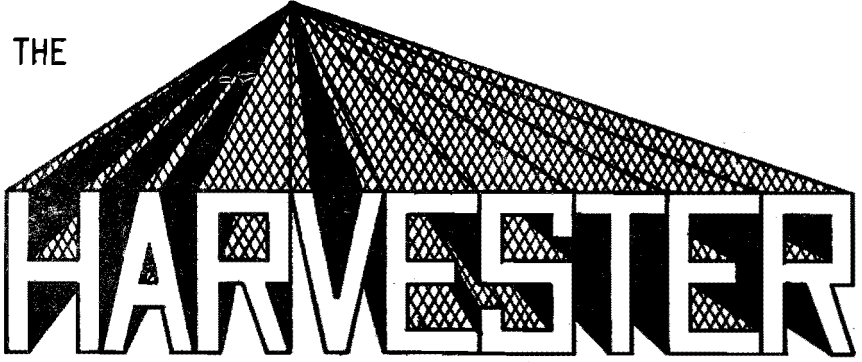


THE



"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

June 1988

No. 030

THE WORD ON HOMOSEXUALITY

What will we find in the newspapers next? Your guess is as good as mine. On May 5, 1988 in the Mobile Register I was appalled to read about a certain denomination that needed "a base of information to assist the church in resolving the difference of opinion within the church regarding the interpretation of homosexuality in the context of the Christian gospel."

The article stated that this religious group already had a "ban on active homosexuals in the clergy and condemned such activity". Nevertheless, there was still doubt among many of the members. "To try to get the answers, the church directed a study enlisting the 'best biological, psychological and sociological

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information,' as well as theological and ethical analysis. Scientists and other experts from outside the denomination will be consulted."

Not only is it absurd that this denomination needs such a study to be conducted, but look at where they are searching. Everywhere but in the Word of God! The answer can only be found in the Bible because it contains *"all things that pertain unto life and godliness"* (2 Pet. 1:3). God's Word is the standard that will be used in the Day of Judgment. *"He that rejected me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."* (John 12:48) Since His word will be our judge, let us see what God has to say on the topic of homosexuality.

From the very beginning, God's plan has been one man for one woman. *"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"* (Matt. 19:4,5) One man for one woman--no other combination will ever work.

The bond between a man and his wife is a very special union. If a spouse has relations with someone else outside of this marriage union, the marriage becomes adulterated (impure, inferior and corrupted). Sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex is commonly called "committing adultery". Sexual relations with someone of the same sex is called "homosexuality". In either case, both threaten the sacred union and are sins before the eyes of the Lord.

Living in a relationship of homosexuality is a sin. That is why Paul wrote to the brethren, *"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every*

man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."(1 Cor. 7:2) "Fornication" here is used in a general sense meaning all sexual immoralities including incest, harlotry and homosexuality as these were commonly practiced among the people at Corinth. Again, the thought is presented that homosexuality can be avoided when there is a union of one man to one woman only!

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah is a prime example of God's attitude toward homosexuals. "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: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them ... Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."(Gen. 19:4-5, 24-25)

Unfortunately the world is becoming more and more tolerant of this particular sin. We hear about "gay rights" and such. Even articles that are written today attempt to rationalize and justify the practices and lifestyles of the homosexual. I remember reading in December 1986 a series of articles in the Birmingham Post-Herald about the plight of these "minorities". It was designed to gain sympathy and understanding for these people who were "born different". One of the interviews was of the pastor of the homosexual denomination located there. Her name is Mary and her comment concerning Sodom and Gomorrah was this: God destroyed the city because of inhospitality and not because of homosexuality. Talk about twisting the Scriptures to justify oneself!

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Continuing on, we see that under the Law of Moses, God explicitly expressed disfavor with those who would practice homosexuality. *"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."*(Lev. 20:13) The principle found here applied not only to men, but also to women who would have sexual relations with each other.

But we do not live under the Old Law. What does the New Testament have to say? Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit and writing to the Christians at Rome, shows the displeasure of God with homosexuality. *"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And 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 unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."*(Rom. 1:26-27) If that does not describe the perverted actions of sodomites and lesbians, what does?

A key note to the passage in Romans 1 is the word "natural". When God created man, he gave him basic needs and desires: food, water, sleep, security, love, etc. According to the laws of nature, a man has to eat and drink to stay alive. Also, God created woman as a companion and proper mate for the man(Gen. 2:18).

Only when a woman joins herself to a man can they reproduce and replenish the earth as God commanded in Gen. 1:28. This is the "natural" course of events set in motion by the Creator. So when a child is born, he has choices to make. He can live according to the natural pattern or he can deviate from it.

There are times, however, when man can deviate from natural needs but it must be with God's permission. For example, the New Testament has several instances where fasting is allowed and enjoined. But nowhere in the Bible is homosexuality permitted or tolerated by God. The person who chooses to have homosexual relationships is one who is going against nature and against God's will. The argument of the perverted ones, then, is to say they are born different. They say, "It is God's fault that I am this way." Hogwash! In actuality, they have all turned that way of their own choosing by sin that is dominant in the world. And those who practice such things as mentioned in verses 26 and 27 are worthy of eternal death. *"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."* (Rom. 1:32)

In summary, the Word of God tells us that homosexuals are unrighteous and will not be heirs to the Kingdom. *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind [homosexual offenders--NIV], Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* (1 Cor. 6:9-10) The next verse shows that some of the Corinthians were involved in these things. Some were homosexuals. But they made a change. *"And such were some of you: but ye*

are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." That is the only escape from the sin of homosexuality today. This is what the Word teaches us.

RAY McMANUS

FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ABOUT CHRIST'S HEAVENLY ORIGIN

He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. (John 3:31)

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (John 6:38)

And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. (John 8:23)

Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (John 8:42)

Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. (John 16:30)

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. (1 Cor. 15:47)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

Often times the question is asked, "Can't a person go to church only on Sunday mornings and still make it to heaven?" I cannot answer that one. Only God can. He knows everyone's heart

and their attitude and their situation. Our Father, *"who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work,"* will judge righteously and fairly (1 Pet. 1:17).

Yet, those who pose such a question may actually be asking something else. "What is the least I can do and still go to heaven?" Unfortunately this is a prevalent attitude among many members of the church today. People want something for nothing and going to services just once a week seems to satisfy their conscience. Would a Christian really attend services once a week? Or would a disciple of Christ try to be there every time the doors open? A brother once said that the evening services were for those who loved the Lord a little bit more. How much do we truly love our Lord?

It appears that the idea of doing the minimum as a Christian is not really enforced by the Scriptures. In fact, Jesus taught the very opposite in principle. *"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain [two]."*(Matt. 5:40,41) In our hearts we should always be ready to go that "extra mile" and not "the least we can get by with". If it takes just a little bit more of our time and effort in order to secure our soul's salvation, then we need to do it. *"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"*(2 Pet. 1:10).

Our soul is much too precious to risk by attending only the Sunday morning service when we can also go to all the other church services. Is it not wiser to attend "too much" than "not enough"? Who will go that "extra mile" today?

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Place & Time</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| June 5-10 | Thomaston, GA | Chris Melton (Valley, AL) |
| June 5-10 | Hopkinsville, OH | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 5-11 | Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL | Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL) |
| June 6-12 | Rich Hill Church Liberty, KY | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| June 12-18 (Su-Sa) | Pleasant Grove Church near Alex City, AL 7:00 each evening | Bill Prince Jr. (Oxford, AL) |
| June 19-24 (Su-F) | Moffat Road Church Mobile, AL 7:30 pm | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| June 20-24 | Claud Church near Eclectic, AL | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 26-29 | Holdenville, OK | Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS) |
| June 26- July 2 | Red Hill Church near Woodbury, TN | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| July 8-10 | West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL | Marty Livingston (Oxford, AL) |
| July 10-15 (Su-F) | Brushy Creek Church Lucedale, MS 7:30 evenings | Tony Whiddon Maynard Foster Ray McManus |

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 WEDNESDAY 7:30 pm