

**The Same Sex Controversy: Defending and Clarifying the Bible's Message About Homosexuality** by James R. White & Jeffrey D. Niell.  
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Reviewed by Johan D. Tangelder.

"The love that dare not speak its name" wrote Lord Alfred Douglas (1870-1945), a British poet, in reference to homosexuality. But today gays and lesbians are no longer silent. They are outspoken about "their love." Our North American society has become so tolerant of the homosexual movement that religious beliefs are put into the closet. The freedom to express publicly one's religious conviction about homosexuality has even come under siege. Sadly, church leaders are not vigorously protesting the imposition of the so-called gay rights agenda. Instead of influencing culture, they manifest the impact of our "culture of narcissism," relativism and materialism. In the name of love aberrant sexual behaviour is now accepted as normal. But the church is "the pillar and support of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15) and must therefore adhere to and speak the truth concerning God's institution of marriage.

To do so is not unloving, judgmental, or hateful; it is loving, discerning and faithful. In other words, what is socially accepted and legally permissible in North America falls desperately short of what is ordained by God in His Word. This truth, however, seems to have fallen on deaf ears in some mainline denominations. The United Church of Canada, for instance, adopted a resolution in August 2000 stating that homosexual, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual orientations are "gifts from God." Recently, the liberal Anglican Bishop Michael Ingham and the governing synod of the Greater Vancouver's Diocese of New Westminster authorized priests to bless same-sex unions. The Bishop believes that the blessing of these unions does not involve church doctrine, but merely involves a special form of liturgical rite. But the United Church and the Bishop contradict the teaching of Scripture and the historic position of the church on sexuality and marriage. The authors of *The Same Sex Controversy* rightly state, "We cannot know divine truths in contradiction to divine revelation. We cannot revise Scripture to suit our taste."

What does the Bible teach about homosexuality? What is the historic position of the church? The authors deal chiefly with the same-sex controversy as it pertains to the church. They discuss arguments for homosexuality that are supposedly derived from the Bible. Therefore, the issue before us now is the nature and authority of Scripture. Do we obey God's Word or will it be twisted to defend a now cherished "sexual preference"? The authors convincingly show that the biblical data clearly indicate that homosexuality is sinful and not acceptable to God. They demonstrate that the church fathers, all of them prior to the twelfth century, also stated clearly: homosexuality is contrary to the law of God, it is against nature, and it is not consistent with biblical morality. These church fathers recognized that God's judgment did come upon Sodom, in part, due to homosexuality.

Homosexuality is not natural, and is not approved by the Word of God. The Bible repeatedly condemns homosexual orientation and acts. God nowhere in the past or now allows for homosexuality. But change and hope are possible. Homosexuals can be forgiven. The one who repents and turns to the Lord, though the battle will be intense, will not be forsaken.

The authors wrote their book with the aim to reach people who are struggling with homosexual practices or desires. They provide a thorough, fair, and a lucidly written exposition of pertinent Scripture passages relevant to the subject. A must read for Christians who wonder what the Bible really teaches about homosexuality.