

10 Reasons G-d Loves Gay Christians

1. The term “homosexual” didn’t exist until 1892. Some modern Bible translations say that “homosexuals” will not inherit the kingdom of G-d, but neither the concept nor the word for people with exclusive same-sex attraction existed before the late 19th century. While the Bible rejects lustful same-sex behavior, that’s very different from a condemnation of all gay people and relationships.

2. Sexual orientation is a new concept—one that the Christian tradition hasn’t addressed. Many Christians draw on their faith’s traditions to shape their beliefs, but the concept of sexual orientation is new. Until recent decades, same-sex behavior was placed in the same category with gluttony or drunkenness — as a vice of excess anyone might be prone to — not as the expression of a sexual orientation. The Christian tradition has never spoken to the modern issue of LGBT people and their relationships.

3. Celibacy is a gift, not a mandate. The Bible honors celibacy as a good way of living — Jesus was celibate, after all — but it also makes clear that celibacy must be a voluntary choice. Requiring that all gay people remain celibate is at odds with the Bible’s teachings on celibacy, which are grounded Scripture’s core affirmation that G-d’s physical creation is good.

4. Condemning same-sex relationships is harmful to the LGBT community. Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount that good trees bear good fruit, while bad trees bear bad fruit. The church’s rejection of same-sex relationships has caused tremendous, needless suffering to the LGBT community—bad fruit. Those harmful consequences should make Christians open to reconsidering the church’s traditional teaching.

5. Sodom and Gomorrah involved an attempted gang rape, not a loving relationship. It’s commonly assumed that G-d destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah out of his wrath against same-sex relations, but the only form of same-sex behavior described in the story is an attempted gang rape — nothing like a loving, committed relationship. The Bible explicitly condemns Sodom for its arrogance, inhospitality and apathy toward the poor — not for same-sex behavior.

6. The prohibitions in Leviticus don’t apply to Christians. Leviticus condemns male same-sex intercourse, but the entire Old Testament law code has never applied to Christians in light of Christ’s death. Leviticus also condemns eating pork, rabbit, or shellfish, cutting hair at the sides of one’s head, and having sex during a woman’s menstrual period — none of which Christians continue to observe.

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7. St. Paul condemns same-sex lust, not love. Like other ancient writers, Paul described same-sex behavior as the result of excessive sexual desire on the part of people who could be content with opposite-sex relationships. He didn’t have long-term, loving same-sex relationships in view. And while he described same-sex behavior as “unnatural,” he also said men having long hair goes against nature, and most Christians read that as a reference to cultural conventions.

8. Marriage is about commitment. Marriage often involves procreation, but according to the New Testament, it's based on something deeper: a lifelong commitment to a partner. Marriage is even compared to the relationship between Christ and the church, and while the language used is opposite-sex, the core principles apply just as well to same-sex couples.

9. Human beings are relational. From the beginning of Genesis, human beings are described as having a need for relationship, just as God himself is relational. Sexuality is a core part of what it means to be a relational person, and to condemn LGBT people's sexuality outright damages their ability to be in relationship with all people — and with G-d.

10. Faithful Christians are already embracing LGBT brothers and sisters. Mainstream denominations like Presbyterians and Episcopalians now ordain openly gay clergy, and there are seeds of change in evangelical churches as well. This November, the Reformation Project will host a training conference for up to 900 LGBT-affirming Christians in Washington, D.C.—and the movement for change in conservative churches is just getting started.

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