

An Overview of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church

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This analysis uses the principles of science to test the validity of the present day teaching of the Christian Church. A new approach to the formation of self-identity is developed. This demonstrates that a moral duality must exist, whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways that conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies are to be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships should be severely condemned for their acts. This conclusion denies the validity of the traditional teaching of the Christian Church which condemns homosexuality, and by implication all gender and sexually variant behaviour as invariably sinful lifestyle choices. The conclusions of the neurophysiological and psychological study are used to conduct a critique of the traditional teaching on gender and sexual variation in the Christian Church. An aim of this investigation is to determine how and why the contradiction occurs. The scientific and historical studies both show that the present day teaching of the Church is incorrect and an aim of this investigation is to return to the teaching of Christ.

An extended analysis of the attitudes to gender and sexuality in first century society is conducted. This uses the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study to examine not just Christianity, but also the attitudes to these in Jewish, Roman, Greek, and other societies. Cultural clashes are examined and it is shown that the abuses of power by Roman society gave permission for abuses of sex. It is shown that the teaching of Jesus incorporates the same moral duality as that predicted by the neurophysiological and psychological study. Therefore it is concluded that the source of the contradiction must come from changes in the theology of the Church.

The adaptations which Peter, Paul and the early Church had to make to survive and to take the Gospel message to the world are considered. The nature of this transformation has been the focus of many theological studies: however the major difficulty has been one of determining how it was managed, and how justification for it could be made. By removing the theological presumptions which have dominated Christianity for the last two thousand years new insights become available in the understanding of biblical texts and the New Testament accounts. That is now addressed in this analysis. It is shown that the statement by Jesus in Matthew 19:12 where he says. "He who is able to receive this, let him receive it" allowed Peter, Paul to move forward with the compromises that were required.

However this was not just a statement of compromise. It was also the command for the Christian Church to express in full the radical teaching of Jesus on gender and sex as soon as it had the power to do so. Instead of returning to the radical teaching which Jesus had presented: the Church used these opportunities enforce its own power and authority. Today; that has still not happened. It is now time to follow in full this commandment of Jesus by restoring the radical teaching of Jesus on gender and sex to the present day Church.

Great emphasis is also placed by GAFCON and others on restoring the "Godly Authority" of bible texts. (The "Global Anglican Future Conference", representing the conservative elements in the

¹ With updates to July 2016: This document is available online at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/224P-OverviewSexGenderChurch1.pdf>

Church). However the correct understanding depends on the context in which these are placed. It is demonstrated in this analysis that the traditional teaching on marriage and family life remains intact; but it also establishes that other valid loving relationships should not automatically be denied. This study additionally supports the views held by GAFCON and others that the traditional Church teaching on gender complementarity, gender and sexuality and on the silencing of the public ministry of women has Apostolic Authority. However GAFCON assumes that these doctrines accurately represent the teaching of Jesus, while this analysis shows that they are the results of the compromises that were made to ensure the survival of the Church. These attempts at restoration do not return to the teaching of Jesus, they return instead to the compromised Christianity which was presented by the 13th Century Church.

The correct restoration can only be made if the moral duality disclosed in this neurophysiological study and in the teaching of Jesus is used. This demands that the same criteria of use and abuse are applied to all aspects of gender and sex. As with Paul's statement in Galatians 3:28, this demands that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted in their own right. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention. There is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act, and there is no toleration of abusive sex.

It is important to note that discrimination against gender and sexually variant people is a socially led phenomenon and it would be a mistake to identify its cause with religious belief. The transformation needed to gain acceptability in the Greco/Roman culture brought the Church to collude with these secular demands of society rather than to challenge them. Not only has this consent reinforced the secular prejudices of such discriminatory societies; it gave and it still gives religious legitimacy to them, it reinforces the severity of the penalties that are encountered and it contradicts the results which the neurophysiological and psychological analysis presents. Instead of recognising the moral duality which is inherent in gender and sexual behaviour, without exception all of these people have been made the scapegoats for abusive sex. Great harm has been done by the medical misdiagnoses that have been and are being made. The persecution and slaughter of gender and sexually variant people, not only in Christianity but in Islam, Judaism and all other religions, states and cultures which have drawn their teachings from this has been enormous, and repentance is needed for these acts.

Centuries of criminalisation and condemnation have prevented any awareness of the moral duality being observed. Little could happen for as long as that existed, however the changes in society mean that this is no longer the case. This moral duality is now available for everybody to see in the love expressed in same-sex marriage and civil partnerships. It has become easy for an unbiased observer to separate a same-sex relationship given in faithfulness, love and lifetime commitment from a strong heterosexual friendship, and to discriminate between loving and illicit same-sex behaviour, even in the absence of sex. Instead of exploring this new situation many Christians have taken refuge in the traditional doctrines of the Church. It is argued in this analysis that this fervent reliance on its disproved traditional doctrines is destroying not only the credibility of the Church; it is also destroying the credibility of Christianity itself.

For a summary of the analysis, copy into your browser or click on the link:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/223P-SexGenderSummary.pdf>

For the full analysis, copy into your browser or click on the link:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/217P-FoundationsSexGender.pdf>

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Gilchrist, S. (2016): Overview1: "An Overview of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church"

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Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

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This is a summary of an extended analysis. Key papers are given below. The papers can be accessed by copying or clicking on the links provided.

Paper 1: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*An Introduction to the Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/211P-IntroFoundationsSexGender.pdf> .

Paper 2: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-InfluencesPersonality.pdf> .

Paper 3: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the Life and Teaching of Jesus*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/219P-InfluencesJesus.pdf> .

Paper 4: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf> .

Paper 5: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*The Perceptions of Gender and Sexual Variation in Present Day Society and in the Modern Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/221P-InfluencesToday.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2015): "*Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2015): "*Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/209P-RethinkPaperFull.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2014): Articles Offered to The Church of England in 2014 for use in its Process of Shared Discussions on LGBTI Matters: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/020B-OfferedPapersIntroduction.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Taking a Different Path": Chapter 10 in: "*This Is My Body: Hearing the Theology of Transgender Christians*", Ed: Beardsley, T. and O'Brien, M: Darton Longman and Todd. May 2016 ISBN 978-0-232-53206-7 Notes for this chapter are available on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/sourcesA/index.htm>

Access to all papers is also available via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

A full personal bibliography is given on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/bibliography.htm> .

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Notes for this paper are posted on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/notes224P>

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