

Q. What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

A. We believe that the written Word of God is very clear in defining sin as behavior that is contradictory to what God prescribes for the good of mankind, both individually and collectively. Such behavior is specifically delineated in Scripture, and homosexuality (sex with another of the same gender) is in that category. Correspondingly, we believe that we should deal with homosexuals as we would with any other person engaged in sinful and self-destructive behavior, that is, love them and do our best to treat them as Jesus would.

From His original creation of man and woman as very diverse personalities, one can clearly see that God's design is that they would come together to complement one another physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. To that union each is to bring the unique, God-given attributes of his and her sexual beings, and the two parts make "one flesh," that is, a whole entity not possible without one or the other.

This two-in-one concept is particularly relevant to child raising, in that a healthy Christian father/mother combination presents to the child a vivid image of the nature of God, to whom Scripture attributes both fatherly and motherly characteristics.

Children who have experienced sexual abuse commonly struggle with gender identity issues, and often subsequently adopt a homosexual lifestyle. As Christians, we are called to be salt and light, and that means doing our best to understand the heart of a person. We may have no idea of the background issues that led to him or her embracing the "gay" lifestyle. Simply speaking the truth in love and reaching out the way Jesus did can do wonders.

Sinful behavior, be it homosexuality or some other practice that is harmful to oneself and others, is usually driven by internal emotional imbalances stemming from one's unhealthy responses to injury and/or trauma during his lifetime. As such, the Christian's goal in relating to homosexuals is to help them draw closer to Christ and gain a godly perspective about their life, to the end that they leave behind their ungodly lifestyle and find wholeness in fruitful relationships within the Body of Christ.

We welcome homosexuals into our community, and attempt to call them forward to a greater possibility in the hope that we can minister God's healing love to them. We do not condemn them nor treat them disparagingly, but neither can we allow them to hold positions of leadership in our fellowship community.

By design, these few paragraphs only scratch the surface of this complex subject about which many valuable books have been written. Among them, we would refer you to ours, titled *Sex and Scripture*, which we hope will be enlightening to you.