

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

Session 5: Homosexuality

April 12, 2023

Thoughts related to Acts 15

- The Jerusalem Council narrowed all the laws to a short list of prohibitions including: “*food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality*”
- The word for “sexual immorality” here is ***porneia***
- For some, ***porneia*** includes any kind of sex outside of marriage, heterosexual and homosexual; teaching against homosexuality

Thoughts related to Acts 15

- Others believe this words clearly points toward prostitution sex, affairs (someone married committing adultery) , and idolatry of not worshiping Yahweh in the sense of worshiping him in your personal commitment.
- Christian church is struggling to decide which OT laws apply to Christians
- The term “arsenokoitai” is not used

Summary of Homosexuality from the Old Testament

- Two laws in the OT forbid homosexual behavior between males
- The Christian community has different beliefs about the relevance of OT laws; which laws are we required to keep/disregard?
- Look to the New Testament for clarification
 - We don't disregard the OT; look to Jesus and NT for clarification
 - Question: What did the early Christian church decide on the matter of homosexual behavior?

Summary of Homosexuality from New Testament

- Jesus never teaches about homosexuality
- Paul is the only NT author specifically addressing the issue
- Some believe Paul supports OT laws about homosexual behavior, connecting “arsenokoitai” with Leviticus 18:22
- How do we apply these summary statements and biblical teachings to our lives today?

Questions to Consider

- Is homosexuality a sin? What do we mean by that?
- Can a gay person be an active member of a church? What about leadership positions?
- Should Christians support gay marriage/civil unions from a civil perspective?

Questions to Consider (cont.)

- What should a Christian do if invited to a gay wedding?
- How should the church respond to young people asking questions about their sexual identity?
- How central is this issue to our faith? Is this an issue where we can agree to disagree?