

AGAINST CHRISTIAN PRUDERY

1. *The Christian Legacy*

According to the Sixth Edition of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* of Current English, the word 'prudery' means extreme propriety in conduct and/or attitudes, especially regarding sexual matters. 'Propriety' means, according to the same distinguished source, "correctness of behaviour or morals". Now surely one could oppose "prudery" on moral grounds without inconsistently criticizing correct moral behaviour in sexual matters, so the OED definition must be incorrect. A better term than 'propriety' is 'strictness' or 'severity', if common usage is any judge. Prudery then involves a rigorous strictness or severity in conduct and/or attitudes regarding sexual matters in particular. It is a certain type of prudery which I wish to refute here: the moral attitude taken by the Christian tradition to premarital and non-marital heterosexual sexual intercourse and homosexual intercourse, and their continuing occurrence in non-marital sexual relationships.

The Christian prudery which I wish to consider here involves this claim: *all* acts of premarital and non-marital heterosexual sexual intercourse and homosexual intercourse are moral evils or sins.¹ Here I shall argue that the general arguments given in support of this position are seriously flawed from both a logical and scriptural point of view. Thus it is not inconsistent with *Christian literalism*, to maintain that at *least some* acts of premarital sexual intercourse *and* homosexual sexual intercourse are not morally objectionable. By 'Christianity' I mean a rationally

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defensible interpretation of the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible and by 'literalism' I mean that position which regards all cognitive propositions in the scriptures as being true, provided they are given a rationally justifiable interpretation. No scriptural passage which contains a conceptual incoherence can be true, and thus some alternative interpretation must be sought. Note as well that it takes only one counter-example to defeat the Christian prudism outlined here. This by no sound argument shows that "anything goes" by way of sexual conduct and attitudes. All I claim is that *some* acts of premarital sexual intercourse by heterosexuals, and some acts of sexual intercourse by gays, are not immoral. This has been denied by the Church.

Tannahill notes that the Christian tradition is unique in its condemnation of all forms of sexuality,² and few traditions can have the pleasure to boast that their leading early thinkers – Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine, Abelard, Chrysostom, Aquinas etc. – viewed all forms of human sexual intercourse as shameful and fundamentally disgusting. Yet the thoughts of the founding fathers, however mad and perverted and even whilst polluting the waters of thought for hundreds of years, need not have an unbreakable grasp upon the minds of their intellectual offspring. Certainly the view of the early Church Fathers and other early Churchmen, that sex is inherently evil, has been challenged since the Reformation. There is virtually no scriptural support for this view (including the writings of St. Paul) and much evidence against it. In Proverbs 5:15–19 and the Song of Solomon 2:6 and 8:3, heterosexual intercourse in a monogamous marriage is described as being both the normal way of satisfying human sexual desires, as well as being good in itself. Indeed the Song of Solomon is correctly described as a celebration of marital sexual love and no reference to procreation occurs in it. Even if the Pauline doctrine in 1 Corinthians 7:1–7 is interpreted to mean

that celibacy is a more valuable state than marital sexuality, it hardly follows that marital sexuality is an evil or is in anyway shameful. What is shameful and fundamentally disgusting are the views of the churchmen on this matter. But since their views do not square with the scriptures, their own criterion of ultimate truth, we may dismiss them from further consideration.

Recent Christian writing on sexual morality, such as Herbert Miles' *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage*³ and John White's *Eros Defiled*⁴ present a wholesome view of marital sexuality; indeed these books are not inaccurately described as the modern Christian equivalents of *The Joy of Sex*. Both texts have been strong sellers – *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage* had by September 1975 nearly 100,000 copies in print. Both texts are very liberated about the moral legitimacy of erotic delights in marriage. White for example, whilst regarding orogenital and penile-rectal orgasms as "sub-normal sexual practices",⁵ nevertheless manages to say this: "If God gives you as a married couple a delight in the sensations provided by orogenital or rectal stimulation, be thankful and receive such pleasures."⁶ Such delights, of course, are strictly reserved for the marital bed and both Miles and White believe that socio-psychology and the scriptures support them. I shall argue that these sources do not.

The critique naturally enough falls into two parts. First is an examination and critique of Miles' and White's case for the sinfulness of premarital heterosexual activity, and second is an examination and critique of their moral and theological objections to homosexual sexual activity. If it can be shown that there are no sound moral objections to homosexual sexual intercourse from a Christian perspective, then we have immediately established that *not all* acts of non-marital sexual intercourse (of which the set of acts of premarital sexual intercourse is a

subset), are immoral. This is so because homosexual marriages do not legally exist in most of the Western World and would not in any case be recognized as legitimate by the non-Gay Christian Church. Thus the sexually active homosexual cannot help but to engage in non-marital sexual relationships. If it can be shown that at least some homosexual sexual relationships (and consequently the sexual acts committed in these relationships, provided that these acts are not immoral for non-sexual or independent reasons) are not morally objectionable, then we establish that not all non-marital sexual relationships and their consequent sexual acts, are morally objectionable. However, it is still logically possible that premarital sexual relations are morally unjustified because in the case of such relations, they could have been consummated in marriage. Hence the need now for a consideration of Christian ethics and premarital sexuality.

2. *Premarital Sexuality and Christianity*

The point of departure in our argument must be with the question 'What is marriage from the Christian perspective?' This is not, as it may seem at first glance, an easy question to answer.⁷ Is marriage a certain legal relationship involving a contract? This contract we suppose, must be socially recognizable. But for the Christian, what must be said about the actual or merely hypothetical post-world War III Adam and Eve living without social institutions to recognize contracts and living without "total" divine protection after the Fall? Either our Adam and Eve are married, in which case the Christian cannot claim that marriage is essentially a legal relationship requiring social recognition, or they are not married. The hypothesis that our Adam and Eve are not married conflicts with the account of Genesis 4:1 which says that Eve is Adam's wife. Hence marriage cannot be purely a legal relationship. Nothing depends upon the Adam and Eve story in Genesis being *literally* true for this con-

clusion to follow, just as the social contract theory does not require the state of nature, or the original veil of ignorance to be historical existents.⁸

There is an argument to be found in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 by St. Paul, which seems to view an act of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman as the constituent factor establishing a marriage. This thesis has been recently discussed and criticized by B. Ward Powers,⁹ and Powers' interpretation of Paul's position has been criticized in turn by Vivian Bounds.¹⁰ This issue, as we shall soon see, is of importance to the issue of the morality of premarital sexual intercourse. Now Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:16-17 that one should not have sexual intercourse with a prostitute because "he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body [?]. For it is said, "The two will become one flesh" [Genesis 2:24]". Paul takes the body to be the temple of the Holy Spirit, so sexual sins are particularly serious. Paul does not realize, however, that if we accept that marriage involves becoming one flesh (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7; Ephesians 5:31), and that in becoming "one body" one becomes "one flesh", then if two people can become one body through an act of heterosexual sexual intercourse, then the same two people can become married through this act. But if at least these two people are virgins prior to their sex act, then all of their sex acts after the initial marriage-making sex act, are cases of marital sex rather than premarital sex. Hence their sexual relationship is morally justified from a Christian perspective. Yet our couple are "living together in sin"!

Powers objects to the equation of the meaning of 'one body' and 'one flesh' on the grounds that it does not explain why it is wrong to seek union with a prostitute.¹¹ But no identification of the meaning of 'one flesh' and 'one body' occurs in this passage. The claim that "the two will become one flesh" is

voiced as an explanation as to why one should not become one body with a prostitute. Therefore Paul is claiming that sexual relationships are quite unlike physical relationships for they involve a metaphysical transformation of persons. This explains why Paul went on to say in verses 18-20 of 1 Corinthians that sexual sins are more serious than all other sins because they offend against the body, a "temple of the Holy Spirit". Thus it is reasonable to agree with Vivian Bounds that Paul did believe that an act of sexual intercourse leads to marriage. If this is so, then my criticism of Christian prudery given in the previous paragraph immediately holds.

There are strong objections which could be made to Paul's position. Counter-examples such as the rapist and his victim becoming one flesh and body, and hence married, could possibly be dealt with by demanding rational choice made on the part of the sexual agents, a condition not satisfied in the example of the rape.¹² But an outstanding problem is this: the prostitute must be "one flesh" with all of her customers, but is any individual customer "one flesh" with any other individual customer? If so, then two males can be married even if they have never met. If not, then why is it that the relation of *being one flesh* fails to be transitive? And what about celibate "marriages"—is the concept of a celibate marriage to be taken to be logically contradictory? The Pauline position seems to be untenable and some more rational position should be sought by the reasonable Christian. But for the many fundamentalist groups who use arguments such as Paul's, they are honoured with justifying "living in sin" for two virgin heterosexuals who meet and have sexual intercourse.

It is not necessary to resolve the issue about the true nature of Christian marriage here, for this issue has served its critical purposes. It is established that it is by no means uncontroversial

what the true nature of Christian marriage is, and further, one interpretation of this nature would seem to undermine Christian prudery. Now I shall address the arguments for the immorality of premarital and non-marital sexual relations given by Miles and White, taking 'marriage' itself as an undefined term. But it is intuitively clear who is not married: our two young virgin heterosexuals who meet, fall in love, develop a relationship full of trust, care and a mixture of other virtues and have sex continually are *unmarried* and immoral according to Miles, White and most Christians. Why?

There are basically two types of arguments that are advanced to show the immorality of the premarital sex of our two lustful but loving virgins. The first type of argument is scriptural based on alleged Biblical evidences. The second type of argument is based upon social and psychological evidences, showing the social and psychological harm which inevitably arises from premarital sexual relations. For the sake of argument I assume that the alleged logical gap between "is" and "ought" can be soundly bridged, so that one can argue from factual premises to evaluative conclusions. I shall try to show in what follows that both types of arguments fail, beginning with the scriptural argument.¹³

1 Corinthians 6 and 7 contains what has been taken by most Christians to be the clearest statement of an objection to premarital sexual relations. But this is mere prejudice. 1 Corinthians 6, which White cites as conclusive evidence for his position, contains as I have shown, a logical problem. It is therefore highly likely that the Pauline view of sexuality is untenable and too uncertain to base any sound reasoning upon. Miles cites 1 Corinthians 7:2 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 also as evidence.¹⁴ He points out that the word 'fornication' (*porneia*) has three different meanings as used in the New Testament. The word

may refer to *all* sexual immorality in general (as in John 8:41; Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:13, 18; II Corinthians 12:21; Ephesians 5:3). Miles claims that such a use must also include premarital sexual intercourse, including the case we suppose of our two lustful but loving young virgins. But this is little more than a thinly disguised question-begging argument—only because Miles is so confident that all cases of premarital sexual intercourse are morally objectionable does he include it under the heading of general sexual immorality to begin with.

The word 'fornication' is used in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 as a synonym for the word 'adultery', but in four other passages the words 'adultery' and 'fornication' are both used, which indicates in Miles' opinion that a definite distinction between the two words is being drawn. The passages are Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:21, 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Galatians 5:19. Miles concludes: "Since adultery only includes the behavior of married people, the word fornication would have to mean (among other things) sexual intercourse and other sexual abuses of single people. *This is a direct reference to premarital relations.*"¹⁵

Miles' argument is invalid. If the word 'fornication' includes all forms of sexual immorality, then a distinction can be drawn between the words 'adultery' and 'fornication' without 'fornication' referring at all to "premarital relations". All the term need refer to is any case of sexual immorality, not involving adultery. There are any number of cases of this: fetishes, sadistic activities, human-animal sexual contacts, and so on. Unless we were already convinced that all premarital sexual relationships were objectionable, then we would have no reason at all as Christians to draw Miles' conclusion.

This leaves us with 1 Corinthians 7:2 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 to consider. The above remarks can be repeated for these

passages, with no qualification. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:2 that "since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband". This would seem to be an inescapable reference to premarital sex, for what other sexual immorality could Paul be referring to? The "other" sexual immorality is prostitution, a topic which must have been fresh on Paul's mind after writing 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. Further, we know that in the maritime and commercial city of Corinth, prostitution flourished. According to Hans Licht in *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece* :

Of the wantonness and licentiousness of life in this metropolis of ancient trade, so wealthy and so favoured by nature, it would be difficult to give an account that would err by exaggeration... What human fancy elsewhere was content merely to imagine in the way of licentiousness, found in Corinth its home and visible exemplification. The priestesses of venal love crowded about the city in incalculable numbers. In the district of the two harbours were swarms of brothels of every degree, and prostitutes without number lounged about the streets. To a certain extent the focus of unmarried love and the high school of the hetairae was formed by the notorious temple of Venus, in which no fewer than a thousand hetairae or *hieroduli* (temple-servants), as they were euphemistically called, practised their profession and were always ready to greet their friends.¹⁶

It is therefore not unreasonable to take prostitution to be the form of immorality referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:2.

It is of interest to note that most of the kings of the Old Testament had their *concubines* (e.g. 2 Samuel 15:16; 16:21-22). Now concubine is a woman who cohabits with a man, usually having sexual relations with him, whilst not being his wife. If the king was unmarried, then he engages in allegedly illicit premar-

rital or non-marital sexual intercourse. If the king was married, then he commits adultery. Strangely enough, whilst the Old Testament contains a description of King David's punishment for adultery with Bathsheba (and the murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite in 2 Samuel 11), there is no condemnation of King David keeping his supply of at least ten concubines (2 Samuel 15:16) who by definition were kept on hand for sexual gratification even if they were not actually used. Is there therefore two moral laws: one for the rich and one for the poor? If you feel that historical relativity solves this problem (translation: that having concubines is good for David but not for us) then how can you show that historical relativity does not also undermine the Christian's view of the general immorality of homosexuality?

I turn now to a consideration of the social and psychological objections to premarital sexual relations as stated by Miles.¹⁷ The first objection to premarital sexual intercourse may result in an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy. Whilst advances in contraceptive methods have occurred in recent decades, most teenagers do not have access to effective contraceptives. Hence premarital sexual relations are taken to contribute to a major social problem, and are judged to be morally wrong for that reason (granted we recall, that the is-ought gap can be bridged).

Now the force of this argument can be met in a number of ways, even accepting the severity of the problem of unwanted teenage pregnancies. First, one could take this argument to show that teenagers must have access to effective contraceptives if many social tragedies are to be avoided. Second, Miles' point counts for nothing in the case of our imaginery virgins (1) who may want a child and are prepared to support it, (2) who have effective contraception, even if this involves sterilization or (3) are past the child-bearing age anyway.

A second objection which also has much emotional force is that premarital sexual relations increase the likelihood of one contracting syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes and possibly AIDS. The contraction of these diseases is a threat to those who practice sexual promiscuity, but is no more a problem to our example of the two virgins who decide to live together than it would be to the paradigm case of a christian married couple.

Premarital sexual relations are also said by Miles to have a detrimental effect upon the attitude of youths about the nature of sex. Unsuccessful sexual experiences may shatter the illusions of youth about "perfect sexual fulfilment in their future marriage".¹⁸ Guilt feelings may also be produced which may tend to undermine the couple's relationship, feelings that what has been done is wrong. These feelings arise from a conflict between the couple's sexual action and their own internalized value system. Premarital sexual relations may also promote distrust and suspicion. In reply it may be said that none of these negative consequences may arise. Early sexual experiences if unsuccessful may be looked upon with amusement as a successful learning experience. If the couple did not believe that what they were doing was wrong, and if it was not, then guilt feelings would not be produced. If distrust and suspicion arises in premarital relationships, then perhaps this is more an indication of possessiveness and the desire for ownership of one's love object than an indication of any essential defect in premarital relations in general. In any case we can show that not all premarital sexual relations are morally objectionable on any of these grounds. In the case of our imaginary couple who meet as virgins, without guilt and suspicion and who obtain sexual happiness, Miles cannot voice any objection, except perhaps to deny that there could be any such couple even approximately. Surely

though it is a matter of common sense knowledge that actual approximates to my imaginary couple exist.

It follows then from the argument of this section that the mainstream Christian moral position on premarital sexual relationship, is unjustified. That at least some premarital sexual relationships are morally wholesome, has not been excluded by either socio-psychological or Biblical arguments. Thus it is logically possible for one to be a Christian and be involved in a premarital sexual relationship, without being in a state of sin.

3. Homosexuality and Christianity

According to Miles :

Homosexuality is an abnormal practice that is a sin against God and His purpose for life. It is a sin against the other person involved. It destroys the normal functions of life and erodes and deforms personality development. Reason, intelligence, common sense, and Christian principles should lead any man (or woman) to reject homosexuality as an acceptable means of meeting sexual needs.¹⁹

As I have already rejected the view that homosexuality is abnormal in chapter 3, I shall address the question here as to whether reason and Christian principles do indeed lead one to reject homosexuality as an acceptable means of meeting sexual needs.

One of the first references to homosexual activity can be found in the Sodom and Gomorrah story in Genesis 19, where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were taken to be destroyed by God because of "offences against nature". That these offences against nature are homosexual acts is generally taken to be shown by Genesis 19:6-11. These verses describe the Sodomites surrounding Lot's house and calling for lot to surrender his angelic

visitors for the purpose of sex. The Hebrew word *yādhā* means both "to know" and "to have coitus". Indeed "to know" is often used as a metaphor for sexual relations. Some such as John McNeill feel that *yādhā* in Genesis 19:5 means "to know" without being a metaphor for sexual relations.²⁰ This interpretation does not square with Genesis 19:8 where Lot offers to the Sodomites his two virgin daughters and McNeill makes no satisfactory attempt to account for Lot's statement.²¹ But even if the Sodomites did want to have sex with the angels, this hardly shows that homosexual practices are morally wrong. If the angels were female would one conclude that heterosexual practices are therefore morally wrong? Genesis 19:6–11 is a story about a group of would-be pack rapists who get to see the light the hard way.²²

Even tougher stuff is found in Leviticus 18:22–23 and Leviticus 20:13. Homosexual relations are clearly and uncontroversially condemned as being "abominations", punishable by death. If one wishes to accept this as the word of God, then one must also accept the following propositions as being also voiced by God: (1) it is wrong to eat the fat of cattle, sheep and goats (Leviticus 7:23); (2) the rabbit is "unclean" (Leviticus 11:6); (3) emissions of semen involve defilement that requires purification (Leviticus, 15:16–18); (4) one should not plant two different kinds of seeds in one's field (Leviticus 19:19) and (5) one should not wear clothing woven of two different kinds of material (Leviticus, 19:19). These commands seem to us today to be at worse silly, at best irrelevant. Further, God's punishments for sin revolt against the contemporary moral conscience: not only are adultery and homosexuality to be punished by death (Leviticus 20:10; 20:13) but some one who curses his mother or father (Leviticus 20:9, or has sex with a woman during her period must be respectively put to death and

cut off from their people. These considerations erode the credibility of Leviticus as anything more than a record of post-exilic Israelite criminal and legal codes.

Judges 19:22-29 contains a variation of the Lot story of Genesis 19. Only here the owner of the house allows a concubine to be raped and murdered. My previous remarks on Genesis 19 can be repeated here.

In the New Testament the three principle references to homosexuality are Romans 1:25-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:9-10. Let us take each of these verses and examine whether these verses lend support to the thesis that all homosexual acts are immoral.

In Romans 1:25-27 Paul describes the "shameful lusts" that all the godless men who have known God, but failed to recognize him and worship him, have been delivered over to. Among such "lusts" are "indecent acts with other men" and these godless men were "inflamed with lust for one another" (Romans 1:27). Now this passage is a condemnation of those who knew God and rejected Him. Their fates were grim and depressing as the spiritual vacuums in their lives were filled with "shameful lusts". It just so happened that these lusts were predominately of a homosexual orientation. This however shows nothing whatsoever about any alleged moral wrongness of the God-living homosexual Christian who lives without such lust. The theologians will still tell us that Paul has said that the Godless men abandoned "natural" relationships with women to practice homosexual acts, which must therefore be unnatural. But what is being contrasted here is natural relationships with women-marriage; with *lustful* relationships with men, relationships which must be adulterous since if natural relationships with women were abandoned then they must first have existed. Hence what-

ever type of sexual relationship these Godless men would have adopted after "abandoning" their marriages, Paul would have found these relationships morally objectionable (excluding celibacy and possibly masturbation). Hence Romans 1:25-27 lends no support to any scriptural argument for the immorality of homosexual sexual love.

The key Greek words in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Timothy 1:9-10 are *malakoi arsenokoitai*. The first edition of the Revised Standard version of the Bible translates both terms by use of one word, 'homosexuals'. The New International version of the Bible uses the words 'homosexual offenders' in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Timothy 1:9-10 contains no explicit reference to homosexuality at all. The King James version of the Bible translates them as 'neither the effeminate nor the abusers of themselves with mankind'. It is obvious that the Christian prude must opt for the RSV as the "correct translation". It is doubtful whether any justification can be given for this. Coleman argues that *malakos*, which literally means 'soft', metaphorically was used by the Greeks to refer to males who played the passive role in homosexual intercourse.²³ McNeill on the other hand points out that *malakos* is usually employed in the scriptures in a moral context signifying moral softness or weakness.²⁴ It is therefore by no means clear that reference is being made to homosexuality at all in these passages.

Finally there have been arguments given from time to time, for the view that Jesus was a homosexual or at least had some homosexual sexual experiences.²⁵ If a case could be made for this proposal then it destroys with one blow the Church's opposition to homosexual practices in general (and if Jesus did not marry, their opposition to all instances of non-marital sex). The present author shall not pursue this matter here.

4. Conclusion

Through an examination of the arguments found in Herbert Miles' *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage* and John White's *Eros Defiled*, an examination and critique of Christian prudery has been conducted. The conclusion reached is that even taking all *prima facie* cognitive parts of the scriptures (translation: the non-poetic stuff that could be either true or false) at face value without any deep historical examination, there is no good reason to believe that the scriptures condemn *all* acts of non-marital sexual intercourse. This is a surprising conclusion to reach from within the confines of the Christian scheme of things, and flies in the face of both the Catholic and Reformed traditions. But tradition may be wrong.

If God has as part of His characterizing essence *goodness*, then given that He can recommend no evil, God's recommendations for morally good sexual relationships cannot differ from the conclusions reached by a correct sexual ethics. Thus in reply to the anguished Christian who feels that the smoking ruins of the received view of sexual morality leaves one in a moral vacuum, we must point him/her in the direction of the theories of sexual ethics discussed by moral philosophers.

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NOTES

1. I follow L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, (Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1984), p. 231. There are theological problems involved with this view or alternatively, presented to Christianity because of this view. Consider the story of the fall of Man, told in Genesis 3:1-24. Whether this is taken to be reality or a myth with a moral (like the state of nature of the contract theorists), there is a major problem in taking Eve to have sinned by allegedly disobeying God and "eating" of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If Eve had "to eat" the fruits of this tree to first become a moral agent (Knowledge of good and evil being a necessary condition for moral agency) then how could she have sinned in eating the fruit? At the time of eating she allegedly lacked knowledge of good and evil, and hence could by no means know that disobeying God was morally wrong. Hence, taking sin to be no more than moral evil, it follows that Eve did not sin. This renders problematic the explanation of the origin of sin given by Birkhof (*ibid*, p. 221), which sees sin beginning with the misadventures in Eden.
2. R. Tannahill, *Sex in History*, (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1980), pp. 136-161, esp. p. 155.
3. H. J. Miles, *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage*, (Zondervan Books, Michigan, 1975).
4. J. White, *Eros Defiled: The Christian and Sexual Guilt*, (Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1983).
5. *Ibid*, p. 25.
6. *Ibid*, p. 25.
7. Nor in general is an ontology of marriage a non-trivial matter to sketch, cf. S. R. L. Clark, "Sexual Ontology and Group Marriage", *Philosophy*, vol. 58, 1983, pp. 215-227.
8. cf. J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, (Belknap Press of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971).
9. B. W. Powers, "Paul's Teaching in 1 Corinthians on Sex and Marriage: Some Questions of Interpretation", *Interchange*, no. 31, 1983, pp. 19-32.
10. V. Bounds, "Does an Act of Sexual Intercourse Make You Married?", *Interchange*, no. 34, 1983, pp. 61-63.
11. Powers, *op cit.* note 11, pp. 21-22.
12. cf. St Augustine, *City of God*, translated by J. W. C. Wand, (Oxford University Press Oxford, 1963), pp. 15-16 and pp. 17-18.

13. Miles, *op. cit.* note 3, pp. 199-206; White, *op. cit.* note 4, pp. 43-74.
14. Miles, *ibid.* p. 205.
15. *Ibid.* p. 205.
16. H. Licht, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece*, (The Abby Library, London, 1971), pp. 340-341, quoted from Powers, *op. cit.* note 9, p. 20.
17. Miles, *op. cit.* note 3, pp. 48-59.
18. *Ibid.* p. 52.
19. *Ibid.* p. 144. White, *op. cit.* note 4, p. 113 compares homosexual's desires with "Starving people in besieged cities of the past [who] found their mouths watering for such delicacies as boiled rats".
20. J. J. McNeil, *The Church and the Homosexual*, (Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1977), pp. 48-44.
21. He does follow D. S. Bailey's *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, (Longman, Green and Co., London, 1955) and claims that Lot's offer of his daughters was "simply the most tempting bribe Lot could offer at the spur of the moment to appease a hostile crowd" (*op. cit.* note 20, p. 44, emphasis added). The word "tempting" however gives the game away: tempting for what? A sexual reference is not eliminated, it is restated.
22. For further arguments along these lines cf. L. Scanzoni and V. R. Mollenkott, *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? Another Christian View*, (SCM Press, London, 1978), pp. 54-61.
23. P. Coleman, *Christian Attitudes to Homosexuality*, (SPCK, London, 1980), p. 95.
24. McNeill, *op. cit.* note 20, pp. 50-53.
25. A suggestion of such an argument although one not explicitly embraced by its authors M. Baigent, R. Leigh and H. Lincoln, can be found in the controversial *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, (Jonathan Cape, London, 1982), pp. 278-282.