

# The Christian Church's Challenge to Address Homosexuality

(A Christian Perspective)

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If ever there was a vexing issue for the churches in our time it would have to be this. Of the major congregations few have come out and publicly stated the Christian principle for this form of same gender relationship is totally unacceptable to God and therefore is not permitted within the ranks of the Royal Priesthood of Believers, or in other words the worshipping congregations of Christian believers.

Most churches skirt the issue completely in a public forum but I would suggest they would most likely address specific cases on a private one-to-one basis. Then we have (in terms of God's righteousness) the fringe churches that have allowed active homosexual relationships to flourish within their congregants and openly support it from their pulpits. We therefore need to examine the underlying forces behind this matter before we make any further comment.

I guess like many nations throughout the new world, Australia is no different in how its roots are imbedded into a pioneering spirit and then burnished through the multinational wars that have wreaked heart-felt tragedies to families and communities that suffered losses in the terrible fog of human destruction. The Australian term for the close relationship between brothers unified in the struggle to survive is "mateship" and up through the recovery years post the Second World War, the Korean War, Vietnam, and to an extent the Middle East, that mateship was the undergirding plinth that men and women used to support themselves both in the theatre of war and back at home maintaining families. And as it continued there was a universal recognition that mateship formed a necessary bond at nearly all levels of society.

We then transitioned from a recovering nation post the war years into a way of life that saw education and career opportunities build a new structural level for the nation taking us on a journey of prosperity and exponential population growth. Our migration policies were also transitioned to support an emerging nation and we touted ourselves to be a multi-cultural hot spot in the world. But all of this also brought with it a dark side and it is this that is now becoming a major threat to the society as we knew it.

Within a relatively few years, we have seen corporate empires lording themselves over the common man through conglomerate monopolies, super powers in governments bullying others on the world stage, the stratospheric rise of the illicit drug trade and usage, the breakdown of the traditional family unit with now skyrocketing divorce rates, the changing work place needing to accommodate a substantially greater female presence – to name a few, but also along with this we saw homosexual behaviour come to open prominence that has jemmied aside what society knew as mateship in the general spirit of comradeship. By this I mean: fellowship, brotherliness, brotherhood, sisterhood, closeness, affinity, togetherness, solidarity and mutual support, but all of these have been largely demonised though what has flourished within our now very sceptical society. Why is that?

We could muse over if there was a correlation between all of these things. Some would agree and would look back into the history of the world and point out the cyclic nature of

the rise and fall of nations down the millenniums and the underlying degradation of their societal codes. We could discuss whether the degradation of the society codes drove the downfall, or if the downfalls were driven by other external influences and the society codes fell as a reactionary consequence. Based on what we can observe today, we could make a good case to say that the failure of decency within our societal codes is a major driver in the rise and fall of nations.

So by what measure should we gauge the health of our society? Is there some set of universal laws that we can reference to guide our government decisions for policy setting, which brings us to look at what actually currently guides their decisions on societal regulation? The answers to both questions are quite black and white – albeit not popular with the masses.

We can look to those countries that are constitutionally based and get an insight to our answers from the tenet of their preamble. Clearly there are those that rely on the principle of adherence to Godly principles and then the others that do not. In Australia the constitution is anchored to God's principles, but as we are currently seeing, this is under extreme threat by a Republican Movement that is being largely driven by some very prominent Federal politicians, and also under threat by State premiers who just ignore the wisdom of our forefathers who gave the societal code a solid, and uniform, base. Without such a unit of measure, it is society itself that reflects its own standard in a warped system of neo- democracy, and this is a great threat to this nation.

If the political leaders choose to ignore the principles upon which their constitution stand and they themselves only reflect what is essentially a directionless society led by the loudest voice, the end of that road is a societal code that will plunge headlong into an inevitable abyss. Hello - a Godless constitution, hello - a Bill of Rights promoting the anti-God outcast societal fringe, hello - homosexuality, hello – government sponsored drug usage, hello - State sponsored suicides, hello - Nanny State, hello - the subjugation of God ordained male and female roles, goodbye family units, goodbye Christian principles, goodbye society codes as we knew them.

And this is the advice we are given in the Gospels of the Bible. The rise of homosexuality in a society is one of the measures indicating the distance away from God it has fallen. There is a direct correlation between the two. And this explains why there is an attempt to either force or coerce churches to accept homosexual couples because there is a strong movement to legislatively force God's people into legitimising these relationships. In a sinful world, God is the only remaining battlement that is stopping all of society failing. God is seen as the barrier to allowing wanton behaviours ravaging through all of our society – and they are right – thank God for this.

We were discussing how traditionally comradeship and mateship were a healthy and vital relationship between same gender people to steady our way through troubled times and many hardships. And we discussed that there were cyclic patterns of how nations rise and fall. We can make the observation that in a general sense a rising society is undergirded by prosperity driven by God. It is a society that has strong comradeship and mateship and

looks to that which gives hope and fulfilment of life. A failing society is the opposite where all of these positive foundations have been eroded and hence societal standards plummet.

But the pithy question that is not discussed is why in a declining society does a healthy mateship between same gender friends suddenly turn into a sexual relationship? What on Earth is driving this? Is there some evil movement that is targeting high profile people? Is there a change in the general society view and physiology that is saying we don't want to procreate anymore? And what is going to occur if we let this phenomena continue its wanton way? What hope for our grandchildren in a fallen nation! And don't say that will never happen because - hello! This is exactly what is happening. It proves we do not learn from our history – *and we never have*.

Where governments actively push the principles of God aside and promote, and protect, such behaviours as homosexuality or the subjugation of traditional male and female roles, they start the nation on the road to its destruction. And even if the general society craves it, it is the duty of our leaders and those whom have the capacity to know wrong from right in the eyes of God to say, No! But I don't see that happening anywhere near the level it should be. In fact I see political leaders having homosexual relationships, I see priesthoods where they embrace homosexuality and I see churches that embrace homosexual congregants. All of these become familiar to those who see a future society devoid of Godly principles and therefore a change is needed before the nation's societal code reaches terminal velocity as it irretrievably falls.

Have you heard of the Redemption Plan? This is God's Plan within his eternal future and it explains why the universe was created and very specifically why mankind was created on this planet Earth. It provides Christians with the blueprint of how God created mankind to be obedient to his will with the view to redeeming us into heaven to be eternally with him. The function of our terrestrial life is to sort out those who look to be redeemed and who seek obedience to God's will, from those who reject God and only want to live for the days that they breathe air doing what they please. The difference between the two groups exemplifies the division between those who will be redeemed and those who will not.

To facilitate who and how many souls will be redeemed requires believers to reach out to unbelieving mankind with the view to getting them to change their minds about seeking God. In this respect the world is full of sinful mankind and we all, in this day, have needed to make a conscious decision to be obedient to God's principles and his Word. So in fulfilling our duty to save out of a sinful society as many people as we can we will come across all manner of man. Murderers, thieves, idolaters, etc etc and, of course those engaged in a homosexual relationship. We shouldn't treat them any differently one from the other, and as part of the process to come before God and guide them to repent of their disobedience - whether that be murder, theft, idolatry or homosexuality. We can still have the compassion of our Lord, but don't let that override God's fierce protection of his abiding will out of which there is no compromise.

We can discuss the notion that we should not suppress love and if this washes over to same gender relationships what should we do? The answer is not that far away. Do not regard the "love" from the heart, which is of the flesh and intrinsically evil, as God's endorsement

of a homosexual relationship. That man would cleave to his wife and the two become one is not a love of the flesh, ie the heart, as in I love a cup of tea in the morning, it is an entirely different bond. It is a legacy of the English language as many would know why the two applications of the word "love" are often confused. And I don't wish to discuss the human trait driving sexual gratification outside of a pure relationship between a man and a woman.

So, to round this up! We should not cease to engage with those who are in homosexual relationships and in doing so we need to have compassion and care because they are in the grip of gross disobedience against God and need to be released. Our work should be in conjunction with the Spirit of God to plant the seeds of how to be righteous in a relationship with God and to open their eyes to also see the error of their ways that prevents them being redeemed by God into eternal life.

Of those who are caught up in such a relationship but are looking for an escape theirs is a hard road to walk back. But the Spirit of God can overcome all hurdles that this terrestrial life can throw up and so we should minister to them in any way we can. And whilst I understand "grace to grow" the ire of God is very fickle and to allow continuing homosexual relationships to display in front of a congregation of believers worshipping God is very problematical.

So where do we look in the bible to find all of this?

Our universal guide to knowing what God will bless and what He rejects in societal behaviour is clearly laid down in both the Old Testament (Tanakh) and also the Gospels from our Bible of the Common Era. In unambiguous terminology we read that any form of homosexual behaviour is an abomination to God. And we can't argue this away with feigned social acceptance in our current contemporary society. An abomination to God a few thousand years ago is not going to suddenly become a blessing in later times, and this we can see in several places of the canon scripture as we trace, for the sake of our discussion, other societies that allowed same gender relationships to flourish. There are several passages from canon scripture that go to our case in point and it is very productive to view them all.

#### **Old Testament Law:**

Leviticus 18:22      *Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.*

Leviticus 20:13      *If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.*

#### **New Testament Gospels**

Romans 1:24 - 32      *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:*

*And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.*

*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;*

*Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,*

*Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*

*Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:*

*Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

1Corinthians 6:9      *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

1Titus 1:8 – 10      *But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;*

*Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,*

*For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;*

We can further see in the canon scriptures that homosexuality was, in some regions, rampant in earlier times and clear examples of communities acting contrary to societal codes that were based upon the blessings of God were noted in those early Song Lines.

Genesis 19:5 - 8      *And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.*

*And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,*

*And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.*

*Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.*

Judges 19:22 - 24      *Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.*

*And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.*

*Behold, here is my daughter a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing.*

These were communities that had allowed diverse same-gender relationships (and behaviour) which permeated throughout their society. The outcome from those freedoms away from God's abiding will for human behaviour was the catalyst that led to the spoiling of an entire community who were judged by God in a scenario that modern mankind risks today. What we are reading about is human behaviour driven by sexual gratification, and not a relationship issue. The two are mutually exclusive.

So whilst post eighteenth century Australia's traditional view of Christianity is being diluted by an influx of new citizens practising Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism (only to mention a few) their impact may also be felt in relation to influencing Government policies, for example the Republic debate, but I do not see any of them that we could single out as a culture supporting a debate on normalising same gender relationships in our legislature, for instance the Federal Marriage Act.

This therefore leads us to think about why has there been a rise in the acceptance of homosexual behaviour within Australia's population. It certainly is a traditional moral issue, but once again may I say that there is confusion in the minds of society in general that they ignore the abnormal sexual behaviour and react only to the assertions of "but we love each other".

Don't be confused about what has always been mateship and going out and doing social activities with good friends of the same gender. Many people of both genders grew up with groups of really good friends and had a lot in common together – exploring the wilds of the world, learning societal limits on social behaviours, perhaps having fun nights out or just sharing in each other's activities and interests.

The point I am making is, that for all those years of growing from youth to young adult and on to mature person there was no hint of any homosexual relationship or behaviour. I feel aggrieved that a minority of people have robbed society of innocently having mates to grow up with. So this relationship excuse to legitimise the behaviour of homosexual couples is a put up. It is just an excuse to make it sound acceptable. The real fact is "homosexual" behaviour is all about sexual gratification and not about trusting and loving relationships that all humans have with our friends, our colleagues, our family members and even our domestic pets and treasured inanimate items. As we have mentioned, the two are mutually exclusive.

If Christendom opens the door to normalising homosexual behaviour in our church congregations, and indeed even within the pastoral functions of the church, when emphatically the Lord's word describes these participating adherents biblically as those who are given over to a reprobate mind set (The Book of Romans 1:27), that same mind set also embraces all forms of sexual gratification and the behaviours that are noted in that bible passage. One cannot be half evil, or half good or for that matter half pregnant. You are either one or the other and therefore my conclusion is that homosexual behaviour is an indicator of a contrary mind-set to that of being disciplined to Jesus our Lord in righteousness and holy devotion doing that which is blessed by God.

So the church's challenge to address homosexuality therefore takes on a clearer picture when we seek the Lord's word on the matter. The behaviour is not acceptable – that is a given (as they say) but the persons are worthy of being saved, and in understanding this, congregations can tailor their outreaches and their internal pastoral services to bring practising homosexual couples to a place where they, with the Holy Spirit exercising the power of salvation to witness God's abiding will for those who seek redemption to eternal life.

The answer might be an outreach service for sinners and saints where only the salvation message is canvassed, but on the other hand believers must be accommodated exclusively to worship God amongst only other brother and sister believers who carry the Spirit of the Lord within, ie born again into the Kingdom of God.

In relation to officers of the church being in homosexual relationships, these should either cease immediately or the person(s) discharged from their position. Their role jeopardises the whole congregation and there is no room to manoeuvre in context with the apostolic determinations on this issue from the Gospels.

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