

Is There Hope for Homosexuals who want to Marry?

A very wealthy man once approached Jesus and asked, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered, “You know the commandments...”

The man grew smug, “Of course, I’ve kept every one since I was a little boy.”

The Bible says the look Jesus gave him was one of love.

“There’s one thing yet; sell all you have and then come follow me.” The man’s expression drooped and he left disappointed because his wealth was the one thing that he wouldn’t give up. What is it you love more than Christ?

One of the possible answers is sex... And now that I have your attention...! With sex on everybody’s minds, the church should mention it at least *occasionally*! I’m going to preach on it for 3 weeks: today on homosexuality, next week on other sexual impurities, and the third week on married sex. On that last Sunday, because I hope to destroy the myth that forbidden sex is better than married sex, I will be a bit “plain-spoken” (May 2). So we’ll offer care for your children through 6th grade during the sermon. You parents can make the call.

The title of this message is, “Is their Hope for Homosexuals who want to marry?” Unless you’ve been living underground for the last 6 months, you know homosexual marriage is around the corner: will it become legal? The Massachusetts Supreme Court took the first steps by ordering the state to marry homosexual couples beginning in mid-May. The legislature is now wrestling with what to do now. The Massachusetts action emboldened city officials on both coasts who began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples: San Francisco, New York, Portland, and elsewhere.

All citizens must now wrestle with, “Is this wise?” *Christian* citizens must also ask, “Is this right?”

The modern “gay” movement is traced to Greenwich Village in 1969. In the 35 years since the so-called Stonewall riots there, homosexual men and women—and increasingly teens—have leaped out of the closet into news headlines, senate floors, school classrooms, church pulpits, surfacing in virtually every area of culture.

Interestingly enough, some support has come from church leaders who portrayed homosexuals as victims of institutionalized bigotry. They pushed churches to let active homosexuals be members, let them be leaders.

- Episcopal church: last year ordained 1st openly homosexual bishop, Gene Robinson.
- PCUSA: annually conservatives just barely contain church’s march toward ordaining homosexual ministers. Last year’s Assembly moderator declared she will never back off from her commitment to give homosexuals full church participation rights.
- UMC next Sunday (3rd largest, 8.3 million USA) world conference in Pittsburg, homosexuality again on agenda as *every* year since 1972.
- UCC in 1985 (1.3 million worldwide) urged by general synod “welcoming and affirming” to practicing homosexuals, even willing to ordain them.

But this is not a social issue; not a civil rights issue, not a compassion issue. It's a discipleship issue: will I follow Jesus? For the homosexual, the question is, will I follow Jesus or my sexual desire? For the church, the question is, will we follow Jesus or seek the approval of people, namely those pressuring the church to conform to the world?

1. The Bible

What does the Bible say? READ Romans 1:24-27. There are other passages on homosexuality in the Bible, but this is the plainest, and hardest for the homosexual scholars to dodge. In fact, if we read the context starting with v.18, it suggests that homosexual sin is bottom-of-the-barrel sin. No, not at all worse than other sins, but it is so aberrant, so against *natural* affections, that it reveals the breadth of rebellion in the heart. Seeing homosexuality's popularity, I wonder if it's an indicator of just how close we are to the final wrath of God. That we are nearing the bottom in mankind's downward spiral of rebellion. In those days, men will be lovers of pleasure... (2 Tim:3:4)

Lest you think this means that homosexuals are either unreachable by the church, or undesirable *to* the church, get this. READ 1 Cor.6:9-11. The early church had repentant homosexuals in it just like it had repentant drunks, and repentant slum-lords, and repentant women who badmouthed their neighbors. The answer to this sin is the same as others: Jesus.

If the Bible is so clear, why are churches giving up its doctrine? Cindy Maddox is a lesbian who was ordained last year in a small UCC church in NC. She admitted that the issue of homosexuality is a question of **how we interpret the Bible**. "Many of us in the United Church of Christ believe that we have a responsibility to reinterpret the scriptures in light of **contemporary understandings**." There's the problem. When people assume authority *over* Scripture, they will always tame it.

But when the Bible speaks, God speaks. Not just to one people or in one period of time, but to all people of all times. And what it says about homosexuality is plain.

A scholar at the University of Chicago warned his fellow homosexuals not to use the Bible to defend their cause, "...it is probably folly to try and claim that the biblical passages which seem to address it [homosexuality] do not do so or fail to condemn it... The heart of the matter is in biblical authority. (He says of evangelicals like us) ...whatever the Bible says is God's will; wherever it says it, to whomever it says it, it speaks to me in the today in the here and now." "...They think the book is without error; we don't."

2. Junk Science

- 1948: Alfred Kinsey (zoologist) report, 1948. 10% Americans are homosexual. Didn't say that. Said 10% of white men were for at least 3 years between age 15-65. 4% were exclusively (sampling included 20-25% who had spent time in prison. Actual figures on men are more likely 1-2%.
- 1991: Simon Levay (brain distinctions)
- 1991: Richard C. Pillard & John Bailey (identical twins): results were anything but conclusive, and tainted by having recruited subjects for the study from gay newspapers. (Their own repeat of their study in 2000 could not reproduce the previous results.)

- 1993: Dean Hamer: discovers the “Gay Gene” by studying homosexual brothers. Research methods flawed. Charges of research impropriety leveled.

In an interview with Simon LeVay for the online homosexual magazine *The Guide*, gay writer Bill Andreiette admits . *Hamer's study was seriously flawed. ...According to Neil Risch, the Yale biostatistician who developed the method Hamer employed, Hamer's small sample size probably made his findings worthless. ...Researchers at the University of Western Ontario could not replicate Hamer's findings, and found no evidence of male homosexuality being [linked to the] X [chromosome]... ...A follow-up study, in which Hamer collaborated, found that the connection to Xq28 so statistically insignificant that the finding, had it come first, would have been unpublishable. Hamer's study today is largely discredited scientifically, yet it continues to be cited in the popular literature.*

By the way, at least Levay and Hamer, are admitted homosexual men. Which makes one wonder about their objectivity.

3. The Causes

If homosexual attraction is not from your genes, what’s it from? How can parents guard their kids? Sexual molestation while young can lay the foundation. Same with early exposure to pornography. But again and again dads figure large. Homosexuals point to abusive, or absent, or neglectful dads. Moms can figure in too, but dads, we’re key. We should not become paranoid, nor should we forget that our relationship with our kids matters more than we’ll ever know.

4. The Compassion

The rest of my message addresses heterosexual Christians in the church: what should we do? I have 3 exhortations:

- First, no compromise on the Scriptures. We must speak the truth.
- Support a constitutional amendment restricting marriage to a man and a woman. Although we live in a pluralistic society, we *too* have been given the right/responsibility to put our convictions on display in the public square. Write your congressman. Sign a petition.
- Repent. Not just for the inroads the homosexual movement has made in the church across America, but for the inroads *we’ve* failed to make into the homosexual community. Where are the homosexuals at Keystone? Have any gotten wind that if they come here they would not only be summoned to repent, but that maybe 3 guys would show him how godly men can love him? Would a lesbian believe she could find 5 women who would love her properly, talk to her, pray with her, invite her to brunch?

Concl:

Some years ago, I counseled a woman who had attended Keystone a time or two. “Martha” was an older woman, and, I soon learned, a lesbian. She was articulate, very bright, but also very conflicted in her spirit. She drank too much, and smoked pot. She’d had an awful family background, but a fairly frequent affiliation with a church for most of her adult life.

Sometime after our second meeting, I got a call asking me to come immediately. Martha was roaring drunk, cursing, threatening herself, her lover, and me. She had accidentally injured herself and was bleeding.

Eventually we were able to get her into the ambulance and she spent the next week or so in the hospital.

I visited her, and we met again after she was released. She and her partner came to services several times, and then she disappeared. Although she claimed to want out of the homosexual life, she admitted she couldn't afford to leave because her partner financially provided for her. She cancelled her last appointment because that woman had just bought her a car. I've often wondered if the financial help would have been available, if she would have left.

Is there hope for homosexuals who want to marry? Yes. But the hope is not in a same-sex partner; it's in Jesus. The same place you and I find hope for our anger, our heterosexual lust, our greed, our violence, is where the homosexual finds hope. There is hope in a Redeemer who delivers. Will we offer HIM to this lonely, hapless, unloved segment of society? Will we for Jesus' sake?