

# Homosexuality and Scripture

by Peet Botha

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*The Bible teaches that homosexual conduct is sin, based on passages such as Romans 1:18-32, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.*

**Duration:** 1:08:13

**Scripture:** Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:26

**Topics:** "Homosexuality"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the topic of homosexuality and scripture. He begins by discussing the wrath of God being revealed against the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth. He emphasizes that since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities have been clearly seen, making mankind without excuse. The crux of the sermon is found in verses 26 and 27, where it is stated that God gave people over to sinful lusts, resulting in the exchange of natural relations for unnatural ones. The preacher concludes by stating that he will only speak on what scripture says about homosexuality, leaving out the biological, psychological, medical, and legal aspects of the topic.

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## Transcript

As I said, the sermon this morning has the theme of homosexuality and scripture. Now this in itself is a big, a vast topic if one wants to speak about it. But in the hour and a half we more or less have, it is not possible to say everything that there is to say on this topic.

And much will be left unsaid. For example, I will not touch on the biological and the psychological side of things. I will say nothing on the medical side of things.

Or the legal side of things. Because I regard myself first and foremost as a theologian. And therefore I will speak only on what scripture says concerning this topic.

Now, before we read scripture, I'd just like to give you some background why this topic of homosexuality is such a vital thing at the moment. I would like to call it a spiritual battlefield. Because darkness and light is fighting a war over this thing.

And the Church of Jesus Christ at large is in the process of being divided by this very specific topic. And it is because the Church finds itself in the position where it has to give advice and guidance to the world. And the Church itself is divided on this specific topic.

The one entity, the Church, who has to give guidance, can't give guidance. This whole war is a war against God. It is a war against the authority of God's word.

It is a war against the principles that God has laid down for His Church and for His people in scripture. And certain questions have been asked to the Church. People have asked the Church, what is wrong with homosexual conduct? What is wrong with homosexual marriages? Why can't homosexuals marry and why can't the Church give their blessing if there's a loving, caring homosexual relationship between two people of the same gender or sex, free of immoral conduct? That's the question.

Homosexuals claim to be Christians. They claim to be able to hear God's word. They claim to hear God speaking to them and directing their lives.

So what is happening with the people? I wonder how you would have answered if these questions would have been put to you. You might have said, well, it's easy. It is against God's word.

Why is it against God's word? Where does it say in God's word that it's wrong? You might say it is a sin. Why is it a sin? Where in God's word does it say it is a sin? You might say it's wrong. Why is it wrong? Where does it say in the word of God that it is wrong? The simple question that we need to know the answer to this morning is what does the Bible teach concerning homosexuality? Now you have to listen carefully, because you might think the answer is easy, but I'm going to quote you some very learned men's opinions concerning homosexuality.

I want you to realize that the generals in God's army, if I may call them that, the professors and the doctors and the learned men, the scribes, I want you to hear that they are confused when it comes to the basic beliefs and truths of God's word. And these are the people training the church of Jesus Christ and forming the opinions of the church of Jesus Christ. Now it's rather dangerous to quote the names of people.

But what they have said, they have said publicly and in newspapers. So this morning I will quote you some names. Professor Lowe from the University of Stellenbosch, the Dutch Reformed Church, said the following.

Because core homosexuality is mostly an unchosen condition in a person's sexual orientation, we have to conclude that homosexuality as such cannot be regarded as sin. Torquille Patterson from the Anglican Church said. At this point it is necessary to state a fact concerning the being of the homosexual, namely he is in no way responsible for his being and that therefore there can be no guilt attached to it.

Dr. Rolf Barnett from the Dutch Reformed Church. If we have to ask what the New Testament teaches us about homosexual orientation, we have to answer in all honesty, nothing. Our dear Desmond Tutu.

Rejecting practicing gays is nearly the ultimate blaspheme. Professor Buerta from UNISA. The Church must get away from the idea that he is the great patriarch which lays down the rules and sets the regulations for something like sex.

These are but a few voices out of hundreds feeling like this. But they have many voices against them. We find homosexual churches, so-called churches, all over the world.

Even homosexual synagogues are being started. But listen to this. The Jewish Ecclesiastical Court, the Jewish Church Court, said the following.

There is not a single source in all Jewish disciplines of holy literature that tolerates homosexual practices or homosexual orientation. Jews who approve of homosexuality do so without any reference to the Jewish holy scriptures. It is totally without support from any holy Jewish literature written during the last 3,000 years, and that's the Old Testament as we have it today.

The International Church Council in America said the following. The Bible considers homosexuality in thought and practice as sin. The Bible teaches practicing homosexuals will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

And that God only called heterosexual men and women as leaders in the Church of Christ. And the Dutch Reformed Church at its Senate meeting in 1986 stated that homosexual practice is sin. And that's the battlefield.

That is what they are fighting about. And this battle is so fierce that the Church of Jesus Christ is being torn apart. In the Anglican Church in America, they have appointed a homosexual bishop.

The Anglican Church in Africa, excluding the one in South Africa, said, we won't take it. We are breaking away. So, brethren, Satan and his demons are using sexuality, which has God given, to make huge inroads into God's Church and much hurt is caused in the Church of God today because of this fight.

And it's a fight that has to be fought. And whether you know it or not, you present God's Church as well. And you have to be very clear on these issues as well.

So let's turn to God's Scripture, to God's Word, and we read and we see what does the Bible teach us concerning this topic. And I'm going to read to you Romans chapter 1 verse 18 to 32. This portion of Scripture is a unity.

We call it a perikope. And it addresses the problem that we are going to speak about. Verse 18.

For since the creation of the world, verse 20, the world's God's invisible qualities, his internal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. Verse 20. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Verse 21. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts, this is verse 24, to sexual impurity for the degradation of their bodies with one another. Verse 25.

They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator who is forever praised. Amen. Verse 26.

Verse 27. Verse 27, which is the crux of this portion, because of this God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Verse 28-32.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice.

They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful. They invent ways of doing evil. They disobey their parents.

They are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things, but also prove of those who practice them. Verse 28-32.

Now, this portion of Scripture seems to be so clear, doesn't it? Based on this piece of Scripture, you can immediately say homosexuality is sin, isn't it? But if we listen to the scribes of our times, it seems that it's not so easy to interpret Scripture for people today. One of the people in this world, theologically speaking, who is forming many opinions is Professor Scruv from Germany. And you might be amazed to hear what he says he's reading out of this portion.

He says this portion of Scripture refers to pederasty, love for boys, homosexual conduct between men and boys. And one would like to ask the dear Professor, where does he find this nonsense that he's speaking? Professor Boswell says this portion refers to heterosexuals, men and women conducting homosexual acts. Professor Boswell says this portion of Scripture refers to pederasty, love for boys, homosexual conduct between men and boys.

But only against excess passion. And then Professor Countryman says, Paul says that same-sex relationships is dirty but not sinful in this portion. Can you ask yourself, if the scribes are so confused, the people who know what the Scripture says are supposed to know what the Scripture says, are so confused, where are we going to find the truth for us? How should we know what is God's will about this thing? But there are many other theologians, dear friends, who do speak the truth and what God says.

And they need our prayers because they are fighting the war on a level that we don't even get into. They are fighting the war there, where the original words were written. And in the Greek and in the Hebrew, they fight the war there.

How should we understand that which Paul has written down for his people to understand? And I'm speaking of people like Professor Schmidt and Professor Gagnon, who really, really portrays God's will as it's found in Scripture. And who says that the Bible teaches that homosexual conduct in all its manifestations is sin. So why? Why did Paul write these two verses, verses 26 and 27, why did he write it down for us to understand them to be that homosexual conduct is sin? There are five texts in the Bible who speaks bluntly about homosexuality.

And you may say, is that all? It doesn't matter. Even if there was only one text, it would have been enough to know God's will according to the Bible. Actually, the only two texts in the Old Testament are Leviticus 18, verse 22 and Leviticus 20, verse 13.

We will read it sometime during this service, don't worry. Then Romans 1, 26 and 27, which we have read. 1 Corinthians 6, verse 9 and 10.

And 1 Timothy 1, verse 9 and 10. Paul is arguing here something which we need to understand very clearly. In Romans 1, verse 19, Paul says, Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities were clear. Now there is a whole teaching concerning creation behind this, what Paul has said. And I'm not going to go into it.

If you want to know more about it, come and ask me. But Paul bases this whole argument on the simple fact that God created. And this fact is, God created mankind, humanity as man and female.

For there is nothing in between. God created man and He created female. And Paul says that God has created a gender difference.

A man looks like a man and a woman looks like a woman. And Paul says here, even if you don't know God, even if you don't know the creator of this universe, you have to realize simply by looking at man and woman that God intended them to be man and woman. There is a sexual differentiation built into the whole of creation which is obvious to whoever looks at it.

There is a man and there is a woman. The second thing that Paul is saying here is that there is a complementarity. In other words, man and woman complement one another.

And we are concerned here with the biological side of things. So the biology of man and woman shows that they are made for one another. There is nothing in between that could substitute the one or the other.

He says a man can't take the place of a woman for another man because it's not so in God's creation. And a woman cannot take the place of a man for a woman because God did not intend it so in the physical sphere of things. So in Romans 1 verse 19 and 20, Paul says that God's intention for mankind is a man-female intention.

Now you will remember that Paul knew the scriptures, the Old Testament of that time. He knew it off by heart. So for Paul to write this in Romans, he must have kept in mind what the Old Testament or the Torah as he knew it have taught about it.

Now pay careful attention to what I'm going to say now because when we come to what Paul has written in Corinthians and Timothy, this is going to be very important for you to grasp. You will see how Paul has taken the Old Testament and woven it into the New Testament in such a way that the homosexuals have got no arguments left when it comes to scripture. In Leviticus 18 verse 22, Paul writes... Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman.

That is detestable and I'm leaving out of the NIV. Now if you go and you look at what the Hebrews say because the Old Testament was mostly written in Hebrew... Listen how beautifully it is stated in the Hebrew language. In the Hebrew it says, do not lie, a man should not lie with a bed of a woman with another woman.

Do not lie with a man as one lies the bed of a woman. That's clear isn't it? And then sometime after the Old Testament was written, we have the translation of the Old Testament in Greek. The Greek Old Testament is called the Septuagint.

And that was the first ever translation of the Old Testament. And they translated these two words, man and bed, with arsen and coite. Coite, the English word coitus that we use sometimes.

Now in chapter 20 of Leviticus verse 13, it says, if a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman... Now this is called evil. This is called wrong in the Old Testament. Now if Dr. Barnard says that the New Testament does not teach anything whatsoever concerning homosexuality, then some way, something has changed between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Then either Dr. Barnard is right and the Bible is lying, or he's lying and he's misinterpreting the Bible. The Bible is not lying. So obviously he is.

Paul comes in Romans 1 verse 18 to 32 and he says, not only men but also women who have homosexual conduct is busy sinning against God and his word. Paul did not want anybody to be unsure about this fact. This is the only place in the whole Bible where women is also included when it comes to homosexuality.

And he starts with a woman in verse 26 and he said, because of this God gave them over to shameful lusts, even their women exchanged natural relationships with men for unnatural ones with women. And then he uses a word in the starting of verse 27. The word in the Greek means likewise.

And the NIV is translated in the same way. So he puts men and women and their homosexual conduct on precisely the same level and he says, likewise men as well. And he says, because of this they receive in themselves God's wrath for what they are doing.

So we can say and clearly see here that Professor Scroggs is wrong. It's nothing to do with boy love. Here it concerns homosexual conduct between adults.

Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9 and 10. I want to show you the totality of the confusion in the church of Christ when it comes to this verse. 6 verse 9. And do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.

Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9 and 10. Now the words Paul is using here comes from the Old Testament.

Remember in Leviticus I spoke about man and woman in Leviticus 18 verse 22 and 20 verse 13. In the Septuagint it was translated with arsen men, man and koite which means bed. Now Paul uses the word here and then another word in the Greek.

He uses the word arsenokoites and the word malakos. Now where does Paul get this word arsenokoites? Because when it comes to the Greek antique literature this is the first time ever where it has been used. Before this verse that Paul has written in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9 it has never been used before this word arsenokoites.

It simply means man bedders. Men taking other men to bed. And it would seem that Paul was the first ever to construct this word for usage after this it was used many times in Greek literature.

So Paul wanted to convey a specific message by putting this word together. The other word that he is using here in combination with arsenikoites is malakos which in itself has no sexual connotation. It means the soft one.

Somebody who is effeminate, who is womanly. Now I want you to listen how the church, the Bible translators have struggled with these two words. The word arsenikoites is also used in 1 Timothy 1 verse 6 and 9. The NIV translate these words with sexually immoral, homosexual offenders or perverts.

The King James translated adulterers, effeminate defile those who defile themselves with mankind. The New King James translate them with homosexuals, sodomites and sodomites. And then another translation translate them with sodomites, voluptuous persons and pederasts.

Could it be that Paul intended all these different meanings for this word? Could it be rather that Paul wanted to convey the simple message of homosexuals and not all these other things that people are reading in it? It seems clear to me when you study the original words that Paul went back to the Old Testament because the Old Testament was very important to him as God's will. And that he took these two words man and bed that we have in Leviticus and he put them together to simply say those men who take other men to bed. And that the word should rightfully be translated with homosexuals.

The other word malakos that he used next to arsenokoites in this portion of scripture. He talks about the soft one, the womanly one, the voluptuous one. Because in any homosexual relationship there are two men if I speak about men now.

And there is the man who takes the role of a woman in the relationship. The one who submits to the arsenokoites. And that is the malakos, the soft one.

And in terms of this scripture portion in 1 Corinthians that person should be called a homosexual as well. Now we have seen in Romans 1 verse 26 and 27 that Paul included man and woman. Here in Corinthians we see Paul including man and the so called woman again.

And therefore friends it seems clear when it comes to scripture that Paul had in mind that homosexual conduct by its very nature is sin. Now that we have determined that I am going to give you the very last reason why it should be considered a sin. In Romans he uses another Greek word.

He says all of this is para fisin. That means it is against nature. You can ask why Paul? Why is it against nature? And what nature is implicated here? Remember Paul said in verse 19 that the nature of man is a gender separated nature, man and female.

Man don't choose his nature, it is God given. So there is a perfect nature being given by God to mankind which is a segregated, a different, a separated nature of man and woman. And just as we have had rebellion in the garden of Eden.

We sit today with a rebellion against God for giving a specific nature to mankind. Man wants other natures as well. And if you want to give man or if man takes up another nature like homosexuality.

He will take up a nature for all kinds of sexual sins. There is a perfect nature and that is God given and that is the nature which is man and woman separate. Now in Romans 1 verse 18 to 32, Paul argues around this nature concept and three times he says something very important.

In this rebellion in verse 23, Paul says they have exchanged the perfect nature and God gave them over to what they have chosen. Verse 23, they have exchanged, verse 24 God gave them over. Verse 25, they have exchanged, verse 26 God gave them over.

It is written there. Verse 25, they have exchanged, verse 28 God gave them over. Verse 27, if you don't accept the intentional nature that God has given for humankind, you have to exchange it for something else.

And if you exchange it for a homosexual nature or bestiality nature or pederastic nature or adulterous nature, then God is going to give you over to that what you have chosen. Friends, I have only touched on this topic. I just wanted to leave you with the impression that scripture is clear and in truth judges homosexuality to be a sin in the eyes of the Most High God.

But now, is there hope for the homosexual? Is there hope for the one who exchanged his nature in God for something evil, for idolatry or something evil? First Corinthians chapter 6 verse 11, after Paul has spoken and he has mentioned homosexuals, after he said to them, you don't have part in the kingdom of God, after he said to them, God has judged you because of your deeds and you will have no part in seeing God, by saying to them, if you die in your sin, you won't go to heaven, but you will go to hell. He says to this very people, so that is what some of you were, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God. Homosexuality is not a sin that should keep you out of the kingdom of God.

And it should not be regarded as any greater sin than other sins which keep you out of the kingdom of God. And we shouldn't make it into more than it is just a plain common sin that breaks down the relationship with God in his word. Therefore, it simply means that like any other sin there is forgiveness, even for the homosexual.

And like the woman at the well, he should and she should hear the same words that the Lord Jesus Christ has spoken to the adulterous woman. I don't judge you, I forgive you, but go and sin no more. And this is what Paul is saying to the believers in his little congregation in the city of Corinth.

He implies by what he is saying, some of you were homosexuals, but you have been washed by the blood of Christ. You have been justified by Jesus Christ. The spirit of God is living in you.

You don't sin like homosexuals anymore. There is hope for the sinner. And in this case this morning, because I am speaking about homosexuality, there is hope for the homosexual.

The hope lies totally in Jesus Christ the Lord. To get free from homosexuality is a great battle. And one should not ridicule the homosexual who is busy struggling to get free from that sin in his life.

The sin of homosexuality, the sin of the homosexual act may never be accepted into the church of Christ. But the freed homosexual, the one who has stopped with it, like the thief, like the drunkard, like the one who swore, all of them must be accepted as pure children of God, being forgiven of their sin and be restored in Jesus Christ. The battle lines are drawn.

And the people, the armies are ready to fight over this one thing because they want homosexuality, the sin, to be accepted into the church of Jesus Christ. So I hope and trust in the Lord that you find yourself better prepared for this onslaught that will be coming in the next year or three. And whenever you are confronted to give your opinion, you will be able to say so because it is written in scripture in those and those and those places, those five places that I've given you.

And I hope that you find yourself better prepared for this onslaught that will be coming in the next year or three. You love us, your church, in such a way that you don't want us to live in ignorance. You have revealed to us this morning this intense war against your will and against your children, the church.

Especially the church which we are in South Africa, you are warning us of what is coming to us. We can expect it in a year or three. We'll be going out preaching and suddenly we'll be attacked for what we

preached against concerning the issue that has been discussed this morning.

Oh Lord, help us this morning concerning these following things now pertaining to our belief in you. We ask you Lord to believe your word, to stand firm in it, to proclaim it with all boldness. And Lord we ask you as we go out that you don't become cowards but that we stand against whatever is opposing the message that you want us to proclaim among the people in the world.

And also we ask you for the anointing that as we preach, those who hear will understand, will grasp your heart in the message that you want us to proclaim among them. Ultimately Lord we ask for victory, that as we do so, the devil will be defeated. Whether he comes by using the authority of the government or whether he comes using the suckliness of those who proclaim themselves as the preachers of the gospel.

Bless your child Lord who has spoken to us this morning. Please endow him with all the power that he needs so that he can be able to go even deeper into these matters and be able to expound them in the church. May we also be prepared to go deeper into these matters, study them, understand them in the power that you give us.

We thank you our God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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