

Sunday, June 7, 2009

**Living Hope EFC**

Art Smith

*Human Potential; What the Natural Heart is Capable Of: Rom.1:24-27*  
What the Bible says about same-sex relationships.

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INTRO

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**

WSJ.com

- APRIL 4, 2009

**Iowa Supreme Court Overturns Gay-Marriage Ban**

The Iowa Supreme Court struck down a ban on same-sex marriages, making Iowa the first Midwestern state and the third overall to allow gay marriage.

The unanimous ruling by the seven justices may signal a shift of momentum in favor of proponents of same-sex marriage, who have taken their fight to courts and state legislatures after years of defeats at the ballot box.

Iowa joins Massachusetts and Connecticut in allowing same-sex marriage, while legislatures in New York, New Jersey, New Hampshire and Maine are weighing bills that would allow it.

**Apr.8, 09 Vermont Legislature Override Legalizes Gay Marriage**

New York Times reports that on Tuesday Vermont joined Iowa as the latest states to approve same-sex marriage. Vermont's legislators managed to override Gov. Jim Douglas' veto of the legislation, allowing the bill to proceed toward its Sept. 1 effective date. Steve Cable of traditional marriage groups Vermont Renewal and Vermont Marriage Advisory Council said the measure was rushed through the legislature, preventing effective debate.

**May 11, 2009 Maine just became the fifth state to legalize 'gay marriage';** the state's governor had previously opposed 'gay marriage' and could have vetoed the bill. He did not - claiming a change of heart on behalf of 'fairness' - a change many appear to be making in these perilous days for marriage.

**June 5, 2009 N.H. Becomes 6th State to Legalize Gay Marriage**

Baptist Press reports that New Hampshire became the sixth state in the U.S. to legalize "gay marriage" Wednesday when Democratic Gov. John Lynch -- who less than two months ago said he opposed such unions -- signed into law a bill redefining marriage to include homosexuals.

***Barbara Catbagan: The Coloradoan, Ft. Collins –***

"In 1967, not that far back in our history, the Supreme Court struck down all interracial marriage bans. Like gays, interracial couples fought hard battles, and married in states where it was not forbidden."

- [The implication is that the present fight of same-sex marriages is a civil rights issue, like racial prejudice.](#) (Tom Barnes, 26) **Q: IS IT?**

## Religion Today Summaries - May 1, 2009

### Gay Hate Crimes Bill Could Target Churches

Baptist Press reports that a bill extending hate crimes protections to homosexuals and transgendered individuals has been approved in the House of Representatives and faces little opposition in the Senate. "This bill puts Christians and many other religious groups in the government's crosshairs," said Barrett Duke, a vice president with the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "While we should never condone acts of violence against anyone, for whatever reason... **this bill proposes to prosecute someone based on their belief about homosexuality** and therefore makes religious belief a germane issue in this debate." Jeff King, president of International Christian Concern, called the bill "a backdoor tool... to shut down legitimate free speech from Christians and others who oppose their lifestyle." He told the Christian Post, "Pastors in Europe and Canada have already been arrested for preaching against homosexuality based on similar legislation."

#### **Q: Is same-sex marriage a civil rights issue?**

- Are gay people born with "gay genes," – Is it their natural gender?
- [What does the Bible have to say on this whole matter?](#)

Paul addresses the very issue in Romans chapter one

**Rom.1:21-27:** The ungodly behavior of those who reject God.

#### **1 – Here is the depth of what it means to be "lost."**

We must take in the full scope of what has happened to man here.

[Romans 1:18-27](#)

<sup>18</sup>The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the odleness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup>since [what may be known about God is plain to them](#), because [God has made it plain](#) to them. <sup>20</sup>For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. <sup>21</sup>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.

<sup>22</sup>**Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.**

<sup>24</sup>Therefore **God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.**

<sup>25</sup>**They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**

<sup>26</sup>**Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their [women exchanged natural relations](#) for [unnatural ones](#).**

<sup>27</sup>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.**

NOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PAUL'S DESCRIPTION:

- (1) God revealed Himself to mankind continually through Creation v20
  - (2) Unmistakenly, man knew/knows God! v19,20b
  - (3) Man didn't esteem or worship God, rather he rejected Him. v21
  - (4) Man's heart & mind have become senseless spiritually, morally v21
  - (5) Man suppresses the truth about God. V18
  - (6) Man worships many corruptible substitutes, idols. V23,25
  - (7) Man is under God's wrath. V18.
  - (8) God gives men over to their sinful desires to impurity. V24,26
  - (9) Man's shameful lusts drive him to abandon his natural functions sexually, and to become inflamed with same-sex lust. V26-27
- A sadder day & "de-evolution" cannot exist!

This represents a desperate situation for mankind.

- ***The picture can't be worse.***
- Not only has man sinned & rebelled against God & turned to idolatry, now his ***heart & mind*** are infected with an ***inability*** to know truth!
- It is one thing to be on the **wrong road**, it is another to be on the wrong road – and have no map – to know you're on the wrong road.

**APPLY:** There is a sober warning to us all here. Just because God reveals Himself to man, doesn't mean men see Him! We must give **thanks!**

## **2- V.24-25. There is a consequence for those who reject God.**

**"Because of this...God gave them over..."**

- In part, God's judgment of man's rebellion is to allow man's sinful nature to have its own way. To abandon man to himself! – **Rom.6:16.**
- With man's mind not thinking properly, and his heart dark to the light of God = he becomes a fool! Q=**What kind of behavior is possible?**
- **Q: What is the human potential?** What will relationships look like?
- Man is left to live in a world God created, but now under the influence of un-godly passions & powers, estranged from God.
- NOTE: Sinful desires express themselves by **degrading the body v24.**

## **3 –V.26-27. Man's sin nature drives him to abandon natural order**

**"Because of this...God gave them over..." – Same Greek construction.**

- Paul explains what he meant in verse 24 by **"sexual impurity."**

### **(1) Paul uses the words "female" & "male," not man & woman.**

- The same words Christ uses in **Matt.19:4:** "Creator made them..."
- His point is that **there is a natural gender sexual design** & function between male & female. BUT...dishonorable passions distort them.
- **Shameful lusts** drive male & female to abandon their natural created sexual functions for "unnatural" "indecent" same-sex behavior.

### **(2) Paul uses three different Greek words for lust of increasing intensity.**

1- Epithumia, v24. The broadest word for desire. Usually has a bad connotation (**6:12** lust). Any natural desire or appetite usually depraved.

2- Pathos, v26 –“lusts.” Denotes an evil desire, deep in the soul.

3- Oreksis, v27- “lust.” A *reaching or stretching after*. A desire or appetite that seeks the object of its gratification in order to make it its own.

- **Note the progressive nature of sinful desire within man:** from desire to passion to action. From natural **impure** desire, to **shameful** passions in the soul, finally to **burning** lust that seeks gratification.
- I suspect Paul is describing not just the sin of homosexuality, but how all sin captivates us. A thought, a desire, a lust, a behavior.

### **(3) The truth about same-sex relations/ homosexuality:**

1-It results from shameful/dishonorable lusts v26.

2-It is *against* God’s created “natural” order & function of male & female

3-It is the product of “burning/consuming passions,” v27.

4-It is classified as “perversion” or “error,” not good or right v27.

5-It receives a necessary reward/ penalty, 27.

6-The penalty is experienced by those participating in such acts.

7-It is the consequence of God’s having given people over to rebellion.

### **4 – Some Biblical conclusions about same-sex relations/ marriage.**

(1) Same-sex relations & marriage are looked upon by God as sinful, unnatural, against-nature – in every case. No exceptions.

- Genesis 19:1-29 & 2 Pet.2:7. Lev.18:22, 20:13. 1 Tim.1:8-11; 1 Cor.6:9-11

(2) The Bible condemns same-sex behavior among Christians and non-Christians. Sin is sin regardless of who commits it.

(3) God prohibits this “unnatural” behavior because it is contrary to His creation design. Therefore, it is unhealthy & harmful to civilization.

- **God has a created design/ order for mankind:** Rom.12, Eph.5, Gen.2
- This design is the result of God’s benevolent, good, loving purposes for ALL mankind.
- **His laws always have in mind man’s happiness:**

- Psalm 1; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119; 2 Tim.3:16-17; John 10:1

**ILLUS:** Why we have family rules, laws for citizens.

- Rules, by good parents & governments, are meant for our happiness.

**Andy Comiskey:** Desert Stream Ministries.

“What well-intended politicians (and citizens) fail to realize is that 'gay marriage' demonstrates an ultimate lack of 'fairness'. How? By messing with God's purpose for His human creation. By sealing the delusion inherent in same-sex couples. And by undermining the most basic, important unit of civilization. Such 'fairness' serves injustice for generations to come. Kids require male and female. Period.”

(4) Same-sex relations / marriage is contrary to God's design for marriage, and therefore harmful to the family, society, & spread of God's K'dom.

- Gen.1:26-28. They rep. God's image. **Reproduction.** Order.
- Gen.2:20-24. **Complimentary** helpers. Specifically designed. "One."
- Matt.19:4-6. Created with **sexual gender.** Marriage definition affirmed
- Eph.5:22-25. **Represents** Christ & church. 6:1-4. Child-rearing design
- 1 Pet.3:1-7. Husbands & wives purpose involves salvation expansion
- Titus 2:3-5. Pattern for how society works. Husband, wife, kids.

(5) While people *may be* born with homosexual desires, God does not create people with homosexual genes, as a 3<sup>rd</sup> alternate gender.

- Never in the Bible is such a notion even mentioned.
- [There is no scientific research identifying a "homosexual" gene.](#)
- Rather, science continually confirms biological male & females.

(6) While people *may be* born with homosexual desires, this does not mean they must give in to such desires, any more than someone with a weakness for gambling, alcohol, anger, lust – must give into these.

- **All men are born with a sin nature:** Eph.2:3; Ps.51:5; Rom.5:12
- All men struggle with some urge or moral weakness.
- [God designed man to live with his sinful nature under the rule of his conscience, intellect and the Holy Spirit.](#) **Gal.5:16**

(7) Same-sex marriage or behavior is not a "civil right," rather a deviant behavior, as are all sexual sins outside the "one-man, one-woman" relationship God designed for marriage.

- [All human beings, including those practicing same-sex behavior, are created in God's image,](#) for God's glory, with the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
- No sin can/should ever be given the status of a civil right.

## CONCLUSION

Homosexuality, like all sin, is not in keeping with God's will for mankind

[Lincoln: "As the family goes, so goes the nation."](#)

**Make no mistake; sin is a reproach to any people.**

**If same-sex marriage is allowed to flourish, America will diminish.**

- Crime will escalate – because kids have no father & mother to raise them. Incarcerations will increase.
- Poverty will rise. Mental & emotional illnesses will increase.
- Gender confusion among young people will increase.
- Government will stagger – since government in a representative republic depends upon the moral virtues of its people
- Marriage, as an institution, will become more & more devalued.
- Life threatening STD's will increase, as will promiscuity.
- And violence is likely to increase.

## WHAT IS THE ANSWER

μεν: We need to be active in our local, state & national government to preserve heterosexual marriage. A Constitutional Amendment.

δε: [The Gospel is the hope of salvation for the homosexual,](#)

just as it is for **every one of us**. **Rom.1:16; 3:9-10,22-25a.**

Romans 3

<sup>9</sup>What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are **all under sin**. <sup>10</sup>As it is written:

"There is **no one** righteous, not even one; <sup>22</sup>Righteousness from God **comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe**. **There is no difference**, <sup>23</sup>for **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are **justified freely** by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup>God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood.

The REMEDY is to turn around and **acknowledge God as Creator** of life.

- Homosexual lifestyles can be restored to heterosexual lives.
- The journey begins by acknowledging God as Creator, repenting of sin, trusting Christ as one's Savior, and coming under His prescribed lifestyle in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.