

Homosexual Theology: A Biblically Sound View

Kerby Anderson helps understand the complete biblical perspective on homosexuality. As Christians, Kerby helps us understand the biblical truth and how to apply it with compassion in our dealings with those around us.

The Sin of Sodom—Genesis 19

Does the Bible condemn homosexuality? For centuries the answer to that question seemed obvious, but in the last few decades pro-homosexual commentators have tried to reinterpret the relevant biblical passages. In this discussion we will take a look at their exegesis.

The first reference to homosexuality in the Bible is found in Genesis 19. In this passage, Lot entertains two angels who come to the city to investigate its sins. Before they go to bed, all the men (from every part of the city of Sodom) surround the house and order him to bring out the men so that “we may know them.” Historically commentators have always assumed that the Hebrew word for “know” meant that the men of the city wanted to have sex with the visitors.

More recently, proponents of homosexuality argue that biblical commentators misunderstand the story of Sodom. They argue that the men of the city merely wanted to meet these visitors. Either they were anxious to extend Middle-eastern hospitality or they wanted to interrogate the men and make sure they weren't spies. In either case, they argue, the passage has nothing to do with homosexuality. The sin of Sodom is not homosexuality, they say, but inhospitality.

One of the keys to understanding this passage is the proper translation of the Hebrew word for “know.” Pro-homosexuality

commentators point out that this word can also mean "to get acquainted with" as well as mean "to have intercourse with." In fact, the word appears over 943 times in the Old Testament, and only 12 times does it mean "to have intercourse with." Therefore, they conclude that the sin of Sodom had nothing to do with homosexuality.

The problem with the argument is context. Statistics is not the same as exegesis. Word count alone should not be the sole criterion for the meaning of a word. And even if a statistical count should be used, the argument backfires. Of the 12 times the word "to know" is used in the book of Genesis, in 10 of those 12 it means "to have intercourse with."

Second, the context does not warrant the interpretation that the men only wanted to get acquainted with the strangers. Notice that Lot decides to offer his two daughters instead. In reading the passage, one can sense Lot's panic as he foolishly offers his virgin daughters to the crowd instead of the foreigners. This is not the action of a man responding to the crowd's request "to become acquainted with" the men.

Notice that Lot describes his daughters as women who "have not known" a man. Obviously this implies sexual intercourse and does not mean "to be acquainted with." It is unlikely that the first use of the word "to know" differs from the second use of the word. Both times the word "to know" should be translated "to have intercourse with." This is the only consistent translation for the passage.

Finally, Jude 7 provides a commentary on Genesis 19. The New Testament reference states that the sin of Sodom involved gross immorality and going after strange flesh. The phrase "strange flesh" could imply homosexuality or bestiality and provides further evidence that the sin of Sodom was not inhospitality but homosexuality.

Contrary to what pro-homosexual commentators say, Genesis 19

is a clear condemnation of homosexuality. Next we will look at another set of Old Testament passages dealing with the issue of homosexuality.

Mosaic Law—Leviticus 18, 20

Now we will look at the Mosaic Law. Two passages in Leviticus call homosexuality an abomination. Leviticus 18:22 says, “Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.” Leviticus 20:13 says, “If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable.” The word for “abomination” is used five times in Leviticus 18 and is a strong term of disapproval, implying that something is abhorrent to God. Biblical commentators see these verses as an expansion of the seventh commandment. Though not an exhaustive list of sexual sins, they are representative of the common sinful practices of nations surrounding Israel.

Pro-homosexual commentators have more difficulty dealing with these relatively simple passages of Scripture, but usually offer one of two responses. Some argue that these verses appear in the Holiness code of the Leviticus and only applies to the priests and ritual purity. Therefore, according to this perspective, these are religious prohibitions, not moral prohibitions. Others argue that these prohibitions were merely for the Old Testament theocracy and are not relevant today. They suggest that if Christians wanted to be consistent with the Old Testament law code in Leviticus, they should avoid eating rare steak, wearing mixed fabrics, and having marital intercourse during the menstrual period.

First, do these passages merely apply to ritual purity rather than moral purity? Part of the problem comes from making the two issues distinct. The priests were to model moral behavior within their ceremonial rituals. Moral purity and ritual purity cannot be separated, especially when discussing the issue of human sexuality. To hold to this rigid distinction

would imply that such sins as adultery were not immoral (consider Lev. 18:20) or that bestiality was morally acceptable (notice Lev. 18:23). The second argument concerns the relevance of the law today. Few Christians today keep kosher kitchens or balk at wearing clothes interwoven with more than one fabric. They believe that those Old Testament laws do not pertain to them. In a similar way pro-homosexual commentators argue that the Old Testament admonitions against homosexuality are no longer relevant today. A practical problem with this argument is that more than just homosexuality would have to be deemed morally acceptable. The logical extension of this argument would also have to make bestiality and incest morally acceptable since prohibitions to these two sins surround the prohibition against homosexuality. If the Mosaic law is irrelevant to homosexuality, then it is also irrelevant to having sex with animals or having sex with children.

More to the point, to say that the Mosaic law has ended is not to say that God has no laws or moral codes for mankind. Even though the ceremonial law has passed, the moral law remains. The New Testament speaks of the "law of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:2) and the "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). One cannot say that something that was sin under the Law is not sin under grace. Ceremonial laws concerning diet or wearing mixed fabrics no longer apply, but moral laws (especially those rooted in God's creation order for human sexuality) continue. Moreover, these prohibitions against homosexuality can also be found in the New Testament as we will see next as we consider other passages reinterpreted by pro-homosexual commentators.

New Testament Passages

In our examination of the Old Testament teachings regarding homosexuality, we found that Genesis 19 teaches that the men of Sodom were seeking the strangers in order to have sex with them, not merely asking to meet these men or to extend Middle

Eastern hospitality to them. We also discovered that certain passages in Leviticus clearly condemn homosexuality and are relevant today. These prohibitions were not just for the Old Testament theocracy, but were moral principles binding on human behavior and conduct today.

At this point we will consider some of the New Testament passages dealing with homosexuality. Three key New Testament passages concerning homosexuality are: Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10. Of the three, the most significant is Romans 1 because it deals with homosexuality within the larger cultural context.

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.

Here the Apostle Paul sets the Gentile world's guilt before a holy God and focuses on the arrogance and lust of the Hellenistic world. He says they have turned away from a true worship of God so that "God gave them over to shameful lusts." Rather than follow God's instruction in their lives, they "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18) and follow passions that dishonor God.

Another New Testament passage dealing with homosexuality is 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. "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." Pro-homosexual commentators make use of the "abuse" argument and point out that Paul is only singling out homosexual offenders. In other words, they argue that the

Apostle Paul is condemning homosexual abuse rather than responsible homosexual behavior. In essence, these commentators are suggesting that Paul is calling for temperance rather than abstinence. While this could be a reasonable interpretation for drinking wine (don't be a drunkard), it hardly applies to other sins listed in 1 Corinthians 6 or 1 Timothy 1. Is Paul calling for responsible adultery or responsible prostitution? Is there such a thing as moral theft and swindling? Obviously the argument breaks down. Scripture never condones sex outside of marriage (premarital sex, extramarital sex, homosexual sex). God created man and woman for the institution of marriage (Gen. 2:24). Homosexuality is a violation of the creation order, and God clearly condemns it as unnatural and specifically against His ordained order. As we have seen in the discussion thus far, there are passages in both the Old Testament and the New Testament which condemn homosexuality.

“God Made Me Gay,” Part 1

At this point in our discussion, we need to consider the claim made by some homosexuals that, “God made me gay.” Is this true? Is there a biological basis to homosexuality? For the remainder of this essay, we will consider the evidence usually cited. Simon LeVay (a neuroscientist at the Salk Institute) has argued that homosexuals and heterosexuals have notable differences in the structure of their brains. In 1991, he studied 41 cadavers and found that a specific portion of the hypothalamus (the area that governs sexual activity) was consistently smaller in homosexuals than in heterosexuals. He therefore argued that there is a distinct physiological component to sexual orientation. There are numerous problems with the study. First, there was considerable range in the size of the hypothalamic region. In a few homosexual men, this region was the same size as that of the heterosexuals, and in a few heterosexuals this region was as small as that of a homosexual.

Second is the chicken and egg problem. When there is a difference in brain structure, is the difference the *result* of sexual orientation or is it the *cause* of sexual orientation? Researchers, for example, have found that when people who become blind begin to learn Braille, the area of the brain controlling the reading finger actually grows larger. Third, Simon LeVay later had to admit that he didn't know the sexual orientation of some of the cadavers in the study. He acknowledged that he wasn't sure if the heterosexual males in the study were actually heterosexual. Since some of those he identified as "heterosexual" died of AIDS, critics raised doubts about the accuracy of his study.

In December 1991, Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard published a study of homosexuality in twins. They surveyed homosexual men about their brothers and found statistics they believed proved that sexual orientation is biological. Of the homosexuals who had identical twin brothers, 52 percent of those twins were also homosexual, 22 percent of those who had fraternal twins said that their twin was gay, and only 11 percent of those who had an adopted sibling said their adopted brothers were also homosexual. They attributed the differences in those percentages to the differences in genetic material shared.

Though this study has also been touted as proving a genetic basis to homosexuality, there are significant problems. First, the theory is not new. It was first proposed in 1952. Since that time, three other separate research studies come to very different conclusions. Therefore, the conclusions of the Bailey-Pillard study should be considered in the light of other contrary studies. Second, most published reports did not mention that only 9 percent of the non-twin brothers of homosexuals were homosexuals. Fraternal twins share no more genetic material than non-twin brothers, yet homosexuals are more than twice as likely to share their sexual orientation with a fraternal twin than with a non-twin brother. Whatever

the reason, the answer cannot be genetic.

Third, why aren't nearly all identical twin brothers of homosexuals also homosexual? In other words, if biology is determinative, why are nearly half the identical twins not homosexual? Dr. Bailey admitted that there "must be something in the environment to yield the discordant twins." And that is precisely the point; there is something (perhaps everything) in the environment to explain sexual orientation. These are two studies usually cited as evidence of a biological basis for homosexuality. Next we will consider a third study often cited to prove the claim that "God made me gay."

"God Made Me Gay," Part 2

Now let's look at another study often cited as proof of this claim. This study is often called the "gay gene" study. In 1993, a team of researchers led by Dr. Dean Hamer announced "preliminary" findings from research into the connection between homosexuality and genetic inheritance. In a sample of 76 homosexual males, the researchers found a statistically higher incidence of homosexuality in their male relatives (brothers, uncles) on their mother's side of the family. This suggested a possible inherited link through the X chromosome. A follow-up study of 40 pairs of homosexual brothers found that 33 shared a variation in a small section of the X chromosome. Although this study was promoted by the press as evidence of the discovery of a gay gene, some of the same concerns raised with the previous two studies apply here. First, the findings involve a limited sample size and are therefore sketchy. Even the researchers acknowledged that these were "preliminary" findings. In addition to the sample size being small, there was no control testing done for heterosexual brothers. Another major issue raised by critics of the study concerned the lack of sufficient research done on the social histories of the families involved.

Second, similarity does not prove cause. Just because 33 pairs

of homosexual brothers share a genetic variation doesn't mean that variation causes homosexuality. And what about the other 7 pairs that did not show the variation but were homosexuals?

Finally, research bias may again be an issue. Dr. Hamer and at least one of his other team members are homosexual. It appears that this was deliberately kept from the press and was only revealed later. Dr. Hamer it turns out is not merely an objective observer. He has presented himself as an expert witness on homosexuality, and he has stated that he hopes his research would give comfort to men feeling guilty about their homosexuality.

By the way, this was a problem in every one of the studies we have mentioned in our discussion. For example, Dr. Simon LeVay said that he was driven to study the potential physiological roots of homosexuality after his homosexual lover died of AIDS. He even admitted that if he failed to find a genetic cause for homosexuality that he might walk away from science altogether. Later he did just that by moving to West Hollywood to open up a small, unaccredited "study center" focusing on homosexuality.

Each of these three studies looking for a biological cause for homosexuality has its flaws. Does that mean that there is no physiological component to homosexuality? Not at all. Actually, it is probably too early to say conclusively. Scientists may indeed discover a clear biological predisposition to sexual orientation. But a predisposition is not the same as a determination. Some people may inherit a predisposition for anger, depression, or alcoholism, yet we do not condone these behaviors. And even if violence, depression, or alcoholism were proven to be inborn (determined by genetic material), would we accept them as normal and refuse to treat them? Of course not. The Bible has clear statements about such things as anger and alcoholism. Likewise, the Bible has clear statements about homosexuality.

In our discussion in this transcript, we have examined the various claims of pro-homosexual commentators and found them wanting. Contrary to their claims, the Bible does not condone homosexual behavior.

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Homosexual Myths – Exposed from a Biblical Perspective

Sue Bohlin looks at common myths concerning homosexual behavior that are prevalent in our society. These myths prevent us from looking at homosexuality with a biblical worldview and from dealing with this sin in a loving and consistent manner.



This article is also available in [Spanish](#).

In this essay we'll be looking at some of the homosexual myths that have pervaded our culture, and hopefully answering their arguments. Much of this material is taken from Joe Dallas' excellent book, *A Strong Delusion: Confronting the "Gay Christian" Movement*.^{1} While the information in this essay may prove helpful, it is our prayer that you will be able to share it calmly and compassionately, remembering that homosexuality isn't just a political and moral issue; it is also about people who are badly hurting.

10% of the Population Is Homosexual.

In 1948, Dr. Alfred Kinsey released a study called *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, claiming that between 10 and 47% of the male population was homosexual.^{2} He got his figures from a pool of 5,300 male subjects that he represented as your

average “Joe College” student. Many of the men who gave him the data, though, actually consisted of sex offenders, prisoners, pimps, hold-up men, thieves, male prostitutes and other criminals, and hundreds of gay activists.[{3}](#) The 10% figure was widely circulated by Harry Hay, the father of the homosexual “civil rights” movement, urging that homosexuality be seen no longer as an act of sodomy but as a 10% minority class.[{4}](#)

Kinsey’s figures were exposed as completely false immediately afterwards, and by many other scientists since. The actual figure is closer to 2-3%.[{5}](#) But the 10% number has been so often reported in the press that most people think it’s valid. It’s not.

People Are Born Gay.

Ann Landers said it, and millions of people believe it. The problem is, the data’s not there to support it. There are three ways to test for inborn traits: twin studies, brain dissections, and gene “linkage” studies.[{6}](#) Twin studies show that something other than genetics must account for homosexuality, because nearly half of the identical twin studied didn’t have the same sexual preference. If homosexuality were inherited, identical twins should either be both straight or both gay. Besides, none of the twin studies have been replicated, and other twin studies have produced completely different results.[{7}](#) Dr. Simon LeVay’s famous study on the brains of dead subjects yielded questionable results regarding its accuracy. He wasn’t sure of the sexual orientation of the people in the study, and Dr. LeVay even admits he doesn’t know if the changes in the brain structures were the cause **of** homosexuality, or caused **by** homosexuality.[{8}](#) Finally, an early study attempting to show a link between homosexuality and the X-chromosome has yet to be replicated, and a second study actually contradicted the findings of the first.[{9}](#) Even if homosexuality were someday

proven to be genetically related, **inborn** does not necessarily mean **normal**. Some children are born with cystic fibrosis, but that doesn't make it a normal condition.

Inborn tendencies toward certain behaviors (such as homosexuality) do not make those behaviors moral. Tendencies toward alcoholism, obesity, and violence are now thought to be genetically influenced, but they are not good behaviors. People born with tendencies toward these behaviors have to fight hard against their natural temptations to drunkenness, gluttony, and physical rage.

And since we are born as sinners into a fallen world, we have to deal with the consequences of the Fall. Just because we're born with something doesn't mean it's normal. It's not true that "God makes some people gay." All of us have effects of the Fall we need to deal with.

What's Wrong with Two Loving, Committed Men or Women Being Legally Married?

There are two aspects to marriage: the legal and the spiritual. Marriage is more than a social convention, like being "best friends" with somebody, because heterosexual marriage usually results in the production of children. Marriage is a legal institution in order to offer protection for women and children. Women need to have the freedom to devote their time and energies to be the primary nurturers and caretakers of children without being forced to be breadwinners as well. God's plan is that children grow up in families who provide for them, protect them, and wrap them in security.

Because gay or lesbian couples are by nature unable to reproduce, they do not need the legal protection of marriage to provide a safe place for the production and raising of children. Apart from the sexual aspect of a gay relationship, what they have is really "best friend" status, and that does not require legal protection.

Of course, a growing number of gay couples are seeking to have a child together, either by adoption, artificial insemination, or surrogate mothering. Despite the fact that they have to resort to an outside procedure in order to become parents, the presence of adults plus children in an ad hoc household should not automatically secure official recognition of their relationship as a family. There is a movement in our culture which seeks to redefine "family" any way we want, but with a profound lack of discernment about the long-term effects on the people involved. Gay parents are making a dangerous statement to their children: lesbian mothers are saying that fathers are not important, and homosexual fathers are saying that mothers are not important. More and more social observers see the importance of both fathers and mothers in children's lives; one of their roles is to teach boys what it means to be a boy and teach girls what it means to be a girl.

The other aspect of marriage is of a spiritual nature. Granted, this response to the gay marriage argument won't make any difference to people who are unconcerned about spiritual things, but there are a lot of gays who care very deeply about God and long for a relationship with Him. The marriage relationship, both its emotional and especially its sexual components, is designed to serve as an earthbound illustration of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church. [\[10\]](#) Just as there is a mystical oneness between a man and a woman, who are very different from each other, so there is a mystical unity between two very different, very "other" beings—the eternal Son of God and us mortal, creaturely humans. Marriage as God designed it is like the almost improbable union of butterfly and buffalo, or fire and water. But homosexual relationships are the coming together of two like individuals; the dynamic of unity and diversity in heterosexual marriage is completely missing, and therefore so is the spiritual dimension that is so intrinsic to the purpose of marriage. Both on an emotional and a physical level, the sameness of male and male, or female and female, demonstrates

that homosexual relationships do not reflect the spiritual parable that marriage is meant to be. God wants marriage partners to complement, not to mirror, each other. The concept of gay marriage doesn't work, whether we look at it on a social level or a spiritual one.

Jesus Said Nothing about Homosexuality.

Whether from a pulpit or at a gay rights event, gay activists like to point out that Jesus never addressed the issue of homosexuality; instead, He was more interested in love. Their point is that if Jesus didn't specifically forbid a behavior, then who are we to judge those who engage in it?

This argument assumes that the Gospels are more important than the rest of the books in the New Testament, that only the recorded sayings of Jesus matter. But John's gospel itself assures us that it is not an exhaustive record of all that Jesus said and did, which means there was a lot left out![\[11\]](#) The gospels don't record that Jesus condemned wife-beating or incest; does that make them OK? Furthermore, the remaining books of the New Testament are no less authoritative than the gospels. All scripture is inspired by God, not just the books with red letters in the text. Specific prohibitions against homosexual behavior in Romans 1:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 are every bit as God-ordained as what is recorded in the gospels.

We do know, however, that Jesus spoke in specific terms about God's created intent for human sexuality: "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh. . . What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:4-6). God's plan is holy heterosexuality, and Jesus spelled it out.

The Levitical laws against homosexual behavior are not valid today.

Leviticus 18:22 says, "Thou shalt not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; it is an abomination." Gay theologians argue that the term "abomination" is generally associated with idolatry and the Canaanite religious practice of cult prostitution, and thus God did not prohibit the kind of homosexuality we see today.

Other sexual sins such as adultery and incest are also prohibited in the same chapters where the prohibitions against homosexuality are found. All sexual sin is forbidden by both Old and New Testament, completely apart from the Levitical codes, because it is a moral issue. It is true that we are not bound by the rules and rituals in Leviticus that marked Yahweh's people by their separation from the world; however, the nature of sexual sin has not changed because immorality is an affront to the holiness and purity of God Himself. Just because most of Leviticus doesn't apply to Christians today doesn't mean none of it does.

The argument that the word "abomination" is connected with idolatry is well answered by examining Proverbs 6:16-19, which describes what else the Lord considers abominations: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises evil imaginations, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and a man who sows discord among brothers. Idolatry plays no part in these abominations. The argument doesn't hold water.

If the practices in Leviticus 18 and 20 are condemned because of their association with idolatry, then it logically follows that they would be permissible if they were committed apart from idolatry. That would mean incest, adultery, bestiality, and child sacrifice (all of which are listed in these chapters) are only condemned when associated with idolatry;

otherwise, they are allowable. No responsible reader of these passages would agree with such a premise.[{12}](#)

Calling Homosexuality a Sin Is Judging, and Judging Is a Sin.

Josh McDowell says that the most often-quoted Bible verse used to be John 3:16, but now that tolerance has become the ultimate virtue, the verse we hear quoted the most is “Judge not, lest ye be judged” (Matt. 7:1). The person who calls homosexual activity wrong is called a bigot and a homophobe, and even those who don’t believe in the Bible can be heard to quote the “Judge not” verse.

When Jesus said “Do not judge, or you too will be judged,” the context makes it plain that He was talking about setting ourselves up as judge of another person, while blind to our own sinfulness as we point out another’s sin. There’s no doubt about it, there is a grievous amount of self-righteousness in the way the church treats those struggling with the temptations of homosexual longings. But there is a difference between agreeing with the standard of Scripture when it declares homosexuality wrong, and personally condemning an individual because of his sin. Agreeing with God about something isn’t necessarily judging.

Imagine I’m speeding down the highway, and I get pulled over by a police officer. He approaches my car and, after checking my license and registration, he says, “You broke the speed limit back there, ma’am.” Can you imagine a citizen indignantly leveling a politically correct charge at the officer: “Hey, you’re judging me! Judge not, lest ye be judged!” The policeman is simply pointing out that I broke the law. He’s not judging my character, he’s comparing my behavior to the standard of the law. It’s not judging when we restate what God has said about His moral law, either. What is sin is to look down our noses at someone who falls into a

different sin than we do. That's judging.

The Romans 1 Passage on Homosexuality Does Not Describe True Homosexuals, but Heterosexuals Who Indulge in Homosexual Behavior That Is Not Natural to *Them*.

Romans 1:26-27 says, "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." Some gay theologians try to get around the clear prohibition against both gay and lesbian homosexuality by explaining that the real sin Paul is talking about here is straight people who indulge in homosexual acts, because it's not natural to them. Homosexuality, they maintain, is not a sin for *true* homosexuals.

But there is nothing in this passage that suggests a distinction between "true" homosexuals and "false" ones. Paul describes the homosexual behavior itself as unnatural, regardless of who commits it. In fact, he chooses unusual words for men and women, Greek words that most emphasize the biology of being a male and a female. The behavior described in this passage is unnatural for males and females; sexual orientation isn't the issue at all. He is saying that homosexuality is biologically unnatural; not just unnatural to heterosexuals, but unnatural to anyone.

Furthermore, Romans 1 describes men "inflamed with lust" for one another. This would hardly seem to indicate men who were straight by nature but experimenting with gay sex.[\[13\]](#) You really have to do some mental gymnastics to make Romans 1 anything other than what a plain reading leads us to understand all homosexual activity is sin.

Preaching Against Homosexuality Causes Gay Teenagers to Commit Suicide.

I received an e-mail from someone who assured me that the blood of gay teenagers was on my hands because saying that homosexuality is wrong makes people kill themselves. The belief that gay teenagers are at high risk for suicide is largely inspired by a 1989 report by a special federal task force on youth and suicide. This report stated three things; first, that gay and lesbian youths account for one third of all teenage suicides; second, that suicide is the leading cause of death among gay teenagers, and third, gay teens who commit suicide do so because of “internalized homophobia” and violence directed at them.[{14}](#) This report has been cited over and over in both gay and mainstream publications.

San Francisco gay activist Paul Gibson wrote this report based on research so shoddy that when it was submitted to Dr. Louis Sullivan, the former Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dr. Sullivan officially distanced himself and his department from it.[{15}](#) The report’s numbers, both its data and its conclusions, are extremely questionable. Part of the report cites an author claiming that as many as 3,000 gay youths kill themselves each year. But that’s over a thousand more than the total number of teen suicides in the first place! Gibson exaggerated his numbers when he said that one third of all teen suicides are committed by gay youth. He got this figure by looking at gay surveys taken at drop-in centers for troubled teens, many of which were gay-oriented, which revealed that gay teens had two to four times the suicidal tendencies of straight kids. Gibson multiplied this higher figure by the disputed Kinsey figure of a 10% homosexual population to produce his figure that 30% of all youth suicides are gay. David Shaffer, a Columbia University psychiatrist who specializes in teen suicides, pored over this study and said, “I struggled for a long time over Gibson’s mathematics, but in the end, it seemed more hocus-pocus than

math.”{16}

The report’s conclusions are contradicted by other, more credible reports. Researchers at the University of California-San Diego interviewed the survivors of 283 suicides for a 1986 study. 133 of those who died were under 30, and only 7 percent were gay and they were all over 21. In another study at Columbia University of 107 teenage boy suicides, only three were known to be gay, and two of those died in a suicide pact. When the Gallup organization interviewed almost 700 teenagers who knew a teen who had committed suicide, not one mentioned sexuality as part of the problem. Those who had come close to killing themselves mainly cited boy-girl problems or low self-esteem.{17}

Gibson didn’t use a heterosexual control group in his study. Conclusions and statistics are bound to be skewed without a control group. When psychiatrist David Shaffer examined the case histories of the gay teens who committed suicides in Gibson’s report, he found the same issues that straight kids wrestle with before suicide: “The stories were the same: a court appearance scheduled for the day of the death; prolonged depression; drug and alcohol problems; etc.”{18}

That any teenager experiences so much pain that he takes his life is a tragedy, regardless of the reason. But it’s not fair to lay the responsibility for gay suicides, the few that there are, on those who agree with God that it’s wrong and harmful behavior.

Notes

1. Dallas, Joe. *A Strong Delusion: Confronting the “Gay Christian” Movement*. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1996.
2. Dr. Judith Reisman, “Kinsey and the Homosexual Revolution,” *The Journal of Human Sexuality* (Carrollton, Tex.: Lewis and Stanley, 1996), 21.
3. Ibid., 26.

4. Ibid., 21.
5. Richard G. Howe, *Homosexuality in America: Exposing the Myths* (found on the American Family Association website at <http://www.afa.net>) gives this citation: "Knight lists the following sources in support of the 1%-3% figures: J. Gordon Muir, "Homosexuals and the 10% Fallacy," *Wall Street Journal*, March 31, 1993; Tom W. Smith, "Adult Sexual Behavior in 1989: Number of Partners, Frequency of Intercourse and Risk of AIDS," *Family Planning Perspectives* (May/June 1991): 102; John O.G. Billy, Koray Tanfer, William R. Grady, and Daniel H. Klepinger, "The Sexual Behavior of Men in the United States," *Family Planning Perspectives*, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, vol. 25, no. 2 (March/April 1993)."
6. Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, "The Gay Gene?", *The Journal of Human Sexuality*, 4.
7. Dallas, 114.
8. Ibid., 112-114.
9. Ibid., 116.
10. Ephesians 5:25-32
11. John 20:30
12. Dallas, 193.
13. Ibid., 195.
14. Peter LaBarbera, "The Gay Youth Suicide Myth," *The Journal of Human Sexuality*, 65.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 66.