

WINTERY KNIGHT

VIDEOS

Matthew Vines and Michael Brown debate homosexuality and the Bible on Moody radio

12/08/2018 | WINTERY KNIGHT | 3 COMMENTS

Dr. Michael Brown debates Matthew Vines: Can ...



The audio of the Matthew Vines vs Michael Brown debate (<https://moodyaudio.com/products/can-you-be-gay-and-christian>) is streamed here on the Moody site.

Details:

Can you be gay and Christian? Matthew Vines says you can and he's created a viral video and best-selling book defending his view. This Saturday on Up for Debate, Vines joins host Julie Roys to debate author and leading evangelical apologist, Dr. Michael Brown. Is gay monogamy an option for Christians? Is it unloving to reject gay marriage? Listen and join the discussion this Saturday at 8 a.m. Central Time on Up for Debate!

Summary key: Julie Roys (JR), Matthew Vines (MV), Michael Brown (MB)

Summary:

Opening speeches:

- JR: Why should Christians be open to reinterpreting the Bible on homosexuality?
- MV: Consider the lives and testimonies of gay Christians. Here is my personal story.
- MV: According to the Bible, a person with same-sex attractions would have to embrace lifelong celibacy. I refuse to do that.

- MV: There are 6 passages in the Bible that are relevant to the goodness of homosexuality. All are negative.
- MV: None of these passages address gay relationships that are “long-term” and “faithful” that are based on “commitment” and “love”.
- JR: You say that it is “damaging” for Christians to disagree with you views, is that true?
- MV: Yes. One of my friends declared his homosexuality and he did not feel safe to come home. He felt pain because Christians disagreed with him.
- MV: You cannot ask a person with same-sex attractions to be celibate, it causes too much harm to ask gays to abstain from sexual relationships.
- JR: Respond to Matthew.
- MB: The Bible only permits heterosexual sexuality and in every case condemns homosexual acts.
- MB: Matthew is taking his sexual preferences and activities as given, and reinterpreting the Bible to fit it.
- MB: Genesis talks about women being made to help men, and to fulfill God’s commandment to procreate and fill the Earth.
- MB: The Bible speaks about the complementarity of the sexes when talking about how two become one in marriage.
- MB: I am very sensitive to the stories of people who are gay who experience discrimination as “gay Christians”.
- MB: You can feel sad for people who have two conflicting commitments, but that doesn’t mean we should redefine what the Bible says.
- JR: Stop talking, we have a break.

JR takes a caller for the next topic:

- Caller 1: I had same-sex attractions and I was able to change my sexuality.
- JR: Matthew, respond to that.
- MV: Alan Chambers of Exodus International says that 99.9% of people he worked with had not changed their gay orientation.
- MV: Lifelong celibacy is not acceptable to gays, so the Bible must be reinterpreted to suit gays.
- MB: Matthew thinks that God himself did not understand the concept of sexual orientation and inadvertently hurt gays because of his lack of knowledge.
- MB: There is a solution in the Bible for people who cannot be celibate, and that solution is heterosexual marriage
- MB: If a person is only attracted to pre-teen girls, do we then have to re-write the Bible to affirm that so they won’t be “harmed”?
- MB: Alan Chambers was speaking for his own group, and his statement does not account for the fact that thousands of people DO change.
- JR: What about the Jones/Yarhouse study that found that 38% of reparative therapy subjects were successful in changing or chastity?
- MV: (no response to the question)
- MV: (to Brown) do you accept that the Bible forces gays to live out lifelong celibacy

Another break, then Brown replies:

- MB: Yes. But change is possible.
- MV: Do you know of any Christian who acknowledged that this was the consequence of the Bible’s teaching for gays?

- MB: Paul's explanation that the options for ALL Christians are 1) celibacy or 2) heterosexual marriage. For 2000 years.
- MV: Paul (in Romans 1) is talking about people who are not "long-term", "faithful" gay relationships.
- MV: Paul was not aware of "long-term", "faithful" gay relationships at the time he wrote his prohibitions in Romans 1.
- JR: How do you know that fixed sexual orientation is true? And that the Biblical authors would write different things if they knew?
- JR: Are there any references in the first century to "long-term", "faithful" gay relationships?
- MB: Yes, in my book I quote prominent historian N. T. Wright who documents that those relationships were known.
- MB: Matthew's view requires that God did not know about sexual orientation when ordaining the Bible's content.
- MB: Leviticus 18 is for all people, for all time. This was not just for the Jews, this was for everyone.
- MV: I am not saying that Paul was wrong because he was ignorant.
- MV: Paul was writing in a context where "long-term", "faithful" gay relationships were unknown.
- MV: NT Wright does not cite first century texts, he cites a problematic 4th century text.
- MV: Absence of 1st-century references to "long-term", "faithful" gay relationships means that God did not intend to prohibit them.
- MB: Whenever the Bible speaks about homosexuality, it is opposed to it – Old Testament and New Testament.

Another break, then the conclusion:

- JR: Respond to the Leviticus prohibition, which prohibits homosexuality for everyone, for all time.
- MV: It is a universal prohibition on male same-sex intercourse, but it does not apply to Christians.
- MV: For example, Leviticus prohibits sex during a woman's menstrual period. And Christians are not bound by that.
- MV: What is the reason for this prohibition of male-male sex in Leviticus? It's not affirm the complementarity of the sexual act.
- MV: The Bible prohibits male-male sex because it is written for a patriarchal culture.
- MV: In a patriarchal culture, women are viewed as inferior. That's why the Bible prohibits a man from taking the woman's role in sex.
- MB: The prohibition in Leviticus is a universal prohibition against male-male sex, applicable in all times and places.
- MB: Homosexual sex is a violation of the divine order.
- MB: We can see already the consequences of normalizing this: gay marriage, and supports for polygamy and polyamory.
- MV: So the earliest reference there is to a "long-term", "faithful" gay relationship is a 4th century text.
- MV: But that gay relationship is not like modern gay relationships.

I have a few comments about Vines' points below.

My comments:

Even heterosexuals who have not married are called upon to embrace lifelong celibacy. I am in my early 40s and am a virgin because I have not married. I wouldn't seek to reinterpret the Bible to allow premarital sex just because what I am doing is difficult. I would rather just do what the Bible says than reinterpret it to suit me. And it's just as hard for me to be chaste as it would be for him to be. In short, it's a

character issue. He takes his right to recreational sex as non-negotiable, and reinterprets the Bible to suit. I take the Bible as non-negotiable, and comply with it regardless of whether it seems to make me less happy. With respect to the purposes of God for me in this world, my happiness is expendable. If I don't find someone to marry, I'm going to be "afflicted" with the lifelong celibacy that Vines seems to think is torture, but let me tell you – God is happy with the contributions I am making for him, and if I have to be chaste through my whole life, I am 100% fine with that. I serve the King (<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Timothy+2:3-4>). And not the reverse.

Notice that he talks about "long-term" but not permanent relationships, and "faithful" but not exclusive. This is important because the statistics show that gay relationships (depending on whether it is female-female or male-male) are prone to instability and/or infidelity. I just blogged on that recently (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2014/06/24/are-same-sex-unions-the-same-as-heterosexual-married-unions/>), with reference to the *published research* on the subject. Vines is talking about a situation that does not obtain in the real world – according to the data. Gay relationships do not normally value permanence and exclusivity in the way that opposite-sex marriage relationships do, especially where the couple regularly attends church. The divorce rate and infidelity rate for religious couples is *far below* the rates for gay couples, depending on the sexes involved. Vines is committed to the idea that marriage is about feelings, e.g. – "love", but that's not the public purpose of marriage. Marriage is not about love, it's about complementarity of the sexes and providing for the needs of children. We have published studies like this one (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2014/03/08/study-children-of-same-sex-couples-do-less-well-than-those-of-married-couples/>) showing that there are negative impacts to children who are raised by gay couples, which dovetails with studies showing that children need a mother (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2013/12/12/study-brain-of-child-neglected-by-mother-is-smaller-and-underdeveloped/>) and that children need a father (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2014/04/22/large-scale-uk-study-confirms-the-importance-of-fathers-to-children/>). We should not normalize any relationship that exposes children to harm. We should prefer to inconvenience adults than to harm children.

Matthew Vines made an argument that Christians have to stop saying that homosexuality is wrong, because it makes gay people feel excluded. I wrote previously (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2014/03/24/leader-of-gay-student-group-disagreeing-with-us-makes-us-kill-ourselves/>) about the argument that gay activists use where they say "if you don't agree with me and celebrate me and affirm me, then I'll commit suicide". In that post, I quoted a prominent gay activist who made exactly that argument. I don't find the threats to self-destruction to be a convincing argument *for the truth* of the view that gay marriage being the same as heterosexual marriage. In fact, this is confirmed by a recent study (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2014/06/09/new-study-relationship-problems-not-family-rejection-leading-cause-of-higher-gay-suicides/>) which showed that features of gay relationships themselves, and not social disapproval, is to blame for high rates of suicide in the gay community.

Vines seems to want to argue that the context in which the Bible authors were writing did not allow them to address the problem of gays in "long-term", "faithful" relationships. Well, we have already seen that statistically speaking, those relationships are in the minority. One British study mentioned in the post I linked to above found that only 25% of gay couples were intact after 8 years. The number is 82% for heterosexual marriages, and that *doesn't* filter by couples who abstain from premarital sex and who attend church regularly. If you add those two criteria, the number is going to be well above 82% in my opinion. Studies show that premarital chastity (http://www.focusonthefamily.com/about_us/focus-

findings/marriage/premarital-sex-and-divorce.aspx) and church attendance (<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/church-attendance-beneficial-marriage-researcher-says>) *vastly* improve the stability and quality of marriages.

In addition, Vines is trying to argue that 1) the Bible authors were not aware of “long-term”, “faithful” gay relationships and 2) their failure to explicitly disqualify these “long-term”, “stable” gay sexual relationships means that the Bible actually condones them. A friend of mine pointed out that this is a textbook case of the argument from silence, where someone asserts that because something is not explicitly condemned, then it must be OK. Carried through to its logical end, that would mean that things like identity theft are OK, because they are not mentioned explicitly. Brown asserted that there was a blanket prohibition on homosexual acts. He is arguing from what we know. Vines says that “long-term”, “faithful” homosexual relationships are not mentioned, and are therefore OK. He is arguing from what we don’t know. And he is trying to reverse the burden of proof so that he doesn’t have to show evidence for his view. Brown wouldn’t take the bait. The fact of the matter is that no one for the last 2000 years of church history have taken Vines’ view. Every single Christian before Vines, who were closer to Jesus’ teachings than Vines, understood the verses that Brown cited to be providing a blanket prohibition on homosexual sex acts. If Vines wants to claim that the Bible condones what he wants it to condone, he has to produce some positive evidence from the text or from church history or church fathers. He has *nothing* to support his case that could convince anyone that this is what Christians have believed, and ought to believe.

Finally, if you are looking for another debate, I blogged about a debate between Michael Brown and Eric Smaw (<https://winteryknight.wordpress.com/2013/03/28/gay-marriage-debate-michael-brown-debates-eric-smaw-on-same-sex-marriage-3/>). There’s a video and summaries of the opening speeches in that post.

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3 thoughts on “Matthew Vines and Michael Brown debate homosexuality and the Bible on Moody radio”

1. [Eternity Matters](#) says:

[12/08/2018 AT 10:34 AM](#)

Great post. Vines’ arguments are so bad on so many levels.

“In addition, Vines is trying to argue that 1) the Bible authors were not aware of “long-term”, “faithful” gay relationships . . .”

That’s one way that “Christian” Leftists like Vines tip their hands: He ASSUMES the text was not inspired by the Holy Spirit! Because God obviously was aware of those possibilities but still had the original texts turn out exactly as He wanted them to.

Those frauds don’t believe the Bible is inspired, and it is one of the many reasons to ignore them. Shame on Christians who are too cowardly to stand up for the truth. Christianity may not be their forte.

2. **Greg** says:

12/08/2018 AT 10:47 AM

The Bible insists on us laying down our life and carrying the cross of Jesus. Our life isn't our own but a Christian lives in service to God.

That and the concept of holiness has be lost too. Be holy because God is holy.

Instead we want to bring God down to our level like all the religions that Israel had around them.

And in this case becaue he is unwilling to commit to following Jesus. He is going to wrap ideas of gods like baal in the coals of Christianity to make them look better and call it a day.

Basic commands change due to culture but the principles underneath them can be explored to see how they become relevant to current culture.

3. Pingback: [Can Christians be gay? | Σ Frame](#)