Volume 2 April 2004 Issue 001

The Coop Report...

About the Homosexual Lifestyle, Gay Marriage, & Stuff...

God's Laws, Responsibility, & Accountability

Many have expressed an opinion relative to the issues surrounding the "gay rights" movement which seeks to have the American society accept the homosexual lifestyle as an "acceptable" way of living for consenting adults. Recently, of course, momentum has picked up with gay activists calling for marriage rights and/or at least what they believe to be the rights of gay "couples" to have some type of benefits traditionally allocated to heterosexual couples (i.e., "civil unions").

Many Christians may be confused about what position they should take regarding these issues. Much confusion can be contributed to the way Jesus would want us to treat the homosexual *individual* (with compassion and love) with the way He would want us to treat the *sin* (with abhorrence). The intent of this article is to help the Christian see God's position in the matter, as recorded by Him in His Holy Scriptures…the Bible.

Just what are many people, including Christians saying about the matter? Some of the more prevalent responses regarding this issue by both Christians and non-believers include the following:

- *"We should accept the lifestyle because to do otherwise would deny gay individuals their basic "rights."*
- *"Well, that's none of my business what other people do as consenting adults. After all, they will have to sit in judgment by God for their actions…what they do does not affect me."*
- *"Since God made them that way, we should accept them as just another child of God."*
- *"What harm can it do? Why can't America just accept the "gay lifestyle", gay civil unions, and/or gay "marriages" and leave us alone? Besides, many of us are Christians, we're not bad people."*
- *"If homosexual behavior is sinful, what's so different about "gays" and straight people who commit other sins that are outlined in the Bible? Isn't a sin, just a sin, just a sin, etc.?"*

The following scriptures provide us with God's perspective concerning the homosexual act:

- Romans 1: 18–32
- Leviticus 18:20-30
- Leviticus 20: 13-16
- Genesis 19: 4-5
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-20
- 1 Timothy 1:8-11

There you have it, both the Old and the New Testaments… God speaks directly to His people about the sinfulness of the homosexual act and the consequences of its practice. Sadly, "AIDS" is a testament to the fulfillment of scripture as recorded in Romans 1.

In Corinthians 6: 9-10, the homosexual act is characterized as being a sin in the same category as fornication, idolatry, adultery, thievery, greediness, drunkenness, abusiveness, and deceitfulness. This passage goes on to say that those who ignore God's most merciful gift of salvation through Christ and continue to nurture these sins will be precluded from entering the Kingdom of God.

Even so, having learned God's message straight from His instruction book for worldly living, many reason that although God does not condone the homosexual lifestyle, He only judges the *individual* based only upon his/her indulgence in this sinful practice…that He will *not* judge others based upon their position in the matter.

This is not entirely true. In the sense that God may not *directly* judge others for the sins of their fellow man, the absence of a resounding Christian presence or Christian influence in our society (these are sins of omission) can *indirectly* result in the innocent being caught up in the aftermath of the sinful practices of our fellow citizens.

Where homosexuals ("married" or not) are permitted by man's law to have children in some way or another, what message is society sending its impressionable children?

Our failing to articulate God's position on this issue may lure others into the homosexual lifestyle itself, thus jeopardizing a soul for Christ. For these reasons, God will hold us responsible for ignoring our Christian duty (remember the Great Commission?), thus allowing a growing culture of immorality to not only take root, but flourish in our own backyards.

There are hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of victims of the AIDS virus that had nothing to do with homosexual activity. Many have acquired it through other self-inflicted attacks on their bodies, such as intravenous drug use. Many still have innocently acquired this dreaded disease through no fault of their own, such as just being born by a carrier of AIDS.

Those who have dishonored their bodies through homosexual or other immoral practices need the healing power of Jesus Christ to see the error of their ways.

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Why does God feel this way about homosexuality? Two of the aforementioned passages address this question. Let's first refer to 1 Corinthians, 6: 13-20:

> *13 "Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food," but God will do away with both the one and the other. The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; 14 God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ's members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! 16 (Or) do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For "the two," it says, "will become one flesh." 17 But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18 Avoid immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body."*

In referring to our bodies as a "temple of the Holy Spirit…" and having been "purchased with a price" (Christ's shedding of His blood for us) committing any kind of immoral act serves only to decimate the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within our human form.

Secondly, referring to Romans 1:25-27:

> *25 "For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."*

God's creation of both sexes (as was His creation of all things) was intentional. It was through this Divine "model" of His creation, that His plan for mankind was built. Men and women who abandon their complimentary sexual roles (functions) in life for the *unnatural* invalidate the intentional design of our Master's hand.

The Responsibilities of the Body of Christ

As the Body of Christ, our responsibility to God's laws is not limited to just our individual actions, but also our *inactions*. While it is true, as individuals, God makes us directly responsible only for our own sinfulness, our inaction (or apostasy) towards the growing spiritual and moral decay of our society does not bode well with our Lord. Being Christian and knowing the truth in this matter, but not sharing the truth, is a sin by itself. The collective sinfulness of our society that grows without resistance from God's people will promote spiritual unrighteousness in our nation, eliciting God to judge America as He judged so many nations before us.

As members of this great nation, which He founded for His people through His marvelous Grace and from Whom our "greatness" and "power" has been given, we are obligated to God to govern our society in a manner that respects *His* laws.

As Christians, we must strive to live by God's Words and actively defend His Word in order to assert His influence in our communities to live in accordance with His laws. What is occurring in America today was prophesized by the Apostle Paul, in his letter to Timothy as recorded in II Timothy 3:16-17 and 4:1-5. We must we take heed from this instruction:

> *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His Kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come with they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."*

If we fail to step up to the plate and reprove, rebuke, exhort our fellow man ("with great patience and instruction") as he wanders down the path to destruction, we will fail in meeting God's standard of Christian living. Like a cancerous cell, indi-

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vidual sinfulness, left unchecked, often impacts the surrounding fabric of humankind, with painful, if not disastrous results.

Those who fail to remember their history….

There are many instances recorded in the Bible when the collective and sometimes individual sins of God's chosen people resulted in severe punishment, including the following:

- The Adam & Eve "incident" that changed mankind's relationship with God forever. Remember that after Eve partook of the apple, God cast judgment on three creatures:
  - ◊ The serpent for tempting Eve, directly causing the sinfulness of mankind
  - ◊ Eve for ignoring God's directive not to eat of the forbidden fruit and for her temptation of Adam
  - ◊ Adam for ignoring God's directive not to eat of the forbidden fruit

You see, sin *originated* with one individual, but easily spread to another…Adam…and to all of mankind.

Recall, if you will, one other closely related event soon after the "garden incident." After Cain slew Able, God inquired of Cain the whereabouts of Abel. Abel replied, "Am I my brother's keeper?" God's question in this incident should also help confirm that, yes" we *are* our brother's keeper.

The Analogy…

If you have children beyond baby-sitting age and you leave them at home as you attend a gathering of some type, how do you help insure their safety and well-being? Chances are, you will delegate the responsibility of keeping them safe and out of "trouble" to your oldest child. You do this because teaching your oldest child to be a responsible person is important to their maturity. If something, however, does wind up going wrong, who will you hold responsible? Most likely it will be both the perpetrator of the wrongdoing as well as the one you placed in charge. You will be disappointed with the "sinfulness" of the one who actually committed the "sin" and you will also be upset with the one who should have prevented the occurrence of the sin. Created in the image of God, God's relationship with His children (that's us) is no different.

Other incidents to remember (lessons learned)…

- The Noah "incident" that was brought on by God due to the widespread corruption of mankind. (see Genesis 6: 1-8)

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the Lord said, I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them. 8 But Noah found favor in the sight of the Lord." (Genesis 6: 5-8)

(Only eight people survived…)

- The "Ham" incident that continues to plague the world today with a curse of violence in the Middle East (the Canaanites were the forefathers of the Palestinians):

"Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness." "When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, he said, 'Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers. He also said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend the territory of Japheth, may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave."

- The impatience of Abraham and Sarah to have a child resulted in Abraham fathering Ishmael by way of Sarah's handmaid, Hagar. Of Ishmael, an angel of the Lord said of Hagar….

"He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." (Genesis 16: 12)

(Ishmael's lineage are fathers of modern-day terrorism...)

Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 18 (all) – 19:1 - 29)

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- The Golden Calf "incident" during God's delivery of the 10 Commandments to Moses….

  "Then the Lord sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf the one that Aaron made." (Exodus 32)

- The rebellion of Korah against Moses and Aaron brought God's wrath against Korah and his followers (about 250), so angered God that He wanted all of His people put to death, except for Moses and Aaron. Only upon Moses' intervention, did God only put Korah and his 250 followers to death. (Numbers 16:16 – 35)

- The people blamed Moses for the deaths of Korah and his followers and God wanted, again, to destroy all of His people. Again, Moses intervened and saved all but 14, 700 who died from the plague. (Number 16: 36 – 50)

- Achan's greed, after he took booty from Jericho (against God's command) caused God's anger to nearly destroy all of Israel. Only after Joshua discovered this and Achan was stoned to death, did God begin to protect Israel from their enemies. (Joshua 7)

(*The list goes on and on…..)*

How many lost opportunities to save the perishing can be contributed to Christians who have failed to become the conduit for God's Word…to bear the pressures upon our governmental leaders and God's people everywhere so they would bend to the will of God's Word, rather than the laws established by man?

Over the last 40 – 50 years, our society has gradually allowed the principalities and powers of darkness (Satan) to infiltrate into our culture. As with all things, "tolerance" has its place in our culture as we interrelate with our fellow man. However, as with many things, it can be used excessively. We will all sit in judgment someday when our worldly lives come to an end. At that time, I believe God will judge us based not only on the sins we directly committed, but also on those that we indirectly caused our fellow man and our country to commit.

Faced with a choice in the matter, then, you can only choose between two options. You can either be against the sanctioning of gay marriages which is in obvious conflict with God's desire for His people or choose to condone them.

If you are against the sanctioning of gay marriage, you must let your witness to this accounting be heard. You must make your voice known…write letters, talk to your Congressman and/or Senator and or local Councilmen, etc. This sin of omission is but one of many that bear heavily on God's heart. We Christians must do much more for fulfilling our purpose in this life…which is to help fulfill the Great Commission. We are to be ministers to our fellow man, especially to those who are lost, for the time is near.

If you choose to condone the sanctioning of gay marriage, you must be willing to face God's judgment (directly or indirectly) upon yourself and/or your loved ones. Should gay "marriages" or even civil "unions" be legalized upon our land, the social consequences will be devastating.

Only you can decide for yourself, but keep in mind that your choice will have tremendous influence on your entire family and circle of friends.

The sexes are the most basic "appointments" of God's handiwork. As He saw Adam was alone in the world, he took one of Adam's ribs and created woman. He did not create another *man*…He created *woman*, after which God declared, "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh."

Christian Apathy or is it …Apostasy?

God chose His People to be witnesses to other nations. If we cannot witness to our own fellow citizens, how then can we be effective witnesses to other nations? If nations see America's unbridled evil, how then must our reflection as a so-called "Christian nation" be seen? How can this "state of our Union" bring glory to God?

The growing tolerance of homosexuality in America is an indication to God that our Christian influence on society has failed to produce the fruits of His supreme sacrifice for us. Our Christian influence on society has become ineffective in stopping the concentrated efforts of the ungodly in the promotion of perverse activities. This unabated assault on God's Kingdom opens us up (America) for his judgment.

It was this same level of depravation of righteous living that led to His destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Rome, and other societies, not to mention nearly all of mankind at the time of the great flood itself.

Responsibility, respect for one's benefactor, and accountability…these are the characteristics that we desire of those we bring into this world and of those for whom we provide. God requires no more…no less from us.

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