

There is a piece on the internet trying to reinterpret “Six Scriptures About Homosexuality in The Bible. Here’s What They Really Say.” I will include commentary on each of the nine to show why they are erroneously interpreted.

Important matter of definition. Some people say that the Bible does not address homosexuality because the word “homosexual” do not appear in it. Not true. The term that describes homosexuality or homosexual behavior is “sodomite” or “sodomy”. Homosexual and gay are very recent terms used for this in English.⁶

1. Good News before the Bad News. The following passages show that we are dealing with a serious matter of grave sin. We must remember that sincere repentance and confession of our sins restores us to a state of grace and leads us to a right relationship with God (See 1 John 1:8-9 and Acts 26:20).

2. Basic Passages:

1. Leviticus 18:22: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman: it is abomination" (RSV).

The claim here is that other things are called abominations in the Old Testament and that Jesus made their condemnation no longer apply through the application of his grace. The problem with that, regarding sodomy, is that in the New Testament letters of St. Paul, the author who speaks most clearly about being freed from the law, also clearly condemns homosexuality, along with a whole list of sins (See **Romans 1:18-32, 1 Cor 6:9-11**).

2. Leviticus 20:13 “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them” (RSV).

3. Romans 1:26-27. "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”.

The claim here is that St Paul is condemning only lustful behavior with the implication that the application of love, commitment, or faithfulness would make it acceptable. The entire range of homosexual behavior was clearly known at this time. To St. Paul it is not the loving quality of the act but the *unnatural nature* of the same sex act that is always objectionable. We should note that the absence of the possibility of children and their upbringing and education both makes homosexual relations much less likely to be permanent and the lack of needing to care for children makes it much more likely to be only provoked by lust and or greed (see study by Assoc Prof Regnerus at UT Austin on lack of stable lesbian couples for parenting).

4. 1 Cor. 6; 9-10 "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the Kingdom of God" (NAS).

5. 1 Timothy 1; 8-10: "We know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and fornicators and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching.”

Against the background of these texts which explicitly describe homosexual behavior as sinful, other biblical passages convey the same judgment by implication.

6. Genesis 19:4-9 (In the context of 19:1-29, the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah) , "Before they went to bed, all the townsmen of Sodom, both young and old – all the people to the last man, closed in on the house. They called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to your house tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may have intimacies with them.”

The attempt here is to say that this is homosexual gang-rape that is condemned. The suggestion is that a consensual, more peaceful type of encounter would be interpreted differently. Throughout the history of interpretation, the quality of the relation is not significant. What counts is its nature. Sex with the same sex person is what is condemned. There is an attempt to use Ezekiel 16:49 to reason that this was a failure of hospitality or failure to help the poor, which it also was. But one needs read the next verse, referring to “abominable crimes” to see how the homosexuality is being referenced. Throughout Judeo-Christian history “sodomy” is the language to describe same sex relations. “Homosexual” has been used only recently.

7. 2 Peter 2:1-22 , "There were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will introduce destructive heresies... Many will follow their licentious ways... For if God... condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (to destruction), reducing them to ashes, making them an example for the godless of what is

coming... then the Lord knows how to rescue the devout from trial and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who follow the flesh with its depraved desire and show contempt for lordship... in them is fulfilled the truth of the saying : "a dog returns to its vomit," and " freshly bathed sow returns to wallowing in the mud."

8. Jude 3:23 "Contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness, and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ... He who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe... Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. Yet in like manner these men in their dreamings defile the flesh... But you... Convince some, who doubt; save some by snatching them out of the fire; on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (RSV).

9. Rom 9:29 – reference to lack of descendants: "And as Isaiah predicted: 'Unless the Lord of hosts had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom and have been made like Gomorrah'" (See Isa 1:9 [1-20]).

Other references to "Sodom and Gomorrah" and their condemnation: Matt 10:15; 11:24; Luke 10:12, 17:29; 2 Pet 2:4-10

3. We must obey the Commandments. Jesus affirms that he did not come "to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17). They are the terms of the covenant.

The other paper argues that Hebrews 8:13 says that the old law is obsolete and aging and that Romans 10:4 says that Christ is the end of the law. But Romans 7:12 says, "So then the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." Furthermore, Jesus also says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). "Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me" (John 14:21). What is necessary here, in relationship to the Old Testament, is to recognize the difference between the moral commandments (which we must obey), the judicial injunctions (which we may be required to obey) and the ceremonial commandments (which we should not obey, at least for religious reasons). Because the O.T. indictment against sodomy is picked up by St. Paul, repeatedly, we can see that it was considered to be "moral law" and therefore binding. On this see St Thomas, *Summa*, Ia IIae Q. 99

4. Sexual holiness is very important. Sexual expression must be within marriage and in this passage holiness is almost completely defined by sexual holiness (cf. 1 Thess. 4:3-5). See also 1 Cor 6:18 which indicates that the sexual sins are the most serious because they "are sins against the body."

5. How are we to judge? Gently and with the redemption of the person as our goal.

"Brothers, even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit, looking to yourself, so that you may not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deluding himself" (Gal 6:1-3).

6. Who are we to judge? Not everyone in the world, but only those we consider brothers in Christ.

"I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people, not at all referring to the immoral of this world or the greedy and robbers or idolaters; for you would then have to leave the world. But I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person. For why should I be judging outsiders? Is it not your business to judge those within? God will judge those outside. 'Purge the evil person from your midst'" (1 Cor 5:9-13). We exercise this discipline so that the 'spirit (of the one being disciplined) may be saved on the day of the Lord'" (1 Cor 5:5).

7. Means of correction of a homosexual orientation. See Dr. Joseph Nicolosi, Reparative Therapist, who helped people redirect their orientation in a more godly manner. See the website, www.narth.com (National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality). Very helpful. Note also "Sexuality and Gender", Executive Survey which documents clearly that sexual orientation is fluid and not a fixed factor in a person's life. Many people change their orientation in many different ways. See 2 Tim 3:16-17 and Matthew 18: 15-20.

8. In the Catechism the Church teaches that homosexuality is "sexual attraction or orientation towards persons of the same sex and / or sexual acts between persons of the same sex. Homosexual acts are morally wrong because they violate God's purpose for human sexual activity" (See Glossary). "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity (Gen 19:1-29, Rom 1:24-27, 1 Cor 6:10, 1 Tim 1:10), tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved" (CCC 2357).

9. In conclusion, I hope this listing of the sure guidance given us by the Holy Spirit through Sacred Scripture and the teaching of the Church is helpful to us as we deal with this modern rationalization. Knowing God's truth allows us to show true love to each person. Approval of someone's sin which promotes them to continue in it is not love.