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# Introduction

The Barbados Evangelical Association (BEA) is profoundly aware that the Church has not always spoken clearly to the issue of human sexuality and there have been times when leaders within the Church have been among the chief offenders of the values and creational norm expressed in our Holy Scriptures. We acknowledge this with a deep sense of repentance, dependent solely on the grace of God to enable us to address issues that are emotive and highly sensitive. With deep humility:

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*In the words of an anonymous writer:*

*When I say ... I am a Christian:  
I don't speak of this with pride. I'm confessing that I  
stumble and need someone to be my guide.  
I'm not trying to be strong. I am professing that I am  
weak and pray for strength to carry on.  
I'm not bragging of success. I'm admitting that I  
have failed and cannot ever pay the debt.  
I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are too  
visible; but God believes I am worth it.  
I still feel the sting of pain. I have my share of  
heartaches, which is why I seek HIS name.*

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1. We recognise that all of us are sinners and that the only true hope for sinful people is in Jesus Christ. Our earnest prayer is that His love, truth and grace would characterise evangelical Christian responses to debates on human sexuality, both now and in the future.
2. We recognise that Evangelical Christians have a reputation for undue judgementalism. We regret this and seek the forgiveness of those hurt because of this.
3. We affirm that monogamous heterosexual marriage is the only form of partnership approved by God for full sexual relations in our and every generation.
4. We firmly oppose sexual relations outside of a faithful, monogamous, marital relationship, whether those relationships are pre-marital, extra-marital, homoerotic, or purchased from a "sex worker."
5. We affirm God's love and concern for all humanity including homosexual people, prostitutes, and those living in non-faithful, non-monogamous, non-marital sexual relationships - but believe homoerotic sexual practice, prostitution, and sex outside of marriage to be incompatible with His will as revealed in Holy Scripture.
6. We repudiate homophobia insofar as it denotes an irrational fear or hatred of homosexuals. We do not accept, however, that to reject homoerotic sexual practice on biblical, medical, or moral grounds is in itself homophobic.
7. We deeply regret the hurt caused to lesbians, gay men, and prostitutes by the Church's past and present hatred and rejection of them.
8. We oppose moves within certain churches to accept and/or endorse sexually active homosexual partnerships as a legitimate form of Christian relationship. We stand prayerfully with those in such churches who are seeking to resist these moves on biblical grounds.
9. We oppose moves within certain churches towards permitting the ordination of sexually active lesbians and gay men to ministry. We stand prayerfully with those in such denominations who are seeking to resist these moves on biblical grounds.
10. We believe habitual homoerotic sexual activity without repentance to be inconsistent with faithful church membership. Where someone is promoting homoerotic sexual practice within a congregation, there may be a case for more stringent disciplinary action.
11. We commend and encourage those Christians who were homosexually active and who have committed themselves to chastity and celibacy. Where they are members of denominations which are considering an endorsement of sexually active homosexual partnerships, we are concerned that they may feel seriously undermined.
12. We affirm, in the expectation that they will come in due course to see the need to change their lifestyle in accordance with biblical revelation and orthodox church teaching, that there is room for evangelical congregations to be open to sexually active homosexual people. We urge gentleness and patience in this process, and ongoing care even after a homosexual person renounces same-sex sexual relations.





13. We commend the work of those organisations which seek to help Christians who were homosexually active live a celibate life, and also commend those groups which responsibly assist homosexuals who wish to reorient to a heterosexual lifestyle.
14. We would resist church services of blessing for gay partnerships as unbiblical. We consider gay unions to be a serious threat to the family.
15. We affirm that men and women are created in the image of God and as such should never be degraded to the status of commodities to be bought and sold in the “sex industry” or otherwise.
16. We do not consider sexual orientation to be a basic human right.
17. We are deeply concerned that from time to time leaders within the Church are guilty of sexual harassment and predatory behaviour. We believe this to be incompatible with biblical leadership styles and commit ourselves to take

disciplinary action whenever credible evidence is presented.

BEA acknowledges with deep appreciation the helpfulness of ***Why We Must Say “No”*** published jointly by the Guyana Evangelical Fellowship (GEF) and the Georgetown Ministers Fellowship (GMF), ***Faith, Hope and Homosexuality*** published by the Evangelical Alliance in the United Kingdom (EAUK), and ***Global HIV/AIDS Crisis*** published by the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States of America (NAEUSA). Gratitude must also be noted for the wide body of research completed by the Coalition Against Trafficking Women International and which was used in the preparation of this paper.



# Homosexuality

## KEY DEFINITIONS

Developing a definition of homosexuality that will be agreed to by everyone in the debate on human sexuality appears difficult, if not impossible. The definition offered by the EAUk is adopted here:

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*“For greater clarity, we suggest that the word ‘homosexual’ be used of people whose sexual attraction is predominantly towards their own sex, whether or not it is expressed in homoerotic activity; and that the term ‘homoerotic sexual practice’ be used to denote genital or other activity pertaining to sexual arousal between people of the same sex.”*

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While recognising that this definition<sup>2</sup> may not meet with universal approval, we would point out that there are problems with terminology on all sides of this debate. Regretfully we note that some gay activists use the word ‘homophobe’ to define anyone who disagrees with their position.<sup>3</sup> Where homophobia means an “irrational hatred or hostility” towards homosexuals, we condemn it in the strongest possible terms and see it as a cause for repentance. We cannot, however, accept that to disapprove of homosexual practice on biblical, medical, or moral grounds is in itself irrational, hateful, or hostile and therefore cannot be described within the definition of homophobia.

## STATISTICAL DATA

There are those seeking to inflate the percentage of homosexuals in the population of Barbados. Attaining accurate statistical data in the Eastern Caribbean seems to be difficult, as noted by the Earle and Phillips Consulting Group study.<sup>4</sup> Empirical data from other countries would suggest that the situation in Barbados is very different from that claimed.

While the 1948 study by Alfred Kinsey is often cited to demonstrate that 10 percent of the population in the USA is gay, this has been largely shown to be a misreading of what was actually written in the Kinsey Report. Indeed, in 1993 it was asserted that in the USA only 2.3 percent of males ages 20-39 said they had experienced a same-sex relationship in the past decade. At the same time only 1.1 percent said they were exclusively gay.<sup>5</sup> Another survey of public school students in Minnesota indicated that only 0.6 percent of boys and 0.2 percent of girls identified themselves as being “mostly or 100 percent homosexual” — a total of less than 1 percent!<sup>6</sup> A 1992 French study found that only 1.4 percent of men and 0.4 percent of women said they had had any same-sex contact in the previous five years.<sup>7</sup> A 1988 survey of first-year college students

in Canada under the age of 25 indicated they were 98 percent heterosexual, 1 percent bisexual, and 1 percent homosexual.<sup>8</sup> In the United Kingdom the figures for Britain show that little more than 1 percent of men and less than one in 200 women have had any kind of homosexual experience, while only 0.4 percent of men and just 0.1 percent of women claim to be exclusively homosexual in their practice.<sup>9</sup> The research in Britain concludes that “exclusively homosexual behaviour appears to be rare,” and that “homosexual experience is often a relatively isolated or passing event” in people’s lives.<sup>10</sup> It would be strange indeed to find a vastly different percentage in the Barbadian society which so often mirrors the so-called “developed countries.”

The gay lobby has repeatedly indicated its willingness to use deceptive means to achieve its objective.

## GOALS OF THE GAY LOBBY

The goals of the gay militant agenda as expressed at the Gay Pride March on Washington DC on April 25, 1993 are:

1. Demands for the repeal of all laws regarding sodomy.
2. Demands for the legalisation of all forms of sexual expression including pedophilia (sexual abuse of children).
3. Demands to change the age of consent to allow sex with minors.
4. Demands for public funds to cover same-sex operations.
5. Demands for the legalisation of same-sex marriages.
6. Demands for legalisation of adoption, custody, and foster care within a same-sex marriage structure.
7. Demands for the deliberate inclusion of lesbians, homosexual men, bisexuals, and transgenders in education and childcare.
8. Demands for public funding of artificial insemination of lesbians.
9. Restriction of freedom of religion and speech *vis-à-vis* teaching on homosexuality (already the case on radio/TV in Canada and becoming increasingly so in the USA).
10. Pressure to ban prayer in public schools and other public places.
11. Demands that the Boy Scouts and armed forces be required to accept homosexuals.

Barbados stands on the threshold of the unfolding of the gay agenda in this country. Item (1) of the agenda has already been cited as a possibility by no less a



person than the Attorney General of Barbados. We note that there has since been significant backtracking from this perceived stance by the Attorney General, though we expect that in one form or another the agenda will surface again in the near future. It is expected that the gay agenda will once again emerge locally when amendments to the Constitution are being considered.

## STRATEGY OF THE GAY LOBBY

Kirk and Pill proposed in 1987 the following blueprint for homosexual activists to re-engineer the social values and creational norms within society:<sup>11</sup>

1. Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and often as possible.
2. Portray gays as victims, not as aggressive challengers.
3. Give protectors a just cause.
4. Make gays look good.
5. Make the victimizers look bad.
6. Solicit funds: the buck stops here.

The blueprint is easy to see in surrounding societies and is unfolding in Barbados before our eyes. Understanding this agenda and strategy is critical if the Church is to develop its own agenda and strategy. According to Kirk and Pill once the public has been beguiled into believing that “decency” requires support for “gay rights,” public hostility must be focused upon those who remain committed to traditional morality: “In the early stages of any campaign to reach straight America, the masses should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behaviour itself. Instead, the imagery of sex should be

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*“We shall sodomise your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies...”*

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downplayed and gay-rights should be reduced to an abstract social question as much as possible. First, let the camel get his nose inside the tent – and only later his unsightly derriere! ... At a later stage of the media campaign for gay rights ... it will be time to get tough. To be blunt, [traditionalists] must be vilified. ... The public should be shown images of ranting homophobes whose secondary traits and beliefs disgust Middle America. These images might include: the Klu Klux Klan demanding that gays be burned alive or [tortured]; bigoted southern ministers drooling with hysterical hatred to a degree that looks both comical and deranged....”<sup>12</sup>

Of even greater concern to the Evangelical Community is the proclamation of Michael Swift:

“We shall sodomise your sons, emblems of your feeble

masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. We shall seduce them in your schools, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your movie theatre bathrooms, in your Houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together. Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They shall be recast in our image. They will come to crave us and adore us.”<sup>13</sup>

## GAY BEHAVIOUR AS A “MINORITY”

The phenomenon of defining homosexual behaviour as a minority group is worrisome. Traditionally, minorities have been defined by race, creed, colour, or national origin. The three criteria that distinguish minority groups that have hitherto been accorded special legal protections are economic deprivation, political powerlessness, and immutable (unchangeable) characteristics. Homosexuality, in its convenient guise of ‘sexual orientation,’ fails every known standard defined through these criteria.

As to economic deprivation, the *Miami Daily Business Review* reports that homosexuals have “extraordinarily high disposable income, and are a very attractive target for advertisers.” The *Review* reports Simmons Market Research Bureau findings that 21 percent of homosexuals have household incomes exceeding US\$100,000; 31 percent have personal income exceeding US\$61,000; 61 percent have a four-year college degree compared with the US mean of 18 percent; 17 percent hold masters degrees compared with 4 percent of the US population as a whole.<sup>14</sup>

With regard to political powerlessness, nothing could be further from the truth in the gay community in the US. The top eleven homosexual activist groups spent approximately US\$36 million in 1999 fighting for homosexual “rights,” according to the *Washington Blade*.<sup>15</sup> Openly homosexual politicians have held various US political offices in Congress including Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), and Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.). According to the *Blade*, 118 openly gay candidates ran for federal, state, and local office in the 2000 US elections – 43 of them as incumbents.

With reference to immutable characteristics a comprehensive examination of genetic claims for homosexuality in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* concludes, “There is no evidence at present to substantiate a biologic theory.”<sup>16</sup>

Homosexuals fail to establish criteria for them to be seriously considered as a minority. At best they could be considered a special interest group. If we allow a group to define themselves as a minority solely on the merits of behaviour, are we opening the door for minibuses to define themselves as an oppressed minority based on their behaviour on the roads of



Barbados?

Attempts by homosexuals to align and compare themselves with the effects of African chattel slavery<sup>17</sup> on those brutalised by that system are morally repugnant. Financially affluent, politically savvy persons such as comprise the gay lobby have no comparison whatsoever with those who bore the brunt of cruelties of slavery, apartheid, and racial discrimination as expressed in Plantation America. In a 1999 Wirthlin Worldwide poll of more than 1,000 Americans, 75 percent of the respondents said that “homosexuals have not suffered the same kind of legal injustice (such as not being able to vote, get an education, or earn a living) as black Americans have.”<sup>18</sup>

## HOMOSEXUALS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Contrary to any claims of “discrimination,” there is no effort in Barbados to deny homosexuals the same rights guaranteed to all Barbadians. The self-evident truth is that homosexuals have the same rights, with the same restrictions, as everyone else. Homosexuals have the right to free speech, freedom of religion, due process under the law, the right to engage in commerce, to enter into contracts, own property, vote, along with a host of other rights. The American Civil Liberties Union handbook<sup>19</sup> lists dozens of rights homosexuals already enjoy in the USA and we submit the same is true in Barbados.

What homosexuals repeatedly seek in a number of countries, and will seek in Barbados, is not for equal protection but special protection. We resist this very strongly. It is contrary to all previous definitions of rights or minority status to define such by behaviour. We believe that to do so now will create serious inequities within the Barbadian society with one set of behaviours specially protected by law while the rights of others are eroded and finally rescinded. People of good conscience will lose the right to disagree. For example, two Madison, Wisconsin women were forced to pay fines, attend political re-education class, write a letter of apology, and informed they were to be monitored by a public agency for two years because they declined to room with a lesbian.<sup>20</sup>

We have seen the Bible proscribed in Canada as a hate book because it condemns homosexuality. We have seen in Canada and increasingly in the USA and Europe that Christians are losing their right to free speech and freedom of religion because Christianity does not view homosexual behaviour as acceptable. We also believe that to accord certain sexual behaviours previously considered deviant special privileges in law would open the door to unintended consequences in other groups beginning to define themselves by behaviour and seeking special privilege. We also believe that homosexual adoption and

fostering denies a child the right to loving, wholesome father- and mother-relationships.

While there can be no doubt from a Christian point of view that lesbian and gay people are entitled to the same basic human rights as everyone else, it is quite another matter to extrapolate from the protection of assembly, privacy, and gender equality in society as a whole to the explicit endorsement of homoerotic sexual activity, whether in the society generally or in the Church specifically.

Homosexuality and homoerotic sexual activity are not civil rights but behaviour that people can and do change.

## IS IT IN THE GENES?

Central to the programme of the gay lobby is that (a) no gay can change, and (b) no gay should change. This has led to attempts to portray homosexuals as having an immutable genetic code that creates them as homosexual at birth. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Richard Cohen has adequately answered the “studies” that supposedly found a genetic link to homoerotic behaviour.<sup>21</sup> It is not unusual to find in these studies the absence of a control group and the inability of other scientists to repeat the experiments and obtain the same results. Neil and Briar Whitehead<sup>22</sup> make the following observations that dispel the myth of genetic immutability and homoerotic sexual behaviour:

- If homosexuality were genetically endowed, then it could not appear and disappear suddenly in family trees like it does.
- There is so much scientific evidence of change from homosexual orientation to heterosexual orientation that it is impossible to argue homosexuality is genetically dictated.<sup>23</sup>
- Those researchers who know the most about genes say, “Your genes did not make you do it.”
- If homosexuality is genetically dictated, homosexual practices will be identical or very similar in all cultures. But the range and diversity of homosexual practice and customs between different cultures, and even within cultures, argues against any genetically mandated homosexuality.
- The human race shares most of its genes – something between 99.7 percent and 99.9 percent of them according to one estimate. That means that all ethnic groups will have most of them.... So many genes held in common by all ethnic groups would argue for similar incidence of homosexuality in all cultures. But homosexuality has been unknown in some cultures (like the Amish communities) and obligatory in others (like the island of Lesbos in ancient Greece).



Additionally, it is noteworthy that leading homosexual apologists have repudiated the genetic myth. David Yates Rist of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation has called the genetic cause argument “an expedient lie.”<sup>24</sup> Peter Tatchell, founder of Outrage! condemned “the flawed theory which claims a genetic causation for homosexuality.”<sup>25</sup>

The Evangelical Alliance in the United Kingdom<sup>26</sup> has concluded:

We have already pointed out a growing acceptance that the definition of homosexual orientation is far from straightforward. A whole range of factors may contribute to it, some of which may not be an individual's responsibility. It is possible that such factors might include a genetic hormonal variation, which may establish the *potential* for developing a homosexual orientation. Even so, it is quite wrong to assume any ‘automatic’ causation from genetics.<sup>27</sup> Environmental and behavioural factors must also be taken into account.<sup>28</sup> Some have correlated homosexual orientation to poor relations with parents – and especially poor father-son and mother-daughter relations. Others have argued for a link with sexual and other abuse in childhood and early youth.<sup>29</sup> These connections are hotly disputed among researchers,<sup>30</sup> however, and the difficulties which attend the establishment of firm models for causation underline the vexed nature of this question.

Despite all this, we would emphasise that the actual *expression* of one's sexual orientation is much more a question of individual choice. This choice *may* be influenced, or to some degree conditioned, by a mixture of innate potential and bad relational experience. But it remains subject to choice for the homosexual person, just as, for the heterosexual person, a decision has to be made whether to engage in sexual relations outside marriage. However we define our orientation, we must take responsibility for our actions. Interestingly, this point is accepted even by certain gay and lesbian activists: Rist,<sup>31</sup> for example, is clear that it is “cowardly to abnegate our individual responsibility for the construction of sexual desires.”

## PRACTICES DURING HOMOEROTIC SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Despite some two decades internationally of intensive efforts to educate homosexuals against the dangers of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), the incidence of unsafe sexual practices that can result in various diseases is on the rise.

- According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>32</sup> (CDC), from 1994 to 1997 the proportion of homosexuals reporting having anal sex increased from 57.6 percent to 61.2 percent, while the percentage of those reporting “always” using condoms declined from 69.6 percent to 60 percent.
- The CDC also reported<sup>33</sup> that during the same period the proportion of men reporting having multiple sex partners and unprotected anal sex increased from 23.6 percent to 33.3 percent. The most significant increase in this category (from 22 to 33.3 percent) was reported by homosexuals 25 years old or younger.
- At the XIII International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa a study<sup>34</sup> presented demonstrated that large numbers of homosexual and bisexual men “continue to engage in unprotected sex with people who have no idea they could be contracting HIV.”
- Similarly, researchers<sup>35</sup> at the University of California in San Francisco found that 36 percent of homoerotic sexual behaviour engaging in unprotected oral, anal, or vaginal sex failed to disclose that they were HIV positive to casual sex partners.
- A CDC report<sup>36</sup> in 1997 revealed that 45 percent of homosexuals reporting having had unprotected anal intercourse during the previous six months did not know the HIV serostatus of all their sex partners. Of even greater concern is that among those who reported unprotected anal intercourse with multiple partners, 68 percent did not know the HIV serostatus of their partners.
- Promiscuity is rampant among those who practice homoerotic sex. Bell and Weinberg's study<sup>37</sup> of homosexuality, both male and female, found that 43 percent of white male homosexuals had sex with 500 or more partners while 28 percent reported having more than 1,000 partners. A study<sup>38</sup> of the sexual profiles of 2,583 older homosexuals found that only 2.7 percent claimed to have had only one sexual partner.
- Even in homosexual couples widespread promiscuity is a reality. McWhirter and Madison<sup>39</sup> reported that in a study of 156 males in homosexual relationships lasting from one to 37 years, only seven couples had a totally exclusive sexual relationship. Saghir and Robins<sup>40</sup> study found that the average male homosexual live-in relationships last between two and three years.

It is interesting that Sheila Samiel<sup>41</sup> notes that beach boys in Barbados “were said to be reluctant to do HIV tests. They did not wish to know their HIV status.” While Samiel was specifically referring to male gigolos as commercial sex workers in Barbados, their behaviour correlates closely with that described above in the



international community of homosexuals outside of Barbados.

It must also be noted that the Earle and Phillips Consulting Group in a study in the Eastern Caribbean<sup>42</sup> found that “a small minority of MSM (men who have sex with men) chooses to engage in known risk activities such as unprotected anal intercourse without the knowledge of their partners, unprotected anal intercourse between an HIV+ and an HIV- man remains the greatest risk for HIV transmission among MSM. This proves to be the biggest challenge for many MSM. However, the intimacy of skin-to-skin contact during intercourse remains a powerful and important draw.... Many MSM’s believe that they are no more at risk than other segments of the population and often used members of the church as comparative others in their personal assessments of HIV/AIDS risk.” The study went on to note that one interviewee stated that he always used condoms, except with his girlfriend, but “I believe a lot of my friends don’t use condoms.”<sup>43</sup>

## DISEASE COMMUNICATED THROUGH ANAL SEX

We are now universally aware of the awful consequences of HIV/AIDS and the threat that this disease poses to life. Not much has been publicly stated about other diseases that are passed rapidly through anal intercourse. Among these are:

- Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a collection of more than 70 types of viruses that cause warts, or papillomas, on various parts of the body. More than 20 types of HPV are incurable sexually transmitted diseases that are known to infect the genital tract of both males and females. Only about one in 100 of those affected experience genital warts. The *Washington Blade*<sup>44</sup> has reported that “a San Francisco study of gay and bisexual men revealed that HPV infection was almost universal among HIV-positive men, and that 60 percent of the HIV-negative men carried HPV.” HPV is known to lead to anal cancer.<sup>45</sup> A link has also been established between HPV and cervical cancer.<sup>46</sup>
- Hepatitis is a potentially fatal liver disease that increases the risk of liver cancer. Hepatitis A<sup>47</sup>, Hepatitis B<sup>48</sup>, and Hepatitis C<sup>49</sup> have been shown to be recurring problems among men involved in homoerotic sex.
- Gonorrhoea traditionally is an inflammatory disease of the genital tract, but has now begun appearing in the rectal region and the throat. While many infected by the disease show no symptoms,<sup>50</sup> untreated gonorrhoea is known to have permanent health consequences, including infertility damage to the prostate and urethra. A CDC report<sup>51</sup> shows that rectal gonorrhoea increased significantly during the period 1994-

97 and a subsequent report<sup>52</sup> in 1999 documents that male rectal gonorrhoea is increasing among homosexuals amidst an overall decline in US gonorrhoea rates. The report attributes the increase to a larger percentage of homosexuals engaging in unsafe homoerotic sexual behaviour. Studies have strongly linked the incidence of throat gonorrhoea to homoerotic sex.<sup>53</sup>

- Syphilis is an STD that, when untreated, can spread throughout the body over time, causing serious heart abnormalities, mental disorders, blindness, and even death. According to the CDC, “transmission of the organism occurs during vaginal, anal, or oral sex.”<sup>54</sup> Additionally those engaging in homoerotic sex acquire syphilis at ten times the rate of heterosexuals.<sup>55</sup> The CDC reports,<sup>56</sup> “It is now known that the genital sores caused by syphilis in adults also make it easier to transmit and acquire HIV infection sexually. There is a two- to five-fold increased risk of acquiring HIV infection when syphilis is present.”
- Gay Bowel Syndrome (GBS) refers to problems such as proctitis, proctocolitis, and enteritis which are “sexually transmitted gastrointestinal syndromes.”<sup>57</sup> Proctitis and proctocolitis are inflammations of the rectum and colon that cause pain, bloody rectal discharge, and rectal spasms and are associated with gonorrhoea, chlamydia, herpes, and syphilis.<sup>58</sup> Enteritis is inflammation of the small intestine causing abdominal pain, severe cramping, intense diarrhea, fever, malabsorption of nutrients, and weight loss.<sup>59</sup> Some pathogens associated with enteritis and proctocolitis “appear only to be sexually transmitted among men who have sex with men.”<sup>60</sup>
- Anal cancer seems to be an increased risk for those engaging in homoerotic sexual behaviour. This cancer is potentially fatal if tumours metastasise to other bodily organs. Dr. Joel Palefsky, a leading expert in the field of anal cancer, reports<sup>61</sup> that while the incidence of anal cancer in the USA is only 0.9/100,000, that number jumps to 35/100,000 for homosexuals. That rate doubles again for those who are HIV positive, which is “roughly 10 times higher than the current rate of cervical cancer.” Dr. Andrew Grulich<sup>62</sup> announced at the Fourth International AIDS Malignancy Conference at the National Institutes of Health in May, 2000 that the incidence of anal cancer among homosexuals with HIV “was raised 37-fold compared with the general population.”

## VIOLENCE IN HOMOEROTIC



## SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

The *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*<sup>63</sup> reported that 31 percent of lesbians surveyed had reported one or more incidents of physical abuse in their same sex relationships. The *Journal of Social Service Research*<sup>64</sup> in a survey of 1,099 lesbians found that “slightly more than half of the [lesbians] reported that they had been abused by a female lover/partner. The most frequently indicated forms of abuse were verbal/emotional/psychological abuse and combined physical-psychological abuse.” Island and Lettier<sup>65</sup> report that “the incidence of domestic violence among gay men is nearly double that in the heterosexual population.”

By comparison the Bureau of Justice Statistics (U.S. Department of Justice)<sup>66</sup> reports that married women in traditional families experience the lowest rate of violence compared with women in other types of relationships. It should be noted that many studies of family violence do not differentiate between married and unmarried partner status. Those studies that do make these distinctions have found that marriage relationships tend to have the least intimate partner violence when compared to cohabiting or dating relationships.<sup>67</sup>

## HOMOSEXUALITY AS A COMPULSIVE DISORDER

In his book *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover, MD, provides a comparison between alcoholism and homosexuality. In describing homosexuality, Dr. Satinover notes:

- A significantly decreased likelihood of establishing or preserving a successful marriage.
- A 25-30 year decrease in life expectancy.
- Chronic, potentially fatal, liver disease – infectious hepatitis – that increases the risk of liver cancer.
- Potentially fatal immune disease including associated cancers.
- Frequently fatal rectal cancer.
- Multiple bowel and other infectious diseases.
- A much higher incidence than usual of suicide.
- A very low likelihood that its adverse effects can be eliminated unless the condition itself is eliminated.
- At least 50 percent likelihood of being eliminated through lengthy, often costly, and very time-consuming treatment in an otherwise unselected group of sufferers (although a very high success rate, in some instances nearly 100 percent, for groups of highly motivated, carefully selected individuals).

Satinover points out that as with alcoholism: First the condition is, strictly speaking, a pattern of behaviour;

second, individuals who have this condition continue in the behaviour in spite of the destructive consequences of doing so; third, although some people with this condition perceive it as a problem and wish they could rid themselves of it, many others deny they have any problem at all and violently resist all attempts to ‘help’ them; and fourth, some of the people with this condition – especially those who deny it is a problem – tend to socialise almost exclusively with one another and form a ‘subculture.’

## SUCCESS IN UGANDA

Uganda is one of the few countries, if not the only one, to have significant success in lowering the HIV infection rate. Infections in this East African country, which once had the highest infection rate in the world, have dropped from 30 percent of the population in the early 1990s to around 10 percent today.<sup>68</sup> Although promotion of condom use has been a part of Uganda’s HIV/AIDS prevention strategy, the concept of “True Love Awaits” – an abstinence-until-marriage programme launched in 1994 and supported by schools and religious organisations – is credited with bringing down the infection rate.<sup>69</sup> Mbogo reports that according to Rand Stoneburner, a former Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organisation epidemiologist, Uganda’s prevention model, used elsewhere, has the potential to reduce the AIDS rate in Africa’s worst stricken countries by as much as 80 percent – the same level of efficacy one might expect from an HIV vaccine. When President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986, he restored political stability and commenced an aggressive campaign of encouraging HIV-testing, abstinence, and the use of condoms. Additionally his government invested heavily in training health workers, creating counselling networks, and treating STDs.<sup>70</sup>

Mbogo reports, “The results, when they came, were remarkable by any measure. By 2001, the number of pregnant Ugandan women testing positive for HIV had fallen from 21.2 percent at the height of the epidemic in 1991 to 6.2 percent. By contrast, in Kenya the rate in 2001 was roughly 15 percent of pregnant women, while in Zimbabwe it stands at 32 percent and in Botswana at 38 percent of mothers-to-be. Rates continue to rise in each country.”<sup>71</sup>

According to Chismar, “President Yoweri Museveni has taken a bold and dynamic leadership on the HIV/AIDS issue and he has never failed to bring it up in his speeches.... His wife, Janet Museveni, has been a leading advocate in the Christian community for full-fledged action and responsibility. Both of them have heavily promoted programmes based on abstinence, fidelity, and monogamy. There is conclusive evidence that Uganda’s HIV rate has gone down and it’s due to the programmatic approach they have taken.”<sup>72</sup>



## HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BIBLE

The Guyana Evangelical Fellowship and the Georgetown Ministers Fellowship in their document **Why We Must Say "NO"** have outlined the biblical position very well. Their comments are reproduced here.

Since the 1950s, an increasing amount of pro-gay groups have been proposing 'alternative interpretations' of the Scriptures on homosexuality. These arguments are at best tenuous, and stretch the limits of plausibility but seem just credible enough to fool the uninformed, or to keep unread homosexuals mentally contented with their lot. Readers should access [www.hiswayout.com](http://www.hiswayout.com).

### **Genesis 19:4-5 and Judges 19:22**

*Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally." (NKJV).*

*As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally!" (NKJV).*

**Argument:** God punished the people of Sodom and Gomorrah for breaching the rules of hospitality, not for threatening homosexual assault.

**Answer:** It is true that a breach of hospitality was serious in that culture, but this argument does not bear close scrutiny for this case. Much of the discussion centers on the exact meaning of the men's demands to bring out the visitors so that they could "know" them. D.S. Bailey, in his widely quoted book **Homosexuality and the Western Tradition**, argues that the men of Sodom and Gomorrah asked to "know" (Hebrew 'yada') the men in the sense of "to become acquainted with." This Hebrew word occurs 943 times in the Old Testament. In only a few cases does it refer to sexual intercourse, and then always to heterosexuality. There is a major problem with this argument: The responses to the men's demands strongly support a connotation of sexual violence. Lot protests, "No my friends. Don't do this wicked thing" (Genesis 19:7). The man in Judges 19 responds, "Don't be so vile" (v. 23). These answers seem

inappropriate to protest a breach of hospitality, as opposed to rape; they certainly make no sense if the men merely wanted to become familiar with the visitors. Furthermore, Lot uses the same word 'yada' in his next statement, "I have two daughters who have never slept with a man." Obviously, the implication is sexual. John Stott has completely rebuffed this argument in his article: **Homosexual Marriage: Why Same Sex Partnerships are not a Christian Option**; Christianity Today, 29:21-28. Nov. 22, 1985.

**Argument:** The converse of the argument above is used when the 'hospitality' theory is disproved. "God was judging intended rape, not loving homosexual behaviour."

**Answer:** God sent the divine visitors to confirm the city's wickedness. Long before this incident, the Bible says that "the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord" (Genesis 13:13) and that "the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah was "so great and their sin so grievous" that God determined to investigate it (Genesis 18:20-21). So this incident was only a final confirmation of the homosexual activities already occurring. Certainly not all the previous homosexual behaviour in the city was characterised by forcible rape.

**Argument:** "Other biblical passages list the sins of Sodom, but do not mention homosexuality."

**Answer:** Some verses mention sins like arrogance, unconcern for the poor, and encouraging evildoers (Jeremiah 23:14; Ezekiel 16:40-49), but other passages link Sodom with sexual immorality, perversion and "filthy lives of lawless men" (II Peter 2:7; Jude 7). God judged the city for a wide variety of sins, including homosexuality.

### **Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13**

*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. (NKJV).*

*If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them. (NKJV).*

**Argument:** "These verses forbid idolatrous homosexual practices, not homosexual behaviour that has no religious



overtones.”

**Answer:** Similarly, this argument says that the presence of male prostitutes in the land was condemned; their removal was accepted as a sign of spiritual reformation (1 Kings 14:24; 22:46). So God’s prohibition against same-sex practices, they say, spoke of his judgment against idolatry, not against the physical lovemaking of two committed homosexuals. But the context of these laws against homosexual behaviour includes condemnation of intercourse between blood relations, and adultery. It is conceivable that these relationships could be every bit as tender and affectionate as the love-bond between, say, two men or two women. But they are strictly forbidden — no matter what the context. These verses speak against certain sexual practices including homosexuality — in ALL circumstances. The ban is absolute. All homosexual behaviour has religious overtones.

### **For Romans 1:24-27**

*Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. (NKJV).*

**Argument:** The Apostle Paul’s statements are “culturally bound.” They are addressed to first-century Jews; they don’t apply to us today.”

**Answer:** Under this reasoning, we can toss out the entire Bible. None of it was written specifically for twentieth century people. This argument implies that God’s standards change from era to era. But here is what the Biblical writers said: “The word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:8) and “All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal” (Psalm 119:160).

**Argument:** Paul didn’t understand the complexities

of homosexuality as we do today. He never condemned permanent, loving homosexual relationships, just homosexual lust and promiscuity.

**Answer:** Paul lived in a complex society, similar to our own in many ways. “New Testament authors could not have been ignorant of something so common as homosexuality in the Greco-Roman world,” says Dr. J. Harold Greenlee, former professor of New Testament Greek at Ashbury Theological Seminary. William Barclay, a well-known New Testament scholar, says that, although homosexuality permeated Greek society, “it was regarded as abnormal, and it was never legal.” Paul could have easily drawn a distinction between various forms of homosexuality if appropriate, but he condemned all homosexual behaviour with no exceptions.

**Argument:** The phrase ‘against nature’ in verse 26 shows Paul to be referring only to those who temporarily abandon their heterosexual orientation for homosexual ‘kicks,’ rather than to those whose orientation is solely homosexual<sup>73</sup>.

**Answer:** The first problem with this interpretation is that it reads back the modern concept of ‘homosexual orientation’ into a text whose author would probably not have recognised it<sup>74</sup>; the second is that Paul’s general focus is on forms of idolatry which contradict God’s general intentions as Creator. In this context, ‘against nature’ is much more convincingly read as ‘against God’s purpose for human creatures per se,’ than ‘against one’s innate sexual orientation.’ It is important to realise that Paul’s *primary* concern here is not homoerotic sexual practice, but the more fundamental sin of refusing to glorify and give thanks to God (v.21). Homoerotic sexual activity is presented as a *symptom* rather than a *cause* of this and as such, takes its place in a whole list of transgressions (vv.26-31). Insofar as homosexual practice is highlighted at all, it is presented only as a particularly graphic *symbol* of the distortion of God’s creation plan. Since Paul understands man and woman to have been designed for sexual relationship and procreation in marriage, sexual intercourse between people of the same gender becomes for him a stark outward embodiment of a spiritual reality - that is, the rejection of God’s will.<sup>75</sup>



## I Corinthians 6:9-11 and I Timothy 1:9-11

*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (NKJV).*

*Knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. (NKJV).*

**Argument:** “The original words in these verses referred to other forms of immorality, such as male prostitution, not to loving, permanent gay relationships.”

**Answer:** In this passage, Paul is broadly condemning all homosexual acts, not just prostitution. If Paul were condemning only one kind of homosexual activity here, and by implication allowing others, he surely would have been more explicit.

*The Bible never speaks positively about homosexuality or any other sexual practices outside a lifelong heterosexual, monogamous commitment. Difficult as this standard is to obey and maintain, it is the calling of Christ for all His followers, including those with same-sex attractions and desires.*

*Homosexuals have been experiencing change since the Bible was written! 1 Corinthians 6:11, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” (NKJV).*

*The biblical passages, which deal more directly with homosexuality, have been expounded commendably by Thomas Schmidt, Gordon Wenham, David Wright, Mark Bonnington & Bob Fyall, Richard Hays, Marion Soards<sup>76</sup>, and others.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Barbados Evangelical Association recommends that:

1. The Church in Barbados and the Government of Barbados work together in fighting the sexually transmitted diseases that are prevalent

in or likely to impact our nation.

2. While the Government of Barbados has mainly promoted the use of condoms (and perhaps now will promote femidoms) space needs to be made nationally for an ongoing, vigorous, holistic campaign to promote abstinence and faithful monogamy as key means of fighting STDs.
3. There be an ongoing national campaign that sensitises the Barbadian community to the dangers of anal sex and the threat that STDs pose in such sexual behaviours.
4. Buggery not be decriminalised now or at any time in the future.
5. Churches across the island be actively encouraged to become involved in understanding STDs, educating their congregations about contracting and treating such diseases, and seek out avenues to minister holistically to persons battling the ravages of STDs.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Faith, Hope and Homosexuality. Evangelical Alliance of the United Kingdom. London: 1998.

<sup>2</sup> For those seeking a more precise definition from a non-Christian source, Wellings et al define a ‘male sexual partner’ as ‘someone with whom a man has had oral sex or anal intercourse, or with whom other forms of genital contact have taken place,’ and a female sexual partner as ‘one with whom a woman has had oral sex or other forms of genital contact.’ For comparison, the definitional criteria for heterosexual intercourse include ‘vaginal intercourse’ and ‘oral or anal sex,’ but do not include no-penetrative sex. Sexual Behaviour in Britain: The National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1994, pp.213-4.

<sup>3</sup> Atkinson, D. Pastoral Ethics: A Guide to the Key Issues of Daily Living. Oxford: Lynx, 1994.

<sup>4</sup>The Earle & Phillips Consulting Group. Sexual Practices and Condom Use Study: The Eastern Caribbean. 2002, p.10.

<sup>5</sup> USA Today , April 15, 1993 publishing statistics from a Planned Parenthood/Alan Guttmacher Institute study.

<sup>6</sup> Wall Street Journal, March 31, 1993 quoting from a survey conducted by the Minnesota Adolescent Health Survey (1986).

<sup>7</sup> Homosexual Urban Legend, The Series.

<sup>8</sup> King, et al. Canada, Youth and AIDS Study, Kingston, Ontario: Queen’s University.

<sup>9</sup> Wellings, K. et al editors. Sexual Behaviour in Britain, p.183.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pp.203-213.

<sup>11</sup> Kirk, Marshall and Erastes Pill. “The Overhauling of Straight America.” Guide. November, 1987.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Swift, Michael. “Homosexual Manifesto.” The Gay Community News February 1987.



- <sup>14</sup> Philbin, Marcia. "Branching Out." *Miami Daily Business Review*, October 06, 2000, p.A13.
- <sup>15</sup> Chibarro, Lou. "Budgets Up, Donors Down." *The Washington Blade*. June 11, 1999.
- <sup>16</sup> Byne, William and Bruce Parsons. "Human Sexual Orientation: The Biologic Theories Reappraised." *The Archives of General Psychiatry*, 50. 1993, pp.228-39.
- <sup>17</sup> Vasey, M. *Strangers and Friends*. Pp.131-2, 136, 140.
- <sup>18</sup> Wirthlin Worldwide poll of 1,013 respondents, July 23-26, 1999.
- <sup>19</sup> Hunter Nan D., Sherryl E. Michaelson, Thomas B. Stoddard. *The Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men: The Basic ACLU Guide to a Gay Person's Rights*, Third Edition. Southern Illinois University Press, 1992.
- <sup>20</sup> Adams, Emily. *Chronicles*. July 1992, p.10.
- <sup>21</sup> Cohen, Richard. *Coming Out Straight: Understanding and Healing Homosexuality*.
- <sup>22</sup> Whitehead, Neil and Briar. *My Genes Made me Do It! A Scientific Look at Sexual Orientation*. 1999.
- <sup>23</sup> Goddard, Michael. "From Drag Queen to Missionary." *The Messenger*. Vol. 2, No. 3. August-November 2003. Bridgetown. This is the story of one Barbadian who changed from being a homosexual.
- <sup>24</sup> Rist, Darrel Yates. "Are Homosexuals Born That Way?" *The Nation*. October 19, 1992, pp.424-9.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Times*. February 20, 1997.
- <sup>26</sup> Faith, Hope and Homosexuality. *Evangelical Alliance of the United Kingdom*. London: 1998.
- <sup>27</sup> See Schmidt, T. E. *Straight and Narrow?* pp.137-42 for a summary of the 'biological causation' debate.
- <sup>28</sup> Schmidt, T. E. *Straight and Narrow?* pp.142-8.
- <sup>29</sup> For a summary of, and references to this 'psychoanalytic' line of explanation, see D. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, pp.29-40. Also Schmidt, T.E., *Straight and Narrow?* pp. 144-6. More specifically in relation to the concerns of this paper see the work of Moberly, E.: 'Homosexuality: Restating the Conservative Case,' *Salmagundi* 58/9 (Fall 1982/Winter 1993), 281-99, and *Psychogenesis: The Early Development of Gender Identity*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983.
- <sup>30</sup> E.g., compare references in previous note with Peters, D.K. and Cantrell, P.J., 'Factors Distinguishing Samples of Lesbian and Heterosexual Women.' *Journal of Homosexuality*, 21, No. 4 (1991): 1-15; Lewes, K. *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Homosexuality*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988, and Robinson et al (1982, cit. LGCM July 1997 paper to the General Synod of the Church of England), who showed 82% of homosexuals as being in good relationships with their parents.
- <sup>31</sup> Rist, Darrel Yates, "Are Homosexuals Born That Way?" *The Nation*, October 19, 1992, pp. 424-29. Cf. Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow*, pp.137-42.
- <sup>32</sup> "Increases in Unsafe Sex and Rectal Gonorrhoea among Men Who Have Sex with Men - San Francisco, California, 1994-1997," *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report* (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention), January 29, 1999, p. 45.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup> Ulysses Torassa, "Some With HIV Aren't Disclosing Before Sex; UCSF Researcher's 1,397-person Study Presented During aids Conference," *The San Francisco Examiner* (July 15, 2000).
- <sup>35</sup> Jon Garbo, "Gay and Bi Men Less Likely to Disclose They Have HIV," *Gay Health News* (July 18, 2000). Available at: [www.gayhealth.com/templates/0/news?record=136](http://www.gayhealth.com/templates/0/news?record=136)
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup> Van de Ven, Paul et al., "A Comparative Demographic and Sexual Profile of Older Homosexually Active Men," *Journal of Sex Research* 34 (1997): 354. Dr. Paul Van de Ven reiterated these results in a private conversation with Dr. Robert Gagnon on September 7, 2000.
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- <sup>40</sup> Saghir, M. and E. Robins, *Male and Female Homosexuality*. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1973, p. 225; L.A. Peplau and H. Amaro, "Understanding Lesbian Relationships," in *Homosexuality: Social, Psychological, and Biological Issues*, edited by J. Weinrich and W. Paul. Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982.
- <sup>41</sup> Samiel, Sheila. *Commercial Sex Work: Barbados*. Prepared for the Barbados National AIDS Commission, August 2001.
- <sup>42</sup> The Earle & Phillips Consulting Group. *Sexual Practices and Condom Use Study: The Eastern Caribbean.* 2002, p.14-15.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.
- <sup>44</sup> Roundy, Bill. "STDs Up Among Gay Men: CDC Says Rise is Due to HIV Misperceptions," *The Washington Blade*. December 8, 2000. Available at: [www.washblade.com/health/a](http://www.washblade.com/health/a)
- <sup>45</sup> Richard A. Zmuda, "Rising Rates of Anal Cancer for Gay Men," *Cancer News*. August 17, 2000. Available at: [www.cancerlinksusa.com](http://www.cancerlinksusa.com)
- <sup>46</sup> "Studies Point to Increased Risks of Anal Cancer/" *The Washington Blade*. June 2, 2000. Available at: [www.washblade.com](http://www.washblade.com)
- <sup>47</sup> *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report*. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. September 4, 1998, p. 708.
- <sup>48</sup> "Viral Hepatitis B—Frequently Asked Questions," *National Center for Infectious Diseases* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) September 29, 2000. Available at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- <sup>49</sup> "Hepatitis C: Epidemiology: Transmission Modes." *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report*. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998. Available at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- <sup>50</sup> "Gonorrhoea," *Division of Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. Centres For Disease Control and Prevention. September, 2000. Available at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- <sup>51</sup> "Increases in Unsafe Sex and Rectal Gonorrhoea."
- <sup>52</sup> *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report*. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, January 29, 1999, p. 48.

<sup>53</sup> Vincelette, J. et al., "Predicators of Chlamydial Infection and Gonorrhoea among Patients Seen by Private Practitioners." *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 144, 1995: 713-721. Also, Jebakumar, S. P. R. et al., "Value of Screening for Oropharyngeal Chlamydia Trachomatis Infection," *Journal of Clinical Pathology* 48, 1995: 658-661.

<sup>54</sup> "Syphilis Elimination: History in the Making," Division of Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. October 1999. Available at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

<sup>55</sup> Hutchinson C. M., et al., "Characteristics of Patients with Syphilis Attending Baltimore STD Clinics," *Archives of Internal Medicine* 151, 1991: 511-516.

<sup>56</sup> "Syphilis Elimination."

<sup>57</sup> "STD Treatment Guidelines: Proctitis, Proctocolitis, and Enteritis." Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 1993. Available at: [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org)

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<sup>60</sup> Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality.

<sup>61</sup> Roehr, Bob. "Anal Cancer and You." *Between the Lines News*. November 16, 2000. Available at: [www.pridesource.com](http://www.pridesource.com)

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<sup>63</sup> Lockhart, Lettie L., et al., "Letting out the Secret: Violence in Lesbian Relationships," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9. December 1994: 469-492.

<sup>64</sup> Gwat Yong Lie and Sabrina Gentlewarrier, "Intimate Violence in Lesbian Relationships: Discussion of Survey Findings and Practice Implications," *Journal of Social Service Research* 15, 1991: 41-59.

<sup>65</sup> Island, D. and P. Letellier, *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence* New York: Haworth Press, 1991, p. 14.

<sup>66</sup> "Violence Between Intimates," Bureau of Justice Statistics Selected Findings, November 1994, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Health Implications, p. 79

<sup>68</sup> Mbogo, Stephen. "Sexual Abstinence Behind Uganda's AIDS Success Story." *Religion Today*, January 14, 2003.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Chismar, Janet. "Finding A Prescription For Hope in Uganda." *Religion Today*, February 27, 2003.

<sup>73</sup> J. Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality*, p. 109.

<sup>74</sup> It is significant that Greenberg concedes this point, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, p. 215; see also Schmidt, T.E., pp. 77-83.

<sup>75</sup> This section excerpted from *Faith, Hope and Homosexuality*. Evangelical Alliance of the United Kingdom. London: 1998.

<sup>76</sup> Schmidt, T.E., *Straight and Narrow*, pp. 29-99; Wenham, G.J., 'The Old Testament Attitude to Homosexuality', *Expository Times* 102 (Spring 1991), pp. 359-63; Wright, D.F: *The Christian Faith and Homosexuality*, Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 1997 [1994], pp.8-22; 'Homosexuals or

Prostitutes? The Meaning of Arsenokoitai (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10), *Vigiliae Christianae*, 38 (1984), pp. 125-53; 'Homosexuality: The Relevance of the Bible', *Evangelical Quarterly*, 61 (October 1989), pp.291-300; Field, D. *Homosexuality: What Does the Bible Say?* Leicester: IVP, nd.; Bonnington, M. & Fyall, B., *Homosexuality and the Bible*, Cambridge; Grove Books, 1996, pp.12-23; Soards, M.L. *Scripture and Homosexuality: Biblical Authority and the Church Today*, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.





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# Prostitution

Recognising that the political correctness of our generation seeks to redefine the words that we use and substitute “sex worker” for the more traditional term “prostitute,” this document will use the latter term. A useful definition is:

*The act or practice of promiscuous sexual relations, especially for money.<sup>1</sup>*

Scanzoni<sup>2</sup> has also been helpful:

*Prostitutes today may be divided into two categories: the street or “bar girl,” and the “call girl.” The latter tends to be more attractive, better educated, and makes more money. The call girl’s clientele is usually from the upper-middle or upper class....*

Mary Thompson<sup>3</sup>, speaking to the Business and Professional Women’s Club of Barbados, also sheds further light:

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*Prostitution is defined as selling or banking of sexual favours for money. It doesn’t only pertain to these sexual favours in terms of money, but in services as well.*

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Noting, “commercial sex work is widespread,” the Caribbean Task Force on HIV/AIDS<sup>4</sup> states:

It is linked to tourism in the islands; it follows mining villages and trading patterns in a variety of industries. There are short-term as well as fixed brothel workers, and mobile sex workers; they are single and married, women and men. Male prostitution in the form of ‘beach boys’ is increasing across the Caribbean.

Despite the reality that Barbados has a long history<sup>5</sup> of prostitution through slave owners’ unquestioned right to sexual access to female slaves, the formulation of prostitution into an “organised, rural arrangement,” the allure of multiple economic returns derived from sexual trafficking in female slaves and their offspring, and the forced migration from England of “London thieves and whores,” BEA affirms its opposition to the decriminalisation of prostitution in Barbados.

## THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCE

While there might be some merit in arguing that prostitution, whether legal or otherwise, exploits women in the worst way possible and women should not be punished when others exploit them, the

decriminalisation of prostitution tends to also legalise pimps as entrepreneurs and gives brothels, sex clubs, “massage parlors,” and other sites of such activity authenticity as legitimate commercial enterprises. Decriminalising prostitution dignifies the sex industry rather than dignifying the prostitute. This would amount to a wholesale onslaught on the moral values of our small nation.

## THE PROMOTION OF TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

The Netherlands has sought to position itself as the centre of the sex industry in Europe. It is even possible to obtain a work permit to enter The Netherlands as a “sex worker.” Yet the report of the Budapest Group<sup>6</sup> stipulates that 80% of the women in the brothels of The Netherlands are trafficked from other countries. Even as early as 1994 it was known that close to “70 percent of trafficked women” in The Netherlands were from the Central and Eastern European countries.<sup>7</sup> As recent as 2002<sup>8</sup> a report states that the trafficking in women has at least remained the same, or increased. The decriminalisation of prostitution has not ended or even decreased the trafficking of women to The Netherlands.

Germany fully established prostitution as a legitimate industry in January of 2002 after years of such activity being restricted to special zones. In 1993 it was recognised that 75 percent of the women prostitutes in Germany were from Developing Countries.<sup>9</sup> Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Germany, as in The Netherlands, estimate that about 80 percent<sup>10</sup> of women prostitutes in Germany are foreigners. This begs the question as to whether these women have legitimately travelled to these countries for the purpose of being involved in the “sex industry” or whether many are trafficked illegally into these countries.

The link between decriminalising prostitution and the trafficking in women has been clearly established in Australia. The U.S. State Department in its country report<sup>11</sup> on Australia in 1999 stated, “Trafficking in East Asian Women for the sex trade is a growing problem in Australia ... lax laws – including legalised prostitution in parts of the country – make [anti-trafficking] enforcement difficult at the working level.”

### *Time magazine has reported:*

An estimated 500,000 women and children – mainly from Eastern Europe, Africa, South America and Southeast Asia – are trafficked to E.U. countries for sexual exploitation every year, according to the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control.



The International Organisation for Migration says this trafficking generates [US]\$8 billion each year. Trafficking volume is soaring in Europe, impelled by increasing demand for prostitution in Europe, and the desperation of the migrant women themselves.<sup>12</sup>

Considerable anecdotal evidence, including occasional newspaper reports of women being deported, exists that women from outside of Barbados service the “sex trade” in Barbados. Sheila Samiel<sup>13</sup> has stated that many of the commercial sex workers who are bar-based in Barbados “come from Haiti, Dominican Republic, Guyana and other OECS countries.” Samiel states further<sup>14</sup> that many of these women are reluctant to seek medical attention because “they are ... foreigners, involved in an illegal trade; some have overstayed the time allowed by Immigration and are reluctant to come in contact with any official entity.”

Will the implementation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) mean that we will see an influx of “sex workers” to service the growing needs of a decriminalised “sex industry” in our island?

## DECRIMINALISATION EXPANDS PROSTITUTION – NOT CONTROLS IT

The available evidence does not support the claim that decriminalising prostitution allows the “industry” to be controlled. Since decriminalisation in The Netherlands, the “sex industry” has grown to 5 percent of the economy.<sup>15</sup> As anyone who has visited The Netherlands knows, women are put on display in show windows at all hours of the day and night for men’s consumption.

In the State of Victoria, Australia, decriminalisation of prostitution has led to a significant expansion in the “sex industry.” The number of legal brothels has expanded from 40 in 1989 to 94 in 1999 with “escort services” now numbering 84.<sup>16</sup> The commodification of women has intensified and government-sponsored casinos now authorise the redeeming of casino chips and wheel of fortune bonuses at local brothels.<sup>17</sup>

In Switzerland the decriminalisation of prostitution has led to the doubling of the number of brothels. Some residents express the feeling of being overrun by the “sex industry” and complain of the “industry’s” encroachment in areas not zoned for prostitution.<sup>18</sup>

We would expect the same thing to happen in Barbados should the lobby for decriminalisation succeed in legally degrading our women to the status of commodities to be used and sold for male sexual gratification.

## INCREASES IN HIDDEN,

## ILLEGAL, AND STREET PROSTITUTION

Those countries that have already decriminalised prostitution have found that decriminalisation does not remove the stigma of prostitution. By creating laws that women must register in order to legally operate, the government has removed anonymity from the women. Numbers of women choose to retain their anonymity and refuse to register. They are therefore forced to operate outside of the law anyhow.<sup>19</sup> Samiel’s note that many of the commercial sex workers in Barbados who are bar-based are here illegally would suggest that decriminalisation would not in fact help these people.

Decriminalisation has not resulted in the criminal elements being removed from the “sex industry” as touted by proponents of decriminalisation. It has in fact entrenched those elements. In Victoria, Australia many of the increasing numbers of brothels are unregistered and operate outside of the law with apparent impunity.<sup>20</sup> In New South Wales, Australia

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*...By creating laws that women must register in order to legally operate, the government has removed anonymity from the women...*

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where brothels were decriminalised in 1995, the number of brothels has exploded to over 400 and in order to reduce corruption and illegal prostitution the enforcement of legislation had to be taken out of the hands of the police.<sup>21</sup>

## INCREASES IN CHILD PROSTITUTION

During the final decade of the twentieth century child prostitution expanded significantly in The Netherlands alongside legalised prostitution. The Amsterdam-based ChildRight organisation estimates that the number of child prostitutes has more than trebled between 1996 and 2001, from 4,000 to 15,000 in five years!<sup>22</sup>

A similar story appears in Victoria, Australia. End Child Prostituting and Trafficking (ECPAT) conducted a study for the Australian National Inquiry on Child Prostitution and exposed increased evidence of commercial exploitation of children within the “sex industry.”<sup>23</sup>

## VIOLENCE IS INTEGRAL TO PROSTITUTION

Violence is an integral part of prostitution, being used to initiate some women into prostitution by breaking them down to perform sexual acts and at virtually every step of the way. It is used for the gratification of the pimps, as a form of punishment, to threaten and



intimidate the women, to exert a pimp's dominance, to exact compliance, to humiliate women, and to isolate and confine women. The Coalition Against Trafficking Women International (CATW) has conducted two major studies on sex trafficking and prostitution and concludes, "The only time they protect anyone is to protect customers."<sup>24</sup> According to CATW, 80 percent of all women interviewed suffered physical violence from pimps and buyers and endured multiple health effects from the violence and sexual exploitation.<sup>25</sup>

So called "safety policies" in brothels did not protect women from harm. Even where brothels supposedly monitored the "customers" and utilised "bouncers," women stated that they were injured by buyers and, at times, by brothel owners and their friends. Even when someone intervened to control buyers' abuse, women lived in a climate of fear. Although 60 percent of women reported that buyers had sometimes been prevented from abusing them, half of those women answered that, nonetheless, they thought that they might be killed by one of their "customers."<sup>26</sup>

David "Joey" Harper<sup>27</sup>, Chairman of the Child Care Board, has referred to prostitution in the context of Barbados as "the exploitation and sexual abuse of children." Similarly, Rev. Leonard Rock<sup>28</sup> is quoted as stating that prostitution is "an exploitation of the human person" equally tainting all parties involved, and serving to perpetuate the notion and practice of female-to-male subordination. Thompson, speaking at the same

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*...Even when someone intervened to control buyers' abuse, women lived in a climate of fear...*

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forum as Harper and Rock, noted that in England the life of some prostitutes was horrific and that children as young as ten were introduced to the streets.<sup>29</sup>

It is noteworthy that in studying the issue of prostitution in Barbados, Sheila Samiel<sup>30</sup>, in August 2001, recorded that the level of crime and violence had escalated "in the area of operation since the early initiative." The Earle and Phillips Consulting Group<sup>31</sup> study also notes, "Contraction of HIV/AIDS and client violence are major problems for CSWs (commercial sex workers). Clients insistence on anal sex also appears to be an issue for many CSWs."

Canon Noel Titus of the Barbados Diocese of the Anglican Church has stated, "To permit prostitution without fear of prosecution might well be stating a devaluation of the person – especially the female."<sup>32</sup>

## INCREASED DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION

When legal barriers are removed, all restraints fall off.

The "sex industry," as demonstrated above, expands and persons who would not normally purchase sex begin to do so as prostitution becomes "acceptable." Far from being "controlled," the restraints are thrown off. Customers can legally purchase anal sex, sex without condoms (or femidoms), as well as bondage and domination. A new form of prostitution has surfaced in decriminalised areas, as men demand breast milk in their encounters with pregnant prostitutes.<sup>33</sup> BEA does not view these as acceptable forms of commercial enterprise in a modern Barbados.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH NOT IN FACT PROTECTED

Some persons interviewed in the Earle and Phillips<sup>34</sup> study indicate "that the marginalisation and stigmatisation of MSM (men having sex with men) and CSW (commercial sex workers) is reflected in a legal system that drives MSM and CSW underground and represents a major inhibitor in their taking advantage of public sector health facilities." This view is by no means universally held.

According to Raymond, "A legalised system of prostitution that mandates health checks and certification only for women and not for clients is blatantly discriminatory to women. 'Women only' health checks make no public health sense because monitoring prostituted women does not protect *them* from HIV/AIDS or STDs, since male 'clients' can and do originally transmit disease to the women."<sup>35</sup>

While those well-meaning persons who live far from the reality of prostitution, assert that decriminalisation will assist the health of prostitutes available data indicates they are completely wrong. One study of U.S. women prostitutes found that 47 percent stated "clients" expected sex without a condom, 73 percent stated that men offered to pay more for sex without a condom, and 45 percent stated they were physically abused if they insisted on the use of a condom.<sup>36</sup> One woman interviewed during the study stated, "It's regulation to wear a condom at the sauna, but negotiable between parties on the side. Most guys expect 'blow jobs' without a condom."<sup>37</sup>

"To address the health consequences of prostitution, the international human rights community [and by extension the Government of Barbados] must understand that prostitution harms women and that in addition to needing health services, women must be provided with the economic, social and psychological means to leave prostitution."<sup>38</sup>

## WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION DO NOT WANT



## DECRIMINALISATION

In one study in the U.S. the majority of the prostitutes interviewed strongly urged that prostitution not be decriminalised and viewed as 'regular work.' They saw decriminalisation as creating more risks from already violent pimps and customers. Not one woman interviewed wanted family members or friends to enter the "industry." One stated, "Prostitution stripped me of my life, my health, everything."<sup>39</sup>

## SWEDEN'S ACTION

Sweden's **Violence Against Women, Government Bill 1997/98:55** prohibits and penalises the purchase of "sexual services." It is an innovative approach that targets the *demand* for prostitution. Sweden believes that "By prohibiting the purchase of sexual services, prostitution and its damaging effects can be counteracted more effectively than hitherto." Importantly, this law clearly states, "Prostitution is not a desirable social phenomenon" and is "an obstacle to the ongoing development towards equality between women and men."<sup>40</sup> The National Rapporteur on Trafficking at the National Swedish Police has stated that in the 6 months following the implementation of the Swedish law in January 1999, the number of trafficked women to Sweden has declined. She also stated that according to police colleagues in the European Union that traffickers are choosing other destination countries where they are not constrained by similar laws. Thus the law serves as a deterrent to traffickers.<sup>41</sup>

BEA sees legislation such as that introduced in Sweden as having a positive impact on the lives of women, an example worth emulating in the legislation that governs Barbados. It is preferable to target the mass male exploitation of women and children in the "sex industry" than to target the women as "the problem."

## PROSTITUTION AND THE BIBLE

The Holy Scriptures are unambiguous on the matter of prostitution.

### **Leviticus 19:29**

*Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness (NKJV).*

### **Proverbs 6:23-29**

*For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life, to keep you*

*from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids. For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbour's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent (NKJV)*

### **Proverbs 7:10-23**

*And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart. ... Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life (NKJV)*

### **Proverbs 29:3**

*Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, but a companion of harlots wastes his wealth (NKJV).*

### **1 Corinthians 6:13-20**

*Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (NKJV).*

### **Rahab**

*Rahab is an interesting case. Acknowledged as a prostitute in the city of Jericho, she negotiates her freedom from the onslaught of the Israeli army. Little else is said about her. Yet she appears in Hebrews 11:31 among the great people of Jewish faith. "Placed among the heroes of faith (Hebrews 11), Rahab brings into bold relief the power of God's love and mercy to transform a person's life."<sup>42</sup>*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Prostitution not be decriminalised in Barbados.
2. Legislation against violence perpetrated on women be strengthened to include prostitution as violence against women and criminalise the men who seek to abuse and exploit women through prostitution.



3. Practical steps be taken through the Alleviation of Poverty Programme to target for ongoing alleviation the economic circumstances that seem to drive women to prostitution.
4. Legislation be enacted to ensure that the coming into being of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy will not provide aid and comfort to those who traffic in women for sexual or any other purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary. Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Scanzoni, John H. "Prostitution." Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981, p.545.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson, Mary. Quoted in "Call to Discourage Spread of Prostitution." The Barbados Advocate. November 26, 2003, p.6.

<sup>4</sup> The Caribbean Task Force on HIV/AIDS. The Caribbean Regional Strategic Plan of Action for HIV/AIDS. August 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Payne, Denise. (quoting Dr. Marcia Burrowes). "Putting Minds to Work Over Prostitution Issue." The Barbados Advocate. November 26, 2003, p.4.

<sup>6</sup> Budapest Group. The Relationship Between Organized Crime and Trafficking in Aliens. Austria: International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> International Organisation for Migration. "Trafficking and Prostitution: the Growing Exploitation of Migrant Women from Central and Eastern Europe." Budapest: IOM Migration Information Programme, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Bureau NRM. Trafficking in Human Beings: First Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur. The Hague, November 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Altink, Sietske. Stolen Lives: Trading Women into Sex and Slavery. London: Scarlet Press, 1995.

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. State Department. Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Australia. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Stewart, David. "The Sex Industry: Global Traffic." Time, October 20, 2003, p.43.

<sup>13</sup> Samiel, Sheila. Commercial Sex Work: Barbados. Prepared for the Barbados National AIDS Commission, August 2001, p.6.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p.14.

<sup>15</sup> Daley, Suzanne. "New Rights for Dutch Prostitutes, but No Gain." New York Times, August 12 2001, pp. A1 and 4.

<sup>16</sup> Sullivan, Mary and Sheila Jeffreys. Legalising Prostitution is Not the Answer: the Example of Victoria, Australia. Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Australia and USA, 2001. Available at [www.catwinternational.org](http://www.catwinternational.org)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> South China Morning Post. Brothel Business Booming at a Legal Red-Light District Near You. September 10 1999.

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<sup>21</sup> Raymond, Janice G. 10 Reasons for NOT Legalising Prostitution. Coalition Against Trafficking Women International, March 2003. Available at [www.catwinternational.org](http://www.catwinternational.org)

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Harper, David. Quoted in "Panellists Lock Horns Over Prostitution's Ramifications." The Barbados Advocate. November 26, 2003.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Raymond, Janice G. Health Effects of Prostitution. Coalition Against Trafficking in Women International, July 1998. Available at [www.catwinternational.org](http://www.catwinternational.org)

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# Compassion

<sup>1</sup> *James 1:27, Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble ... (NKJV).*

AIDS is the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time; it may be the greatest humanitarian crisis of *all* time. The flames of this pandemic are leaping across continents, consuming all they touch with no regard for race, culture, religion or economic status. In sub-Saharan Africa the contagion burns the hottest and the disease has consumed entire communities. The Caribbean is second only to sub-Saharan Africa in the instances of infection, while Asia and Eastern Europe – particularly India, China and Russia – are the next front in this firefight.

“Barbados had its first two reported cases of AIDS in 1984. By 1990 a cumulative total of 172 persons had been reported with AIDS; by the end of year 1999 this figure had increased to 1,176 persons. The incidence rate moved from 0.8% in 1984 to 23.5% in 1990 and was 49.8% by 1999.”<sup>2</sup>

Regrettably, the Church was not the first to the frontlines of this conflagration. However, we believe the Church is uniquely positioned to serve as the pivotal agent in turning the tide against AIDS through its message of reconciliation, faithfulness, hope, and compassionate care.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we acknowledge that we need God’s help. We cannot win this battle without God’s guidance, His direction, and His wisdom. As Christians we call upon the name of Almighty God for

<sup>1</sup> *John 3:17, But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? (NKJV)*

His sovereign intervention.

Nearly 63 million people have been infected with HIV and more than 20 million people have died of AIDS since the virus was discovered in the early 1980’s. Today, five people die every minute from the complications of this preventable disease. Other statistics are equally daunting:

- AIDS is the fourth-leading cause of death in the world.
- In Africa, AIDS is *the* leading cause of death. 70 percent of all people infected with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa, even though it is home to only 11

percent of the world’s population.

- Today, nearly 14 million children are orphaned due to AIDS. By 2010 it is estimated that the disease will leave 25 million children without parents.
- 55% of the HIV-infected population is women. In many countries in Africa, girls 15-19 years of age are becoming infected at more than twice the rate of boys in the same age group.
- Eastern Europe and Asia are experiencing catastrophic increases in HIV prevalence rates. More than 7 million of the HIV infected presently resides in Asia and Russia.

*Luke 10:25-37, So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him...? (NKJV)*

The Christian Church in Barbados and throughout the world is uniquely equipped to address the AIDS pandemic. With God’s help it is our firm conviction that this battle can be won.

Love, mercy, compassion and the teaching of God’s truth are hallmarks of the ministry of Jesus Christ. By encouraging a loving and non-judgmental response to those infected with the virus and those affected by AIDS, Christians have the opportunity to demonstrate their faith in action. Moreover, Christians have the responsibility to bring the hope of Christ to those whose lives are seemingly hopeless. Through the promotion of sexual abstinence before marriage and faithfulness to one’s spouse after marriage, reduction of stigma, as well as compassionate care for orphans, widows, and those already infected we believe will help further reduce the spread of this deadly disease.

We realise that there is a divergence of opinion regarding the use of condoms as one strategy to slow the spread of the disease. We, therefore, respect the right of people to hold to their own convictions on this issue.

With more than 8,000 people dying every day from

*Mark 1:41, Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him (NKJV).*

AIDS related illnesses, global leaders, policymakers and educators need to do more to turn the tide against HIV/AIDS. Public attention is only beginning to focus on the plight of the orphans and vulnerable children affected by the disease. As leaders in a wide range of



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church denominations within the Christian community in Barbados, we commit to actions demanded of us by Scripture and Christ's own example:

- To mobilise and pray for fragile communities left vulnerable by the ravages of HIV/AIDS: To pray for those who have become infected with the disease, for widows and orphans in their distress, for people and organisations that provide care for the dying and their families, and that God will guide our policymakers who can effect change through their leadership.
- To speak out among our families, congregations, and communities to help remove the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS and motivate them to address the spiritual and practical needs of those who are at risk of being consumed by HIV/AIDS through practical ministry, advocacy, and prayer.
- To mobilise constituent faith communities in providing acts of compassionate care and resources for those impacted by HIV/AIDS.
- To urge our partner and/or affiliate organisations in other nations to advocate for their nations' leaders to fulfill their obligations to help fund the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria.
- To promote abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage as the best way to protect against contracting HIV.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Global HIV/AIDS Crisis published by the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States of America.

<sup>2</sup> Samiel, Sheila. Commercial Sex Work: Barbados. Prepared for the Barbados National Aids Commission, 2002.

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## Recommendations

The recommendations are excerpted from the end of each section and presented here for ease of reference.

### HOMOSEXUALITY

1. The Church in Barbados and the Government of Barbados work together in fighting the sexually transmitted diseases that are prevalent in or likely to impact our nation.
  2. While the Government of Barbados has promoted mainly the use of condoms (and perhaps now will promote femidoms) space needs to be made nationally for an ongoing, vigorous, holistic campaign to promote abstinence and faithful monogamy as key means of fighting STDs.
  3. There be an ongoing national campaign that sensitises the Barbadian community to the dangers of anal sex and the threat that STDs pose in such sexual behaviours.
  4. Buggery not be decriminalised now or at any time in the future.
  5. Churches across the island be actively encouraged to become involved in understanding STDs, educating their congregations about contracting and treating such diseases, and seek out avenues to minister holistically to persons battling the ravages of STDs.
3. Practical steps be taken through the Alleviation of Poverty Programme to target for quick alleviation the economic circumstances that seem to drive women to prostitution.
  4. Legislation be enacted to ensure that the coming into being of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy will not provide aid and comfort to those who traffic in women for sexual or any other purposes.

### CHURCH

1. Mobilise and pray for fragile communities left vulnerable by the ravages of HIV/AIDS: To pray for those who have become infected with the disease, for widows and orphans in their distress, for people and organisations that provide care for the dying and their families, and that God will guide our policymakers who can effect change through their leadership.
2. Speak out among our families, congregations, and communities to help remove the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS and motivate them to address the spiritual and practical needs of those who are at risk of being consumed by HIV/AIDS through practical ministry, advocacy, and prayer.
3. Mobilise constituent faith communities in providing acts of compassionate care and resources for those impacted by HIV/AIDS.
4. Urge our partner and/or affiliate organisations in other nations to advocate for their nations' leaders to fulfill their obligations to help fund the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria.
5. Promote abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage as the best way to protect against contracting HIV.

### PROSTITUTION

1. Prostitution not be decriminalised in Barbados.
2. Legislation against violence perpetrated on women be strengthened to include prostitution as violence against women and criminalise the men who seek to abuse and exploit women through prostitution.

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