

The Methodist Church in Singapore



Our Church's stand on homosexuality

NCCS Statement

--Bishop Dr Robert Solomon

WHAT is our Church's stand on homosexuality?

It is clearly stated in the Book of Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore. In the section on Social Principles, we read: *"We consider the practice of homosexuality to be incompatible with Christian teachings. However, we do recognise that homosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. They need the ministry and guidance of the Church as well as the spiritual and emotional support of caring fellowship."*

We maintain that homosexual practice is sinful, contrary to God's will, and forbidden in Scripture. We also believe that God's grace is available to homosexuals and must be offered to them. These two points are based on our faith in a God who is both holy and compassionate (Ezek. 39:25), righteous and merciful (Ps. 4:1).

Let us think about the first point -- that Scripture speaks against homosexual practice.

Those who argue that the gay lifestyle should be accepted as an alternative lifestyle rely on two assumptions that are suspect when examined closely.

The first assumption is that gays are made that way, and therefore their behaviour should be accepted by society as normal.

It has been argued that there could be a gay gene and that gay behaviour is therefore genetically determined, and that it is therefore "natural". Others have proposed that there is such a thing as a "gay brain," structured or wired in a particular way that creates gay behaviour. Yet others have suggested that "hormones" probably explain why some people are gay. Whether it is a gay gene, brain, or hormones, their existence or significance has not been proven.

Even if proof emerges for a strong biological explanation for gay behaviour, there is still a problem. Does biology determine moral values? What if it is shown that, biologically speaking, certain people are naturally and particularly lazy, greedy, selfish, dishonest, violent or lustful? Do we accept the full and free expression of these impulses, even if they cause harm? In reality we don't.

INCOMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS ...

'We consider the practice of homosexuality to be incompatible with Christian teachings. However, we do recognise that homosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. They need the ministry and guidance of the Church as well as the spiritual and emotional support of caring fellowship.'

**--The Book of Discipline of
The Methodist Church in Singapore.**

BUT SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL

To state an unproven claim as a newly-established fact (that gays are "made that way") is in itself questionable. To assume that moral values, or what is right or wrong, can be determined mainly by biology adds to the myth.

The second assumption is that moral values are determined by what is popularly acceptable. Can we determine what is right or wrong by merely looking at the latest polls?

Alfred Kinsey's famous study on human sexuality in 1948 claimed that 10 per cent of the population are gays. The accuracy of this study has been seriously challenged and later studies show that the figure is significantly lower. But Kinsey's figures made gay behaviour appear "normal" and helped to legitimise



We are in
the Season
of
Kingdomtide

it. It led to changing views on homosexuality. Until 1973 homosexuality was considered a mental illness. Now it is viewed as an alternative lifestyle. It is claimed that there is nothing biologically or psychologically wrong with homosexuals, and that the problem really is one of social acceptability.

Hence, it is assumed that though the majority in Singapore are still "conservative" they will come to accept gay lifestyles in due time. The gay activists hope that their lifestyles can then be integrated into mainstream thinking and practice. The assumptions made here are that this shift is the path of progress and that the opinions of the majority determine what is right and wrong. Both stand on shaky ground. Yet, the biological and sociological assumptions described above are often found in arguments used by those who seek to promote gay rights and lifestyles, and sometimes by those who are opposed to them.

As Christians our primary argument must lie elsewhere. It must be rooted in Scripture, what it teaches, and the authority it has in the doctrine and life of the Church. Perhaps we can start by thinking about norms. How do we find and establish norms for our lives? It is not enough to allow what is normal to determine norms, especially moral ones. Rather we should base such norms on what is normative? What then is the difference between what is normal and what is normative?

The normal is discovered by empirical scientific study, e.g. the normal height of men, the incidence of lying, cheating, corruption and bribes. Whatever is discovered to be normal cannot be automatically assumed to be right. Science merely describes what is. We need God's revelation, through Scripture, to prescribe what should be. Science (whether it is the brain scans of biology or the surveys of sociology) can only show what is normal while it is Scripture that can truly point us to what is normative. Our moral views therefore cannot be based merely on the normal (however it is scientifically or sociologically arrived at) but must be clearly based on the normative as found in Scripture. Hence Scripture should take a central place in our discussions and reflections on the issue of homosexuality.

[Next >>](#)