

# Cultural Collision

## Topics covered in this series:

1. What does the Bible teach about Homosexuality?
2. Born Gay? What does science really say about Homosexuality?
3. Same-Sex Marriage. Responding in Truth and Love

## Why the series? Homosexuality is the new civil rights issue

- This leads to a challenge for Christians and the Church –legally
- This is a problem because many in the gay movement are aggressively seeking to change our churches from within --The story from Sean McDowell – The Reformation Project –Reformers—infiltrators
- Doctrinal Statement –make available
- Many churches around the country are moving to accept Homosexuality and gay marriages –reports that the church is split on the issue in America –if you take most main line denominations

**Tonight:** What does the Bible teach about Homosexuality? –marriage –gender –**Letter**

## The Video – from The Reformation Project

- Done very well –compelling
- I like to hear them give their case –rather than give a straw man and then attack it
- I want to be fair and let you hear from one of the best
- Matthew Vines –His book is everywhere –very popular with young folks

**Our Starting point --Important to understand** – we believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God

- There are several reasons
- What the writers of the OT --Bible says about their writings and where they came from
- What Jesus said about scripture –
- What the Apostles say about the OT –Jesus words—and their own
- What the early Christians said about all of this

**2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NIV)** — **16** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, **17** so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**2 Peter 1:19–21 (NIV)** — **19** We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. **20** Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own

interpretation of things. **21** For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**2 Peter 3:14–16 (ESV)** — **14** Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. **15** And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, **16** as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

**Matthew 24:35 (NIV)** — **35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

### **Warnings against false teachers and a false gospel**

**Galatians 1:6–9 (NIV)** — **6** I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—**7** which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! **9** As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!

**Jude 3–4 (NIV)** — **3** Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people. **4** For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

**2 Peter 2:1–10 (NIV)** — **1** But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. **2** Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. **3** In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. **4** For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; **5** if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; **6** if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; **7** and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless **8** (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—**9** if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. **10** This is especially true of those

who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings;

**Revelation 22:18–19 (ESV) — 18** I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, **19** and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

## **The Biblical Story – from the beginning**

### **In the Beginning --The story –a perfect creation –it is good**

**Genesis 2:20–25 (NIV) — 20** So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. **21** So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. **22** Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. **23** The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” **24** That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

### **The curse –**

- Shame—guilt –hiding
- Broken internal thoughts—feelings --desires --A corrupted sinful nature –a spirit of rebellion –dark passions within
- Broken relationship with God
- Broken relationship with one another
- A broken world
- A spiritual war –a deceiver
- Death

### **The new spiritual nation –Abraham –Moses –Israel –David – Messiah**

- A world out of control – Noah – Babel – Sodom and Gomorrah --Abraham – a Holy nation
- Eventually a new covenant –a new Kingdom – a New Messiah
- The story progresses –evil spreads
- God chooses Moses

### **The Law—The tabernacle –God leading –with the people –for the New Nation there is a New Law to be followed–God setting things straight**

- Moses and the Pentateuch –Genesis-Exodus-Leviticus-Numbers-Deuteronomy
- The purpose of the Law – Set a part –Holiness –a nation

- Man had come up with all kinds of ways to sin – God is restoring
- Civil law –a theocracy –crimes and penalty –all according to Gods standards
- Dietary laws –cleanliness laws –purity
- Moral law –
- The rest of the story is about how the people of God (Jews) would or would not follow the law and the resulting Judgment
- God promising that a King would come – a New covenant would be given and God would restore a new heaven and a new earth –set all things right
- The New covenant –we are given the Holy Spirit –a new heart rather than a heart of stone –
- People will desire to live by Gods righteous standards
- The Kingdom will come and all the nations will be blessed through the Messiah
- Gods plan will be that a new family of Jews and Gentiles together will be in the Kingdom
- Those with the Holy Spirit will seek to love God and others and the law wont be needed because it is for lawbreakers and there wont be lawbreakers any more – Real believers will seek to honor Gods righteous standards
- The Moral law represents righteousness and God is righteous
- The moral law is for our good and God desires to restore us to His perfect plan in the garden –according to His design

**The Video seeks to break down six passages –but we have to put them in the right context –Matthew Vines is correct –context is king –the problem is when we create a cultural context that is inaccurate to justify our desires**

**The argument from Matthew Vines’ Video:**

*Sodom and Gomorrah story is about rape and not homosexuality*

- Read the whole passage – Matthew Vines uses only Ezekiel 16:49 as the only passage to explain the story of Sodom.
- Hermeneutics –the synthesis principle –let scripture interpret scripture he didn’t use Jude 7
- The word detestable –in Ezekiel 16:50 –same word for abomination used in Leviticus? Not referenced at all in the video
- Some say their sin was about desiring angelic flesh –they did not know they were angles

**Genesis 18:20–21 (NIV) — 20** Then the LORD said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous **21** that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.”

**Genesis 19:1–12 (NIV) — 1** The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. **2** “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your

servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square." **3** But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. **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 **7** 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. "This fellow came here as a foreigner, 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. **10** But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. **11** Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door. **12** The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here,

**Ezekiel 16:49–50 (NIV) — 49** "Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. **50** They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.

**Jude 7 (NIV) — 7** In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion (they went after strange flesh). They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

***The answer: though this story is about many things it is also about Homosexuality***

### **The Argument:**

*Leviticus has a lot of things in it that are strange that do not apply today—so why should teaching concerning Homosexuality --*

- Remember the Leviticus is intertwined with moral- civil—dietary and cleanliness laws –
- God wants them to be a clean different kind of people –to represent Him to the world
- God uses the laws to teach them to be separate and different –not only could pork be dangerous if not cooked well –they represented filth –a picture that the Jews could learn from
- Circumcision was supposed to be a picture of health –we still do it today –but to say your offspring belong to me –sex is special important
- Matthew Vines' argument –that the law (all of it is not binding today)

**Leviticus 18:22 (NIV) — 22** “ ‘Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable.

**Leviticus 20:13 (NIV) — 13** “ ‘If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.

### ***The argument from Matthew Vines***

*The Old Testament is null and void --the New Testament replaces the Old in every way*

- The Old and New Testaments reveal Gods view of righteousness –the Ten Commandments
- God is the same yesterday today and forever
- God is righteous and He has revealed His version of righteousness in the Law of God which has everything to do with the design –perfect relationships –All the law is summed up in to Love the Lord your God with all your Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength and love your neighbor as yourself –God then tells us what this means in the Moral Law Code
- The Law never saved you and couldn’t –but it does reveal Gods heart and standards
- Where the New Testament changes the standards, we accept this, but if it does not than Gods standards apply
- When the New Testament puts up standards like sexual immorality is condemned –it is reinforcing the Old Testament standard of immorality

**Matthew 5:17–19 (ESV) — 17** “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. **18** For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. **19** Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

### **Notice that Paul is tying the New Testament grace covenant to a set of standards**

- The Gospel is tied to right behavior
- Grace leads us to repentance and a changed life

**1 Timothy 1:8–11 (ESV) — 8** Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, **9** understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, **10** the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, **11** in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

## **The Old Testament standards of right and wrong are not set aside**

- Ceremonial –dietary = purity –sacrifices
- Civil –in a democracy –punishment –even capital offense
- Moral –still stands

### **Yes Jesus sets aside the food laws**

**Mark 7:14–20 (ESV)** — **14** And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: **15** There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” **17** And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. **18** And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, **19** since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) **20** And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him.

### **Paul sets aside the food laws**

**1 Timothy 4:1–5 (ESV)** — **1** Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, **2** through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, **3** who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. **4** For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, **5** for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

### **The sacrificial system is done away with**

**Hebrews 7:27 (ESV)** — **27** He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

### **The Sabbath is no longer in effect**

**Colossians 2:16 (ESV)** — **16** Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

### **Jesus does not set aside the Moral law -- it is still binding**

- Jesus – back to the beginning concerning sexuality and marriage
- Jesus affirms the book of Genesis –
- He points back to Gods intended plan –gender – marriage –sexuality
- The same man who wrote Genesis wrote Leviticus
- As the Son of God He has the perfect understanding of the design –He is also the judge and is revealing how He will judge on judgment day
- He declares that sexual immorality will be judged
- When He declares the design he does not need to identify every other way a person can get away from the design –
- He does not need to declare homosexual marriage is wrong because in a sense He has when He said a husband will leave His wife and become one flesh – they were

created to fit together physically and they have a purpose –to go and multiply as Genesis tells us

- Remember many Christians love to come against gay marriage proponents on the issue of gay marriage but they are not very hard on divorce—Jesus declares that divorce for any other reason other than adultery is sin –It is hypocritical to condemn homosexuals but give a pass in the church to those who divorce
- Remember God forgives anyone who comes to faith and repentance

**Matthew 19:3–6 (NIV) — 3** Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” **4** “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ **5** 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’? **6** So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

### ***The answer: Jesus affirms the book of Genesis and the designed genders and purpose of sex***

- *Some say Jesus doesn’t say anything about homosexuality –He speaks often about sexual immorality –He refers to Genesis and the designed order*
- *He affirms Leviticus by quoting it*
- *When He speaks of sexual immorality what is His definition of that and where would He have gotten it –in the Old Testament scriptures*

### **Kevin De Young –What Does The Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?**

Page 43---There is no indication in the New Testament that Leviticus should be treated as particularly obscure or peripheral. Quite the contrary. Jesus referred to Leviticus 19:18 (“love your neighbor as yourself”) more than any other verse in the Old Testament and the New Testament refers to it ten times. Likewise, both Peter and Paul quoted Leviticus as part of their summons to holiness (2 Corinthians 6:16 quoting Leviticus 26:12:1 Peter 1:16, quoting Leviticus 11:44). The authors of the New Testament did not hesitate to turn to Leviticus, the preeminent book on holiness in their bibles, to find instruction and exhortation for godly living. In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul appeals directly to the Law of Moses –Leviticus 18:8; Deuteronomy 22:30; 27:20—to establish the sinfulness of incest (a move he makes again in 1 Corinthians 6 with respect to homosexuality). Paul found in Leviticus moral obligations still binding on the Christian. The sexual ethic of the Old Testament was not abrogated like the sacrificial system, but carried forward into the early church. The law is good if one uses it lawfully (1 Peter 1:8)

### ***The argument from Matthew Vines – The Reformation Project and others***

*Gods Word does not condemn loving relationship in this passage – It just condemns lust between those who are heterosexuals who venture into homosexuality –those who lust not love*

### **The Apostles teaching**

- Paul is giving the progression of the fall of mankind from the beginning
- Paul is speaking to rebellious people who refuse to obey or give glory to God
- They refuse His rule and His design
- He speaks of lesbianism as well as Male homosexuality
- **Notice Matthew Vines statement concerning lust – Epithumia** --Desire – passionate longing –lust –He tells us that lust is condemned but not love
- Agape love is the act of the will to lay down your life for another –to do what is best for them rather than yourself
- Sexual desire and fulfillment comes from the word Eros– the desire for sexual fulfillment and attraction is not the same as biblical love
- When we love the other we think in terms of protecting them and doing what is best for them
- What is best for the person I claim I love is to help them obey God –to think in terms of eternal joy with God rather than sexual satisfaction for a minute
- What best for the other is to use the parts of their body the way they were intended rather than in ways that destroy their body. Homosexual sex destroys the body in many ways because you are not using your body as it was intended
- Our desire for the thing we were designed for has been corrupted because of sin. Not everything we desire is good for us
- Example –some have a broken desire or bent towards a form of drug or something we deem as severe immorality
- If we claim attraction towards something is something we are born with and this makes it ok then where does this stop? Are there humans that have attractions towards other things that we know of that we would not accept? I think you know the answer to this.
- Some have broken desires towards all kinds of things but just because we have an attraction towards something does not make it acceptable to act out on the attraction
- The world has corrupted our hearts and though we can accept Jesus and be saved –it does not mean our desires and attractions are made right. That time will come when we get to heaven and all things are made right

**Romans 1:18–32 (NIV) — 18** The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, **19** since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. **20** For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been

made, so that people are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. **24** Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. **25** They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. **26** Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual 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 shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. **28** Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. **29** They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; **31** they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. **32** Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

### **Sex is special to God –**

- God is telling us that sexual immorality and specifically homosexual acts are sinful –in fact they come at the end of the progression of a culture towards total degradation –they have totally rejected Gods designed/natural law
- This is seen as outright rebellion against Gods design and plan
- As men rejected God the progression led down hill step by step culturally
- God is condemning the act of sin here regardless of the motivating desires or feelings
- Desires become more corrupt as we step away from God
- Some sin is worse than others but all sin will lead to hell unless forgiven
- Examples –Matthew 18:6—Luke 12:47—harming a child
- Sexual sin does damage to your body and to children
- We all have sinful desire of one kind or another –we are told not to live it out or practice it –with Gods help we die to it and live for eternity rather than earthly pleasure

**1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV) — 18** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

### **Notice the progression**

1. God has given enough light to know –especially in the beginning but now too
2. Refuse to glorify and thank God
3. Suppress the truth with wickedness

4. Hearts becoming darkened –foolish
5. They exchanged the real God for a false one –made their own
6. God gives them over –allowed them to have what they wanted
7. They had sinful desires –
8. Degrading their bodies
9. Shameful desires –exchanging natural sex for unnatural
10. Notice there is no mention of one having power over the other (man child sex) it speaks of homosexuals exchanging natural sex for un natural with one another
11. Destruction
12. Chapter 2 begins with a warning to the proud – We have all sinned

***The answer: Romans has to do with homosexuality no matter what the underlying motive or feeling –it is sinful***

### **The Reformation Project argument**

*It is unclear what is meant by the following texts*

- Arsenokoitai (ar-sen-o-koi-tai)
  - Matthew Vines is telling us that it is not a mandate against loving homosexual relationships

### **Notice –other texts concerning homosexuality**

- Remember homosexual sex is just one form of sin –sexual immorality
- Notice it is forgivable –this is what you were –past tense
- Notice practicing homosexuality is not the same as same sex attraction
- We all have attraction towards sin of one kind or another

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NIV)** — **9** Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men **10** nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**1 Timothy 1:8–11 (NIV)** — **8** We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. **9** We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, **10** for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine **11** that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

## **Arsenokoitai (Ar-sen-o-koi-tai)**

*The word used in these two passages for homosexuality –arsenokoitai—This is the only place the word is used in scripture or in literature up to this point –true but we know what it means--Paul blends two words together from the Old Testament (Greek Septuagint-3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE—copy used at the time of Christ—quoted by Paul)*

*This word is created by putting two Greek words together from the Greek OT verses*

*Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13—meta arsenos ou koimethese koiten gyniakeian*

*Leviticus 18:22 – You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.*

*Leviticus 20:13 – If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death;their blood is upon them.*

*hos an koimethe meta arsenos koiten gynaikos*

*Paul created this word by joining arsenos koiten -- arsenokoitai --together –These two words were directly taken from the Leviticus passages which tell us that Paul is reinforcing the Old Testament book of Leviticus. He created a word directly from those texts.*

*When we look at interpretation issues we must ask the question: how did the first Christians understand what was being written. They understood the language best and could ask the writer what is meant by what you have written. The early church understood what was meant and declared homosexuality immorality as established by Leviticus.*

*This is why every translation we have in history interprets the passage the way it does.*

***The answer—this passage affirms Leviticus 18 and 20—***

- Remember Jesus quoted Leviticus 19—love your neighbor as yourself several times –
- You cant affirm Leviticus 19 and get rid of the bookends

## **The Reformation Project argument**

*–we do not understand the cultural context –we have misunderstood scripture as the church has in the past*

**Rules for properly understanding scripture -- Context**

- Matthew Vines used interpretation and context issues/arguments to attack the interpretation of scripture we hold to
- Biblical Principles of hermeneutics accepted –grammatical principle—synthesis principle—practical principle –historical principle --

- Historical principle Vs Cultural principle --
- Video said that in this century loving same sex relationships were unknown — false —examples Roman Emperor Nero and Alexander the Great just a few
- Video said that homosexuality was between men and boys —yes and no —it was also between men and men
- The Reformation Project is disputing Old and New Testament understanding for thousands of years – What reason do they have to dispute it
- So called scientific proof – see next week
- When we discover that we are bent towards one sin or another we can say no or find a way to justify what we do –
- What do we do with the long hair passage

### **Long hair argument**

- The historical principle reveals that Paul is supporting the issue of authority
- To a Jew short hair for a woman meant they had rejected their role as helper to their husband and would not let him be in authority over her
- In a sense she was saying I have the authority of a man in my own life
- Paul is saying no to this —live in the divine order as revealed in scripture
- Long hair in bible times was for women not for men (unless you had made a specific Nazerite vow)
- Paul is saying to the men at that time —be a man not a woman
- Again the principle is in support of Gods plan to establish genders and gender roles —this actually supports the Old Testament law in the Pentateuch to be who God designed you to be —the Law was to set right what had been lost because of sin in the world
- Quoting Deuteronomy again – the issue is authority and sexuality

**1 Corinthians 11:14 (ESV) — 14** Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him,

**Deuteronomy 22:5 (ESV) — 5** “A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.

***The answer – The historical principle reveals there is a principle behind every command even when the command had its bearing in the Old or New Testament culture—our job is to discover the principle God is setting and apply it today into our lives***

From Anthony Venn-Brown - Founder & CEO of ABBI  
(Ambassadors & Bridge Builders International)

History tells us that the Christian church, by upholding certain 'beliefs', have been the instrument of oppression of certain people and groups. Until enlightenment came Christians did not see what they were doing as oppression as they believed (based on the current worldview) that they were upholding God's word. Unchangeable traits such as race, gender and currently sexual orientation, have been the criteria for treating others like second-class citizens. By not treating others as equals, a hierarchy is created that can never liberate only oppress.

Initially, when the church was birthed, Jewish males were at the top of the hierarchy, with Gentiles, women and others seen as being lesser in value. From what I can see, if God is trying to do anything in this world, He is trying to get through our thick skulls that all people are of equal value and worth and should be treated with dignity and respect. That kind of theology will create a better world for us all.

History has a sober warning to us all when we feel so convinced we are defending the 'truth'.

The statement 'the bible says homosexuality is a sin' is not unlike other 'truths' the Christian Church has upheld over the centuries.

## Once Heresy - Now Truth

Once taught as false but now we know its true....

### 1. Once Heresy now Truth —The world revolves around the sun

The churches previous position — **The earth is the center of the universe**

### 2. Once Heresy now Truth —White and black are equal

The churches previous position —**White is superior, black is inferior**

### 3. Once Heresy now Truth — Two people who love each other should marry no matter what color their skin

The churches previous position — **God separated the races therefore they should never marry**

#### 4. Once Heresy now Truth —Men and women are of equal value and worth

The churches previous position — **men are superior, women are inferior**

#### 5. Once Heresy now Truth — same sex orientation, for a percentage of the population, is a normal expression of sexuality and occurs in all of creation

The churches previous but changing position— **the Bible says homosexuality is a sin**

The statement ‘the Bible says homosexuality is a sin’ is actually a false statement. It’s impossible for homosexuality to be a sin. We know from science today that homosexuality is a sexual orientation like heterosexuality and therefore it’s amoral. As I find myself saying repeatedly to people who have been taught to believe the equation that homosexuality = promiscuity—‘my morality is a choice, my sexual orientation, however, isn’t’.

Many are surprised to find there is no chapter or verse for that quote we hear so often ‘the Bible says homosexuality is a sin’ in either the Old or New Testaments; it is a belief or assumption based on an interpretation of several verses—six passages out of 31,240 verses.

#### *The answer –*

- The church has been wrong but the bible has not—there has never been scriptural support for the others listed on this website –there is scriptural support on the issue of homosexuality
- Science has not proven that people are born gay –more on this next week
- Jesus Himself had a problem with religious people who made rules that were not intended by God in scripture
- We must learn from the churches past mistakes concerning belief systems that are not scriptural but this is not one of those places the church has been wrong

**Matthew 15:2–7 (ESV)** — 2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” 3 He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ 5 But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” 6 he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

## **Bottom line –How do we act towards others concerning this subject?**

### **1. Homosexuality is sin but it is on a list of many others –be humble**

- (1 Corinthians 6:9-11—1 Timothy 1:8-10)

**Romans 3:23 (ESV)** — **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**Romans 3:10–12 (ESV)** — **10** as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; **11** no one understands; no one seeks for God. **12** All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

### **2. The first message people need to hear is the gospel –**

- Sin is a symptom of the problem
- Don’t start with condemning the sin start with giving the gospel

**Romans 10:11–15 (ESV)** — **11** For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” **12** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. **13** For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **14** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? **15** And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

### **3. Practicing sin is not the same as being tempted to sin**

- We all have a sinful nature bent in one direction or another
- Just because we struggle with sin does not mean we are practicing it
- Being tempted to sin is not the same as sinning

**Galatians 5:17–21 (NIV)** — **17** For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; **20** idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions **21** and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

**Colossians 3:5–8 (ESV)** — **5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **6** On account of these the wrath of God is coming. **7** In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. **8** But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

**1 John 3:4–10 (ESV)** — **4** Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. **5** You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **6** No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who

keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. **7** Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. **8** Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **9** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. **10** By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

#### **4. There are different standard for believers and unbelievers**

- Those who know better and continue in sin are being rebellious
- Rebellion is not the same as ignorance
- Believers represent God and when they teach that Jesus is Lord but pretend or rebel they are not glorifying God and have take the Lords name in vein.
- Remember there is a difference between a person who is practicing sin (unrepentant and given over to sin) and a person who is stumbling and resourceful and repentant. We help a fallen brother who accepts they have sinned and wants help.

**1 Corinthians 5:9-11 (NIV)** — **1** It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. **2** And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? **3** For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. **4** So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, **5** hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. **6** Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? **7** Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. **8** Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.— **9** I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— **10** not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. **11** But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

**Romans 2:21–24 (ESV)** — **21** you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? **22** You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? **23** You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. **24** For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

## 5. How do we handle this issue as believers?

### A. We hold onto scripture –we stand on it even though we struggle to obey it

- We are told to not only pass on the teaching of the word but the meanings expressed by the apostles –their interpretation –how did they take the teaching –what did it mean to them

**1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV)** — **16** Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

**1 Corinthians 11:1–2 (ESV)** — **1** Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. **2** Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

**Philippians 3:17–20 (ESV)** — **17** Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. **18** For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. **19** Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. **20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

### B. We personally battle temptation –die to self

**Matthew 16:24–27 (ESV)** — **24** Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. **25** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. **26** For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

### C. We are humble and focus on our selves first before we approach another

- This does not mean we do not approach a brother or sister in sin it just means we take a good hard look at our selves first –this leads to humility because we all struggle
- This changes our attitude from pride and judgment to a desire to help

**Matthew 7:3–5 (ESV)** — **3** Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? **4** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

### D. When dealing with unbelievers –

- We share the gospel first –a saving God who wants to save those who will believe.
- The strength to conquer sin comes from the Holy Spirit as they accept Gods commands in scripture and become growing disciples (Matthew 28:19)

**John 15:4–6 (ESV)** — **4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

**E. We help Christians in their struggle –**

**Jude 20–23 (ESV)** — **20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, **21** keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. **22** And have mercy on those who doubt; **23** save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

**Galatians 6:2 (ESV)** — **2** Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**F. We cannot judge a persons eternal condition –Only God is the final judge**

- We can warn people to live in obedience when they are not
- We can remind them that they were saved for something better

**Hebrews 3:12–13 (ESV)** — **12** Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. **13** But exhort (warn – encourage—admonish) one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

**G. We may have to put someone out of the church but it’s the last thing we do after we have lovingly pursued them (even begged them) to stop their sin**

- Remember this is for Christians –don’t expect non Christians to accept the commands of God if they haven’t made Jesus their commander/Lord
- Discipline in the church always comes from a heart of humility and for the restoration of the rebellious Christian

**Matthew 18:15–17 (ESV)** — **15** “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. **16** But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **17** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

**H. We are kind to everyone –even those who reject us**

**2 Timothy 2:22–26 (ESV)** — **22** So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. **23** Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. **24** And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, **25** correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.