

John 8

"1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and *began* to teach them. 3 The scribes and the Pharisees *brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" 6 They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.

"7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to throw a stone at her." 8 Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 When they heard it, they *began* to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. 10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "**I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more.**"

Lessons from Jesus in John 8

- The religious leaders are preoccupied with rooting out the unorthodox & sinners. Jesus is focused on separating truth from legalism & saving sinners.
- Jesus turns the judgment on the heart of the religious leaders.
- Jesus is not judgmental but calls for self discipline.

Homosexual acts are viewed as sin in both the O.T. and the N.T.

- This is clearer than many would like it to be.
- Conservative Christians should not back down on this point.
- But neither should they be taunting others with it while not judging themselves through it.
- Some conservative Christians sound and act a lot like the religious leaders of Jesus' day.
- The difference is that unlike the Jewish leaders, when Jesus confronts them, they double down.

Strait Christians share a common story with homosexuals.

- They share **common failures** as broken people in a broken world.
- They share **common longings** for unconditional love and fullness of life.
- They share **common temptations** to find life in the wrong things.
- They share **common redemption** through the Cross of Christ and faith.
- They share **common callings** to bear one another's burdens and walk in a godly manner.

1 Corinthians 6

"9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither **fornicators**, nor **idolaters**, nor **adulterers**, nor **effeminate**, nor **homosexuals**, 10 nor **thieves**, nor **the covetous**, nor **drunkards**, nor **revilers**, nor **swindlers**, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

Lessons from Jesus in 1 Cor.6

- Homosexuality is listed alongside - coveting, abusing, crooked, etc.
- In what sense were the sins of Corinth only in their past? Note that Paul exhorts them to flee these sins in the present (vs.18).
- Could “washing” and “sanctifying” refer to the effect of baptism and their position in Christ rather than their present level of sanctified behavior?

Were these people part of the church?

1 Corinthians 3:3

“for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not **walking like mere men?**.”

Hebrews 5

“¹¹ Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become **dull of hearing**. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, **you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles** of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes only of milk is **not accustomed to the word of righteousness**, for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses **trained to discern good and evil**.”

Two errors to avoid

Idolatry

Sexual freedom is a necessary path to experiencing fullness of life.

Hypocrisy

The grace of God in the Gospel is conditioned on selective holiness.

Homosexual acts are sinful and must not be condoned.

Homosexual acts are forgiven in Christ and should be put in the past.

Pastoral responsibility

- We start by **sharing** the common story of our search for love and life.
- We understand Scripture, sexuality, and spirituality imperfectly and therefore are **learners** (disciples).
- When we share the Gospel’s hope and the wisdom of the Word of God, we must **audit our own souls**.
- Sexual preferences of all types require **sacrifice, discipline, understanding**, and often **repentance**.
- The church is made up of dirty, rotten, sinners who are fully **justified by grace through faith**.
- The **Holy Spirit calls** (through the church) all who are in Christ to live out their faith.

How should a Christian church be prepared to minister to the homosexual?

- **Empathize** with struggle of the homosexual community - civil rights, longing for life, etc.
- **Share** our common spiritual journey.
- For men: **Model** Christian masculinity at close range.
- **Cultivate** a healthy family values culture.
- **Move toward** those who struggle with homosexuality with grace and truth (not away with fear and judgment).

Should an active gay couple be welcomed as members into the local church?

- How does one **define** membership?
- Does the prospective member give credible signs of having **authentic** faith?
- What kind of **repentance** is needed for salvation?
- Is the member **willing** to submit to orthodox Christian belief and behavior?
- Would the response differ if we were living under the Old Covenant of Law rather than the **New Covenant of Grace**?
- What are the **limits** of forbearance, with a professing Christian?

What do Christian parents do when their adult daughter wants to marry a woman?

- Does the daughter know how the parents feel about sexual ethics and her choice?
- Does the daughter know how the parents feel about their unconditional love commitment to her?
- How forbearing is a relationship when there is not a shared commitment to the moral law?

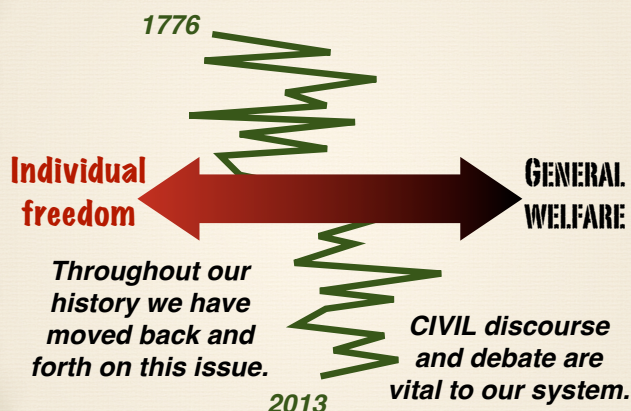
Political responsibility
“personal rights” and the “general welfare.”

- Human (including gay) **rights** of all citizens should be defended in a pluralistic society.
- **Special rights** including special favored treatment for homosexuals should be resisted.
- The interests of the **“common good”** of a society will dictate the discouragement of some behaviors including homosexual acts.
- Moral dialogue in a pluralistic society should be conducted with respect for the **common good and common ground**.

Christians are called to be **tolerant**
- legally and socially but not ideologically.

- Kingdom standards are **distinct** from public policy.
- **American pluralism** is defined by legal and social rights not personal or private ideology.
- No individual or culture is pluralistic at all levels - proscription of child sacrifice, racism, polygamy, honor killing, etc. reflect a **common ideology**.
- The gay community tends to **confuse and equate** ideological agreement with legal and social rights.

Competing values in the American vision



Homosexuals rights and wrongs.

Civil rights?	Gay partnerships?	Christian status?
Civil rights YES! Special privileges No!	Civil contracts YES! Gay marriage No!	Christian fellowship YES! Ordination of active gays No!
		

- Only 25% of all homosexual relationships make it to 8 years.

Charles Q Lau, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol.74, Issue 5, pp 973-88

Attitude / Behavior of young adults from lesbian-parented homes

- Same sex attraction is twice as likely,
- Identification as homosexual or bisexual is twice as likely,
- Considering a same-sex relationship is three times as likely,
- Have a same-sex relationship is six times as likely.

Fiona L. Tasker & Susan Golombok, *Growing Up in a Lesbian Family: Effects on Child Development*, (New York; The Guilford Press, 1997) P.107



JUNE 2013

The Gay Guide to Wedded Bliss

Research finds that same-sex unions are happier than heterosexual marriages. What can gay and lesbian couples teach straight ones about living in harmony?



“Unless you’re seeking more relational instability leading to divorce, greater infidelity, a greater chance of having your daughters be more sexually loose with people of either gender, or you just want to witness the death of your own married sex life, it would appear same-sex couples have little to teach us. *The Atlantic* and a very robust body of research demonstrates that the “*Gay Guide to Wedded Bliss*” is anything but.”

Glenn T. Stanton

Advice to those with a homosexual orientation.

- If you are using “Christian faith” to justify sinful behavior - look at how Jesus & the Apostles responded to such people.
- If you are a Christian struggling in this area.
 - Cling to the hope of the Gospel that in Christ you are acceptable and loved.
 - Open your heart to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.
 - Commit your self to be true to your new self in Christ.
 - Seek help from a loving Christian community

