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FAITH, SEXUALITY & GENDER

# Pastoral Paper

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WHY DIDN'T JESUS MENTION  
HOMOSEXUALITY?

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# Introduction

Jesus never explicitly mentioned homosexuality<sup>1</sup> in the four gospels of the New Testament. He talked about fornication, adultery, lust, marriage, divorce, and other aspects of sexuality. But he never mentioned same-sex sexual relations.

Some say Jesus would have affirmed same-sex sexual relations. Since he didn't mention them, they reason, and since Jesus was focused on loving people, surely he would have taken the affirming—and in their minds, the more loving—stance.

Others say that Jesus's silence proves his indifference toward same-sex sexual relations. If he were dragged into our modern debate, they say, he would have shrugged his shoulders and told us to focus on more important things like feeding the poor.

I believe both of these perspectives are wrong. I'll argue on biblical and historical grounds that Jesus neither affirmed nor was indifferent toward same-sex sexual relations. Rather, Jesus considered them to be sexually immoral, and he would not have deemed them to be a disputable matter that Christians should agree to disagree on.

I'll first offer 5 reasons to support my claim. Then, I'll address 5 objections to my argument. I'll conclude by offering some brief pastoral reflections.

# Reasons Why Jesus Did Not Affirm Same-Sex Sexual Relations

## 1. JESUS'S JEWISH CONTEXT

Jesus's Jewish world universally condemned all forms of same-sex sexual behavior. If you examine all the statements made by ancient Jewish writers 500 years on either side of Jesus (500 B.C. – A.D. 500), you won't find any statement that affirms same-sex sexual behavior. Every time it's mentioned, it's condemned.<sup>2</sup>

Such widespread agreement in Judaism is remarkable given the diversity of Jewish views on all kinds of topics. There were few things all Jews in the ancient world agreed upon. For instance, some loved the temple, while others thought it was corrupt.<sup>3</sup> Some regarded the entire Old Testament as authoritative, while others said only the Pentateuch was inspired.<sup>4</sup> Some believed in angels, while others didn't.<sup>5</sup> Some believed in an afterlife, while others denied life after death.<sup>6</sup> Some thought they should live under Roman rule, while others made plans to violently overthrow the empire.<sup>7</sup> And on and on it goes.

Even sexual ethics were widely disputed. Some condemned intermarriage, while others were okay with it.<sup>8</sup> Some believed it was fine to have sex with female slaves, while others condemned the act.<sup>9</sup> Some believed that sex and procreation would exist in the new age, while others anticipated an abstinent afterlife.<sup>10</sup> And, of course, there was the well-known debate about divorce, which we'll talk about below.

If you asked 10 ancient Jews about 20 different ethical topics, you'd probably get 46 different answers. Diversity ruled the day. That's why scholars today talk about ancient "Judaisms" rather than a single ancient Judaism. And yet when it came to whether same-sex sexual relations could be affirmed, they all said no. Same-sex sexual relations were uniformly considered sin by all Jews of Jesus's day—a striking point of agreement in the midst of profound theological diversity.

So what does this have to do with Jesus?

Jesus was a Jew. He wasn't some pasty white Norwegian with long blond hair. He was a dark-skinned Middle Eastern Jew. And as a Jew, Jesus held to a Jewish sexual ethic *unless he made it clear that he was departing from it*. The fact that he never mentions same-sex sexual relations is almost certainly because the question never came up. It was one of the few things the Jewish people agreed upon. There was no debate, no diversity. Why preach to the choir about something everyone agrees on? No mathematician spends time arguing that  $2 + 2 = 4$ , and no Jew came to Rabbi Jesus asking whether same-sex sexual relations were sin. The answer was self-evident within first-century Judaism (and, I would add, within first-century Christianity as well). The only way to make Jesus affirm same-sex sexual relations is to wash him of his Jewishness.

## 2. JESUS'S STRICT SEXUAL ETHIC

Even though Jesus never mentioned same-sex sexual relations, he took a very strict stance compared to other rabbis of the day when it came to sexual matters in general. There were two main schools of thought in Judaism around the time of Jesus: the school of Hillel and the school of Shammai, named after their respective founders. Both believed in the Mosaic Law, but they interpreted it differently. The school of Hillel was known for being more lenient, while the school of Shammai was more strict.

When it came to divorce, for instance, Shammai said divorce was never permissible except in cases where the wife had committed fornication. As for Hillel, he said a man could divorce his wife if she simply cooked a bad meal.<sup>11</sup>

Jesus, of course, takes the stricter view of Shammai: "anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery" (Matt 19:9). Some say he goes even further than Shammai by not allowing divorce at all (Mark 10:2-12). When it comes to adultery, Jesus takes a very strict view as well: "anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt 5:28).

So in sexual matters that were debated within Judaism, Jesus consistently defends a stricter stance and not a more lenient one. While he never mentions same-sex sexual relations, it's nearly certain that he would have upheld the universally held Jewish view, rather than assuming a more permissive posture. Upholding a stricter Jewish view would fit the pattern of how he approached other sexual laws.

### 3. JESUS'S BIBLE

One of the reasons Jesus would have prohibited same-sex sexual relations is that his Bible—what we call the “Old Testament”—said that same-sex sexual behavior was sin.

Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable. (Lev 18:22)

If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. (Lev 20:13)

Some modern people debate the meaning of these two laws in Leviticus, but no ancient Jew ever did. At least, not that we're aware of. Whenever Jewish people discussed these passages, they took them as categorically prohibiting same-sex sexual relations. And there's no evidence that Jesus would have disagreed.

You might think, *Didn't Jesus do away with the Old Testament Law, including the stuff in Leviticus?*

Well, not really. There are a few places where Jesus improves upon an Old Testament law—like in Matthew 19, where he seems to correct what Deuteronomy 24 says about divorce. But even here, Jesus doesn't do away with an Old Testament law; rather, he draws out the true intention of the law when he says that a man should not divorce his wife.

Jesus also reconfigures the law of retaliation (“eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth”) and the dietary laws, and, of course, he fulfilled the sacrificial system through his death and resurrection. But on the whole, there's a tremendous amount of carryover from old covenant morality and obedience into the new covenant. Remember what Jesus said: “Anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:19). And when it comes to sexual ethics, there's not a whole lot of difference between old covenant and new covenant expectations for sex and sexuality.

Here's the point. Whenever Jesus corrects (or improves upon) Old Testament laws, he makes this clear. That is, we have textual reasons, with chapters and verses, for saying that we should no longer poke out someone's eye if they poke out ours. But when it comes to same-sex sexual relations, there's no evidence that Jesus corrected, improved upon, or did away with the sexual commands in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 (or any of the sexual laws in Leviticus 18). Again, when Jesus differs from an Old Testament sexual ethic, he differs in the direction of strictness, not leniency.

These first 3 reasons show *why* Jesus was silent on questions related to same-sex sexual relations. The next 2 reasons show that Jesus wasn't as silent as we may think. Jesus condemned fornication (*porneia*), which included same-sex sexual behavior, and he taught that marriage is between one man and one woman.

## 4. JESUS ON FORNICATION

Even though Jesus never explicitly mentions same-sex sexual behavior, he does use the well-known term for all types of fornication: *porneia* (Matt 15:19; cf. Mark 7:21). The Greek word *porneia* refers to sexual misconduct in general and probably includes the various sexual sins listed in Leviticus 18:6-23, such as incest, bestiality, adultery, and same-sex sexual behavior. According to New Testament scholar Scot McKnight, "When you double-click on the term *porneia*...it takes you to Leviticus 18."<sup>12</sup>

Although general sexual misconduct (including same-sex sexual behavior) is the most likely meaning for the word *porneia*, it isn't the only possible meaning. In Greek literature, *porneia* is sometimes used more narrowly to refer to sex with a prostitute. In these cases, context makes it clear that the authors have this more rare, narrow definition in mind. But when Jesus uses the term, there's no evidence that it has such a limited meaning. Unless the context limits *porneia* to a specific kind of sexual sin, it's best to understand it as an umbrella term that includes every kind of sexual sin outside of a male-female marriage.<sup>13</sup>

When Jesus says that fornication (*porneia*) is wrong, he is most probably including same-sex sexual behavior.

## 5. JESUS ON MARRIAGE

In addition to using the word *porneia*, Jesus also affirms that sex difference is part of what marriage is. In an argument against the Pharisees about divorce, Jesus cites Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 to say that divorce is wrong:

Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning “made them male and female” and said “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? (Matt 19:4-5)

Notice that in order to confront divorce, all Jesus needs to do is cite Genesis 2:24: “the two shall become one flesh.” And indeed, he uses the one flesh statement from Genesis to forbid divorce: “What therefore God has joined together, let no person separate” (Matt 19:6).

But Jesus goes out of his way to include the “male and female” bit from Genesis 1:27, which is rather irrelevant for the divorce question. If marriage is between two consenting people regardless of sex difference, then bringing in Genesis 1:27 is a waste of messianic time. The reference to sex difference (“male and female”) is superfluous and unnecessary for Jesus’s point about divorce—if, that is, sex difference makes no difference in Jesus’s understanding of marriage.

For Jesus—and for every Jew in the first century—sex difference is part of what marriage *is*. It’s the one-flesh union of two sexually different persons.

Now, some people say that Jesus simply assumed the normativity of heterosexual marriages, since that’s all he knew. Marriage for Jesus was limited to opposite-sex couples because he was a first-century Jew, and male/female marriage was all that was known in Judaism. If this is true, then Jesus is only *assuming* rather than *promoting* sex difference in marriage.

This pushback relies on a false dichotomy. That is, *either* Jesus actually cared about sex difference in marriage, *or* he assumed what was normal for Judaism. Given what Jesus says here in Matthew 19 (cf. Mark 10), the answer is both. Yes, first-century Jews believed that marriage was between a man and a woman, and Jesus assumed this standard view. But Jesus also believed that this standard view was the correct view. Sex difference in marriage wasn’t just an unquestioned assumption in Judaism. It was written into God’s very design of marriage in Genesis 1-2—which is why Jesus quotes from this passage. Plus, if Jesus simply assumed the Jewish view (but didn’t really care too deeply about it), then why does he go out of his way to cite the sex difference of Genesis 1:27, as discussed above?

If we try to understand Jesus on his own terms (and not on ours), it seems clear that he affirmed sex difference in marriage because he believed that sex difference—male and female—is part of what marriage *is*.

# Objections

## 1. ISN'T THIS AN ARGUMENT FROM SILENCE?

Perhaps some of you are poised at the edge of your seats, ready to spring up and object that everything stated above is an argument from silence—Jesus never mentioned same-sex sexual relations, and therefore we don't know what he *would* have said.

This is a fair critique, though it's a bit overstated. After all, my last 2 reasons were *not* based on silence but on what Jesus actually said. In any case, Jesus never explicitly mentioned same-sex sexual relations as such. We should acknowledge that there is some silence we're trying to fill in.

However, there are good arguments from silence and bad arguments from silence. Not all arguments from silence are incorrect. Good arguments from silence look at other historical and culture details based on evidence to help explain *why* there is silence. Not all arguments from silence are the same.

Plus, Jesus is silent on a whole host of other ethical questions, but I don't think his silence meant that he was indifferent. Jesus never mentions infanticide—leaving newborn babies out for dead. Logically, therefore, it's an argument from silence to say that he had an opinion on the matter. Jesus never mentions kidnapping. Perhaps he was for it, or maybe he was against it. We just don't know without making an argument from silence.

There are good arguments from silence—ones that are based on historical evidence—and bad arguments from silence that are created out of thin air. It would make much more historical and cultural sense to conclude that Jesus stood with the rest of Judaism on the question of same-sex sexual relations.

## 2. ISN'T JESUS ONLY CONDEMNING PEDERASTY, NOT CONSENSUAL RELATIONS?

To answer this question, we have to step back again and get a handle on Jesus's Jewish world. For the most part, Jewish writers had pederasty (older men having sexual relations with teenagers) in mind when they wrote about same-sex sexual relations. After all, pederasty was the most common type of same-sex sexual behavior. The widespread Jewish condemnation of pederasty should come as no shock.

However, we do find some Jewish writings that mention same-sex sexual behavior (or desire) and do not mention pederasty. In the *Letter of Aristeas* 152, the author refers to same-sex sexual behavior with no reference to pederasty or any other type of exploitation. *Pseudo-Phylides* 3 warns against "rousing homosexual passion," which seems to apply to all forms of same-sex lust or desire. Josephus raises the question, "What are our laws about marriage?" And his answer is: "The law owns no other mixture of sexes but that which [is] according to nature (*kata physin*)" (*Against Apion* 2.199). Notice that Josephus is not talking about men having sex with boys. He condemns same-sex sexual relations specifically within the context of marriage. The late first-century work 2 Enoch describes consensual same-sex acts between adults with the rather crass phrase "*friend with friend in the anus*" (34:1-2 MS P). No coercive pederastic same-sex relation (or any other relationship of domination) would consider both partners to be "friends." The relationship depicted is mutual and between equals.

So, while Jewish writers often condemned pederasty, they also prohibited same-sex sexual

relations more generally. While pederasty and other exploitative relations (prostitution, master-slave) were the most common forms of same-sex sexual relations in the first century, we do see evidence of adult consenting relations, especially among women, prior to and in Jesus's day.<sup>14</sup>

But even if Jewish writers were only thinking of pederasty, we still have to ask the question: *why* did they condemn pederasty? Was it the age distinction? Or did the same-sex nature of the relationship have something to do with it?

Most likely it was both.

After all, such age distinctions were common in male-female relations in the Jewish world. It was typical, actually, that a 30-year-old man would have sexual relations with a 15-year-old girl. Unlike today, ancient Jews considered teenagers to be young adults rather than overgrown children. It's unlikely, therefore, that Jews condemned pederasty only because of age distinction and not because of biological sex.

Others argue that pederasty wasn't consensual, and that's why it was condemned. Yet Judaism didn't only approve heterosexual relations that were consensual. Arranged marriages, which lacked consensuality, were common in heterosexual relations, yet the Jews had no problem with this. Lack of consensuality was probably not the sole reason why same-sex sexual relations were prohibited.

In short, ancient Jews prohibited same-sex sexual relations, at least in part, because they believed such relations were categorically wrong. And since Jesus was a Jew, we have every reason to believe he endorsed this universally held Jewish view.

### 3. SAME-SEX SEXUAL RELATIONS WERE NOT PROCREATIVE, AND THAT'S WHY THEY WERE WRONG

Some argue that the Jews believed sex was designed for procreation and not for love or pleasure, and *that's why* same-sex unions were prohibited. But, as the argument goes, Christians today (Protestants, at least) don't believe that marriage and sex is *only* for procreation. So if we're ethically consistent, we should be fine with same-sex sexual relations since we don't hold to a procreation-only view of sex.

It's true that some Jewish writers believed that sex was for—and only for—procreation, and that's the main reason they condemned same-sex sexual behavior. Josephus and Philo, for instance, explicitly condemn same-sex sexual relations because they lacked procreative potential.

But again, the "Judaisms" of Jesus's day were diverse. Not every Jew believed the same things about sexual ethics, and there was some degree of diversity on the relationship among sex, pleasure, and procreation. The authors of Jewish books *Jubilees* and *Joseph and Asenath*, for instance, talk freely about sex and marriage without emphasizing procreation.<sup>15</sup>

The fact that same-sex sexual relations were non-procreative is one of the reasons why some Jewish writers condemned them. But it wasn't the only reason. Blurring gender distinctions, using your body in a way it wasn't designed, and forcing another man to act like a woman were among other reasons.<sup>16</sup> Or in some cases, there was no reason other than "God said so."<sup>17</sup> After all, first-century Jews were much more reluctant than 21<sup>st</sup>-century Americans to question God's commands.

Where does Jesus fall on the sex-for-procreation spectrum? He doesn't say explicitly. But he does seem almost to downplay the nuclear family when he calls *all* Christian brothers and sisters his family: "'Who are my mother and my brothers?' Jesus asked. 'Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother'" (Mark 3:33, 35; cf. Matt 12:48-50). After Peter praises himself for leaving everything, Jesus responds:

Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands. (Mark 10:29-30)

Add to this the rather remarkable fact that Jesus was a single man of marital age. Apparently, Jesus didn't elevate marriage and procreation nearly as highly as most Jews of his day. I don't think we can conclude that Jesus thought procreation was irrelevant. But we certainly can't assume, as some people do, that the only reason Jesus would have condemned same-sex sexual relations is because they weren't procreative. Jesus's own posture toward procreation suggests that this wasn't his primary concern.

We can't say that *all Jews* (and therefore Jesus) prohibited same-sex sexual relations merely because they weren't procreative. Jews prohibited same-sex sexual relations for many different reasons. It's dubious that Jesus's only problem with same-sex sexual relations was their lack of procreative potential.

## 4. WHAT ABOUT SAME-SEX MARRIAGE?

Some say that Jesus had no concept of same-sex marriage. If we could transplant him into the 21st century, they argue, where same-sex marriage is legalized and we now know about sexual orientation, then Jesus would have blessed consensual, monogamous, same-sex unions. In other words, we've made so much progress in our thinking about sex, sexuality, and same-sex sexual relations. Were Jesus around today, he would have rethought his old first-century Jewish ways.

First of all, I don't think Jesus would be all that impressed with America's 21st-century sexual ethic. What we call progress, I think Jesus would call deterioration. I imagine he'd say that our society has gone off the rails sexually and the church has largely followed suit. In any case, it's true that Jesus probably had no concept of same-sex marriage, but that's because Jesus believed that sex difference is part of what marriage is (remember Matt 19:3-6, where he cites Gen 1:27 and 2:24). To say that Jesus had no concept of same-sex marriage doesn't support the affirming view; it actually works against it. When people say "Jesus had no concept of same-sex marriage," I say "exactly."

Plus, as referenced above, we do have evidence of adult, consensual, same-sex sexual relations—especially between women. So it's not as if the category of consensuality didn't exist in Jesus's day.

There's no evidence that the problem Jesus (or other Jews) had with same-sex sexual relations is that they weren't marital.

## 5. DIDN'T JESUS TELL US TO LOVE EVERYBODY?

He certainly did. “Love your enemies” (Matt 5:44) and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt 22:39)—that about covers everybody. But these and other love commands can never be pitted against Jesus’s (strict) Jewish sexual ethic. The same Lord who said “love everyone” also said “don’t lust,” “don’t worry,” “don’t hate,” “don’t fornicate,” “don’t be greedy,” “don’t retaliate,” and a whole host of other things that confronted, not reaffirmed, our desires.

The “love everybody” argument rightly prioritizes love but wrongly defines it. Jesus tells us to “love one another as *I have loved you*” (John 15:12), and that last part is important. When Jesus loved his disciples, he didn’t always (or usually!) affirm their behavior or desires. It’s worldly love, not Christian love, that says: *because I love you, I’ll affirm everything you desire to do and everything you believe to be true about yourself.*

Jesus-shaped (agape) love must be set alongside, not against, Scripture’s sexual ethic. Jesus loved people who fell short of God’s holiness—and the further away they were, the more Jesus loved them. But the direction of Jesus’s love was always toward holiness, not away from it. Jesus’s love knew no bounds and had no leash. He hung around people who fell short of his ethical standard. Jesus delighted in scandalously accepting all people—especially the marginalized. And he accepted them into a community of broken sinners *seeking holiness* through grace and repentance.

When Jesus loved people, he loved them toward holiness, not away from it. And this holiness included the sexual holiness defined by Scripture.

# Pastoral Reflections

The focus of this paper is largely intellectual—it's responding to those who use Jesus's silence about same-sex sexual relations to suggest he was affirming or indifferent. It's within this intellectual purview that I offer three pastoral reflections.

First, it's important to interpret Jesus in his first-century Jewish context. It's easy for modern interpreters (conservatives and progressives alike) to interpret Jesus through a modern, Western lens. Whatever the topic, whatever the question, if we're going to enlist Jesus to speak into it, he's going to speak with an accent—he didn't think and act like a 21<sup>st</sup>-century American. Put simply, we must interpret Jesus on his own terms, even if it offends our modern, Western categories. From pulpits to pews, this point needs to be driven home to ensure that we don't refashion Jesus in our own image.

Second, Jesus's silence on same-sex sexual relations doesn't mean he was indifferent. Quite the contrary. Jesus was silent on ethical questions that were so self-evident within Judeo-Christianity that they didn't need to be addressed. Pastorally, this should encourage much greater caution among Christian leaders who are rethinking the historic Christian view of marriage. In other words, Jesus's silence steers the question of same-sex sexual relations away from being a mere disputable matter that Christians can agree to disagree on.

Third, while Jesus held to a very high ethical standard (and a very strict sexual ethic), he received people who fell short of that

standard—oftentimes with no questions asked. Jesus declared to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you" *before* he said "go and sin no more" (John 8:11). Jesus forgave the many sins of a prostitute who was washing His feet without ever mentioning her sins (Luke 7:36-50). Jesus entered the home of Zacchaeus without confronting him on his (many) sins (Luke 19:1-10). In the story of the prodigal son, the father who represents God "felt compassion, and ran and embraced" his sinful son *before* he knew that his son was repentant (Luke 15:20).

Jesus emulated a very distinct (and disruptive!) pastoral pattern of loving people who were marginalized by the religious elite for their sin. And he did this *while* holding onto and promoting a strict sexual ethic. Christian pastors and leaders should embrace this messy tension between grace and truth—a tension called love.<sup>18</sup>

# Notes

1. I don't love the term "homosexuality." It blurs the critical distinction between sexual *attraction* and sexual *behavior*—both are often included or implied by the term "homosexuality." Plus, the word "homosexuality" sounds quite clinical, which is unfortunate since we're talking about people and not just issues. Since, however, it's the term familiar to most people, I've used "homosexuality" in the title of this essay and here in the first line, but I won't use it again. Instead, I'll use "same-sex sexual relations" or "same-sex sexual behavior" to refer to sexual acts.
2. See Josephus (*Ant.* 1.200-201; *Against Apion* 2.273-275), Philo (*Laws* 3:37-42; *Contemplative Life*, 59-60), *Pseudo-Phocylides* (3, 190-192, 213-214), *Sibylline Oracles* (3.184-187; 5.166), the *Letter of Aristeas* (152), 2 *Enoch* (34:1-2), and later rabbinic literature (*m. San.* 7:4; *t. Abodah Zarah* 2:1; 3:2).
3. The Sadducees vs. the Essenes.
4. The Pharisees vs. the Sadducees.
5. Most branches of Judaism vs. the Sadducees.
6. There was a wide array of diversity on Jewish beliefs about the afterlife.
7. Most branches of Judaism vs. the Zealots.
8. *Pseudo Philo* and Philo were against it, while *Joseph and Asenath* was for it.
9. Philo (*Questions and Answers on Genesis* 3.21; *On Joseph* 51; *Special Laws* 3.69) and some documents from Qumran (4Q270 4 13-19) were for it, while Sirach 41:22 MS B opposed it.
10. Philo (*On Rewards and Punishments* 98-105) and *Wisdom* 3:13 were for it, while *Apocalypse of Moses* 28:4; 37:5 and *Sibylline Oracles* 2:238 were against it.
11. See *b.Gittin* 90a.
12. <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2015/04/06/did-jesus-talk-about-homosexuality/>
13. The one pushback to this argument is that *porneia* isn't used to describe the sexual sins in the Greek translation of Leviticus 18. And this is true. But the fact that the word *porneia* isn't in Leviticus 18 should come as no surprise. Leviticus 18 describes specific sexual sins (e.g. adultery, incest) and doesn't have a place for a catch-all term for all the sins listed. It just jumps in and starts describing the specific sins. It's clear from later usage that for the Jew (and the Christian), *porneia* included all the sins listed in Leviticus 18.
14. See my book, *People to be Loved: Why Homosexuality Is not just an Issue* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), chs. 4 and 5.
15. For instance, in *Jubilees* 3, where the creation account of Genesis 1 is paraphrased, the command to "be fruitful and multiply" is completely left out—a striking omission in an otherwise procreation-happy Judaism.
16. Philo (*Laws*, 3.37-39) mentions all of these (and other!) reasons.
17. *Pseudo-Phocylides*, 3.
18. See Caleb Kaltenbach, *Messy Grace: How a Pastor with Gay Parents Learned to Love Others without Sacrificing Conviction* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook, 2015).

# 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](http://www.centerforfaith.com/leadership).



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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](http://prestonsprinkle.com).

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