What the Bible Teaches About Homosexuality
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 45-16

Tonight we're going to return, at least to begin with, to Romans chapter 1 for our study. We really finished last week looking specifically at the text of Romans 1. But there was much interest and reaction as we discussed the issue of homosexuality as it is mentioned by the apostle Paul in this text. I really feel that God used our study of Romans 1 in a very unique way. During the time we were in that chapter many people gave their lives to Christ. I think many of us have a greater understanding of why God is angry with men who reject His revelation, sink into rationalization, religion, and ultimately reprobation, as we saw in our last study.

But we noted last time that in the process of Paul's defining the sinfulness of man and the utter *fallenness* of man, he gives an illustration of the depth of man's sin by pointing out what is the worst earthly expression of man's *fallenness*, and that is homosexuality. He says in verse 26 that women exchange the natural use for that which is against nature, and in verse 27, likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unfitting and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error, which was fitting.

Now we noted last time that Paul deals with the essence of sin. That is, in verse 24 and 25, sin comes out of the heart. He deals with the extent of sin in verses 29 to 32, that it covers so many things. It extends over all kinds of behavior. And then that very most heinous expression of sin, the sin of homosexuality, points up the utter *fallenness* of man. And you'll remember in Romans 1 we learned that because man is abandoned by God, man is left to the consequence of his own sinfulness, which is an ever-increasing compulsiveness in sin that drives him to horrifying ends.

And we also suggested that religion cannot restrain man. There is no way for religion to retard this sinfulness. Now we may say, "Well, I know some religious people, they're Mormons, or they're something else, and they're very moral outwardly." Well, the pressure of religion can make people conform outwardly because of peer pressure and the desire to belong and to appear self-righteous, but it cannot restrain what they feel inwardly. And so, though not everyone goes to the limits of all of these expressions of sin, and though everyone does not go to these extents in sin, they are restrained by certain cultural pressures or certain peer pressures or whatever, but their hearts are unrestrained. They are like the Pharisees, who outwardly are white and painted as if they were new,

but inwardly are full of dead men's bones. And so, Paul has shown us the utter sinfulness of men.

The catalog in verses 29 to 31 is staggering, utterly staggering. And we went through it last time; we'll not go through it again. We could spend an equal amount of time on that particular catalog of sin, discussing each sin. But because of the fact that Paul singles out this sin of homosexuality in verses 26 and 27 as the mark of the depth of man's sinfulness, for this is not a perversion, this is an inversion. Because of the time in which he takes to point it out it seems important for us to spend another time looking at it.

I received some responses from last Sunday night's message. Some responses were grateful responses. Some people who were caught in the sin of homosexuality who have been delivered expressed their joy and rejoicing at what Christ had done.

I received another response in which a person said that I had missed the proper interpretation of Scripture altogether and there was a place in God's plan for gay people. And so I felt in order to clear that up I ought to spend another time just to make sure you really understand what the Bible says. And this is a real problem. I understand a famous tennis player who has been accused of having homosexual lesbian relationships is now going to write a book about it. We all know that in the state of California our governor has just appointed the first lesbian judge to go with several other male homosexual judges that he's appointed in the past. It is not only a sin but it is an acceptable sin. Verse 32 says that they not only commit it but they have pleasure in those that commit it. We not only allow it but we appoint people to high positions who do it.

The Quaker church in the United States released a statement that homosexuality is no more abnormal than being left-handed. Very many denominations have ordained homosexuals to the ministry. There are over 100 organizations in the Roman Catholic Church for homosexuals, the leading one being an organization called "Dignity."

In May, May 28, 1981, there was an article in the *L.A. Times* and I'll give you just a little of it. It's entitled "Homosexuality and the Churches." Subtitle: "Clergy to participate in ecumenical lunch for Parents and Friends of Gays." Ted Rodriquez, 26, remembers how he and the Pentecostal church parted ways. “My minister said, ‘We need more Christian young men in our church.’ I said, ‘Fine, I'll bring my boyfriend.’ Immediately I was shouldered out. Before Bill Charlton, 43, came out 18 months ago, he was for 21 years the choir director of his home church in Ohio. When he told his minister about his homosexuality, said Charlton, “He made me resign the children's choir.” In early May a group that calls itself Parents and Friends of Gays sent a letter to 7,200 churches in California. The

letter signed, by Adele Starr, mother of a gay son, and Agnes McLaughlin, mother of a lesbian daughter, said in part, quote: “We know firsthand the tragedies caused by misguided parents and other persons toward those who happen to be homosexual. There have been suicides, family separations, teenagers either thrown out of their homes or runaways with no place to go, all because of the myths and misinformation still prevalent in our society. In addition, today under the guise of religion there are some religious leaders who make statements which are threatening to the very existence of our gay and lesbian children. We are alarmed and frightened. Many of us are deeply religious and have brought up our children in a traditional manner, yet when we were faced with the fact that we had a gay child, most of us received no comfort from our church ministry. We were alone."

The letter then poses this challenge, quote: "Is your ministry involved today in helping families who have a gay child to understand and accept this child and thus to preserve the family unit?" End quote.

"Parents and friends of Gays do not believe that homosexuality is a sin. Now even as many mainline religions have come forward in support of gay rights, and barriers against homosexuals within church hierarchies are tumbling, however, there's an attack on homosexuals by the extreme right. Fundamentalist groups, while stopping short of asking for a literal interpretation of the Old Testament, i.e., that homosexuals be put to death, are condemning homosexuality as sinful and seeking to do away with the rights of gays. Those who would attack homosexuals in the name of God and goodness frequently quote from the Old Testament. ‘If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination, they shall surely be put to death, their blood shall be upon them.’"

Rabbi Allen Freehling of University Synagogue said, "It really means very little to us. Our approach to the Bible is not to accept everything literally but hold it up against historical and cultural backgrounds and interpret it in the context of contemporary situations." And the article goes on. It talks about the Metropolitan Community Church and Troy Perry, who started that church. It now has, I guess, 25,000 members and 158 churches in seven different countries and so forth and so on.

We're being told that religion is the culprit, that fundamentalism is the enemy, because we affirm this to be a sin. Well just to set the record straight tonight, that's exactly what we affirm and we'll show you why as we look at the Bible. And unlike the rabbi, we believe the Bible to be the Word of God.

Homosexuality sounds very innocent when they portray it. But it is not. It has physical results that are so far-reaching they now have new classifications for diseases that occur only among homosexuals.

They have introduced not only foreign strains of venereal diseases, but foreign viruses heretofore unknown in medical science. The VD clinic of San Francisco Department of Public Health has 75,000 patients a year; 70 to 80 percent are homosexual. And in a very real way there is built into this whole thing exactly what it says at the end of verse 27; there is a recompense of reward for their error that is fitting. In other words, there are built-in consequences.

I mentioned last week some of the general comments of Dr. Milton Helpern, who was the former chief medical examiner for New York City. And I want to quote from his biography entitled, *Where Death Delights*. He says, quote — and he's not a Christian — he says, "It's not my role to condemn homosexuality as such and I leave it to the psychiatrists and psychologists to try to figure out why people practice homosexuality. Having performed 60,000 autopsies," he said, "it is high time that those who deviate from the norms should understand the risks. I don't know why it is so but it seems that the violent explosions of jealousy among homosexuals far exceed those of the jealousy of a man for a woman or a woman for a man." And that's why, by the way, it says in verse 27 that they burn in their lust in an unnatural way.

He goes on, "The pent-up charges and energy of the homosexual relationship simply cannot be contained. When the explosive point is reached, the result is brutally violent. But this is the normal pattern of these homosexual attacks, the multiple stabbings, the senseless beatings that obviously must continue long after the victim dies. When we see these brutal multiple wound cases in a single victim, we just automatically assume that we're dealing with a homosexual victim and a homosexual attacker." End quote.

More recently, in a release from United Press International, it says, "Laws concerning homosexual activity between consenting adults are without foundation either in modern scientific theory or New Testament theology, two witnesses testified in a federal court." In other words, they're saying it’s foreign to the New Testament. On the one hand it's foreign to the Old Testament because they culturally explain it away. On the other hand, it's foreign to the New Testament because they just don't believe it and if they do believe it, they'll explain it some other way.

Now the reason I bring this up is because of this. Homosexuality has so invaded the church, it has become so acceptable in the church that they're now actually interacting with the biblical data to try to explain it away. They want to belong in the church, they want to identify in the church. In fact we recently had a gay person who wanted to join our church. They want to find a place in the church, they want to be accepted in the church and in order to do that they want to interact with the biblical data. And so they're doing that, explaining it away one way or another.

Now what then does the Bible say about this problem? Let's find out. Go with me to Deuteronomy chapter 22, Deuteronomy chapter 22, and I want to just introduce some things that are sort of connected to homosexuality that will help to kind of broaden your thinking. The first one is what is known as transvestism, from which the word transvestite comes. A transvestite is someone who likes to wears the clothes of the opposite sex. And in verse 5 of Deuteronomy 22 it says, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

Now some people say this means women are not allowed to wear slacks. The problem with that is men didn't wear slacks in that day. What it is saying is that a woman is not to wear that which pertaineth to the man. And the term is so broad that the Hebrew word refers to clothes, it also refers to weapons and tools and implements and utensils and jewelry and ornaments and anything else. And the point is that whatever tends to obliterate the distinctiveness between the sexes is forbidden. It is an abomination.

And many pagans indulged in this kind of exchange. For example, Maimonides writing mentions that a man dressed in fancy woman's clothes came to honor Venus and Asteroth and a woman dressed in man's armor worshiped at the shrine of Mars. The people who worshiped Asteroth often exchanged male and female dresses. In fact, if you study the idolatry of the ancient times, you will be amazed to find out that sometimes the gods appear as men, and sometimes they appear as women. Sometimes they represent the male and other times they represent the female, and the worshipers would do the same kind of flip-flop. So tied with much of pagan idolatry was this obliteration of the clear distinction between male and female. And of course that fits the satanic effort.

But anything like that was an abomination to God, an outrage, an indecency, because it obliterated the fact that God had made them male and female. Such behavior fostered softness and effeminacy in the man and impudence and boldness in the woman. So transvestism is an abomination. Anything that exchanges or tends to obliterate the sexes is an abomination to God.

And then there is such a thing called transexualism. People come along and claim they're women trapped in men's bodies and they go have an operation to change their sex. And then they say they're liberated. Well the Bible speaks of that, too. In chapter 23 of Deuteronomy verse 1, "The one wounded in the stones or hath his privy member cut off shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord." Anyone who would entertain this kind of thing has no place among God's people. To enter the congregation of the Lord means either admission to public honor or public office in the state of Israel.

Or in the case of a foreigner it meant incorporation into the nation, either by circumcision, obviously, or by marriage. In other words, God wanted no such people. They were excluded from the full rights and privileges of citizenship among God's people because they had defiled the image of God, they had perverted their creation. And the pagans, of course, commonly made eunuchs and many parents even mutilated their children to prepare them for service to the idols. And this was always a satanic practice.

I would just add as a footnote that God offers grace to such people. According to Isaiah 56 verse 3, "Neither let the son of a foreigner that hath joined himself to the Lord speak saying, ‘The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people,’ neither let the eunuch say, ‘Behold I'm a dry tree.’" In other words, if you've done this, you don't have to be totally despairing, "for thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep My Sabbath and choose the things that please Me and take hold of My covenant, even unto them will I give in Mine house and within Mine walls a place and a name better than a name of sons and daughters and I will give them (and I love this) an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." That's pretty practical. You may cut some things off, but you'll never cut that everlasting name off, if they come to Me in faith. So God offers grace to the transsexual or the eunuch.

But we want to focus our attention on the subject of homosexuality itself, which is women engaging in sexual acts with women and men engaging in sexual acts with men.

Now like all other sinners, and we're all the same, people who are caught in the sin of homosexuality invariably attempt to justify their sin. And once you get into that kind of a perversion it is such a burning consuming deviation, it is such an utterly dominating kind of sin that they don't want out, they just to justify it. You see, it is the legacy of sin that it pushes itself deeper and deeper into the pit because it is the consequence of the outworking of the wrath of God. And so many of them don't even look for a way out, many do; but many of them don't look for a way out, they just invent things that go deeper and deeper into this sin. And then when they want to justify it and seem religious, they use the Bible.

And the first and foremost thing they say is that David and Jonathan had a homosexual relationship. I picked up a copy of one of the Bible studies from the Metropolitan Community Church, which is a homosexual church. And it says in there, "The Bible shows that the blessing of the Lord can rest on a homosexual by giving us the example of David, who was a man after God's own heart and obviously had a relationship with Jonathan." And they say the following points prove this. "He never had a successful ongoing relationship with a woman." How they know that I'm not sure. "He loved Jonathan as his own soul. Jonathan stripped himself and kissed David. David at this point acceded, or gave

himself to Jonathan. And David stated that he loved Jonathan more than he could love a woman."

Now perversion is one thing and an inversion is something else. But to try to justify your inversion by making the Word of God fit it is the ultimate blasphemy. I...There's something ambivalent in me that doesn't even want to deal with this and yet I will. Look at 1 Samuel chapter 18, 1 Samuel chapter 18. And I might say as a footnote here that while all of us are pouncing with both feet on the homosexuals, may we also remember the list in verses 29 to 31 which may identify a little more with us but is equally heinous to God and just as forgivable.

But in 1 Samuel 18 they say, verse 1, "It came to pass when he had ceased speaking unto Saul that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." Now the only reason you see homosexuality in that verse is if you've got a problem. I never saw it there. Verse 3, "Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul and Jonathan stripped himself with a robe that was upon him and gave it to David." Now if you see homosexuality in that, then you truly manifest the fact that you have no concept at all of what love can be. There's no justification for that. There's nothing in the text that says that. In fact, in verse 12, "Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him.” The Lord was with him. Would God have blessed him if he was so engaged in sin?

In the nineteenth chapter verse 1, "Saul spoke to Jonathan, his son, and all his servants, they should kill David, but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David." And they want to give sexual implications to "delighted," which is ridiculous. It means only that he was so highly pleased and so drawn to the very special character of this man David.

In chapter 20 verse 3 they take this phrase, "Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes." The idea that he found favor, that they became friends, and they twist and pervert that into homosexual relationship.

And then they go to chapter 20 verse 30. And here's where they really load the guns. "Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan. He said to him, ‘Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman,'" said that to his own son, "Do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own shame and unto the shame of thy mother's nakedness?" And they say that Saul is accusing him of being a homosexual. I don't know, there may be that overtone in it, a veiled reference to Genesis chapter 9 in which there could be some indication of a homosexual implication. But you certainly can't be sure that that's what he said, and even if he did say that, that would be what we would expect from somebody as twisted and as jealous and as fearful as Saul, right?

And then in verse 41, "As soon as the lad was gone David rose out of a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, bowed himself three times, they kissed one another and wept one with another till David finally controlled himself." And they say this is some kind of a homosexual kiss. It's obviously not. The weeping and the emotion and this is not a kiss as you and I would define a kiss in the twentieth century. This was an embrace that men made, this was a holy kiss, the common exchange of greeting in the East.

And if you want to know how David felt about homosexuals, 2 Samuel 3:29 will tell you. And David is speaking and he says, "Let it rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house and let there never cease from the house of Joab, (for his murder, of course, of Abner,) let there never cease from that house one who has an issue (somebody with a medical problem), or one who is a leper or who leans on a staff, or who falleth on the sword (commit suicide), or lacks bread (or starves)." And the key phrase is the one who leans on a staff. The word is to lean on a spindle. "May they have always an effeminate son who weaves thread, leans on a spindle." That's what David implied as a part of a curse.

And even though 2 Samuel 1:26 says that David said to Jonathan, "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women," we are not to assume that it was some illicit kind of thing. In the days of David women were kept in harems. Women were pampered but women were not the friends of men. The exchange of ideas and the exchange of ideals and the exchange of concepts and the exchange of feelings was a man to man thing which surpassed the possibility of a relationship with a woman. David had a marvelous relationship with a man whom he esteemed and loved with a kind of love that is not a man to woman love, that's all it's saying. And they twist and pervert that.

We must recognize that this goes on. And this is what people do with the Bible. Now I just gave you an illustration of what they do to justify their sin. But let's look very specifically at the Scripture. And I guess we ought to begin at the beginning, Genesis 1 verse 27. Hang on we're going to go fast.

“So, God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him (Watch this.) male and female created He them." *Zakar* and *neqebah*, male, female; there was no third type. This was not a cultural condition. This is a divine creation. "And then they two were to be one flesh," and two men can't be one flesh and two women can't be one flesh. For the greatest indication of that one flesh is the product of a child, which is the perfect one-flesh result of the two.

Now if you understand the basic creation of God, you can begin to see what happens to pervert this. Follow along. God creates male and female, puts them together, says this is it, one man, one woman for life. Immediately Satan begins to pervert it and it comes very rapidly. In chapter 12 of Genesis — you don't need to look them up, just listen — in chapter 12 of Genesis verse 17 you have the threat of adultery. In chapter 19 of Genesis you have the threat in verse 36 of incest. In chapter 34 of Genesis verse 2, the threat of rape. In chapter 38 verse 15 and following: the threat of prostitution. And finally in chapter 19 of Genesis: the threat of homosexuality. All of these to pervert and adulterate God's intention. You might also add along the way, Lamech and the sin of polygamy. But all of these Satan brought about against God's order of male and female marriage for life.

Go to chapter 19 and this is the classic passage on the issue. The city is Sodom. God and two angels have just visited Abraham. You remember that there was a dispute between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abram and Abram said, you take the side of the country that you want. “And he pitched his tent toward Sodom.” He played with sin and he wound up in a terrifying situation.

Two angels and God visited Abraham but only two angels went to Sodom. God wouldn't go. So in verse 19, "The two angels came at evening and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom and Lot, seeing them, rose up to meet them and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground and said, ‘Behold now, my lords, turn in I pray you into your servant’s house and tarry all night and wash your feet. You shall rise up early and go on your way.’" Now angels can appear in physical form, they appear as men in bodies. And so he invites them in and says let me care for you. And they said, "Nay, we'll just abide in the street all night." And Lot, in effect, said, you don't understand Sodom, you'll never survive it.

"And he pressed upon them greatly and so they turned in unto him and entered into his house. And he made them a feast and did bake unleavened bread and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter."

Now here come all the men of Sodom, old ones, young ones from all over the city and they surround Lot's house. "And they called unto Lot and said unto him, ‘Where are the men who came into thee this night? Bring them out unto us that we may (What?) know them.’" What does that mean? We'd like to introduce ourselves? Well, I didn't get their name, we'd like to be pen pals. “We may know them.”

Well, it's very clear what it means in Genesis. “Cain knew his wife and she bore a child.” To know someone is the intimacy of the union that produces a child in marriage. They were talking about a sexual encounter. And Lot knew it, "So he went out at the door to them and shut the door behind him and said, ‘I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters who have not known man. Let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you." O Lot. Lot could...Lot would rather have them have a fornicating relationship with his daughters than a homosexual one. "Do ye to them as it is good in your eyes. Only unto these men do nothing because they have come under my roof for my protection. And they said, ‘Stand back.’" They weren't interested in women. "And they said again, ‘This one fellow came in to sojourn and he will needs be a judge. Now will we deal worse with thee than with them.’ And they pressed hard against the man, even Lot, and came near to break down the door." I mean, this is the burning.

This...I think I told you last time that it's not uncommon for a homosexual to have over 300 different partners in one year. And this was something new for them. They had never met these two before. "But the men put forth their hands," that is the angelic beings in the house, "and they pulled Lot into the house and shut the door. And then they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness." They instantly made them all blind.

Now what do you think their reaction was? Do they run in horror? No, it says, "They wearied themselves trying to find the door." You see, the burning is so tremendous that even in their blindness their lust overruled and they tried to find the door in the blackness of their own sightlessness. "And the men said unto Lot, ‘Hast thou here any besides, son-in-law, thy sons and thy daughters and whatsoever thy hast in the city, bring them out of this place for we will destroy this place.’"

You know what Troy Perry said? He said God destroyed that city because of a lack of hospitality. The word "know them," *yada*, *yada*, doesn't necessarily mean sexual knowledge, say the homosexuals. But if you study its use in the Old Testament that is definitely what it means in this context. And that city was not judged for a lack of hospitality. Some other homosexuals say, "Well, the reason God judged it was because they were going to have that homosexual relationship without being married, but as long you're married to the man it's okay." But what's interesting is that whenever the Bible refers...well, many times when the Bible refers to the sin of homosexuality in the future, it calls it the sin of sodomy, clearly indicative of what this sin was. It became a descriptive term for homosexuality.

There were multiple sins, I know that. According to Ezekiel, there were multiple sins for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. But this was definitely one of them.

In 1 Kings, just trying to cover a couple of more passages here, chapter 14, I think it is, verse 24, "And there were also sodomites in the land." And this is talking about the time of terrible apostasy in Judah. "There were sodomites in the land and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out." The term "sodomite" actually came to mean a male cultic prostitute, a male cultic prostitute, someone who functioned as a prostitute in some cult.

In Deuteronomy 23:17 it says, "There shall be no harlot of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." No harlots among the women and no harlots or male prostitutes among the men.

Now when there *was* one, what did God say to do? Look back at Leviticus chapter 18. Leviticus chapter 18 verse 22 says, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind, it is abomination, neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself there with. Neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto. It is confusion." Then he goes on to talk about defiling and the vomiting out of the land and so forth.

Then go over to chapter 20 verse 13. So we know it's an abomination. In chapter 20 verse 13, "If a man lies with mankind as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination, they shall surely be put to death and their blood shall be upon them." And so God's standard for this immoral thing was that it was an abomination and that the consequence was death. And yet in wonderful grace, as we saw in Isaiah, where there was repentance, there was full forgiveness and a special place in God's kingdom.

There's an account in Judges 19 of a similar nature. And it just talks about some base fellows in verse 22. They were making their hearts merry, getting drunk of course, probably. “And the men of the city, certain base fellows, beset the house round about and beat on the door and spoke to the master of the house, an old man, saying, ‘Bring forth the man who came into thine house that we may know him.’” And there it's the same thing again. They wanted to have a homosexual relationship. "And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them and said unto them, ‘Nay, my brethren, nay I pray you, do not so wickedly, seeing that this man is come into mine house. Do not this folly. Here's my daughter." Here's another guy who would rather give up his daughter than to allow for this. "I will bring out now and humble ye them and do with them — that is the daughter, maiden, the concubine — do whatever you want but unto this man, do not so vile a thing." And that is a comment as to the vileness of it that gives us insight into how the people understood God's command.

Now the New Testament doesn't change anything. Look at Matthew 5. And we're just giving you the scriptures. We're not taking the time to go into every little argument. It's pretty clear. In Matthew 5 Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets." He didn't come to change God's law, to destroy God's law, "but to fulfill it." He didn't come to negate the legal principle; He came to offer payment for its legal debt. He fulfilled the law, not by setting it aside but by paying what it demanded. Not only did He pay what it demanded in the virtue of His life but He did it in the virtue of His death as well. Jesus reiterated the purity of marriage. Jesus reiterated the divine standard with no change whatsoever. And so as you flow through the New Testament, the standard says the same.

Now look at Romans chapter 1. And we're right into the heart of the New Testament, the standard is the same. It is when men are corrupted and men are abandoned by God, that verse 26 says, the women exchange the natural use for that which is against nature, and the men, verse 27, do the very same, burning in their lust, men working with men that which is not fitting. Literally, the unseemly thing means the shameful thing.

It goes with apostasy and that's what I want you to note. It goes with rebellion against God. The thought of a Christian gay person is utterly ridiculous. Now I suppose there could be a Christian who, just like any other sin, committed an act of homosexuality and for a Christian the Lord would forgive, wash it clean. But there couldn't be a Christian who went around defending that as if it were a righteous lifestyle. And there's a big difference.

Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and see the next passage that deals with it. Verse 9, Paul says, "Don't you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived. Neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor effeminate (That could well sort of pull together the transvestite, transsexual thought.) nor homosexuals." The Authorized says, “abusers of themselves with mankind.” And, boy, that's really graphic terminology. And here Paul condemns it again.

And then in 11, "And such were some of you but you were washed." Why? Because that stuff was filthy, you see. You had to be washed from that, sanctified, justified. It is an incredible thing that the church could exist in a day when people say this is a righteous kind of lifestyle, an alternative. Paul says you've got to be washed of that stuff. I mean, imagine, the Parents and Friends of Christian Murderers or the Parents and Friends of Christian Fornicators. Wouldn't that be a nice organization? The Parents and Friends of Christian Fornicators is having a luncheon. The Parents and Friends of Christian Adulterers is having a picnic.

First Timothy chapter 1 verse 10 says, "The law of God is made to condemn." And the ones that it's made to condemn, verse 10, are fornicators. And the next one: "Those that defile themselves with mankind," that's homosexuals, fornicators and homosexuals, "and any other thing contrary to sound doctrine." The root for that term there is...It's actually sodomites. The root means to go to bed with a man. And that's contrary to sound doctrine.

Now let me pull together what the Scripture says by having you look at the seventh verse of Jude, seventh verse of Jude. Here in Jude, God is showing His judgment on apostasy, showing His hatred and His condemnation of those who are apostates. And he says if you want to see an example of judgment, if you want to see an example of God's condemning wrath, if you want to see the vengeance of a holy God against sin, look at Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, in like manner, because they were destroyed, because they were given over to fornication and a going after strange flesh and they are therefore set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Sodom and Gomorrah guilty of the sin of sodomy, of homosexuality, becomes —

watch this — the living illustration of God's vengeance in eternal damnation. Romans 1, now here it comes, says this is how far they went, all the way to this vile thing. And Jude 7 says when God judged the city that did that, it became the living illustration of God's vengeance.

And in a sense then Jude sort of modifies Romans 1. If Romans 1 is the worst sin, then the destruction of Sodom is the greatest illustration, do you see, of God's vengeance. And from one end of Scripture, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah becomes the byword for God's judgment.

Listen to Deuteronomy. Don't try to follow me, just listen. Deuteronomy 29:23: And here God is warning, "The whole land thereof is brimstone and salt and burning that is not sown nor bareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath." He's warning His people, and Sodom and Gomorrah is the illustration.

In Deuteronomy chapter 32 and verse 32, "For their vine is the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter, their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of asps. To me belongeth vengeance." It's just like Sodom, He says.

The prophet Isaiah, chapter 1, says, "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your land foreigners devoured in your presence and it is desolate as overthrown by foreigners. Except the

Lord of host had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been like Sodom." Again the illustration that Sodom is the picture of devastation.

Isaiah 3:9: "The show of their countenance doth witness against them and they declare their sin like Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul." In the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah we find again how Isaiah uses Sodom as the illustration, verse 19, "And Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans, excellency shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

And you will go into the book of Jeremiah and you will find Sodom and Gomorrah is his illustration of judgment. And then you will go to the book of Ezekiel and you will find it is his illustration of judgment. You will find it in the fourth chapter of Lamentations. You will find it in the fourth chapter of Amos. You will find it in the second chapter of Zephaniah. You will find our Lord used it in the tenth chapter of Matthew and in the eleventh chapter of Matthew and in the tenth of Luke and the seventeenth of Luke. And Paul uses it in the ninth of Romans and Peter in 2 Peter 2, and John in Revelation 11. Over and over again Sodom becomes the illustration of God's vengeance.

If this is the worst sin, then Sodom and Gomorrah's judgment is the severest exercise of God's vengeance. And the sad thing is when the church accepts this and people accept it. You know what's sad about it? People say, "Oh, you're not loving; you're not being kind to those people." You want to know something? If you want to really do a job on them and damn them to hell forever, just tell them it's OK to do that. But if you want to help them, then tell them it’s sin, because until they see it as sin they cannot come to God for forgiveness, right? Don't say it's unloving. Hey, we all were saved out of some sin but we weren’t saved until we knew we were in sin and needed a Savior, right?

I will say what I will say about homosexuality and I'll say it over and over and I'll say it as often as I need to to whomever I need to say it because it's the only way they'll ever be delivered is to see it for what it is. They are sinful. They are alienated from God. And the love of their own vile sinfulness makes them want to justify it and the deepest ugliest pit of self-justification is to say that the Bible permits it or teaches it or advocates it. That is simply to pursue the path of destruction.

Now let me say something to you. There's no such thing as a homosexual in a technical sense; there are just people who choose to do homosexual sins. And some supposed new report came out and said, "Well, we now believe it's something you're born with." That's right. You're born with a wretched rotten sin nature. And because of certain temptations and certain problems, some people go that way into that kind of sin. But it is a perversion of God's design. It is not something that's a result of your genetic structure, it's not something you can't help, it's not the fault of your dominating mother or your

passive father, although they may contribute to the temptation problem, it's a choice you make. And you choose to do it and you choose to keep on doing it or you choose to be changed.

And you know what's so wonderful? When you realize that it isn't something you're born with but it's a sin, then you realize you can be delivered from it like any other sin. That's essentially, you know, a liberating thing.

I want to share a letter I got this week and I know the person who wrote won't mind cause I won't use their name, but it just blessed my heart.

“Dear John MacArthur: I realize you probably get some criticism for preaching on subjects like homosexuality. I'm not writing to you for that purpose. (You know, after that line I was OK, cause I was waiting, waiting to get it.) I've been attending Grace Church for so long. One night while attending a baptism service I was moved by a young man's testimony that he was saved from a homosexual lifestyle. I was saved in 1977. I was a lesbian. I was so full of joy that the Lord took that sin away that I thought it would be a good testimony to say I'd been saved from that lifestyle. I was told by the pastor of the church I attended to keep it to myself because people at the church would fear it and not understand my feeling, and just praise the Lord for taking my sin away.

For four years I have kept this thing bottled up inside of me. I feared I would be condemned by my fellow Christians if I told anyone. After I attended a number of baptisms, I wanted to be able to give my testimony because it seemed that it wasn't wrong to tell other Christians what you were saved from. And when you were talking about homosexuality, all of a sudden I felt like a terrific weight had been lifted off my shoulders, the tears started flowing and they didn't stop until you finished your sermon. I felt like God took away all the bottled-up emotions I've held inside for four years and allowed me to get it out in the open. I really want to thank you for the sermon. I know Jesus saved me from my sin years ago, but tonight I feel all clean because the burden of hiding my sin is gone.”

You see, it is so totally liberating to know that it is a sin; it is not something you're stuck with because you're weird. And by the way, they walk funny because that's a signal to each other. They don't have to walk that way. They're just like everybody else, only they've chosen a lifestyle. But God can deliver them out of that life style. Such were some of you, and right in this audience we have some ex-murderers, maybe, adulterers, fornicators, liars, thieves, robbers, homosexuals. You can be liberated because it's a sin. God can take it out of your life if you recognize it for what it is. “There's no temptation taken you but such is as common to man. God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted above that you're able but will with the temptation also make a way of (What?) escape, that

you may be able to bear it.”

You might be tempted in that area. You know, there are some people who are more tempted toward adultery than others. There are some people that are more tempted to stealing than others. And there are some people, because of whatever circumstances, are more tempted toward this than others. But you can have the same victory that we have in temptation, through Christ.

I've got another letter. I have to share this with you. And I haven't really been preaching, I've just been kind of talking my way through the Scripture tonight, so indulge me another moment. I want to share with you.

“I was the mother of a former homosexual. Our family went through the `accept yourself' guilt feelings trip. Well the emphasis on the domineering mother as the cause nearly drove me to insanity. I felt thoroughly incapable of going on as a mother to my other children. To make a long story short, the verse `With God all things are possible,' came to mind, and it was. Our son accepted this thing as sin. It took ten years to overcome it but he did and he's now happily married and redeemed and our whole family has grown and we thank Him. A redeemed mom.”

Let him who is without sin cast the first stone, right? We're all sinners. This is just one that represents the pit of sinfulness. But by the grace of God we might have gone to that pit had not Jesus saved us. We understand it for what it is. We understand that God can forgive and cleanse. Let's pray.

It's been good tonight, Lord, just to kind of talk as a family about this thing. Such a horrible thing. But I guess when I think about this I always remember that You're so holy that one little tiny white lie would stain the entire dimensions of heaven. Any little sin, the ones we pass by, are utterly vile in Your sight. So may we not think we're the holy ones but know that we, too, are sinners in need of Your salvation. We pray tonight for any in our midst who are caught in this kind of lifestyle. It's hard because the burning is so deep, the lust is so strong, the inversion so captivating, the experiences so bizarre and unforgettable that they stain the mind and they're so hard to get rid of. We think of the man who said, "The good things I forget so easily, the evil I remember so long." We pray that You'll deliver folks from this and from memories of past experiences. Fill up their minds with the things that edify. Set their affections on things above. Give them deliverance from temptation. Lord, we would even ask that this church might know the testimonies of those delivered from this, that our hearts might rejoice with them. May they be free from the bondage of this horrifying sin.

O Lord, we see the world around us and we see it in Romans 1 so clearly. Not only are they condoning all of this evil, but they're actually having pleasure in the people that do it, lifting them up. God help us to stand true in this sad, perverse generation. And in love, to call sin sin that the sinner may see himself as You see him and repent and be washed.

Father, I pray that You'll speak, that You'll touch hearts. Help us all to be aware of our sin and grateful that You've provided forgiveness for us. Thank You that You eagerly receive sinners who come to You. In Christ's name. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2016 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).