“Is Animal Homosexuality Proof that It’s Normal?”

A teenage girl in my church has just been confronted by discussions on homosexuality in her high school classroom. When she told the class that homosexuality was not “normal” behavior because it did not exist among animals, the teacher said that studies have “proven” that homosexuality is prevalent among animals, esp. elephants. While browsing on the web, I have found this to be a widely used “proof.” What would you answer? How can I help this girl?

First of all, I would encourage her to ask with humility and softness (i.e., no edge in her voice) where she can find the studies that “prove” the prevalence of homosexuality in animals. People toss off assertions all the time (such as, “science has proven homosexuality is genetic”) but when we ask where the articles are, they don’t have an answer. They’re just parroting what they’ve heard.

Same-sex behavior DOES exist in the animal kingdom, for a number of reasons. Usually, it’s either playful antics, or dominance behavior to assert hierarchy. For one male to mount, or attempt to mount, another male is a very powerful way to communicate his higher position in the “pecking order” of the community. But if you bring in a female in heat, suddenly the male-male behavior is abandoned in favor of the female. Sometimes males mount other males in a type of practice before the females come into heat.

Secondly, I have read of same-sex attachments in animals, but the fact that they exist doesn’t make it normal any more than the fact that cystic fibrosis or diabetes exists makes those diseases normal. From a Christian perspective, we live in a fallen world, and that falleness extends to the entire creation on the planet. It would make sense that things would

go wrong even among the animals. For instance, I understand that a hormonal imbalance can result in homosexual behavior in some animals. (Here are links to a couple of articles concerning that. Note the naturalistic bias underlying them: "What is, is normal and natural and therefore to be embraced." http://www.noglstp.org/bulletin/1997spring.html and http://www.libchrist.com/other/homosexual/sheepandanimals.html)

Even from a godless evolutionary perspective, there is no benefit to homosexual behavior since those who engage in it do not reproduce, and from an evolutionary perspective, the only purpose in life is to make babies (the bottom line for the more scientific-sounding "survive and reproduce").

I recently discovered an excellent article on the "animal homosexuality myth" at the NARTH (National Association for the Research and Treatment of Homosexuality) website. This article points out that we can find occurrences of "homosexuality," cannibalism and infanticide in the animal kingdom, but the fact that these aberrant behaviors exist should not lead us to deduce that they are acceptable and normal HUMAN behaviors to engage in! www.narth.org/docs/animalmyth.html

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

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