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When "Gay" Means "Hurting"

by Murray McLeod-Boyle

WE LIVE IN AN AGE where the Christian moorings that have stopped society drifting into dangerous waters have become badly eroded and are threatening to break. This situation is compounded by certain groups actively attacking the anchor chains with blow torches and hacksaws.

No group is probably more active in this arena than the homosexual community. They continue to push for acceptance in every sphere of life. This was evidenced by a recent decision to allow a "lesbian" to undergo artificial insemination because she desired to have children.

In light of this, we must ask, what is the appropriate Christian response to homosexuality? Should we be, "open and affirming" or condemnatory? Should we love the sinner and detest the sin? What should our reply be to these people who are "gay" and "hurting?"

Let us look together at two different approaches; one humanistic and the other Biblical.

The title of this article is taken from a sermon by the Rev. Jerry Alan Smith.¹ As the title may suggest, the position presented is one which is extremely sympathetic to the homosexual perspective.²

The reason that this sermon is of interest lies in the fact that it is an example of modern liberal thinking. That is to say, that this sermon is not founded upon a plain understanding of Scripture. In fact we are obliged to say that even though Scripture is used during the sermon, the hermeneutic employed indicates that

Scripture is being subtly attacked, *not* upheld.

1.0 An overview of Smith's Argument

THE OPENING of the sermon is instructive in that it states:

"This issue (homosexuality) is at the forefront in every major denomination; it provides prime material for press, both secular and religious; and it has caused more schism in the church, individual and collective, than any issue since slavery."

Here in a nutshell are the basic issues. The fact that homosexuality has caused great schisms in the church is testimony to the certainty that it is not of God. Secondly, the topic still, in one sense, concerns the issue of slavery; the question is, which master are people going to serve? Last, but by no means least, the issue is *primarily* about Scripture — whether it is to be believed nor not. Smith introduced the topic of "slavery" in order to gain a comparison with another great social upheaval that is immediately understood by all. However, his choice of comparison is deeper than he seems to realise. For just as the American Civil War was *not* about slavery, but worldviews, so the debate over homosexuality has little to do with sexual orientation, sexual preferences, sexual evolution, and the like.

The argument over homosexuality is about one thing only — *fallen, rebellious, man trying to appease his searing conscience in the face of a righteous God who has proscribed homosexuality as an abomination* — and we must be aware of the many smokescreens that have been, and are being, laid down in order to cover over the crux of the matter.

This then means that those who try to justify homosexuality will have to do two things; a) they will appeal to sources other

than Scripture for an authoritative voice, and b) they will seek to overturn Scripture's plain message.³

Looking at this sermon by Mr. Smith, we see both of these traits exhibited.

2.0 Psychology versus Scripture

IN ONLY THE SECOND paragraph of this sermon the *American Psychological Association* is introduced, and a free offer of a "brochure" published by them is made. This brochure is "commended" to the congregation because of its findings.

According to Smith the conclusions are:

1. "That gay and lesbian persons are inherently that way";
2. "That their sexual identity is built in — not a "choice"."

Smith, giving commentary on these findings, announces that: "Any person's sexuality, yours, mine, and theirs, is part of us, of who we are — and it does not change. *Behaviour can change, but nature cannot.*"⁴

So here at the very outset, Smith declares that psychology has the drop on theology. Before even mentioning the Bible, he has set it aside in favour of that humanistic religion known as psychology. Then having done this, he says boldly, "Let's talk for a moment about the Bible and homosexuality."

Of first importance we must note carefully the words used. Smith does not want to talk about, what the Bible *says* about homosexuality; only about homosexuality and the Bible. In other words, there is no call to interact with what Scripture *says*, only a desire to include it in a general discussion.

Therefore it comes as no surprise that Smith turns Scripture on its head by saying: "The writers of Biblical times, as with everyone up to the last several years or decades, did not have a clue about sexual identity as we now understand it."

Why were those of past generations so unable to accept homosexuality? "Procreation!"

Smith posits that the survival of the tribe depended on procreation and therefore any wastage of the male seed

¹ Preached at Irondequoit UCC (United Church of Christ), Rochester, New York. It would seem from this sermon that whilst it was preached in a UCC church, Smith, himself, belongs to a church/congregation that is only "affiliated" with the UCC.

² I believe the UCC were the first denomination to accept practicing Homosexuals for ordination.

³ This is especially so of those who seek to justify homosexuality in the name of God.

⁴ Emphasis added.

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The very fact that Smith feels comfortable in dismissing Scripture's message in the way he does, clearly indicates that he believes the Bible to be embedded in a cultural context from which it needs liberation. Hence, there are no ultimate standards that are to be heeded and obeyed, only descriptions of how men and women in past eras wrestled with the concept of God.

Having dismissed Scripture, Smith needs to find an authoritative source on which to lean, and for this task he chooses that broken reed, psychology.

Yet, we are forced to ask: What justification is there for believing that the findings of psychologists are worthy of being considered as absolute in this matter? The simple answer is, none!

We are used to the media telling us how science has established certain facts in regard to homosexuality. Among these are the claims that psychology no longer lists homosexuality as an illness and that science has found a genetic link that makes homosexuals what they are.

In light of this it is instructive to consider what brought about this change of definition.

Daniel Heimbach,⁶ in an article dealing with the issue of homosexuality and the military, notes these changes and gives an insight as to how these changes occurred. Says he:

A second battle in the larger social context . . . is the battle to capture the authority of science pertaining to homosexual desires and conduct. It is now *de rigueur* in the media and most other institutions of public discourse to presume that of course modern science has determined that homosexual behavior is biologically predetermined, irreversible, and though different from heterosexual behavior is nevertheless equally natural, at least for persons "born that way." Not only is this perception spread by individuals outside the medical community, it is often encouraged by medical authorities and scientists as well. For example on March 30, 1993, Edward Martin, a Clinton Administration political appointee . . . issued an information memorandum for all secretaries of the military departments stating in part:

Homosexuality was once medically defined as an aberrant sexual behavior.

However, years of medical, psychologic(al) and sexual research consistently failed to demonstrate the presence of any specific . . . clinical syndrome and/or psychosocial profile in practicing homosexuals of either sex.

By 1975, the American Psychological Association no longer considered homosexuality an aberrant sexual behavior. By 1976, the American Psychiatric Association enacted the same resolution and removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. . . .

We are not aware of any scientific evidence that individual sexual preferences, in and by themselves, be they homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual, affect . . . disease incidence, medical costs or crime rate in the population at large . . . homosexuality, per se, cannot scientifically be characterized as a medical issue. . . .

In fact, nothing is further from the actual records of scientific research and the history of medical treatments. . . .

What transpired as the American Psychiatric Association was being pressured to change its designation of homosexuality, as well as the manner in which a shift in designation was achieved, is a very revealing story (Italics added). In 1973, homosexual activists persuaded members of the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. In its place they were persuaded to create a new category, "sexual orientation disturbance." This, they were told, would satisfy advocates seeking to promote the idea that homosexuality might be a natural sexual variant, but it would not require members of the association to change their medical views on the subject. Thus, the change responded to an intense political campaign and was not based on the discovery of new scientific evidence. Action was rushed through by a few advocates who circumvented normal channels because the leaders of the field were deemed opposed to the desired alteration.⁷ Finally, the manner by which the change passed the APA was not by direct vote on the issue. Rather, wording to change the nomenclature of

was frowned upon, and considered to be a "sin against the family and against God's plan."

This reasoning is further catapulted into the realm of subjectivity when it is stated that "if we believed humanity to be an endangered species we might conclude the same."

Hence we see that Smith, who claims to have come to this position through "much study, thought, and prayer," can be seen to have; a) excluded God from the equation, and b) made sexuality contingent to man's environmental position.

These quotations reveal two important details to us. In the first instance, there is no hint of the Bible, or its writers, as being inspired by God. That is to say, in layman's terms, that there is absolutely nothing that is special about the Bible — it is a merely human work. Secondly, and closely allied with the first, is the idea that man and his religion are the result of an evolutionary process. There is certainly no concept of an immutable God who does not change; only one of changing values and beliefs as the world in which man lives changes, forcing him to readapt to his present context.⁵

for another. Does this sound familiar? It should. Here is Fletcher's situational ethics in operation.

⁶ Daniel R. Heimbach, *The Bible in the Moral War over the Rejection of Homosexuality by the Military Services: A View from Inside the Pentagon*. PREMISE, Volume II, Number 7, August 27, 1995. Page 10.

⁷ For more detail see R. Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis* (New York: Basic, 1981); and Charles W. Socarides, "Sexual Politics and Scientific Logic: The Issue of Homosexuality," in *Hope for Homosexuality* (Washington, DC: Free Congress, 1988), pp.46-64).

⁵ In other words, man becomes environmentally orientated. His morals, thoughts, ethics, laws, and desires are all governed by the local environment. Therefore what is right for one, can be equally wrong

homosexuality was linked to a statement supporting civil rights and members were forced to adopt the strategy for change or put themselves on record as against civil rights. Consequently, the APA vote to change the nomenclature of homosexuality was made contrary to the professional judgement of most scientists working in the field, against the position of leaders in the professional study and treatment of homosexuality, and without regard to the medical evidence.⁸

What this illustrates is that political agenda — rather than scientific fact — has brought about many of these changes in definition. In other words, the homosexuals have tried to make their depravity look more wholesome by simply changing what the text book says about their condition. However, as Linleigh Roberts has pointed out, changing the manual so as to make it conform to the disease, does not, in any way, legitimise immorality or make the problem disappear.⁹

Therefore, in regard to Smith's attempt to lean upon that broken reed of psychology, it would seem that it has splintered and pierced his own hand. Moreover, as there is no solid evidence to suggest that homosexuality is anything less than an aberration, those who attempt to use its findings as a foundation to validate homosexuality have compromised themselves from the beginning.

This then leads us to question the approach that Smith has adopted with regard to the Biblical text.

3.0 Overturning Scripture's Plain Message

AS NOTED EARLIER, Smith's view of Scripture is extremely low, a fact which is further attested by the hermeneutic that he applies in the case of homosexuality.

3.1 The Perverted Hermeneutic

Having already degraded the Bible by stating that Scripture's reaction to homosexuality was because of "procreation," Smith continues to relativise Scripture by finding convenient ways to

⁸ This article appeared with the following acknowledgment: Dr. Daniel Heimbach is Assoc. Professor of Theology and Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC. This essay is reprinted with permission and originally appeared in *God and Caesar*, Michael Bauman and David Hall, eds. (Christian Publications, 1994).

⁹ Linleigh J. Roberts, *Let Us Make Man* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1988), pp. 43-44.

overturn its plainly stated message. Says he:

We should note that sex between women was not really discussed — that did not seem to them to impact the family's future. They (Biblical writers) did proscribe the rape of one man by another. We stand against rape of any kind. They stood against a heterosexual man having sex with another man. We can stand with them — that would be unnatural.

They spoke against the ritual prostitution practiced in the temples of the Baal cults — male and female. We stand against prostitution. They spoke against the male-male pedophilia widely practised in the Greek culture of Biblical times. We speak against pedophilia, too. The "we" here includes our gay and lesbian sisters and brothers as well as the rest of us: we are against unnatural acts, rape, prostitution, and pedophilia. Period.

The Genesis story about Lot . . . when analyzed, can be seen to be about showing proper hospitality, as Lot tried to protect those who had sought safety in his house. The sexual aspect is in the unnatural act of the crowd of men who came in violence to rape them — male to male rape long having been a show of power, a way to subjugate and degrade others.

Yes, the Bible refers to men lying with other men as an abomination, but first, that is in the context of not knowing about the inherent nature of sexual identity,¹⁰ and second, so are a few other activities so identified as abomination: Egyptians eating with Hebrews, a scale that gives false weight, eating crustaceans (read that 'lobsters'), children talking back to their parents, lying, oppressing the poor and needy, committing robbery, reneging on a pledge, or offering improper prayer or worship — among other things. *So, on the grand scale of things, abomination isn't quite what we might think at first. Even if they had known then what we know now.*¹¹

In summary Smith then states that: "Dietary restrictions, rules for commerce, and restrictions on which people the Israelites could associate with were given the same proscriptions as homosexual behaviour."

¹⁰ Does the Creator not know what He created the creature to be?

¹¹ Emphasis added. Note the constant refrain of 'we know more than they did,' as though God's Law was founded totally upon man's ability to understand some anatomical function.

Having stated his case and dismissed Scripture, Smith arrives at the water shed. What is he going to do with this long list of justification for perversion? He is going to justify it some more, but this time from the New Testament.

With a casual, "let's turn to our scripture for the morning," Smith introduces Acts 10:9-16, which reads:

About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

Here is the crux of Smith's argument: "That blanket full of animals included clean and unclean — animals that could be eaten and those which were an "abomination." Peter heard the word: "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." And we must hear it too. The restrictions and the separation of the world into clean and unclean are the actions of humans, not God . . . In case we missed the point, a few verses later the word comes again as Peter says, "God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean." Anyone. Anyone."

Smith obviously believes he has pulled off a hermeneutical triumph. By linking homosexuality with dietary restrictions he has attempted to find a New Testament justification for overturning Old Testament sanctions against homosexuality. If we grant for a moment that this thesis is sound, however, we see that Smith has, in his own words, also justified: "false weight(s), eating crustaceans, children talking back to their parents, lying, oppressing the poor and needy, committing robbery, reneging on a pledge, (and) offering improper prayer or worship." Such false hermeneutics must be deplored, for they make the Word of God meaningless and give justification to lawlessness.

3.2 A Proper Hermeneutic

Smith is correct in only one area of his sermon and that is when he says that "the Bible refers to men lying with men as an

abomination." Even he realises that at face value the Scriptures have nothing but condemnation for homosexuality, and that is precisely why he tries to overturn Scripture's plain message.

You see, Smith's effort to point out all the various sins that are listed as an "abomination" by Scripture failed at on crucial point — *he did not mention the penalty attached to such transgressions*. This aspect is important as those things listed as abominations by no means draw the same penalty.

Let us consider some examples:

Egyptians and Hebrews: Genesis 43:32 states that, "they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians, who ate with him, by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome¹² to the Egyptians."¹³

Whilst the text points out that Egyptians were not fond of eating with Hebrews the text does not say that such things were punishable in any way. The text simply gives commentary on what was taking place and answers the question, why did Joseph not eat with his brothers?

Dietary Laws: In Deuteronomy 14:3 we read, "You shall not eat any detestable (abominable) thing." This passage then goes on to list those animals that are clean and unclean; those that may be eaten and those which must be avoided. Again we search in vain to find a penalty attached to these restrictions at this point. Even if we broaden our search, we find that contact with an unclean animal rendered someone unclean until evening, at which time they were to undergo the prescribed washing (c.f. Lev. 11:1-47; 17:13-15). Further investigation shows that severer penalties linked with eating food have to do with other transgression such as, eating the peace offering whilst unclean (Lev. 7:19-21), and eating blood (Lev. 7:27; 17:14).

So it is simply not good enough to try and justify the acceptance of homosexuality on the grounds that something else described by the same term has now been made acceptable under the New Testament dispensation.

3.3 What the Bible actually says about Homosexuality

This then leads us to consider the Bible's condemnation of homosexuality and the penalty given to it.

¹² "Loathsome" is the translation of the Hebrew word for abomination. See Strong's 8441. Note that the comparisons made at this point deal only with translations of this particular Hebrew word.

¹³ See also Gen. 46:34.

In Leviticus 18:22 homosexuality is proscribed with the following words: "You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."

At this point no further assessment is made about homosexuality. It is described as an abomination, and left at that, with no penalty being prescribed. Yet, unlike the previous cases we are able to find that God has handed out the death sentence in regard to this particular abomination.

If we keep reading this chapter we are confronted by the following:²⁴ "Do not defile yourselves by any of *these* things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled.²⁵ 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have visited its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants.²⁶ 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments, and *shall not do any of these abominations, neither* the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you²⁷ (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these *abominations*, and the land has become defiled);²⁸ so that the land may not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nation which has been before you.²⁹ *For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do so shall be cut off from among their people.*³⁰ 'Thus you are to keep My charge, that you *do not practice any of the abominable customs* which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them; I am the LORD your God."³¹

Here the LORD places all the perversions found in Leviticus 18, including homosexuality and bestiality, under the one judgement. These practices are considered as abominations and those who indulge in them are to be "cut off" from among God's people.

Whilst the phrase, "to cut off," is a little ambiguous, it is commonly held to refer to an untimely death caused by divine intervention, rather than any kind of excommunication from Israel itself.¹⁵ This interpretation is to be preferred for several reasons, a few of which are relevant here.

In the first place, most of these perversions are crimes of secrecy. For example, people do not commit sexual acts, decent or otherwise, in public places. Hence, the threat of excommunication seems to be a very soft deterrent considering that the offenders may never be caught.

Secondly, in the context of the passage, we see that the previous inhabitants of the land were themselves "cut off" for

¹⁴ Emphases added.

¹⁵ See: G.J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Ed. R.K. Harrison; (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988) p. 285.

practicing these abominations. How were these people 'cut off?' Were they deported to other lands, or regions? Were they allowed to stay within the land whilst being ostracised by the Israelites? No! They were put to the sword — they paid for their abominable practices with their lives.

Last of all, and of greater importance, is the fact that the Bible prescribes the death penalty for these same sexual wrongdoings at other points. Hence, it would seem that the LORD is giving warning that even if man can be fooled He can not. His warning then is simple; you may escape the due penalty at the hands of men, but you will not escape from Me.

In light of this, we see that homosexuality is both described as an abomination and a capital offence, thereby setting it well and truly apart from those other "abominations" listed by Smith.

3.4 Why is Homosexuality an Abomination Punishable by Death?

It is instructive at this point to note that homosexuality is referred to as both an "abomination" and a "confusion." The word translated as "abomination" refers to that which is abhorrent and so can be used, as we have seen above, of one race finding another race loathsome, or of some food being detestable. The word denotes more of a personal abhorrence rather than something that is morally or ethically wrong, and that is why it has such a broad usage. The second word, however, signifies that which is out of the natural order. Strong's Enhanced Lexicon defines it as "confusion (violation of nature or divine order)" or as "perversion (in sexual sin)."

Focusing then on those transgressions which Scripture condemns as either an abomination or a confusion and for which it allots the death penalty, we find there are but three: homosexuality, bestiality and idolatry.¹⁶

These categories, whilst diverse in one sense, all have common threads. In the first instance all are, or have associated with them, some type of sexual perversion. However, this is not the reason for the Bible's outright denunciation of these practices.

The reason that each of these offences has been proscribed by Yahweh is that they are all blasphemies. Why? Because each one of these infractions constitutes a direct attack on the Character of God. For example, if we make a comparison with the dietary laws, we note that they are based upon God's holiness and work of redemption. To illustrate this let us look

¹⁶ C.F Homosexuality: Lev. 18:22 and Lev. 20:13; Bestiality: Lev. 18:23 and Lev. 20:15-16; Idolatry: Deut. 13:14 and Deut. 17:4.

momentarily at Leviticus 20:25, where we read: "You are therefore to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; and you shall not make yourselves detestable by animal or by bird or by anything that creeps on the ground, which I have separated for you as unclean." Why? v.26 "You are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine (Emphasis added).

Here, the point is basic: God separated to himself a holy people, and to these separate (holy) people he gave a separate (holy) food. Furthermore, it must be noted that as these dietary laws were imposed as part of God's separating work, it meant that infringements of them could be adequately dealt with by purification rites. However, such is not the case with those violations listed above.

In the Biblical blueprint we see that God made man. This man He put in dominion over the animals. Man, taking his attributes from God, was made to rule over the animals and be separate from them. However, in creating man above the animals but below Himself, God planned that man would worship Him alone. There were to be no other contenders for the affections of man's heart. God would be worshipped and glorified, as man, the crowning glory of creation, functioned according to God's specifications. Yet each of the abominations listed above invert this process in a way that effectually spits in God's face.

A. Homosexuality: In homosexuality Adam and Eve become Adam and Steve. God made man *male and female — in His image*. As male and female man is a reflection of God's own being and that is why He designed us as we are. He made man male and female to complement each other. God made us like Himself so that we might understand "individuality" as well as "society," the greatest expression of which is seen in monogamous heterosexual marriage — the two become one flesh.¹⁷

Yet, homosexuality destroys the image of God as male and female in man. It degrades man by asserting that he is complete within himself. Homosexuality effectually decrees that man as male alone is a whole, and that he is not in need of supplementation. As such homosexuality becomes a form of idolatry as man is adored and enamoured as the highest being. This is supported by the Apostle Paul in his comments found in Romans chapter 1. There we read that: "²²Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the

incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures."

This passage clearly teaches that when man exchanged the truth of God he did not enter a vacuum. Rather, he wilfully turned his affections toward another object. One of those objects was that "of corruptible man."

However, we commit a grave error if we believe that this passage refers only to images of stone, wood and precious metals. For Paul goes on to mention the exchanging of natural relations — relations as God had ordained — and in so doing points to *living* men and women as examples.

Furthermore, the homosexual despises the creation mandate to be "fruitful and multiply," and wastes the male seed, Smith's evolutionary — gibberish notwithstanding, in lustful trysts that satisfy only his own base selfish desires.

B. Bestiality: Bestiality assails God's character in that the action tries to make a union between man and animal. As noted above, man was deliberately created to be above the animals and this was accomplished in his being made in the image of God. In other words, man is an analogue of God. Man was created to think God's thoughts after Him, and we derive many of our distinctive features from this very fact. This is, in essence, what sets man apart from animal.

Therefore, the desire to practise coitus (the purpose of which is the exchange of intimacy and procreation,) with an animal degrades man to the point of declaring that he is one with the animals. Bestiality openly declares that evolutionary theory is correct and that man truly is, just another animal.

Intercourse, communicative and sexual, the highest blessing bestowed on man in creation, is spurned as man seeks sexual gratification from that which is unable in any way to understand, appreciate or reciprocate the action to which it is subjected.

C. Idolatry:¹⁸ In considering this aspect, we need to turn our thoughts once again to Romans chapter 1. There we see that the natural consequence of denying God is idolatry. However, as we noted earlier, man did not simply do away with God. Rather, he actively exchanged God for something else. In other words, man tried to replace God with another entity whilst at the same time trying to retain all the attributes of God.

Being made in the image of God, man was made to be dependent upon God. Therefore, when man did away with God

he had to find something or someone that would fill that void. Hence, he set up idols to be the object of his worship; He established shrines and high places in which to offer sacrifices; and then he sought out mediums and spiritists and he engaged in necromancy in order to find direction for his life.

In doing this, man despised God's position as Creator and as the One True Object of man's worship. Furthermore, man scorned God as the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent One, who alone knows the facts about today, yesterday, and tomorrow.

Therefore, in concluding this section, we see why these three abominations draw the harsh penalty that they do. Simply stated, they are not simple sins of misconduct, but sins of gross insubordination that mock the great Creator God on whom all men are patterned. Hence, Smith's thesis founders dismally as it fails to take into account the penalties attached to each "abomination," and the reason they were attached in the first place.

4.0 What of Psychology's Claims?

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US now to refocus upon the claims made by psychology and trumpeted so boldly by Smith, namely that: "Any person's sexuality, yours, mine, and theirs, is part of us, of who we are — and it does not change. *Behaviour can change, but nature cannot.*"

We have seen thus far that the Bible denies homosexuality as a valid relationship because such relationships are founded upon God Himself and, therefore, must reflect God — something homosexuality does not and cannot do.

However, what are we to do with the claims that homosexuality is a part of one's nature and not simply, something that is behavioural?

Here, again, Heimbach is informative:

We must note the fact that while much energy and expense has gone into the search for a biological cause for homosexuality, scientists have found no evidence able to withstand testing. Over this same time period, the study of gender identity has only added strength to the body of accumulated evidence showing homosexuality to be a learned behavior shaped and strengthened by external factors. The scientific evidence supporting the traditional view is extremely strong and includes important factors such as the possibility of reversal, the insufficiency of associated biological traits, the power of cultural factors to affect incidence rates, and the inability to

¹⁷ Here we may note that even the anatomical differences between man and woman are designed so as to compliment each other.

¹⁸ The term "idolatry" is here used in its broadest sense and includes spiritism as well as the direct worship of false gods.

maintain favorable genetic indicators through reproduction.

What this clearly illustrates is that homosexuality in no more a genetic condition than kleptomania, homicidal mania or claustrophobia for that matter. If change can take place then the condition can only be behavioural.

To illustrate this let me use the issues of anorexia and obesity. A person's genetic make-up determines the height and size of that particular individual. However, that size can be altered by starving the body or, conversely, by the individual becoming a glutton. Either of these actions will alter the body immensely, but neither alters the body genetically. Any changes that take place in bone structure, blood, body tissue or heart, are side effects of the persons behaviour; they are not congenital.

However, the Scriptures go further than this. As noted above the Old Testament describes homosexuality as "tebel" — a confusion. Likewise, the Apostle Paul, in Romans 1:26-27, describes the homosexual act as "unnatural," or that which is against nature. Paul is simply stating a fact — homosexuals are not born, they are made.

God has designed man, male and female, and their natural function is to join with each other. Consequently, any other association is unnatural. Moreover, we note that homosexuality is the end result of a judgement handed out by God for constant rebellion. That is to say that homosexuality is the ultimate apostasy; the ultimate turning from God.

Hence, from a Biblical point of view, homosexuality can never be viewed as the result of genetics, for man's genes have been made male and female by the Creator who is forever blessed. This is what man is, what he was created to be, and any deviation is simply the expression of wilful rebellion against God.

Related to our discussion at this point is the question of, where does this argument about "genetics" end? For example, when will we see paedophilia,

necrophilia, homicide, suicide and kleptomania all justified on the same basis. Never again will you have to pay a speeding fine. You will simply inform the judge: "Your Honour, I was genetically engineered for speed. I can not help going fast. I was made this way."

What this ultimately teaches us is that the whole genetics debate is nothing more than antinomian man trying to justify antinomian man's behaviour. This being the case, it is not a wonder that this position is supported by psychology, for its sole goal is to label all as "victims," and to justify individual and societal wrongdoings by shifting the blame.

However, Scripture condemns all these efforts as unnatural acts that go against man's design. We have been created to be responsible and accountable creatures, and one day we all will have to give an account — even those who deny their accountability.

5.0 Female Homosexuality

THE LAST POINT that needs to be addressed is that of female homosexuality. Today it has become popular to speak of "gay" and "lesbian" people in order to differentiate between male and female. This is a distinction that should be avoided as it tends to take away from the actual transgression. These terms are used to lessen the stigma that is so rightly attached to the word "homosexual." This stated let us continue.

Earlier, Smith commented that the Old Testament did not deal with this topic, as it did not seem to impact upon the future of the family and tribe. As we have already refuted Smith's low view of Scripture, there is no need to look at his reasoning here. However, we are left with the question of, what does the Bible say about female homosexuality.

If it were not for Romans chapter one, female homosexuality would be passed without mention. This is interesting

considering that when bestiality is mentioned it is proscribed for both male and female in consecutive laws.¹⁹

Since God has made man as male and female in His image, what is true of man is also true of woman. This is particularly so in regard to fundamental moral issues, such as those discussed earlier in this paper. It would seem best, therefore, to parallel male and female homosexuality in all respects. This is particularly so when one considers that both male and female are treated the same way in regard to adultery.

Hence, homosexuality, male or female, is an abomination in God's eyes and something that is punishable by death.

6.0 Conclusion

IN WORKING THROUGH some of these issues, it is hoped that Mr. Smith and his gospel can be seen to be anathema. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 1:8-9 states: "But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, *let him be accursed*. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, *let him be accursed*" (italics added).

These are harsh words for harsh times. Too many ministers today masquerade as messengers of God Almighty, but the message they bring is anathema, because it bears no resemblance to the *True Gospel* of Jesus Christ, the Righteous Son of God.

May we understand who we are and what we were created to be, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, take our stand against those who, "know(ing) the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death . . . not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them."

¹⁹ Compare Lev. 18:23 with Lev. 20:15-16.