

wealthy for their acts of penetration of unwilling males. Paul is condemning male-on-male sexual assault and rapt, not consensual Gay relationships..

### **#8 IN CORINTHIANS, PAUL IS CONDEMNING OVERSEXED MALES AND APPEARS TO CONDEMN THOSE WHO COMMIT SEXUAL ASSAULT**

In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 modern translations indicate that Paul wrote, "Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers – none of these will inherit the kingdom of God." (NRSV)

Some church leaders focus on the terms "male prostitutes" and "sodomites" claiming they mean a clear condemnation of Gays. But those two terms are translations made through a modern homophobic lens. The King James Version does not use "male prostitutes," it uses the word, "effeminate." The King James Version also does not use "sodomite," it uses the phrase "abusers of themselves with mankind."

The English is confusing because Paul wrote in Greek. The Greek word translated as "male prostitute" is malakas which literally means "softy." In Paul's day, it was a derogatory term for men who had so much sex they depleted their male prowess. They're "effeminate" because of too much sexual activity – of any kind. So the term malakas denotes being oversexed in general; it is not a word denoting the condemnation of homosexuality.

The Greek word translated as "sodomite" in the modern text is arseno-koites – which literally means "man penetrating." Some scholars think that Paul may again be referring to the Greco-Roman practice that allowed elite males to penetrate anyone to show their dominance, but no one knows exactly what Paul means by this term, so that it cannot be fairly concluded that it refers to homosexuality.

Paul condemns oversexed males and also appears to condemn those who commit sexual assault on men, and it cannot be said that he clearly condemned homosexuality in these verses.

### **#9 TIMOTHY CANNOT FAIRLY BE SAID TO CONDEMN GAYS.**

A vice list is found in 1 Timothy 1:10 Which in Modern English translations, refers to sodomites and so some church leaders claim it clearly condemns Gays. But the translations are made

through a modern homophobic lens. As mentioned in Number 8, the Greek word translated as "sodomite" in the modern text is arseno-koites – which literally means "man penetrating." The author of Timothy may be referring to the Greco-Roman practice that allowed elite males to penetrate anyone to show their dominance, but no one knows exactly what is meant by this term and it cannot be fairly concluded that it refers to homosexuality. Accordingly, I Timothy cannot fairly be said to condemn Gays...

### **#10 CHRISTIANS CAN BELIEVE BIBLICAL PROHIBITIONS MAY BE IGNORED.**

So there you have it; nine reasons that show God's love has no strings attached for LGBTQ+. And you know what? Even if there were verses in the Bible that deem homosexuality unclean or impure, such provisions may now be ignored. Why? Well for one thing, Peter was shown by God that we "should not call anyone profane or unclean."

Another reason is that there are lots of non-harm-to-others prohibitions in the Bible that modern Christians ignore. For instance, no one seriously argues that we have to treat as sinners and second class citizens those who violate Biblical prohibitions against: charging interest on loans; hiring clergy with disabilities; letting women talk or lead at church; treating aliens differently than citizens; divorce; or, other purity prohibitions like shaving, body piercing, eating pork, wearing mixed fibers, "unnatural" heterosexual sex, not washing after emissions or marrying who the Bible says we must marry. We don't hear Christians clamor about these laws because we have decided that they no longer apply and so ignore them. They don't relate to harm, but to "cleanliness."

Finally, in Romans 1 Paul naturally does not list homosexuals as worthy of death but does list the gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, foolish, faithless, heartless and the ruthless. No one clamors that Paul must be literally followed in this regard, because he himself indicates that we are not to judge others because of that list!

Since Christians are not suppose To judge and have otherwise long chosen not to comply with other cleanliness Biblical laws, Christians can also similarly and safely choose to ignore Biblical prohibitions against homosexuality, assuming they exist. (#4 – #9 suggest that none exist.)

**"YOU ARE LOVED AND MATTER MUCH!"**

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# 10 Biblical reasons God's love has **NO** Strings Attached for LGBTQ+

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## **#1 GOD'S LOVE HAS NO STRINGS ATTACHED!**

The Bible instructs that God is love and that God loves all humans all the time, forever. The Old Testament refers to God's love for us as steadfast love. This matches up nicely with Paul's assertion in the New Testament that nothing can separate us from God's love. Indeed, in the Gospels, Jesus tells us to love like God does, without condition. As the Church was wrestling with who should be allowed into the community, Peter was shown by God that we "should not call anyone profane or unclean." All of this means that God loves everyone without regard to human hang-ups (including those relating to LGBTQ+). In other words, God's love has no strings attached. God loves everyone, and the Church and Christians should too.

## **#2 THE EARLY CHURCH SOUGHT OUT & FULLY ACCEPTED & WELCOMED PEOPLE WITH NON-CONFORMING GENDER INTO THE COMMUNITY.**

In the Book of Acts (8:26-39) God sent Phillip to meet, convert, baptize and welcome into the early Christian community an Ethiopian Eunuch. This person who was born a male did not play a heterosexual male role when Acts was written. They were gender non-conforming and can fairly be considered transgender today. This gender nonconforming individual was a person God very early on guided Philip to baptize and fully welcome into the community of Christ. The early Christian community fully accepted non-conforming gender into the church community—modern Christians should too.

## **#3 HOMOSEXUALITY AS AN INCONTROVERTIBLE PART OF CREATION IS IRREFUTABLY GOOD.**

Modern medical, psychological and science communities and others overwhelmingly agree that homosexuality is not a disorder or a disease. These conclusions are based on clear, convincing evidence and reason, through the gifts of science and logic that God has Given us. These conclusions mean that homosexuality is a part of creation, not a deviance from it. Genesis 1:31 tells us that when God completed creation, "God saw everything that (God) had made, and indeed, it was very good." This verse literally and inescapably means that ALL of creation is very good. Consequently homosexuality, as an incontrovertible part of creation is, therefore, irrefutably good.

## **#4 THE STORY OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH WAS NOT WRITTEN TO CONDEMN HOMOSEXUALITY**

The first purportedly anti-Gay text in the Bible is in Genesis 19, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. In this story the town's men want "to know" the foreign messengers that Lot has taken in. The literal meaning of "to know" means just what it says. So one could argue the story means what it says that the men just wanted to know the foreigners. But literalists don't read it literally. They (and others) read "to know" as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Fair enough, but in the ancient world, such sexual intercourse in a story like this was about control and power. For a man to forcibly penetrate someone without consent was to make them subordinate by making them womanly. Those who chose to read "to know" as an ancient euphemism for sex must also accept the ancient meaning that the men in the story seek to forcibly and violently make the messengers subordinates. Simply put, Genesis 19 is about condemning rape, and cannot fairly be said to prohibit consensual homosexual relationships. Despite what other may claim. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah does not condemn homosexuality.

## **#5 ANCIENT PURITY LAWS OF LEVITICUS WERE INTENDED TO APPLY IN ANCIENT ISRAEL, NOT TO US.**

Although many Biblical purity laws are ignored by modern Christians some nonetheless seek to invoke Ancient Israel's purity laws to claim homosexuality is unclean and therefore forbidden in America. Specifically invoked are Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 which expressly prohibit a man "[lying] with a male as with a woman..." These laws, however are in chapters that expressly assert that the laws there in are applicable in Israel (e.g., "Say further to the people of Israel [or any who] who reside in Israel..." Lev 20:2). Consequently, the prohibitions were never meant to apply outside of Israel; and we don't live in Israel!

In addition, the whole premise of these laws was to keep males from being made unclean and we don't follow other ancient Biblical cleanliness laws, and ancient ideals, so there is no reason to otherwise follow these.

## **#6 LESBIANISM IS NOT ADDRESSED AND THEREFORE NOT PROHIBITED BY ANY TEXT IN THE BIBLE.**

Romans 1:26 is the only verse in the Bible that some Christians claim condemns lesbianism. But that verse nowhere refers to lesbians. What it mentions is heterosexual women having what Paul thought was unnatural sex. "Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another."

Unlike Paul's reference to men (in the next verses), Paul does not indicate he is talking about women having same-sex intercourse. That's because his condemnation is aimed at heterosexual women who were having "natural intercourse" and exchanging it for "unnatural intercourse" in the same way that men were having sex with men.

In other words, it's about women choosing to have non-coital sex with men in ways Paul thought were unnatural. Paul is not addressing intercourse between female adults, but types of acts between women and men.

In Romans (1:26-27) Paul wrote, "Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error". With respect to men, Paul is most likely addressing non-consensual sex acts by otherwise heterosexual men on men. Paul probably does not name them as unnatural acts because his reference is not to consensual relational intercourse, but to sexual assault. Wealthy Greco-Roman men culturally proved their power and domination by penetrating lower class males of any age. Paul may have left out the "unnatural" label for the men's passion because he was not criticizing the victims who had no choice in the acts. Paul was criticizing the wealthy for their acts of penetration of unwilling males. He is condemning male-on-male sexual assault and rape, not consensual Gay relationships.

## **#7 PAUL CONDEMNS SEXUAL ASSAULT ON MEN, NOT CONSENSUAL GAY RELATIONSHIPS IN ROMANS.**

In Romans (1:26-27) Paul wrote, "Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error". With respect to men, Paul is most likely addressing non-consensual sex acts (which are shameful) by otherwise heterosexual men on men.

He probably does not call them unnatural acts because his reference is not to consensual relational intercourse, but to sexual assault. Wealthy Greco-Roman men proved their power and domination by penetrating lower class males of any age. Paul may have left out the "unnatural" label for the men's passion because he was not criticizing the victims who had no choice in the acts; rather he was criticizing the