

ATTACHMENT B

Answering LGBT Affirmations¹

Affirmation 1: “I’m gay because God made me that way. So gay must be good. I cannot believe that God would create me with same-sex attraction and then deny me the right to sexual self-expression. I intend, therefore, to affirm, and indeed celebrate, what I am by creation.”

Response: This statement makes the wrong assumption that because a person is born a certain way, that “way” must be good. Philosophers call this type of thinking naturalistic fallacy: *is = ought*, or *What is ought to be*. Adam and Eve were the only people created good (Gen. 1:26–31). After they fell into sin (Gen. 3), we have all been born into sin and much of life is not as it ought to be. Babies are born blind, without limbs, with heart problems and other issues. We never accept that because a baby is born that way it is as it should be. We try to repair the brokenness.

Some people appear to be born with a propensity to addictions, a propensity towards lust or violence, and everyone is born to be a self-worshipper. People naturally embrace a lie and reject God’s truth (Rom. 1–2; Eph. 2:1–3; 4:17–18). Christian doctrine calls this condition original sin. We are born sinful (not simply committing sins), our very nature is *fallen*.

But God provides a cure to our broken state through redemption. People are to stop expressing themselves in whatever way they want (Matt. 5:27–30; 15:18–20). God calls people to follow him through repentance (Matt. 16:24–26). God regenerates/resurrects us with Christ (Eph. 2:4–10) and then calls us to put to death the remains of our sinful nature (Col. 3:1–5ff).

Affirmation 2: “You may say that LGBT practice is against nature and normality; but it’s not against my nature, nor is it in the slightest degree abnormal for me. Paul speaks about “exchanging natural relations for unnatural ones” (Rom. 1:26) but I never exchanged anything. I’ve always been gay.”

Response: This argument comes from a misunderstanding or misuse of Paul’s use of the terms “natural” and “unnatural.” Paul’s use of the term “natural” in Romans 1:26 refers to God’s original created nature for mankind, not to our fallen nature. So when Paul says that same-sex behavior is “contrary to nature” he means that it is “contrary to the way God created men and women in the beginning.”

Everyone is fallen and our fallen nature is abnormal and contrary to God’s created design. Our fallen nature means that we are flawed both physically and spiritually. Physically we struggle with certain genetic predispositions and a propensity to certain diseases. Spiritually we find it easy to lie, lust, love ourselves more than God, etc. But

¹ I’m grateful for Dr. Alfred Poirier, Professor of Pastoral Theology at Westminster Seminary. These Responses were initially drafted by Dr. Poirier and have been adapted by permission for this purpose.

God says that our physical and spiritual flaws are not in accord with how he originally created mankind, but are the “unnatural” result of our fall from sin.

The only appropriate response to our fallen sinful condition is repentance (Ezek. 18:21-23; James 4:8-10). The Affirmation above instead seeks to embrace an aspect of our fallen sinful condition as good and right.

Further, when Paul writes that they “exchanged the truth about God for a lie,” (Rom. 1:25) he is talking about much more than same-sex behavior. He is referring to our shared, much deeper, condition as fallen creatures. At this level the exchange does not refer to a conscience and deliberate choice, but to our fallen state of being dead in sin and without hope except for the grace and mercy of God (Rom. 3:9-18; 5:1-2).

Everyone is born with an orientation to rebel against God, to hate his truth, to love the lie, and to worship created things rather than the Creator. A mere orientation does not mean that it is the way it ought to be (see response to Affirmation 1).

It is difficult for an LGBT Christian to accept the fact that his orientation and desires are compromised before God from the outset. But the deeper truth is that the orientation and desires of the entire human race are compromised from the outset. We are all fallen creatures in need of a Savior.

Affirmation 3: “I’ve been in a committed, consensual, monogamous relation with another lesbian like myself and we care for one another, are raising two young children we adopted out of poverty and inevitable death (from Cambodia), go to church regularly, and contribute substantial time and effort in building homes for the poor. We are imperfect, but we love one another and others. Isn’t love of God and neighbor the greatest thing in the world, (Matt. 22:37-40)? How then can you stand there and condemn my love for my same-sex spouse?”

Response: Love is commendable to the degree that it conforms to God’s definition of love. It is right to say that love is a factor for assessing the moral nature of a relationship, but it is not a sufficient factor. There is more to consider. True love is obeying and submitting to God (John 14:15; 1 Cor. 5:14-15). If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord! (1 Cor. 16:22). Our Lord calls his people to love him even more than they love their parents and children (Matt. 10:37).

An unmarried Heterosexual who has sexual relations with a girlfriend, or a polygamist, both could provide an extensive list of “loving deeds,” and still be in rebellion against God.

Christ calls his people to submit to him in all things. A rich man was able to recount a long list of good deeds to Jesus, but in the end went away grieved because he was unwilling to sell his extensive property as Jesus required (Mark 10:17-27).

Love is good, but love in place of submissive and obedient love of God in all things is still rebellion.

Affirmation 4: “So you say you are against gay marriage because of the Bible. Right? Even though Jesus never said anything about being gay. And don’t quote Leviticus to me because it also forbids you from eating bacon—which I know Christians love—and it forbids you from having pastors with bad eyesight. What hypocrites! You pick and choose what laws in the OT you’ll obey and what you won’t.”

Response: First, an argument from silence in this case is no argument at all. Jesus also never said anything about incest, domestic violence, rape, or bestiality. But no one claims that Jesus affirms these practices.

Second, the Affirmation implies that Jesus’ words are somehow weightier than other Scripture. But Christians believe that “The Old and New Testaments . . . were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will...”², and that all Scripture is “God breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21). One part of Scripture is as much God’s truth as any other. Jesus did not need to directly address same-sex behavior because the consistent message in Scripture is that any sexual relations other than within marriage between one man and one woman is sin.

Third, Jesus clearly affirmed the sexual ethic expressed in Genesis 1–2: (A)t the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’ and said ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh... (Matthew 19:4– 5).

Fourth, this Affirmation implies that same-sex behavior in some manner may have been culturally acceptable in New Testament times. However, Old Testament Israel and the Judaism of Jesus’ day unequivocally condemned any sort of same-sex activity. Noted scholar and gay activist Louis Compton said this about the current attempt to rewrite Jewish cultural history:

“According to this interpretation, Paul’s words were not directed at “bona fide”

homosexuals in committed relationships. But such a reading, however well-intentioned, seems strained and unhistorical. Nowhere does Paul or any other Jewish writer of this period imply the least acceptance of same-sex relations under any circumstance. The idea that homosexuals might be redeemed by mutual devotion would have been wholly foreign to Paul or any other Jew or early Christian.”³

Fifth, the Affirmation contains a common misrepresentation and/or misunderstanding about the nature of Old Testament Law. All Old Testament law is not the same. Biblical Scholars divide Old Testament Law into three distinct categories: ceremonial law, civil law, and moral law.⁴

² Constitution of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Article 1, Statement of Faith, Section 1.4.

³ Louis Compton, *Homosexuality & Civilization*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 114.

⁴ See 1 Cor 7:19; see also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, I, Q.99. Art. 4; John Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.14,15. Calvin speaks of “the ancient writers who taught this division...”; *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 19.3,4; Francis

Ceremonial and civil laws were provisional in nature and are no longer in force in the New Testament age. Ceremonial laws such as those related to circumcision, dietary restrictions, and temple sacrifices were all required because in one way or another they pointed to Christ and were fulfilled or completed in Christ. Civil laws were connected to the Theocracy of Israel and most scholars agree that these laws ceased to be applicable outside of that context.

Moral laws, chiefly represented by the Ten Commandments, are universal principles reinforced by Christ, repeated in the New Testament, and applicable to all people at all times. A common interpretation is that the moral law acts as a curb to establish boundaries of proper behavior, a mirror to reveal to us our own sin, and a guide to show what is right and wrong. Same-sex behavior fits in the category of moral law.

Thus, this Affirmation makes a false comparison between dietary restrictions (ceremonial law), and same-sex behavior (moral law).

Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, three volumes, trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison, Jr., (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 1992) vol.2, p.166-167. For a similar division see article seven (VII. Of the Old Testament) of the Anglican *Articles of Religion*, also called the 39 Articles.