

Homosexuality

By Evan Lenow

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read Genesis 2:18-24 and then read the comments related to Romans 1:26-27 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What was God's design for sexuality in creation?

Assignment Two

Read Romans 1:26-27 and then read the comments related to verse 27 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following question: What are the possible results of participating in homosexual behavior?

Assignment Three

Read the comments related to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How can someone escape a homosexual lifestyle?

Scripture to Memorize

"And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Corinthians 6:11

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand that homosexual behavior is sinful.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

One of your friends stops you after school one day and says he needs to ask you a question. He asks, "Will God still love me if I come out of the closet?" Your friend has just dropped a bombshell. He's announcing that he has homosexual feelings. How do you respond to his question? What does the Bible say about homosexual behavior? Can someone identify with homosexuality and be a follower of Christ?

Read Romans 1:26-27 out loud.

In the verses prior to this passage, Paul described a situation where people have rejected what God has made known about Himself through creation. Instead, they had begun to worship the creation. Verse 25 says, "because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen."

In three different places in this chapter, Paul said that "God gave them over" to something. Those who rejected God now wallowed in their sin, and God allowed them to embrace their sin fully.

Studying the Passage

Verse 26. dishonorable passions. This is the second time in Romans 1 that we see God has given people over to their sin. This time is it to degrading passions. These are desires or passions that take away from God's design for human sexuality. Rather than rejecting the passions in favor of God's design, these people embraced and acted on their passions. **women.** This is the only time in the Bible that lesbianism is specifically mentioned. However, it is clearly called sin in this passage. **exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature.** The natural function is the sexual relationship between a man and a woman. The women in verse 26 had given up on expressing their sexuality with a man in marriage and had adopted a same-sex relationship. This function is biologically unnatural because two women cannot engage in sexual intercourse naturally. This function is theologically unnatural because God designed men and women to complement each other sexually (see Genesis 1-2).

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on God's design for sexuality at creation.

Studying the Passage

Verse 27. And the men likewise. The words Paul wrote about women also apply directly to men. **men committing shameless acts with men.** Paul made clear that degrading passions had led to male same-sex relationships as well. These sexual encounters are "indecent" because they violate the way God has made men to express themselves sexually. **the due penalty for their error.** There has been much debate over what this phrase means. Some believe it refers to sexually transmitted infections, since there is a much higher rate of such infections among people engaged in homosexual behavior. At the very least, we know that those who violate God's law incur His judgment both spiritually and physically.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now report on the results of participating in homosexual behavior.

Discussion Question

Why would the Bible describe homosexual behavior as “degrading passions”?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verses 9-10. the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. These verses are what many scholars call a “vice list.” It is a list of sins attached to a judgment from God. In this case the judgment is that those who practice such behaviors will not inherit the kingdom of God. In other words, these types of people are not followers of Christ. They are described as unrighteous because of their ongoing sinful behavior.

Among the list of sins, we find two terms of significance for our discussion: **nor men who practice homosexuality.** The Greek term for *men* can also be translated as “effeminate” and appears only once in the New Testament. The Greek term for *homosexuality* is found twice (also in 1 Timothy 1:10). These two words are difficult to translate, but they are generally understood to refer to the passive and active partners in consensual homosexual relationships.

The term for *men* is generally understood to be the one who takes on a feminine role in a male homosexual relationship. *Homosexuality* is a new word coined by Paul. The word is a combination of two Greek terms referring to a man who lies with another man in a sexual sense. We find these two words close together in the Greek translation of Leviticus 20:13. Thus Paul includes those who participate in same-sex behavior in his vice (or sin) list.

Verse 11. Such were some of you. Paul made an important statement at the conclusion of the vice list. He said that some people in the church at Corinth used to be described by the sins in the list. He intentionally used a past tense verb “were” to describe their relationship to the sins, including homosexuality. Now they had been washed, sanctified and justified. In other words, they were no longer living in sin because Christ had changed their lives.

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now report on how someone could escape a homosexual lifestyle.

Discussion Question

How would you describe God’s perspective on homosexual behavior to a friend who struggles with same-sex attraction?

On Your Own

In the space below, write down the names of people you know who may struggle with homosexual behavior and how you can pray for them and reach out to them.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again **the Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to. . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

Homosexuality is one of the most controversial and divisive issues of our day. That is not likely to change anytime soon. Even though many in our culture have become more accepting of homosexuality in recent years, the text of Scripture has not changed. As disciples of Christ, we should develop our positions on ethical issues from Scripture rather than experience. Therefore, we should conclude, from the biblical texts, that homosexual behavior is sinful.

In Romans 1:26-27 we saw that homosexual behavior is an unnatural distortion of God's original design for sexuality. God created man and woman to express sexuality within the context of monogamous, heterosexual marriage (Genesis 1-2). Paul described homosexual behavior as an exchange of the natural for the unnatural. This comes as a result of denying who God is and what He has revealed to us about how He made us.

We also learned that homosexuality was included in two different sin lists (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; and 1 Timothy 1:8-11). While those who participate in such sins, including homosexual behavior, will not inherit the kingdom of God, we also saw in 1 Corinthians 6:11 that there is hope for deliverance from sin. God has provided a way of escape from all types of sinful behavior through the sacrifice of His Son. Only through Jesus Christ can one find deliverance from sin.

As the culture continues to shift on matters of sexuality, disciples must stand strong and live out biblical sexuality. This means refraining from all types of unbiblical sexual expression—homosexuality, fornication, adultery, pornography, and lust.

Follow up Question

How can we demonstrate biblical sexuality in our lives?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.