

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES: Segment 10

**Homosexuality, Health Issues: A Commentary
by Ildefonso J. Rubrico**

Introduction

In the previous segment, we considered God's positive purpose in creating human sexuality. We also examined the biblical texts which explicitly address homosexuality.

In this segment we shall discuss the health issues - psychological and physiological - surrounding homosexuality. We start by asking the pertinent question: How many of the population are homosexual?

The Ten Per Cent Myth

Dr. Joseph Gudel, whom we already cited in previous segments, in a well-researched paper¹ commented: "Perhaps the most fascinating statistic cited (constantly and confidently) in research of homosexuality is that ten percent of the United States population is homosexual. The implication is that this is probably just as true in most other societies as well. I say this is fascinating because virtually nobody knows (or at least cites) where this statistic comes from."

Gudel further reports that 14 years ago, in 1991, respected publications like *USA Today* and the *Washington Times* confidently announced that 10 per cent of Americans were homosexual, while the august American Psychological Association "assures.. that homosexuality is 'an orientation found consistently in about ten

percent of the male population and approximately five percent of the female population' (2/6/89)."²

Since then, the 10 per cent figure been proven to be a myth in a study made by Dr. Kirk Cameron, a statistical scientist at the Family Research Institute.³ Dr. Cameron's finding has been supported by statistics from the U.S. Census for 2000. The census figure is 4.3 million Americans, or 1.51% of the total population admitting to being gay, lesbian, or bisexual.⁴ Even a coalition of leading pro-homosexual activist groups has now admitted in a legal brief that only "2.8 percent of the male, and 1.4 percent of the female, population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual," according to the latest 2004 report.⁵

What do the lower figures prove? Simply that homosexuals are *not* as numerous as they claim to be, and it puts this small minority's needs and *demands* in proper perspective for evaluation purposes of the church, the government, and private organizations, especially those concerned with health care and AIDS prevention.

We shall now consider the psychological aspects of homosexuality.

Is Homosexuality a Mental Disorder?

Back in 1973, The American Psychiatric Association (APA) officially went on record to declare that homosexuality was not a mental disorder.⁶ The American Psychological Association made a similar declaration: "That the American Psychological Association opposes portrayals of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth and adults as mentally ill due to their sexual orientation and supports the dissemination of accurate information about sexual orientation, and mental health, and

appropriate interventions in order to counteract bias that is based in ignorance or unfounded beliefs about sexual orientation." [Resolution on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation, American Psychological Association, 1997.]⁷

Peri Jude Radecic, a member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), asserted on the ABC news show *Nightline*: "Homosexuality is not an illness, it is not something that needs to be cured. We are normal, natural and healthy people."⁸

While this is a happy development for the gay community in general, there are a few dissident voices that disown the 1973 declassification of homosexuality from the list of mental disorders by the mental health associations.

Dr. Gudel recounts how militant gay activists used threats and intimidation to secure the reluctant approval of the APA. In the end, only a quarter of APA's 25,000 membership cast their votes, with 58% endorsing the declassification.⁹

Writes Dr. Stanton L. Jones, professor of psychology at Wheaton College: "I would not regard homosexuality to be a psychopathology in the same sense as schizophrenia or phobic disorders. But neither can it be viewed as a normal 'lifestyle variation' on a par with being introverted versus extroverted."¹⁰

To summarize, mental experts cannot seem to agree whether homosexuality is a pathological condition or not. As a result, the claim that a gay lifestyle is "normal and healthy" is still being debated until now.

Are People Born Gay?

Among the arguments put forward that gays are "normal" people is that they are "born that way." That among the general population there are those who naturally harbor a "homosexual gene." Perhaps their numbers is not larger than "ten percent" but having those "gay" genes nonetheless at birth. As proof, they offer studies made of animals that appear to exhibit homosexual behavior¹¹ and conclude that what is true for animal homosexuality is also true for human homosexuality, since humans belong to the animal kingdom too. Lack of space precludes the inclusion of several studies that disprove that there is such a thing as homosexuality in animals, hence allow me to simply summarize the findings of such one study sponsored by the NARTH, the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality recently. NARTH says that:¹²

1. There is no "homosexual instinct" in animals - animals, unlike humans, lack the intellectual perception and will that humans have. Thus, a male dog mounting another male dog manifests signs of dominance, not necessarily "homosexual" instincts.

At times, animals may even kill their own offsprings and/or eat them ("fillicide" and "cannibalism"). Again this can be explained by animals mixing their instinctive "signals." A lion for instance may switch from a 'play mode' to a 'hunting mode' and kill his cubs in the process of frenzied play.

2. Animals Lack the Means to Express Their Affective States - Since the ability to express fear, pleasure, desire, pain, etc. is severly limited in animals, they "borrow," so to speak, the manifestations of the instinct of reproduction to manifest the instincts of dominance, aggressiveness, fear, gregariousness and so on. Male bonobo monkees, for example, may briefly mount each other before eating as a sign of reduced tension between them for the shared food.

3. "Homosexual" Animals Do Not Exist - For reasons of survival, the reproductive instinct among animals is always directed towards an individual of the opposite sex.

The study concludes that it is "foolhardy" to "read" human motivation and sentiment into animal behavior..The animal kingdom is no place for man to seek a blueprint for human morality. That blueprint, as bioethicist Bruto Maria Bruti notes, must be sought in man himself:

"It is a frequent error for people to contrast human and animal behaviors, as if the two were homogenous. The laws ruling human behavior are of a different nature and they should be sought where God inscribed them, namely, in human nature."¹³ The two are simply not compatible.

The Elusive Homosexual Gene

What's the latest word on the scientific origins of homosexuality? Is there such a thing as a homosexual "gene?" Or, is it acquired? How?

The search for that elusive "homosexual gene" has taken on heroic proportions akin to the search for the Holy Grail of Christianity. What I mean to say is that, while it's supposed to exist in mythology, it's never been found! Because, if it were, all the "gender identity" problems of gays and lesbians would have been solved. Imagine a "third sex" that's biologically-genuine, medically-demonstrable, and ethically-acceptable! Unfortunately, science has not been able to find this "gay gene," and perhaps it never will simply because it does not exist in nature.

From the studies cited below, it would seem that homosexuality is anything but simple, scientifically speaking.

Consider these:

1. What the majority of respected scientists now believe is that homosexuality is attributable to a combination of *psychological, social, and biological* factors.
2. From the American Psychological Association - "[M]any scientists share the view that sexual orientation is shaped for most people at an early age through complex interactions of biological, psychological and social factors."¹⁴
3. From "Gay Brain" Researcher Simon LeVay - "At this point, the most widely held opinion [on causation of homosexuality] is that multiple factors play a role."¹⁵
4. From Dennis McFadden, University of Texas neuroscientist - "Any human behavior is going to be the result of complex intermingling of genetics and environment. It would be astonishing if it were not true for homosexuality."¹⁶
5. From Sociologist Steven Goldberg - "I know of no one in the field who argues that homosexuality can be explained without reference to environmental factors."¹⁷

As we have seen, there is no evidence that homosexuality is simply "genetic"--and none of the current research itself claims it is.

Is Homosexuality Genetically Acquired?

This is a question that presumes the existence of an inherent gay trait or gene acquired from one's parents or ancestors.

Since we have already answered in the negative the supposed existence of a homosexual gene, the present question appears unnecessary. However, as late as this year a prominent doctor, Dr. Phil McGraw, America's newest diet counselor and author of the *Ultimate Weight Solution* has put in his views of sexual orientation. Dr. Phil's website recently posted a question from a woman whose 22-yr. old daughter was involved in a lesbian relationship. The reader wondered if her daughter could have learned this behavior, thus allowing a possibility that her current lesbian relationship could be a phase [towards greater involvement]. Dr. Phil's reply: "Homosexuality is not a learned behavior. A sexual orientation is inherited; you are wired that way" - thus reports Warren Throckmorton, Ph.D.¹⁸ Dr. Throckmorton is Director of College Counseling and an Associate Professor of Psychology at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Throckmorton castigates Dr. McGraw for his naivete, saying: "If anything the research shows an environmental component must be involved in the development of homosexual orientation. To wit, a recent study of genetically identical twins in the *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* found that the participants were quite dissimilar when it came to sexual orientation. Consider the study's male identical twin pairs: if one twin was gay, then only 20% of the time was the other twin gay. Female twins were alike only 24% of the time. With 76 - 80% discordance rates,

environment must play some, and I suspect, pretty significant role in creating the differences."

In 1991 Dr. Simon LeVay, a neuroscientist at the Salk Institute of Biological Studies in California, studied the brains of 41 cadavers. He found that a tiny area believed to control sexual activity [the hypothalamus] was less than half the size in the gay men than in the heterosexuals.¹⁹ This was thrilling news to the gay community until they discovered that: (1) all 19 of the homosexual men had died of AIDS, something that many researchers believe could very well account for or contribute to the differences; (2) there was no way to know the sexual history of the "heterosexual" men; (3) there is no way to determine if the smaller hypothalamuses were the cause or the result of homosexuality; and (4) Dr. LeVay, a homosexual himself, admitted that his study was not entirely a dispassionate scientific endeavor.²⁰

Environmental Factors

According to Gudel's research, there are probably just as many, if not more, psychiatrists and psychologists who believe that homosexuality arises from various environmental factors. The majority of these say that homosexuality's root causes are psychological, not biological. Therapists helping homosexuals who are unhappy with their condition can cite one case history after another showing that negative early childhood experiences are the one common factor found in almost all their patients. The vital factor here is that these people were raised in a very unloving home environment, never knowing love or acceptance from their mother or their father, or in some cases both. According to these studies, the child's reaction to this rejection and lack of nurturing is formulated at a very early age,

usually before five years old. The following references illustrate these findings.

1. William H. Masters (codirector of the Masters and Johnson Institute), Virginia E. Brown, and Robert C. Kolodny stated categorically in their 1982 work *Human Sexuality*: "The genetic theory of homosexuality has been generally discarded today."²¹

2. Robert Kronemeyer, in his work *Overcoming Homosexuality*, writes: "With rare exceptions, homosexuality is neither inherited nor the result of some glandular disturbance or the scrambling of genes or chromosomes. Homosexuals are made, not born 'that way.' I firmly believe that homosexuality is a learned response to early painful experiences and that it can be unlearned. For those homosexuals who are unhappy with their life and find effective therapy, it is 'curable.'"²²

3. John DeCecco, professor of psychology at San Francisco State University and the editor of the 25-volume *Journal of Homosexuality*, expressed the same view in a 1989 *USA Today* article: "'The idea that people are born into one type of sexual behavior is entirely foolish,' says John DeCecco... Homosexuality, he says, is 'a behavior, not a condition,' and something that some people can and do change, just like they sometimes change other tastes and personality traits."²³

Physiological Aspects of Homosexuality

Is there any truth to the assertion that homosexuals are more-prone to AIDS and other forms of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs)? That the homosexual person die at a much younger age than his or her heterosexual counterpart in the U.S.?

In the remaining paragraphs I will outline some important medical facts and figures to show that homosexuals are, as a rule, at a much higher risk to contract certain types of diseases than the general population.

The causes for this medical anomaly, while well-known and well-documented by the medical community, are generally not admitted by homosexual patients themselves, perhaps out of shame. But since our job here in Biblical Perspectives is to *inform* but not to needlessly embarrass, to comment but not to denigrate anybody, we shall skip the graphic details surrounding homosexual behavior. It is enough for us to let our brothers and sisters realize the risks they take should they choose to embark on a dangerous homosexual adventure.

One Important Caveat: Our present discussions here should in no way be construed as referring to any person in particular excepting those mentioned in researches, studies, and the like, as cited herein.

Medical Problems and Selected Facts and Figures Associated with Homosexual Behavior.

1. Medical Problems and Diseases Associated with Homosexual Behavior.²⁴
 - a) Gay Bowel Syndrome - Amebiasis, Giardiasis, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis;
 - b) Hepatitis - Hepatitis-A (HAV), Hepatitis-B (HBV), Hepatitis-C (HCV);
 - c) Tuberculosis;

d) STDs - syphilis, gonorrhea, genital warts, lice, scabies, penile-contact infection, oral/penile infection, HIV, AIDS.

2. Selected Facts and Statistics About Homosexual Lifestyle in the U.S.²⁵

- One study reports that the average homosexual has between 20 and 106 partners per year. The average heterosexual has 8 partners in a lifetime.
- Many homosexual sexual encounters occur while drunk, high on drugs, or in an orgy setting.
- Many homosexuals don't pay heed to warnings of their lifestyles: "Knowledge of health guidelines was quite high, but this knowledge had no relation to sexual behavior."
- Homosexuals account for 3-4% of all gonorrhea cases, 60% of all syphilis cases, and 17% of all hospital admissions (other than for STDs) in the United States. They make up only 1-2% of the population.
- Homosexuals live unhealthy lifestyles, and have historically accounted for the bulk of syphilis, gonorrhea, Hepatitis B, the "gay bowel syndrome" (which attacks the intestinal tract), tuberculosis and cytomegalovirus.
- 25-33% of homosexuals and lesbians are alcoholics.
- Of homosexuals questioned in one study reports that 43% admit to 500 or more partners in a lifetime, 28% admit to 1000 or more in a lifetime, and of these people, 79% say that half of those partners are total strangers, and 70% of those sexual contacts are one night stands. Also, it is a favorite past-time of many homosexuals to go to "cruisy areas" and have anonymous sex.
- 78% of homosexuals are affected by STDs.

- Captain William Riddle of the Los Angeles Police says, "30,000 sexually abused children in Los Angeles were victims of homosexuals".
- 50% of suicides can be attributed to homosexuals.
- It takes approximately \$300,000 (around 15 million pesos) to take care of each AIDS victim; medical insurance rates have been skyrocketing for all.
- Homosexuals were responsible for spreading AIDS in the United States. Even today, homosexuals account for well over 50% of the AIDS cases in the United States, which is quite a large number considering that they account for only 1-2% of the population.
- Homosexuals account for a disproportionate number of hepatitis cases: 70-80% in San Francisco, 29% in Denver, 66% in New York City, 56% in Toronto, 42% in Montreal, and 26% in Melbourne.
- 37% of homosexuals engage in sadomasochism, which accounts for many accidental deaths.
- 41% of homosexuals say they have had sex with strangers in public restrooms, 60% say they have had sex with strangers in bathhouses, and 64% of these encounters have involved the use of illegal drugs.
- The median age of death of homosexuals is 42 (only 9% live past age 65). This drops to 39 if the cause of death is AIDS. The median age of death of a married heterosexual man is 75.
- The median age of death of lesbians is 45 (only 24% live past age 65). The median age of death of a married heterosexual woman is 79 (8).
- 50% of the calls to a hotline to report "queer bashing" involved domestic violence (i.e., homosexuals beating up other homosexuals).

Closing

And so, my esteemed viewers, we have arrived once again to the end of our program. In the past few minutes, we have attempted to describe the psychological and physiological make-up of homosexuality by asking how many homosexuals there are in a given population, whether or not homosexuality is a mental disorder, a genetic trait, or caused by outside environmental factors. We also outlined the medical problems faced by those who live a homosexual lifestyle.

In our next and last segment on this topic, we will discuss how may a homosexual person be helped and which persons and organizations are available to help.

Until next time, this is Nene Rubrico, your host for Biblical Perspectives, bidding you a pleasant good evening. Remember:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Thank you very much for your time. God bless you!

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Notes:

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- ⁵ Peter Sprigg, "Homosexual Groups Back Off From '10 Percent' Myth", 28 January 2004. In Focus (Family Research Council), Issue No. 260; URL: <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IF04A01>.
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