

Are They Born That Way?

When I think back to how things were back in the 1980's compared to today I am amazed at how openly homosexuality is pushed in our western society today compared to back then.

A couple of years back I moved to New Farm in Brisbane and found myself shocked when I visited the local council library and they had a whole aisle of books devoted to gay and lesbian literature and also had a promotional poster on a wall for a queer film festival. At my local 7/11 I regularly see a free gay magazine called Pride. Only later did I find out the suburb was quite a popular one with the gay community.

I recently struck up a friendship with a married man with children who was helping me out with some sporting projects. I was surprised at how liberal his views were when he posted some items on facebook promoting homosexuality and transgenderism. It highlighted to me just how much homosexuality is approved by those who are not themselves homosexual.

On another occasion when I visited Sydney I heard a radio poll of the top 5 places you'd take a tourist to visit in Sydney. I expected the Harbour Bridge or Centrepont to be the top item and was shocked when the number one response was the Sydney Gay Mardi Gras.

One of the key planks in the argument supporting homosexuality is that it is genetic and that some people are just born that way. The Australian pop band Savage Garden in their hit song "Affirmation" summarised this view when they sang "I believe you can't control or choose your sexuality." If you were born that way or can't choose your sexuality then how can you be guilty over the sexuality you were born with?

The Christian community, as far as I am aware, in speaking against homosexuality, have been relatively silent in addressing the issue of explaining how some people can be drawn to the same sex from a very early age. Are people born that way?

I have heard the testimony of some who were formerly homosexual and later turned to God's way that they felt drawn to the same sex from a very early age even before puberty. If this is so, then how is this possible? Were they born that way or is there another explanation?

Why do people gravitate to homosexuality?

There are many examples of people who started off straight that later embraced homosexuality after experimenting with it in college or university.

There are also other examples of those who started off straight, gotten hooked on pornography and promiscuity and as their addiction got deeper they needed more of a hit, more variety and as they became bored with normal sex they gravitated to homosexuality.

In both these examples they chose the homosexual lifestyle by acquiring a taste for it. We can acquire a taste for some things the more we try them out. Tastes can change. Some are more difficult to change than others. One example of where tastes can change is where most children when they first take a sip of beer find it terrible yet most of these end up liking beer when they become adults after they push themselves to try it more and start taking a liking to it.

Dr Paul Cameron of the Family Research Institutes cites studies that show that the vast majority of homosexuals learn and acquire a taste for homosexuality from their early teens on. He cites a number of causes from family dysfunction where love and affection is absent in the individual's life, being approached by an older homosexual when they are young and homosexual experimentation. He writes:

There is evidence that homosexuality, like drug use is "handed down" from older individuals. The first homosexual encounter is usually initiated by an older person. In separate studies 60%, 64%, and 61% of the respondents claimed that their first partner was someone older who initiated the sexual experience...There was a strong relationship between those whose first experience was homosexual and those who practiced homosexuality in later life. In the FRI study two-thirds of the boys whose first experience was homosexual engaged in homosexual behaviour as adults (<http://www.biblebelievers.com/Cameron3.html>).

Is homosexuality genetic where it is passed down from one generation to another?

Let's apply a little common sense to answer this one. Those who are exclusively homosexual are unable to reproduce naturally and cannot perpetuate the human species and therefore those who are exclusively homosexual cannot pass on genes to the next generation.

If we rule this out then how do we account for how some people can be drawn to the same sex from a very early age? There are two other possibilities.

The first is some form of physical or mental disorder with the brain. Brain diseases and afflictions have been very much on the rise in recent decades with the surge in Autism and Alzheimer's disease. Many point the finger at chemicals in our foods and lack of minerals and nutrients in our soil.

Dr Cameron in the above quoted article states there is no definitive evidence that a purely physical disorder accounts for homosexuality and notes some psychoanalysts believe when it happens so young that it is more likely to be a mental disorder brought on by childhood trauma. If a physical or mental disorder were the case, like any physical disease, the repentant believer can seek healing from God while doing their part to correct the problem. The timing of His healing will depend on His plan to use the trial to build His character within that individual.

The second possibility is gravitating to the moods and impulses broadcast by Satan from a very early age. Ephesians 2:2 tells us that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience". Herbert W. Armstrong wrote the following about this verse:

This great and powerful being, even though evil, has power literally to surcharge the air around this earth. HE BROADCASTS!... The spirit in every human being is automatically tuned in on Satan's wavelength. You don't hear anything because he does not broadcast in words -- nor in sounds, whether music or otherwise. He broadcasts in ATTITUDES. He broadcasts in attitudes of SELF-centeredness, lust, greed, vanity, jealousy, envy, resentment, competition, strife, bitterness, and hate...that we call "Human NATURE" is actually SATAN'S NATURE...

Those unaware of this phenomenon, with this self-centered attitude being broadcast and injected into their unsuspecting minds from earliest childhood, do, to a greater or lesser degree, absorb it until it becomes their normal attitude. It becomes habitual. It does not, of course, exhibit the same degree of effect in all minds -- one person will become more evil than another. But the natural tendency is there. They come to have it naturally. It becomes their very NATURE. And we call it "human nature." (Did God Create Human Nature?, p.8-9)

Dwelling on and giving over such impulses that come from Satan over a period of time, even at an early age, can lead to habitual thinking and behaviour and that can include our sexual orientation.

The apostle Paul would sometimes use principles found in nature to make a case for certain things. Paul said: "Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him?" (1 Corinthians 11:14). In Romans 1:26-27 he said that homosexuality is against what is natural. Nature and common sense tells us that the physical reproductive organs were not designed for homosexual sex and if we were all exclusively homosexual then the human race would die out with our generation.

I feel compassion for those who want to follow God's way when it comes to sex but are still strongly drawn to same sex. I refuse to label them as homosexual if they have that physical desire but obediently do not act on those feelings just as I wouldn't call someone a thief if they felt tempted to steal but faithfully resisted the temptation to act on that.

I feel compassion for those who have spiritually lost their way, including those who are homosexual, as often there are deeper issues of abandonment and family breakdown that have led them down that path.

That said, this concern and compassion for them should not lead to us being soft on the practice of homosexuality. God's word trumps our human reasoning and God makes it clear from Genesis to Revelation that this practice is against His holy law.

God opposes sin and open rebellion against His law because of the harm that it does to relationships. In Ezekiel 16:49 in speaking to Jerusalem God said: "Behold, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom; pride." Today the gay movement will often use the term "Gay pride". Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 "Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor abusers, nor homosexuals...shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you."

Paul knew some who had turned their lives to God and been able to abandon the homosexual lifestyle. There is hope for those who turn to God and seek the help that is available and choose to live by His ways, including what God teaches about sexuality.