

# The Methodist Church in Singapore



## Our Church's stand on homosexuality

NCCS Statement

--Bishop Dr Robert Solomon

### What then is Scripture's normative teaching on homosexuality?

Bible scholar Robert Gagnon's excellent book, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Abingdon, 2001) provides a thorough study of the matter. He examines the key verses such as Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9, and 1 Tim. 1:10 and concludes that Scripture's clear teaching is that **homosexuality is a sin**. Even those who try to reinterpret Scripture to support homosexuality find it difficult to refute Gagnon. Gagnon has reiterated the Church's historical scriptural position. On this matter we must be clear and hold firmly to Scripture teaching.

**Homosexual practice an unacceptable lifestyle**

**We come to the second point raised at the beginning -- that we should offer homosexuals the Gospel of God's forgiveness, grace and power to transform people.**

The Bible declares that all have sinned, and all are in need of God's grace. In condemning sins, we must also work with God in redeeming sinners. God loves all that He has made, whether they please Him or not. Jesus taught that God gives sunshine to both the good and the evil, and sends needed rain to both the righteous and the unrighteous (Mt. 5:45).

In providing for people's basic needs, God shows a loving non-discrimination. We must note that homosexuals are also people and have basic human dignity and like us, have basic rights, such as the right to education, health care, and employment. It must also be noted that just like all humans who are a mixture of sin and grace, a homosexual may also exhibit many praiseworthy character traits in spite of engaging in a particular sinful practice (We must also note that while we condemn homosexual practice, we must likewise be prepared to condemn with equal strength and conviction the other sins listed in, say, 1 Cor. 6:9 such as stealing, greed, drunkenness, slandering, and idolatry, or the more deadly sins such as pride.)

We must be careful in not outdoing and contradicting God by rejecting people or denying them their basic needs as God-created individuals because of their unrighteous acts. This applies to homosexuals too. What we must oppose, however, is the active and aggressive promotion by gay rights groups of a gay lifestyle in our society. We must raise strong objections when there are attempts in the arts, media and other places to endorse, normalise, idealise the gay lifestyle. We believe that such a lifestyle is contrary to family values and the kind of society we seek to live in. We live in a common social environment and as salt and light, we must fulfil our role in the larger society.

In Church, we must take a clear moral stand that homosexual practice is sinful and is an unacceptable lifestyle. Like all sinners, those who are repentant and seek God's grace, healing and transforming power should be welcome in the Christian family (cf. 1 Cor 6:11; it suggests that some of the church members in the Corinthian church were repentant ex-homosexuals just as there were people who had repented from the other sinful practices listed in v. 9. The Church, after all, is a fellowship of repentant and forgiven sinners who are being transformed in Christlike holiness and love). Such people must be treated with sympathy and love. We must ensure that the condemnation of the sin does not carry over to hatred and destruction of the sinners. We must be morally clear and firm against the sin, and at the same time loving and gracious towards the repentant and struggling sinners. They must find in the Christian community the tender kindness of divine grace that Jesus always showed to those who had failed morally but had turned to God in repentance.

*Jesus is our best example here.*



We are in  
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When asked to judge and throw stones at a woman caught in adultery He told her, "*Neither do I condemn you. Come now and leave your life of sin.*" (Jn. 8:11) A clear judgement is made on the sin but grace is offered to the one caught in that sin. Like our Lord, we must clearly condemn the sin but also, with the grace of God, set aside and discard the stones. For it is in Him and by the Spirit of God that all sinners, whatever their sin, are washed justified, and sanctified (1 Cor.6:11). There are no exceptions, and no other way

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