Gomorrah's past sin (the Lord said, "the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me" (Gen 18:20-21)). The attempted rape of Lot's guests in Genesis 19 was a manifestation of pervasive sin that had been endemic to Sodom; it was not the sin that prompted God's judgment of the city.

2. All of Sodom's People Participated in the Assault on Lot, Homosexuals Are a Small Minority

Rev. Eastman writes:

Second, all of Sodom's people participated in the assault on Lot's house; in no culture has more than a small minority of the population been homosexual.

The Scripture does not state that all of Sodom's people participated in the assault on Lot's home. Rather, it states that "all the men from every part of the city of Sodom" (Gen 19:4) participated. In this way, the Scripture alludes to the homosexual nature of the attempted assault of Lot's guests.

Rev. Eastman makes a sweeping statement about the percentage of homosexuals in all cultures, presumably throughout time, but without offering any research, evidence or citations. In fact, the percentage of homosexuals in any country or culture is widely disputed. Regardless of this percentage, Rev. Eastman offers no evidence to counter the possibility that regardless of how many of Sodom's residents identified as homosexuals, some or all of them may have had some homosexual proclivities, at least enough to drive them to attempt to rape Lot's guests.

In addition, Rev. Eastman ignores the possibility that Genesis 19:4, in deploying the term "all the men from every part of the city," is employing hyperbole, which is commonly used throughout the Bible to illustrate a

point. In John 4, for example, Jesus revealed to a Samaritan woman that she had five husbands and that the man she had was not her husband (John 4:17-18). The Samaritan woman then testified that Jesus “told me everything I ever did” (John 4:29). Of course, Jesus had not in that brief conversation told her *everything* that she ever did. The Samaritan woman used hyperbole to convey the incisive insight of the Messiah, whom she had just encountered. In the same way, Genesis 19 is not likely trying to convey that *every* man in Sodom had participated in the attempted rape of Lot’s guests. It wouldn’t be practical for every male resident to even fit on Lot’s front step as the angry mob demanded Lot’s visitors. Most likely, the Bible is employing hyperbole to convey the fact that a great multitude of Sodom’s residents had gathered at Lot’s home to demand that Lot turn over the guests for the men to know carnally.

3. Lot’s Offer to Release His Daughters Suggests the Intruders were Heterosexuals

Rev. Eastman writes:

Third, Lot’s offer to release his daughters suggests he knew his neighbors to have heterosexual interests.

On this basis, Rev. Eastman suggests that the intruders could not have been homosexuals because Lot offered them his daughters, “who have never slept with a man” (Gen 19:8).

Here, Rev. Eastman’s fallacy is to equate a person’s sexual orientation to the type of sexual intercourse offered to them. Therefore, if a woman offers to have sex with a man, the man cannot be a homosexual. If Lot offered to have his daughters have sex with his intruders, the intruders could not be homosexuals.

The logic that Rev. Eastman employs is deeply flawed. If his reasoning is correct, one can conclude that if a person is offered a meat entrée, he cannot be a vegetarian. If a person’s tastes and orientation are not based on inherent desires or inclinations, but rather on what they are offered, then there is no such thing as an inherent sexual orientation, since a person at any moment can be proffered sex with a man or a woman.