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-Dr. George O. Wood, General Superintendent, General Council Of The  
Assemblies Of God

## **A Trilogy On HOMOSEXUALITY**

Anatomy Of A Hate Crime: How A False Premise Led To A False Conclusion

What Did Jesus Say About It?

Sodom: The Forgotten Lesson

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## Preface

Over the years I have authored three published articles relating to homosexuality. These are brought together here to form a three-part essay.

The purpose of this trilogy is to address the essential and clear statements of The Scriptures on this timely subject and also to show how beginning from a wrong premise can lead "logically" and consistently to a wrong conclusion and disastrous consequences.

I categorically reject the fatuous notion that any opposition to homosexual acts and behavior is *ipso facto* discrimination resulting from bigotry and motivated by hate. People who truly love God and their neighbor seek the highest good of others, including those who pursue degrading and destructive lifestyles. Let it be understood that love for the person is the motive behind religious/moral opposition to the behavior. The objective is to give hope to those who struggle with same sex attractions and/or who want to be free from same-sex entanglements.

I will not attempt to address all facets of homosexuality. That is for people who are qualified to do so by scholarship or experience.

The first article, "Anatomy Of A Hate Crime: How A False Premise Led To A False Conclusion," was published in Liberty magazine. It examines the "logic" that has legitimized homosexuality and that is bringing about alarming cultural and legal consequences. Homosexual militancy seeks to repress all opposing viewpoints and condemns objectors as discriminators who deserve to be punished under "hate crimes" laws. The article contains a general reference to faulty research that has been accepted and publicized uncritically.

The second article, "What Did Jesus Say About It?" was published in The Pentecostal Evangel. It is a response to the assertion that Jesus said nothing about homosexuality. It looks at what Jesus *did* say and how that applies to homosexuality and homosexual relationships. It is included here in its original form.

The third article, "Sodom: The Forgotten Lesson," was also published in the The Pentecostal Evangel. A revision is presented here. It is essentially a biblical/moral overview.

It must be kept in mind that no contrary research, no amount of evidence, no logic and reason, no laws established by God or by the will of the people mean anything to homosexual militancy. It is determined to impose its will whether the people want it or not, and it finds accomplices even in liberal religion. In this subject, truth will be valued only by those who sincerely want it.

This trilogy is offered in the hope that it will bring a little more light to a subject that is being smothered under an avalanche of closed mindedness, obscurantism and repression. Also, if it provides a ray of hope that will help lead someone out of homosexuality's dehumanizing bondage, it will be more than worth the effort.

## **ANATOMY OF A HATE CRIME:** **HOW A FALSE PREMISE LED TO A FALSE CONCLUSION**

The time: November 29, 2005.

The place: Sweden's Supreme Court

The person: Pastor Ake Green

The charge: that Pastor Green committed a hate crime under Swedish law by preaching against homosexual behavior.

The verdict: acquittal. After intense international pressure and the prospect that a conviction would likely be overturned by the European Court Of Human Rights, Sweden's high court chose not to view Pastor Green's statements as "hate speech."

Now the question: how does opposition to a behavior become defined as a criminal act motivated by hate?

The mere expression of opposition to homosexual behavior has become so widely assumed to be motivated by hate that entire nations have criminalized it or are seriously considering doing so.

Such a widespread assumption must be the result of a systematic process. That process must start with a premise and follow that premise consistently to its logical and necessary conclusions.

A false premise consistently followed will lead necessarily to a false conclusion. When the conclusion is obviously wrong and irrational to thoughtful people, reason demands a critical examination of its starting premise.

Our case in point is the outrageous prospect of fining and even imprisoning pastors and others for publicly reading and expounding on biblical statements. How does this happen? What premise leads intelligent people to criminalize biblically based speech?

The premise behind the effort to gain acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle is that *homosexuality is genetically determined*. Although this is the premise, it is not the driving force. The driving force is homosexual activism itself. This activism has seized upon this premise as its rationale.

The first assumption that flows necessarily from this premise is that *the person and the behavior are inseparable*.

If the person and the behavior are assumed to be inseparable, the next link in the chain of assumptions is that *opposition to the behavior is ipso facto opposition to the person as a person*.

The next assumption follows logically: because opposition to the person as a person is hate, *opposition to the behavior must also be hate*.

Finally, because hate is an offense, *whoever commits the offense is an offender and should be regarded and treated as such*. Thus a new class of "criminals" is created: pastors, priests, Sunday School teachers.

This entire line of "reasoning" makes such bumper stickers as "hate is not a family value" and "separation of church and hate" so incomprehensible and downright offensive to people of good will who oppose homosexual behavior but who have no animus toward homosexuals as persons. Little knots of protesters carrying "God hates fags" signs are just as reprehensible to them as they are to anyone else. Their opposition to the homosexual lifestyle is motivated by a genuine concern for the well-being of the person. The outrageous charge of "hate" is totally false and personally insulting.

Before we in the United States Of America proceed further toward criminalizing speech opposing homosexual relationships and behavior, we need to wake up and take a long look at where we are headed.

Societies that have already gone down that road need to stop and ask themselves: "How did we come to the place where we put good people on trial for expressing their biblical beliefs? Where did we take the wrong fork in the road?" The answer is: back at the beginning with the false premise that homosexuality is genetically determined and therefore the person and the behavior are inseparable. Wrong premises lead to wrong conclusions, and wrong conclusions lead to unjust laws.

The dogma that homosexuality is genetically determined is based largely on Simon LeVay's 1991 study of the interstitial nuclei of the anterior hypothalamus—group 3 (INAH3) in 41 cadavers, and Dean Hamer's study of an area of the X chromosome known as Xq28 (published in 1993 and 1995). Both studies were very preliminary. They were not subjected to the rigorous standards of thorough scientific research. Their results are open to being challenged by researchers who point out serious flaws in their methodology and reject their conclusions. Whatever research has been conducted since, including the 2014 inconclusive genome-wide study by A. R. Sanders, et al, or research that might be currently in progress or conducted in the future does not change the fact that the widespread and permanent conclusions regarding homosexuality were made immediately on the basis of those two early studies.

The immediate acceptance of the LeVay and Hamer studies lies in the eagerness of homosexual activism to seize upon anything that gives credence to its ideology, and the readiness of the media to hype the studies as conclusive.

The American Psychological Association makes the presumptuous assertion that sexual orientation is not a choice. This assertion is not based on incontrovertible scientific evidence but is ideologically and politically generated. For this reason "sexual orientation" has no legitimate place in jurisprudence and should not be accorded standing in law.

The causes and conditions of homosexuality are too complex for a "locked-in" conclusion based on such a tentative foundation. It certainly does not provide a rationale for the vicious charge of "hate" that is recklessly hurled at good people and the unjust laws that criminalize and oppress them. Also, it provides no valid rationale for the acceptance and legitimatizing of homosexual relationships, particularly homosexual ("gay") marriage or "civil unions."

*We must not surrender to an uncritical genetic determinism.* Our genes do not define who we are. Our humanity transcends our biology. As responsible moral agents, our character, our behavior, and our destiny are shaped by our personal choices.

People who oppose homosexual behavior out of a regard for the health and well-being of the person build upon a correct, realistic premise: the causes and conditions of homosexuality are complex; therefore the person and the behavior are separate considerations.

Respect for the person provides a common ground for us. It means no taunting; no treating people in such a manner as to cause pain, rejection and alienation. What divides us is linking respect for the person with acceptance of the behavior, because to so many people that is totally unacceptable. It is based on a false premise and is ideologically driven. It does harm by affirming people in an unnatural, unhealthy lifestyle and taking away from them any hope of becoming free from it. It makes masses of innocent people the targets of the familiar self-righteous but abusive code words: "bigotry," "discrimination," "intolerance," "hate."

These epithets are aimed not only at the few who do hate homosexuals, but also at the many people of faith and good will who are unjustly judged and injured by these false charges. Thus "hate" has become in itself a hate word, aimed at punishing those who do not agree with the premise of homosexual activism.

Civilization, particularly western civilization, urgently needs to reflect seriously on a premise that is moving it toward cultural decline and secular repression. The time for sound thinking is now.

## WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT IT?

I once was asked to join a panel of area clergy assembled to address a religion class at Eastern Washington University.

During the question-and-answer time, a student addressed a question about homosexuality to a panelist seated next to me. A man of admitted liberal views, my fellow-panelist replied that Jesus said nothing about homosexuality.

The same student then asked about premarital sex (a subject much on the minds of many students). My co-panelist responded first, taking the stock liberal position that premarital sex is acceptable if it is part of "a loving and caring relationship."

When asked for my response, I noted that the "loving and caring relationship" just mentioned is clearly defined in Scripture as marriage and that premarital sex is sin.

In nominal Christianity the notion is widespread that if Jesus said nothing about a subject, we have no divine authority on that subject, no matter what the rest of the Bible says about it.

Perhaps we should face this issue head-on. What did Jesus say?

True, the Lord said nothing by name about homosexuality and homosexual behavior. He also said nothing by name about bigamy and polygamy. For that matter, He said nothing by name about cannibalism!

But that does not mean that Jesus said nothing. Our Lord spoke, and He spoke with authority.

Let's examine one of His statements. It was in response to a question by the Pharisees about divorce. Both Matthew and Mark record it. Here it is in Matthew:

"Haven't you read," He replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this cause a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:4-6).

First, Jesus said, "Haven't you read...?" Here and elsewhere our Lord affirmed the absolute authority of The Scriptures. "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4). "Sanctify them by the truth: your word is truth" (John 17:17).

Some might reply that Jesus was referring to the Jewish Scriptures, commonly called the Old Testament. What about the Epistles and other New Testament writings?

Jesus told His disciples about the coming of the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I said to you" (John 14:26).

The Holy Spirit would inspire them to set down a full and accurate record of Himself. Thus Jesus validated the gospels. The Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth. Thus Jesus

validated the Acts, the Epistles and the Revelation.

Jesus Christ also affirmed the authority of the apostles: "If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also" (John 15:20). Though Paul was not one of the Twelve, he too received his authority directly from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:11, 12).

This should settle the question of biblical authority for anyone who claims to accept the authority of Jesus Christ.

What else did Jesus say in His answer to the Pharisees?

"At the beginning the Creator..." Jesus cut through all the polygamy and other degenerate deviations of patriarchal and other ancient times. He went clear back to the beginning, back to God's established order. In so doing He confirmed that what God had created still stands and is in full effect—established throughout all generations.

God created us male and female. Jesus confirmed it. That rules out all homosexual behavior as a violation of God's natural, moral and governmental order in human creation and relationships.

God said the *two* would be one flesh. Jesus confirmed that also. That rules out bigamy and polygamy (including so-called "plural marriages") and for the same reason.

God also said (and Jesus confirmed) that a man is to leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. He did not say to leave father and mother and go live with his girlfriend.

Jesus ruled out all deviate and subhuman forms of sexual behavior in human sexuality by affirming the authority and sanctity of God's established order.

Marriage is God's idea, not ours. Marriage is God's property. It does not belong to us; it belongs to God. We cannot do what we wish with marriage, including our marriages.

God upholds monogamous, heterosexual marriage and protects it by natural and moral sanctions—sanctions that people violate only with the severest of consequences, both in this life and in the next.

God upholds marriage because it is vital to the well-being of society. Marriage as God ordained it is beautiful. It is the source of immense human good and happiness. Its violation destroys that good and brings grief and misery.

That is why God forbids the violation of marriage. He is not trying to take away our happiness; rather, He is protecting our happiness. He loves us and desires that we honor and enjoy His gift. In this, as in everything, Jesus is in full agreement with the Father.

By our words and by our example, let us celebrate marriage as God created it and gave it to us. It is one of His greatest blessings in this life.

## **Sodom: The Forgotten Lesson**

Homosexuality is the choice to follow a sexual attraction toward people of the same sex. Experiencing occasional homosexual feelings does not make one a homosexual. What makes a homosexual is the choice to follow those feelings.

Homosexuals, then, are not a third gender, or a distinct ethnic group. They are ordinary people who have chosen to obey homosexual desires and develop such relationships.

Several conditions contribute to homosexual tendencies. One is an individual's physiology, including biochemistry. Some men are less masculine and some women less feminine than most. The result is an increased susceptibility to homosexual attractions and temptations.

But susceptibility is not surrender. A person with homosexual feelings is not a homosexual unless he or she yields to them. Your physiology does not make you a homosexual unless you let it. The saying is true, "Homosexuals are made, not born." A feminine-type man is a man. A masculine-type woman is a woman.

Also contributing to the problem is the sex-role confusion resulting from an emphasis on unisex (clothing, hair styles) and uniformity between the sexes. The effort to eliminate bias and discrimination tends to go too far, to ignore the factual differences between the sexes and the roles for which each is naturally best fitted.

Female domination in the home contributes to homosexuality, particularly in men. A boy who is dominated by his mother and who sees his father so dominated runs a higher risk of slipping into homosexual attitudes and practices. Not having a clear domestic example of what a man and a husband should be, he can grow up without a correct idea of what he himself is.

The opposite extreme is harmful too. A boy dominated by his father can grow up feeling inadequate, sub-masculine. Every boy needs to develop a good masculine self-image. For this he needs an attainable real-life model, preferably his father. The same holds true for girls, the feminine model being preferably her mother.

Other factors contributing to the problem are "gay" demands, increasing efforts by the institutions of society (government, education) to condition the public to accept homosexuality as a normal lifestyle, the materialistic view of man and the resulting downgrading of marriage, the demand for absolute personal autonomy in so-called "private" practices, and rejection of the authority of the Scriptures.

The Bible is God's Word, and it has much to say about homosexuality.

Sodom is the classic case study. Genesis 13:13 says that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (KJV). Chapter 19 tells what this wickedness was. The men of Sodom (and they were men) were intent on homosexual rape. Their perversion had developed to its violent stage. When that happened, God destroyed the city, warning all succeeding generations that He regards sodomy as intolerable, a moral cancer that

demands radical social surgery to save society.

Ever since, Sodom has been a symbol of moral perversion and its consequences. Jude 7 says that Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding cities "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Second Peter 2:6-10 categorizes the homosexual conduct of Sodom and Gomorrah as "filthy" (verse 7) and "unlawful" (verse 8). Verses 9 and 10 say that God will "reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority" (NKJV).

Another occurrence, sometimes overlooked, happened at Gibeah (Judges 19:22-25). Frustrated in their homosexual attack, the men of Gibeah turned instead to a woman, raping her repeatedly so that she died.

Male homosexual prostitution is forbidden in Deuteronomy 23:17,18 (such persons are termed "dogs," an expression of utter contempt). The practice was associated with the spiritual, moral, and national decline of ancient Israel (1 Kings 14:24). Renewal included the uprooting of the sin (1 Kings 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7).

Homosexuality is condemned in Leviticus 18:22: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable" (NIV). Under the Mosaic law it was punishable by death, as we read in Leviticus 20:13, "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads" (NIV).

In Romans 1:24-28 homosexuality is seen as one of the worst and most degrading of the immoral practices of pagan societies. They "dishonor their bodies among themselves" (verse 24 NKJV), "men with men" committing indecencies and suffering the due results (verse 27).

In 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10 homosexuality is listed among the sins that will keep people out of heaven. In 1 Timothy 1:9-11 homosexuals are included among those who are under the condemnation of the Law, and the practice is pronounced contrary to sound doctrine according to the gospel.

Homosexuality is included in the term "lasciviousness" (shameful and disgusting practices expressing total surrender to perverted passion) in Mark 7:22; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:19; 1 Peter 4:3; and Jude 4. It is included also in the term "uncleanness" in Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; and 1 Thessalonians 4:7.

Sexual perversions, including homosexual practices, are a consummate affront to God and His natural order.

Homosexuality is biologically unnatural. It outrages God's natural order and purpose in sex.

The practice is psychologically damaging. It robs people of their self-respect and human dignity. It is socially disintegrative, a threat to stable order, and should not be sanctioned by

any institution public or private. It undermines the family. It replaces the stability of heterosexual marriage with a counterfeit "marriage" or "domestic partnership" that is incapable of providing the basis for a genuine sexual unity. It is dehumanizing and enslaving, dethroning reason and placing perverted passion in control.

"Gay rights" has become a catch phrase. But demands are not necessarily rights. People who engage in homosexual practices do not have a right to impose themselves on others or to flaunt their behavior before a defenseless public. Employers have a right not to hire persons they reasonably deem to be morally unqualified. Parents have a right to have a say in who shall be authority figures in the lives of their children. Christian institutions have a right not to be forced to employ persons who violate sexual morality.

Government has no sanction to use public funds to condition the public to accept homosexuality as a natural alternative lifestyle. If public education and other public institutions campaign against the moral teachings of the Bible, separation of church and state is violated.

The aggressiveness and disruption inherent in homosexuality exhibited itself at Sodom and at Gibeah. It is now doing so in modern society. No nation can survive moral anarchy. If it sows to the flesh, from the flesh it will reap corruption.

God loves people—*all* people. Sin always dishonors God and ruins people. That is why God is opposed to sin. For the same reason we who love God and love people must also be opposed to sin. We oppose homosexuality because it dishonors God and degrades people. We hate the practice because we love the people it degrades.

In opposing homosexuality we must always love the homosexual. It is easy to feel disgusted at sin, to get angry at evil. If we become carried away by our feelings, we can become hard, reviling, vituperative. Instead, we must always speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). People who engage in homosexual practices are sinners for whom Christ died. God loves them and wants to save them. So must we.

The first step in helping people who have a problem is to get them to face the fact that they *have* a problem. That is why accepting and affirming homosexuals' behavior as normal makes a solution to their problem more difficult. It is a disservice to the homosexual. It harms the homosexual just as accepting the alcoholic's behavior as normal harms the alcoholic. That is not true compassion. Though they deny it, homosexuals are not spiritually and sexually whole. God wants to make them whole.

Like any sinner, the homosexual needs to: (1) face the problem, (2) want to change, (3) change. In other words: "I'm a sinner. I'm tired of sin. I'm through with sin." That is repentance. Anything less is merely playing games.

We must turn to God from sin, and the way to God is Jesus Christ. The solution to sin, including the sin of homosexuality, is the blood of Jesus Christ. We cannot save ourselves. Christ alone can save us, and He will if we surrender to Him in faith.

Jesus Christ can deliver any person from homosexuality; He can help that person establish a positive sexual identity and orientation consistent with his or her natural sexuality; He can give that person true acceptance with self, with society, and (most of all) with God.

After stating that homosexuals shall not inherit the kingdom of God, the apostle Paul goes on to declare triumphantly, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11 NKJV).

That is the good news. When we surrender unconditionally to Jesus Christ, He blots out our sins, whatever they are, and makes us pure and clean.

If you are not saved, He will save you from all your sins. If you let Him, He will change you into the person you really can be and want to be—a new *you* in Jesus Christ.