Homosexuality in Christian Perspective

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In his *Large Catechism* Luther writes that God established marriage as "the first of all institutions, and he created man and woman differently (as is evident) not for lewdness but to be true to each other, be fruitful, beget children, and support and bring them up to the glory of God."[1] That is the perspective from which I begin. In whatever way those who are not Christians may approach this topic, for Christians there should be no discussion of homosexuality that is not also a discussion of marriage and its purposes. It is equally important to emphasize at the outset that I take up this subject as a problem for theological ethics. I will not address directly hard questions of pastoral practice or psychological counseling. Those are important questions, but our approach to them depends upon an ethic already in place. And the position I will be explicating has been stated, about as directly as one could ask, by the noted German theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg:

> If a church were to let itself be pushed to the point where it ceased to treat homosexual activity as a departure from the biblical norm, and recognized homosexual unions as a personal partnership of love equivalent to marriage, such a church would no longer stand on biblical ground but against the unequivocal witness of Scripture. A church that took this step would cease to be the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.[2]

Before tracing the steps by which one might arrive at such a judgment, it is important, especially perhaps in contemporary American culture, to note briefly the place of moral reflection in the life of the church. No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:3). We are "justified by faith apart from works of law" (Rom. 3:28). It is "for freedom [that] Christ has set us free" (Gal. 5:1). Protestants, in particular, love to ring the changes on these crucial Pauline themes—almost suggesting, on occasion, that doing so could substitute for moral guidance and direction. And certainly the church is constituted and continually reconstituted only by the word of the gospel announcing that God has vindicated Jesus as his Son. The faith that, in turn, acknowledges Jesus likewise vindicates us before God. To such faith no conditions may be added, as if something more were needed to enter the kingdom that Jesus establishes. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to suppose that the Scriptures exist only to bear witness to Christ, as if they were the norm for the church's faith but not also for her life.

The temptation to such a mistake regularly expresses itself in a certain type of question. How can we articulate norms for Christian life without thereby establishing conditions for entry into the kingdom? Without supposing that something more is required than the confession "Jesus is Lord"? Such questions seem to press inexorably down a road at the end of which no ethic remains, at the end of which we are unable to distinguish between actions that follow Christ

and actions that turn against him. But to distinguish between those deeds that can be done in Christ and those that turn against him—a distinction the church has always struggled to make—is not to add any conditions to the faith that acknowledges Jesus. The church's moral discipline does not set up conditions for entering the kingdom; rather, it offers a description of what the life of discipleship should be like—a description of what it means to follow Christ. In setting forth such a description of her way of life, in understanding that description as a discipline to be undertaken, the church does not raise any other standard than the Christ who is confessed. On the contrary, the church seeks "solely to explore and expound what the standard" is.[3] We seek, that is, to give content and structure to the meaning of love.

Love Is Not Enough

A marriage that neither begins in love nor gives rise to love falls short of what Christians hope for in a bond that analogically participates in the union of Christ and his church. Nevertheless, in a world in which the languages of love and consent have gradually come to trump all other moral language, we do well to remind ourselves at the outset that marriage, the first of all institutions, is not simply about love in general. It is about the creation of man and woman as different yet made to be true to each other; it is about being fruitful, begetting and rearing children. This pours content and structure into our understanding of sexual love, and it takes seriously the body's character within nature and history.

We should not deny, of course, the significance for human life of the person-uniting, love-expressing dimension of sexual love. In such love we are drawn out of our isolated subjectivity, into a relationship that may seem to offer fulfillment and satisfaction. Wherever such love and affection are present, something of great human significance occurs. "A being which can still love is not yet a devil."[4] And even a distorted and perverted eros, in its longing to give love to and receive love from another, still bears "the traces of ... divinity," as Plato well knew.[5] True as this is, it alone does not and cannot constitute a satisfactory Christian ethic. To locate moral meaning only in the love-giving dimension of our sexuality will, for example, leave us unable to explain why the sexual relation must be given a history, why fidelity to one's spouse is required, even when love draws us toward another possible partner. It will not, that is, explain why adultery is an action that turns against Christ. To locate meaning only in the love-giving dimension of our sexuality, rather than in the union of its love-giving and life-giving dimensions, will leave us unable to explain why the giving and receiving of sexual love should in its very nature be ordered toward procreation. It will not, that is, explain why the conception, gestation, and rearing of children should not be separated from the bond of marital love. To locate meaning only in the love-giving dimension of our sexuality will leave us unable to explain why the trust expressed by partners in sadomasochistic acts, as they make themselves vulnerable to harm while trusting that their lover will not go too far, is a degrading rather than a dignifying of our humanity. In short, emphasis upon quality of the relationship alone, upon the giving and receiving of love within a consensual relationship, does not and cannot by itself provide the necessary content and structure for love as Christians have understood it.

The body is the place of our personal presence. And moral significance must therefore be found not only in the spirit that characterizes our relationships with others, not only in mutuality and communion, but also in the bodily relationship itself. To suppose that mutual love is all that is needed to make a relationship right is to ignore the moral significance of the body. It is, in

fact, a kind of dualism that separates our true self from the body. If we want to know how rightly to use the body, therefore, if we want to distinguish between fulfilling and corrupting sexual relationships, we cannot talk only of love, consent, and mutuality. However much my neighbor's wife and I are drawn to each other, our bodies are already promised to others. However deep and intense may be a father's affection for his adult daughter, to give himself sexually to her is a perversion of love, not a fulfillment.

In countless ways, therefore, a spirit of love is not enough. Spirit must be present in and through the body, and the body is rightly given only in certain ways, to certain people, under certain circumstances. In a world uncorrupted by human sin, spirit and body would, no doubt, be harmoniously integrated, but that, of course, is not the world in which we live. Therefore, human nature as we experience it—a nature in which body and spirit have quarreled—cannot itself provide the norms for human sexual behavior. What seems "natural" to us may, in fact, be contrary to our nature as God's creatures. Behavior that is natural in the sense that we are readily drawn to it, may in fact be unnatural—inappropriate to who we truly are. Experience alone—the prompting of love alone—cannot here be our sole tutor and guide; for our experience is broken and distorted. It must be reshaped and redirected with the guidance of Scripture.

The Meaning of Marriage

The St. Andrew's Day Statement, published in 1995 by a theological working group responding to a request of the Church of England Evangelical Council, articulated the proper starting point for Christian reflection on homosexuality when it stated:

> The primary pastoral task of the church in relation to all its members, whatever their self-understanding and mode of life, is to re-affirm the good news of salvation in Christ, forgiveness of sins, transformation of life and incorporation into the holy fellowship of the church. In addressing those who understand themselves as homosexual, the church does not cease to speak as the bearer of this good news. It assists all its members to a life of faithful witness in chastity and holiness, recognizing two forms or vocations in which that life can be lived: marriage and singleness (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7 *passim*). There is no place for the church to confer legitimacy upon alternatives to these.[6]

This constitutes our proper starting point because it makes clear that whatever we say about homosexuality must be grounded in what we say about marriage and the creation of humankind as male and female.

In his book, *The Moral Teaching of Paul*, Victor Furnish begins his discussion of homosexuality with a succinct statement of a view that is commonly expressed: "As we begin an investigation of the biblical teaching about homosexuality, then, we must keep our sense of proportion. We are not dealing with a fundamental biblical theme. We are not dealing with a major biblical concern. We have to hunt for relevant passages."[7] This is a form of biblicism that one does not expect to find in a distinguished critical scholar, assuming, as it does, that fundamental themes require proof texts that speak directly and leave no room for reflection. Perhaps only a topic as volatile as the one we are discussing could give rise to such biblicism.

We can readily grant that there are only a few biblical texts that speak directly to the issue of homosexuality, and I will make my way toward them before I am done.

But surely *sexuality* is a very fundamental biblical theme. Indeed, as Jesus says, "from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6). God creates woman not as the mirror image of man but as his counterpart, like him and yet unlike him. Because she is flesh of his flesh, they correspond to each other and are made for relation with each other; because she is not simply his mirror image, they can become "one flesh." This is not just a spiritual truth about human beings, or about "gender." It is written into our sexuality, our embodied selves. Two people—sharing a common nature, yet as different as their genitalia are different—are drawn out of themselves in order that they may learn something of what it means to be true to each other. And by God's grace, this fleshly bond is oriented toward the creation of succeeding generations—toward begetting children, supporting and bringing them up. The sexual union of man and woman is at the center of our nature, and it sustains our history.

Moreover, our creation for covenant community as male and female images the still more fundamental relation of Israel and her Lord, who is not only her maker but also her husband (Isaiah 54:5-6). Even when Israel is unfaithful to this covenant, God sends his prophet Hosea to reclaim her as his wife, to woo her and speak tenderly to her as he once did in the wilderness, so that she will again say to him "my husband," and they will be betrothed in faithfulness (Hosea 2:14—3:1). So also the church is the bride of Christ—here and now in the profound mystery of their union (Eph. 5:31-32), at the end of the age when the new Jerusalem is revealed as the bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2). To be faithful to our creation as male and female is, therefore, to image forth in our lives still deeper truths about God's election of and steadfast faithfulness to his people. To acknowledge *this* God as Lord is to recognize and affirm, as Richard Hays has put it, "that God constituted a normative reality by making them male and female and joining them together as one flesh."[8] We are, then, dealing with a fundamental biblical theme—one, in fact, that comes very near the heart of the gospel which announces God's faithfulness in Christ.

How do we live in accord with this normative reality—the creation of humankind as male and female? A good starting place would be Luther's explanation of the 6th commandment in his *Small Catechism*. We should seek to "lead a chaste and pure life in word and deed, each one loving and honoring his wife or her husband." Although the 16th century Reformers often exalted the importance of marriage, especially as part of their attack on monastic vows, marriage itself is not the fundamental requirement. Chastity is. And chastity means far more than disciplined control of one's appetites. Were that all it meant, there would be no need or place for chastity in heaven, when we no longer will experience the pull of sinful appetite. Chastity means that we offer our sexual life back to God, presenting our bodies "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" (Rom. 12:1). It means not being conformed to the world but being "transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2). And, of course, this does then, in our present sinful condition, imply the necessity also of discipline and control. According to St. Paul, marriage serves now to restrain our sinful impulses—impulses which, if given free rein, would often satisfy themselves outside the bond of marital commitment (I Cor. 7 *passim*). We need not enter into a sexual relationship; we can, either by choice or by necessity, bypass that and seek to

devote our bodies directly to God as members of Christ's bride, the church. But if we do give ourselves sexually, then it is to be done in accord with the order God establishes in creation. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from unchastity..." (I Thess. 4:3).

The central and typical expression of our creation as male and female is, therefore, marriage, together with the procreation of children who, by God's grace, may bring to fruition the union of husband and wife. Some marriages may be involuntarily childless, or perhaps, on occasion, deliberately childless in order for husband and wife better to devote themselves to God's service (I Cor. 7:25-35; Matt. 19:10-12). Some men and women may be unmarried—perhaps because they have not yet found a suitable spouse, perhaps because they are widowed. Nevertheless, those who are married but childless and those who are single, when in chastity they offer their bodies to God in holiness and honor, live in accord with the order God has established in creation, an order Jesus himself reaffirms. They do not deliberately set themselves against the grain of the creation. Rather, what they say in essence is: "Marriage and procreation are good. They were once good for me; or they may some day be good for me; or they would be good for me were it not for the special tasks of service laid upon me."[9] With good consciences and glad hearts they take their place in the community of the faithful who form the bride of Christ.

Having emphasized the significance of our creation as male and female, the biblical story also qualifies it. We tend to suppose that sexual fulfillment is of ultimate importance and that no life can be well lived without it, but we must come to see it as an image of what is truly ultimate. Our creation for covenant community as male and female points toward the eternal communion of Christ and the church. A day will come when image becomes reality and the marriage supper of the lamb is consummated. Then our creation for one-flesh union will be seen to have offered us something far more important than sexual fulfillment—namely, an inkling of the divine glory in which we have a share. In heaven, Jesus says, they neither marry nor are given in marriage (Mark. 12:25). Not that our created nature as male and female will disappear; for, as C.S. Lewis once put it, "[w]hat is no longer needed for biological purposes may be expected to survive for splendor. Sexuality is the instrument both of virginity and of conjugal virtue; neither men nor women will be asked to throw away weapons they have used victoriously."[10] Knowing this, we are given a vantage point from which to evaluate claims about the importance of sexual expression or satisfaction in human life. On the one hand, our creation as male and female, as sexual beings, is part of the meaning of our humanity. On the other hand, it cannot divulge the final meaning of that humanity, for it is only a pointer toward the true fulfillment God will one day give.

Homosexuality and the Bible

Against this background we may now turn our attention more directly to the Bible's evaluation of homosexual behavior. And the most important passage that demands our attention is, of course, in the first chapter of Romans, where Paul writes:

> Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the

> Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error. (Rom. 1:24-27)

In the larger context of this chapter, Paul is laying bare the human condition before God.[11] All stand under God's wrath, condemned in their sins, but this divine judgment "takes the ironic form of allowing them the freedom to have their own way."[12] We try to live free of any limits. With this freedom we wrap ourselves ever more firmly in the chains of vice—and it is not insignificant for Paul that we do so, in part, by using our freedom to distort and corrupt the very sexuality which is intended to sustain human life, and which, by giving rise to those who will take our place, points to the limits of our mortal nature. But we try to live without limit. By turning against the created meaning of our humanity as male and female, homosexual behavior claims the freedom to give our own meaning to life and thereby symbolically enacts a rejection of God's will for the creation. Paul assumes that his readers will, together with him, view homosexual behavior as wrong; indeed, the structure of his argument rests precisely upon such an assumption.

What makes it wrong? In part, of course, it is wrong for Paul because it is condemned in Torah, as for example in Leviticus 18:22: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." In that passage, we should note, an act is categorically prohibited. Its moral quality does not depend upon the spirit or the circumstances in which it is done, and Jews have historically understood it that way. But the prohibition in Torah cannot be all that stands behind Paul's words in Romans 1. For one thing, the Leviticus passage condemns only male homosexual behavior, whereas Paul also depicts female homosexual behavior as a rejection of the Creator's intent. And for another, Christians—following precisely Paul's lead—have regarded some commands in Torah as no longer binding. One might argue that the levitical prohibition of homosexual behavior as an abomination represents only ancient Israel's understanding of ritual purity and is not a moral judgment that should govern our actions today. Were we orthodox Jews we might still regard this prohibition as binding in our lives. Since we are not, we have to distinguish, one might say, between what the Bible narrates—the purity laws by which Israel ritually separated itself from the surrounding peoples—and what the Bible teaches and requires of us.

This move is not likely to get us very far, however. In the same eighteenth chapter of Leviticus, God's people are forbidden to engage in incestuous behavior, forbidden to "lie carnally" with a neighbor's wife, forbidden to devote their children by fire to Molech. Shall we regard these prohibitions merely as ritual purity requirements? I think not. Torah itself does not distinguish for us between moral law and ritual requirement. But that does not mean we cannot or should not or need not make such distinctions; it only means that we must do what the Old Testament does not do for us. "In each case, the church is faced with the task of discerning whether Israel's national norms remain in force for the new community of Jesus' followers.[13] And quite clearly, one of the norms that Paul here regards as still in force for those who seek to live in Christ is that prohibiting homosexual behavior. Far from being an action that could now be done in Christ, it is one manifestation of the "ungodliness and wickedness" in which our lives

are deeply involved and against which the wrath of God is directed (Rom. 1:18). The question our churches have to face, therefore, is not really what Paul thinks and teaches but how we are prepared to respond to what is taught.

This is a hard saying, however, and a variety of strategies have been used to avoid it. For example, even granting that Paul regards homosexual behavior not simply as ritually impure but as morally wrong, perhaps his judgment is limited in some way by the circumstances of his day. Thus, some have argued that Paul is condemning only a form of pederasty known to him at the time and that the expression of sexual love between men in his world was never fully voluntary, nor between equals, nor part of a long-term romantic relationship. Paul, according to this view, knew only of pederastic relationships between a man and a younger boy—relationships lacking in mutuality and almost inevitably exploitative. When he condemns them, we can join him in his condemnation without likewise condemning all homosexual relationships as we know them today.

Unfortunately for the argument, however, the facts are otherwise, as Mark D. Smith has recently demonstrated.[14] First, not all pederastic relationships in the ancient world were exploitative; some were characterized by mutuality and shared pleasure. Second, and more important, the homosexual behavior Paul would have known in the Roman world was no longer chiefly pederastic, if indeed it ever had been. The most common form of homosexual behavior among females had, in fact, "involved mutually consenting women of roughly equal age."[15] And more generally, even in the three centuries before Paul, the practice of pederasty among males was not the most common form of homosexual behavior in the Greco-Roman world. Hence, Smith concludes his exhaustive examination of the evidence this way: "I believe that the only interpretation that does justice to the literary and historical context is that Paul probably did know of at least several different types of homosexual practices among both men and women. He used general language in Rom. 1, because he intended his proscription to apply in a general way to all homosexual behavior, as he understood it."[16] He was familiar with a range of homosexual behavior not unlike the range in our world, and that range of behavior he condemned.

Another way in which we might attempt to confine Paul's words in Romans to his time alone would be to note that he could not possibly have had our contemporary understanding of sexual orientation according to which some people—even if perhaps only a very small percentage—have, for as long as they have known themselves as sexual beings, experienced a consistent pattern of attraction directed exclusively toward members of their own sex. Because this concept of a fixed sexual orientation emerged only in the nineteenth century, it could not have affected Paul's thinking.[17] In condemning those who "exchanged natural relations for unnatural," he could only have had in mind those who, despite being primary het*eros*exuals, perversely acted contrary to their own natural inclinations.

Here again, however, it is difficult to make the facts fit the argument—and that for several reasons. To be sure, the nineteenth century concept of "orientation" does not seem adequate to Paul's world, but it is also inadequate to our own. Human sexual experience is varied indeed. If we speak of homosexuals and heterosexuals, we must also speak of bisexuals.

Human sexual desire ranges across a continuum, and the moral question is not why our desires draw us in one direction or another but what behavior is right or wrong. The diversity of sexual desire in our world is, it turns out, very much like the world Paul knew, with a kaleidoscopic variety of sexual desires and behaviors.[18] The truth may be, as Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen has put it, that "our Old Testament and New Testament ancestors were correct in treating homosexual acts... as behaviors to which any person could potentially be tempted, and that is why they remind their readers to be on guard against them."[19] The important question, in other words, is not about sexual "orientation" but about behavior—both in Paul's world and in ours. Indeed, the language of "orientation" has proven to be a dead end for serious moral reflection.

But suppose we were to grant that such an orientation exists and that some people experience themselves as primary homosexuals—constituted by a consistent attraction toward those of the same sex. Does this mean that Paul's condemnation of "unnatural" sexual activity does not apply to their behavior? That will be a hard case to make. *Philosophically*, "natural" is a word to conjure with. If the "natural" denotes simply the desires some people consistently have, the whole bewildering variety of such desires that exists in our world, we will lose our grip on norms entirely. Indeed, that notion of the natural is incompatible with any understanding of ethics or moral law, for it has no standard by which to judge or evaluate the desires that come "naturally" to us. Then we very quickly find ourselves without the conceptual resources needed to speak ethically about incest, bestiality, and adultery. *Theologically*, the case is equally hard to make. The "exchange" Paul has in mind—when he writes of those who "exchanged natural relations for unnatural"—does not refer to "individual life decisions; rather, it is Paul's characterization of the fallen condition of the pagan world."[20] The Creator's will for human life has been exchanged for sinful human will. Homosexual behavior—whatever orientation it enacts—is contrary to our created nature and is one more evidence of our alienation from the Creator. That is Paul's point. He is offering a moral and theological assessment of behavior that was common in his time and place but is not unlike behavior common in our time and place.

As far as we are aware, of course, Paul did not know churches in which there were people who understood themselves as both committed homosexuals and committed Christians, who wanted to set their experience of homosexual behavior as positive and good over against and in judgment upon the witness of Scripture. In the face of such experiential claims from believing Christians, might Paul have found reason to modify his moral and theological assessment? We have, as I noted, no instance to which we can turn in which Paul responded to such claims. He might have responded "as he did to the Corinthian Christians, for all we know committed church members," who were going to prostitutes.[21] "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never." (I Cor. 6:15).

It is also theoretically possible, of course, that he might have responded more as he did when the earliest Jewish Christians were reluctant to accept into the church Gentiles who, because they were uncircumcised and did not observe dietary laws, were ritually unclean. Theoretically possible, but unlikely. It is hard to find in Paul any warrant for such a response. Richard Hays has articulated the crucial point with clarity and precision:

> [E]xperience must be treated as a hermeneutical lens for reading the New Testament rather than as an independent, counterbalancing authority. This is the point at which the analogy to the early church's acceptance of Gentiles fails decisively. The church did not simply observe the experience of Cornelius and his household and decide that Scripture must be wrong after all. On the contrary, the experience of uncircumcised Gentiles responding in faith to the gospel message led the church back to a new reading of Scripture. This new reading discovered in the texts a clear message of God's intent, from the covenant with Abraham forward, to bless all nations and to bring Gentiles (*qua* Gentiles) to worship Israel's God... Only because the new experience of Gentile converts proved hermeneutically illuminating of Scripture was the church, over time, able to accept the decision to embrace Gentiles within the fellowship of God's people.[22]

An analogous argument, taking seriously the biblical understanding of our creation for community as male and female and showing that homosexual behavior can be a fulfillment rather than a repudiation of this creation, has not been made—and, I think, cannot be made. Hence, we can only say what, at the outset, I cited Wolfhart Pannenberg as having said: The unequivocal witness of Scripture is that homosexual activity departs from the norm God has established for human life, and homosexual partnerships cannot be understood morally as the equivalent of marriage. There is no persuasive evidence that this scriptural view applies only to a world now lost and not also to our own. In allowing her public teaching to be governed by this scriptural witness, the church faithfully distinguishes actions that follow Christ from actions that turn against him.

This has been for me a long and arduous argument. And it is important to recall now what I said at the very outset: I have taken up this subject not as a question of counseling but as a matter for theological ethics. We are asking what the church's public teaching ought to be if it wishes to be faithful to Scripture, and I think we have found the answer to that question. We have not, of course, answered every difficult question that might arise in pastoral or clinical care.

But we dare not permit the church's public teaching, on the matter of homosexuality or any other matter, to be taken over and determined by a desire—however sincere and well-intentioned—to "affirm" every person in whatever state he or she may be. That is not the gospel. To articulate the Christian norm for life is not the church's only task, but it is a necessary task. If we fail here, affirmation of and compassion for those who fall short mean little. Indeed, once we can no longer say what it means to "fall short," we have little need for compassion and few problems for pastoral practice. But then we also are poorly positioned to take seriously the law written in our hearts, the desire of human beings for what is noble and God-pleasing, the good news that we have been set free from captivity to our own distorted images of what it means to be satisfied and fulfilled. For the sake not only of those who have been baptized into Christ's body, but also for the sake of a world which, even if only inchoately, wants to follow the way of life, we have a responsibility to conform our public teaching to what we have ourselves been taught by Scripture about our creation as male and female and about marriage as the first of institutions. We have no authorization to do otherwise.

NOTES

1. Martin Luther, *Large Catechism*, I, p. 207.
2. "Revelation & Homosexual Experience: What Wolfhart Pannenberg says about this debate in the church," *Christianity Today*, 40 (November 11, 1996), p. 37.
3. Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 177.
4. C. S. Lewis, "Preface to the Paperback Edition," *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. x.
5. C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1955), p. 110. Cf. Plato's *Phaedrus*.
6. "The St. Andrew's Day Statement: An examination of the Theological Principles affecting the Homosexuality Debate." Published by a theological work group in response to the request of the Church of England Evangelical Council. (November 30, 1995), p. 6.
7. Victor Paul Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 53.
8. Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (Harper San Francisco, 1996), p. 368f.
9. Thomas E. Schmidt, *Straight & Narrow?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), p. 48.
10. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p. 166.
11. For a fuller discussion of this passage in its context, a discussion upon which I rely here, see Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (Harper San Francisco, 1996), pp. 383-389.
12. Ibid., p. 385.
13. Ibid., p. 382.
14. Mark D. Smith, "Ancient Bisexuality and the Interpretation of Romans 1:26-27," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 64 (Summer, 1996), pp. 223-256.
15. Ibid., p. 243.
16. Ibid., p. 246.
17. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, "To Ask a Better Question: The Heterosexuality-Homosexuality Debate Revisted," *Interpretation*, 51 (April 1997), p. 144.
18. Smith, p. 248.
19. Van Leeuwen, p. 144.
20. Hays, p. 388.
21. Smith, p. 249.
22. Hays, p. 399.