

Guest Commentary

“Using the Bible Against Us”

One of the more vile and destructive developments in the battle over marriage and homosexuality is the use of God’s word, the Bible, to try to condone and justify sexual perversion and even same-sex marriage. This would be expected from the non-believing world, but my concern is what’s happening within the self-proclaimed believing community. From my viewpoint, there’s at least five ways scripture is wrongly applied to the issue of homosexuality.

First, claiming that homosexuality is never condemned in scripture is demonstrably a lie. The entire Bible is God’s word, not just the passages about loving our neighbor. Homosexuality is clearly described (Lev 18:22, 24-25; Rom 1:24-27) and consistently condemned (Rom 1:18-32; Gen 19; 1 Tim 1:9-10, etc.). There are no passages speaking well of it, or even coming close to accepting the behavior for other than what it is – horrible sin and an affront to God. When President-elect Obama says that homosexuality is only addressed in “an obscure passage in Romans” he demonstrates his abysmal ignorance of the Bible and willingness to distort God’s word for political ambition.

Secondly, it’s in vogue to quote Old Testament laws whose violation demands the death penalty (e.g. a rebellious son, cursing, working on the Sabbath, certain activities during menstruation), and lumping them with the punishment for homosexuality, thus trivializing the sexual behavior. What’s ignored, however, is that Old Testament Israel was a true theocracy - the LORD dwelled and ruled in their midst. His presence demanded holiness in all aspects of Jewish life, as well as distinctives to separate them from the world. With the coming of Christ and the new covenant a theocracy is no longer needed, and how God’s people are distinctive has changed. However, the moral code and the condemnation of sexual depravity have never changed and has been consistent throughout the Bible and all time.

Third, the mentality that has encouraged activist judges to re-interpret the Constitution to mean anything they want is the same mentality used by people who believe God changes, His word is fungible, and scripture can be conveniently stretched to justify anything. A classic example is focusing on the love nature of God (1 John 4:8) while overlooking God’s righteous standard concerning sexual purity and personal accountability (e.g. recent Newsweek cover story). Another is the belief that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of a lack of hospitality! This type of “progressive” reasoning is not new, and has destroyed many souls over the millennia.

Fourth, using the “What would Jesus do?” question. It’s a little arrogant to speak for Jesus, particularly when one has an ax to grind. Don’t forget that Christ Himself is the word incarnate (John 1:1,14) and that the entire Bible is God’s

revelation, not just those words printed in red. Context, literary genre, and consistent interpretive principles are key to understanding the direct and clear statements of scripture. The entire Bible is Christ's word to us and is very understandable in what it says. Interpreting it in false and tortured ways to justify sin, and at the same time ignore other passages, is at best ignorance, and at worst a self-deceived heart that needs to be called out for what it is – arrogant self-delusion.

The final abuse of God's truth is the claim that He created homosexuals the way they are. Scripture itself repudiates this (1 Cor 6:9-11), showing they can repent, turn from this vile life and be received into the kingdom of God through the saving work of Jesus Christ. May we remember this as we continue to contend for the truth, love those that are lost, and condemn unjustified manipulation of God's perfect word. Remember, you can't have it both ways. To tear down the authority and clear teaching of the Bible on the one hand, then use it in a twisted manner as an authoritative source to bolster acceptance of sin (Matt 4:1-11; Gen 3:1) is arrogant, hypocritical and destructive. Scripture warns against such people – whether clergy or laity – and we're not to be lead astray by them (2 Peter 3:14-18).

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