

The ABCs of HOMOSEXUALITY and the Bible

The subject is far from academic (in the negative sense of irrelevant to current church-life). More than any other subject, this one is tearing the fabric of churches. In the European/British press, it got center stage in the just-ended Lambeth (the biennial global gathering of Anglicans at Canterbury). In the USA, the Presbyterian USA & United Methodist churches are threatened with schism. In my own church, the UCC, the in-your-face, aggressive "Open and Affirming" policy pushed by the national office is deeply alienating many congregations already turned off by the trendier-than-thou mentality of "Cleveland" (our national hdq.)....So here's what I'm saying on the subject these days when asked, & sometimes even when not asked:

1 The primary value-virtue appeal of the pro-homo lobby in the churches is to **equality**. Philosophically, it's the tonic (a musical scale's first tone) of all liberationisms. It was an Enlightenment cry appearing in our Declaration of Independence as "all...created equal" & in the Fr. Revolution's cry as the middle term ("Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité"). In our USA mainline churches leadership, it's so powerful as to have suppressed Christianity's pronouns for God (since, it's argued, that to call God "he" insults the she [the feminine element] in deity).

Britain's leading papers picked up the Lambeth row over (evangelical) Archbishop (of Canterbury) Geo. Carey's argument that homosexual alliances should be kept at a lower level, in public esteem & law, than heterosexual alliances: the law discriminating against homosexuals (viz., homosex a crime till age 18) is not to be struck down (so homosex will be legally equal to heterosexual, which is legal at age 16). His offense (it was said) was against the Zeitgeist's holiest good, viz. equality.

The Bible is even stronger: hetero/homo is not a matter of superior/inferior, but of right/wrong. And here the whole Christian Tradition agrees.

2 Because of the Tradition's anti-homo solidarity, homo theology's first move is to **neutralize** (take off the table, set aside) the Bible on the subject. It's argued that the Bible deals with sex only as action (behavior) because the biblical authors were ignorant of sexual "orientation" as "natural" (in the Stoic phrase, *κατὰ φύσιν* *kata physin* ["according to nature"]--the antonym, *παρὰ φ.* *para ph.*, appearing in the NT's most explicit passage condemning both the gay & the lesbian "lifestyle," viz., Ro.1.26-27).

3 Homo theology errs in treating as fact the genetic theory of homosex (viz., "born that way," nature not nurture). The scientific jury is still out. And **biology** will remain here indeterminate because of chicken-&-egg: which caused which, nature or nurture? (See, e.g., NEWSWEEK's 8.17.98 cover-story "Gay for Life? Going straight: The Uproar Over Sexual 'Conversion'.")

4 The pro-homo argument from "**orientation**." Human beings are variously sexually attracted to animals (bestiality), children (pedophilia), both sexes (bisexuality), the same sex (homosexuality), & the other sex (heterosexuality). The National Association of Men and Boys uses, for pederasty, the same ("nature," "orientation") argument pro-homo debaters use for homosexuality. Man/boy sex, indeed, in addition to being natural, can claim equality, equal rights. (In FLOW OF FLESH, REACH OF SPIRIT, I deal with all this: "On not taking Mother Nature as seriously as Father God" [chap.14] & "The Holy One is more than lover" [chap.39].)

5 Biologically, homosex is a case of **arrested development**, the organism not coming to its telos, its observable developmental process-end: philosophically-theologically, it's a case of **disorder** (& so is treated in Ro.1, as a symptom of the collapse of worship from Creator into creature). Because nature is fallen, we're all of us God's defective as well as sinful creatures: the Bible looks more at what we do than at what we ("naturally") are. So it proscribes men getting into bed with men (the literal meaning of the word in 1Cor.6.9 & 1Ti.1.10: *ἀρσενικοῦ της* *arsenokoites*).

6 Desperate for a loophole (which the Bible nowhere offers), homo arguers seize upon the fact that Lev.18.22's context is primitive "holiness" taboos. But the same purity sanction applies unspoken in Ro.1. The **abnormal** in Lev. is signaled by such words as "abomination," "defilement," "depravity." Holiness in the whole Bible is set over against disorder, deformity, the distortion deriving from the perversion of the Creator/creature relationship (Ro.1.24,25,26). No homo* comfort in the Bible.

No excuse for abuse of homosexuals, or for homosexuals' abuse of the Bible.
*No comfort for homo behavior. Comfort for homosexuals, of course, as God-beloved, Christ-redeemed, & our brothers & sisters in Christ.