

THE CENTER FOR
FAITH, SEXUALITY & GENDER

Pastoral Paper

WRITTEN BY:
DR. PRESTON SPRINKLE

4

**WAS HOMOSEXUALITY THE
SIN OF SODOM?**

Misleading premise that he will use to build a strawman. He has hidden parameters to this question. He reduces it to an "all or nothing" situation, where homosexuality is THE sin, or irrelevant if there are other sins. This is why a CLEAR premise is important.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Was Homosexuality the Sin of Sodom? **PG. 1**

The Story of Sodom Revisited **PGS. 2-3**

Reasons Why Christians Uphold the "Homosexuality" View? **PGS. 4-7**

Pastoral Implication **PG. 8**

Notes **PG. 9**

Was Homosexuality the Sin of Sodom?

Many Christians assume that the sin of Sodom (Gen. 19:1-10) was homosexuality. This assumption has given us everything from the word "sodomy" to bumper stickers declaring that "gay pride is why Sodom fried." But was "sodomy" really the sin of Sodom? Is gay pride the reason why God fried the city?

I will show that this interpretation is not only wrongheaded but pastorally destructive. As Christians today wrestle with whether same-sex sexual relations are morally permissible, non-affirming (or traditional) Christians should not use the story of Sodom as biblical evidence for their position.

Before we proceed, I want to reframe the very question we're addressing in this paper. I've used the term "homosexuality" in the title because that's the way the question is often stated: "Was the sin of Sodom *homosexuality*?" But the word "homosexuality" is a very broad term that includes identity, orientation, lust, sexual intercourse, romantic desire, same-sex attraction, same-sex marriage, and so much more. Only some of the various aspects of homosexuality include *sexual activity*.

This is why I don't like to use the word "homosexuality" to discuss what the sin of Sodom might have been. Many aspects of homosexuality don't even come close to playing a role in the story of Sodom. The story is clearly not about orientation, identity, marriage, or even same-sex attraction or romantic desire. Instead of asking, "Is the sin of Sodom *homosexuality*," we should ask a more precise question: "Is the sin of Sodom

same-sex sexual *behavior*?" But even here, we should distinguish between same-sex sexual behavior as a promiscuous activity—running around the city late at night and having sex with whatever person you see—and sexual activity within the context of a life-long, committed, monogamous union. I believe that both are wrong; I believe that the Bible forbids all forms of same-sex sexual activity no matter the context.

But I would still want to distinguish the two for various pastoral reasons. A gay person (or a straight person, for that matter) who has several sexual partners every week should be pastored differently than the sexually abstinent gay Christian man engaged to another man, forgoing sexual relations until his wedding night. You may believe, as I do, that same-sex sexual relations are wrong regardless, but we should certainly distinguish between the different types of "wrongness" under consideration and let the most relevant passages shape our pastoral wisdom.

For this paper, then, we are asking: Is the sin of Sodom same-sex sexual *behavior*, and if so, *what kind of same-sex sexual behavior*?

Why reframe things to use this question? What justifies narrowing things to this question? Take note for later. Also, this question isn't even used for most of the paper

I will revisit the story and make four observations to help us understand what *kind* of same-sex sexual behavior was attempted in Genesis 19. I will then address the three main reasons why some Christians still use the story of Sodom to condemn all forms of same-sex sexual behavior (including marital sex). Lastly, I will conclude by giving three pastoral implications of the interpretation offered in this paper.

The Story of Sodom Revisited

According to Genesis 19, two angels appearing as men arrive in Sodom, and Lot insists that they spend the night in his house. **While the angels are there, the men of Sodom crowd around Lot's house demanding to have sex with his guests:**

What kind of sex is that, Preston?

[A]ll the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. They called to Lot, **"Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them."** (Gen. 19:4–5, NIV)

As the story unfolds, Lot offers his virgin daughters to the crowd instead, but the Sodomites decline and try to attack Lot for refusing to give up his guests. The angels intervene and strike the men (and boys) of Sodom with blindness (Gen. 19:4–11).

Some scholars say that this passage isn't talking about sex at all. The Hebrew word translated "sex" actually means "to know" (*yadah*), so some interpreters say that the men of Sodom only wanted to "know" more about Lot's guests. ("Where are you from? Why are you here? Would you like a falafel, or perhaps a shawarma?") This is the view of the late **John Boswell—a world-renowned Yale theologian**—who writes:

When the men of Sodom gathered around to demand that the strangers be brought out to them, "that they might know them," they meant no

more than to "know" who they were, and the city was consequently destroyed not for sexual immorality but for the sin of inhospitality to strangers.¹

Others agree with Boswell, but this is a minority view.² **The Hebrew word *yadah* ("to know") almost certainly refers to sexual intercourse here.** In the same passage, Lot describes his daughters as never having "*known* any man" (19:8), which clearly means that they were virgins, not just socially awkward. Since "know" refers to sex in 19:8 (as it does elsewhere in the Bible; e.g. Gen. 4:1), it probably means the same thing in 19:5.

The men of Sodom were most likely trying to have sex with God's angels.

We'll be better equipped to understand how this story fits into our modern discussions about same-sex sexual behavior once we've made four simple observations.

First, notice the comprehensive nature of the mob. Genesis 19:4 says, "*All the men from every part of the city—both young and old.*" **Even though all the men were trying to have sex with Lot's guests, it's unlikely that all the men were gay. In the ancient world, it wasn't uncommon for straight men to rape other men as an act of domination and power.** This practice was similar to prison rape today. One man may rape another man to show him who's boss. **It's not an expression of attraction or orientation. It's an expression of domination.**

Clearly, then, Sodom wasn't condemned for

Applying a modern definition

simply "being gay"—that is, for experiencing attraction to the same sex. Someone can be gay and abstain from all forms of sexual activity, especially the type of activity pursued by the men (and boys) of Sodom.

What does quantity have to do with anything?

This leads to a second observation: the men of Sodom were trying to gang-rape Lot's guests. They weren't pursuing consensual sexual relations with Lot's guest—bringing them chocolate and flowers and asking their fathers' permission to court.

What?

There's nothing consensual going on in Genesis 19. Although there is sexual activity being pursued, it's sexual violence rather than an expression of consensual love. Such violence might have provoked fire from heaven even if Lot's guests had been women.

We don't need "might haves," we need "this is what the Bible says"

There's no debate today about whether it's okay for a bunch of men to gang-rape other men. No one I know is arguing for this. The question facing the church today is whether two people of the same sex can engage in consensual sexual relations in the context of a life-long union. The story of Sodom doesn't address this question. It only shows that gang rape is wrong. Next paragraph contradicts this.

Third, no one had sex in Genesis 19. The men of Sodom tried to rape Lot's guests, but they were struck blind before they laid their hands on them. No one actually had sex in the story. So when we talk about God's condemnation of Sodom, we can't actually say they were condemned for the sexual activity in Genesis 19, because there was no sexual activity. According to Gen. 18:20-21 (cf. 13:13), Sodom was condemned before the attempted gang rape in Genesis 19. Sodom was a wicked, horrible, terrible city filled with all kinds of immorality. There's no evidence, though, that consensual same-sex relations were among these immoral practices.

Didn't Preston just establish that rape is worse? Why jump to "consensual," and how would that change anything?

Fourth, other Bible passages refer back to the story of Sodom but never mention same-sex sexual behavior.³ Isaiah, for instance, mentions Sodom in the context of false religion and social injustices (Isa. 1:10-17; cf. 3:9). Jeremiah mentions the same and adds adultery to the list, and there's no evidence that the adultery Jeremiah had in mind was men sleeping with another woman's husband (Jer. 23:14). Jesus mentions Sodom without ever hinting at same-sex relations (Matt. 11:23-24). And Ezekiel gives us the clearest commentary of them all:

Isaiah is about Israel

not about S&G, but about wicked prophets being destroyed (like S&G were)

all: Matt: again, about judgement, not about S&G's specific sins

Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. (Ezek. 16:49, NIV)

Seems like a "gotcha" verse... until you read v. 50 where their actual sin comes in. "Thus... committed abominations"

Did you get that? The one passage that actually defines the Sodomites says they were overstuffed greedy people who were unconcerned for the poor. How ironic that some Christians have wielded the story of Sodom to condemn gay people while committing the very sins that the Bible calls "sodomy."

Jude, as he'll admit (already did in a footnote) also goes into the sin of the S&G

We've had deny and deflect, and now we have discredit. And very disjointedly thrown in at that.

If the story of Sodom was about homosexuality, we would expect other scriptural references to confirm this. But they don't. Sodom and homosexuality are simply not correlated by any other biblical writer.

This reminds me of Muslims arguing Jesus never claimed to be God because He never said the words "I am God"

If a castaway were stranded on a desert island and the story of Sodom washed up on shore (stuffed in a bottle, of course), that castaway would probably not conclude after reading the story that it prohibited same-sex marriage, same-sex romantic desire, or simply being gay. The story only addresses one type of attempted same-sex sexual activity: violent gang rape as a display of power, most probably by heterosexual men.

Why not? This argument relies on separating S&G from the rest of

Umm... you never did anything to prove that, only stated it as fact. Also, if a man rapes another man... what kind of sex is that?

the Bible. Beyond that, Preston is projecting his beliefs and categories onto this hypothetical person. Also, it's not the story that prohibits those. It's the rest of the Bible

Reasons Why Christians Uphold the “Homosexuality” View?

This only works when you split the category (homosexuality) up

Why do some Christians still think that the story of Sodom is about “being gay” as such, or about all types of same-sex sexual activity? To be fair, there are many good, intelligent, Bible-believing Christians who hold this view. Most believe it out of tradition; they haven’t actually considered our observations above. But some scholars and pastors have thought through the passage and still conclude that the story is about same-sex sexual relations. Why is this? We’ll summarize their arguments under three categories: (1) the Jewish interpretation of Genesis 19, (2) the reference to Sodom in Jude 6-7, and (3) the use of “abomination” in Ezekiel 16:50. In each case, we’ll show why these arguments don’t prove that all types of same-sex sexual behavior are in view, and they certainly don’t show that every aspect of homosexuality is being condemned.

Yes, that’s because you’re splitting up “homosexuality” into many, many mini categories. This is why noting his reframing at the beginning was important.
The Jewish Interpretation of Genesis 19

Some say that first-century Jews believed the sin of Sodom to be same-sex sexual behavior (without distinguishing between different kinds of such behavior), and therefore early Christians assumed this same interpretation. Pastor and author Kevin DeYoung, for instance, argues that Josephus, Philo, and other pieces of “[l]iterature from the Second Temple period” confirm “Sodom’s reputation for same-sex behavior.”⁴ These other pieces of Jewish literature to which DeYoung refers are three ancient Jewish texts: *Testament of Naphtali* 3:4-5, *Testament of Benjamin* 9:1, and *Jubilees* 16:5. But if you read these three texts, you’ll be

hard-pressed to find any clear reference to same-sex behavior.

The first one (*Testament of Naphtali* 3:4-5) says that the Sodomites “departed from the order of nature,” which DeYoung takes as a clear reference to same-sex sexual behavior. However, the next statement says, “likewise the Watchers [a name for angels] departed from nature’s order.” This passage apparently refers to Genesis 6, where angels had sex with humans. Without getting into all the strange details of Genesis 6, what’s clear is that the “order of nature” that the men of Sodom departed from was not male-female sexual relations but human-human sexual relations. They were trying to have sex with angels.

The second reference (*Testament of Benjamin* 9:1) mentions only “sexual promiscuity” and not same-sex sexual behavior. Maybe the author has same-sex promiscuity in mind, but he certainly doesn’t say so. In fact, the very next statement in 9:1 talks about sleeping around with “loose women,” which suggests that opposite-sex, not same-sex, promiscuity is in view.

The last text (*Jubilees* 16:5) mentions “fornication” and “polluting themselves.” DeYoung states rather confidently that “[t]he language of fornicating and of polluting themselves” in *Jubilees* “suggests that Sodom’s sexual transgression was of a unique kind—not merely fornication, but also something more polluting.” But this is not true. There’s no evidence that “pollution” means “same-sex sexual

I’m not interested in going into the “what did these Jewish sources think” section. It’s a distraction that proves nothing either way. It functions as deflection from the question at hand: What does the Bible say

Functionally “you’re wrong if you haven’t considered my novel points”

That’s because such distinctions are novel

Early church leaders DID connect S&G to homosexuality

behavior" in the book of *Jubilees*, as we can see by examining the other places this book uses the word "pollution." In *Jubilees* 23:14 and 23:17, "pollution" is used to describe sin, but it doesn't specify a particular kind of sin, and it certainly doesn't describe same-sex behavior. The word "pollution" in *Jubilees* 7:20 almost certainly refers to the sexual sin of the angels in Genesis 6. The book of *Jubilees*, therefore, offers no evidence to support DeYoung's view that the sin of Sodom was same-sex sexual behavior of any kind.

DeYoung also cites the ancient Jewish authors Josephus and Philo to show that the story of Sodom was believed to be about same-sex sexual behavior. Josephus was a prolific first-century Jewish historian, and Philo was an equally prolific first-century Jewish philosopher. Both writers offer several interpretations of the story of Sodom. While they sometimes use the Sodom story to condemn same-sex sexual behavior,⁵ **this sin is usually mentioned alongside many other sins like selfish affluence, gluttony, pride, and inhospitality.** And sometimes, like the biblical writers, Josephus and Philo refer to the sin of Sodom with no reference to same-sex sexual acts.⁶

When we step back and consider all the ancient Jewish writers and how they understood the story of Sodom, the fact is this: most of them do *not* mention same-sex sexual behavior.⁷ And again, the Bible itself never correlates the story of Sodom with same-sex sexual behavior. Since ancient Jewish writers didn't universally understand the sin of Sodom to be **(all types of)** same-sex sexual behavior—indeed, this was the minority view—we should be cautious about assuming some standard Jewish interpretation of Sodom and then imagining that the New Testament writers shared this interpretation.

actually, he just proved his assumptions wrong, but we'll see that in a minute

Jude 6-7 Refers to Same-Sex Sexual Behavior in Sodom

Depending on your translation, Jude 6-7 may look like a reference to same-sex sexual behavior in Sodom. The NIV reads:

And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to **sexual immorality and perversion**. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

The word "perversion" is translated as "strange flesh" by the NASB and "unnatural desire" by the ESV. **The Greek phrase is *sarkos heteras*, which literally means "other flesh."** Some readers assume that this "other flesh" means same-sex sexual activity. Ironically, the second Greek word, *heteras*, **is where we get the first part of our compound word *heterosexuality*—that is, a sexual attraction toward the opposite, or other (*hetero*), sex.** **The sexual immorality of the Sodomites had to do with going after "other flesh" and, quite plainly, not the *same* flesh. To interpret "other flesh" as a condemnation of same-sex sexual activity goes directly against what the Greek actually says. If Jude had had same-sex intercourse in view, he most likely would have said "same flesh" rather than "other (*heteras*) flesh."**

this is one of the most manipulative inclusions I've seen in a long time

1. Preston's admitted they were attempting homosexual rape.

2. What is the context of "other flesh" here. Heterosexuality is "sexual attraction to the other sex," but

So what is Jude referring to? **In light of verse 6, it seems rather clear that the "other flesh" of Jude 7 refers to the angels that the Sodomites were trying to have sex with.** Jude 6 refers back to Genesis

what is the "other" here? It is "other" in the sense that it is "other than what is normal," hence translations using "strange" (a synonym of other, and one that is clearer to English speakers.) See Rom 1:26

No one says there weren't other sins. Romans makes it clear that sins like homosexuality grow out of other sins.

And there's that qualifier again

What did the men of S&G know? "Where are the MEN who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them." They were not seeking to have sex with angels, but rather other men. Further, granting him Gen 6, that would be angels pursuing humans, i.e. the opposite situation. Preston has also admitted that the men were seeking homosexual rape, and is now shifting to "sex with angels" because that is more convenient now. Or was there no homosexuality in the story at all? I'm confused Preston. Because the men were seeking homosexual sex, had no knowledge the men were angels, and the roles are the opposite; the logical conclusion is that the compared "otherness" is in "leaving what is natural for what is unnatural."

6:1-4, where angels had sex with humans. Jude 7, then, connects this story with the story of Sodom, where the men of the city were trying to have sex with angels, which Jude describes as other flesh.

In short, Jude 6-7 offers no evidence that the sin of Sodom was same-sex sexual behavior of any kind. I'm confused, was homosexuality involved, or wasn't it? Preston is flipping on that point constantly.

Ezekiel's Use of "Abomination" in 16:50 Refers to Same-Sex Sexual Behavior

This is probably the strongest argument for the view that the story of Sodom is about same-sex sexual behavior. In describing the "sin of Sodom," Ezekiel 16:50 says that the city committed "an abomination." Let's back up a verse to get the full context: Why didn't this verse come up when Preston tried to use verse 49 as the "sin of Sodom"?

Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it. (Ezek. 16:49-50, ESV)

Some argue that the word "abomination" (*toevah*) refers to same-sex intercourse, based on the occurrence of this very same word, *toevah*, in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13—the two Old Testament passages that prohibit male same-sex sexual behavior.⁸ This argument is strengthened by the fact that Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are the only two passages in Leviticus where "abomination" occurs in the singular.⁹

He's leaving out important context for why people say that. Multiple sins are called abominations in the OT, so it's not simply that Lev says it. It's that it has been identified as such while referencing a story that involves homosexuality.

While this argument is stronger than the two above, it relies on too many speculations that are not clear in the text. For one, it assumes that the reader will hear "an abomination" and immediately jump to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and then map these passages and the singular "an abomination" onto Genesis 19. That's a lot of dancing around required for a reader—all from the use of the word "abomination" in the singular instead of the plural. Plus, the phrase "did an abomination" (using "abomination" in the singular) occurs elsewhere in Ezekiel without any mention of same-sex sexual behavior (Ezek 18:12; 22:11; 33:26).¹⁰ While "an abomination" is used to describe same-sex sexual behavior in Leviticus, the same does not seem to be true for Ezekiel. Lastly, Ezekiel says they "did an abomination," and yet no one had same-sex intercourse in the story of Sodom. They tried to gang-rape Lot's guests, but the Sodomites were struck blind before making it to first base. We simply don't know exactly what Ezekiel had in mind when he said that the city of Sodom "did an abomination." He may have had some type of same-sex sexual activity in mind, but if he did, he was probably referring to the (attempted) gang rape of Genesis 19. Either way, he certainly didn't make it clear that same-sex sexual behavior is what he meant by "an abomination."

Ignoring context again and presenting a radical strawman of what people believe. It's all a distraction from the "dancing around" that Preston is doing

Why? You simply stated that, but never actually argued for it

"Looks upon a woman with lust..." God's law doesn't have the same distinction between "attempted" and "committed" that modern law does.

Never proved (or even argued) a single word of this.

Now, if the men of Sodom had actually raped Lot's guests (angels appearing as men), they would have violated Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Same-sex gang rape is a type of sexual activity. In a similar way, if a father rapes his 5-year-old son, he too would be guilty of a type of same-sex sexual sin. But to condemn the father's act is not, in itself, to condemn all forms of same-sex sexual activity. Likewise, if a father rapes his daughter and we condemn it, we are not thereby

1. Adultery of the heart is still adultery. 2. Sodom doesn't condemn anything, it's descriptive. God's prescriptive law is what condemns homosexuality. The homosexuality both violates established law, and is later condemned again. It displays the consequences of said lawbreaking. 3. Why the dramatic grossouts? Red herrings, being used to distract from the question. 4. All homosexual activity is explicitly condemned in the Bible, something Preston claims to agree with, while not all heterosexual activity is condemned. It's apples to oranges. Additionally, this implies that there is a good expression of homosexuality.

condemning all forms of opposite-sex sexual behavior. The men of Sodom tried to gang-rape Lot's visitors. And there are piles of wickedness involved in the act: pride, greed, lust, coercion, violence, sex outside of marriage, abuse, inhospitality, selfishness, lack of control, rape, and same-sex sexual behavior. But to single out the latter categorically and reduce the story to a single narrative about homosexuality, or being gay, or same-sex love, collapses the multifaceted dimensions of homosexuality into a narrow theme of sexual violence. Not only is this reduction exegetically misleading, it's pastorally destructive—a theme to which we now turn.

There is no sin that doesn't involve other sins. He's actually arguing against himself here by answering why Ezk 16:49 mentions the other sins that it does, before v. 50 brings it to the bigger sin that resulted. Further, Preston is again admitting that homosexuality was involved... despite trying to deny/distance from that earlier.

Beyond that, he's including many sins in the same category to inflate his list. Not that we can't talk about those elements in the story, but there is a difference between primary and secondary. There is a primary sin at play, even if it involves other related sins. I.e. premarital sex always involves lust.

No one is "singling out the latter," not in the way he's implying. We can acknowledge the many sins of S&G, while also seeing a progression of sin that leads to "abandoned the natural function... [and] committing indecent acts." With homosexuality being that end-of-the-chain sin worthy of specific attention. "Same-sex love"?

"Collapses the multifaceted dimensions of homosexuality into a narrow theme of sexual violence." Again, no argumentation for his point, instead just another distraction based on his strawman. Where are the "multifaceted dimensions of homosexuality" in the Bible? This is all an attempt to scare people from addressing the homosexual sin of the story.

Pastoral Implications

There are three primary pastoral implications we can draw from the discussion above.

First, there's a lesson in how to read the Bible. It's easy for Christians (or anyone reading some piece of literature) to read into the text what they want to find. For Christians who already think that same-sex sexual behavior is wrong, it's especially easy to saunter through Genesis 19 and casually conclude that God is addressing all types of such behavior in this passage. But if we believe that the God who breathed stars into existence also breathed out his word, then we must pay close attention to what God actually said. We certainly shouldn't use the wrong text to justify a right belief.

In short, the meaning of Genesis 19 is a good lesson in *hermeneutics* (that is, the science and art of interpreting the Bible). It exposes our presuppositions and challenges us to read the Bible afresh—even if certain texts don't end up saying everything we thought they did.

Second, how we interpret the story of Sodom affects the church's reputation. Many non-believers reduce the Christian view of homosexuality to the story of Sodom. Think about the conclusions they draw. If the Sodomites are believed to be gay people, and the Christian God went out of his way to destroy the city of Sodom, then the natural conclusion is that the Christian God hates gay people and can't wait to fire up the nukes to annihilate every gay city on the planet. This, of course, would be a terrible misunderstanding of the Christian God. Our God loves all people; we are all equally in need of

Actually no. In our unsaved state, yes, but once saved, our need is no longer the same as those who are outside Christ. This is either a low view of salvation or removing all urgency from evangelism.

God's redeeming grace. Whether you're gay or straight, we've all been made crooked by the Fall.

The story of Sodom is *not* designed to single out gay people as particularly sinful people.

Third, and most importantly, many people struggling with same-sex attraction are confused and damaged when Christians apply the story of Sodom to them. Young Johnny comes out to his youth pastor when he is 15 years old, and his youth pastor shows him the story of Sodom and says, "You know, Johnny, God doesn't approve of homosexuality." Johnny turns to read a passage about a bunch of men trying to gang-rape a couple of angels and thinks: *What, do you think I'm some kind of monster?* Johnny begins to see the Christian Bible as twisted and condescending, and he tends to see Christians who read this Bible as unwilling to understand the real experiences of actual gay people—the ones who aren't down with gang raping angels.

Even in this contrived example, the YP didn't say anything wrong/harsh. The Bible's condemnation of homosexuality is just as "harsh" (clear) in other places

The type of same-sex sexual behavior pursued by the Sodomites in Genesis 19 does *not* reflect the attractions and experiences of the average gay person in the world today. And it's pastorally destructive to imply that it does. Whenever Christians haphazardly correlate Sodom with homosexuality—an umbrella concept that includes orientation, identity, romance, sexual activity, marriage, and more—they unintentionally dehumanize gay people with inaccurate accusations.

And here are the assumptions that motivated and guided this essay. They were assumed, and thus he never argued for them. This is why he focused on simply asserting his opponents are wrong, because to him they MUST be wrong, since Preston's assumptions are true (to him).

And again, where in the Bible do we find orientation, identity, romance, sexual activity, marriage, and more? Specifically with regard to homosexuality, as different "types"? This is irrelevant, though, as identifying as homosexual, having a homosexual romance, homosexual activity, homosexual marriage, fixed biological orientation, are all condemned ideas in the Bible.

Again, you can condemn those things without S&G, and just as "harshly," so does that "dehumanize" gay people? This is placing emotion, convenience, and culture above God's word. and then forcing that onto God's word.

Not just Gen 19. One might ask though, why is it easy to make that connection?

Preston has been very choosy with passages

Our doctrine stands on truth, not reputation.

That's on them, not us

Sensational nonsense. Worse, his argument is that God destroyed S&G for sins like pride.

Doesn't that send an even more alarming message to the secular world?

Again, that's on Jonny, who has rejected Christ and His word. The YP didn't make him do that.

Again, where are the "types" of homosexuality in the Bible. The condemnation is of all "types."

Notes

1. John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 93-94.
2. The best defense of the nonsexual view is by Scott Morschauser, "'Hospitality', Hostiles and Hostages: On the Legal Background to Genesis 19.1-9," *JSOT* 27 (2003), 461-485. Morschauser makes a very convincing case; however, I still think that the use of "know" in 19:8 informs its use in 19:5, lending support for the sexual interpretation. Moreover, the parallel story in Judges 19:22-26 is clearly sexual, thus strengthening a sexual interpretation of Genesis 19. In any case, if Morschauser is correct, then Genesis 19 is even more irrelevant for the question of homosexuality.
3. Some people cite Jude 7 as an exception to this rule; we'll discuss in a subsequent section why Jude isn't talking about same-sex sexual behavior.
4. *What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 36.
5. Philo, *Abr.* 135-37; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.194-95, 200-201.
6. Josephus, *Ant.* 1:194; Philo, *Abr.* 134.
7. See, for example, *Wis.* 19:14-15; *3 Macc.* 2:5; *T. Levi* 14:6; *Jub.* 20:5; *b. Sanhedrin* 109a; *b. Ketuboth* 103aa; *b. bab Bathra* 12b; 59a; 168a; *b. Erubin* 49a.
8. For example, Robert Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2001), 79-87.
9. Abominations," plural, occurs four times in *Lev.* 18:26-30 and nowhere else in Leviticus.
10. *Ezekiel* 22:11 refers to adultery, which is a sexual sin, but it's not likely that Ezekiel is thinking of same-sex adultery.

About the Author

Our collaboration is a growing team of Christian leaders, pastors, scholars, and LGBT+ persons to serve as advisors, writers, speakers, researchers, and board members. Learn more about our collaborative team at www.centerforfaith.com/leadership.



Dr. Preston Sprinkle
President
The Center for Faith,
Sexuality, & Gender

Preston is a biblical scholar, an international speaker, and a New York Times bestselling author who has written numerous books including *People to Be Loved: Why Homosexuality Is Not Just an Issue* (Zondervan) and *Living in a Gray World: A Christian Teen's Guide to Homosexuality* (Zondervan). He also served as the general editor for *Two Views on Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Church* (Zondervan). Preston has given talks to thousands of people worldwide on the topic of faith, sexuality and gender. He and his wife, Chris, and their four children live in Boise, Idaho. Learn more about Preston on his website: prestonsprinkle.com.

THE CENTER FOR
FAITH, SEXUALITY & GENDER

The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender is a collaboration of Christian pastors, leaders and theologians who aspire to be the Church's most trusted source of theologically sound teaching and practical guidance on questions related to sexuality and gender.

Download more resources at:
WWW.CENTERFORFAITH.COM