

Is the Bible's sexual ethic harmful and exclusive?

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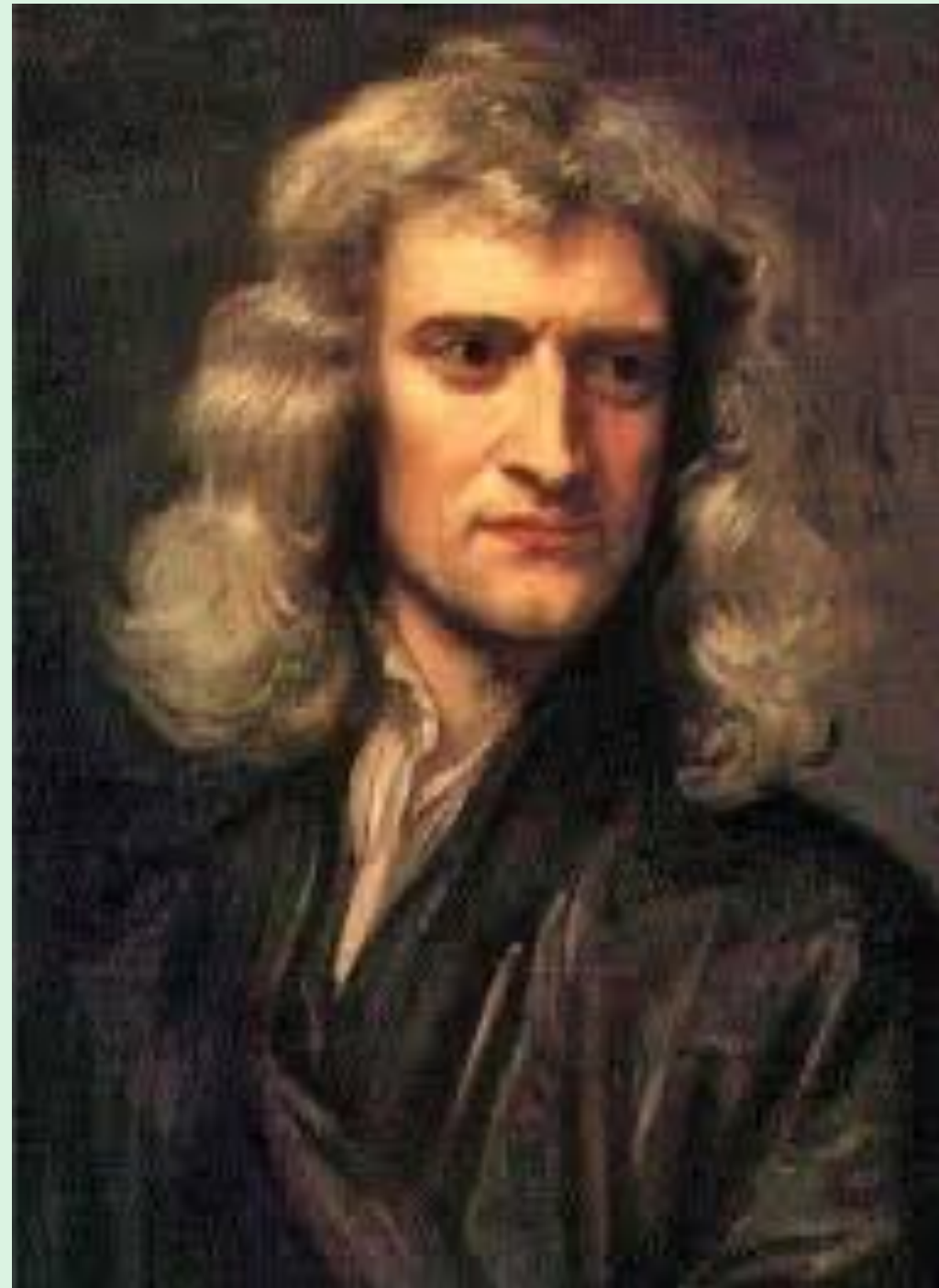
Confident Christianity, Kinmel Bay Church

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Do I look familiar?



Or maybe...



Testimony

OCCA
The Oxford Centre for
Christian Apologetics



Objection 1

THE TRADITIONAL
CHRISTIAN SEXUAL
ETHIC IS HARMFUL
FOR ALL PEOPLE
WHO PRACTICE IT



Objection 1: Response

- Assumption = only way to joy and fulfilment is romantic or sexual relationship
- How do we evaluate 'harm'?
 - In many situations it's surprisingly hard to diagnose (benefits vs. risks etc)
 - No evidence from Christian LGBT+ community following Christian sexual ethic i.e. Mark Yarhouse *et al.*
 - No convincing evidence from secular research
 - We do know mental health issues + suicidality is greater in overall LGBT+ community (interestingly, in younger people where LGBT+ much more accepted)
- What is harmful? **I suggest it's the concept that only way to joy & fulfilment is in romantic or sexual relationship!!!!**

Objection 1: Response

- Does God sometimes ask us to do difficult things?
- Does God sometimes allow us to go through difficult things? YES!
- Need to take a real look at human suffering for EVERYONE
- Matt 16.24.....
- When we follow Jesus sacrificially, he will bless us in this world and in the future
- Mark 10.29-30..... I can testify to this!

“

Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

Matt 16.24-5

“

“Truly I tell you”, Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mothers or children or fields for me and for the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields – along with persecutions – and in the age to come eternal life.”

Mark 10.29-30

Objection 2

THE TRADITIONAL
CHRISTIAN SEXUAL
ETHIC IS
EXCLUSIVE TO
LGBT+ PEOPLE



Objection 2: Response

- Underlying idolatry of marriage and sexual/romantic relationship
- Under-appreciation of friendship
- Sexual ethic applies to ALL people, not just LGBT+
- Romans 3.23-24 → for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
- Jesus: radical inclusion AND call to radical holiness
- Unrepentant sinners ARE excluded from God's Kingdom (e.g 1Cor 6.9-11)
- Repentance needed from some areas of the church

CONCLUSION

- Is the Bible's sexual ethic harmful and exclusive?
- Answer: NO! AND....
 - All life following Jesus is difficult → denying of self
 - God wants us all in healthy, boundaried deep friendships → looks different for different people
 - Jesus modelled radical inclusion AND call to radical holiness
- Very difficult to diagnose harm here
- Objections based on strong cultural norms not affirmed by Jesus or Paul

References/Further reading

- 7 myths about singleness – Sam Allberry (2019)
- Love Thy Body – Nancy Pearcey (2018)
- The plausibility problem – Ed Shaw (2015)
- Does the Bible support same-sex marriage? (Preston Sprinkle, 2023)