

Biblical Pleas Against The Discrimination Of Homosexual People

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The "Catalogue of Vices" in 1Corinthians 6,9f***Evidence of 'reversibility'?***

Homosexuality is mentioned again in 1Corinthians. Here, Paul accuses the Corinthians of dealing too frivolously with their sins and urges them to a conduct appropriate to their status with God. In this context, he lists various sins which must have been familiar to the congregation in the vibrant, multicultural city of Corinth and of which they should have gotten an intimate impression.

'Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1Cor 6:9-11)

Both expressions, 'male prostitutes' as well as 'homosexual offenders'¹ refer to homosexual conduct. 'Male prostitutes' are the 'malakoi', that were already mentioned, (literally 'effeminate weakling'). The second group are 'arsenokoitai', which is derived from Greek 'man' and 'bed', meaning something like 'those who sleep with men', which sounds rather general at first. Since the *arsenokoitai* are mentioned in the same breath with the *malakoi*, male prostitutes, it makes the reader think especially of their clients. Homosexual practices are similarly embedded in a world of promiscuous homosexuality in the passage in Timothy.

Since the expression *arsenokoitai* wasn't commonly used in Greek at that time, some exegetes also assume that it might be a Pauline invention alluding to the Greek translation of the well-known verses in Leviticus (those 'who lie with a male as with a woman', Lev 18:22).

The question here remains as well whether Pauline argumentation indeed referred to or could have referred to homosexual love relationships, and wasn't aimed at homosexual, promiscuous practices that were the order of the day, which he naturally prohibited within the Christian congregation.

Therefore, another aspect has to be considered. Those who express the view that homosexuality can be generally 'healed' like to quote the above-mentioned passage to prove that even back then people with a homosexual disposition were successfully transformed to heterosexuals: 'And that is what some of you **were**.' (1Cor 6:11).

1 In fact, many translations (like here the New International Version) are less translations than already interpretations of the Greek terms

After all, if we assume that these words were usually addressed to heterosexuals, who were solely looking for some kind of extraordinary pleasure in homosexual contacts, then Paul is not talking of changing a *sexual disposition*, but of abstaining from certain *habits*, that constitute only sidelines of a person's sexual activities – which is a tremendous difference! In my opinion, the implications of this sentence in 1Corinthians are thoroughly pushed too far if used within a psychotherapeutic approach to justify the 'hope' (as well as the demand) for a complete turn-over of a homosexual to becoming a heterosexual.