
REV. DR. MEL WHITE'S
WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS
—AND DOESN'T SAY—
ABOUT
HOMOSEXUALITY

A REPLY, REFUTATION
AND **REBUTTAL**

— BY —

JOHN TELLER

TIME  BOOKS

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What the Bible Says—and Doesn't Say—About Homosexuality: A Reply, Refutation and Rebuttal

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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

In “What the Bible Says - And Doesn't Say - About Homosexuality,” Dr. Mel White argues that the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, when correctly understood, neither condemn nor prohibit homosexual relationships between two loving, committed partners. The apparent prohibitions of sodomy and other homosexual acts in the Old Testament are intended not as injunctions from God, but rather, as reflections of societal tastes and preferences. In any event, the prohibitions and societal preferences of the Old Testament 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” by old men, not homosexuality between two men or two women in committed, loving relationships. Only in translations rendered after the mid-twentieth century did the term “homosexuality” begin to erroneously appear as a reflection of societal prejudices against homosexuals.

First, it must be conceded that Dr. White does make some strong points, such as his argument that the word “homosexual” in 1Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10 first only appeared in English translations as “homosexual” in 1958. In other areas, however, Dr. White’s pamphlet is based on broad assumptions and a rejection of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

CHAPTER 2. MISUNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

Looking at the Old Testament's apparent injunctions against homosexual relations, Dr. White holds that we "miss what these passages say about God when we spend so much time debating what they say about sex." He goes on to examine the condemnations of same-sex relations in the Old Testament, such as Leviticus 18:22^{1,2} and Leviticus 20:13.³ Dr. White argues that to read these as condemnations or prohibitions of homosexual relations is a misinterpretation, for these passages are not intended as absolute statutes written by God on how men and women should treat and relate to one another; rather, they represent a "holiness code," or "list of behaviors that people of faith find offensive in a certain place and time." These statutes reflect a Jewish culture that found same-sex unions to be offensive.

Dr. White here commits several errors. First, he repeats constantly that these injunctions against homosexual relations

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² "You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female. It is an abomination."

³ "A man who sleeps with another man is an abomination and should be executed."

represent a code that the Jews found offensive, as though this code is nothing more than a list of preferences of the Jewish people. He characterizes this code to a pact to which he bound himself as a high school student: “I don't drink, smoke, or chew, or go with girls who do.” Dr. White misses, however, the first premise of orthodox Christianity: the Hebrew Scriptures were written by God through inspired prophets, not by individuals seeking to record cultural preferences. The Scriptures that Dr. White quotes were given to Moses by God: “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying [Lev 18:1] ... You shall not lie with a male as with a woman [Lev 18:22]” and again in Leviticus 20: “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying [Lev 20:1] ... If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination [Lev 20:13].” Thus, when homosexuality is prohibited in the Jewish law, we must read this as God’s injunction, not as man’s injunction.

Yet Dr. White claims just a few paragraphs later that an abomination in the Hebrew Scriptures is a behavior that “people in a certain time and place consider tasteless or offensive.” Here, Dr. White essentially ignores the preface “Then the LORD spoke to Moses ...,” and can only do so if he denies that the Scriptures are divinely inspired, perfect and complete. This denial of the divine inspiration of Scripture can only be true if Leviticus 18:22 (“You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female”) were written by Jews of the time reflecting their cultural preferences. Yet if this were the case, then Leviticus 18:1 (“the LORD spoke to Moses, saying ...”) cannot be true. It must be fabricated if God is not the author. And if Dr. White believes the verse to be fabricated, then in what way does he “take the Bible seriously”? Certainly not as an