

[DOCUMENT: "Policy Statement and Recommendations," from "BACKGROUND From the Division of Communications," UPC/USA.]

1. Immediately after reading this, in my daily reading of NT at the office I came upon these phrases in the Wm.'s tr. of Ro.1: "sexual impurity...trend of their heart's desires...degrading passions...flaming passion for one another...the inevitable penalty for doing what is improper....as they did not approve of fully recognizing God any longer, God gave them up to minds that He did not approve, to practices that were improper." Now, a religion that in a primary document has so stranded together theology and anti-homosexual-praxis can hardly be expected to elevate to priestcraft practioners, publicly known as such, of homosexuality. Stay in the closet or out of the professional ministry. The 6:1 majority at Gen.Assembly was close to inevitable.
2. Civil rights for homosexuals, absolutely. That's the stance of most of my former thinksheets on homosexuality. Ecclesial rights is another matter. As ethicist, I must resist the mindless or mindful spillover from the former into the latter.
3. While the document grants that God sometimes--as in the case of Jesus (Mt.12.46-50, M.3.31-35, L.8.19-21)--blesses "life lived outside the covenant of marriage," it tends to reserve the category of wholeness for marriage. Sun Moon [though not I] would agree, and on this basis (1) denies wholeness to Jesus, who must therefore (as he did not live long enough to marry) be replaced as Messiah by "the Lord of the Second Advent," another person who will marry. Pressed this far into heresy and blasphemy, one can see writ large the heterosexual arrogance which in the document speaks only with a soft voice. Say I, "wholeness" in the human sense is a category independent of genital history in the sense that "normal" [read "heterosexual"] sex is not an essential component of "wholeness"; whereas in the biological sense, "fulness" or "fulfilment" is essentially heterosexual (but is also essentially insignificant, as the difference between a pig that has rutted and one that hasn't). The fact that Jesus was "unfulfilled" is for Christians a sadness, but no impairment to our conviction of his experiencing, and modeling, wholeness.
4. In religious [i.e., paradigmatic--including scientific and marxist] argumentation, appeals to "nature" cannot be more than ad hominem--"nature" being only antonymic to "supernature" in one direction and "humanity" in another. Yet the document uses *argumentum e natura in extenso*. In this, it's more old Catholic than new Presbyterian!
5. My first homo counseling was in 1938, since which time I've been convinced that the church should welcome into membership, but not ordination, professing Christians who are practicing homosexuals. This compromise honors God by (1) respecting persons, (2) admitting ignorance [since little is known, biopsychologically, about homosexuality], and (3) exercising a becoming diffidence with regard to (a) Scripture and (b) the conscience of the vast majority of "the faithful" [1Cor.10.12-31; cf.8.7-13]. At this point I adduce also the sanction of personal influence [= how will it affect "the neighbor" if our priest openly practices homosexuality?--not the sanction of public opinion in the narrower sense: what will the neighbors think?]: role models do influence the sexual-preference shaping of the young, and only population-bomb paranoids argue that homo-shaping the young is preferable to hetero-shaping them.
6. Almost no one would counter the statement that homosexuality is *de novo* profoundly tragic in both the bio- and the socio-senses. This is to be distinguished from the assertion, I believe false, that each instance of homosexuality is profoundly tragic: I have known some "gay" [unimpaired sense] "gays" [corrupt sense], and even a couple of good homo marriages, good in both senses: genital faithfulness, and longevity. Very few. The disaster of homosexuality--i.e., the homo condition as disastrous--cannot be explained solely in terms of "they," i.e. an insensitive social surround.