

# **“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 fallenness 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](http://www.narth.org/docs/animalmyth.html)

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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# **"Is It a Sin To Mistreat**

# Animals?"

I know that the Bible does not say whether or not animals go to Heaven. My question is, is it at least a sin in God's eyes for people to mistreat animals? Does God care that animals suffer?

*[Editor's Note: Two Probe researchers have responded to this question.]*

From Sue Bohlin:

God shows Himself to be a God of compassion toward animals in Jonah 4:11:

*"Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, **as well as many animals?**"*

He also wants us to be, like Himself since He made us in His image, people of compassion toward animals:

*"A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal."  
(Proverbs 12:10a)*

It's helpful to look at some big ideas in scripture:

In Genesis 1:28, God tells Adam and Eve,

*"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

This is the principle of stewardship.

Secondly, the Bible says that all animals belong to God:

*O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions.  
There is the sea, great and broad, In which are swarms without number, Animals both small and great. (Psalm 104:24-25)*

Since all animals belong to God, and God has put their care and management into the hands of people, we can deduce that it is wrong to mistreat something that belongs to God.

So, while the Bible doesn't come out and say it is a sin to mistreat animals, a case can be made that it's wrong.

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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## About the Author



[Sue Bohlin](#) is an associate speaker with Probe Ministries. She attended the University of Illinois, and has been a Bible teacher and conference speaker for over 30 years. She is a frequent speaker for MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) and Stonecroft Ministries (Christian Women's Connections), and serves on the board and as a small group leader of Living Hope Ministries, a Christ centered outreach to those dealing with unwanted homosexuality. Sue is on the Bible.org Women's Leadership Team and is a regular contributor to [TheTapestryBlog.com](#). She is also a professional calligrapher and the webmistress for Probe Ministries; but most importantly, she is the wife of Dr. Ray Bohlin and the mother of their two grown sons. Her personal website is [suebohlin.com](#).

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From Heather Zeiger:

Thanks for writing. It just so happens that I looked up some verses on this in studying for a discussion on environmentalism and stewardship. I will also tell you that I love animals, and have always had at least one animal, and usually more at one time. I currently have a sweet little cat and a red-eared slider turtle, so the question of animal cruelty is a good question and certainly one I care about.

true that animals are not made in God's image, and therefore, are not capable of sin nor are saved as humans are, so unfortunately I will not likely see my pets in Heaven, although there is some reason to believe that there will be animals (and plants) in Heaven.

Having said that, animals are part of God's creation, and not only that but are apparently a good part of his creation and something that he cares very much about. Here are some important verses (emphasis mine):

*And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth" (Genesis 1:20-22).*

*"And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw*

*that it was good" (Genesis 1:24, 25).*

So it seems that not only did God want animals to be part of creation, but he thought it was good to put them here, and he even blessed them. He also seems to have taken care to make them in an orderly way and specific to their environment (the sea, the land). So while God made man above the animals, and even allowed him to use them for food or clothing, he also made man to be a steward over creation. This means he wanted Adam to care for creation. We see elements of this in God's law when he specifies how the Israelites are to care for both the domestic and wild animals when they enter the Promised Land (Leviticus 25:1-12), and how they are to care for livestock (Deuteronomy 22:1-4, 6, 9, and 25:4). Proverbs 12:10 says that "Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel."

In the New Testament we see that God cares for the birds: "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" Matthew 6:26.

In short, the answer to your question is yes, cruelty to animals is a sin and yes, God most certainly cares about animal suffering. Man is to be a steward over God's creation. Man is more important to God than the animals, but God obviously expects man to care for creation.

Even when we consider that animals were used for sacrifices, it is not meant to be an enjoyable thing, but...well...a sacrifice. This particular suffering of animals is ordained by God to foreshadow the suffering of Christ. The sacrifice pleases God because it pleases him that man has obeyed God and repented for his sins. For example, 1 Samuel 15:22 says, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams." There are

also places in Deuteronomy and Isaiah that talk about how God desires man's heart more so than the act of sacrifice. The sacrifice is to turn man's heart to God.

I hope this was helpful for you. Always feel free to email us with questions.

Heather Zeiger

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## **“Your Comments About Eating Animals Are Unintelligent and Illogical”**

I read your response to the question [“Why Did God Allow Animals to be Eaten and Sacrificed?”](#) and found it to be one of the most unintelligent arguments on any subject that I have ever read. Your “logic” draws conclusions in very convoluted ways. Recognizing an animal's right to life does not drag man down to the level of a beast. If ALL life is valued then human life is valued more. There would be no “‘open season’ on man to cure overpopulation problems...” as you suggest. There is no ultimate NEED for humans to get their diet from animals. Even Daniel recognized that he could be as healthy as [email ends here]

Thanks for writing. Jimmy isn't able to respond to your email, so I'll take a shot at it.

I'm really surprised you found this “the most unintelligent arguments on any subject [you] have ever read.” You should

read some of the letters we get!

Upon what do you base an animal's right to life? The answer to that will depend in a significant way upon your worldview. We are Christians, so our authority is the Bible where we learn about the places of humankind and other living beings in God's order.

Because we're to be good stewards of God's creation, we are not to destroy life willy nilly. As Jimmy wrote in his article, there is a hierarchy. I think you'd probably agree that we needn't shed tears over pulling up plants when they are being a problem. Killing animals should be for good reasons, not just for killing's sake. You said we don't need to eat animals. Maybe not, but I don't see why we need to eat animals in order to do so. If God gave us that freedom, we can engage in it (Gen. 9:1-3).

Jimmy's concern about man being pulled down has historical precedent. The loss of a belief in the sacredness of human life has given us abortion and euthanasia. Can you imagine a hundred years ago having to pass a law to prevent doctors from sticking sharp objects into the skulls of partially-delivered babies to suck their brains out and kill them? That would have been unthinkable. But people think they should be able to do that. What does that say about the value of human life? And if Darwinism is correct, then there is no qualitative difference between humans and animals, just a difference of degree.

Yes, Daniel and his friends did well on a vegetarian diet. But there's no hint in the text that he did that because he thought it wrong to eat meat. The Babylonians' meat could very well have been obtained as a part of idol worship.

The bottom line is that we have been given permission to eat any living (non-human) thing. Animals don't have the same "rights" we have. To make a case that animals shouldn't be used for food because they have a right not to, requires a



reason for such a right. On what do you base such a right?

Rick Wade

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# Why Did God Allow Animals to be Eaten and Sacrificed?

**Why did God allow animals to be sacrificed and to eat other animals if He loves His creation? They are innocent. (I am not an animal rights activist. I am a Christian.)**

I think the answer must first be addressed in the reality with which we find ourselves. The cosmos according to Christians was created by God. In the early chapters of Genesis we find that everything God created is expressed over and over as being something GOOD.

The Cosmos is made up of minerals, plants, animals, and humans, the lower to the higher. We are told that only man was created in God's image. That does not mean the rest of creation is of NO value, but there is a hierarchy involved. We are told that all of the created order was intended for man. And that he was to have dominion over it. This does not mean the exploitation of everything for selfish purposes. But God provided a food chain involving plants and animals for man.

We see in the Hindu culture a good example of what happens to a culture when the food chain is distorted. Hindus, with their doctrine of reincarnation, believe that animals are just as valuable as human beings, and some, in a former life, may have actually been human beings. Therefore, all devout Hindus are vegetarians.

What makes this difficult is that now scientists are moving toward the position that even PLANTS have consciousness! Does God love the flora any less than the fauna He created? That leaves us with a diet for our existence totally dependent upon rocks!

Man was never intended to “rape the resources.” Having “dominion” meant for man to be good stewards of the plant and animal world. “The Earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof,” says the psalmist. (Ps. 24:1) We don’t own the earth; we are to be good stewards of it.

The scriptures are filled with indications of God’s love for that which He created. Jesus notices the beautiful lilies of the field. Men are not to abuse their animals, but rather care for them with kindness, not with harshness. He takes notice of every sparrow who falls to the ground in death. God explicitly states that one purpose of plants and animals was to provide food for man. He even gave some instructions about *which* animals we were to eat and which we should not.

Consider this verse: Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not *worth much more than they?* (Matt. 6:27). Jesus goes on to say, “Do not be anxious saying, ‘What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink?’...for...your heavenly Father *knows* that you have *need* for all these things.” (Matt. 6:31-32).

Your question springs out of a matrix of thought which is very popular in the modern world. . .that all life is sacred (I agree). But the further notion held forth today is that the life of a dolphin or a sea otter or a spotted owl is equal in value to a human being.

The Bible does not teach this equality. Jesus didn’t teach it, as we see above. All life is sacred because it came from the hand of God. But it is not all equal in value. Man is set

apart as the recipient for which it was intended.

Those who would remove this distinction do not elevate man. If there is nothing special about man (which appears to be true in so many ways), then man is dragged down to the status of beast or animal, and an “open season” on man to cure overpopulation problems would make as much sense as an open season on whitetail deer each fall here in Texas to thin out the one half million which inhabit this state. My point here is that once you remove this line, man is not special in any sense and there is no reason we shouldn’t live like the rest of the animals on the planet: “survival of the fittest.” Hitler understood this. . .and practiced it!

I don’t think you would agree that this is a solution to the problem.

Does this help any?

Sincerely,

Jimmy Williams, Founder  
Probe Ministries

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## **“Do Our Pets Go to Heaven?”**

**I have a dog that I love very much. She is starting to get old and will only be with me a few more years. Can you tell me if our pets that we love and care about with all our hearts will be with us in heaven?**

All we have to go on is what God has revealed to us in His word. According to what the Bible says, there is no indication that our pets will join us in heaven. (However, this does not rule out the possibility; it’s just that the Bible is silent

on this issue.) Animals are God's creation, but they are not made in His image as human beings are. Animals have bodies and we can say that some are [souls](#) (Gen. 1:21 and 24 use the word for "soul" [*nephesh*] to describe the land creatures), but soul in that context means "a breathing creature." Because animals are not made in the image of God, they do not have a spirit where God indwells like humans do. (Neither do angels, by the way.) As far as I can tell from scripture, it is this God-imaging spirit-soul that lives forever.

Revelation 19 does include a vision of the Lord Jesus on a white horse, along with the armies of heaven on white horses, but at this point we can't know if the horses are symbolic or not. And that would be a very tenuous (and unsupportable) connection to conclude that pets go to heaven.

I should tell you that this is not a hill I'm willing to die on. If I'm wrong, that is perfectly okay with me. <smile> Perhaps there is a spiritual parallel to *The Velveteen Rabbit* where pets who are loved by people are made "real" in a forever sense. But if it turns out that pets will be in heaven after all, it will be by God's grace, because their presence can somehow add to God's glory and our worship. There is no loss in heaven, so if they are not, then we will be so joy-soaked and absorbed in the presence of God that we won't notice or be troubled by their absence.

Sue Bohlin

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## **"Do Animals Have Souls?"**

My name is C\_\_\_\_\_ and I am 13 years old in the 8th grade. A classmate told me she was a Christian but she didn't believe some of what the Bible says. I asked her for an example and

she told me that the Bible said that animals don't have souls and how she believed that they did have souls. I would be very appreciative if you would help me on my quest to find out what the Bible says about that.

Dear C\_\_\_\_,

We have an answer to email about animals and souls and going to heaven: [www.probe.org/do-our-pets-go-to-heaven/](http://www.probe.org/do-our-pets-go-to-heaven/).

I would ask your friend where in the Bible it says animals don't have souls. Lots of people have heard things they repeat as true but they don't really know. When you ask [powerful questions like](#), "How do you know that?" and "Where do you get your information?" the answer is really, "Well, I heard. . ." or "They say that. . ." Which doesn't go very far in being persuasive, does it? <smile> In reality, the Bible doesn't anywhere say, "Animals don't have souls." It's a much bigger issue than that, and it comes down to the fact that animals are not made in the image of God, like people are. (Note that angels are not made in the image of God either. Not being made in the image of God doesn't mean something doesn't have great value.) And it also matters how you define "soul." If you mean "personality," then of course some animals have souls. If I ask our Irish Setter Pele, "Pele, do you have a soul?" with a smile on my face and energy in my voice, he'll respond by breathing fast, wagging his tail, and smiling his doggy smile.

If you mean, "the spiritual place inside you where God can dwell," then no they don't. If I ask our dog, "Pele, who made you? Do you know who God is? Did you know Jesus is Lord?" he'll just keep on wagging his tail. . . or sleeping. . . or looking at me blankly—because those questions have no meaning to him. He is not a moral creature like we are. He cannot respond to the truth of the gospel because he has no understanding and no choice. He does, however, glorify God by his "dogginess." He brings glory to God by just being the dog God made him to be. He has a place in God's creation, and a

very important place in our hearts. . . but he cannot become a part of the Kingdom of Heaven or the family of God like we are. Any more than he can choose to become a fish.

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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