

Where can I find more information?

For more information on LGBT issues; questions regarding OHIO SafeZone, SpeakOUT!, and campus organizations; or to check-out a book, magazine, or video from our Resource Library; visit the LGBT Center.



The OHIO SafeZone project is a voluntary, educational effort to support LGBT & Questioning students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University by attending a two hour workshop and by displaying a SafeZone card. If you are an LGBT supporter, it is time to act!

SpeakOUT!

Speaker's Bureau & Education Project

SpeakOUT! is a dynamic speaker's bureau and education project that has been assisting class instructors, student organizations, and resident assistants with their speaker/education needs for years. Formats include a panel presentation, Coming Out 101, or tailor-made presentations.

Resource Library

Our Resource Library is a collection of books, magazines, and videos on a variety of topics including LGBT history, legislation, biographies, fiction, and religion in relation to LGBT concerns, as well as coming out resources. Check it out today!

Campus Resources

Hillel Jewish Center at Ohio University

Hillel Jewish Students

21 Mill Street

Tel: 740- 592-1173

ohiohillel@yahoo.com

Web: www.ohiohillel.org

Hillel is the Jewish Center of Southeast Ohio.

Hillel's calendar reflects students' social, cultural and religious interests. Hillel sponsors a few LGBT-related programs every year.

Drop by to schmooze and meet the Hillel staff!

UCM:

Center for Spiritual Growth & Social Justice

18 North College Street

Tel: 740-593-7301

ucm@frognet.net

Web: <http://www.ucmathens.org>

Programs: Winter and spring break community service work trips; Bridging the Diversity Gap interactive drama; Underground Railroad Trips; Soup for the Soul; Student intern program; Thursday Supper weekly soup kitchen; and interfaith activities. Open Doors meets here, too!



OHIO
UNIVERSITY

THE BIBLE & LGBT ISSUES

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center

354 Baker Center
Ohio University
Athens, OH 45701

740.593.0239
www.ohio.edu/lgbt

Many Bible scholars believe that a person can be both Christian AND lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). Although Jesus of Nazareth was never quoted in the New Testament as saying anything about same-sex relationships, some people have translated certain Old and New Testament verses as condemning LGBT people. Where are these found? Below is the real story on what the Bible has to say about this important issue.

Genesis 19:4-11

The Story of Sodom and Gomorrah

“They called to Lot, ‘where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them to us, that we may know them.’”

Some have translated this verse as meaning that the men of the city wanted to have homosexual sex with the visitors and that this was a sin, but not all scholars agree. Some will point out two things about this passage that lead them to believe that it does not refer to same-sex relationships. First, the sin of Sodom is never said to have been homosexuality in any other part of the Bible. In fact, according to Ezekiel 16:49-50 and Matthew 10:11-15, the sins that the passage refers to were *inhospitality*, *pride*, and *greed*. Lot was seen as a good host because he refused to give his guests over to the crowd, regardless of their purpose.

In addition, the verb in the original text, “yadah,” meaning “to know,” means “to become acquainted with” and only rarely (10 out of 943 times) means “sexual intercourse” of any sort in the Hebrew scriptures.

Finally, some scholars suggest that, because Lot offered his virgin daughters to the crowd in place of the male visitors, we should not be attempting to draw sexual ethics from this story.

Leviticus 18:22; 20:13-14 **The Holiness Code**

“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is [an] abomination.”

The “Holiness Code” contains many cultural restrictions that may have had practical value during the time the passage was written even though they may seem strange by today’s standards. These include a condemnation of the wearing of fabric made from more than one material (like a cotton/poly blend) and the cross breeding of two types of cattle. People were expected to keep all of these laws, so modern scholars scratch their heads when some Christians want to enforce only certain parts of the “Code.”

It has also been mentioned that what seemed so “abominable” to this patriarchal culture was to “lie... as a woman,” or to take the role of a woman, who were considered in those days to be passive or inferior.

Finally, the word in the original text, “toevah,” translated as “abomination,” is usually used to refer to something that is *ritually unclean*. During Biblical times, many things were considered ritually unclean. For example, a woman’s menstrual cycle made her ritually unclean for several days each month.

Romans 1:26-27, I Corinthians 6:9 **and Timothy 10:1**

The recurring issue scholars have with these New Testament verses is a cultural one. The Greek words used to refer to male sexual behavior, in a cultural context, mean things like “call-boy,” “boy prostitute,” and “one who has sex with young boys” (whom we would consider to be minors). When any word appears in a laundry list of sins, there is no context, and it becomes even more difficult to translate.

Still Confused?

One of the best ways to handle intellectual and emotional difficulties with Christianity and LGBT issues is to engage in dialogue with religious professionals who are allies to the LGBT community.

Resources

Check out these and other books on religion and LGBT issues from the LGBT Center’s Library:

What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality
by Daniel Helminiak, Ph.D.

Holy Homosexuals: The Truth About Being Gay or Lesbian and Christian
by Michael Piazza

Say Jesus and Come to Me
by Ann Allen Shockey

Reclaiming the Sacred
Ed. by Raymond-Jean Frontain

Openly Gay, Openly Christian
by Rev. Samuel Keader

In the Court of the Lord
by James Ferry

Taking a Chance on God
by John J. McNeill

Gifted By Otherness
by L. William Countryman & M.R. Ritley

Stranger at the Gate
by Mel White

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