

What the Bible Says About Same Sex Relations3

Introduction:

1. This lesson continues our studies regarding what the Bible says about same sex relations. (I have sent information regarding four 1 hour video studies by Terry Feix entitled "Gender and Sexuality." I hope you will consider these. I think it is a balanced and insightful series and worthy of your time.)
2. Thus far in our study we have distinguished between the world's cultural view of same sex relations and what the Bible says.
3. We have learned that there is a pattern in Scripture involving one male and one female. Among human beings sexual relations are restricted to one male and one female in marriage.
4. We have tried to be respectful in this series. While not validating same sex relations we have tried to be compassionate, to see this sin as equivalent to other sins (1 Cor. 6:9ff), and to see the responsibility we have to bring healing to those struggling to understand themselves and to find peace. (I have appreciated the comments that you have made about the approach in particular.)
5. In this lesson I would like to bring more definition to our topic by addressing some of the terms critical to the discussion and then continue our move through Scripture as we address the instruction that is given in Lev. 18.

Discussion:

- I. Some definitions that help us sort through the language used in our society.
 - A. The word "gay" is used by many but may be too broad to be helpful. It means different things to different people. One dictionary defined it, "of or having to do with homosexuals."
 - B. Sexual orientation and Gender orientation. Sexual orientation may be reflected in who you go to bed with. Gender orientation reflects on who you go to bed as. Sexual orientation has more to do with sexual actions. Gender orientation has more to do with identity.
 - C. It may be helpful to distinguish the following.
 1. Same sex attraction.
 2. Same sex orientation—attraction over time and reflected in how you react.
 3. Same sex practice—participating in same sex relations
 4. Same sex identity—relates to the question of who I am
 5. Realize that one may be attracted to the same sex without identifying as having this orientation. One may identify as having this orientation without practicing same sex relations.
 6. One may identify as trans-gender but attracted to opposite sex relations.
 7. There is no "one size fits all." We are dealing with individuals and to lump all into one category like "gay" can miss the point entirely.

- D. What does LGBTQIA2S+ mean?
1. The acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (Queer), Intersex, Asexual and Two-Spirit.
 2. Lesbian—female same sex relations.
 3. Gay—male same sex relations.
 4. Bisexual—both male and female same and heterosexual relations.
 5. Transgender—gender identity that does not correspond with physical body
Cisgender—gender identity that does correspond with physical body
 6. Queer—in-between, fluctuating between binary gender categories of male and female. May move fluidly between the identities of male and female and may move fluidly between masculine expression and feminine expression.
 7. Intersex—born with biological traits that are outside the strict male/female gender binary. Ex. Turner's Syndrome, Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome and Klinefelter Syndrome.
 8. Two-spirit—Indigenous people who express their gender or sexual identities as different from others. Some hold space for more than two genders.
- E. This whole discussion can be very very complex. It sometimes involves chromosomal (biological) issues, identity issues, and cultural issues that are all intertwined and overlapping. Be careful that you do not lump everything categorically into a moral issue, view people with condemnation and contempt, and not see the desperate need for compassion and healing. To be compassionate and recognize a need for healing does not mean to compromise moral truth. There is the need for both truth and compassion to bring healing to the circumstances of our fallen world, to move from chaos to organization. I believe that's what the Bible does.

II. Leviticus 18 brings organization to the sexual practices of God's people.

- A. Note the contrast between the cultures of Egypt and Canaan and the culture of God's people (18:1-5). There is the reminder of this contrast throughout the text in the statement, "I am the Lord your God." Relationship with God is the determining factor bringing organization to the sexual practices of His people.
- B. There are regulations regarding what we know today as incest (vs. 6-18). There is no explanation given in the text as to why these relations are prohibited. Verse 17 says it is "lewdness." Some reason that there are biological reasons for not having relations with a close relative. Offspring may have biological issues. But this is never stated in the text.
- C. Verses 19-23 prohibit relations during menstruation, adultery, offering offspring to Molech, lying with a male as one lies with a female, and bestiality. Words that describe such actions are "defiled," "profane the name of your God," "an abomination," "a perversion."
 1. Why are these things "an abomination," "a perversion?" No explanation is given.

2. Why is offering offspring to Molech included in these instructions regarding sexual practices? Perhaps to draw again the connection between the difference in the culture of idolatry and the culture of the Lord. Note v. 21 reiterates the statement, "I am the Lord."
 3. Mostly the laws are addressed to men, except v. 23. In principle they are applicable to both men and women.
- D. The contrast between the cultures is again brought up in verses 24-30.
1. The nations have one culture.
 2. The people of God another culture.
 3. There is more to consider than just sexual practices (see Lev. 19 and the chapters following).

Conclusion:

1. The instruction in Lev. 18 is consistent with the creation account and the pattern established from Genesis.
2. What is said in Lev. 18 is founded on our relationship with God in contrast to the confusion of worldly cultures.
3. What is said in Lev. 18 is consistent with what we have studied from Gen. 19. It is not merely homosexual rape that is forbidden but same sex relations.
4. The instructions that the Lord gives are "for our good always" (Deut. 6:3, 24). The people of God need to respect this rather than following the chaos that characterizes worldly cultures.