

The Scriptural Teaching on Homosexuality and Modern Trends in Christian Churches

[Presented to the Ohio Conference Spring Pastoral Conference, Michigan District, WELS, held at Beautiful Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, April 15-16, 1985]

Richard D. Starr

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Introduction

Why a paper on homosexuality? Isn't that a rather cut and dried issue in the Scriptures? Besides, the subject deals with a very small portion of society and certainly no one in my congregation would ever be involved in such a thing. I've been in the ministry for twenty years and never had a homosexual in my congregation.

Some of you may be thinking such thoughts at this point. Yet how would you respond to the following people if they were to come to you or join your congregation? Would you recoil from them in revulsion, pretend that they didn't exist, or tell them to go away and not come back until they had changed their ways?

Meet Christopher Hawks from New Jersey:

I am seventeen years old, a senior in high school, and openly gay. Homosexuality has always been a major force in the shaping of my life and personality. Learning to be myself, and to like myself, has been a continuous growing experience; one that is still going on.... The best thing that came from my move was that I was now close to a big city. The city is wonderful! There are so many gays everywhere. It used to make me feel so good to go into the city and see them all living openly and happily, and it gave me strength to be myself.ⁱ

Consider James Brock, a twenty-four year old, from Seattle, Washington. James had been concerned about the Scripture's prohibitions against homosexuality all his life until he met a "wise and wonderful pastor."

The most difficult problem created by my homosexuality was to deal with the religious beliefs I was raised with.... My religious roots are both Pentecostal and Baptist ... I tried to change myself. I prayed everyday to have a sexual feeling for girls. I prayed that I would start liking sports. I prayed that I would stop watching sports just so I could look at the guys. But no change came.... Religion had been my lifeline, my stronghold, the one thing I was good at ... a very wise and wonderful pastor opened my eyes, and helped me re-open my heart. Together he and I read the Scriptures which had plagued my life. He pointed out that each of them could be read to say what anyone wanted it to say. He showed me how beliefs differed from religion to religion.... As he said, I had been given life by God, and these feelings were a part of the whole Me that God had created.... It was such a relief to know that I could be a Christian who was gay.ⁱⁱ

What would you have told eighteen year old Mark Maki from Minnesota if you had been the Lutheran pastor he turned to for help?

I am deaf, gay, and eighteen years old. I grew up in a small town and attended Minnesota School for the Deaf. I was seventeen when I first realized that I was gay.... One Sunday, I went to the Lutheran Church for the deaf. After the service was over, I decided to talk to the pastor and I told her I was gay. She understood, and told me about this lesbian couple she knew.... They have made me very happy ... they said that many pastors make gays feel bad and guilty. I then prayed to God to accept me as a gay person. I found out that God does accept and love me as his child.... Now I am at St. Mary's Junior College in Minneapolis and am very excited to have gay friends.ⁱⁱⁱ

Isolated incidents? Perhaps, but probably not. These accounts were taken from a book entitled *One Teenager in Ten*, implying that ten percent of the world's population is homosexual or at least would be without laws and social repression against homosexuality.

The church has always been a formidable force in keeping homosexuality in check, but that, too, is changing. As we shall see later in this paper, every major denomination of Christianity is being affected and many are indeed changing centuries-old positions on homosexuality. We in the WELS are not unaffected by this. Since we Lutherans are often all lumped together in the minds of most people it is important to know that much of Lutheranism is rapidly becoming pro-homosexual. This change is being led by the clergy. "I am a child of God, a man, a homosexual, a Christian, a Lutheran—in that order—and I am a husband committed to my wife, who knows I'm gay." The author of that statement is a thirty-three year old Lutheran minister serving a Midwestern parish.

Homosexuality is a subject which demands the attention of every concerned servant of the Word today. It isn't just going to go away and it is wrong simply to ignore it. Faithful shepherds under Christ must be prepared to give counsel and aid to their flock in this area, too. Although I have been in the parish ministry for only four years, during that time one man, one woman, one teenage boy, and one teenage girl have come to me for help in wrestling with the matter of homosexuality. Five families in my still small mission congregation have spoken to me concerning relatives, friends, co-workers, or classmates who are openly homosexual. I'm sure some of you have had similar experiences. If not, I'm confident that you will. Therefore, it is important that we be well prepared to give an answer to the questions that may be asked and that we be absolutely certain of and correct in what we answer from God's Word.

I. Definition of Homosexuality

Webster defines homosexuality in this way, "of, relating to, or exhibiting sexual desire toward a member of one's own sex." For our purposes, we shall add to desire also behavior. Homosexuality refers to overt sexual relations or emotional attachment involving sexual attraction between individuals—male or female—of the same sex. Certainly homosexuality does not describe a person's physical appearance or mannerisms. Effeminate traits in a man or masculine traits in a woman do not identify either as homosexual.

Homosexuality as a condition or state of being as the preferred sexual contact is found only in human beings.

From animal studies, it seems evident that in every group of higher mammals at least, there is a wide range of normal sexual behavior, rather than a single type, including at least partial homosexuality. Exclusive homosexuality, however, seems to be a purely human phenomenon. It is certainly true that some homosexual preference and activity has been a human condition from the very start of things and (as far as we know) in every land and culture.^{iv}

It appears that homosexual behavior occurs in animals only when heterosexual relations are impossible. Of course, we do not turn to the animal kingdom for our moral standards or for a determination of what is a sin and what is not. The author of the above quotation, Richard Woods, a Roman Catholic priest, also overstates his case (a chronic disorder among pro-homosexual authors from my experience in researching this paper) when he says that homosexuality as a preference and activity has been around from the very start of things. God

certainly did not create Adam and Eve as homosexuals. However since the Fall, sin has been here with us. Therefore, homosexuality may have been around very early—but *not* from the very start of things.

It is important to note, however, that much of academia considers homosexuality to be an unchosen state of being. There is much debate and indecision in the scientific world as to the cause of homosexuality, which we shall discuss later in this paper. Yet seldom is homosexuality seen for what it really is: a sin which eventually traps and enslaves the perpetrator perhaps in much the same way that the abuse of alcohol often leads to the sinful enslavement of alcoholism. When a person reaches the point with homosexuality that an alcoholic does with alcohol, then, he/she is a homosexual. This is not a popular view with homosexuals who prefer to blame their sin on someone else such as parents, society, or even God. Supposedly, they are constitutionally different from heterosexuals. Yet, their promoters most often stress similarities in an attempt to dispel homophobia.

True homosexual persons differ from heterosexual persons mainly in that they prefer members of the same sex as the exclusive or predominant “object” of sexual desire during most of their lives. Most homosexual persons are not exclusively so oriented, however; like the heterosexual population, they can be considered more or less bisexual.^v

From all of this we may conclude that homosexuality either or both is the sexual desire and behavior toward a member or members of one’s own sex. A homosexual is a person—male or female—who enjoys engaging in that desire and/or behavior.

The very definition of homosexuality gives thoughtful people another reason to carefully study this entire matter in some detail. “Before the fall of every civilization that has existed, three sins had become epidemic. These sins are homosexuality, incest, and sexual child abuse (pedophilia).”^{vi} All three of these sins are epidemic in the USA today. We turn now to Scripture to learn what God does have to say about homosexuality.

II.

The Scriptures and Homosexuality

An entirely new attitude toward homosexuality has arisen within the Christian church during the last two or three decades. Lying at the very crux of the matter are the principles of Bible interpretation. Broadly speaking, biblical interpretation among believers exists on a continuum between two divergent posts. On the one side are those who say that the Bible simply means what it says. No ifs. No buts. If the Bible says that God created the world in six days, then that’s the way it happened. If the Bible says that the Red Sea parted, then it parted. If the Bible says that Jonah spent three days in the belly of a great fish, then it is certainly so. I hope and pray that no WELS pastor would ever have difficulty confessing that belief about God’s Word. Nor should any WELS pastor ever feel an obligation for apologizing at taking a stand at one end of the biblical interpretation continuum, for truth can abide no compromise. Since “the Bible clearly and specifically addresses the problem of homosexuality—what it is, where it comes from, and how it invades the hearts and lives of individuals,”^{vii} it is appropriate that we study in detail what God tells us through his Word about homosexuality and accept that without condition, being careful to say nothing less and nothing more than he himself has said.

Toward the other pole of the Bible interpretation continuum are those who insist that the Bible must be interpreted with the aid of the tools of textual and historical criticism. The Bible, they say, was set in writing by men conditioned by their cultures, using the literary conventions

of their times. To get at the truth of the Scriptures, they say, it is necessary to understand and peel away those cultural and stylistic aspects. Unfortunately, this is the stand taken by the majority of so-called Lutherans today. Lutheran seminary students are being taught that “we should try to explicate the meaning of the biblical texts in terms of the best understanding of our time.”^{viii} This is certainly not letting God speak clearly and plainly to us from his Word, but putting words—the words of sinful human beings—into his holy mouth.

While it is obvious that we do not agree with them on what Scripture is and its validity, yet we cannot simply leave it at that. It is necessary that we review what Scripture does have to say about homosexuality and to be thoroughly familiar with the manner in which the Scriptures are used to excuse and promote homosexuality. The reason this is so essential is familiar to all of us. Undoubtedly, each of us must struggle with some particular weakness or pet sin. You know from personal experience how skilled the unholy three—the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh—are at tempting you to fall repeatedly into that sin. Rationalization is one of their greatest weapons in that battle. If a Christian’s particular weakness is the sin of homosexuality, we can be sure that the person will be most interested in, will reach out and latch on to anything religious telling him that it is not a sin or at least not nearly so bad as he previously may have been taught to believe. This is exhibited in the accounts of James and Mark in the introduction of this paper, page one.

Genesis 19

The account of Sodom and Gomorrah is probably the most well known and certainly the most influential passage in the Old Testament condemning homosexual behavior, giving its name, sodomy, to homosexual acts. Since the account is so familiar, we shall not go into great detail recounting the circumstances of that tragic tale here. However, by way of review, we read verses four through nine from the NIV.

4 Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. 5 They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.” 6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door, behind him and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. 8 Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.” 9 “Get out of our way,” they replied. And they said, “This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

“There is hardly a more horrible account anywhere on the pages of Holy Writ. Both the degeneracy here described as well as the catastrophic overthrow of the cities involved are calculated to startle by their lurid and gruesome details. Luther confessed that he could not read the chapter without a feeling of deep revulsion (*es geht mir durch mein ganzes Herz*).”^{ix} The terrible proportions to which the vice of the men of Sodom had grown is indicated by the fact that “both young and old” gathered at the house of Lot for sexual gratification. The vice was pervasive in the city which is made unmistakably clear by the two modifying phrases “all the men” and “from every part of the city.” The euphemism, הַיָּדְוָה, translated as “that we may know them” in the KJV and as “so that we can have sex with them” in the NIV, is not used out of delicacy on their part because they shout their libidinous desires aloud, clamoring in the streets

of the city. This was used as an example of open and blatant sin in Isaiah 3:9 "... they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it." "זָדוֹן is applied, as in Judges 19:22, ["Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him."] to the carnal sin of *paederastia*, a crime very prevalent among the Canaanites (Leviticus 18:22; 20:23), and according to Romans 1:27, a curse of heathenism generally."^x There can be no doubt whatsoever that זָדוֹן is here to be understood "in the biblical sense." The context makes that abundantly clear for which reason the NIV has chosen to reflect that meaning in its translation. Anyone with the least spark of virtue and any remains of natural light and conscience can see that the story speaks of homosexuality. It is obvious that homosexuality was accepted as normal in Sodom, but that didn't make it right or any less a sin, which the unusual and complete destruction of the city indicates. There was no remorse for their sin. "The practice would have been bad enough if it had been carried on by intrigue and wheedling; but they proclaimed was with virtue, and bade open defiance to it."^{xi}

Dr. Martin Luther knew of homosexuality in his day, which was not all that rare. He also knew that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality. In one of his lectures on Genesis 19, Luther tells us: "In Rome I saw some cardinals who were venerated as saints because they were satisfied with having intercourse with women."^{xii} The Reformer also had this to say about the sin of Sodomy:

The vice of the Sodomites is an unparalleled enormity. It departs from the natural passion and desire, planted into nature by God, according to which the male has a passionate desire for the female. Sodomy craves what is entirely contrary to nature. Whence comes this perversion? Without a doubt it comes from the devil. After a man has once turned aside from the fear of God, the devil puts such great pressure upon his nature that he extinguishes the fire of natural desire and stirs up another, which is contrary to nature.^{xiii}

Luther pinpoints the cause of homosexuality—separation from God, and no matter how hard and long and loud a practicing, non-repentant homosexual cries, "Lord, Lord," he/she will not enter the kingdom of heaven, cf. Matthew 7:21.

Before we move on from Luther and Genesis 19, we should mention that Luther has been maligned for trying to vindicate the character of Lot, who offered his daughters for the men's sexual pleasure. Luther speculated that Lot was shrewd enough to know that the men would not want his daughters, since they were so bent on satisfying their homosexual lust and so his daughters were in no real danger. Yet, some have accused Luther of trying to promote the idea that one can avoid sin by sin. However, Luther is most clear on this point: "The principle that you may choose the lesser evil in order to avoid the greater is sound in external and physical affairs. But in spiritual relations it is different. You must never do evil so that good may come of it. To kill a woman is a sin; yet if her life could be saved by adultery, this sin should never be committed."^{xiv}

In spite of the overwhelming clarity of this account in its condemnation of homosexuality, there are many so-called scholars who seem to ignore common sense and insist that the words must mean some thing other than what they say. Motivated by the desire to legitimize sin for themselves and others they couch their arguments in seemingly plausible and convincing ways, using all their persuasive powers to give credence to their aberrations. This is especially damaging since many religious leaders and scholars are leading the way in this abominable scratching of itching ears. For example, Joseph C. Weber, professor of Biblical Theology at Wesley Theological Seminary writes: "There is no evidence that Sodom's sin was

homosexuality (Genesis 18:20). In every other passage in the Bible referring to Sodom the sins condemned are vain sacrifices, pride, and inhospitality (Isaiah 1:10; Ezekiel 16:48-49; Jeremiah 23:14; Matthew 10:14-15; Luke 10:10-12). Even if the men of Sodom intended homosexual acts against the angels, the passage could only serve as a condemnation of homosexual rape.^{xv} Of course, the thought is never suggested that Sodom's sin was so well-known that it didn't need mentioning, that indeed the very mention of the name Sodom called to mind its heinous sin of homosexuality. Such writers also lose credibility with such statements as Weber's, "Even if the men of Sodom intended homosexual acts." What else could they have intended from the context?

John Boswell, author of *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*—the new "bible" of the homosexual community—proposes four reasons for the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah:

(1) the Sodomites were destroyed for the general wickedness which had prompted the Lord to send angels to the city to investigate in the first place; (2) the city was destroyed because the people of Sodom had tried to rape the angels; (3) the city was destroyed because the men of Sodom had tried to engage in homosexual intercourse with the angels (note that is not the same as [2]: rape and homosexual intercourse are separately punishable offenses in Jewish law); (4) the city was destroyed for inhospitable treatment of visitors sent from the Lord.^{xvi}

Boswell insists that all the men of Sodom, from the young to the old, gathered around Lot's house and demanded that the strangers be brought out to them for no other reason than to know who they were and that the city was destroyed, not for sexual immorality, specifically homosexuality, but for the sin of inhospitality to strangers. Ignoring the context of the verse, he claims that "the Hebrew verb 'to know' (יָדַע) is very rarely used in a sexual sense in the Bible (despite popular opinion to the contrary): in only ten of its 943 occurrences in the Old Testament does it have the sense of carnal knowledge. The passage in Sodom is the only place in the Old Testament where it is generally believed to refer to homosexual relations."^{xvii} But isn't once enough, considering the terrible consequences of that sin on its perpetrators? (Cf. Judges 19:22—uses same word to refer to homosexuality.)

Boswell also points out that Jesus himself must have considered the sin of Sodom to be inhospitality since he refers to it in that way when sending out the seventy-two: "But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town" (Luke 10:10-12). Of course the thought is not expressed by Boswell that since Sodom's sin of homosexuality and its punishment were so well known that it became a benchmark by which all other punishments were judged and that therefore the two causes of punishment need not be related at all. But Boswell is extremely adept at turning his supposedly objective information into persuasive propaganda without it ever appearing as such to the casual or homosexual-sympathetic reader.

From time to time however, he slips and goes too far, beyond the bounds of Reason he so passionately worships. For example, he would have a person who has just read Genesis 19 believe that

indeed only one argument can be advanced to demonstrate any sexual desire on part of the Sodomites: that Lot's offering his daughters to the men must suggest some anticipation of their part of sexual satisfaction. This argument, however, does not stand close scrutiny. Bailey comments, "Its connection with the purpose (whatever it was) for

which the citizens demanded the production of his guests is purely imaginary. No doubt the surrender of his daughters was simply the most tempting bribe Lot could offer on the spur of the moment to appease the hostile crowd...^{xviii}

In my opinion, other pro-homosexual writers are more honest in their presentations of the account, although still misguided in their conclusions. For example, Switzer writes:

In the first place, it is quite clear in this story in Genesis 19 that the men of the city wanted to have sexual relationships with Lot's two guests, who were actually angels disguised as men. However, it was not merely that they wanted such relationships but also that they wanted Lot to hand his guests over to them against his and his guests' will. They threatened violence; they pushed forward as if to break into the house; they were intent on sexual aggression, literally rape. If this passage is used against homosexuality, then it must in all fairness be against homosexual rape, and could be used as appropriately against heterosexual rape as it could against consenting homosexual acts, the last not being an issue in this story at all.^{xix}

In conclusion, the Genesis 19 account of Sodom and Gomorrah is seen by pro-homosexual writers and proponents as being at the most a condemnation of homosexual desire that is linked with aggression and at the least a condemnation of poor manners and inhospitality. In their opinion, it has nothing whatsoever to do with homosexuality as a condition or homosexual acts between consenting persons. God's children know differently.

Genesis 38:1-11

The Onan account of course does not deal with homosexuality or even sins of a sexual nature at all, although it has been wrongfully used by some well-intentioned people to condemn masturbation. However, pro-homosexual writers have used it to explain why homosexuality and other non-procreative acts such as intercourse with a menstruating woman were banned by law. One example of this reasoning is sufficient to make the point and cause you to be aware of its existence:

While the Onan story does not deal directly with homosexual activity, it gives us important clues to some of the reasons for its ancient condemnation.... The deliberate and non-procreative spilling of semen was equivalent to the deliberate destruction of human life. When such occurred in male masturbation, in male homosexual acts, or in *coitus interruptus*, the deserved judgment was as severe as that for abortion or for murder.... Male masturbatory and homosexual acts have been condemned far more vigorously in the Judeo-Christian tradition than have similar female acts. The sexism endemic to a patriarchal society ironically bore with its logic a heavier burden upon "deviants" of the "superior" gender.^{xx}

So, in combating the pro-homosexual presentation, be prepared for the accusation that all of Israel's laws were designed simply to help the nation grow into numbers as numerous as the stars or the sand on the shore, and now that this objective is no longer of prime importance, such rules no longer apply.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

"Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable." "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to

death; their blood will be on their own heads.” Of course, we must realize that these prohibitions against homosexuality are a part of the Levitical law code which is, for the most part, no longer binding on New Testament Christians, cf. Colossians 2:16. On the other hand, much of the moral law which is binding for all time, which is a part of the Lord’s continuing will for his people, is also interspersed in the Levitical law code. [The condemnation of] Unlawful sexual relations can be seen to be part of God’s will for all people of all time. The punishments for such crimes were usually most severe—death. Pro-homosexual writers throw out the Leviticus passages for the most part because of the death penalty and the other prohibitions that are no longer binding:

Persons committing homosexual acts are to be executed. The meaning is clear: anyone who wishes to base his or her beliefs on the witness of the Old Testament must be completely consistent and demand the death penalty for everyone who performs homosexual acts. This was in fact the case until fairly recent times—hence the name “faggots,” which homosexuals earned while burning at the stake.^{xxi}

(A faggot refers to the lower dead branches of coniferous trees which are mostly worthless for sustaining useful fires and were used to fuel the fires of persons burned at the stake.) The argument here is that no one would be so barbaric as to suggest the death penalty for homosexuals or homosexual behavior today so therefore the law must no longer apply. That’s the tail wagging the dog.

Others suggest that the passages in Leviticus condemn the homosexual *act* but not the state of *being* a homosexual. That’s similar to giving a child a piece of candy but telling him not to eat it. These people obviously do not realize that sin begins with the thoughts contrary to God’s will and that sin is not merely the act, cf. 1 Samuel 16:7.

Since homosexuality and incest were rampant among the heathen nations who were separated from God by their unbelief, some pro-homosexual writers promote the idea that the prohibitions against such vices were put in place merely to keep Israel separate and distinct as a people from the other nations. Boswell uses word study once again to impress the reader, but by only telling half the truth, the facts can be twisted beyond recognition. Boswell writes: “The Hebrew word ‘toevah’ (תוֹעֵבָה), here translated ‘abomination’ [detestable – NIV], does not usually signify something intrinsically evil, like rape or theft (discussed elsewhere in Leviticus), but something which is ritually unclean for Jews, like eating pork or engaging in intercourse during menstruation, both of which are prohibited in these same chapters.”^{xxii} However, תוֹעֵבָה is also used in Deuteronomy 32:16 and Isaiah 44:19 referring to false gods and idols, the worship of which is intrinsically evil, violating the very First Commandment. Of course it is convenient to forget that when wanting to see only one side of an issue.

Deuteronomy 23:17; 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46

All of these passages speak of male and/or female temple prostitution. It is well known that male temple prostitutes serviced both males and females in their despicable worship practices. While the verses should not be used by themselves as a condemnation of homosexual behavior, yet it is significant that the male prostitution seems to be singled out for special revulsion in the eyes of God and his people. This seems to be the tenor of 1 Kings 14:24, for example: “There were *even* male shrine prostitutes in the land.”

The pro-homosexual writers use these passages, however, to try to show that God didn’t actually condemn homosexuality. “Male prostitution is condemned because it is an expression of

the cultic worship of foreign gods.... The revulsion against sacral male prostitution remained one of the major forces in Judaism's rejection of any form of homosexuality."^{xxiii}

Of course, the pro-homosexual writers do not stop at merely trying to debunk the clear passages of the Old Testament condemning homosexuality. Without any substantiation, other than an overly active and warped imagination, Boswell states that "In fact intense love relations between persons of the same gender figure prominently in the Old Testament—e.g., Saul and David, David and Jonathan, Ruth and Naomi—and were celebrated throughout the Middle Ages in both ecclesiastical and popular literature as examples of extraordinary devotion, sometimes with distinctly erotic overtones."^{xxiv} The Middle Ages were probably no more moral or immoral than the present age; sinners still tried to call sin something else just as sinners do today. Their calling something which is black white just doesn't make it true. Boswell's argumentation is faulty but appealing to someone looking for an excuse to sin.

Boswell also tries to use the age-old ploy familiar to everyone who has ever been a youngster—everyone else is doing it so it must be alright for me to do it, too. "The ancient world ... knew no such hostility to homosexuality. The Old Testament strictures against same-sex behavior would have seemed to most Roman citizens as arbitrary as the prohibition of cutting the beard, and they would have had no reason to assume that it should receive any more attention than the latter."^{xxv} One would not expect that the heathen Romans should understand the things of God "for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). But by the same token, a Christian certainly cannot use the example of the Romans as justification for behavior in opposition to the clear and explicit will of God.

Turning to the New Testament, we find that the same hermeneutical principles are applied by those advocating homosexuality on scriptural grounds. Much is made of the fact that Jesus did not specifically condemn homosexuality. Anyone who uses passages penned by the Apostle Paul is termed a "Paulist" as opposed to a Christian. Apparently, if Jesus said it, then it must be so, but if one of God's inspired writers penned the words, they are immediately suspect. Switzer is representative of this group: "When we look at the New Testament we are once again struck by the fact that it is rather difficult to find any statements about homosexuality. JESUS NEVER MENTIONS IT AT ALL. He was hardly one to let serious sin go by unnoticed and unmentioned."^{xxvi}

It is in fact that very attitude which prompted the assignment and writing of this paper. While attending a seminar at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, I was teamed with an ALC pastor, his wife, and three nuns. In the course of working on a hypothetical problem we had been given to solve, the ALC pastor said that the Sixth Commandment applied only to married people and that there were no prohibitions in the New Testament against sexual activity among the unmarried. When I quoted Matthew 5:28, "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart," the oldest nun in our group, probably in her sixties, questioned whether or not we could be sure that Jesus had really said those words. So, even if Jesus said it, if it doesn't fit into their wishes, it is permissible to dismiss it as possibly being added many years later by misguided moralists. These people with whom I attended the seminar were not writers and scholars, but everyday people dealing directly with God's people. Yet, they echo the thoughts and musings of men like Boswell rather than the Lord. For example, Boswell writes, "Sexuality appears to have been largely a matter of indifference to Jesus.... He pronounced no condemnation of sexuality among the unmarried and said nothing which bore any relation to homosexuality. The only sexual issue of importance to Jesus appears

to have been fidelity.”^{xxvii} Apparently, Mr. Boswell has never read Matthew 15:19, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.” Certainly, adultery and sexual immorality refer to sexual behavior among the married and the unmarried.

Nor is Jesus Christ himself immune from the same treatment given to Saul, David, Jonathan, Naomi and Ruth in the Old Testament. Just as some have suggested Paul’s thorn in the flesh was homosexuality, they have cast the same aspersions on our Savior. “He was apparently celibate himself, and the only persons with whom the Gospels suggest he had any special relationship were men, especially St. John, who carefully describes himself throughout his gospel as the disciple whom Jesus loved.”^{xxviii} When a person has convinced himself that his sin is acceptable, what better way to convince others than to suggest that Jesus did not consider the activity a sin at all but even participated in it himself.

Romans 1:26 – 27

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27 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.” (NIV)

Chapter One of Romans is a description of the godless world which is strikingly correct at all times and especially, it seems, at the zenith of intellectual enlightenment. It is a description of what happens when people deliberately transfer the honor due to God, the Creator, to man, the creature. The result of this transference is that God will abandon such people to the most nefarious vices—lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, lasciviousness, unmentionable sins.

The boundary between Creator and creature is completely disarranged if honor is deprived the Creator and transferred to the creature. Upon such unnaturalness in the religious sphere there follows, by God’s decree, unnaturalness in the moral sphere. The created difference between man and woman, as concerns sexual use, is completely arrested. Man and woman are, as it were, divested of their nature.^{xxix}

This happens because people refuse to consider God and his revelation worthy of their acceptance. They did not like what they found in God’s revelation and so they ignored, or perhaps even worse, changed it to suit their own wishes. For the pro-homosexual, this means denying God’s Word while crying loudly that they are true Christians. They delight in sin without pangs of conscience because they have convinced themselves that God is only a God of love, completely forgetting that he is also a just God. Therefore, God “gave them over” to all kinds of sins, enumerated by the Apostle Paul under divine inspiration in 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:19ff; 1 Timothy 1:9ff; and 2 Timothy 3:2ff.

This is the only place in the Bible which speaks directly of homosexual females.

The females abandoned the natural use of the female organ for the unnatural one; they violated even nature. How they did this Paul does not even care to indicate except that by speaking of females by themselves homosexuality is implied. “The natural use” disregards the question whether the legitimate use in marriage or the illegitimate use in adultery and fornication is referred to. The females viciously violated even nature in their bodies.^{xxx}

Μετήλλαξαν is a frightful exchanging, a horrible trading and perversion. “The Greek idiom in *παρά* is that a thing is left lying aside and is thus discarded; the English views the relation differently, namely as opposition, ‘against,’ ‘contrary to.’”^{xxxix} The result is the same of course in either Greek or English. “Exchanged natural relations refers not only to the point of nature but brings out the enormity of violating even nature itself, established by God. The facts are plain and simple: people—male or female—desiring or engaging in sex with a member or members of the same sex is a throwing away of God’s given natural order, that which is contrary to his will.

It is also important to note Paul’s terms for man and woman, or rather male and female, in these verses. Lenski points out:

Paul does not say “women” and “men,” he says *θήλειαι* and *ἄρσενες* “females” and “males.” To say that this is done in order to denote sex is too weak, for “women” and “men” would certainly fully denote sex. When women and men are called females and males in a connection of the lowest vices such as this, the terms are degrading. They descend to the brutish level of being nothing but creatures of sex.^{xxxii}

There is absolutely no doubt as to what the words mean here concerning the sexual act. There is no word play in which the pro-homosexual writers can engage to change that meaning, although we shall see that they claim the reference is to heterosexual people rather than homosexual people. But more of that later. Paul is speaking of one special vice—homosexuality—seen for centuries as the rudest, most perverse kind of lewdness. Homosexuality is a violation of nature which marks the depth of immorality to which godlessness descends. Sexual degradation always follows apostasy. “The moment God is taken out of control in men’s life the stench of sex aberration is bound to arise. It is so the world over to this day. Without God sex runs wild.”^{xxxiii} No matter how loudly and long a person says he/she believes in God, if he/she willfully rejects God’s will and continues to live in sin, then he/she is not really a Christian, because he/she exhibits the kind of behavior seen only in those who are unbelievers.

In spite of this clear and plain portion of Scripture, the pro-homosexual writers go through various linguistic gymnastics to twist and pervert God’s Word. One of the best of the “word athletes,” John Boswell, writes: “Paul did not discuss gay persons but only homosexual acts committed by heterosexual persons. There is, however, no clear condemnation of homosexual acts in the verses in question.”^{xxxiv} For most people it is impossible to think of a homosexual person without thinking of homosexual acts, for it is, after all, the homosexual desire and behavior which distinguishes the homosexual person from the heterosexual person, and in most cases, that alone. Paul is obviously not speaking of people who were forced into a singular homosexual act or experimented with homosexuality out of curiosity, because these people were given over to shameful lusts. Natural relations were abandoned, they were inflamed with lust for one another, for people of their own sex. This describes a homosexual according to the pro-homosexual writers’ own definitions and not a heterosexual. These people were by every inclination homosexual in regard to both men and women, and it is begging the question to say that they could not be homosexuals because the “natural relations” for homosexuals is same-sex relations.

Boswell engages in more word play with these verses. “*παρά φύσιν* signifies behavior which is unexpected, unusual, or different from what could occur in the normal order of things: ‘beyond nature,’ perhaps, but not ‘immoral.’”^{xxxv} Yet, if man is *παρά φύσιν* with God, is that not

sin? God has established the order of things, the “natural use,” and he demands that his creatures, human beings, stay perfectly within the normal order of things, his will.

An interesting point on this passage is that every pro-homosexual writer which I read reached the same conclusion concerning the entire section of Romans 1:18-32. Yet each failed, in varying degrees, to make the proper application. The sins listed here are results, not causes. The cause is explicitly detailed in verse 21, “For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him.” “The base sin is not homosexuality nor any of the other behaviors listed; rather it is not worshiping the true and living God.”^{xxxvi} We can agree with this statement by Switzer wholeheartedly. The cause and root of all sin is not worshiping God as the only true God, making him our number one priority in life. If we could keep the First Commandment, theoretically we could keep all the others. Therefore, homosexuality and all the other wicked behaviors listed are sin, the result of separation from God.

The homosexual practices mentioned are not the cause of God’s wrath. They are symptomatic of that human chaos which results when men do not acknowledge their creatureliness and accept life as a gift from God their creator. Homosexual acts can be an expression of that state of chaos, pride, and confusion that is universal to all apart from Jesus Christ—but so can religion (Romans 1:22-23), gossip, boasting, the whole list.^{xxxvii}

That is exactly the point. All of these behaviors, including homosexuality, are sins stemming from man’s basic sin, failure to acknowledge and keep and worship God as God. “If we could assume that this is what homosexuality is, and all that it is, it could be seen as being in conflict with the behavior of one who does worship the living God.”^{xxxviii} The advocates of homosexuality insist that true homosexuality is more than what is described in Romans 1:26-27, that it is a state of being, a condition that is not chosen by an individual but is thrust upon him/her by society, physiology, or even God. Since homosexuality is forbidden by Scripture, it cannot come from God. It may come through society, it may even be found to be a physiological or psychological disorder in some, perhaps akin to psychosomatic diseases such as colitis, asthma, or certain allergies, but it would still be the result of sin and remain a sin itself in God’s eyes. It may be a person’s cross to bear through life, just as an alcoholic may never be able to take a drink, and that person must strive, with God’s help, to carry that cross without stumbling into the sin.

In conclusion, from our study of this passage, we see that homosexuality is one part of the bondage of sin; it is the result of apostasy. As man has drawn away from God, God has given him over to vile affections and vices as his just desserts here on earth. “God gave them up, in a way of righteous judgment, as the just punishment, of their idolatry—taking off the bridle of restraining grace—leaving them to themselves—letting them alone; for his grace is his own, he is debtor to no man, he may give or withhold his grace at pleasure.”^{xxxix} So, the practicing, unrepentant homosexual is outside of God’s grace, no matter how firmly he/she insists that he/she is a believer. Such a person is in need of law and gospel and Christ’s love, reflected through us, his ambassadors.

1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10

We shall consider these next two passages together since they are very similar and the same word for homosexual or homosexual behavior is used in both. The word *μαλακοι*, is used only in the 1 Corinthians passage. It comes from *μάλακος* nominative, plural, masculine; is used in Matthew 11:8 and Luke 7:25 to mean “soft, soft to the touch, delicate;” metaphorically it has

come to mean a cinaedus, an instrument of unnatural lust, effeminate. *Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich* defines it, this way: “of persons—soft, effeminate, esp. of catamites, men and boys who allow themselves to be misused homosexually.”

The word ἀρσενοκοῖται is used in both passages and comes from ἀρσενοκοίτης. It is a dative, plural, noun, and is formed by ἄρσην and κοίτη, “male” and “marriage-bed.” *Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich* defines it as a male homosexual, pederast, sodomite. It is used in this sense in *Polycarp to the Philippians 5:3*.

A comparative study of μαλακοὶ and ἀρσενοκοῖται in the major English translations of the Bible may prove worthwhile and interesting at this point.

Greek	1 Cor. 6:9 οὔτε μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἀρσενοκοῖται	Timothy 1:10 ἀρσενοκοίταις
Wyclif	lechouris or men that done synne of sodom	them that trespassen with males aZenes kynde
Tyndale	abusars of themselves with the mankynde	them that defile themselves with mankynde
RDV	the effeminate, liars with mankind	them who defile themselves with mankind
KJV	effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind	them that defile themselves with mankind
RSV	homosexuals	sodomites
C	the effeminate, sodomites	sodomites
JB	catamites, sodomites	those who are immoral with boys or with men
NEB	who are guilty of homosexual perversion	perverts
NAB	sodomites	sexual perverts
NIV	male prostitutes, homosexual offenders	perverts
AT	men who sin sexually with other men	men who sin sexually with other men
JBP	effeminate, pervert	sexually uncontrolled or perverted

*KEY to Bible Translations in chart

Although Lenski disagrees, it would appear as though Paul in 1 Corinthians is naming both the passive and active homosexual acts (N.B. the active role refers to the male who performs fellatio or who penetrates in anal intercourse) as that which is forbidden. Lenski feels this is wrong because the naming of both the passive and active roles is redundant and that *μάλακος* refers to one whose chief interest is luxury and the gratification of sensual appetites.

* AT = Beck's American Translation, 1976.

C = The Confraternity Edition of the New Testament, 1941.

JB. = Jerusalem Bible, 1966.

JBP = The New Testament in Modern English, J. B. Phillips, 1965.

KJV = King James Version, 1611.

NAB= New American Bible, 1970.

NEB = New English Bible, 1961.

NIV = New International Version, 1978.

RDV= Reims-Douai Version, 1609.

RSV = Revised Standard Version, 1946.

In a papyrus of circa 245 B.C. Deissmann found the word *μάλακος*, which he translates “the effeminate.” This word is used in a secondary (obscene) sense and is an allusion to the foul practices by which musicians eked out their earnings. The term is not an equivalent of *μολλίς*, one who submits himself to a pederast. There is no reason that this vice should be indicated twice by naming its passive and its active perpetrators. It denotes a voluptuary.^{x1}

Boswell, of course, makes sport with this word, too. He is quick to use secular writings to make his point with his interpretation of the Bible, but when those secular writers do not suit his purpose, he is quick to dismiss them. For example, “the fact that *μάλακος* is sometimes applied to obviously gay persons in classical literature is no more proof that the word actually means ‘gay’ or ‘homosexual’ (or even ‘sexually passive’) than the application of ‘proper’ to Englishman’ is proof that ‘proper’ means ‘English.’”^{xli} However, it appears that *μάλακος*, a perfectly good Greek word, was violated in much the same way that “gay,” a perfectly good English word, was and came to mean “homosexual” just as, unfortunately, “gay” does today. Switzer agrees, stating, “the use of this Greek word in nonbiblical writings of that time suggests that it could be used for the passive partner in a male homosexual relationship, and Paul could well be using it in this way.”^{xlii}

In turning to the second word, *ἀρσενοκοῖται*, Switzer goes on to say, in what might be termed a major concession by a pro-homosexual writer, “The second word means something like ‘males who go to bed,’ and when used in combination with the first word could mean the sexual partner who assumes the traditional active role.... This, of course, means that the statement probably does have to do with male homosexual acts.”^{xliii} Saint Paul appears to have been the first or one of the first authors to use this word and it appeared only infrequently after him. Yet, even if the word were a *hapax legomenon*, which it is not, there would be no question as to its meaning. The authors of most lexica have always corroborated with the Bible translators by giving the definition as “sodomite” or “homosexual.” The fact that Paul did not use one of the many words in Greek homoerotic literature to refer to sodomites or homosexuals probably means that he wished to leave no doubt as to the unacceptability of the desire and behavior. He could not legitimize homosexuality by even referring to it in the same way its perpetrators did, all the while leaving no doubt as to his meaning. I have followed the same principle throughout this paper by not referring to homosexuals as “gays,” since that term somehow lessens the gravity of the situation which accounts for its widespread use among the homosexual community.

Boswell overstates his case once again in trying to prove that *ἀρσενοκοῖται* does not mean homosexuals or sodomites. He turns to the secular world to make his point:

Plato, in his numerous dialogues on love between men, never once used the word in question, even though in several works he specifically distinguished between men who love men and those who love women and in his later years went so far as to characterize sexual relations between persons of the same sex as “*παρὰ φύσιν*” a phrase employed by Paul in Romans 1:27.^{xliv}

Evidently even Plato recognized that homosexuality is against nature. Boswell has helped to make that point in spite of himself. Then, he goes beyond all reason in trying to prove that the word does not mean what it says to any objective reader.

The second half of the compound, *κοῖται*, is a coarse word, generally denoting base or licentious sexual activities (see Rom. 13:13), and in this and other compounds corresponds to the vulgar English word “fucker,” i.e., a person who, by insertion, takes the “active” role in intercourse. The prefix *ἀρσενο* simply means “male.” Its relationship to the second half of the compound is ambiguous: in bald English the compound means “male fuckers,” but it is not clear whether “male” designates the object or the gender of the second half.^{xlv}

However, just a few examples from Greek literature can prove how faulty that reasoning is. If *παιδερασταί* refers to “men who love boys,” and *παιδοφθορέω* means to “corrupt boys,” then *ἀρσενοκοιτέω* must mean “to sleep with men” and, *ἀρσενοκοῖται* designates those who do so.

Boswell is not alone however in his false assumption. Even those who admit that *ἀρσενοκοῖται* means homosexuality draw indefensible conclusions. For example, Weber states that “*ἀρσενοκοῖται* probably refers to those engaging in anal intercourse [although he gives no evidence as to why fellatio and other homosexual behaviors are excluded]. The question being dealt with is not homosexuality per se, but the kinds of actions that exclude people from the kingdom of God.”^{xlvi} Even if the inspired writer, Paul, is not speaking of homosexuality (but it is abundantly clear that he is) he is stating that the behavior of the homosexual (taking a member of one’s own sex to the marriage bed, anal intercourse, fellatio, etc.) excludes a person from the kingdom of heaven. Weber’s statement is of absolutely no help to the “Christian” homosexual, although he intends it that way. In effect, what’s the use of being a homosexual if you can’t do what a homosexual does? So repent, and trust in God’s help to amend the sinful life.

Perhaps a few remarks to each passage individually are in order. In I Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul lists sins that were rampant when he came to Corinth. They were gross sins, humanly speaking. The only way to deal with such sinners is to prick their conscience with a harsh, stern word of the law: people that live in such sins shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. That word is clear and final. These people had heard the law and they had been set free from the bondage of sin by the Gospel, but apparently some were in danger of returning to that slavery, feeling that since their sins were forgiven anyway, why worry about sin. So Paul writes clearly, plainly, pulling no punches in an inspired effort to stem the rising tide of wickedness.

His readers were not to make the mistake that the liberty of the Gospel was equivalent to libertinism and license; free grace does not imply the right to sin ... to the flagrant violators of the holy will of God belonged the fornicators, those that sought the gratification of their lust outside of the marriage-bond; the idolaters, that worshiped strange gods; the adulterers, that broke the marriage-tie;—these three sins were openly practiced in Corinth in the cult worship of the heathen goddess;—the voluptuous, that were addicted to all forms of sensuality; the sodomites, that were guilty of the unnatural vices as practiced by the Greeks in such a shameless manner ...^{xlvii}

In this passage, there is a very important message to homosexual and heterosexual people alike. The message is: change is possible, as in any sin, because of our Savior’s victory over sin, death, and the devil, made ours by faith. As Christians we need to remember to whom St. Paul was writing: to Christians. And what does Paul say of them?

Some of the Christians to whom the Apostle is writing had once been such gross sinners, but now they are converted, sanctified, and made righteous before God. Christians here

are reminded of their spiritual regeneration. By the Spirit of God they have become new creatures. That is true of all Christians in all times. Thus they ought to remember what they are and then conduct themselves accordingly.^{xlvi}

The Christians who had formerly engaged in homosexual desire and behavior were not continuing that kind of life. They could not be Christians and practice homosexuality at the same time for homosexuality excludes from the kingdom of heaven.

In the 1 Timothy 1:9-10 passage, we see Paul listing sins in order against the Ten Commandments. We note that homosexuality is listed as a sin against the Sixth Commandment. As violators of the Sixth Commandment, Paul mentions both adulterers and sodomites. These are people who abuse their fellow men or women for the sake of gratifying their sexual lust in either a “natural” or an “unnatural” way. Both are sinful. Both exclude the practitioners thereof from the kingdom of heaven. Nor is this merely a condemnation of illicit sexual acts brought about by force against one party’s will, for adultery doesn’t have to be rape any more than illicit homosexual acts have to be rape. Adultery between or among consenting adults is wrong just as homosexual acts between or among consenting adults are wrong.

Hendrickson reiterates the facts on the word ἀρσενοκοῖταις, drawing attention to the fact that immediately after “immoral persons” Paul mentions “sodomites.” “The word employed in the original is composed of two parts: ‘male’ and ‘bed’ (particularly, marriage-bed). The reference is, therefore, *directly* to male homosexuals, in other words to sodomites (cf. Gn 19:5), ‘abusers of themselves with men’ (Ro 1:27; 1 Co 6:9); *indirectly*, the reference is to all homosexuals, male and female.”^{xlix}

Luther shares a most interesting thought on this passage which I would like to relate to you at this point. He says that even the godlessness mentioned by Paul in this passage can serve the good of the Christian, that it indeed must serve his good.

After all, everything must redound to our good and produce benefits of various kinds. First, we thereby become accustomed to handle and hold the Word of God with greater diligence and so become increasingly certain of the truth. For if such factious sects, through which the devil wakes us up in this way, did not exist, we would become too lazy, would sleep and snore ourselves to death, and both faith and the Word would become obscured and would rust in our midst until actually everything would be ruined. But now these sects are our whetstones and polishers; they whet and grind our faith and doctrine so that, smooth and clean, they sparkle as a mirror. Moreover, we also learn to know the devil and his thoughts and become prepared to fight against him. All this would be lacking if the factious sects did not disturb us.¹

So the next time some difficult problem or sin or worrisome situation confronts us, we yet thank God it's causing us to dig deeper into his Word, to get down on our knees and implore his strength, guidance, and wisdom, and to face the devil head-on rather than often taking pot shots at him. I suppose I have come to see the researching and writing of this paper in that light.

As we leave these two passages now, we can conclude that the holy Scriptures do indeed condemn the sin of homosexuality—homosexuality as it was in Paul’s day and homosexuality as it is in our own. Yet, we hasten to add that it is not a sin from which there is no escape. Thank God, through Christ’s redemptive work, there is no such sin. May God’s love that caused him to send his one and only Son to be the Savior of the world always be reflected by us as we deal with those trapped in homosexuality, recognizing that sometimes the strongest and greatest love is firm and hard and tough, cf. Christ’s reinstatement of Peter. An entirely different conclusion is

drawn by the pro-homosexual writers. Nelson writes: “What, then, are we to make of Paul’s moral judgment in this case? Perhaps we should accept Paul for what he was—a peerless interpreter of the heart of the Gospel and one who was also a fallible and historically—conditioned person.”ⁱⁱ Certainly Paul was a sinner; he was the first to admit that, but when he was privileged to write the inspired words of God, he wrote without error.

Jude 7

“In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.” The NIV translates ἀπελθοῦσαι ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἐτέρας, literally, “going away after different (strange—KJV) flesh,” as “gave themselves up to ... perversion.” Among the commentators there is varying opinion as to what that “different flesh” really is. Since it is used in connection with Sodom and Gomorrah and with ἐκπορνεύσασαι (“committing fornication”) I believe the simplest explanation is that it refers to gross sexual sin, namely homosexuality. However, other suggestions include adultery (someone who is not your spouse is “different flesh”), bestiality, and even as Boswell hints broadly, “the Jewish tradition to which Jude alludes was a legend that the women of Sodom had intercourse with the angels.”ⁱⁱⁱ One can almost understand how such a legend may have arisen. To the women of a city filled with homosexual men, two apparently heterosexual men must have seemed heaven-sent. The sit-com “Sarah,” set in San Francisco, played a similar situation for laughs. Sarah’s friend urged her to attend a party because they were flying in heterosexual men from the Midwest. At any rate, since one of the rules of hermeneutics is that the simplest interpretation is usually the best, I submit that Jude 7 does indeed speak of and condemn homosexuality when taken in the light of the rest of Scripture. It is, however, certainly not a *sedes* passage.

In conclusion, the Scriptures are very clear and plain and explicit in their condemnation of the sin of homosexuality and that the person who lives in such sin is excluded from the kingdom of heaven. It is also clear from the 1 Corinthians 6:9 passage that “once a homosexual, always a homosexual” is not a truism any more than “once a drunk, always a drunk.” Homosexuality, like most sins, is a sin which enslaves, but is also, like all sins, a sin from which our Savior has freed us.

Unfortunately, that sin will continue to enslave and damn many who refuse to acknowledge it as sin or who are duped into believing that it is not a sin but a viable alternative by so-called theologians and Bible scholars. Switzer, writing to quell the fears and anguish of parents of homosexuals, states “reassuringly:”

First, not only the terms, but also the concepts “homosexual” and “homosexuality” were unknown in Paul’s day. These terms, like the terms “Heterosexual,” “heterosexuality,” “bisexual,” and “bisexuality,” presume an understanding of human sexuality that was possible only with the advent of modern psychological and sociological analysis. The ancient writers ... were operating without the vaguest conception of what we have learned to call “sexual orientation.”ⁱⁱⁱⁱ

What he says, in effect, is that the Bible, God’s inspired Word, is no longer useful for our enlightened age. Pity the poor inspired writers who could only call a sin a sin instead of some fancy word that was concocted to give validity and respectability to man’s basest desires and rebellion against God’s will.

Since we have heard Boswell's contentions at almost every other point in this paper so far, we would be remiss, I suppose, not to hear his summation of the biblical injunctions against homosexuality.

In sum, there is only one place in the writings which eventually became the Christian Bible where homosexual relations per se are clearly prohibited—Leviticus—and the context in which this prohibition occurred rendered it inapplicable to the Christian community, at least as moral law.... The notion that Genesis 19—the account of Sodom's destruction—condemned homosexual relations was the result of myths popularized during the early centuries of the Christian era but not universally accepted until much later and only erratically invoked in discussions of the morality of gay sexuality.... Romans 1 did not condemn homosexual behavior as “against nature” in the sense of the violation of “natural law.” No clear idea of “natural law” existed in Paul's time or for many centuries thereafter. To Paul, the activities in question were beyond nature in the sense of “extraordinary, peculiar,” as was the salvation of the Gentiles, described with the same phrase. Moreover, the persons referred to were considered by influential early Christian theologians to have been necessarily heterosexual (i.e., “naturally attracted to the opposite sex). There was no implication in the passage that homosexual acts, much less homosexual persons, were necessarily sinful.^{liv}

Boswell has written a “very big book.” It has become nothing less than a watershed in the current thinking of many Christians on homosexuality. It undoubtedly has and will do a great deal of damage and disservice to those Christians struggling with the sin of homosexuality. God grant us the wisdom, the desire, the courage, and the strength to effectively counteract it with his Word in all its truth and purity.

III. The Homosexual Social Explosion

While it is certainly true that homosexuality has probably been around for as long as sin has, here in the USA and in other free countries of the world, there seems to be a recent explosion of interest in the subject. People are being encouraged to “come out of the closet” with their sexual preference and others are being urged to accept them for what they are, ordinary human beings with a different sexual orientation. Housing and job discrimination against people because of their sexual preference is being outlawed as lobbyists work hard on local legislators. Social tolerance of homosexuality is growing at an astounding rate. “As author/educator/scholar Irving Kristol points out, ‘homosexuality used to be repressed, not only by the law but within the individual himself. Now a lot of younger people are in fact not only permitted to become homosexual, but some are even encouraged to become homosexuals by their social environment.’^{lv}

The entertainment industry has been a major contributor to the reshaping of America's views on homosexuality. Each “sweep month” the television medium presents at least one show dealing with the controversial issue of homosexuality in an attempt to appeal to the prurient interests of the viewers. Showtime has a hit series called “Brothers” which centers around one of the brother's homosexuality. The Broadway show, *La Cage Aux Folles*, has a homosexual theme and glorifies transvestitism and won six Tony awards for 1984. It is now on a successful tour of the Midwest. “*The Times of Harvey Milk*, an Academy Award nominated documentary, tells Milk's story and more. Narrated by author/playwright Harvey Fierstein, it represents advocacy

filmmaking at its finest.”^{lvi} The film advocates homosexuality. The various entertainment media bombard us with pro-homosexual presentations and eventually dull the sharpness of our God-given consciences until we finally give up and look the other way as thousands are led down the path of unrighteousness to the gaping jaws of the gates of hell.

Homosexuals are making vast inroads in the legislative and judicial branches of this country. For example, on March 26, 1985, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the State of Oklahoma cannot fire homosexual school teachers or teachers who speak of homosexuality in a positive way, because this would be a violation of their First Amendment rights. This ruling denies the people of Oklahoma the power to protect their children from the subtle and blatant, conscious and sub-conscious propagandizing recruitment of homosexuals. Remember, the majority of homosexuals do not choose to propagate themselves; their numbers increase only through recruitment. (Homosexuals do not automatically produce homosexual offspring.)

There seems to be a well-orchestrated plan to promote the acceptability of homosexuality. One branch of that plan appears to be the highly visible and militant homosexuals who stage demonstrations and parades reminiscent of the anti-Vietnam war ‘60s on college campuses, at state capitals, major cities, and at our nation’s capital. They appear defiant in their demands for social acceptance. “A bomb threat did not deter Ohio Michigan Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade participants from rallying at the Statehouse Sunday. ‘Hell no, we won’t go!’ shouted the crowd, estimated at 3,000 when news of the bomb threat was announced.”^{lvii} This report appeared on the front page of The Ohio State University student newspaper, accompanied by a large picture of two handsome young men locked in a passionate embrace.

Politically homosexuals are also becoming a formidable force. A report by *U.S. News and World Report* in July 1984, listed homosexuals as the seventh largest group of voters in the USA with 17 million potential voters. The report also noted that gays and lesbians had more electoral power than Hispanics, Jews, and farmers combined. Much emphasis is being placed currently on the instruction of Spanish in our synod’s academies and colleges so that we can more effectively minister to the ever-increasing Hispanic population. In view of the above report, perhaps we should at least spend some time learning how to effectively serve the person trapped in the sin of homosexuality. The recent 1984 elections saw many “advances” for the homosexual community that would never have occurred just ten or twenty years ago.

The most notable victory for the homosexuals came in Massachusetts, where Rep. Gerry Studds (D) was reelected after being censured by his colleagues for having a homosexual relationship with a congressional page.... Studds won by a 56-percent margin.... Rep. Ted Weiss (D) won reelection with an astounding 82 percent of the vote in New York ... Weiss is fighting hard for more and more tax dollars to be invested to find the pill or vaccine that will protect homosexuals who choose to have a dozen sexual encounters in a single night while never troubling themselves to scrub and gargle.^{lviii}

Those are our tax dollars being used to promote homosexuality and to make it “safe” for America.

Advocates of homosexuality appear to be very adept propagandists. A special target seems to be religion, and unfortunately, many religious leaders and scholars by their conduct deserve the treatment they are receiving. The pro-homosexual writers are gloating over statistics such as these:

Ninety-one percent (that’s 91%!) of college religion leaders and pastoral counselors responding to a recent survey believe that the government should not regulate sex

between homosexuals. G. Sidney Buchanan, law professor at the University of Houston, conducted the survey from the Fall of 1982 to the Spring of 1983 with the help of Mark Johnson, one of his students. Buchanan, an expert on constitutional law, said they also found that nearly half the people who answered his survey believe that homosexual relations are not immoral. The findings were based on surveys sent to 950 faculty members of religion departments in colleges throughout the U.S. and counselors chosen at random from the Directory of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. 51% of the questionnaires were returned. Of those who responded, nearly 17.7 listed themselves as Roman Catholic, 14.9 were Methodist, 12.6 were Baptists, and 11.5 were Presbyterians. The survey also revealed that:

- 75% think adultery is morally wrong; 16% do not consider it wrong; and the remainder are not certain.
- 87% do not believe adultery should be a crime.
- 53% think the legal system should limit marriage to opposite-sex couples.
- 71% would approve of a male homosexual teaching in an elementary school.^{lix}

Those figures appeared under the title: *Most Religion Teachers Believe Homosexuality Is Okay*, in a Columbus newspaper for homosexuals.

While high praise is given to the religious leaders who support them, those who stand up for the literal interpretation of Scripture are given the most caustic of treatments. In the same newspaper as above, this article, typical of their “assassination journalism,” appeared:

“The Reverend” Jerry Falwell said his activities as founder of “moral majority” were never intended to hurt Gays, *Au Courant* reports. Speaking before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, Jerry was asked by club president Shirley Temple Black whether he was aware that he had caused a great deal of pain to the American Gay Community because of his belief and his actions. “I certainly never intended to cause pain,” he answered, quickly adding that Gays bring the pain on themselves. “I don’t think anyone is born that way; we choose what we are. God doesn’t like what you’re doing, but He loves you—your lifestyle is wrong.” Falwell went on to add that 23% of his church’s counseling ministry is used to “convert” misguided homosexuals. ED. NOTE TO JERRY: Bombs are not intended to kill either, are they, Jerry? Your ministry must be sorely in need of sheep if the insignificant number of Gays you “cure” comprises a full 1/5 of your ministries’ counseling efforts. Of course, though, your sheep are “saved” and therefore not in need of marital counseling,—we forgot. ED. NOTE TO READERS: Flaw-well notwithstanding, rest assured that the Creator made you to function as the creature S/He made you. Just as heterosexuals are made to be heterosexual and must function as heterosexuals in order to fulfill their nature, so God made homosexuals to be homosexuals and to function as homosexuals in order to fulfill our natures.^{lx}

Another item receiving a good deal of attention in the religious homosexual community is the “Homosexual Marriage Rite.” It is being presented as proof that homosexuality was accepted by the Christian church in its earliest years and that therefore we must accept it today. However, the so-called proof that churches had homosexual marriage rites merits nothing more than a “So what?” Christian churches today have such rites; that doesn’t make them proper, correct, or God-pleasing. The inventions of man do not change the immutable will and revelation of God. Yet, *The Concord*, the newsletter of “Lutherans Concerned,” a pro-homosexual organization, carried the following article on its front page:

Yale professor of history Dr. John Boswell, author of *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, announced recently in West Hollywood that he is doing extensive research on an ancient Christian rite used for lesbian and gay male couples, and intends to publish a definitive text and English translation.... Boswell has now discovered more than 50 extant manuscripts of gay/lesbian marriage rites, many of them bound in ancient liturgical manuals that also contain the best examples of the Mass.... Boswell's research has found that the gay/lesbian rite of union was not an obscure or illicit liturgical act, but was in very wide use, perhaps as early as the middle of the 5th Century, and as late as the 13th Century.... In its fullest form, the rite is called, "The Making of Brothers," and the text is filled with many prayers in which the couple being joined dedicate their relationship with the language of "unashamed faithfulness" and "honest love." ... The rite also refers repeatedly to St. Serge and St. Bacchus, two 4th Century Christian martyrs, who were soldiers and lovers, to whom many churches throughout Europe have been dedicated over the centuries, and whose passionate relationship has not been concealed in many standard works on the lives of saints.... The historian, who is a devout Roman Catholic, did not speculate on the impact his research may have on the contemporary church scene, which recently shows evidence of anxiety about the occurrence of gay or lesbian Christian marriage ceremonies.^{lxi}

At such a point, one feels the need to climb out of the mire of sin, as Paul did in his long list of reasons for God's wrath against mankind in Romans 1, and pause for a breath of fresh air and proclaim a *Te Deum*, "the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen" (v. 25).

IV.

Modern Trends in Christian Churches

For the most part, reports on the various churches listed here will be made without comment. Statements on the positions or activities within the church bodies would be repetitious considering the position of the Scripture on the subject of homosexuality. It should be noted, however, that few major church bodies have official policy statements condoning homosexuality, but actions speak louder than words.

Anglican Church:

Anglican scholar, Dr. W. Norman Pittenger of King's College, Cambridge University, says he sees no reason why churches should not ordain admitted homosexuals. He described biblical prohibitions against sexual acts between persons of the same sex as "red herrings," the use of which, he said, is an indication of "benighted ignorance."

American Baptists:

"A controversial policy statement that approves remarriage for divorced Christians under certain circumstances and gives guarded acceptance to homosexual unions was approved by the General Board of American Baptist Churches at its semi-annual session."^{lxii}

United Church of Christ:

The UCC has been ordaining avowed homosexuals into the public ministry since 1973, with the ordination of the Rev. Tom Mauer in Minnesota and the Rev. William Johnson in California.

Episcopal:

Bishop Paul Moore, Jr., of the Episcopal diocese of New York, considers it no “great new thing” that he ordained a known homosexual woman a deacon on December 15, 1975. The Episcopal homosexual organization is called “Integrity.” The Columbus chapter, active on The Ohio State University campus, did not respond to my research questionnaire.

Lutheran:

“On the basis of Genesis 1:27-28; 2:21-24; Romans 1:26-27, Christians oppose homosexual marriage.”^{lxiii}

LC- MS:

As early as 1977, *The California and Nevada Lutheran*, official organ of the district and a supplement of *The Lutheran Witness*, the official magazine of the LC-MS, carried a letter from one of its pastors which stated, “Some of my friends are gay. They are my brothers and sisters in the church.... I exhort us to accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation, as God’s creation and as partners in meaningful dialogue.” However, a positional paper on homosexuality from the LC-MS states:

Whether a person has only a homosexual inclination (propensity), or whether he actually practices it, it calls for an acknowledgment of the fact that homosexuality is sin and therefore requires repentance.... We must recognize the fact that when we are dealing with the sinful hearts of men, repentance, which is a radical change of heart and mind, can be brought about only by application of the Word of God.^{lxiv}

As Christians, we should not be concerned that the Word is often seemingly without effect on so many so-called homosexual Christians. They do not have the true Word because they or others that they trust have distorted the Word beyond recognition and perhaps even effectiveness.

ALC:

This church body does have a fairly extensive statement on homosexuality. It will be interesting to see how this statement will be made to mesh with the LCA statement quoted later in this paper when the two church bodies merge.

1. Persons who do not practice their homosexual erotic preference do not violate our understanding of Christian sexual behavior.
2. This church regards the practice of homosexual erotic behavior as contrary to God’s intent for his children. It rejects the contention that homosexual behavior is simply another form of sex behavior equally valid with the dominant male/female pattern.
3. Gen. 18:16-19:29, Lev. 18:22 and 20:13, Rom. 1:24-32, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 1 Tim. 1:10 were reviewed. We remain open to the possibility of new biblical and theological insights.
4. We agree that homosexually-behaving persons need God’s grace as does every human being. We all need to hear the Word, to receive the sacraments, to accept forgiveness God offers, to experience the understanding and the fellowship of the community of Christ. We all need the power of the Holy Spirit for ethical living. So saying we nevertheless do not condone homosexual erotic behavior. Nor do we condone idolatry, pride, disrespect for parents, murder, adultery, theft, libel, gossip or other sins known in our circles. The sacrifice God finds acceptable from each of us is a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. Then he can answer our prayer for a clean heart and new and right spirit within us (See Psalm 51).

5. Truth, mercy, and justice should impel members of the ALC to review their attitudes, words, and actions regarding homosexuals. Christians need to be more understanding and more sensitive to life as experienced by those who are homosexuals. They need to take leadership roles in changing public opinion, civil laws, and prevailing practices that deny justice and opportunity to any persons. We all need recognition and acceptance as human beings known to and loved by God.^{lxv}

In his book, *The Ethics of Sex*, Helmut Thielicke insists that being homosexual is nothing to be proud of but finds certain narrow circumstances in which homosexual expression is no sin. This position was promoted by a study done by Professors Gaiser and Storassli of the ALC's Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, and released by President David Preus.

In regard to the new Lutheran church being formed by the merger of the LCA, ALC, and AELC, "The ALC's Augsburg Publishing House has published *Embodiment*, a book which wants the [new] church to be broad enough to allow unrepentant homosexuals, homosexual marriages and homosexual clergymen. *Embodiment* has been highly praised by ALC clergymen and professors."^{lxvi}

In researching this paper, I sent brief questionnaires to clergymen whose names I had received from The Ohio State University Gay Alliance. These clergymen have ministries to the homosexual community. I did not receive a reply from the Lutheran campus pastor who has such a ministry but I did receive one from Dr. Arthur Becker, Professor of Pastoral Theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, operated jointly now by the ALC and LCA. My questions and his responses follow:

1. *Does the Bible teach that homosexuality is a sin?*

It depends a great deal upon how you understand the concept of "sin;" in the Lutheran sense, ALL human behavior involves both sin and health; sexual behavior perhaps is more vulnerable because of the egocentric elements involved in it ... homosexuality perhaps is even more vulnerable.

2. *How do you understand Romans 1:26-27?*

Paul is here describing human behavior and identifying the simple consequences of that behavior: (if you eat too much you get fat, for example) if you "use" each other sexually, you pay certain consequences—God is the God of an "orderly" (consequential) universe. *Any sexual obsession results in idolatry.*

How do you understand 1 Corinthians 6:9?

Same as "you cannot serve two masters" (Jesus). Any obsession, sexual or otherwise, becomes a form of idolatry (worship) which ultimately rejects God. In another sense, any form of behavior which assumes ascendancy over faith/trust in God is sin ... including homosexual behavior as well as heterosexual behavior.

3. *What about promiscuity?*

Are homosexual couples required to be sexually faithful to one partner as heterosexual couples are? If not, why? Yes. The homosexual has the same responsibility that every other person has for the "appropriate management" of his/her sexuality.

4. *If we believe human sexuality is a gift from God, then do you believe that heterosexuality and homosexuality are equal gifts from God?*

They can well be. I do not believe they are the same since they serve different purposes in the economy of God. The *central* reason/function of sexuality in creation is the *bonding* ("one

flesh”) of two human beings. The secondary reason is procreation. Homosexuality may fulfill the first function, but cannot fulfill the second.

5. *In your ministry, do you ever try to encourage a homosexual to practice heterosexuality in a God-pleasing way?*

Yes.

6. *How would you counsel a homosexual who is married to a heterosexual, or vice versa?*

The same way I would counsel a heterosexual who is married and who is having an extramarital affair.

LCA:

As mentioned earlier, this church body also has an official statement on homosexuality.

Scientific research has not been able to provide conclusive evidence regarding the causes of homosexuality. Nevertheless, homosexuality is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God’s creation. Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other persons—alienated from God and neighbor. However, they are often the special and undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination in law, law enforcement, cultural mores, and congregational life. In relation to this area of concern, the sexual behavior of freely consenting adults in private is not an appropriate subject for legislation or police action. It is essential to see such persons as entitled to understanding and justice in church and community.^{lxvii}

“Lutherans Concerned” is a group of Lutheran homosexuals and homosexual supporters that was formed in 1974. They currently have thirty-three chapters in North America. *The Concord* is their quarterly newsletter. Excerpts from two articles in the 1984 No. 4 issue will suffice to give you the flavor of this publication and show how insidious homosexuality among Lutherans has become. The first article I would share with you is entitled “Coming Out Is a Spiritual Action.”

Recently, a gay/lesbian educational foundation held a conference entitled “Coming Home.” Attached, as a subtitle, was this message: “For each area we are not ‘out’ in life, we lose more and more of our self-esteem.” Although that’s a concept phrased in secular terms, it carries a Christian truth. Self-esteem, in Christ, is the awareness of our ultimate value before God. To accept the Good News of God’s unconditional love is to be born again. For the lesbian or gay Christian, to come out is, at last, to accept oneself as an imperfect child of God who is unconditionally loved.... To come out is to face ourselves as we really are: the self that our loving God *already knows*, “and from whom no secrets are hid.” ... Gays or lesbians could flee from God (Genesis 3:9-10); they could attempt to crawl back to God with the enormous burden of self-depreciation (Luke 15:18-19); or they can awaken to the sweet sound of the Gospel (Romans 5:1-11; cf. vv. 6-8) ... We have the invitation of the Scriptures both to encourage coming out (facing ourselves), and to shape our reborn lives with integrity. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” advises Paul. “God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:12-13) ... Gay and lesbian believers need to also struggle with a *spiritual action*: coming out to the Church, in the Gospel, for in that action, they finally can know and testify how God is at work in them, how they are finally at peace, and why they are finally able to walk in hope.

Note how quick homosexuals are to denounce and reject St. Paul's inspired condemnations of homosexual behavior but readily quote him when it is convenient to prove their case. Obviously, they want it both ways.

The second article is entitled, "Seminary Survival Skills" and was written by an anonymous student at Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, MN.

First, you need to know that no Lutheran Seminary will ordain practicing homosexuals (whatever "practicing" means).—What you may not be aware of is that most Lutheran Seminaries don't have an official policy for dealing with gay students. At a recent student forum, the president of Luther Northwestern was confronted by a student on this issue, to which he replied, "It's a secret policy," noting that if he were to reveal it, he would be in trouble with the seminary board. The main reason the policy toward gays is a secret is that it is bad press for a seminary to have one in the first place; to a seminary's benefactors this isn't supposed to happen at all among those preparing for ministry. (Pure and simple, it's maintaining the laity's ignorance.) For this reason it's good to be aware of what position you're in when confronted by the faculty/administration (which rarely happens). You can be in a position to work with the seminary to save face—yours and theirs.

In connection with *The Concord*, I would also like to direct your attention to Addenda one and two of this paper. Addendum one is a copy of a regular feature in *The Concord*, called "World News" and gives information concerning the current affairs of the homosexual community. Addendum two gives information about the "Reconciled in Christ" program designed to welcome homosexuals into the Lutheran Church.

United Methodists:

The Rev. Michael Collins, 36, a founding leader of Affirmation, an organization for homosexual United Methodists, died in New York on October 15, 1984. He had suffered from AIDS for about a year. He was a former staff member of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. However, the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church, the second largest Protestant denomination in the USA, upheld a ban on the ordination of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" on October 26, 1984. But, the future of homosexual clergy may still be up to individual bishops in the regional conferences, some of whom have indicated they are not going to ask ordination candidates about their sexual orientation. Bishop Jesse DeWitt of the Wisconsin Conference and Superintendent Bernard Kassilke of Madison oppose ordination of openly homosexual ministers not on theological grounds, they say, but because of appointability.

Presbyterian:

A United Presbyterian magazine states that they do not see persons as sinful simply because of a particular sexual orientation. Rather, they see homosexuality related to heterosexuality in the way that left-handedness is related to right-handedness, and therefore as morally neutral. Secondly, sin is expressed not in a particular sexual orientation, but in failure to love others and to express that love in kind acts. In this view, homosexuality is sinful only if one's own pleasure is sought, without considering the effect on others. In the same way, heterosexuality is sinful. Presbyterians concerned about their denomination's acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle have formed an organization to promote biblical sexuality. We pray that it is not too little too late.

Quakers:

In an official publication of this body, we find this statement, which is quite similar to that of the Presbyterians: "One should no more deplore 'homosexuality' than left-handedness.... Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse."^{lxviii} From a speech by Dwight Spann Wilson to Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (Quakers) in Philadelphia in February 1984, we share the following quote:

If someone says to you, "I am God," you don't believe it. If somebody says to you, you are inferior because you are not like they are, why should you believe it? The Church is as the Church does. If the Church is not filled with love, it is not the Church.... If somebody calls himself or herself a Christian and they have no love, they're not a Christian. I know that for me my foundation is a rock ... that foundation is the Spirit. Jesus always lived his life according to Psalm 103:6, "God always does what is right and is on the side of the oppressed." That is clear. Jesus said, "Suffer unto me those who are weary and oppressed and I will give you rest." That is the position that Jesus took; how can anyone who calls himself or herself a Christian take a lesser position?

Roman Catholic:

As is often the case with this widely diverse body, many conflicting reports on official policy and practice are being received. "Dignity" is the Roman Catholic homosexual organization corresponding to "Lutherans Concerned." The Columbus chapter, also active on the OSU campus, chose not to return my questionnaire. Archbishop John L. May has participated in "Dignity" sponsored prayer meetings, much to their delight, and has said that the Roman Catholic Church teaches that a "homosexual orientation" is not morally wrong, but "homosexual activity," as in sexual intercourse, is, not to their delight. Robert Nugent, S.D.S., from the Sacred congregation for Catholic Education states that "the Roman Catholic Church is still listing homosexuality with adultery, fornication, and masturbation, indicating that that church body does not consider homosexuality a condition but an act of conscious will. It is also called a 'disorder.'^{lxix}

Unitarian Universalist Association:

In 1980, the UUA, meeting in conference at Albuquerque, NM, resolved to push for the hiring of openly homosexual and bisexual persons for leadership positions in local congregations and within the denomination. In July of 1984, the 1,300-delegate body of the UUA, meeting on the campus of The Ohio State University, endorsed religious celebrations of homosexual unions. The UUA, which numbers 175,000 members, is the first major denomination in North America to give official recognition to such rites. The Rev. Carl Whittier, of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, did return my questionnaire. In fact he was the first to do so. I share with you his responses to my questions:

1. *Does the Bible teach homosexuality is a sin?*

I do not believe that the attitudes of 2,000-3,000 years ago can set the standards for today. Judging by the great number of biblical injunctions which are ignored, neither do most people, Christians included.

2. *How do you understand Romans 1:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9?*

Both passages are quite specific. Why was Jesus silent? Paul seems to have had a number of sexual hang-ups which Jesus lacked and Jesus, after all, should be the better qualified to define sexual practices for Christianity.

3. *What about promiscuity?*

I believe the less said about faithfulness in marriages the better. I see many signs that heterosexual couples are less than faithful. Since marriage is not possible for gay couples the pressure to be faithful is less strong. There are signs that this is changing as gays are learning to be committed.

4. *Do you believe that heterosexuality and homosexuality are equal gifts from God?*

Most assuredly yes. Since homosexuality seems to be “given” its source must be the same as heterosexuality.

5. *In your ministry, do you ever try to encourage a homosexual to practice heterosexuality in a God-pleasing way?*

A very judgmental question. It also assumes that homosexuality is chosen. It is not as many a person who has fought against it in him/her self could tell you.

6. *How would you counsel a homosexual who is married to a heterosexual, or vice versa?*

A very difficult issue, one I have had counseling experience in. The end is usually divorce since the gay partner may wish gay sex which of course breaks the marriage vows. Some couples seem to manage in what is, I suppose, an open marriage. Open marriages among straights don't work so I don't see how they could for a mixed gay straight relationship.

7. *In your congregation, do your heterosexual members accept your homosexual members?*

Our gay members are accepted by the overwhelming majority of the members who know about them. Since one can't tell a gay at sight, many members are unaware that we have gay members—couples as well as singles. We would under no circumstances separate them from the church community. It is theirs too.

8. *Any comments or suggestions?*

Your task is a difficult one particularly since I suspect your mind is made up. Have you met any middle class, professional gay people? You might be surprised how far they are from the “flaming queens” of the stereotype. There are gay Lutherans obviously, I know one at least. Too bad you can't meet the gay members of your church, there must be some but they doubtless are fearful of “coming out” lest they be judged sinful and ousted from the church. I wish you well in your task. I hope you are approaching it with the love, the compassion that is Christianity at its best.

Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches:

“a denomination of and for practicing homosexuals started from scratch in 1968 and today [February 1981] has 150 congregations in eight countries, with some 29,000 members.... It's growing fast, not only because of its attractiveness to homosexuals, but also because conventional churches find it hard to minister to gays.”^{lxx} Columbus has a UFMCC congregation which meets each week at the UUA church of the Rev. Carl Whinier, see above. Concerning the Columbus UFMCC pastor:

“I am black, I am lesbian, I am woman ... and I choose to be Christian,” the Rev. LaPaula Turner said Wednesday night in observance of Athens' Gay Awareness Week. Turner, a mother of six children and an ordained minister in the Metropolitan Community Church of Columbus ... said she believes Scripture can be interpreted any way a person prefers and society often interprets it to discriminate.^{lxxi}

The Rev. Turner also responded to my questionnaire and invited me to attend her services. Here are her responses:

1. *Does the Bible teach that homosexuality is a sin?*
No.
2. *How do you understand Romans 1:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9?*
Isaiah 56:1-8 (v. 8, “The Sovereign Lord declares—he who gathers the exiles of Israel: ‘I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.’”) and Acts 10:9-36 (v. 15, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.” and v. 34, “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism³⁵ but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.”)
3. *What about promiscuity?*
Morality is a part of each person as interpreted or accepted by each one. If you mean do I require [couples to be sexually faithful], how would I go about *enforcing* that? If you mean by God, just as heterosexual couples, homosexual or bisexual or transgender couples—God’s law and spirit of the law is the same.
4. *Do you believe that heterosexuality and homosexuality are equal gifts from God?*
As are all forms of sexuality a gift from God.
5. *In your ministry, do you ever try to encourage a homosexual to practice heterosexuality in a God-pleasing way?*
Only if the homosexual is not truly a homosexual and seeks counseling in that manner.
6. *How would you counsel a homosexual who is married to a heterosexual, or vice versa?*
Counsel them about what? Luke 10:26-27, “‘What is written in the Law?’ he replied. ‘How do you read it?’ He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” John 3:16-17.
7. *In your congregation, do your heterosexual members accept your homosexual members? Do you hold separate services for the homosexual community to avoid possible tensions? Each accepts the other. We hold no separate services for heterosexuals and homosexuals.*

V.

Causes of Homosexuality

Causes are not really a concern for this paper yet I would feel remiss in not speaking to this matter at least briefly. By this point, I hope it is abundantly clear to anyone who accepts by faith all of the Bible as God’s inspired and inerrant Word that homosexuality is a sin. Since the Fall into sin, we have all been born with original sin; it is a part of our old Adam which we carry with us at all times until our death. For this reason, our Savior explained, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander,” (Matthew 15:19). No advocate of homosexuality whom I have read or with whom I have spoken would deny that these are sins or that a Christian should not willfully live in them, although here it does get a little fuzzy. However, they see homosexuality in an entirely different light. “... it appears that homosexual orientation is not a matter of choice, a decision someone consciously makes but a fact of life, as it were. Homosexuality just is, whether the person involved wants to be gay or not.”^{lxxii} Homosexuality proponents seem to take this statement as a foregone

conclusion and shake an accusing finger at anyone who would be so cruel and unloving and unchristian as to condemn homosexuality when God himself made some of his people that way. Ignoring or changing the meaning of the scriptural injunctions against homosexuality, they turn to the scientific and medical world for proof that they must be right and the Bible must be wrong. They thus fall into the trap of placing man's reason over God's Word, which has been the source of almost every heresy in the Christian church.

Yet, what about that scientific proof of which they are so sure and proud? In spite of all the millions of governmental tax dollars and foundational dollars being spent on research in this area, there is very little agreement on the cause of homosexuality. No scientific study of which I am aware has been able to make a solid and conclusive statement on the cause of homosexuality. "No medical study has ever stated—with any degree of scientific certainty—that homosexuality is caused by an abnormality in the genes, or in the glandular (hormonal) system."^{lxiii} The reason scientists cannot come up with a cause for homosexuality is, of course, because they are looking in all the wrong places.

Homosexuality is not a medical problem nor is it, in and of itself, a psychological one. It is a sin, coming from the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. The homosexual lifestyle is a lie because it is against God's nature, although many homosexual activists will tell you that trying to live a heterosexual life for them is a lie and against the nature God gave them, so enslaved by this sin are they. Since homosexuality is a lie, then we know from where it comes—the devil. Our Savior said of those who lie, "You belong to your father, the devil and you want to carry out your father's will.... When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). However, this cause of homosexuality is mocked by the medical, scientific, and homosexual communities in general.

To show further that the cause of homosexuality is sin, it is possible to see homosexuality was a sin against nature, society, and God. One of the favorite statements of the homosexual is, "God made me this way." They are, I'm sure, thoroughly convinced that they had no choice in the matter whatsoever. *Nothing* they do is *their* fault and, therefore, society *must* accept them. Yet, as Jesus said, "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'" (Mark 7:21-23). Or as James says, "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' ... each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (1:13-14). Some people are tempted by the sin of homosexuality; others are not. Those who are not can thank God for that blessing but should not consider themselves better than those who are tempted by it, for undoubtedly, they are tempted by another sin which does not bother some other person. Paul warns each one of us: "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Romans 12:3). The person who is tempted by the sin of homosexuality must recognize it as such, seeing that is a sin even against nature itself. God created human beings as male and female to complement each other, cf. Genesis 1:27-28. When man needed a suitable helper, God did not create another man but a woman, taking her from man, to show that close relationship and bond between man and woman. Even the physical make-up of the male and female body shows God's intention—they go together, they fit each other in a natural way that simply does not exist for the homosexual. Besides, God made people with a natural desire for the opposite sex: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Advocates of homosexuality continually insist that God does not say homosexuality is

wrong (even though he clearly does) but, we might ask them, where does he ever say it is right? If it is supposed to be “the nature” of fully one-tenth of his creature, the human, it certainly seems that he would have made it known that this desire and behavior meets with his approval. It does not; homosexuality is a sin against nature.

It is also a sin against society. As we have said previously, in most cases homosexuals choose not to propagate themselves and most children of homosexuals do not turn to homosexuality themselves. The sin of homosexuality is not, in that sense, genetic. Yet, there is a conscious effort to increase the size of the homosexual community by encouraging people who may be fighting their sinful weakness toward homosexuality to drop their defenses and “come out.” By “advertising” themselves as normal, happy, healthy people they seek to convince others that it is perfectly alright to be one of them. Enticement into their way of life is the only way that the homosexual community can maintain and perpetuate itself. If society permits the acceptance of homosexuality to permeate the media and our schools (just try to find a major university or college without an active homosexual organization) then society will pay the price for its leniency and indulgence. Throughout history, that price has been decline and destruction.

Finally, homosexuality, like all iniquity, is first and foremost a sin against God. The entire section of this paper entitled, “II. The Scriptures and Homosexuality” is proof of that. The twisting of God’s Word that homosexual proponents must do in order to make homosexuality appear acceptable is evidence that God certainly does not view homosexuality as a viable alternative, as an alternate lifestyle to the one he established at creation with Adam and Eve. Therefore homosexuality is just part of the diabolical scheme Satan has devised to ruin the crown of God’s creation—human beings. Homosexuality is a sexual sin against the body he has given us about which God gives us a clear and special warning: “Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you received from God?” (1 Corinthians 6:18-19). Since homosexuality is a sin against nature, society, and God, it has only one ultimate cause, the devil, and those who practice it, rejecting God’s grace of freedom from sin through Christ, belong to the devil. That is not a hate-filled statement aimed at homosexuals, but one filled with love for their souls and their eternal welfare.

VI. The Cure for Homosexuality

Mention a cure for homosexuality to one of its advocates and the reaction can be almost violent. This should not surprise us, however, since our own reaction is often similar when we realize that we must not indulge in our own pet sin. It is a way for our old Adam to rebel and for sin to continue to raise its ugly head in our lives. Boswell insists that there is no need for homosexuals to change, that indeed the homosexual lifestyle should even be emulated and seen as desirable. “Gay relationships, whether sexual or not, occasioned no legal difficulties, left no one defenseless or unprovided for, created no unwanted pregnancies or illegitimate offspring, and were not even likely to produce property-settlement problems.”^{lxxiv} Today we know that sexual relations among promiscuous homosexual males does present the as yet incurable problem of AIDS, though.

Others see a need not for the homosexual to change but for everyone else, including the church, to change to meet the needs of the homosexual. “If, on the basis of Christian love and responsibility, one can maintain, as I have, that for the individual a number of intimate relationships are possible, some of these being expressed sexually, then it is the responsibility of

the church, its members and leaders, to revise the traditional attitudes of sexuality and human relationships.”^{lxxv} But this kind of attitude skirts the issue and denies the problem. It will do the homosexual no eternal good to deny the sinfulness of his/her desire and behavior. Such a denial will lead only to eternal ruin.

Yet some homosexuals claim that the only way they can be happy here on earth is to give in to their homosexual desires and practice homosexual behavior. I don’t believe that is the only way they can be happy, or at least content, but even if it were, better to be unhappy here for 50-60-70 years than to suffer eternally in the fires of hell. Besides, the Christian’s life is often pictured as a constant war which is why we are to put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:11) and war is certainly not pleasant and happy. That continual struggle going on inside each Christian between old Adam and new man often causes pain and frustration but we can rejoice and be at peace at the same time, for we know Christ Jesus has won the war for us. Yet when we deny our sinfulness, we reject all that God has done for us.

After admitting the sinfulness of homosexuality the only way in which to overcome it is with Christ’s love. There is no sin or bondage to sin which our Savior cannot break. He shed his blood on the cross of Calvary for all people, including homosexuals. John 3:16 is the only answer for a person caught in the sin of homosexuality. However, just as a murderer cannot become a child of God and continue killing or a thief be converted to Christianity and keep on stealing, neither can a homosexual have true faith in his/her Savior and persist in homosexual behavior. “Jesus declared, ‘Go now and leave your life of sin.’” (John 8:11).

Unfortunately, the Christian church historically has not always been as ready to give of Christ’s love to the homosexual as it should have been. Without ever treating sin lightly or taking it for granted, we must also extend the helping hand of Christ’s love to all who need it. To be sure, we must convince of sin, but we must also be ready to assure the penitent of God’s forgiveness of sin. “The homosexual son of a West Coast pastor said, ‘Christ first said to the adulterous woman: I love you. Then he told her to change. Churches do the opposite. They say: Change, then we’ll love you.’”^{lxxvi} We need to be ready to help anyone fighting the temptations of sin. If that person is troubled by homosexuality, then we should be eager to encourage the struggle against it, to rejoice at the triumphs over it, and to help pick up the person after a fall into sin.

Many churches and Christians are reaching out with that powerful love of Christ, but they go too far and hallow the sin, thus making the state of the sinner worse than before. “Today many churches and church leaders refuse to help the homosexual, choosing instead to defend and excuse homosexual actions. They cannot possibly offer him the genuine help he needs. For if you take away God’s judgment from the sin of homosexuality, you also take away the grace that comes in Christ.”^{lxxvii}

So enslaving is the sin of homosexuality that a permanent “cure” may not be possible. That is, it may never be possible for a life free from temptation for a former homosexual. But it is not impossible for a homosexual to change. Speaking of salvation, our Savior said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God” (Mark 10:27). Yet it is not easy for sinful man.

Donald Tweedie, a clinical psychologist in suburban Los Angeles, has counseled about 300 homosexuals in 25 years of practice ... he doesn’t believe a “cure” necessarily implies a life free from homosexual temptation. He explains that many of his clients have gone on to satisfactory married lives. He sees homosexuality much like alcoholism, an addictive practice.^{lxxviii}

However, like the recovering alcoholic, with God's help and the help of fellow Christians reflecting Christ's love, the homosexual can lead a life that gives glory to God by not falling into the sin of homosexuality. It will be a joyful life according to the new man created in him/her by the Holy Spirit even though the old Adam may rebel against and hate the God-pleasing way of life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see basically three approaches or responses to homosexuality within the Christian church. The first and correct approach sees the Bible as God's totally inspired and inerrant Word, the only guide for our faith and life, even if our old Adam or reason objects to what it says. With this approach it is necessary to view homosexuality in the perspective of a Christian or scriptural understanding of sex. The two sexes, male and female, in God's creative design, are indeed intended to complete and complement one another. In the beginning, to offset Adam's lack of human companionship, God fashioned not another man but a woman. Jesus cites the record of Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in Matthew 19:4-6, "... at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'" in support of the life-long marriage partnership of a man and a woman. He never said that two men or two women could accomplish the same type of partnership in a God-pleasing way. Homosexual behavior is contrary to God's creation. It is contrary to his will for man's life as Romans 1:20-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 make plain.

The second approach or response is the one which sees homosexuality as a sin according to God's Word but instead of rejecting homosexuality as a proper way of life for the Christian, rejects the Bible instead.

The Bible clearly considers homosexuality a sin, and whether it is stated three times or 3,000 is beside the point. Just as some of us grew up "knowing" that homosexuality was the unutterable sin, though no one ever spoke of it, so the whole Bible "knows" it to be wrong. I freely grant all that. The issue is precisely whether that biblical judgment is correct.^{lxxix}

While this is certainly a dangerous position because it attacks God's Word, it is more blatant and more easily recognized as being wrong by most Christians than the third approach to homosexuality.

The third approach or response to homosexuality in the Christian church is the most dangerous and undermines saving faith in a more subtle and perhaps effective way than the more open second approach. It is the approach which attempts to harmonize homosexuality with Scripture, using "theological jargon" to condone homosexuality. When this is spouted by religious leaders and received by an uninformed Christian laity or a Christian with a propensity toward the sin of homosexuality, the result can be confusion, tolerance, acceptance, and finally embracement. Switzer gives an example of this treacherous approach to homosexuality and Scripture. Note how carefully and skillfully he couches heresy within orthodoxy.

The total impact of Scripture is on the side of God's plan for human beings involving heterosexual attraction and leading to a permanent marriage in which there is sexual fidelity.... This seems to us to be the Scripture's portrayal of the primary will of God. It is what is expected. The exceptions to this in the Scripture are when a person in response to God's call to a particular mission in the world does not marry as a part of his effective

carrying out of that mission (Jesus, Paul, others). However, when the condition or situation is such that the primary will of God is not possible for a person, and there are many such dilemmas in human life, the person of faith is not released from the obligation to seek what is now God's will for himself or herself from this time forward in the new situation.^{lxxx}

This leaves the door wide open for homosexuality and Switzer has made it sound as though God himself opened the door. This is extremely attractive to the old Adam of a Christian who must fight against the sin of homosexuality. Switzer even further muddies the clear waters of Scripture by condemning some forms of homosexuality while condoning others.

Where homosexual acts are today reflective of a disregard for the worship of God, where they are motivated only by the desire to fulfill one's own passion and are therefore selfish, where they are coercive and exploitative, then these fit the biblical descriptions of acts that are displeasing to God. However, when persons are homosexual, this being a condition of persistent sexual preference, established early in life and/or having developed over a long period of time, and when two homosexual persons are in love with each other, commit themselves to the well-being of each, and desire sexual relations with each other, we are left with a situation untouched by the biblical descriptions and injunctions. These persons, who may also desire to serve God, must seek God's will for themselves on the basis of the impact of the total message of the gospel as it is found in Scripture, through prayer, and if possible, through discussions with other persons of faith.^{lxxxii}

As one can plainly see, this approach is so very dangerous because it seeks subtly to give credence to the lie in much the same way as theistic evolution does in its sphere.

Finally, we must preach and teach firmly against the sin of homosexuality as it becomes more and more accepted and embraced by this sinful world. There must be no doubt whatsoever concerning the sinfulness of homosexuality in the minds of our people. "The last thing a young person with a predisposition toward homosexuality needs is a false climate of respectability created for homosexuality, inducing him to experiment with it rather than save himself for marriage, as he is clearly instructed to do in the Bible."^{lxxxii} Yet, at the same time, we must also be always ready and willing to counsel and aid the Christian struggling with the sin of homosexuality. This requires us to be approachable by anyone seeking our help, including the homosexual. Only God knows how many of his children have had to shoulder and carry a tremendous burden of sin without the assistance of a fellow Christian simply because of fear of being ostracized by those who could help them the most. God help us all to follow the example of our loving Savior who ate with publicans and sinners, who opened his arms to all, who forgave all kinds of sins, and who encouraged with his empowering word, "Go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11).

Soli Deo Gloria

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Addendum One

World News

Loma Linda Calif.—Closed-couple gay relationships should be encouraged for gay Seventh-Day Adventists, according to Loma Linda University biblical ethics professor David Larson. In an article in the May 1984 issue of *Spectrum*, Larson went on to say that Christians must stop accusing the sexually-different of “perversion.”

New York—The New York State Supreme Court declared New York City Mayor Ed Koch’s order barring city-funded agencies from discriminating against gay people unconstitutional, and could threaten other executive orders protecting gay job rights in New York state. The court challenge was brought by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, the Salvation Army, and Agudath Israel of America. (from the *Bay Area Reporter*)

New York—A research study by the State University of New York suggests that male homosexuality may have its origins in “biological markers.”

The complete study, released in the Sept. 28, 1984 *Science Magazine* (Vol. 225), states that “the secretory pattern of luteinizing hormone in the homosexuals in response to estrogen was intermediate between that of the heterosexual men and that of the women. Furthermore, testosterone was depressed for a significantly longer period in the homosexual men than in the heterosexual men. These findings suggest that biological markers for sexual orientation may exist.” Further, the study stated that, “This invites the idea that there may be physiological developmental components in the sexual orientation of some homosexual men.”

Cincinnati—The Presbyterian Church (USA) has asked the federal appeals court to hold that a Louisville bank violated the 1964 Civil Right Act when it fired a branch manager who told his supervisors that he was president of a group of lesbian and gay Roman Catholics and Episcopalians.

Phoenix—James Andrews, formerly the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (US) and recently elected Stated Clerk of the merged Presbyterian Church (USA), has indicated that he believes that Presbyterians have not seriously practiced what they preached in regard to supporting gay civil rights and in welcoming gay men and lesbians into the church as members. He has expressed his own commitment to remedy this failure of the church. (from the Evangelicals Concerned newsletter, *Record*)

San Francisco—The National Board of Lutherans Concerned/North America met in the bay city at the same time as the Lesbian/Gay Interfaith Alliance held its second annual meeting (Oct. 12-14). Under the theme “Strategies for a New Vision,” the Alliance held a day of workshops and an interfaith prayer service open to the public; business meetings were restricted to delegates to the national organization. (from: the LC/Los Angeles newsletter)

Boston, Berkeley—A resolution of “openness to and affirmation of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons” in the United Church of Christ, was adopted at the recent annual meeting of its Massachusetts Conference, according to the national Office of Communication for the denomination.

The resolution was also adopted at the fourth National Gathering of the United Church Coalition for Lesbian/Gay Concerns at its meeting in Berkeley, California.

The National Gathering urged other U.C.C. Conferences to pass similar resolutions in preparation for the 1985 General Synod. (from the LC/Los Angeles newsletter)

Northridge, Calif.—By a unanimous vote of congregational ballot, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church (LCA) approved the Affirmation of Welcome of LC/NA’s Reconciled-in-Christ project, which seeks congregations that welcome gay and lesbian Christians as full and equal members of the Body of Christ.

Pacific Southwest Synod (LCA) Bishop Stanley Olson, attending the congregation after the vote was taken, congratulated the church and lauded them on their commitment to the unconditional Gospel.

New York—The National Council of Churches NCCC Executive Committee concurred with the opinion of a special NCCC Governing Board’s vote in November 1983 to “postpone indefinitely the vote on eligibility for consideration for membership” of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches(UFMCC) was “in effect an indirect rejection of the main motion.”

The application of the UFMCC, which has a particular ministry to homosexuals, will remain on file with the NCCC. However, the UFMCC would need to update its application and “request in writing that the application be reactivated” in order for the application to become the subject of further consideration by the Governing Board, the committee ruled. The committee’s opinion also will be reported to the NCCC’s November 1984 Governing Board meeting in New Brunswick, NJ, for its concurrence. (from the LC/Los Angeles newsletter)

Baltimore—The National Conference of Catholic Charities adopted a resolution on homosexuals which reads in part: “Be it resolved ... that the NCC movement take on a prophetic role by committing itself to an educational effort to help people become sensitive to the social trauma suffered by people with a gay orientation. (from the Evangelicals Concerned newsletter, *Record*)

San Francisco—Mayor Diane Feinstein rejected the year-long study of the task force on a “domestic partners” health benefits plan out-of-hand, before it had been formally presented to her. Mayor Feinstein claimed the panel “had strayed too far from its original mandate” to consider the effects of any designated benefits for any designated beneficiary of a [...] The panel felt that approach [...] broad and financially unfe[...] suggested that focus be shifted [...] partners” of gay and lesbian city workers. Feinstein rejected that notion emphatically. Supervisor Harry Britt was also uncomfortable with the recommendation, which he felt ought to extend to partners of non-gay as well as gay/lesbian workers. (from the *Bay Area Reporter*)

Addendum Two

Reconciled in Christ

An energetic and vital Reconciled in Christ program has been assembled and put into operation by Lutherans Concerned in order to reach Lutheran congregations on a global basis. Many gay and lesbian Lutherans remain within their congregations, rather than leaving their parishes to join churches having a special ministry to gay/lesbian people. What the Reconciled-in-Christ program seeks to accomplish is to identify Lutheran congregations engaged in ministry inclusive of lesbian and gay people. Also, it gives an opportunity for congregations to show their love and concern for lesbian and gay Lutherans.

A congregation may ask, “All people are welcome here; why should we single out gay people?” The Reconciled-in-Christ program doesn’t seek special treatment for gay people. It simply seeks to make clearer the policy of the church that all people are welcome as full members, regardless of affectional orientation. Moreover, making a clear affirmation can be an important part of evangelism—bringing the Good News to all people.

What will happen if we participate?

A congregation can join the program by having its Council approve the Program’s “Affirmation of Welcome.” This document is then sent to the national offices of Lutherans Concerned, which maintains a roster of participating congregations. This roster will be publicized appropriately for the purpose of letting gay and lesbian people know they are welcome in your congregation.

What is the Affirmation of Welcome?

The Affirmation of Welcome is a statement that affirms the message of Christ that calls us to reconciliation and wholeness. Since gay and lesbian persons are often scorned by society and alienated from the Church, the affirmation states the following:

- * that gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God;
- * that gay and lesbian people are welcome within the membership of this congregation upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make; and
- * that as members of this congregation, gay and lesbian people are expected and encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of this congregation.

What churches have affirmed God’s unconditional Gospel?

St. Paul’s LCA, Oakland, California
St. Francis ALC, San Francisco, California
University LCA, Palo Alto, California
St. Mark’s LCA, San Francisco, California
First United LCA, San Francisco, California
St. Paulus AELC, San Francisco, California
St. Paul’s LCA, Northridge, California
St. Paul-Reformation LCA, St. Paul, Minnesota
Resurrection LCA, Chicago, Illinois
St. Gregory of Nyssa AELC, Chicago, Illinois

How can we become involved in the Reconciled-in-Christ Program?

For more information, contact:

Rose M. Smith
Reconciled-in-Christ Program
12602 Park St.
Cerritos, CA 90701

Lutherans Concerned
P.O. Box 10461
Chicago, IL 60610

Glossary of Homosexual Terms

Baths—Special baths frequented by homosexuals when looking for sex. Gang sex often occurs in such places.

Bisexual—One who has sexual relations with both sexes.

Butch—A masculine or super-masculine homosexual. Many wear boots, leather clothing, or extremely tight-fitting clothing that show off their muscles and emphasize their genitalia.

Chicken—A young homosexual.

Chicken Hawk—An older homosexual who seeks to pick up a “chicken.”

Closet Gay—A homosexual who, for personal or professional reasons, hides or covers his homosexuality.

Closet Queen—An effeminate man who practices homosexual acts when he can but who keeps his practice a closely guarded secret for personal reasons.

Cruise—A sexually stimulated homosexual out looking for a partner. Often a homosexual who is cruising will advertise his preference by wearing a handkerchief in his hip pocket. Anything on the left means the man wants to do the act; anything on the right means he wants to receive it.

blue: anal intercourse

olive: military

black: Sadoomasochism

orange: wants to do anything—supposedly

brown: feces

red: fist intercourse

green: money, a hustler

yellow: urine

gray: bondage

white: masturbation, usually implies mutual

Drag—Female clothes worn by a male to impersonate a female.

Drag Queen—A queen dressed in drag on the prowl.

Faggot—The stereotyped homosexual; a limp-wristed, feminine acting homosexual often looked down upon by other homosexuals.

Fellatio—The practice of obtaining sexual satisfaction (orgasm) by oral stimulation of the penis.

Gay—Favorite term of the homosexual community to describe themselves.

Gay Bars—The places in which gays congregate for dancing, pickups, and sexual contacts.

Golden Showers/Water Sports—Activity involving urine for sexual gratification.

Heterosexual—Those who confine their sexual activity to members of the opposite sex.

Homosexual—A man or woman who engages in sexual activity with another member of the same sex. Such activity usually leads to an orgasmic experience.

Hustler—A male prostitute.

Latent Homosexual—A cruel and harmful term (attributed to Sigmund Freud) suggesting that some people are born with homosexual tendencies. Many people believe that men who use effeminate gestures and mannerisms or women who act masculine possess “latent

homosexual tendencies.” This is a lie. Studies show that over 80 percent of the “effeminate” acting men and “masculine” women are heterosexual.

Lesbian—A woman homosexual. She usually brings her female partner to sexual climax by manipulation of the clitoris with either her finger or tongue. They sometimes spell women as “womyn” to distinguish them from heterosexual women.

Old Queen—An old, effeminate homosexual male, usually no longer desirable as a sex partner, who often experiences extreme loneliness and has the highest unhappiness quotient and suicide rate.

Pseudosexual—A person who possesses certain superficial characteristics that cause people to erroneously label them homosexual when in reality they are not.

Queen—An effeminate male homosexual (also called nelly or fairy).

Sadist and Masochist, or “Slave Master”—One who adds brutality or cruelty, either physical or mental, to sexuality. Some punish their partners; others prefer to be punished or tortured themselves.

Sodomy—Anal intercourse between persons.

Straight—A heterosexual person.

Transvestite—A person who likes to wear one or more pieces of clothing of the opposite sex.

Contrary to popular opinion, most of these people remain heterosexual, marry, and raise a family (if the spouse can overlook this idiosyncrasy).

Trouble—Butch that may cause trouble or is dangerous.

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