

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

Volume 32

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

February 1998

No. 2

HOMOSEXUALS AND LESBIANS: Sanctified or Sinners?

by Ted J. Clarke

Introduction

On the ABC Television Network's "Turning Point," November 7, 1996, Elizabeth Vargas did a report entitled, "Same Sex Marriages, For Better or For Worse?" Toward the end of the piece an Episcopal priest led a procession carrying a cross. There were two men hand in hand, and two women also walking hand in hand. The priest said a ceremony of "union" for the two men and the two women. As the men looked at each other and the two women did the same, in unison they repeated the words, "I will be your partner, your lover, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." These people claim that the Bible does not condemn same sex relationships and marriages, that it only speaks out against homosexual and lesbian relationships when they are "abusive," not when they are committed monogamous relationships. When two homosexual men or two lesbian women are in such relationships, we are told, God accepts them completely and so should we. Does the Bible teach that God approves of these relationships? **It does not!**

When Alfred Kinsey did his infamous research on the sexual habits of the human male, he concluded that 10% of the population were homosexual. Kinsey's study is known to be severely flawed, since part of his sampling used men in prison where normal sexual relations of men with women were not an option. The National Opinion Research Center says that its surveys between 1989-1992 showed 2.8% of the men surveyed were exclusively homosexual and 2.5% of the women were exclusively lesbian. The National Survey of Men reported that only 1.1% had been exclusively homosexual in the previous year. This one to three percent is well below Kinsey's erroneous data on the subject.

However, it is certainly true that these small percentages are **vocally loud!** They have influenced the President to imple-

ment a "don't ask, don't tell" policy in the military; they have influenced large corporations like AT&T and Disney to give them the same benefits as legally married men and women; they have influenced some state legislatures to give them preferential treatment, claiming to be a minority which is discriminated against like blacks and women. Of course, one cannot help being born black or a woman, but it has not been proven that one cannot help being homosexual or lesbian. How do you think the government or these corporations would respond to me (a white male), if I went to them and said, "I want you to consider me as a black woman. I just can't help but think of myself as a black woman and I want all the minority rights you would give to her." "Well, they would usher me right to the nearest exit, and rightly so. Saying I feel black and feel like a woman wouldn't make me a black woman. Neither does someone saying he or she feels like loving someone of the same sex mean that God made them that way. In fact, this is a watershed as to whether or not one believes the Bible, since it condemns all homosexual/lesbian relationships; and it will determine whether or not the God of the Bible is truly the God He claims to be. If homosexuals cannot help being what they are (they claim God made them that way), but yet the Bible condemns homosexuality and says they will be eternally lost, then God is not a just God and the Bible is not worth following.

Is There A "Gay" Gene?

One researcher named Simon LeVay, looking into the possibility of being "born gay," pointed in his studies to a section of the brain in homosexuals which seemed to be smaller in "gays" than in heterosexual men. Since this area of the brain was known to house the sexual stimulus of a man toward a woman, this researcher decided this indicated some people are born to be homosexuals. However, other

scientists said, "Wait a minute!" Perhaps this area of the brain is smaller, not because it was so at birth, but because this part of the brain was not used as intended, in developing social relationships with women. God's law in all creation is use it or lose it. Other parts of the brain show similar types of shrinkage from non-use, so this claim of LeVay does not prove homosexuals are born that way.

Another claim for homosexuals being "born" that way comes from some work done by J. Michael Bailey and Richard C. Pillard. These men said they discovered that 52% of identical twin brothers are both gay, while only 22% of non-twin brothers are gay. This, we are told, means that if homosexuality has a genetic basis, "many of the second twins should also be gay." But again, "Wait a minute!" If homosexuality has a genetic basis and identical twins have identical genetic makeup (and it is **identical**), then 100% of the second twins should be gay, not just 52%. If nearly half **are not gay** then there is no genetic factor making someone gay. The fact that there is an unusual closeness between most twins, along with other environmental and developmental factors, could account for the high percentage of gay identical twins. Don't blame God. Additionally, if being homosexual was genetic, then one could not change that any more than one could make his blue eyes brown or his black skin yellow. Yet many who have been practicing homosexuals or lesbians have changed their sexual orientation to heterosexuality, simply by their own will to do so. Homosexuality is "want to," not "have to."

Old Testament Condemnation of Homosexuality

Early in Scripture the Bible discusses the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 13:13, saying, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Before going further, remember the **natural** state in which God created mankind "male and female," telling them to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [literally=fill] the earth" (Genesis 1:27-28). It took a male and female

(Continued on page 2)

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

USPS Publication # 211780

...is a Periodical publication issued monthly by the Church of Christ at Third and Bethel (P.O. Box 251), Mammoth Spring, AR 72554-0251. **POSTMASTER:** Please mail all changes of address to the above address.

FCGN is mailed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name we must have a complete address, including number and street name, or R.R. or HCR number, plus box number, or a P.O. Box number and the **NINE DIGIT ZIP CODE**. This paper is supported by voluntary contributions for which we are grateful. Financial information will be furnished upon request. *Mail all address corrections or manuscripts to:*

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

P. O. Box 251

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

Ted J. Clarke EDITOR
Phone (870) 625-3217
Fax (870) 625-3137
E-Mail tedjc@mail.oci-i.com

(Continued from page 1)

to multiply, and it still does today, the natural way God created and intended for all time. The account is expanded in Genesis 2:18-24 as it discusses the "one flesh" relationship of the man and woman. Trying to become one flesh in any other way is unnatural and sinful.

Genesis, chapter 19, clearly condemns homosexuality. The angels who came in the "form" of men to rescue Lot before God destroyed Sodom, were sought out by the men of Sodom, who did not know that they were heavenly messengers. Lot persuaded the angels not to stay in the street that night, aware that the men of Sodom would sexually attack them. Even in Lot's own house the men of Sodom came to take them out of Lot's care, that they might "know them" (Genesis 19:1-5). The word for "know" is a common Hebrew word used hundreds of times in the Old Testament for "to get to know, become familiar with." However, there are times when it has a definite sexual connotation, as it does here. It is used of Adam's sexual relations with Eve in Genesis 4:1, 25, and of Cain with his wife (4:17). This use of "knowing" someone sexually was also common in the language of the New Testament. Joseph "knew not" Mary until after Jesus was born (Matthew 1:25). We use the word "know" in the same sense today, when we speak of carnal

knowledge, meaning things sexual.

The fact that Lot offered his virgin daughters to these Sodomite men illustrates the extreme vulgarity with which Lot viewed this sin. The men rejected Lot's offer, showing the depravity of mind they possessed (Genesis 19:7-9). We do not claim that Lot was right in what he did. Not at all! He had placed himself in a wicked environment and had stayed in that area to maintain his wealth, in spite of the horrible sins of the people which vexed his own soul (2 Peter 2:6-7). He was now desperate to show the Lord his concern for the heavenly messengers. Jude 7 answers the argument of some homosexuals that Sodom's sin was simply being "inhospitable." Jude writes, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. "The word **"fornication"** means **all illicit sex**, specifically "going after strange flesh," here meaning the unnatural desire of men to have sex with other men.

Leviticus 20:13 clearly states, "If a man also lie with mankind (other men), as he lieth with a woman, **both** of them hath committed an abomination: **they** shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon **them**." Homosexuals who seek God's approval for their wicked deeds say this verse merely prohibits homosexual rape, not a loving relationship between two consenting members of the same sex. However, "both, they, them" have committed an abomination worthy of death under Old Testament law. This is not speaking of forced rape, but mutually consensual sex. That is why "**both**" were condemned! What about verse 15 which says, "And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast." Does that mean this verse is a law against raping a beast? If the man had a "loving relationship" with the beast, would that be all right? Ridiculous? Yes, and so is the idea that the Lord was only prohibiting homosexual rape. Rape is prohibited, both in Leviticus 18 and chapter 20, and distinctions are made between rape and homosexuality. Just as rape is wrong in every case and sex with animals is wrong in every case, so it is wrong in every case for a man to lie with another man, or a woman to lie with another woman. **It is an "abomination!"** (Leviticus 18:22)

New Testament Condemnation of Homosexuality

In discussing the horrible sins of the Gentile world, Paul did not neglect homosexual and lesbian activities. Speaking of these sexual sins in Romans 1:24-27, Paul noted that "God also gave them up to uncleanness **through the lusts of their own hearts**, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. 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** [fitting]." These acts of sexual immorality did not come from minds which God made to be that way or being born that way, but "through the lusts of their own hearts." Notice also that Paul is not describing homosexual rape, but all homosexuality! These men were not raping one another, they were "**burn[ing] in their lust one toward another.**" This is mutual reciprocal lust, not rape. Men do not have any God given inclination nor right to burn in lust for other men, nor women for women. Such is "uncleanness, unnatural, and unseemly."

First Corinthians 6:9-11 also speaks out against homosexuality (and lesbianism) when it says, "**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... shall inherit the kingdom of God.**" Sexual sins will keep one from heaven, whether fornication, adultery, or homosexuality. The "effeminate" are men who "play" the more passive role of a woman in a homosexual relationship, while the "abusers of themselves with mankind" are the more active aggressors "playing" the role of a man. I say "playing" these roles because neither is truly being what God created them to be. A homosexual man may "play" the role of the woman, but he is not a woman. The homosexual man only "plays" the role as a man, because he is unnaturally making love to another man and that is not what God created man to do sexually. Both will be

lost unless they repent through faith in Christ and obey the gospel. After naming an entire list of sins, sexual and otherwise, Paul said of the Corinthians, "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" (1 Corinthians 6:11). While some of the Corinthians had been homosexuals, they had to quit practicing those acts when they became Christians, just like the thieves had to quit stealing and the drunkards had to quit drinking. If they did not, they could not enter God's kingdom, receiving forgiveness of sins.

Conclusion

In addition to sexual perversion, homosexuals and lesbians who strangely seek to have the approval of God for their abominations commit another type of perversion. They pervert the text of the Scriptures to justify their perverted acts of sex. Believers in the Bible and the God of the Bible cannot surrender what the Scriptures teach on this topic without removing all hope for the salvation of homosexuals and lesbians. Unless they are taught the truth on these matters and give up these ungodly sexual acts; coming to God through faith in Christ (Hebrews 11:6), repenting from past sins (Acts 17:30-31), confessing Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9-10), and being baptized into Christ to have their sins washed away (Acts 2:38; 22:16), they will not, they cannot be saved!

While the Bible shows the unnatural status of homosexuality, it is a sin no greater than many others which will keep us from heaven. Other sexual sins will also keep us out of the kingdom. To speak out against homosexuality is no worse than speaking out against idolatry, stealing, lying, adultery, etc. One is not being homophobic (afraid of homosexuals) when one objects to their often obscene public behavior and tries to teach them the truth of the gospel, encouraging them to repent and change their ways. Still, this is not just another type of illicit sexual activity; it changes the very nature which God created in us into something so unnatural that it cannot fulfill the purpose for which God originally made us male and female and gave the institution of marriage (Genesis 1 & 2). It can destroy souls, families, and nations. Love the souls of homosexuals and seek to convert them to Christ, but do not surrender one particle of biblical truth in your approach to them. Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), wielding the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

[A good book to read to be informed about what homosexuality really includes, as well as the intentions of the gay rights movement of today, is entitled, *Sodom's Second Coming: What You Need To Know About The Deadly Homosexual Assault*, by F. LaGard Smith, published by Harvest House in 1993. The statistics used in the "Introduction" of this article are from that book. Most religious bookstores can get this for you. My copy cost \$8.95. We do not sell books, but I like to inform you of good resources when possible. - Editor]

TO OUR READERS A WORD OF GREAT THANKS TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS

The year 1997 was a good year for **Fulton County Gospel News**. Our present circulation is slightly under ten thousand, mailing out to 49 states and 24 foreign countries. Our total cost for printing and mailing out **FCGN** in 1997 was about \$18,000.00, an average of \$1500.00 per month. Outside support from churches and individuals was \$10,481.00, for a monthly average of \$873.42. The Third & Bethel congregation, Mammoth Spring, pays the rest of the cost and members volunteer each month to label and package the paper and get it into the mail.

Without your generous support of this good work we simply could not send the gospel message out to the thousands who receive it. **We thank you all so much for your cooperation in sending out the gospel through the printed page!** We receive a multitude of verbal comments as well as letters of appreciation for the work we are doing. Since our paper is small we do not take up space to give you a sampling of the types of positive responses we receive, but we do send our quarterly letters to all who have helped us during that period, as well as a yearly report to all past and present supporters. **We especially want to thank all of the churches in the Ozark areas of Arkansas and Missouri who have been so faithful in supporting FCGN through the years.**

This year marks the **Forty-fifth Year** that the **Fulton County Gospel News** has been published. Except for a couple of periods of brief interruption, **FCGN** has been published monthly continuously for 45 years. I think that is some significant

accomplishment for the Third & Bethel congregation and the Ozark churches who have supported its continuance. The Third & Bethel church is not a large congregation and many of our members are elderly and on fixed incomes. That is also true of many of the supporting churches. But look at what good can be accomplished when we work together to serve the Lord!

A WORD ABOUT RECEIVING THE PAPER

The elders of the Mammoth Spring congregation have asked me to keep our circulation near the 10,000 number. That is all we can afford to do at this time, considering the amount of outside support we currently receive. We are praying that God will continue to bless us, looking forward to celebrating our **Fiftieth Anniversary** in the year 2003. The elders are committed to keeping **FCGN** going out to lost souls and Christians, believing that this is one of the most effective ways to evangelize the lost and edify the brethren.

We want everyone who desires to receive **FCGN** to continue to get it. If you do not want it, simply let us know and we will remove your name from the mailing list. Probably some friend or relative submitted your name, believing you would profit from reading the articles and studying the Scripture references from your own Bible. We understand that some may not like to receive **FCGN** or do not agree with what we teach. We would hope that you would study what we write and compare it with what your Bible teaches, but some do not. At times we receive angry notes or letters from some who do not like what we have printed, but these people almost never try to show us why we are wrong in their view of things. I am willing to study and re-study any point of teaching we place in the **FCGN**, but if you just throw away our paper without reading it, let us know and we will remove your name so that we can add another who will read the paper. If you are a church receiving a bundle and you are having a considerable number left over each month, let me make two suggestions. First, encourage your members to pick up a copy of **FCGN** each month. Make an announcement from the pulpit when each new issue arrives. Do this regularly. You might have someone pass them out to each family. You might pass out some of the remaining

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

issues at the nursing homes or mail some out to family or friends. Second, if you still have extra papers you cannot use elsewhere, let us know and we will reduce the number we are sending to you. If you are an individual receiving two papers at the same address and you only need one, send us the label from your extra paper which you want us to delete.

If you want more papers than you now receive, or if you want to send a list of names of those you believe will read FCGN, please do not hesitate to send them in! We are not yet ready to say we can take no more. With God's blessings and your continued support, that day will not come. Thank you, again.

[Ted J. Clarke, Editor]

DID THE APOSTLES EXPECT JESUS TO RETURN SOON?

by Dennis Gullede

In Revelation 22 we find John saying (twice) that Jesus will come quickly (Vss. 7, 20). Does that mean that he expected the return of Christ to occur within his own lifetime despite many New Testament warnings which dispel any such knowledge on man's part? (Matthew 24:36; 25:13).

In verses 6, 7 and 20 the two words "shortly" and "quickly" (KJV) are forms of the Greek word (*en tachei*). This word has at least two meanings. First, it can denote chronological nearness (Acts 25:4). However, in prophetic literature time can be a very elastic concept (Obadiah 15). The Edomites were not finally destroyed until centuries after Obadiah's time. Second, the word can mean "speedily" (Luke 18:8). That is, the events, whenever they occur, will occur without delay. Therefore, the term can refer to speed rather than time.

The NIV makes a serious mistake when it renders "soon" in Revelation 22:7, 20. The word soon denotes chronological nearness exclusively and espouses the false idea that the apostles expected Christ to return in their own lifetime. It is tragic that a translation would have an inspired apostle affirming such a radical falsehood as would make the common reader wonder if the writer even knew what he was saying. Either that or "soon" is an awfully long time!

10822 Mabelvale West Road
Mabelvale, AR 72103

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

A man was driving home late one evening, and stopped to pick up a hitch-hiker. Always being a suspicious person, and at times highly critical of others, John soon began to "feel" the youth might not be up to any good! Feeling for his money, John discovered that it was missing! He immediately stopped the car, ordered the hitch hiker out, and said, "Now, hand over that wallet immediately!" The scared and startled youth produced his billfold, and John continued on home. When he arrived, he began to tell his wife about the incident, but she interrupted him by asking, "Before I forget John, did you know that you left your wallet here this morning?"

How important it is NOT to jump to conclusions! Many unkind words have been said, many a friendship has been severed, and all because one has been unduly critical and judgmental!

Dwayne Simon
via Anderson, CA

CONTRIBUTIONS

CHURCHES

Jeff Church of Christ, Thayer, Mo.	\$25.00
Church of Christ, Garfield, Ar.	35.00
Clarkridge Church of Christ	75.00
Clarkridge, Ar.	
Thayer Church of Christ, Thayer, Mo. ...	200.00
Dellhalf Church of Christ, Myrtle, Mo.	25.00
Church of Christ, Bakersfield, Mo.	25.00
Church of Christ, Viola, Ar.	15.00
Church of Christ, Elizabeth, AR.	25.00
Pilot Church of Christ	40.00
Mammoth Spring, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Souder, Mo.	25.00
Church of Christ, Moody, Mo.	25.00
Church of Christ, Crider, Mo.	25.00
Lowell Church of Christ	50.00
Springdale, Ar.	

INDIVIDUALS

Ann Wilson, Hot Springs Vlg., Ar.	\$20.00
Chuck Pearson, Abilene, Tx.	50.00
Tom Boyette, Stanton, Ky.	10.00
Rita Terrill, Harrison, Ar.	2.00
Mobley's, Cave City, Ar.	25.00
Maurice O'Neal, Nashville, Tn.	5.00
Jack D. Gaddis, Mountain Grove, Mo. ...	100.00
Irene Laxton, Caulfield, Mo.	12.00
Mildred Rhoades, Kirksville, Mo.	10.00
Charles Tostige, Trenton, Mi.	25.00
Ms. V. Snider, Campbell, Mo.	5.00
M/M Donald Secrist, Centrailia, Mo.	15.00

"YOU CAN HELP WITH POSTAGE"

MOVING? CHANGING TO 911?

Be sure to send us
your change of address.



GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

CHURCH OF CHRIST
P.O. BOX 251
MAMMOTH SPRING, AR, 72554

ADDRESS
CORRECTION
REQUESTED

#BXNGHZD*****3-DIGIT 325
345
MICHAEL HATCHER
4852 SAUFLEY FIELD RD
PENSACOLA FL 32526-1724
PKG 308
SACK 101

Periodical Postage
Paid At
Mammoth Spring, AR
72554-9998
Publication #211780