



## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans-Sexual: a Christian Ethics Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

This research analyzes ethical-theological responses to LGBT issues in Protestant context through in-depth study of key Biblical texts and related literature. Using a qualitative approach combining hermeneutical and contextual analysis, this research explores: interpretation of Biblical texts about LGBT, formulation of Christian ethical principles, development of theological-ethical responses, and pastoral care models. Research findings show that Biblical texts consistently and firmly reject LGBT practices as deviation from creation order. The research identifies seven fundamental ethical principles that should underlie church response: principles of creation, holiness, love, redemption, community, human dignity, and pastoral care. In implementation, churches need to develop a "convicted humility" approach that combines strong theological conviction with pastoral humility, distinguishing between behavior rejection and individual acceptance. Effective pastoral care models require integration of theological understanding with pastoral sensitivity, creating safe spaces for dialogue and healing while maintaining biblical truth. This research provides significant contribution in helping churches develop balanced responses between doctrinal firmness and pastoral love in handling LGBT issues.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) issues have experienced significant growth in global public discourse, creating ethical challenges for the church in formulating a biblical response. Adamczyk and Pitt's (2009) study shows that attitudes towards homosexuality have undergone dramatic changes, influenced by cultural and religious contexts. This shift in moral values exposes the church to an ethical dilemma between maintaining biblical truth and demonstrating Christ's love to the LGBT community. For Protestant churches, theological and ethical struggles are increasingly complex, especially in responding to this social reality. Cadge and Wildeman (2008) found that the majority of Protestant congregations experience significant internal struggles in determining their ethical position on LGBT issues. The main challenge is how to maintain doctrinal integrity that clearly rejects LGBT while developing a biblical pastoral approach for those who stray. Whitehead (2018) revealed that higher levels of religious participation correlated with more assertive stances in defence of traditional sexual ethics, suggesting the importance of theological foundations in shaping ethical responses.

The pastoral dimension of this ethical dilemma was revealed in Barnes and Meyer's (2012) study which showed that faith-based rejection had a significant impact on the mental well-being of members of the LGBT community. Their study underscores the urgency to develop an ethical approach that can distinguish between rejection of behaviour and acceptance of individuals as beings created in the image of God. This ethical-theological debate centres on the interpretation of key biblical texts. Loader (2012) in his work 'The New Testament on Sexuality' emphasises the importance of a deep understanding of the historical and social context in interpreting texts on sexuality. On the other hand, Via and Gagnon (2003) demonstrate how different hermeneutical approaches result in different ethical implications, while Yip (2005) reveals the complexity of dialoguing biblical texts with contemporary realities.

Previous studies point to the need for a comprehensive ethical framework in understanding and responding to LGBT issues. Olson and Cadge (2012) analysed various church strategies in balancing doctrinal truth with pastoral sensitivity. Rosik et al. (2013) asserted that different theological understandings result in different pastoral approaches in dealing with LGBT issues in the church context. This research aims to develop a Christian ethical framework for responding to LGBT issues through careful biblical hermeneutic analysis. Specifically, this research will: (1) analyse ethical principles from key biblical texts, (2) formulate theological-ethical responses that distinguish between rejection of behaviour and acceptance of individuals, and (3) develop practical guidelines for biblical pastoral care. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to helping the church develop an ethical response that is balanced between truth and love in dealing with LGBT issues

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent scholarship has established important frameworks for understanding LGBT issues within Christian ethical contexts. Gagnon (2002) in

"The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics" provides a comprehensive analysis of biblical texts related to sexuality, establishing core interpretative principles that continue to influence contemporary theological discourse. This foundational understanding is complemented by Via and Gagnon's (2003) "Homosexuality and the Bible: Two Views," which demonstrates how different hermeneutical approaches to these texts result in varying ethical implications. Loader (2012) further develops this discourse in "The New Testament on Sexuality," offering detailed exegetical analysis while considering historical and cultural contexts that shape our understanding of biblical sexuality.

Contemporary theological scholarship has increasingly focused on bridging traditional biblical interpretation with modern pastoral needs. Yarhouse (2010) has been instrumental in developing frameworks that distinguish between sexual orientation, identity, and behavior in pastoral care contexts through his work "Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends." His approach is enriched by Hill's (2010) personal and theological reflections in "Washed and Waiting," which provides valuable insights into the lived experience of LGBT Christians committed to traditional biblical ethics. The theological discourse is further developed by Messer (2014) in "Systematic Theology and Christian Ethics," which emphasizes the importance of integrating theological understanding with contemporary pastoral challenges.

Empirical studies have increasingly examined the practical implications of these theological frameworks. The research of Rosik et al. (2013) demonstrates the importance of nuanced approaches in conservative religious contexts, while Olson and Cadge (2012) analyze various church strategies in balancing doctrinal truth with pastoral sensitivity. Particularly significant is the work of Rodriguez and Etengoff (2016), which identifies practical strategies for helping LGBT individuals integrate their religious and sexual identities. This research is complemented by Paris and Anderson's (2021) exploration of human dignity in LGBT ministry contexts, and Cadge and Wildeman's (2008) analysis of how mainline Protestant clergy respond to homosexuality. These studies collectively emphasize the importance of maintaining theological integrity while developing effective pastoral care approaches.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a focus on literature study and contextual analysis. The literature study involves in-depth exegesis of biblical texts relevant to Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender issues. Contextual analysis was conducted to understand the concept of Christian theological ethics on LGBT issues. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of LGBT issues from both theological and practical perspectives. Through a combination of biblical exegesis and contextual analysis, this research aims to bridge the gap between sexual ethics, worldly reality and protestant pastoral practice.

The main data source for this study is the Bible, including relevant texts from the Old and New Testaments. These texts were selected based on their

relevance to the theme of servant leadership and analysed in their original languages (Hebrew and Greek) as well as modern translations. In addition, the study also used theological literature as secondary data sources. This literature includes textbooks, scholarly journal articles, and other academic publications that discuss LGBT theory, Sexual Theology, Theological Ethics and their applications in religious contexts. The use of these multiple sources enables data triangulation to increase the validity and reliability of the research (Swinton & Mowat, 2016).

Data analysis in this study utilised a hermeneutic approach to the interpretation of biblical texts and theological literature. This method involves an in-depth understanding of the historical, linguistic and cultural contexts of the texts analysed. For data from contemporary literature, thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns and themes. The analysis process involved coding, categorisation, and interpretation of the data to produce an in-depth understanding of protestant ethics and ministry in LGBT. The results of the analysis were then integrated to produce a synthesis between biblical perspectives and practical applications in modern organisational contexts (Van der Ven, 1993).

## RESULT

### a. Three Biblical Perspectives

#### Genesis 19: The Sodom and Gomorrah Narrative

The Sodom and Gomorrah narrative in Genesis 19 presents a dramatic event that begins with the arrival of two angels (*mal' ākîm*) to the city of Sodom. The Hebrew text describes how Lot, sitting at the city gate, insists on inviting these guests into his home - an act that reflects the value of hospitality (*hachnasat orchim*) that was highly valued in ancient Near Eastern culture. The tension peaks when 'all the people' ('*anšê hā'îr "anšê səḏôm*) of the town demand to "know' (*yāda'*) the guests. The use of the word *yāda'* in this text is significant, because while this word generally means "to know", in certain contexts it is also used to describe a sexual relationship, as seen in Genesis 4:1 of Adam "knowing" Eve.

The context of the narrative further reveals that this event is not simply about sexual desire, but a demonstration of collective violence and a serious breach of the laws of hospitality. This is evident from Lot's response of offering his two daughters who 'had not known men' ('*āšer lō-yāḏə'û 'îš*), an act that, while morally problematic, emphasises the seriousness of the offence that would be committed against the guests. The text also indicates that the threat comes from 'the young and the old, all the people from all directions' (*minna'ar wə'aḏ-zāqên kāl-hā'ām miqqāšeh*), suggesting that this is a collective act of the entire community, not a specific group of individuals. The theological significance of this narrative is reinforced by later references in the biblical text. The prophet Ezekiel in chapter 16:49-50 mentions specifically that Sodom's sin was 'pride, abundance of food, and negligent tranquillity' (*gā'ôn šib'aṭ-leḥem wəšalwaṭ hašqêṭ*), as well as 'not strengthening the hands of the poor and needy.' In the New Testament, the Letter to Jude verse 7 uses the terms "ekporneusasai" and "apelthousai opisō sarkos heteras" - 'following unnatural

passions' - to describe the sin of Sodom, suggesting that early Christian interpretations saw this event as an extreme example of moral and social deviance.

### **Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13: The Early Laws**

The Hebrew text of Leviticus 18:22 reads 'wə'eṭ-zākār lō ṭiškab miškābê "iššāh tō'ēḇāh hī", which literally means "with men you shall not sleep as with women; it is an abomination". The key phrase here is 'miškābê "iššāh" - "as with a woman" - which uses the plural form of the word "miškāb" - a place to lie down). Meanwhile, Leviticus 20:13 uses a similar formulation but adds the consequence of death (mōṭ yūmātū) for this offence. The use of the word 'tō'ēḇāh' - abomination) in this context is significant because the same term is used for various ritual and moral offences in the Levitical law. Both texts appear in the broader context of the laws of holiness (qəḏuṣṣāh) in Leviticus. Chapter 18 in particular begins with YHWH's warning to Israel not to follow the practices of the Egyptians and Canaanites (18:3). This prohibition appears among a series of laws governing sexual relationships and marriage, including prohibitions on incest ('erwāh), inbreeding, and various other sexual practices. These laws form part of the priestly system (kōhānīm) aimed at setting Israel apart as a holy nation ('am qāḏōš) among the nations.

The linguistic structure of these two verses contains an important aspect of ritual sanctity (tāhōrāh) in the priestly system of ancient Israel. The use of the word 'šākaḇ' (lie down) together with 'zākār' (male) and the reference to 'miškābê "iššāh" suggests a focus on specific physical actions rather than orientation or identity. The text appears in the broader context of laws aimed at separating Israel from the practices of the surrounding nations, especially with regard to idolatry and fertility rites common in the ancient world of the Near East. The use of the term 'tō'ēḇāh' in this context is often associated with idolatrous practices, as seen in the use of the same word in other parts of the Pentateuch.

### **Romans 1:26-27: The Paul's Teachings**

Romans chapter 1:26-27 appears in the broader context of Paul's argument about the universality of sin and the need for God's righteousness (dikaiosynē theou). The text sits within section 1:18-32 which describes God's wrath (orgē theou) on human ungodliness. In the original Greek, Paul uses the word 'paredōken' (deliver) three times (verses 24, 26, 28), indicating the progressivity of divine punishment whereby God 'delivers' human beings to the natural consequences of their rebellion. This context is important because it shows that the sexual behaviour discussed is not an isolated issue, but rather part of a larger narrative of humanity's rejection of God's revelation in creation (phaneron).

Exegesis-wise, Paul uses specific terms that are significant. The phrases 'pathē atimias' - (shameful passions) and "tēn physikēn chrēsīn" 'the use of nature indicate an emphasis on the concept of 'natural' versus 'unnatural' in Greco-Roman thought. The word 'physis' (nature) is an important concept in Hellenistic philosophy that Paul uses to communicate to a Gentile audience.

The use of the word *exekauthēsan* - 'burning' describes the intensity of unbridled passion, while *aschēmosynēn* - 'shameful deeds') refers to the violation of the accepted social and moral order.

Paul's rhetorical structure in this passage follows the pattern of *khiasmus*, where rejection of the Creator (*ktisanta*) results in chaos in the created order. The phrase 'metallaxan tēn physikēn chrēsin' ('exchanging natural use') corresponds to 'ēllaxan tēn doxan' ('exchanging glory') in verse 23, showing the parallel between idolatry and moral disorder. Paul uses the word 'antimisthian' ('recompense') to describe the natural consequences of rejecting the divine order, indicating that the behaviour described is symptomatic of a more fundamental problem, namely the rejection of God's revelation in creation.

### **b. The Finding of Socio-Cultural and Historist Socio-Cultural Scriptura: Sexuality in the Ancient World**

The understanding of sexuality in ancient Jewish culture cannot be separated from the concepts of holiness (*qəḏuṣṣāh*) and the order of creation (*seder b'reshit*). In Torah texts, sexuality is seen as an integral part of the order of creation, where God created humans as 'zachar unekevah' - male and female) with the purpose of 'peru urevu' - being fruitful and multiplying). This concept is reinforced through narratives in Genesis that emphasise gender complementarity in creation and the role of reproduction in divine blessing. In the ancient Jewish tradition, sexuality was not seen as something taboo or negative, but rather as a divine gift that should be governed within the boundaries of chastity. This is evident from the existence of literature such as the Song of Songs that poetically celebrates sexual love and desire in the context of marriage. Sexual laws in ancient Israelite society served as social and ritual barriers that set Israel apart from surrounding nations. This legal system was built on the concepts of 'taharah' (purity) and 'tumah' (impurity). In the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, these laws cover various aspects of sexual life, ranging from marriage ('kiddushin') to specific prohibitions on illicit sexual relations (*arayot*). The significance of these laws lies in their role in maintaining Israel's identity as an 'am kadosh' (holy nation). Violation of these laws was not only seen as a moral offence, but also as a threat to communal sanctity and the covenant relationship with YHWH.

In the ancient Mediterranean context, the understanding of gender and sexuality was very different from modern concepts. Greco-Roman society had a complex value system regarding gender and sexuality, which is reflected in the use of the term 'physis' (nature) in the literature of the period. In the ancient Mediterranean world, concepts of masculinity and femininity were closely linked to social roles and power hierarchies. In this context, sexual behaviour was often associated with social status and self-control, where *enkrateia* (self-control) was considered a cardinal virtue. The terminology used in New Testament texts, such as 'arsenokoitēs' and 'malakos', must be understood in this socio-cultural context, where gender identity and sexual behaviour are closely linked to power structures and social status.

### **Historical Context: Understanding Sexuality in the Church Tradition**

The church's understanding of sexual orientation underwent significant evolution throughout its history. In the Patristic period, Church Fathers such as Augustine, Chrysostom, and Hieronymus viewed sexuality primarily through the lens of asceticism, where they emphasised the importance of self-control and celibacy as forms of spiritual perfection. Texts that addressed homosexual behaviour during this time were always placed within the broader context of idolatry and the moral decadence of pagan society. The Medieval period brought significant changes with the advent of the systematisation of church law (*Corpus Iuris Canonici*) which began to categorise various sexual acts in terms of sin and punishment. Scholastic theologian Thomas Aquinas introduced the concept of natural law (*lex naturalis*) which later became the foundation for the church's understanding of sexuality, where sexual acts were judged based on their compatibility with the natural purpose of procreation. This understanding dominated church discourse until the modern era, where sexual orientation began to be understood as a more complex phenomenon than just an act or moral choice.

The modern era brought radical changes in the understanding of human sexuality, which in turn affected the interpretation of biblical texts. The rise of the social sciences and psychology in the 19th and 20th centuries introduced a new understanding of sexual orientation as an intrinsic aspect of human identity. The development of modern hermeneutics also brought new approaches to the interpretation of biblical texts on sexuality. The historical-critical method encourages a more contextualised reading, considering the socio-cultural background of the texts. This approach results in a more nuanced reading of traditional texts relating to sexuality, recognising the complexity of interpretation in a modern context where the understanding of sexual orientation has evolved significantly from the understanding that existed at the time of the writing of the texts. The dialogue between traditional interpretations and modern understandings of sexuality is becoming increasingly important in contemporary theological discourse, creating a creative tension between faithfulness to tradition and response to modern pastoral realities.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Ethical Biblical View**

The Sodom and Gomorrah narrative in Genesis 19 illustrates the rejection of deviant sexual behaviour, where the context of the event is not only about homosexuality but also about sexual violence and violation of the laws of hospitality. The laws in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 provide explicit statements about the prohibition of same-sex sexual relations, placing them in the context of Israel's holiness and separation as God's people. Both texts affirm that homosexual behaviour is against the order of creation and God's plan for human sexuality. The emphasis on 'abomination' (*toevah*) in these texts indicates that such behaviour is seen as a serious violation of the holiness that God requires of His people. In the New Testament, Paul in Romans 1:26-27 elaborates by placing homosexual behaviour in the broader context of human rebellion against God and rejection of the natural order God established in

creation. Paul's use of the term 'against nature' (*para physin*) emphasises that such behaviour is a deviation from God's design for human sexuality. Paul viewed homosexual behaviour as a manifestation of man's rejection of God's truth and a consequence of idolatry. Paul's theological argument asserts that moral transformation, including in terms of sexuality, is integral to man's response to the gospel.

We can add some biblical insights that consistently present a clear ethical framework regarding human sexuality in the context of creation and holiness. The creation narrative in Genesis 1:27-28 sets the theological foundation of human sexuality in the context of gender complementarity and the purpose of procreation. Texts such as Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 provide explicit ethical boundaries against homosexual behaviour in the context of Israel's holiness. Paul's statement in Romans 1:26-27 reinforces this perspective by placing homosexual behaviour in the context of rejection of the divine order of creation. The New Testament develops a sexual ethic that integrates righteousness and love in the context of Christ's redemption. Jesus demonstrated a strict approach to sin while showing mercy to sinners, as seen in the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). The early church, under the leadership of the apostles, maintained high ethical standards while opening the door of repentance and restoration to all. Paul's letters consistently called for moral transformation while emphasising the power of the gospel to transform lives.

Yarhouse (2010) in 'Homosexuality and the Christian' offers an ethical framework that distinguishes between sexual orientation, identity, and behaviour in pastoral care to them. He develops an 'identity synthesis' model that allows LGBT individuals to integrate their identity within the framework of Christian faith without compromising biblical truths. Hill (2010) reinforced this perspective by presenting his personal experience as a 'gay celibate Christian'. Loader (2012) provides an in-depth analysis of understanding sexuality in a biblical context. These approaches show that the church can maintain doctrinal truth while demonstrating Christ's love in a practical way. Whereas Paris and Anderson (2021) explore the concept of human dignity in the context of the LGBT debate, emphasising that every individual, regardless of sexual orientation, reflects the image of God, the study of Rosik et al. (2013) supports this by expressing the importance of understanding the psychological and spiritual complexities of ministering to the LGBT community without accepting their view of sin. Olson and Cadge (2012) found that successful churches are those that are able to maintain doctrinal integrity while developing compassionate pastoral care. DeFranza (2015) contributed important thoughts on the theological implications of gender variation in the context of the *imago Dei*. These understandings help the church develop a more nuanced response to LGBT issues.

Pastoral responsibility within an ethical framework requires a balanced and biblically-grounded approach. Scholars such as Rodriguez and Etengoff (2016) identify practical strategies to help LGBT individuals integrate their religious and sexual identities; Cornwall (2013) contributes an important perspective on how churches can maintain LGBT-rejecting theological integrity

while demonstrating pastoral compassion. Added to this is Gagnon (2002) who provides in-depth biblical analyses of key texts relating to sexuality. Finally Messer (2014) emphasises the importance of developing a pastoral care model that integrates theological truth with contemporary psychological understanding. These approaches help churches develop effective ministries without compromising the truth.

Therefore, Christian Ethics in dealing with LGBT issues is built on several fundamental principles rooted in the Bible and the true Protestant tradition, namely: **First**, the creational principle which affirms that God created humans in two complementary genders and that human sexuality is meant to be expressed in heterosexual marriage (Gagnon, 2002). **Second**, the holiness principle which emphasises the call to holy living while recognising the reality of man's sinful nature which requires divine grace and restoration (Hill, 2010). **Third**, the love principle that requires the church to demonstrate the love of Christ to all people while holding to the truth, as emphasised by Yarhouse (2010) in his model of ministry that distinguishes between orientation, identity and behaviour. **Fourth**, the redemptive principle which affirms that the gospel offers hope and transformation for all people, including those who struggle with sexual identity (Cornwall, 2013). **Fifth**, the community principle which emphasises the role of the church as a healing community that supports the spiritual growth of each individual without compromising biblical moral standards (Paris & Anderson, 2021). **Sixth**, the human dignity principle which recognises that every person, regardless of sexual orientation, is created in the image of God and deserves to be treated with respect (DeFranza, 2015). **Seventh**, the pastoral principle which emphasises the importance of accompaniment with wisdom and compassion while maintaining doctrinal truth (Messer, 2014).

## **2. Theological-Ethical Approach**

In making a theological-ethical response to LGBT issues, a careful balance is needed between maintaining biblical truth while showing Christ's love. Gagnon (2002) in his analysis of Biblical texts affirms that homosexual behavior is consistently rejected in biblical tradition, however this rejection must be distinguished from attitudes toward individuals. Yarhouse (2010) strengthens this argument by developing a framework that distinguishes between orientation, identity, and behavior. Empirical research by Rosik et al. (2013) reveals that the ability to distinguish between behavior rejection and individual acceptance correlates with more positive pastoral outcomes and lower stigma levels.

The theological approach that distinguishes between basic identity as God's image and behavior requiring transformation is further developed by Hill (2010). He demonstrates how the church can affirm human dignity while maintaining biblical ethical standards. Paris and Anderson (2021) found that religious communities who successfully manage this tension show better mental health levels among their LGBT members. DeFranza (2015) contributes important understanding of how the doctrine of *\*imago Dei\** provides

theological foundation for respecting every individual's dignity regardless of their sexual orientation, while maintaining the call for moral transformation. Added by Rogers (2009) in "Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality" proposes a theological framework that seeks to bridge the gap between traditional understanding and contemporary reality. He argues that biblical principles of justice, love, and inclusivity should inform the church's response to LGBT issues. Reinforced by Gushee (2017) in "Changing Our Mind," where he shows how evolving theological understanding can influence the church's pastoral approach while maintaining faithfulness to Biblical authority.

Moon et al. (2019) identify concrete practices that enable churches to maintain doctrinal faithfulness while creating safe spaces for LGBT individuals. Their research shows that churches implementing what they call "convicted humility" - strong theological conviction accompanied by pastoral humility - are more successful in their ministry. Rodriguez and Etengoff (2016) found that pastoral approaches acknowledging the complexity of religious and sexual identity, while holding firm to biblical truth, help LGBT individuals integrate their faith and identity more healthily. Wolff et al. (2016) affirm that pastoral acceptance without compromising doctrinal truth reduces the risk of religious trauma. Creek (2013) analyzes how LGBT individuals committed to Christian faith negotiate between their sexual and religious identities. Levy and Reeves (2011) identify that healthy identity conflict resolution occurs when churches can communicate rejection of certain behaviors without rejecting individuals as persons. Wendt et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of an integrated theological-pastoral approach, where truth and love are not seen as contradictory, but as two complementary aspects in holistic Christian ministry.

### **3. Models of Pastoral Care and Ministry Approaches**

The pastoral approach to LGBT issues requires a balanced and practical theological framework. VanderWal-Gritter (2014) in "Generous Spaciousness: Responding to Gay Christians in the Church" analyzes how churches can develop pastoral approaches that respect both biblical truth and pastoral reality. Her study identifies the importance of creating "safe spaces" for dialogue and pastoral care, while maintaining theological integrity. Her research shows that churches successful in LGBT ministry are those able to build bridges of dialogue without compromising their core beliefs. Pastoral care models for LGBT contexts have been developed and analyzed by Yarhouse (2010) in "Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends." He presents a pastoral framework that integrates psychological understanding with theological perspectives. His study shows that effective pastoral care requires deep understanding of sexual and gender identity complexities, as well as awareness of spiritual challenges faced by LGBT individuals.

The ethical pastoral care model in LGBT contexts requires a comprehensive and biblically-grounded framework. Yarhouse (2010) developed a "Sexual Identity Therapy" model that distinguishes three dimensions: sexual attraction, sexual identity, and sexual behavior. This approach enables pastoral caregivers to respond appropriately to specific struggles faced by LGBT

individuals. Empirical studies by Rodriguez and Etengoff (2016) identify that effective care must consider the complexity of religious identity and sexual orientation. Wendt et al. (2020) in their research on "Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy" emphasize the importance of integrating psychological understanding with spiritual perspectives in pastoral care. Creek (2013) in their study of "religious sexual identity therapy" found that approaches respecting both faith and sexuality produce more positive outcomes in pastoral care. This model emphasizes the importance of creating safe spaces for identity exploration while holding firm to biblical truth. Levy and Reeves (2011) identify four stages in the care process: awareness of internal conflict, evaluation of religious beliefs, exploration of sexual identity, and resolution aligned with faith beliefs. Livingston et al. (2015) add the importance of trauma-informed approaches in pastoral care, given that many LGBT individuals experience rejection and stigma in religious contexts.

In the context of church ministry, research by Cadge et al. (2012) reveals that churches successful in developing effective LGBT ministry are those able to maintain balance between doctrinal truth and pastoral love. They identify three key elements: (1) development of thoughtful theology about sexuality and gender, (2) creation of safe and supportive communities, and (3) holistic pastoral ministry. Moon et al. (2019) found that churches adopting a "convicted humility" approach - maintaining theological beliefs while acknowledging issue complexity and need for practical love - are more successful in serving LGBT communities without compromising doctrinal integrity. Wolff et al. (2016) emphasize the importance of training church leaders in developing pastoral competency to effectively serve LGBT communities.

Paris (2011) in "The End of Sexual Identity: Why Sex Is Too Important to Define Who We Are" offers new perspectives on how churches can balance truth and love in ministry. Her research challenges traditional paradigms about sexual identity and suggests a more holistic pastoral approach. She argues that churches need to develop ministry models that acknowledge human experience complexity while remaining faithful to biblical vision of sexuality. Hill (2010), a theologian who identifies as a gay celibate Christian, in "Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality" provides valuable insights about pastoral challenges faced by LGBT Christians. His study highlights the importance of church community in supporting individuals' faith journeys, regardless of their sexual orientation. His analysis shows that effective pastoral ministry must consider both spiritual and emotional needs of LGBT individuals.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATION**

In-depth analysis of key Biblical texts (Genesis 19, Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:26-27) clearly shows firm rejection of homosexual practices and LGBT behavior. These texts, both in the Old and New Testaments, consistently place LGBT behavior as a deviation from God's created order and a violation of the holiness required of His people. The emphasis on terms "abomination" (*toevah*) and "against nature" (*para physin*) affirms a clear theological position against LGBT practices. This research has identified seven fundamental ethical

principles that should underpin the church's response to LGBT issues: the creation principle affirming gender complementarity, the holiness principle emphasizing the call to holy living, the love principle requiring acceptance without compromising truth, the redemption principle offering transformation, the community principle emphasizing the church's role as a place of restoration, the human dignity principle recognizing imago Dei in every individual, and the pastoral principle emphasizing wise accompaniment.

In the context of theological-ethical implications, the church needs to develop responses that distinguish between rejection of LGBT behavior and acceptance of individuals as beings created in God's image. The "convicted humility" approach - strong theological conviction accompanied by pastoral humility - proves most effective in balancing doctrinal truth and practical love. Churches must be able to communicate rejection of LGBT behavior without diminishing the dignity and value of individuals as God's creation. Effective pastoral care models require integration of theological understanding with pastoral sensitivity that distinguishes between orientation, identity, and sexual behavior. Churches need to develop safe spaces for dialogue and accompaniment while holding firm to biblical truth. Pastoral ministry must be holistic, considering the complexity of spiritual and emotional struggles of LGBT individuals, while still offering hope of transformation through the power of the Gospel. This approach enables the church to remain faithful to biblical mandate while practically demonstrating Christ's love to those struggling with LGBT issues.

### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Like all academic research, this study has several important limitations that should be acknowledged. The theological-ethical analysis primarily focuses on Protestant interpretations and may not fully capture the diversity of Christian theological traditions addressing LGBT issues. Additionally, while the research examines biblical texts and their interpretations extensively, the rapidly evolving nature of contemporary pastoral challenges means that some current practical applications may not be fully addressed. The study's theoretical framework, while comprehensive in its theological foundations, could benefit from more extensive empirical validation, particularly regarding the effectiveness of the proposed pastoral care models in different cultural and denominational contexts. The research also faces limitations in terms of its ability to fully capture the lived experiences of LGBT Christians navigating their faith and identity, as most source materials approach the issue from theological and pastoral perspectives rather than through direct experiential accounts.

Future research in this field should pursue several promising directions to address these limitations. Longitudinal studies tracking the effectiveness of various pastoral care approaches would provide valuable insights into which models best support both theological integrity and individual well-being. There is also a pressing need for comparative studies examining how different denominational contexts implement ethical-theological frameworks in their LGBT ministry approaches, particularly focusing on churches that successfully

maintain biblical truth while creating supportive pastoral environments. Researchers should also explore the development of more comprehensive assessment tools for evaluating pastoral care outcomes, integrating both theological and psychological metrics. Additionally, future studies would benefit from incorporating more diverse voices, including the perspectives of LGBT Christians who have successfully integrated their faith and identity within traditional biblical frameworks. Such research would enhance our understanding of effective pastoral care strategies while maintaining Protestant ethical principles.

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