

HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS – WHAT A MESS!

By Jim Seghers

Polls show that most Americans and certainly most Christians are opposed to elevating homosexual unions to the legal status of marriage. Yet the aggressive agenda to promote legal status to homosexual unions exposes the ineptitude of many Christians to effectively articulate their opposition to this disturbing development. How is that possible? The consistent teaching of the Catholic Church has condemned homosexual acts “as acts of grave depravity” that are “intrinsically disordered” ([Catechism # 2357](#)). Furthermore, the Church has declared that the homosexual “inclination” is “objectively disordered” ([Catechism # 2358](#)). The Church roots its lucid teaching in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Protestants claim to base their beliefs on the Bible. Yet, the Bible is very clear in its repudiation of homosexual acts (See: Gen 19:1-29; Lev 18:22; Rom 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tim 1:10-11). Let’s consider two passages. In Leviticus God instructs the Hebrew people through Moses: “You shall not lie with a male as with a women; *it is an abomination*” (Lev 19:22). St. Paul’s instruction is equally clear and unambiguous: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor 6:9-10).

Some Christians have attempted to obstruct the clear biblical message regarding homosexual acts through “reinterpretations” and “nuancing.” An example is found in Thomas A. Smith’s article that appeared in the September 20, 2003 issue of The Times-Picayune. Mr. Smith, who teaches at Loyola in New Orleans, gives the following absurd interpretation of the evil at Sodom and Gomorrah: “the real sin identified in the story was a breach of the ancient social rules of hospitality... The story has nothing whatever to say about homosexual relationships as such.” Evidently Mr. Smith believes God destroyed Sodom, Gomorrah and the other three cities because they were inhospitable not because “the men of Sodom, young and old” (Gen 19:4) attempted to commit homosexual rape upon their visitors. Aside from this kind of silliness the message of Scripture is so clear that the Rev. Rod Thomas, a spokesman for the evangelical network Reform, noted that even the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement accepted that the Bible condemns all homosexuality activity.

Because the constant teaching of the Catholic Church and the clear teaching of Sacred Scripture condemns homosexual acts, one would expect that almost all Catholics and Protestants would stand shoulder to shoulder in their repudiation of this disordered behavior. Sadly, that is not the situation. Obviously there is confusion in the ranks. In addition many Christians lack the ability to persuasively defend their position even when they reject these acts. Let’s consider two factors that contribute to this ineptitude.

The Onslaught of Misinformation.

It is difficult to accurately gauge the considerable impact of the long lasting and massive media blitz that promotes homosexuality in television, in films, in novels, in textbooks - even some religious textbooks, and in the class room. It’s clear that this campaign has been effective in fostering an increased acceptance of homosexual behavior while spreading confusion about the causes and remedies of these same-sex attractions. This propaganda uses humor, stereotypes, misdirection, half truths, and falsehoods to portray the “normality” of homosexuality and the bigotry of those who would question it.

In a letter to Catholic bishops psychiatrist and psychologist Dr. Richard P. Fitzgibbons and Peter Rudegear, specialists in the origins and healing of same-sex attractions, observe: “For over twenty years, activists, intent on changing the laws on sexual orientation, have put forward a massive public relations campaign specifically designed to spread misinformation that will change the social acceptance of homosexuality.” They cite the popularized myth that scientific research has produced conclusive evidence that

homosexuality is a genetically inherited condition. They state emphatically: "In fact, no such evidence exists."

Those who support this false claim sight the example of men who exhibited extreme effeminacy from early childhood. This condition is called Gender Identity Disorder (GID). Because of the considerable observable difference between boys with GID and other boys, the erroneous conclusion is drawn that boys with GID are born that way. According to Fitzgibbons and Rudegear the reality is that "effective family therapy in which the father bonds more closely with the son and affirms his son's masculinity can in a relatively short time result in the elimination of these symptoms and the emergence of normal boyish behavior." Because this information is not widely known many boys with GID do not receive treatment with the result that about 75% of these boys will develop a same-sex attraction in adolescence.

In his attempt to justify homosexual relationships Rowan Williams, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, posed the question, "What about those people who say "I've never known anything different'?" Men and women with a same-sex attraction need to hear a clear answer. There is real hope for healing! Based on their 25 years of experience Fitzgibbons and Rudegear affirm: "Large numbers of people, including clergy, who had SSA [same-sex attraction] are now substantially cured, especially if they brought the power of faith into the healing process. These men and women no longer view themselves as being homosexual."

There are many causes for same-sex attractions. Among them Fitzgibbons and Rudegear identify: 1) weak masculine identity among males, 2) social isolation and loneliness, 3) peer rejection, 4) poor body image, 5) the mistrust of male love in girls, 6) and a weak feminine identity. They stress that children are born male or female, but they must learn what it means to be a man or a woman. When children fail to successfully pass through this vital developmental stage, they may develop same-sex attractions in adolescence. Sadly, there has been a huge campaign to hide this information from the general public and from those who wish to prevent or to rid themselves of same-sex attractions.

This is not meant to imply that the healing of a same-sex attraction is easy for those who have already embraced the homosexual lifestyle. Recent studies by Fergusson, Herrell, and Sandfort demonstrates that individuals with same-sex attractions suffer from other psychological problems at a substantially higher rate than those without this disorder. Some of these are very difficult to treat. Anyone wishing to learn more about this subject should read Fr. Harvey's book, *The Truth About Homosexuality*, and the Catholic Medical Association's, *Homosexuality and Hope*, which can be found at www.cathmed.org. Fr. John Harvey, O.S.F.S. is the founder of Courage, a dynamic and effective support organization for homosexuals. Unlike the dissident group, Dignity, Courage accepts and promotes the Church's timeless teaching on sexual morality.

The media gives the false message that homosexual unions are stable loving relations just like the relationships of heterosexual married couples. The overwhelming available data gives a very different and dark picture. The study of Dutch homosexuals by Dr. Maria Xiridou of the Amsterdam Municipal Health Services published in the May issue of the journal AIDS found that men in homosexual relationships have an average of eight partners a year outside their main partnership, adding more evidence to the stereotype that homosexuals tend to be promiscuous. Pete LaBarbara, senior policy analyst at Concerned Women of America's Culture and Family Institute observed that these findings are "proof positive that these relationships ... will never be as stable as a normal heterosexual relationship regardless of what institutions and laws are changed." The study also discovered that homosexual partnerships last, on average, only 1½ years. In contrast the US National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) reports that 67% of first marriages last 10 years and 50% last 20 years.

A lengthy article in the June 2003 issue of *Population and Development Review* provided extensive data highlighting the importance of traditional family and religious values. The authors, Linda Waite and Evelyn Lehrer, state: "We argue that both marriage and religiosity generally have far-reaching, positive effects."

The marriages that produce these desired effects are those who make a lifetime commitment. In contrast divorce and cohabitation significantly reduce the positive effects that were supported by five pages of bibliographical references.

In spite of this growing body of information the Centers for Disease Control granted over \$500,000 to the radical sex promoters, Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). SIECUS is made up of a network of pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, and feminist organizations. According to LifesiteNews.com/CWN, SIECUS promotes sexual activities in schools and lobbies at state and federal levels. Their "Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education" include recommendations to teach 5 year-olds about masturbation and homosexual practices.

The media's handling of the terrible priest scandal is a classic example of misdirection. These reprehensible acts were incorrectly identified as pedophilia. The sad reality is the vast majority of the cases involved homosexual acts committed by homosexual men against adolescent boys. Yet, when John Geoghan was recently murdered in prison this crime was reported as a "hate crime," motivated by "homophobia." Are we to believe that the Boston Globe and the *New York Times* only discovered that Geoghan was a homosexual after he was killed?

Admitting the true facts of the priest scandal does not imply that most homosexuals are child molesters. However, it does highlight the specific problem of homosexuals in the priesthood and the unique obstacles the homosexual person experiences in integrating his sexuality. The psychotherapist, Gregory Popchak, clarifies the difficulty. "While the heterosexual person works out his identity in public, eliciting the guidance of parents and others in his quest for a whole identity, the shame the homosexual person experiences as he confronts the disintegration of his sexual self causes him to wrestle with many questions in secret, which grossly retards his sexual development. Healthy identities – sexual identities in particular – cannot be formed in secret."

Some politicians were quick to curry favor with their radical supporters by criticizing the insightful document from Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which gave needed clarity to the Church's position on homosexual unions. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, son of Sen. Edward Kennedy condemned the document as "bigotry." His distorted logic went so far as to claim that the Church does not understand what it means to be a Christian: "The very foundation of the Church is about love. This notion of discrimination is so far afield of what Jesus' life is all about." Using Kennedy's distorted logic one could also justify fornication, adultery and a whole series of perversions.

Discrimination is the act of treating or judging a person unfairly because the judgment is not based on the merit of the individual's action. An example of discrimination would be giving a promotion purely based on the person's sex, religion or race while passing over more qualified candidates. In the case of homosexual acts and unions the Church condemns the behavior precisely because it is evil. There is nothing arbitrary about it. Behavior is the fair and objective basis upon which all sinful actions are condemned. Jesus taught truth and died defending it. Jesus was very severe in his condemnation of those who pervert the truth. Those who speak of a saccharine Jesus who tolerates anything should study tough covenantal courses Jesus utters against the Scribes and Pharisees (Mt 23:13-36). In the words of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: "Those who would move from tolerance to the legitimization of specific rights of cohabiting homosexual persons need to be reminded that the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil."

Kennedy is typical of those politicians who sell out their faith to curry favor with radical groups who support evil agendas like abortion and homosexuality. In their duplicity they attempt to hide behind the falsehood that they can and must separate their public behavior from ones private values. This rationalization evokes Pilate washing his hands over his unjust sentence of Jesus. It should be obvious to everyone that politicians have a grave moral obligation to protect the good of society as a whole. Marriage is not given legal recognition because it institutionalizes friendship or companionship. Marriage

has special rights because it provides a stable basis for the survival of society, and the education and development of children.

It should be self evident to any thinking person that two bulls are not made for each other, neither are two cows. Even a rudimentary grasp of human biology demonstrates that a man and a woman compliment each other – not two men and not two women. So while persons of the same sex may become close buddies and intimate friends that are not capable of the conjugal dimension which is essential to the procreation of children. Thus the Congregation for the doctrine of the Faith draws the obvious conclusion: “Homosexual unions are totally lacking in the biological and anthropological elements of marriage and family which would be the basis, on the level of reason [and one could add – common sense], for granting them legal recognition. Such unions are not able to contribute in a proper way to the procreation and survival of the human race.”

The Holy See makes the astute observation that there is a huge difference between homosexual acts as private behavior between two individuals and the radical restructure of marriage and society by recognizing these relationships as an approved institution in the legal structure of a society. Clearly, it would lower moral values making them subject to the fickle whims of what is currently considered “politically correct.” Clearly giving legal status to homosexual unions would devalue marriage, which is the essential building block of any society. Indeed, the very survival of a society is rooted in the family and founded on marriage.

The Fast Track to Self-Destruction.

There is another dimension to the discussion that must be explored. It is not possible to defend marriage or demonstrate the evil of homosexual unions while sympathetic to other sexual sins. How can one explain the immorality of homosexual unions while approving other sinful behavior like contraception, pornography, masturbation, adultery, fornication and abortion? How can one, for example, make a convincing case against the homosexual excesses of Southern Decadence while tolerating or excusing the heterosexual excesses of Mardi Gras?

One of the most insidious characteristic of sexual sins is their ability to corrupt the mind. Ultimately, however, the guilt of conscience forces a decision. Will I change my behavior to conform to truth, which is called repentance; or will I twist and distort the truth in an attempt to conform it to my behavior, which is called rationalization? The great wound in Western societies today is the moral hemorrhaging caused by unfaithful Christians who rationalize their sins and reject the need of repentance. Regrettably, no Christian church has been spared this evil.

Pope Paul VI warned about the dangers of this modern idolatry in 1966. “Today man is tempted to worship himself, to set himself up not only as the highest choice of thought and as the goal of history but even of all reality. He is ready to believe that he can of himself, relying only on his own resources, make real progress and bring about his own salvation. In other words, man is tempted to seek only his own glory and not the glory of God... Today a falsely humanistic mentality is becoming more and more widespread, a mentality deeply rooted in egoism because it is closed to the knowledge and love of God, and is basically unsettling because it is closed to His light and to hope in Him.”

What person has the right to decide which of the Ten Commandments are no longer in effect? This cafeteria Christianity is simply another attempt to be like God, knowing good and evil. We can choose to abandon God’s law, but we can’t remove the feeling of guilt much less its evil effect our own salvation. We can play the fool and live in a fantasy, but the harsh reality of Christ’s judgment strikes home at the moment of death... if not before.

Many people board the fantasy train to hell with a ticket stamped: **the Sixth Commandment - violation.** This leads to a pool of guilt which contemporary false prophets - theologians, ministers, priests and

intellectuals - exploit to build their pathetic little empires by handing out naughty permission slips. The price is cheap, just become an ardent follower and you can sin to your hearts content. Sadly, it's like counterfeit money. There is a lot of the stuff out there, but it isn't worth anything.

The radical distortion of human sexuality, which the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960's broke upon us with a vengeance of a hurricane, is the root cause of the present confusion among Christians about homosexual unions. The pervasiveness of sexual excesses among Christians explains their ineffectiveness in combating homosexuality.

Genuine human love desires to be a gift to another and to receive the gift of another. This exchange of persons is beautifully expressed with our bodies in the conjugal act in which the two become "one flesh." This union only finds its true meaning in the lifetime commitment of marriage. It is the path of self-donation and surrender. Lust in contrast is distorted sexual desire that seeks to use the other person as an object to selfishly gratify ones pleasure. This is the path of grasping, taking and self-focus. Selfish men commonly express lust in the form of physical gratification while exploiting a women. It is also common that women experience lust in the form of emotional gratification while using a man. Each has made an object of the other. Taking replaces the genuine gift of persons.

Selfishness is at the core of the sexual revolution, which seeks to pull apart the inseparable love and fruitfulness elements of human sexuality. Whenever self predominates commitment and self-sacrifice diminishes or disappears altogether. In this context the life element of the sexual act, the child, becomes the enemy because it demands sacrifice. Contraception became the battleground in the Protestant churches in the 1930's and in the Catholic Church in the 1960's, because contraception prevents this unwanted life, this drag on ones freedom and the imposition of ties and responsibilities. When preventing the pregnancy fails, abortion became the method of choice for eliminating the obligation to the child and each other. Forty million murders later is it surprising that homosexual unions is now a burning issue?

Christians will never win this battle by exclusively focusing on homosexuality because, as bad as it is, it is a symptom of a deeper malady – the distortion of human sexuality and marriage. Therefore, the real challenge facing Christians is to rediscover the true meaning of human sexuality and the sacrament of marriage. This is a message our teetering society longs to hear and desperately needs.

Genuine human love is modeled after God's love. Within the divine Trinity of Persons it is characterized by the infinite and total donation of each of the Persons to the others. The concrete and definitive example of this love is discovered in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Bridegroom. His is a love of complete giving, total surrender, and absolute self-sacrifice. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for us is the model St. Paul uses to describe how husbands and wives are to "be subject to one another" (Eph 5:21).

The biblical blessing of fertility in marriage is built on this fundamental union between husband and wife because in the gift of each other in procreation they reflect the inner life of the Trinity and the relationship of Jesus and the Church. This explains the satanic attacks aimed at this sacred union and the resulting culture of death. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19). Sexual sins desecrate that temple. In this way Satan, the adulterous intruder, tries to steal what is not his.

The primary weapon that must be employed to win this battle to defend marriage is the example of Christian marriages in which the husband and wife love the way Jesus loves. Theirs must be a gift of self-sacrificing love. There is no greater legacy to give children than a mom and dad deeply in love, not the false love so sentimentality and hormones, but the genuine article of commitment and self-donation. None of us are capable of loving in this manner, but in relying of Christ's potency we can be transformed to accomplish what is otherwise beyond our capacity.

God's love is so totally wild that He makes Himself our gift in that supernatural marital embrace we call the Eucharist. Why are we so hesitant, so afraid to surrender to that gift? When we do our entire life

becomes a “Thank you,” *eucharistia* in Greek – a eucharist. When we eat ordinary food we absorb it into ourselves because we are of a higher order than the food. However, Jesus is of an infinitely higher order than we. So in the reception of the Eucharist, He transforms us into Himself. Then we are prepared to become his sent ones (Mt 28:19-20), the willing instruments through which he can transform our world.

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