

A Biblical-Theological Response to Homosexuality

Engaging Church and Society

PCS Statement on 377A

- In 2017, the PCS affirmed that marriage between a man and a woman is **God's original, good and enduring design** for the propagation of family and society (at the PCS Synod AGM and in our Constitution). Consequently, we reject same-sex unions as they undermine the life-giving marriages and wholesome families which are the bedrock of a stable society.

PCS Statement on 377A

- The PCS agrees with and is united in the stance of the National Council of Churches of Singapore, the Diocese of Singapore, the Roman Catholic Church of Singapore and PERGAS to support our Government's and our Courts' carefully calibrated position expressed in these significant legal, executive and social touchstones.

NCCS Statement on the Repeal of 377A

- 1. For Christians, our sense of public morality especially in matters relating to sexuality issues is shaped by the Bible, which upholds same-sex sexual acts as contrary to God's order and sees such acts as sins. Our views of marriage are also shaped by Scripture which clearly affirms the position of one man and one woman in a monogamous marriage relationship (Gen. 2:24). Finally, our view of the family unit follows from our view of marriage, which maintains that the best environment to raise and nurture children are families that are constituted by heterosexual parents.

NCCS Statement on the Repeal of 377A

- 2. We recognise that we live in a society that is governed on the basis of a secular state Government with no state religion and without affiliation to any particular religion. Yet, Singapore is a religious society. As Christian citizens in this secular state, our views on public morality and our conception of the common good in relation to issues of sexuality will be shaped by our religious beliefs outlined above.

Homosexuality and the Bible

- Six passages in the Bible have been identified as condemning homosexual relations:
 - Gen 19:1-9
 - Lev 18:22
 - Lev 20:13
 - Rom 1:26-27
 - 1 Cor 6:9
 - 1 Tim 1:10

The Relevance of Leviticus

- “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable” (Lev 18:22)
- “If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads” (Lev 20:13)
- Common objections include:
 - Leviticus is irrelevant for today
 - The term “detestable” refers only to ritual sins
 - Leviticus is not a comprehensive guide because it omits lesbianism

The Relevance of Leviticus

- While much of the Levitical rules are not followed literally today, the underlying principle: “Be holy, because I am holy” (Lev 11:44), still stands in the NT
- ¹⁵ “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy” (1 Pt 1:15-16)
- The prescriptive status of Leviticus is affirmed by Jesus’ citation of Lev 19:8, as the second greatest commandment, which is to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31)

The Relevance of Leviticus

- Lev 18:19-23 does not differentiate moral and ritual categories:
- 19 “Do not approach a woman to have sexual relations during the uncleanness of her monthly period.
- 20 “Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor’s wife and defile yourself with her.
- 21 “Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molek, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.
- 22 “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable.
- 23 “Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; that is a perversion.

The Meaning of “Detestable”

- The term “detestable” (*to’evoth*) has moral connotations
- After a list of sexual sins, the chapter concludes with a summary in Lev 18: 24-30 in which the term “detestable” is used four times to refer to all sexual sins
- Thus, all forms of incest, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality and bestiality were considered “detestable,” indicating that the word describes acts that were both morally and religiously repugnant

The Image of God

- The creation account of humankind includes the aspect of gender
- “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Gen 1:27)

The Image of God in Marriage

- Proponents of gay relationship argue the following about marriage
- Because of over-population, procreation is no longer needed
- “God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Gen 1:28)
- Marriage is for companionship, not just for procreation
- “The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him” (Gen 2:18)

The Image of God in Marriage

- Proponents of gay relationship argue that marriage in Gen 2:14 is descriptive, not prescriptive
- “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh (Gen 2:24)
- The Bible includes other forms of union such as polygamy and concubinage, especially among the patriarchs like Abraham and Jacob

The Image of God in Marriage

- The prescriptive nature of Gen 2:24 is confirmed by Jesus:
- ⁴ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Matt 19:4-6)
- ⁶ “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’⁷ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Rom 1:26-27

- ²⁶ “Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error”
- Proponents of gay relations argue that Paul is talking about:
 - Heterosexuals having homosexual sex
 - Sex with boys

Rom 1:26-27

- Some have argued that when Paul says they “exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones” (Rom 1:26), they are referring only to those born with a heterosexual orientation
- The implication is that what Paul says is not relevant to people who are born with a homosexual orientation
- The phrase they “exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones” means against one’s personal sexual nature or orientation
- The one form of homosexual practice known to Paul was “pederasty,” which included an older man having sex with a boy

Rom 1:26-27

- The all-inclusive language includes both males and females, and Paul doesn't limit his condemnation to specific forms of same-sex relations
- Paul grounds his condemnation with allusions to the creation account of Gen 1-2
- For example, he mentions “For since the creation of the world” (1:20)
- For Paul, the same-sex acts in 1:26-27 violate gender boundaries, which go against the way humans were created as males and females

Rom 1:26-27

- What is the meaning of the phrase “contrary to nature” (ESV) or “unnatural” (NIV)?
- In Greek literature, the phrase was used by philosophers and writers, who believed that same-sex intercourse was contrary to the will of God or the design of nature
- Paul, with allusions to Gen 1-2, is saying that same-sex intercourse is contrary to the design and intention of the creator
- Paul cannot be talking about heterosexuals engaging in same-sex intercourse against their personal sexual orientation

Frequently Asked Questions

- What does the Bible teach explicitly about Same-Sex Attraction?
- Is it a sin to experience Same-Sex Attraction?
- Is homosexual behavior a sin?
- Can a homosexual be a Christian?
- How to deal with a LGBTQ Christian?
- How do we interact with a non-Christian LGBTQ?

Resources for Reading

