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CLOBBER

RETHINKING OUR MISUSE OF
THE BIBLE ON HOMOSEXUALITY

by COLBY MARTIN

ONE PAGE CHEAT SHEETS

FOR ALL SIX CLOBBER PASSAGES

GENESIS 19

LEVITICUS 18 AND 20

ROMANS 1

1 CORINTHIANS 6

1 TIMOTHY 1

Greetings Friend!

Thanks for downloading my **free resource:**
UNCLOBBER ONE PAGE CHEAT SHEETS.

In this free PDF, I've distilled some of the major ideas from my book as it relates to the six Clobber Passages, giving you a **quick one-stop shop** for understanding how the Christian church has **historically misused the Bible** when it comes to *homosexuality*.

Each page below covers a different passage by outlining:

- 1) How it's traditionally been used to Clobber LGBTQ people
- 2) Why I think that's been a *misuse*
- 3) A better way to understand the Clobber Passages

By no means is this comprehensive—for that, I recommend reading the entire chapter devoted to each passage in my book, [UnClobber: Rethinking Our Misuse of the Bible on Homosexuality](#).

This is a **free resource**, so please feel **empowered** to share the link on the final page and **help** others know that **God fully loves, accepts, welcomes, and celebrates LGBTQ individuals!**

Love and light to you,

Colby MARTIN
author of UnClobber

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CLOBBER

Traditional interpretation used to Clobber gay people

PASSAGE RECAP

- ▶ God **destroyed** these ancient cities because of their rampant **sinfulness**.
- ▶ Central to their iniquities was **homosexuality**, evidenced by the the **men** of Sodom wanting to have **sex** with the male/angelic visitors.

JUSTIFICATION FOR DISCRIMINATION

- ▶ LGBTQ individuals are a **threat** to the well being of society.
- ▶ God destroyed cities for it, and God **still punishes societies** today that tolerate LGBTQ activity.

Why that’s a misuse of this passage

IT’S NOT ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY

- ▶ The male characters in the story are **not gay**. They are power hungry monsters who wanted to **gang-rape** foreigners.

THE BIBLE EXPLAINS THIS STORY FOR US

- ▶ The Bible **explains** the “sins of Sodom” for us in multiple places.
- ▶ **Homosexuality** is never mentioned. Rather, the focus is on **pride** and failure to show **hospitality**.

How to UnClobber it. A better way forward

KNOW OUR CALLING

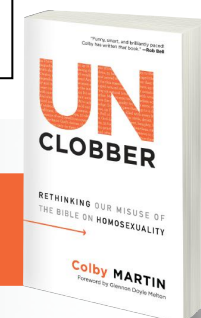
- ▶ Israel was **called** to be a people who embodied **hospitality** and sought **justice** for the oppressed. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was a story passed on as a **warning** should they forget their calling.

EMBRACE RADICAL HOSPITALITY

- ▶ In what ways do we today neglect the call to **radical hospitality**? May we always **open** ourselves up to the **needs** of the outsiders, the marginalized, and the outcast.

*“The point of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah is that the people of God are called to be people who **receive** the outcast and the outsiders... not **create** them.”*

Learn more in
Chapter 4



FUN FACT:
Other cultures had Genesis 19 type stories, aka, “divine beings visit wicked cities and destroy them.” See: Baucis and Philemon.

“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination” -Leviticus 18:22

Traditional interpretation used to Clobber gay people

PASSAGE RECAP

- ▶ Two verses in Levitical law declare a **specific** type of same-sex activity between two **men** as *toevah* (in Hebrew), a.k.a. an **“abomination.”**

JUSTIFICATION FOR DISCRIMINATION

- ▶ Used as the basis for an **OT ban** against **any/all** same-sex sex acts.
- ▶ If God called it “sinful” back then, then surely it will **always** be so.
- ▶ “Abomination” means vile, gross, **subhuman**. This word has **armed** the church with **justification** to see LGBTQ individuals as “less than.”

Why that’s a misuse of this passage

BAD TRANSLATION

- ▶ The Hebrew word (*toevah*) did not imply, “vile, gross, or subhuman.”
- ▶ *Toevah* was about a violation of cultural boundaries, not objective offenses that are inherently wrong.

NOT UNIVERSAL

- ▶ The prohibition is about a **specific** act, not **any/all** same-sex activity.
- ▶ No prohibition against **lesbians**.

HOW IS THIS FOR US?

- ▶ Leviticus was written for the **Jewish** people as they entered the promised land. **Not for us**, 3,000 years later.

How to UnClobber it. A better way forward

SACRED CALLING

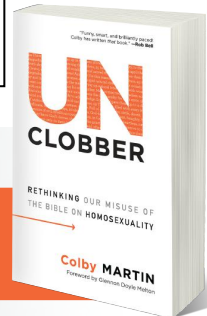
- ▶ The idea of **Leviticus** was that Israel was to **live differently** from those around them when they entered the promised land. This was a calling to be **holy**, “set apart,” so as to **reveal** to the world the true **heart** and **nature** of God.

LIVING HOLY TODAY

- ▶ This calling remains for us today. **We** are now the **lights** of the world. What might it look like to **live differently** from the culture around us?

*“When it comes to questioning the **sinfulness** of people born with same sex attraction, or the **sinfulness** of a gay couple living together in a loving relationship, these two verses in Leviticus **simply do not help**. They are not trying to answer those questions.”*

Learn more in Chapter 6



FUN FACT: Moses acknowledged to Pharaoh that the Jewish worship of Yahweh was “*toevah*” (an abomination) to the Egyptians.

Traditional interpretation used to Clobber gay people

PASSAGE RECAP

- ▶ Paul describes both **men** and **women** who **turned their back** on God and exchanged **natural** relations for **unnatural** ones.

JUSTIFICATION FOR DISCRIMINATION

- ▶ Used as Biblical support for labeling homosexuality as **“unnatural.”**
- ▶ **Lesbians** are finally mentioned (and equally condemned).
- ▶ Homosexuality is a broken state that is a result of people **turning their backs on God** and chasing their own desires.

Why that’s a misuse of this passage

RIPPED OUT OF CONTEXT

- ▶ These two verses are part of a larger thing Paul was doing in Romans 1, which was part of a larger thing he was doing with the letter altogether: attempting to **unify** Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome.
- ▶ The point of this passage was **expose** Jewish **prejudice** against Gentiles and level the playing field, so as to bring everyone together.

NOT PAUL’S PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ These aren’t Paul’s **beliefs** on the sinfulness of **homosexuality**. He **borrowed** rhetoric from common Jewish sources which were originally written to be **anti-Gentile**.

How to UnClobber it. A better way forward

RESTORE INTENT

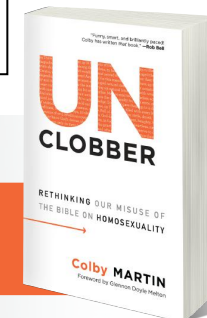
- ▶ This clobber passage was part of a **larger effort** from Paul to unify Christians in Rome who were **fractured** along ethnic lines.
- ▶ We have to know **why** Paul wrote Romans (to bring **unity**) or we’ll never understand these two verses. A simple reading isn’t enough.

OWNING PREJUDICE

- ▶ The church needs to bring to the surface its long-held **prejudice** against LGBTQ individuals.
- ▶ Once named/owned we can **repent** & begin efforts for **reconciliation**.

*“In a **tragic twist**, these words—originally written in an attempt to **unify two fractured groups**—have been **misused** to justify the division and support the enmity between the **church** and the **LGBTQ community**.”*

Learn more in
Chapter 8



FUN FACT:
Early church fathers interpreted Paul’s “unnatural sex” to be sex-acts that were non-procreative (not “same-sex” acts).

1 COR 6 & 1 TIM 1

Will Not Inherit the Kingdom

“Do not be deceived... male prostitutes, sodomites... will not inherit the Kingdom of God.” -1 Corinthians 6:9

Full Passage
1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tim 1:9-10

Traditional interpretation used to Clobber gay people

PASSAGE RECAP

- ▶ In two different letters, Paul writes out a list of **sins** and includes “**homosexuality**” as something that **excludes** you from the Kingdom.

JUSTIFICATION FOR DISCRIMINATION

- ▶ This makes the Bible “clear” that **homosexuality is a sin.**
- ▶ Not **worse** than other sins, perhaps, but nonetheless still sinful.
- ▶ Same-sex behavior is **incompatible** with a life lived for God.

Why that’s a misuse of this passage

TRANSLATION ISSUES

- ▶ Translators **can’t decide** on how to handle two Greek words—one of which Paul seemed to **create** (making it hard to know for certain).
- ▶ Some translations go with **behavior** (aka, “men who have sex with men”), others go with **identity** (aka, “homosexuals”).

SPECIFIC, NOT GENERAL

- ▶ Paul was naming **specific** kinds of same-sex behavior, he was **not** saying that **any/all** sex acts between two men/women are **sinful**
- ▶ A person’s sexual **identity** is **not** what is at stake in these verses.

How to UnClobber it. A better way forward

WHAT’S REALLY AT STAKE

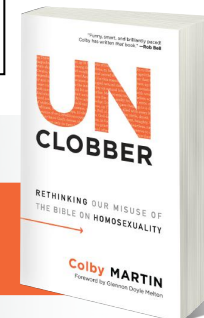
- ▶ These two poorly mistranslated words refer to those who **exploit** others for sex, who **sell** themselves for sex, or where there is an **imbalance in power.**
- ▶ If there is **exploitive** or transactional sex between two people of the same gender, that is **incompatible** with life in the Kingdom.

CONSISTENCY

- ▶ Let’s call *all* people—**regardless** of their sexual orientation—to a life of **equity**, mutual **respect**, and **love.** May *all* people strive for a healthy sexual ethic together.

“The next time someone asks you, “do you think **homosexuality** is a sin,” try responding with, “do you think **heterosexuality** is a sin?” This often helps people think through a “**sometimes yes/sometimes no**” sexual ethic for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.”

Learn more in Chapter 10



FUN FACT:
The ancient world used the term “eunuch” to name castrated males *and* males who showed no sexual interest in women.

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for downloading this free PDF



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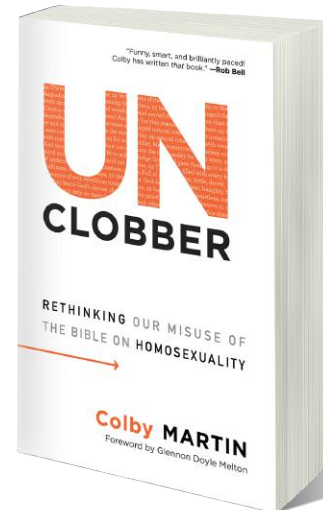
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