

# Are arguments that the Bible accepts homosexual relationships similar to those that it approves women church leaders?

*Are the methods used to interpret Scripture as justifying women being in church leadership and the liberation of slaves valid for arguing Scripture approves of committed homosexual relationship?*

This cannot be the case for the following five main reasons:

- a. Human beings were created male and female – this could only be physiologically for heterosexual relationships. Other forms of intercourse are potentially harmful. See the National Health Service documents.<sup>i</sup>
- b. Procreation is the fundamental purpose of sexuality (as the production of sperm indicates) and is for the preservation of humanity.<sup>ii</sup>
- c. The family, parented by a heterosexual couple, is therefore fundamental to human society.
- d. Marriage is always seen in Scripture as heterosexual.
- e. Homosexual practice is consistently disapproved of in the NT as well as the OT.
- f. It is homosexual behaviour which is the issue (nowhere in Scripture are people with homosexual orientation condemned, but only the practice). Scripture frequently lists types of behaviour which are unacceptable to God and none of these are now regarded as right.

But if the liberation of slaves and women is right despite the restrictions on both groups in Scripture, does this not imply the liberation of homosexuals to be involved in homosexual practice is also right? This is not the case as the following table makes clear.

The table below speaks of human equality. It is very important to remember that the homosexual issue is one of *behaviour*, not human equality. The issue of slavery and the status of women is one of the equality of all *people*. People with homosexual inclinations are, of course, equal to all other human beings and should be treated as such. We are to love our homosexual neighbours as we do other people. But the fact that all human beings are equal does not mean that all human behaviour is equal.

<b>Homosexual Practice</b>	<b>Slavery</b>	<b>Women's Ministry</b>
<b>1. The focus group consists of people involved in behaviour the Bible disapproves of.</b>	The focus group consists of people who are slaves, not those involved in behaviour the Bible disapproves of.	The focus group consists of people who are women, not those involved in behaviour the Bible disapproves of.
<b>2. Scripture teaches the behaviour of the focus group is subject to divine disapproval (Lev 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9)</b>	The behaviour of the focus group, as such, is subject to no divine disapproval	The behaviour of the focus group, as such, is subject to no divine disapproval
<b>3. There are no exceptions in Scripture to the behaviour of the focus group being disapproved of.</b>	There are numerous indications of slaves being treated with respect in a way which implies the ultimate abolition of slavery.	There are numerous indications of women being treated with respect in a way which implies the ultimate liberation of women.
<b>4. Practising Homosexuals are not included in the groups the NT teaches are equal in Christ.</b>	Slaves are included in the groups the NT teaches are equal in Christ. (Gal 3:28)	Women are included in the groups the NT teaches are equal in Christ. (Gal 3:28)
<b>5. There is no hint or suggestion in the NT that homosexual practice will be accepted.</b>	Paul's treatment of Onesimus implicitly undermines slavery.	Jesus' and Paul's treatment of women implicitly undermine their second class status.
<b>6. Homosexual practice is contrary to the pre-Fall creation narratives which state that humans are created physiologically and</b>	The liberation of slaves is in harmony with pre-Fall creation narratives in that all humans are created equal.	The liberation of women is in harmony with pre-Fall creation narratives in that all humans are created equal. Male domination is introduced as a result of the Fall.

emotionally for heterosexual relationships.		
7. <b>The NT disapproval of homosexual practice is counter-cultural in the Gentile Greek world which accepted homosexual relationships, including pederasty.</b>	The NT teaching favouring slavery was culturally-conditioned. In the purposes of God the Holy Spirit allowed this, probably because of the danger that a liberation movement would draw attention away from the gospel and lead to a blood bath.	The NT teaching favouring the second class status of women was culturally-conditioned. In the purposes of God the Holy Spirit allowed this, probably because any liberation movement would draw attention away from the gospel and lead to social chaos and accusations levelled against Christianity in its infancy.

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<sup>i</sup> [Does anal sex have any health risks? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk); [What is oral sex? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

<sup>ii</sup> An evolutionary view: “It is a puzzle because homosexuality poses a biological conundrum. There is no obvious evolutionary advantage to same-sex relationships. So why are some people attracted to others of the same sex? Sexual attraction provides the drive to reproduction – sex is a means to an end not, in Darwinian terms, an end in itself. From an evolutionary perspective, same-sex relationships should be selected out.” *Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor of The Independent and winner of the British Medical Association’s Medical Journalist of the Year award 1997.*