

An Unfinished Reformation

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Abstract

One of the aims of the Reformation Movement of 16th Century was to return to the teaching of the bible alone. This included a rejection of later traditions that had been adopted by the Church. These reformers took Augustine as a frame of reference. Although they rejected many of the Church traditions which Augustine had endorsed, they continued to maintain, and may have reinforced the doctrines of an exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy, which included the abhorrence of homosexuality and other gender and sexually variant behaviour that had been propagated by the Church.

There were many doctrinal changes which the Church had adopted in regard to the positions of women, in the attitudes to gender complementarity and to gender and sexual variance during the first three centuries of its existence. This analysis uses the results of recent research work on gender dysphoria and personality development as a tool for re-considering the historical backgrounds and the reasons for these changes. The history of the Church is examined from two perspectives, one of these works back through the Church traditions, and the second traces forward from the Jewish and the Greco/Roman backgrounds to review the social and the moral traditions which were the sources from which the Apostolic Church developed. It is shown that for the Church to be able to make the breakthrough from a minority and a subject Jewish sect into the universal religion of a dominant society, an initial period of true gender equality and transcendence is required, and without that period that transition could not have happened. It is also shown how and why the Church later came to adopt the form of gender complementarity practiced by the surrounding Greco/Roman society in place of the gender transcendence which is present in the Gospel itself. It is further indicated how the Christian Church first continued, and the ways in which it later changed the Jewish traditions on sexual and gender variance. It is also shown that a major disconnect occurred during these first three centuries and that what in the present day is regarded as the traditional teaching of the Church on homosexuality and on sexual and gender variance is not the same as that of the Gospel Church. The reasons for these changes and the processes which led to this disconnect are studied with reference to the contemporary literature and bible texts.

The results of this analysis challenge many of the traditional doctrines which the Church has adopted on the roles of women, gender complementarity and to gender and sexual variance. In certain Churches the social changes of the last fifty years have promoted a re-evaluation of Christian teaching but this has also resulted in a retrenchment into literalism and to fundamentalism in others. This study supports this re-evaluation and gives historical and theological support to the changes that are now being made. The sixteenth century reformers could not have carried out this re-evaluation since the knowledge and resources were then not available to them. This analysis provides new insights into the crises about gender and sexuality which are faced by the present day Christian Church. It is hoped that this study can make the Reformation a little more complete.

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Additional Material

A précis of this document is available in Gilchrist, S. 2013. "Reform and the Christian Church". Some other articles of relevance are: Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach" and also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or: Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See the footer for availability

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last Update: 12 December 2013.

Please note that this is a reference document, which may be regularly updated. It is presented as a compendium of resource material, instead of a single account, much of which has been, or will be the subject of separate publication.

This document brings together information from a number of sources to examine the development of the attitudes to gender equality, gender complementarity and gender and sexual variance within the Christian Church. Part 1 of this document gives an overview of the approach and the principles of analysis. An introduction to the issues of cultural differences and compromises is also provided. Part 2 considers the history and the subsequent development of these Church traditions by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers to determine how these viewpoints were understood by the fourth century Church, how they differed from the original Gospel views, and the transformations that occurred. Part 3 of this document has the same objective, but this time the material is examined from the perspective of the surrounding cultures from which the Church developed. A further perspective is provided by using the results of some recent neurophysiological and psychological research which shows that the traditional teaching of the church on homosexuality and gender and sexual variance cannot be correct¹. Part 4 considers the impact of these on the present day Church. The discussion and conclusions are contained in Part 5. From examining the inconsistencies and the conflicts which are encountered when these three approaches are compared with each other, it is hoped that a better understanding of the relevance and the accuracy of present day Church teaching on homosexuality, gender complementarity, gender equality and on gender and sexual variance can be found, and that the original teaching of Jesus can be restored.

Part 1: Introduction

1:1 Overview

1:1:1 Respectability and the Christian Church

One of the principal concerns about determining what the correct Christian attitudes should be to the issues of gender transcendence, gender complementarity, gender equality, gender identity, gender role, and to sexual orientation arises through the contradictions that the bible seems to present. This is most obvious in the apparently changing attitudes which Paul adopts in the New Testament, where his declaration which demands the total Christian transcendence of gender and of sex in Galatians

¹ Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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3:28² is subsequently contradicted or amended in the later epistles and letters by the segregation of the gender roles that were expected of men and women. By the time the later epistles were written a form of gender complementarity which demands the submission of women was to be enforced³. The differences are frequently explained by the increasing length of time it was expected to have to wait before the end of the world, when the second coming of Christ would be fulfilled.

In early Christianity an immediate second coming of Jesus was expected. It is now generally understood that this is the reason why the early Church believed that there was no requirement to conform to the social and the cultural divisions of the strongly gender stratified Greco/Roman societies. However as time went on and the second coming did not take place, the requirement to conform to the social expectations of this dominant and patristic society increased, and thus the gender expectations that were associated with Greco/Roman society came to be more strongly imposed. This is why it is usually considered that many of the later Christian doctrines about gender and sexually variant behaviour which have been arrived at through the development of the church traditions arise only as a consequence of this delay.

However this disregards the cultural differences and the tensions within and between Greco/Roman and Judean society, as well as the influences of their different social structures upon the formation of the early Church. There were major cultural clashes between these societies, not least in the matters of sex, and the failure to take these clashes into account has largely led to the adoption of the present Church doctrines which declare that any form of engagement in gender and sexually variant behaviour is a heinous sin and that it is always in pursuit of lust, licentiousness, prostitution and immoral sex. That presumption is challenged by this analysis which is carried out in two sections. The paper: Gilchrist, S. (2013) on: "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach"⁴ examines traditional Church

² The statement made by Paul in Galatians 3:28 that: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", is a declaration which challenged both gender complementarity and the male domination within Greco/Roman society. The later statements by Peter and Paul seem to contradict that by re-imposing these requirements. Indeed they do even more than this for they re-impose the demand that women should always be in submission to men

³ See for example the statement by Paul: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24) and also Peter " Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. (1 Peter 3:1-6) (The statement said to be by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:34: "Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church", is often considered to be a later addition to the text of this earlier epistle).

⁴ See the footer for access

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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teaching from a psychological perspective. Not only does it show that the distinctions between loving and abusive sexual behaviour must be clearly enforced, it shows that these distinctions must not be applied on a gendered basis, and that the same criteria must be applied to heterosexual and same-sex relationships alike. It further demonstrates that the driving forces which lie behind each of these motives have characteristics which are almost opposite to one another, and what is appropriate for care and management in one is counterproductive as far as the other is concerned.

The analysis confirms that these gender and sexually variant conditions are identity driven. It also disproves the current Christian doctrines that exclusively attribute the driving forces which lie behind all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour to the pursuit of lust, illicit and immoral sex. It further rejects the Church assertions that the gender and sexually variant conditions are intrinsically disordered, and it shows that within the gender and sexually variant communities, as great a range of moral attitudes and expectations must exist as in the whole of society. That places identical requirements on the members of the gender and the sexually variant communities to conform to those same moral obligations which are applied to everyone else, and it does not denigrate the moral values of the Church.

The second section of this analysis looks at the historical setting and the developing traditions of the Church using the results of the neurophysiological and psychological analysis, but by applying them to analyse two different points of view. Therefore the second part of this document examines the behaviour, historical background and the development of the Christian Church from the standpoint of gender equality, gender complementarity and gender transcendence. The third part of this document covers the same background, but with the focus on gender and sexual variation in the early and modern Church⁵.

However other strong forces were also involved. These arise because of the cultural differences between the subject Jewish and the dominant Greco/Roman society. The early Christian teaching on gender and sexuality in the Gospels challenged both, but Christianity also made the transition from the religion of a subject society to become that of a dominant one, and it is established in this account that the changes from the early teaching have been driven through the need the Church to obtain respectability in this strongly gender polarised Greco/Roman society. The cultural clashes which occur between a dominating society, such as that of Greece and Rome and those of a subject society, such as Judaism, were a major issue. The strong and pressing need for respectability is evident throughout all of the Pauline epistles and letters.

The development of this accommodation can be observed at various points in the New Testament texts, and also within the early Church; where the Church had come to accept the social norms of the surrounding societies and then tried to adapt these to fit its own theology and beliefs. The need to make these adaptations has set the Christian Church on a trajectory whereby the original Gospel teachings on gender transcendence and on sexually variant conditions were lost. By the time of Augustine

⁵ This is also written up in Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation" and in Gilchrist, S. (2013). "Reform and the Christian Church". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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(354-430) and the early fourth century Church, an almost complete transformation in outlook had occurred.

It will be demonstrated in this analysis that the traditional teachings, together with the present day Church doctrines on gender complementarity and on sexual and gender variance, do not form any part of the original Gospel message. This is even though the doctrines related to gender complementarity possess an apostolic imprint, and they developed very early in the life of the Church. It will also be shown how and why early Christianity rejected the principles of gender complementarity associated with both Greco/Roman and Jewish societies, why this was subsequently embraced as a doctrine of the Church, and why the teaching of Jesus created an attitude to gender equality which would be acceptable in the present day. A major disconnection has therefore occurred, and this has significant implications for the current Church⁶

This is a radical statement, which absolutely demands to be justified. It is the focus of the new examination which is presented in these documents. The cultural clashes, between the subject and dominant first century societies, and also between those first century societies and the ones of the present day have a major impact on the attitudes that were, and are today, encountered. Therefore the consequence of the attacks which early Christian teaching imposed on the social values and the power structures of the dominant, dictatorial, gender polarised, slave endorsing and socially unequal surrounding societies tends to be ignored. This modern view gives a false impression, and a detailed examination of attitudes to gender equality is given in the more extended accounts^{7 8}. The early Gospel Church gave women a high place in the Gospel ministry. That is evident not only in the attitude of Jesus as it is described in the Gospels, by Mary Magdalene's role in announcing the resurrection, by the high worth which Paul gives to the missionary work of women, together with the influence they held in the running the early Church and in their roles in spreading the Gospel of Christ.⁹ In societies where the social roles of men and women were inflexibly segregated through custom and divine influences, these were challenging acts¹⁰. A further examination of the biblical texts together with the contemporary literature which is undertaken in this analysis indicates in a greater detail the radical impact on Greco/Roman society that was created by the early Gospel message. It also reveals the ways in which early Christianity, in common with the principal Goddess cults of the Greco/Roman Empire, disrupted and challenged the gendered security of a male dominated society¹¹. The boldness of this challenge has had a major impact on the formation of the Church, but the magnitude of that challenge has since been hidden by the later doctrines which the Church enforced.

⁶See Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". See footer for access.

⁷See Section 2:2:4 in this document.

⁸Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

⁹See Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships"

¹⁰This is fully discussed in section 2:2:4 of in this document.

¹¹See section 3:1:4 in this document.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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1:1:2 Social Dynamics

In the terms of their social messages, both Christianity and the Goddess cults shared some key elements in common. This was because both represented minority groups in dominant societies. Therefore a major challenge (and achievement) that was met by Christianity was its success in transferring the distinctive views of the minority Jewish religion into this dominant culture. That meant confronting the self-centred moralities of the culture and sexual values that were characteristic of Greco/Roman male dominated society. This additionally meant challenging and usurping the power structures which are formed inside these powerful societies by placing the concern for the victims and the suppressed first on the religious and the social agendas of those cultures, and by embracing an all-encompassing morality which is founded on compassion, nurturing and love. These moral characteristics were more typical of the first century female expectations, and women were also a subject group.

Even though women in Greco/Roman society were subject to male authority in every way the attitudes them are often misunderstood. In principle gender complementarity was expected to be practiced, but that would depend entirely on the attitude that was taken by each "Pater Familias", who held full responsibility for the household, even over the matters of life and death. Restrictive rules could be placed on women and this meant that severe gender discrimination could always occur. The Christian apologists of today cite this gender discrimination for their condemnations, but many of them only provide a partial account because they only describe the numerous restrictive rules. However this discrimination and separation of role broke down to a large extent in Greece around 400 BC, and again in Rome around 205 BC¹². War had decimated the male population, and women then became even more essential for maintaining key functions of society¹³. Within the marriage relationship, as well as in the occupations which men and women fulfilled in society, compatibility of intellect

¹²In earlier Greek Societies before 400 BC women had to have their husband's permission to leave their homes. With the exception of women in ancient Sparta, Greek women at this time had very limited freedom outside the home. If they had their husband's permission, they could attend weddings, funerals, some religious festivals, and visit female neighbours for brief periods of time. But without their husband's permission, they could do none of these things. However inside the house at this time Greek women were in charge. After 400 BC there was a rapid change and a transformation in the freedom of women, largely because of the reverses Greece suffered in war. Not every boundary was broken, however it is undeniable that the visibility and role of women during this time of violent change in ancient Greece greatly increased. See Scott, Michael (2009) "The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece" History Today Volume: 59 Issue: 11 2009. Also: Pomeroy, Sarah B. (1994) Goddesses, Whores, Wives And Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity". Publisher: Pimlico; New Edition (5 May 1994) ISBN-10: 0712660542 ISBN-13: 978-0712660549

¹³Between the fall of Athens in 404 BC and the rise of Alexander the Great in the 330s BC, the Greek world was turned on its head. The transformations were motivated in part by the catastrophic effects of the Peloponnesian War, the 30-year conflict which had brought democratic Athens to its knees. In response to the increased poverty that resulted, Greek women began to work outside the home. The orator Demosthenes, writing in the middle of the fourth century, complained that they now worked as nurses, wool-workers and grape-pickers because of the city's penury. This primarily economic drive was coupled with great political upheaval, an increasingly muddled distinction between public and private worlds and new forms of religious expression. In different parts of ancient Greece women become visible for different reasons and in Athens they appear centre stage in comic discussions of sexual and political equality and in the law courts on issues relating to citizenship. See Scott, Michael. (2009) "The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece" History Today Volume: 59 Issue: 11

<http://www.historytoday.com/michael-scott/rise-women-ancient-greece>

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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between men and women was also expected¹⁴. By the time of the first century many women had become well educated, they made significant contributions to society; nevertheless they were still denied any form of power and authority over their own lives. The first century was a period of religious upheaval within Greek and Roman society. Many of the traditional religions had lost credibility, the Goddess cults were undergoing a major resurgence, there was a proliferation of new religious beliefs, and the male domination of society was being put to the test¹⁵.

The gender challenging behaviour of all of these Goddess cults may be regarded as a challenge to this male domination, and the examination of the cult of Cybele shows that the “Women’s liberation” element which is contained within it cannot be ignored. Nevertheless none of the presently published research work on the Cult of Cybele takes full account of this women’s liberation element or on the beneficial roles of the cult¹⁶ and in this examination it is demonstrated that this omission has had

¹⁴ Plato considered that the only innate differences between males and females were the reproductive ones. Socrates likewise believed that that males and females have no distinct qualifications for any particular pursuits and that no particular function should be reserved for men and women, but both sexes should be treated alike. In Plato’s Republic, the Guardians are put into place to defend morality and to rule society because they know the truth and possess the knowledge and wisdom of true forms. The equality of opportunity for both men and women to enter the Guardian Class requires an equality of education for both sexes, and this principle of the equality of education for both men and women was adopted in the real world. This meant that, rather than gender polarisation, a gender complementarity was exercised in which men and women were placed into separate and exclusive gender roles which were considered to have equivalent esteem. In Roman society, at least among the upper classes, women seem to have been very well-educated. Only after children had come of age did the standards differ. See: Blundell, Sue. (1995) “Women in ancient Greece: Harvard University Press, 1995 ISBN 0674954734, 780674954731: Plato, The Republic. Books I–V: The eutopia portraying the ideal community and the education of the Guardians: See <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics-politics/> “Plato’s Ethics and Politics in The Republic” First published Tue Apr 1, 2003; substantive revision Mon Aug 31, 2009: Rawson, Beryl (1987) “The Roman Family,” in “The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives” Cornell University Press, 1987, pp. 30, 40–41. ISBN0801494605, 9780801494604.

¹⁵ This analysis gives a very different perspective on the role and function of the Goddess cults from that the traditional Christian viewpoint, which regards them as havens for lust, promiscuity and inappropriate sex. In this analysis it is demonstrated that the rituals and activities of the Goddess cults also embraced the attributes of protecting female interests against the attacks of male aggression and domination. They additionally included support for women’s concerns, for birthing and nurture, for fertility and renewal, and in total contrast to the Christian condemnations, they further emphasised the requirement for responsible sex. Therefore, far from any thoughts that their existence was purely to promote the sexual orgies, the cult’s activities had an important role. This included fortune telling, the production of charms and healing and welfare activities. They were also associated with the power struggles within these gender unequal societies, and the diversity, disruption and the nature of this behaviour caused both a strong disapproval and a high respect. A full analysis is given in Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”. Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”. See footer for access.

¹⁶For a description of the cult of Cybele see: Lynn E. Roller, In Search of God the Mother: The Cult of Anatolian Cybele. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. ISBN 0-520-21024-7. Philippe Borgeaud, Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary. Originally published as La Mère des dieux: De Cybele à la Vierge Marie. Éditions de Seuil, Collection “La Librairie du XXe siècle”, 1996. Translated from the French by Lysa Hochroth. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8018-7985-X. Eugene N. Lane (ed.), Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren. Religions in the Greco-Roman World, 131. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. ISBN 90-04-10196-9. The attitude taken to gender and sexually variant behaviour tends to follow the presumptions embodied in the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church. This implies that the gender

significant consequences for interpreting the behaviour, not only of the cult itself¹⁷ but also of the general moral values of Greco/Roman society. However, because of their nature the existence of gender defined Gods and Goddesses within a polytheistic society creates a glass ceiling which can never be crossed¹⁸. Therefore, even if full gender equality could be achieved in a polytheistic society, the rewards that it brings could only be expressed in terms of the sex and gender ideologies of that society. Males and females would continue to be separated into their religiously determined and socially segregated roles^{19 20 21}. What was required to make the real

disruptive behaviour of the cults self-castrated Gallae priests can only be in pursuit of immoral sex. That is not perhaps surprising given the nature of the ancient myths. See for example, Borgeaud pages 48-49, 54-55. Borgeaud is reciting the ancient myths which surround such behaviour. The possibility of other types of behaviour does not appear to be given full value and the changes to the social attitudes to women are not fully considered in these accounts. See Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

¹⁷ Roller, Borgeaud and others perceive a single boundary between reputable and disruptive behaviour. The popular viewpoints exclusively associate the Gallae and the morals of the cult with sexual orgies, prostitution and for the practice of immoral sex. This analysis argues that both these presumptions are incorrect, and that more than one boundary must exist. It also follows from this argument that two boundaries must be set. One is that between co-operative and disruptive behaviour in the pursuit of female interests and rights. The second is the boundary between proper and improper sex. The creation of these separate boundaries permits a re-evaluation of the roles of the self-castrated Gallae priests. The psychological analysis has demonstrated that as wide a range of attitudes must be found in the gender and sexually variant section of the population as there are in society at large. It also allows the Gallae priests to be treated in the same way as those belonging to other religious beliefs, where across cultures and across continents the equivalent people who seek to transcend gender may be understood to celebrate and to express the ideals of both lives. Some religions believe that holding both the male and female experience in one body is the closest that human beings can get to a total holiness and that within this relationship the worshipper "Receives the inner-most essence and power of a God." Within these traditions the descriptions of "Two spirit" or "Double gendered" may be used and in yet other cultures these people may, as with the Gallae, be considered to belong to a "Third Sex". Possession of this inclusiveness is often considered to be appropriate to a priestly role and in those societies where the requisite outlets for behaviour are provided such people can have a very high status. Indeed the reverence which they are accorded can commonly exceed the esteem that is given to other people who conform to the normal expectations of their sex. In Ancient Rome those people who transcended the sex-gender boundaries could be described as "The Wise Ones, the Pure Ones and the Holy Ones" and the myths of the cult indicate that those who crossed the sex gender boundaries were given special status. For the full account see Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

¹⁸ Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

¹⁹ Frymer-Kensky, Tivka. (1993) "In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth" Ballantine Books; (First Edition February 10, 1993) ISBN-10: 0449907465 ISBN-13: 978-0449907467.

²⁰ That there were public official duties for women in Rome contradicts the commonplace notion that women in ancient Rome took part only in private or domestic religion. The dual male-female priesthoods may reflect the Roman tendency to seek a gender complement within the religious sphere. Most divine powers are represented by both a male and a female deity, as seen in divine pairs such as Liber and Libera. The twelve major gods were presented as six gender-balanced pairs, and Roman religion departed from Indo-European tradition in installing two goddesses in its supreme triad of patron deities, Juno and Minerva along with Jupiter. This triad "formed the core of Roman
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014
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breakthrough was a religion which worshipped a single gender transcendent God, but which also possessed a social perspective that was close to the cults.

This is the transformation which Christianity brought. Yet that achievement carried its own dangers because this meant that in order to gain respectability in Greco/Roman society, Christianity had to quickly separate itself from the still continuing social and gender disrupting behaviour of the Goddess cults. In addition there were many other moral, cultural and theological differences between the two religious groups, and these equally required an absolute and an immediate rejection of any possible links with the Goddess cults²². However Christian doctrine also required the Church to work within society to change it, and instead of continuing with the challenges and the social disruption of following the doctrine of true gender transcendence contained in the Gospel message which is taught by Jesus, and also by Paul in Galatians 3:28, Christianity came to adopt the form of gender complementarity which demanded the submission of women. This is described by Paul in Ephesians 5:22-24, 1 Corinthians 14:34, and 1 Timothy 2:1-7²³, and additionally by Peter in 1 Peter 3:1-6. This dogma of gender complementarity was identical to that practiced by Roman society, and it also shared much with Judaism as well.

The need to establish a clear boundary between Christianity and the Goddess cults meant that instead of just adopting the social divisions and gender complementarity of a gender unequal society, Christianity had to be seen to take an active role in its enforcement of them, and this pursuit of respectability and acceptability has led to the imposition of a strong heterosexual, gender defined and exclusive orthodoxy in Christianity, whereby every expression of gender or of sexually variant behaviour is automatically considered to be an immoral act. It has also led to the great severity of the Christian condemnations of all gender and sexually variant behaviour as being second only to bestiality in the heinousness of these acts.

However short or long this early period of absolute gender transcendence was, it had to be complete, for without this Christianity could never have made the transition into

religion."(See Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, pp. 79–81. Lipka, Michael.(2009), "Roman Gods: A Conceptual Approach".Brill, pp. 141–142)

²¹ Barker, Margaret. (2001)"The Temple Roots Of The Liturgy"

This is developed from a paper read in Dublin in November 2000 subsequently published in *Sourozh. A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*. Available online at:

<http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/TempleRootsofChristianLiturgy.pdf>

See also Barker, Margaret. (2003)."Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy": T&T Clark; ISBN-10: 0567089428 ISBN-13: 978-0567089427

²² It should be noted that sexual morality in these dominant societies was determined by authority.

Responsibility in all activities was demanded, but provided the recipient was of a lesser status than the perpetrator, these societies endorsed what in the present day would be considered to be same-sex or heterosexual rape. That was horrendous to subject societies, whose members could be the victims of such actions. However this difference arises due to cultural clashes between subject and dominant societies more than the theologies of the cults

²³ "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all --this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth".

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a world religion from a local gender defined sect. Therefore instead of simply seeking gender neutrality the Christian Gospel provided a major role for women. A doctrine of full gender equality was expressed in early Christianity, which would find acceptance in present day society and it is also not surprising that women figure prominently in the early church. However even though these important roles at first were given to women, the social constraints imposed by gender complementarity meant that the public spokespeople for this new religion could only be men. Through their pursuit of a male agenda and from its pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines of the early Church have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines that were adopted by the later Church²⁴. Therefore the theological justifications which in the present day are employed to validate the presumptions for a male leadership, together with its male prerogatives, and with the arguments for an exclusively male priesthood are also founded on these later traditions. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus and the Gospel Church.

1:1:3 Changing Perceptions

One of the main objectives of the Reformation movement of the 16th Century was to eliminate the spurious traditions that had developed within the Church, and to restore it to the fundamental teachings of the bible itself. Many changes were made by the reformers, but their understanding of the position of gender and of sexually variant behaviour within the Church was largely unchanged by their reforms²⁵. Therefore the doctrines which were embraced by the fourth century Church on these matters were believed to be correct. However the Reformer's own attitudes to the different sexual and gender variant conditions would also be filtered and strengthened through the theology that they themselves developed. This has provided the background against which the present day attitudes to homosexuality and to gender and sexual variance have now come to be established. The contributions of the reformers must therefore be recognised as crucial, but the key period for dealing with the Church doctrines on these matters is that of the first three hundred years of the Church.

1:2 Principles of Analysis

1:2:1 Gender and Sexual Variation

The presumption which most people make when they observe gender and sexual variant people is that they are driven by the search for a goal: so that transsexuals are men who want to be women (and vice versa) and that homosexuals are people who desire to have sexual relationships with people of the same sex. However this neurophysiological and psychological analysis shows that instead of desire, these conditions are driven by the rejection of an enforced identity, and that these driving forces of rejection are far stronger than everyone expects.

²⁴ See Section 3:1 in this document.

²⁵ Many transformations were made by the reformers in attitudes to celibacy, marriage and sex. However a strong and exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy was retained both by the reformers and the Catholic Church. Reasons are discussed later in this account
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Although gender and sexual variation acts independently of each other, (for example as wide a range of sexual variation is found amongst the transgender community as that which is encountered in society at large), the driving forces which lie behind the two conditions share the same dynamics and the study of one gives results that can be applied to the other. This examination concentrates more on transgender issues because all of the markers which are associated with the gender variant conditions can be more easily identified, and it can be more firmly shown that the underlying driving forces that power these conditions are present from infancy when an overall sense of self identity begins to be created, to the end of adult life.

For the great majority of people it is possible to look down at their bodies and to say without any contradiction that “I am a man”, or “I am a woman”. However this does not reflect the order in which these ideas are formed.

In this analysis it is shown that the development of a personal self identity, including gender identity takes place in three main stages. The first of these stages begins at birth and it characterises the first two years of life as ones which are dominated by a feedforward processes of unrestrained integration and acquisition²⁶. By their nature these initial processes of contagion and the self reinforcing drives of possessive imitation fulfil their main purposes through creating vast amounts of un-coordinated and often conflicting information²⁷. The resonance of mirror neurons also provides a framework whereby empathy is created²⁸. This is the acquisition stage; however chaos can be the only result if no effective control ever comes to be imposed.

A sudden onset and the step change in behaviour is encountered between the ages of one and a half to three years. It is demonstrated in this analysis that the marks the transition period when the ideas of separation of the self from the other first begin to have an effect²⁹. This takes place through another contagious process and is also the time from when the first structured elements of control, analysis and of cognitive thought can begin to be meaningfully applied.

From about three years onwards, feedback processes which make use of cognition, judgement and analysis then take over the dominant role, and this identifies the period when the separation of the self from the other becomes increasingly defined. The forces which drive this organisation of self identity must be sufficiently strong to overcome these innate processes of contagion and possessive imitation which still continue to exist. Not only must these forces possess great strength, the developing brain physiology reinforces only those neural pathways which are extensively used, and discards the others, and it is shown that this process also physically locks key features of personality in place³⁰.

²⁶These ages are approximate and considerable variation may occur.

²⁷Gilchrist, S. (2013). “A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach”. See footer for access

²⁸Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief”. See footer for access.

²⁹Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach”. See footer for access.

³⁰Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief”. See footer for access.

In summary there are three developmental stages to note. The first identifies the step change in infant behaviour about the age of two years. The second stage becomes evident at the latest by three years when it is shown that some basic core elements of self-identity have become irrevocably locked in place. The third stage occurs from the age of four years when children first become sufficiently self aware to examine their own minds and this is then they can first sense the correctness of what has taken place. By the time when it becomes possible for anyone to look down at their bodies and to declare to themselves that: "I am a woman" or that "I am a man", it is only an identity check which is by that time being performed.

In this examination it is concluded that the conflicts which are associated with an incongruent gender identity have to be understood as the symptom of the failure to build a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. The power and the control which must be exercised by the feedback forces of cognition, judgement and analysis must also be more than sufficient to countermand the always present contagion together with the self-reinforcing drives. The overpowering constancy and the firmness which is required for their success additionally demands that when any two people encounter each other, even if there is gap of many years, each may still recognise in the other that it is the same person whom they had previously met, and that the same constancy of personality is encountered. It can thus be argued that the development processes for transsexuals follows a normal pattern, but the problem which they encounter is that they have developed a fixed, secure and unchangeable gender identity that society does not expect³¹. It is the alienation and exhaustion that comes from fighting this constant, overpowering and unmovable demand which leads to desperation and collapse.

Although the compulsion to seek gender reassignment, and to make the body shape conform as far as is possible to the gender which one belongs to often becomes overwhelming, these conflicts are driven by the rejection of what is wrong and the desire for what is right. This is why transsexuals are not driven through the desire to become a woman or a man; they are driven instead by the desire to be able to live life in the way which is true to their own self identity, and many then merge invisibly and unobtrusively into society in their new role after their target has been reached. However these are conflicts of identity which are driven by rejection rather than by desire. Without a clear goal the conscious awareness of them can be suppressed, and this also means that bipolarity exists.

Polarisation is also encountered. If gender identity is imagined to be the finger which presses the switch, then the gender allegiance is measured by the way in which the switch is then set. The development of any gender identity is therefore a multifaceted process, but this requirement to develop a coherent self-identity creates a gender allegiance which becomes exclusive and complete. These same processes apply to everybody. Thus for those people whose body shape is in accord with their gender allegiance no new target is sought, and no discord is perceived to exist. This also leads to the situation where transsexuals often become driven to desperation by the conflicts they face, while other people cannot understand why they exist.

³¹ Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief". See footer for access.

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As well as those which are related to gender identity, it is demonstrated that the same development processes can be applied to the creation of many other key features of personality. These are not passive processes and strong but hidden, driving forces are also found to be present. It is further demonstrated both the physiological and psychological processes are together tuned to ensure that the maximum possible personal potential, together with the greatest degree of a personal individuality is created. This analysis also reveals how the natural variations in these development processes can lead to situations where both gender and sexually variant identities are formed. Thus no external cause may be found. These same variations further ensure that different end points are reached for every individual. Explanations for transsexuality, transvestism, lesbian, gay and bisexual conditions are offered by this analysis, and the interactions between them can also be defined³².

1:2:2 Re-Examining Christian Teaching

Without the provision of a fresh perspective, any new analysis would only be the recycling of previous work. That different perspective comes through this new analysis of personality development carried out by this author, which employs the gender and sexually variant conditions as a model to test the accuracy of the results³³. That work has demonstrated that these conditions are identity driven. Even though the conflicts that they create may be expressed through a desire for engaging in certain types of relationship, or through the cravings for gender reassignment, the driving forces that lie behind them are not propelled either by gender or by sexual desires. They are driven by the need to create a coherent sense of self identity which allows people to be true to themselves³⁴.

Therefore the recognition of the differences between goal driven and identity driven conflicts is crucial for this understanding³⁵. In the goal driven conflict the desire which is expressed is identical to the actual goal that is being sought. Once that goal is achieved the behaviour that results expresses the delights of the same goal that is now fulfilled. In an identity driven conflict the real goal that people seek is to be able to be true to who they are. In these cases the change which is made is to the frame

³² For a full description of this work see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach". Gilchrist, S. (2013). "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach", and also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief". See footer for access

³³ The impetus for this research has come through personal experience. For further information on this, see: Gilchrist, S. (2011). "LGB&T People: Labels and Faith"

³⁴ For details of the psychological analysis see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014) "Personality Development and LGB and T People: A New Approach."

³⁵ Each type of process represents different stages in the process of personality development. Up to the age of about two years identity driven conflicts, which are characterised by the rejection of what is wrong dominate. After the age of two years children have a sufficient sense of self identity to enable goal driven conflicts to be formed. The desire that is expressed matches the goal that is sought. For the full implications of this, see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach". Gilchrist, S. (2013). "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". And also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief". See footer for access
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of reference alone. No more changes are required and these types of conflicts are characterised by the rejection of what is wrong. Often no behavioural changes or any further goals are sought and as extended a range of moral attitudes desires and perceptions are found amongst these groups as there are in society at large.

This viewpoint has been expressed by gender and sexually variant people for many years, but in the past it has only been based on the word of one group against the other. Now that has been backed up through this research. There are four particular implications for this analysis. These are:

1. The first is the requirement to distinguish all gender and sexually variant behaviour which is identity driven and is about being oneself, from goal driven behaviour which may instead be pursued for sexual gratification, prostitution and irresponsible sex.
2. The second is to recognise that the conclusions of this analysis destroy the validity of any current or any of the previous attempts by the Church to make homosexuality or every other type of identity driven sexual and gender variant behaviour scapegoat for abusive or inappropriate sex.
3. The third requirement is to examine the cultures from which Christianity has developed while taking the first two of these criteria into account.
4. The 1997 Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church states that: "Tradition has always declared that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered. They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity"³⁶. This means that according to this definition all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour arise from a goal driven conflict, and it means that it can only be engaged in for reasons of lust, promiscuity, prostitution, or for inappropriate sex. That presumption is challenged by this analysis.

1:2:3 Physiology and Psychology

This account uses the personal experience of the author in dealing with transgender concerns. It brings together newly applied theories of personality development, with the recent research work on infant neurophysiology and neuropsychology to provide new insights into the gender and sexually variant conditions. It examines the links between the most recent neuroscientific research and psychoanalytical approaches. Particular attention is given to development during the first three years of life. A

³⁶ Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997: "Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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complete account of this work is reported elsewhere³⁷. The summary which is given here only presents the information that is necessary for understanding its impact on the outlook of the Church.

The physiological and psychological analyses which have been developed as a part of this investigation have shown that both gender and sexually variant conditions, such as homosexuality and transsexuality, are identity driven³⁸. Even though the conflicts manifest themselves as disturbances of gender and sexual orientation, their origins lie at the foundation of self-identity. A coherent sense of self-identity is sought and what people can become is then built upon this base³⁹. This means that the conflicts are driven by the rejection of the enforced role and not by the desire for the new⁴⁰. Therefore it is not the desire for sex or the cravings for a new role that drives

³⁷ This analysis takes a new approach. For a full account see: Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships", Gilchrist, S. 2012. "Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church". And Gilchrist, S. Pub.2014. "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief".

³⁸ Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach". Gilchrist, S. (2013). "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". And also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief". See footer for access

³⁹ Transsexuals may strongly express the desire to be members of the opposite gender, however they are not men who want to become women and vice versa: instead they want to be themselves. Many seek gender reassignment surgery to make their bodies appear as those of the gender identity they believe that they have belonged to from birth, but the extremity of this trauma strongly contrasts with the modesty of the outcome that is sought. Sexual desire plays no role in creating the gender trauma. Most dress and live unremarkably and modestly in the role that they have embraced. After gender reassignment has been carried out, these people can feel that they are true to themselves, gender no longer becomes an issue in their lives and many merge invisibly into society in their new role.

⁴⁰ Please note that this footnote summarises a new approach to the understanding of gender dysphoria. A summary is given in: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014) "Personality Development and LGB and T People: A New Approach". See also: Gilchrist, S. (2013). "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". For the full analysis see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief". See footer for access. Recent advances in infant neuroscience are considered together with the various psychological approaches in order to give to give both a top down and a bottom up assessment. Gender dysphoria is used as a model to test the validity of the arguments which are developed. In the papers it is shown how the influence of pre-natal hormones can influence the direction of future development. It is also shown that there is a maturing of the thought processes which are involved in creating an overall gender identity. The development begins from birth with the neural resonances, and the rejection, inhibition and imitation which create the core gender identity and define the behaviour of infancy. The processes of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning ensure that these early concepts become permanently locked in place. This has happened by between the ages of two and three years and its permanence is needed to ensure that a constancy of personality is maintained. This first period of development is here defined as the integration period. A step change in the development of brain activity takes place at the end of the integration period and a rapid progression then follows. This is the transition period. The learning capabilities subsequently extend to the development of more socially integrated behaviour, where social learning inputs become more prominent, where more comprehensive ideas of gender role are created, and where more effective methods of conflict resolution can begin to be applied. This third period is described as the separation period in this analysis and it is when an individual awareness of the self as distinct from the other begins to be created. This is also the period where concepts associated with the cognitive continuum can start to develop. For this continuum to work there has to be some form of mental processing which relates cause to effect. The delayed development of the pre-frontal cortex and the absence of this cognitive continuum during the integration period restrict the learning processes that can be made available. Therefore children do not develop an adequate "Theory of Mind" until around the age of four years. Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

these battles and the ultimate goal is not for people to be made men or women, it is for people to find the coherence of self identity which enables them to be true to themselves.

It is demonstrated that the development of identity begins from birth with the neural resonances, and the processes of rejection, inhibition and imitation that create the core gender identity, and which also define the behaviour of infancy. The processes of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning then ensure that these early concepts become permanently locked in place. All of this has happened by between the ages of two and three years and their permanence is needed to ensure that a constancy of personality is maintained. Attempts to fight these conflicts do not succeed since the more that they are fought or suppressed the stronger they become. The constant awareness of the unchanging nature and invincibility of these conflicts enforce an ever increasing alienation from the imposed gender identity. This more and more becomes accompanied by the desperate drive for surgery and gender reassignment, which can often be made the scapegoat for the trauma which is incurred. If these conflicts cannot be resolved, the outcome can often be a catastrophic collapse.

Therefore the dominating, and also the sometime subconscious compulsions which are powered by these deep seated driving forces come through from the need for people to true to themselves. This means that behaviour is not the focus and as wide a range of moral attitudes and motivations are found to exist within the transgender and homosexual communities as those that are encountered in society at large.

This is the age from which children start to be able to test their own thought processes, and it is the age at which many transsexuals begin to feel that something is wrong. These delays in development mean that the distinction between the early rejection, imitation and inhibition led thought processes during the integration period and the later goal led ones of the separation period is extremely important. This is not least because the methods required to manage the conflicts arising from these different types of conflicts are almost opposite to one another. The Christian Church has adopted a doctrine which states that transsexuality and homosexuality are goal and not identity led conditions. The same presumptions are often made within the medical profession, and great deal of trauma and tragedy has been caused by the inappropriate and counterproductive treatments which have been applied. This failure of understanding has had disastrous consequences. The late creation of a "Theory of Mind" creates a delay before the normal adult methods of conflict resolution to begin to develop, and it is argued that the reason for this delay is to allow the maximum possible intellectual capacity and individuality of personality to develop. This capability can then be applied to those conflicts that are associated with the identification of the gender role, and transsexuals can resolve these conflicts in many different ways. This is not the case for earlier conflicts associated with the core gender identity. Here these more advanced methods of conflict resolution fail to work and the more strongly they are applied the stronger the conflicts become. Brain plasticity and synaptic pruning have locked these foundations in place and methods of management must therefore welcome and accept the reality of these foundations before it becomes possible to calm the compulsions they create. Management techniques must be based on a transcendence which finds its fulfilment through inclusion and a search for the richness of life. It is important to note that gender reassignment will often be the right course to take, and that opportunity must never be denied. The conflict cannot be fought, so successful management only allows people to find the correct balance for themselves. When it is found that gender reassignment is the correct destination this can also be pursued in an orderly way. People may have genuine and firmly held reasons which are not gender identity related to avoid seeking gender reassignment. By understanding and accepting the dynamics of these conflicts management techniques can be evolved.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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1:2:4 Misconceptions

That is not the usually understood perception. Transsexuals typically express their predicament by saying they seek gender reassignment in order to make their bodies conform to the gender which they have always belonged to. This drive is interpreted as a goal driven conflict, which mean that their desire arises through the search for that particular goal⁴¹. The usual presumption which is made is that the condition is driven by a craving to be made into a man or a woman, and the possibility that these conflicts are imposed, not through the desire for achievement, but by the rejection of the enforced gender identity is thereby dismissed. Therefore all gender and sexually variant behaviour is frequently condemned because its motives are considered to be for the pursuit of sexual gratification, promiscuity and lust, yet exactly the opposite may be the case. Over the centuries many of these people have been murdered, persecuted and condemned for their actions, even when their most earnest aim and intention is to live moral, faithful, committed and honest lives.

1:2:5 Disasters

The Christian Church has adopted a doctrine which states that transsexuality and homosexuality are goal and not identity led conditions which are engaged in for the pursuit of lust or immoral and inappropriate sex. Within the medical professions the same presumptions, which consider these conflicts to be driven by a goal led desire are often made, and a great deal of trauma and tragedy has been caused by the inappropriate and counterproductive treatments which have been applied⁴². Attempts to treat these gender and sexually variant conditions as though they are driven by a goal centred desire or are a lifestyle choice prove disastrous. Nevertheless because they are driven by rejection and the search for identity, some relief can be gained by creating a sense of euphoria which transcends their demands. When this happens a threshold can be crossed where the conflicts seem to disappear⁴³.

This is the approach which is taken by some religious groups, who use this to claim that a "Cure" has been found, but this relief only lasts for as long as the euphoria can

⁴¹ It is essential to understand the difference between a goal driven conflict and a rejection driven one. Transsexuals become overwhelmed by the goal to seek gender reassignment, but this is characterised by the rejection of the enforced gender rather than the goal for the new. Once gender reassignment has taken place it often becomes evident that the real need is not to change the gender identification. Instead it is for people to be able to be themselves. Life can be lived without the need to express any of the behavioural stereotypes, interests or concerns associated with the reassigned gender that might be expected. In a goal driven conflict the goal which is sought and the outcome that is achieved are always the same and in that case a close association with gender stereotypical interests and behaviour would be expected to occur. The different types of conflict can be associated with the different stages of personality development.

⁴² Aversion Therapy or Electric Shock treatment has often been applied. However these fail to deal with the real need and the consequence of this is to drive people even deeper into crisis. The reverse approach of transcendence, which uses the principles of inclusion to create a coherent sense of gender identity and which enables people to find a richness of life can be used to calm the conflicts that are created. See: Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality".

⁴³ For a full analysis see Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality".

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be sustained. After it is lost it is not something which willpower can regain. The problem with many such groups is that any person who does not conform to their rules of behaviour may be ejected from membership. These people may also be told that God still loves them but to be practicing or non-practicing is not the real issue. The act of rejection becomes a personal attack of the self identity of that individual and not of their practice. The hurt, guilt and self loathing caused by this can be enormous. It is also extremely destructive because any attempt to fight or to suppress the conflict drives people even deeper into distress. Whatever opportunity had remained to rejoin the group or to keep control of the conflict is either diminished or destroyed.

1:2:6 Condemnation

The traditional Christian teaching on homosexuality and gender and sexually variant conditions declare that, while it is not sinful to possess these feelings, to permit any expression of them whatever is a reprehensible and a sinful act. These traditional teachings and doctrines on homosexuality have been further developed by Aquinas and others. They condemn all such behaviour as mortal sins and they also define same-sex intercourse as the second most heinous act. For a more detailed account, of this see section 3:7:1 of this document. Paragraph 2357⁴⁴ of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church is worth repeating here in full:

“Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.”

This statement both recognises that the physiological genesis for homosexuality remains largely unexplained and at the same time it makes the presumption that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered, and that they are engaged in for the purposes of lewdness, lust, promiscuity or inappropriate sex. The conclusions of the psychological and physiological analysis summarised in this document demonstrate that these presumptions are incorrect⁴⁵. The results from the social and theological analysis also indicate that the reasons for the development of this approach owed much to the need for the Church to gain social respectability and to integrate into the social structures of Greco/Roman society. The Gospel Church had sought gender transcendence, and it had developed an attitude to gender equality that would find acceptance in the present day. It is also shown that what the Church today regards

⁴⁴ Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997.

⁴⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2013). “A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach”. See footer for access
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as its traditional teaching on homosexuality does not have an Gospel foundation. The consequences of this have been many centuries of persecution, and the pursuit of these doctrines brings shame on the Church.

1:3 Cultures and Compromise

1:3:1 Summary

In the earlier sections of this document it has been shown that the conclusions of the neurophysiological and psychological analysis demonstrate that the drives to engage in various forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour come from two opposing sources where the approaches which are appropriate for the care and management of one are counterproductive with the other. Therefore the traditional teaching of the Christian Church as it is defined by paragraph 2357 of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, which identifies only a single source, cannot be correct. In different religious beliefs across cultures and continents an equivalent duality of sources and behaviour is found, and this matches that which has been discovered by the results of this neurophysiological and psychological analysis. In this account it is shown that a similar duality is encountered within the social and religious attitudes to gender and sexual variance in the first century Middle Eastern societies, and that this duality of source and behaviour would also have been known to Jesus, John and to the other Apostles. An important disconnection has occurred. In the first three hundred years of its existence, all evidence of that duality in Christianity had been lost.

Christianity as it is known today has been heavily influenced by the teaching of Peter and Paul, and also through the compromises which the early Church made to gain respectability in Greco Roman society⁴⁶. It is shown that this included the adoption of a strong and exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy, which the Church enforced in order to distance itself from the politically challenging and the gender disrupting behaviour of the Goddess Cults. This has also provided the Church with a structural framework which is based on the social mores of Greco/Roman society more than the Jewish tradition. It is additionally shown that what were initially pragmatic decisions the early Church first made to obtain influence in Greco/Roman society have since come to be considered as unchangeable doctrines of the Church. These are major challenges which must be overcome if any attempt to rediscover and to reinstate the original Christian teachings about celibacy, gender transcendence, gender equality and the issues of gender and sexual variance is to have any prospect of success.

A major turning point in the development of the Church was its transformation from a protesting minority religion to an institution which had the backing of the state. There is therefore the need to examine the history of the Church from two perspectives. Part 2 of this document considers the history and the subsequent development of the Church traditions and doctrines by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers in order to determine their perception of how Christian teaching had been presented by the fourth century Church, how it had differed from

⁴⁶Peter's own contribution seems to have been have been at least as important. See Gilchrist, S. "Reform and the Christian Church" See footer for access
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the original Gospel views, and the transformation that had occurred. It demonstrates how the traditions and the teaching that was developed by the fourth century Church has since evolved, and how it has been transformed into that of the present day. It is further noted that, while the reformers rejected many of the traditions that had been developed by the fourth century Church, they maintained, and further strengthened the teachings on sexual and gender variance which had been adopted by the fourth century Church, on their understanding that this was correct.

Part 3 of this document “Relationships and the Early Church” considers how the first century attitudes to sexual and gender variance which were found in the surrounding Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures were brought forward into the early Christian Church. These attitudes demanded the exercise of full responsibility for all actions but their acceptability was not determined principally on a gendered basis, and they placed the boundary which divided acceptable and unacceptable behaviour between actions which were carried out for the noble pursuit of love, and the actions that were engaged in for the carnal abuse of sex. The transformation and changes in outlook between those embraced by the Gospel Church and the early fourth century Church are also discussed.

The cultural clashes - and not only those between subject and dominant first century societies, but also between the first century societies and those of the present day have had a major impact on the attitudes that were, and are today, encountered. The outcomes of these clashes are examined in the context of how much they may have affected the nature of the relationships between Jesus and John⁴⁷; the contrasting attitudes to sexual morality between subject societies and the dominant powers, and on the subsequent developments within the Church. It is notable that the only sexual act which is prohibited by the bible is that of anal penetration⁴⁸. Sexual morality in the dominant cultures was determined by authority, so any male citizen had the power to engage with a man of lesser status without penalty. If he did this with someone of the same status only the penetrated partner was condemned. The reverse situation was encountered in subject societies where men could be the victim of such actions, and in the accounts of Sodom and Gomorrah, the horror about the prospect of same-sex rape being inflicted on the Israelites resounds through the Jewish texts. In Judaism all anal penetration was very strongly condemned, either for its use in humiliation, or where it would cause social disruption

⁴⁷ See Section 3:4:1 of this document.

⁴⁸This first century interpretations make it clear that the passages in Leviticus only prohibit the act of same sex anal intercourse. They do not prohibit any other expression of homosexual desires. All other sexual acts are permissible and these include oral sex. There is no condemnation of lesbian sex whatever since penile penetration is not possible. This Hebrew interpretation takes a very specific view but it is quoted widely in the literature. For example it is cited in the Babylonian Talmud and it was reaffirmed in the Conservative Judaism's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards in America in December 2006. It is also cited by Josephus in “Against Apion”; and by Philo in “Abraham”. These latter two sources were contemporary with Jesus and Paul: This is what both would have known and this interpretation would almost certainly have guided the actions of the early Christian Church. These changes in meaning have brought enormous consequences. The original specific condemnation of one particular act, which was there to preserve social order in society, has been transformed without authority into the condemnation of every homosexual relationship and act.

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inside the gender unequal society⁴⁹. However with this particular exception a duality in attitudes to sexual behaviour is found⁵⁰.

A major and a necessary achievement of Christianity was its success in transferring the distinctive views and moralities of the minority Jewish religion into the dominant culture. How Jesus dealt with the sexual clashes associated with these cross cultural transformations is discussed in section 3:1:8 in this document. If the Old Testament prohibitions of the Law that are given in Leviticus 18:22 and in 20:13 condemned all acts of anal penetration; then the coming of Jesus, in the fulfilment of the Law, meant that judgements were no longer to be made in literal terms by using the words of the Jewish law, but from love and on the intention of the acts.

It is hardly surprising that this exception is found. There were many condemnations of sexual abuse which were issued by the authorities of the Church⁵¹. These became ever more and more vehement, however they were often not acted upon in the civil ordinances in the ways which the Church demanded, either by most of the Roman Emperors or later on by the Carolingian Kings (the principal exception to this was the Emperor Justinian)⁵². This conflict over of anal penetration was a major contributor to the cultural clashes which occurred. In a dominant society it was only the submissive or penetrated partner who was condemned for reducing the powers of citizenship by engaging in same-sex acts, however in a subject society it was the perpetrator who was condemned because of the humiliation which the enforcement of the same-sex act created, and this latter position was adopted by the Christian Church. The length of time, and the difficulty which the Church encountered in changing the attitudes of the dominant society, measures the strength of the battles it faced.

⁴⁹ In the dominant first century Middle Eastern societies the freedom for one man to anally penetrate another was based on authority. If this happened between two citizens, only the penetrated partner was condemned. However a very different situation was found in subject societies which were dominated by these major powers. In the Judean tradition the freedom to engage in penetrative relationships was instead governed by love. Therefore the Greeks and the Romans could be regarded as people who penetrated at will, but the Jews did not.

⁵⁰ This account examines these matters principally from a Christian perspective. A more extended analysis is given in Gilchrist, S. (2011) "Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships". For a Jewish perspective see: Greenberg, Steven; (2004) "Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition" The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3

⁵¹ The full account is given in Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships"

⁵² One might expect any type of same-sex act to have been a major area of concern, however by far the major condemnations in first century Greco/Roman and Jewish society seem to have been socially and status determined. The jurist Paulus stated in his Digest of Roman law, written around 300 A.D., that a male who voluntarily is passive to another male should lose half of his estate. He also reiterates an earlier edict barring such men from the legal profession. In 438 A.D. the Roman Emperor Theodosius II confirmed that just the submissive partners in homosexual relationships were to be put to death. The Roman Emperor Justinian, in amendments to his Novels No.77 (dating 538) and No.141 (dating 559), declared that the sin of Sodomy was specifically due to same-sex activities and the desire for them. Initially both of the offending partners were to be put to death, but this was later relaxed. This was the first Roman legal assignment of the term Sodomy to these activities. During the remainder of the first millennium a number of Church Councils increased the penalties against same-sex acts, but these could not be enforced without the support of the civil authorities.

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These transformations are discussed in Part 3 of this document. It shows that same-sex acts which are engaged in for power and physical gratification must be clearly separated from those which come from the outpouring of love, and it demonstrates that instead of the blanket ban on anal penetration which the present day Church imposes, any judgement on these activities must likewise be made on responsibility in action and on the intention of the act. This does nothing more than put same-sex intercourse on the same level as heterosexual intercourse, where its use can rejoice in the delights of love, but its abuse condemned through the horrors of rape. These considerations in principle should allow the original duality to be rediscovered, but for as long as the Christian Church by its creed continues to define homosexuality, and by implication all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour, to be intrinsically disordered and always in pursuit of immoral or illicit sex, then that duality can never be restored⁵³.

1:3:2: Current Consequences

These doctrines have placed the Christian Church within a trap of its own making. In Parts 2 and 3 of this document it is shown that the theological justifications which, in the present day are employed to validate the presumptions for the condemnation of all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour as being intrinsically disordered and exclusively for the pursuit of immoral and inappropriate sex, together with the presumptions of a male leadership, with its male prerogatives, and its justification for an exclusively male priesthood are built on the pressing need for the early Church to obtain respectability and its acceptance in Greco/Roman society. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus, and they do not come from the Gospel Church.

For as long as the Christian Church held the power to maintain its secular authority these traditional views on sexual and gender variance, with the traditional teaching about homosexuality could not be challenged. In some Churches the social changes arising in the last fifty years have promoted a re-evaluation of Christian teaching, but these have also resulted in the retrenchment into literalism and fundamentalism in others. That has been accompanied with their rejection by the mainstream of society.

Current social developments have included the disappearance of Church authority, the rejection of religious belief, the widespread introduction and use of contraception, the social acceptance of same-sex relationships, the enacting of anti-discrimination legislation, legalisation of same-sex relationships in the form of Civil Partnerships, and also, since June 2013, the legalisation of Equal (or same-sex) Marriage. These same changes have also meant that most people now have had personal and direct experiences of relating to homosexual couples and to other people who are gender variant or in other same-sex relationships. Such observers do not need to have any special knowledge to understand that the same values of love, care and commitment can be expressed within loving same-sex partnerships as there are in heterosexual marriages. It is also easy for them to distinguish between the behaviour of any two

⁵³ Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357: "By declaring that "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."

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people who are involved within a heterosexual friendship and that of an equivalent couple who are involved in a homosexual relationship, even in the circumstances where there is a total absence of sex. It is these clashes between what is perceived today as the common sense values, and the fervent reliance on traditional doctrines which is destroying the credibility of Christianity in the eyes of the world.

This analysis has demonstrated that the present day attitudes to gender and sexual variation which have been adopted by much of society are the ones which are, and were, much closer to the teaching of Jesus. Therefore it is the people who hold to the traditional teachings of the Church who are out of step with the Gospel message and a rediscovery of the first century values is urgently required. The consequences of transforming dogma into a doctrine were condemned by Jesus in Mark 7:1-23, and the words in this passage speak for themselves:

“This people honours me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.”

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’

Mark 7: 6-8

The resulting gender discrimination which came through the misapplication of gender complementarity and centuries of persecution, condemnation murder and rejection of all gender and sexually variant people whose most earnest aims and intentions were to live totally moral, faithful, committed and honest lives in ways that were true to the Christian gospel, and true repentance for past misdeeds is an important element in the rehabilitation of the Church.

1:3:3: Making the Choice

The present position of the Christian church is not sustainable and it is essential for it to change its approach. However any change must always be to affirm the Gospel of Christ. There are a number of impediments which have to be overcome. One of these is found in the way that reinterpretation and translation drift has been used and is still being used today to reinforce the traditional doctrines of the Church. This is examined in detail elsewhere⁵⁴. A further concern which fuels the opposition to any change comes through the fear that any liberalisation of the traditional teachings on homosexuality and on gender and sexual variation will destroy the moral authority of Christianity and the Church. However there is nothing contained within this analysis which can justify these fears or reduce the moral expectations in any way, for it only requires that all people, irrespective of their senses of gender identity or their sexual orientation, are treated alike.

In the moral compass of all religions there is the freedom to choose between actions of good and evil. This can sometimes be described as the difference between “The

⁵⁴See section 3:5:1 of this document.
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way of darkness and the way of light". That equivalent duality is shown to exist within the Judean and Greco/Roman traditions of the first century where those people who attempt to live to the highest moral standards which their society expects can live according to the way of light. People who do the reverse follow a way of darkness instead, and they are strongly condemned for their actions. Through its search for authority and for respectability in a gender unequal society the Christian Church has condemned every category of gender and sexually variant behaviour to the way of darkness instead. The result of this has been that the traditions of the later church do not represent those that belonged to the Gospel Church. A major disconnection has occurred and its correction is a reform that must now be made.

1:3:4 Seeking a Change

On the 28th August 2013 the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, told an audience of traditional born-again Christians that they must "repent" over the way in which gay and lesbian people have been treated in the past. In a speech to the Evangelical Alliance⁵⁵ he said that the vast majority of people under 35 think that the Christian attitude to lesbian and gay people is "wicked" and "incomprehensible", and that most young people considered Christians to be no better than racists on the issue.

The recent news that Pope Francis has called an extraordinary synod of the Roman Catholic Church in October 2014 to discuss the subject of the family is a welcome development. A questionnaire to the Bishops asks them to provide local views on the issues of premarital cohabitation, birth control and gay marriage and it is hoped that significant changes can be made, however it is also made clear that the synod will not be expected to change or to reverse the traditional teachings of the Church.

This awareness and concern is a welcome development. Within the Anglican Church a number of reports have been published. The two which are the most significant are the Church of England report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality, or the Pilling Report⁵⁶ which was commissioned by the House of Bishops of the Church of England in January 2012, and was published on the 28 November 2013. The second, on "Some Issues in Human Sexuality: A Working Party of the House of Bishops" was published by the Church of England in 4 November 2003⁵⁷. Both of these reports advocate a "Listening Process" in order to further the debate.

Nevertheless a particular concern is the hesitant progress and the seeming lack of awareness of the urgency of the situation. A further concern is about the limitations

⁵⁵On Wednesday, 28 August, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby visited the Evangelical Alliance's new home in Copenhagen Street, King's Cross, London, to officially open the building. Evangelical leaders from across the country joined national newspaper and broadcast journalists and members of staff from the Evangelical Alliance at the event, which also celebrated the Alliance's work over the past 170 years and looked ahead to its future. More information and a video of the speech is available on the Evangelical Alliance website: <http://www.eauk.org/church/stories/official-opening-with-the-archbishop-of-canterbury.cfm>

⁵⁶Report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality (The Pilling Report). Church House Publishing. Published: 28/11/2013 ISBN-13: 9780715144374 ISBN-10: 0715144375

⁵⁷ Church of England 4 November 2003 Some Issues in Human Sexuality: A Working Party of the House of Bishops. Church House, Westminster ISBN No: 9780715138687
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which both these reports, which are and were, intended to be frameworks to inform the debate, appear to impose in regard to the questioning of the traditional teaching of the Christian Church. Many of the presumptions that were made in the 2003 report date from the time of St Thomas Aquinas onwards. As this report says: “Where St Thomas led the Christian tradition has followed” and the statement which is taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church⁵⁸ is also accepted in that report as the traditional view on homosexuality. The Pilling report notes that attitudes to same sex attraction, both in English society and also amongst Christians in many parts of the world, have changed markedly since “Issues in Human Sexuality” was published, and that a further review is needed.

In relation to the pastoral care and the acceptance of lesbian and gay people inside the Church there is much that should be welcomed in the Pilling Report (regrettably transgendered people were excluded from consideration in the report by the working party itself). However it is good that the Pilling report endorses the need for a greater understanding of the physiological and psychological processes which lie behind the gender and sexually variant conditions. It is also good that the report recognises the diversity of theological views on these issues, including those within the evangelical wings of the Church. However there are still some concerns about the depth of the theology which it expects from future debate and that is indicated by the level of the consideration that is given within the report itself. Recommendation 11 of the report states that: “Whilst abiding by the Church’s traditional teaching on human sexuality, we encourage the Church to continue to engage openly and honestly and to reflect theologically on the circumstances in which we find ourselves to discern the mind of Christ and what the Spirit is saying to the Church now”. And paragraph 61 declares: “Because of the centrality of Scripture in the life of the Church, changes which imply that Scripture has been interpreted wrongly or too narrowly in the past, or that the meanings of Scripture once considered certain are, in fact, uncertain, will only be contemplated with great caution. Yet such conclusions remain a possibility, precisely because of the inadequacies of fallen humanity and the fact that it is God’s nature to go on revealing himself afresh in every generation”.

If the Pilling Report at least leaves these matters open to some discussion within the Church of England, this is not the case at present within the Roman Catholic Church, where it has been made clear that no changes of the traditional Church teaching on homosexuality or on gender and sexual variance can be contemplated. Yet this analysis makes it clear that this is precisely what is required.

Progress can only be made when a dialogue for change has been opened, and that is the case with the Pilling Report. However discussions which take place exclusively within the House of Bishops of the Church of England, where it is understood that a number of its members are themselves homosexual, but who are also too concerned to be open about it, is not a good start. It is said that the Church of England exists as much for those who are outside it as those who are within it, and the numbers and strength of lesbian and gay people in society as a whole must be fully represented in any discussions that take place. It is not sufficient to use a framework for discussion

⁵⁸Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997

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where only a selected group which represents all shades of opinion in the Church of England alone, is given equal weight in the discussion. The urgency and the need for this full and proper representation is reflected in the address which the Archbishop of Canterbury gave to the Evangelical Alliance meeting on the 28th August 2013, as is described earlier in this document. The Pilling report makes recommendations for a programme of facilitated discussions during the next two years. The nature and the scope of this facilitation are crucial. That demands the full inclusion of all LGB&T⁵⁹ people in the discussion, and it requires the abandonment of previous approaches within the Church of England, which could be described as “Talking about us without us”, if the conversations are to have any credibility with LGB&T people themselves. An intense and unrestricted level of debate is needed. If the discussions do not, or cannot take place at this deep level then the Pilling report be seen as a document which is characterised by “Too little, and too late” and its impact will be lost.

Although the Pilling report does make recommendations which could be immediately implemented, its remit was to create the framework for the debate. Recommendation 3 of the Pilling Report declares: “Consultation on this report should be conducted without undue haste but with a sense of urgency, perhaps over a period of two years”. Whilst it is important that theology is properly and fully discussed, the Church seems to be obsessed with these internal matters, and blind to the changes that are taking place in the world that is outside it. However welcoming the Christian Church may become to the presence, and to the ministry and witness of the gender and sexually variant people who are within it, however many services of blessing and of endorsement of same-sex relationships that are provided, these core issues of the Christian teaching must be fully and unreservedly addressed. Without that total commitment, the fundamental questioning and the unease about the legitimacy of the status of gender and sexually variant people who worship within the Christian Church provides a road which leads to even more hypocrisy instead. In a keynote address which the Anglican Bishop of Salisbury presented to the Cutting Edge Consortium Conference on “Making Space for an Honest Conversation”, held on the 21st April 2012⁶⁰ the Rt. Rev. Nicholas Holtham said: “In British society, the game is up. Gay people are equal members of our society”. There is also evidence that many other people inside the Christian Churches are also aware of what has to happen, but only limited movement has been made. Full and proper engagement is essential, and action is now urgently required.

While the Pilling report has correctly kept to its brief, which it required it to prepare a report of the House of Bishops Working Group on human sexuality, there are other major challenges that must also be met; for is not only the issues of gender and of sexual variance which must be addressed as a consequence of this analysis. These results also question the present teaching on gender equality, the presumptions for male authority and the roles of women, both in ministry and in governance, within the Church. That strongly suggests that the correct terms of reference for a full debate must also include all of these areas of concern, and that it must consider not only the attitudes and traditions, but also the organisation of certain churches that have been

⁵⁹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People

⁶⁰ Available at: <http://www.lgbtac.org.uk/documents/SuC0422a-BishopOFSalisburyAddressToCECConf-21apr12.pdf>
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built upon this base. This debate may demand a radical change, but it may also be why any movement in even one of these areas is strongly resisted.

This investigation has also made it clear that the traditional attitudes of the Church to gender and sexuality must be regarded as disciplines; and not as the doctrines of the Church. Even though an apostolic imprint is present, these views do not come from the teachings of Jesus and the witness of Gospel Church⁶¹. This means that it is the responsibility of Christianity and of the Christian Church through every generation to work out anew what all of these relationships should be. Those relationships will also change with time, and in present day society, where complete gender equality is now determined by the belief in universal human rights, and not through the compulsory complementarity of the first century Greco/Roman and Jewish views which maximise the perceived usefulness of men and women in society; a totally different approach is urgently required.

This demands a radical change, but when the Christian Church is destroying itself in the eyes of society, these are changes which must urgently be made. This is also the change in viewpoint which should enable the Christian Churches of the present day to establish without any diminution of the moral values or the precepts of Christian teaching, and without any degree of departure from truth of the Gospel message, an approach to gender and to sexuality, to gender equality and to gender and sexual variance, which is entirely appropriate for present day world.

⁶¹ Gender complementarity in Christianity was inherited from both the Judean and the Greco/Roman traditions, and it is necessary to consider the sources that are used. Certain statements, such as that made by Paul in Galatians 3:28 announce a doctrine of a complete transcendence of gender. This statement draws its authority from the Gospel itself. However there are many other statements within the Pauline Epistles which are concerned with how Christian men and women should behave in a first century society. Paul provides a whole compendium of these: 1 Corinthians 7:1-17, 32, 35, 39; 1 Corinthians 11:3-17; 1 Corinthians 14:33-37; Philipians 4:3; Colossians 3:18-21; Ephesians 5:21-31; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 1 Timothy 5:1-16. Also 1 Peter 3:1-6 is at least as important as these others. Unlike the statement in Galatians 3:28 all of these statements draw their authority from the requirement for the respectability of the Christian Church. They do not rely on the teaching of Jesus for that, and it is argued that these must be regarded instead as contemporary rules of conduct that were determined by the needs of the Church in relation to Greco/Roman society. This is why they should only be considered as disciplines, not as doctrines of the Church.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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An Unfinished Reformation

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This document brings together information from a number of sources to examine the development of the attitudes to gender equality, gender complementarity and gender and sexual variance within the Christian Church. Part 1 of this document gives an overview of the approach and the principles of analysis. An introduction to the issues of cultural differences and compromises is also provided. Part 2 considers the history and the subsequent development of these Church traditions by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers to determine how these viewpoints were understood by the fourth century Church, how they differed from the original Gospel views, and the transformations that occurred. Part 3 of this document has the same objective, but this time the material is examined from the perspective of the surrounding cultures from which the Church developed. A further perspective is provided by using the results of some recent neurophysiological and psychological research which shows that the traditional teaching of the church on homosexuality and gender and sexual variance cannot be correct⁶². Part 4 considers the impact of these on the present day Church. The discussion and conclusions are contained in Part 5. From examining the inconsistencies and the conflicts which are encountered when these three approaches are compared with each other, it is hoped that a better understanding of the relevance and the accuracy of present day Church teaching on homosexuality, gender complementarity, gender equality and on gender and sexual variance can be found, and that the original teaching of Jesus can be restored.

Part 2: Reform and the Organised Church

2:1 The Reformation

All attempts to trace back through church history by examining its traditions come up against a barrier in the early fourth century. This is when the Church became a state religion and a rationalisation and ordering of Church doctrines took place through the various Councils which were held around that time. The aim of the Reformation movement of the 16th Century was to return to the teachings of the Church which was based on the bible alone and to correct any deviations that had occurred. While the Reformers did make many changes, the one area in particular where they had to accept the traditional teaching of the Church was that of gender and sexual variance, even though the contradictions in the bible texts meant that these had largely been decided through the traditions that were developed by the Church. However Luther and the other reformers did emphasise the principle of gender complementarity in place of the gender discrimination that came to occur.

⁶² Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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This part is in three sections. The first of these parts examines the development of the Church by taking as its point of reference the 16th Century Reformation, and it shows how this framework has been carried forward to the present day. The second section, which deals specifically with sexual and gender variance, does the same, but this adopts as its point of reference the Church teachings and the traditions that were found at the time of the 4th Century Church. Present day social consequences are also examined and the third section of this considers the consequences of the rationalisation of teaching and traditions in the 4th century Church.

2:1:1 Historical Attitudes

The 16th Century Protestant Reformation was an attempt to reform the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, which in the understanding of its proponents, had come to be governed by its own traditions in preference to the bible itself. The Reform movement rejected many of these traditional teachings with the argument that they did not come from, and they were contrary to the views of the Apostolic Church.

The first expression of the new and disruptive philosophies came from John Wycliffe (1328 to 1384) at Oxford University, then followed by Jan Hus (1372 to 1415) at the University of Prague. Hus was a key predecessor to the Reform movements of the sixteenth century. His teachings had an immediate and strong influence, which was seen in the creation of a reformist Bohemian religious denomination. More than one century later his arguments motivated the activities of Martin Luther, who was an Augustinian monk and a professor at the University of Wittenberg. Luther wrote his Ninety-Five Theses on the sale of indulgences in 1517. This is often considered to be the incident that started the Reformation; however his criticisms of the traditional teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were much broader in their scope.

In parallel to these reform activities within Germany, a similar movement emerged in Switzerland under the leadership of Ulrich Zwingli. In France, Guillaume Farel (1489 to 1565) also preached reformation as early as 1522 in Dauphiné, from where the French Wars of Religion began in 1562. In France these wars became known as Huguenot wars and they later spread to other parts of Europe⁶³. The work and the writings of John Calvin (1509 to 1564) were also to be influential in establishing the protestant reformation tradition amongst various groups in Switzerland, Scotland, Hungary, Germany and elsewhere. In Britain the political separation of the Church of England from Rome (1529 to 1536) under the reign of King Henry VIII, brought England broadly alongside this Reformed movement. The Scottish Reformation of 1560 and the teachings of John Knox also decisively shaped the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church into the reform tradition.

These Reformation Churches understood themselves to be "Reformed" in two ways. First, they were "Reformed" from what they believed to be the defective practice of Christianity, as it was defined by the corrupt Roman Catholicism of the day. In doing

⁶³ The European wars of religion were a series of wars waged in Europe from ca. 1524 to 1648, following the onset of the Protestant Reformation in Western and Northern Europe. Although sometimes unconnected, all of these wars were strongly influenced by the religious change of the period, and the conflict and rivalry that it produced
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so they were "Turning again" to the teaching of Jesus Christ as it is witnessed to only in the Old and New Testaments, which was shorn of all later traditions, and as it was lived in the life of the early Church. Secondly, to be "Reformed" also meant the rejection of the concept that traditions alone can provide a sufficient justification for the doctrines of belief. Instead, the Reformers insisted that "the Word of God" was the only ultimate source of appeal in all matters of faith, and that every other source of knowledge, which included all of the Church's traditions, had to appeal to this central source.

2:1:2 Celibacy, Marriage and Sex

The Reformers also made the abolition of the tradition of clerical continence⁶⁴ and of priestly celibacy a vital element in their reform. These were denounced because they opposed the New Testament recommendation that a cleric should be "The husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2-4), together with the right which was stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:5 for each Apostle to take their wives with them on their missionary journeys⁶⁵, and also from the assertion that: "Marriage should be honoured by all" (in Hebrews 13:4). They additionally blamed celibacy and continence for the widespread sexual misconduct which was encountered amongst the clergy⁶⁶. Attitudes to sex were also transformed. Traditionally sexual activity of any type had been regarded by the Catholic Church as a necessary evil, because it was brought about by the Fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden. Luther on the other hand strongly emphasised the rightness of sex for the fulfilment of love and for healthy relationships. Therefore "For Luther sexuality was as much a part of life as eating"⁶⁷ and within the marriage he encouraged his followers to celebrate the delights of wholesome sex.

In his sermon on the "Estate of Marriage"; written in 1522⁶⁸, Luther took what might be regarded as a very modern approach. He believed that libido and sexuality were to be viewed as sacred, healthy and they should be treated as fully integral parts of life and marriage. The medieval Catholic perception of sex was one of shame, which dictated that sex should only be for the propagation of the species. However Luther's views were much more liberal. He thought that women's sex drives may be stronger than men's, he strongly supported the idea that women must not be slaves to their husbands, and that they also must have full rights, including the right to sexual satisfaction. Luther demanded that the husband and wife must be regarded as equal partners in a marriage and that they share equally in the care of the children and in the household chores⁶⁹. Thus for Luther the ultimate purpose of marriage is to obey God, to find aid and counsel against sin; to call upon God; to seek, love, and educate

⁶⁴ The Roman Catholic Church tradition and Canon Law both require absolute clerical continence, i.e., total abstention from sexual intercourse. This applies to certain people who may be married, but who are in the service of the Church. Celibacy prohibited marriage and all sex

⁶⁵ When they are believing Christians as well.

⁶⁶ Calvin, Jean. (1536). *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, 12, 23–28.

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.html>

⁶⁷ Marius, Richard. (2009) "Martin Luther: The Christian Between God and Death" Harvard University Press, 2009 ISBN 0674040619, 9780674040618

⁶⁸ Martin Luther, "The Estate of Marriage" (1522)

<http://pages.uoregon.edu/dluebke/Reformations441/LutherMarriage.htm>

⁶⁹ Martin Luther, "The Estate of Marriage" (1522)

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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children for the glory of God; to live with one's wife in the fear of God, and to bear the cross. However, when there are no children, to live with one's wife in contentment, and to avoid all lewdness with others⁷⁰.

There are three important elements in Luther's definition of marriage. These are. (1) The ultimate purpose of marriage is for the glory of God. (2) Children are not simply the blessed by-products of marriage; they are part of the very essence of the marital design. (3) Sanctification is embedded at the very heart of marriage. This means that marriage is a God-appointed means of obeying God, for the purpose of fulfilling the God-given desires, for avoiding sin, and for instructing children in the faith. Luther himself married in 1525⁷¹ and all of the other leaders of the reformation movement were married as well⁷².

More controversial is Luther's recommendations to husbands (or wives) who fail to fulfil the sexual expectations of their marriages. To this Luther appears to say that he would prefer secret liaisons to divorce⁷³. The charges are also sometimes made that Luther approved of sex before marriage⁷⁴. It is however essential to put Luther's teaching into the context of that period. Luther was writing before the Council of Trent which, for the first time, demanded that the ceremonies of marriage had to be conducted by a priest⁷⁵. Marriage before that period was essentially a civil contract

⁷⁰ See section 2:2:4 for a comparison with first century attitudes.

⁷¹ In 1525, Luther married Katharina von Bora, an ex-nun. This was controversial at the time for many reasons, not the least of which was that priests had to take vows of celibacy. Luther thought that monastic vows of celibacy were near impossible to maintain for the vast majority of people. The other controversy was that because Luther was a brother of God, and his wife a sister of God, their marriage was technically one of incest. Many elements of their marriage challenged the social norms of the times; including casting man and woman as fully equal partners. This was put to practice by Luther not only living his own marriage in equality and respect with Katy, but also leaving her as his heir to everything he owned, a vast departure from the medieval practice of only leaving the estate to another male.

⁷² Zwingli married in 1522, Luther in 1525, and Calvin in 1539 and the married Thomas Cranmer was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533.

⁷³ Martin Luther, "The Estate of Marriage" (1522). For Luther, although marriage itself was a civil contract, the bonds which were created in a married relationship were something that never should be broken, and this comes from many Gospel texts Mark 1:1-12, Mark 10:7-9, Luke 16:18 Matthew 19:9 or Matthew 5:32. Secret liaisons seem to be the lesser of two evils, but only in instances when a marriage has already failed. Luther himself very strongly denies the allegations made against him which stated "Here they have accused me of teaching that when a husband is unable to satisfy his wife's sexual desire she should run to somebody else" He goes on to say "Let the topsy-turvy liars spread their lies" and then he gives his argument against this allegation. Luther seems to have suffered from the difficulties academics face when they produce detailed arguments, in which the qualifications they make about them are ignored! For the details see:

<http://pages.uoregon.edu/dluebke/Reformations441/LutherMarriage.htm>

⁷⁴ "Secret intercourse of those who are engaged to each other can certainly not be considered fornication; for it takes place in the name and with the intention of marriage, a desire, intention, or name which fornication does not have. Thus there is a great difference indeed between fornication and secret intercourse after the promise of marriage". See Luther: "Von Ehesachen, published in 1530". Harrington, Joel F. (1995). "Reordering Marriage and Society in Reformation Germany" Cambridge University Press

⁷⁵ With few local exceptions, until 1545, Christian marriages in Europe were by mutual consent, declaration of intention to marry and upon the subsequent physical union of the parties. The couple would promise verbally to each other that they would be married to each other; the presence of a priest or witnesses was not required. This promise was known as the "verbum." If freely given and

and, in Christian terms, it was not a Sacrament which was instituted by Christ^{76 77 78}. Therefore betrothal may have possessed greater religious significance⁷⁹. The bonds created by a marriage were sacrosanct and should never be broken. However for Luther the celebration of the love and the commitment of a marriage was the most important element in the lives of the couple, and it not from the legal doctrines of the Church⁸⁰.

Given Luther's own free-thinking approaches to sex, celibacy and marriage it might be expected that Luther and the other Reformers would embrace a similarly informed attitude to the matters of sex and gender variance, and that they would promote the same equality for the public roles and status of men and women in society. However that is not the case. The attitudes to gender equality, the public segregation of the gender roles and to sexual and gender variation remained broadly the same as the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church⁸¹. Indeed all forms of homosexual behaviour now appeared to be even more severely condemned and there additionally appears to be a further transition in this outlook which moved the attitudes even more away from the condemnation of motives towards the condemnation of the acts⁸².

made in the present tense (e.g., "I marry you"), it was unquestionably binding; if made in the future tense ("I will marry you"), it would constitute a betrothal.

⁷⁶ Marriage was first officially recognized as one of the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church at the fourth Lateran Council in 1215. It was not instituted by Christ but the church taught that Christ raised or elevated marriage to the dignity of a sacrament because he recognized "Something fundamentally good in the marital institution."

⁷⁷ Martin Luther was writing before the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563) when it was decided that a Priest had to officiate a wedding, and thus make a marriage. When Luther was alive only the landed nobility went to a cleric, who then acted as a government clerk in the modern sense, who recorded the transaction so that the political/economic deals and obligations of the royal and landed families being sealed by the marriage could take place. Other people simply moved in together and by common law they were married. If they were church going they simply showed up at church and announced that they had moved in together, thus they had married. No sacramental ceremony was involved.

⁷⁸ The Council of Trent was called to repudiate the activities of the reformers and the occasion of this solemn declaration was an attack on the denial by the Reformers of the sacramental character of marriage. According to the Council of Trent this dogma has always been taught by the Church, and is defined in canon I, Sess. XXIV: "If any one shall say that matrimony is not truly and properly one of the Seven Sacraments of the Evangelical Law, instituted by Christ our Lord, but was invented in the Church by men, and does not confer grace, let him be anathema." The bonds created in a marriage were sacrosanct but marriage is still not a sacrament in many of the Reformed Churches, for it was instituted as a tradition of the Church. It was not instituted by Christ. For the contrary Roman Catholic view see: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09707a.htm>

⁷⁹ See Luther's comments on sex before marriage

⁸⁰ When Luther found out that his long-time friend George Spalatin was going to get married just five months after his own marriage to Katie, he wrote him a note, obviously delighted that his friend would be able to experience the joy of sex with his new bride: "When you sleep with your Catherine and embrace her, you should think: "This child of man, this creature of God has been given to me by my Christ. May he be praised and glorified." On the evening of the day on which, according to my calculations, you will receive this, I shall make love to my Catherine while you make love to yours, and thus we will be united in love".

⁸¹ Making these distinctions is one way of resolving the apparent contradictions in the Pauline epistles.

⁸² The original Old Testament definition of Sodomy was based on the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, which had referred only to same-sex anal penetration in the context of domination, humiliation and rape. The celibacy advocated by Jesus in the Gospels and Paul in the Epistles was that of a call of *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation"*.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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2:1:3 Gender and Sexuality

Martin Luther identified homosexuality with the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. When he commented on the text in Genesis 19:4-5 he wrote: "I for my part do not enjoy dealing with this passage, because so far the ears of the Germans are innocent of and uncontaminated by this monstrous depravity; for even though disgrace, like other sins, has crept in through an ungodly soldier and a lewd merchant, still the rest of the people are unaware of what is being done in secret. The Carthusian monks deserve to be hated because they were the first to bring this terrible pollution into Germany from the monasteries of Italy"⁸³. And then within the same section Luther referred to the heinous conduct of the people of Sodom as "Extraordinary, inasmuch as they departed from the natural passion and the longing of the male for the female, which is implanted into nature by God, and desired what is altogether contrary to nature"⁸⁴. Whence comes this perversity? Undoubtedly from Satan, who after people have once turned away from the fear of God, so powerfully suppresses nature that he blots out the natural desire and stirs up a desire that is contrary to nature"⁸⁵. So Luther's extreme rejection of homosexual activity was not just a matter of aesthetic preference but rather a theological judgment rooted in his view of the reality of the ways through which the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness. For Luther, homosexuality was therefore a form of idolatry and of false worship. John Calvin adopted a similar condemnatory approach. In his commentary on Romans 1:26-27⁸⁶, he described homosexual acts as, "The dreadful crime of unnatural lust," and he said of people who practiced these acts: "They reversed the whole order of nature." Also, in his commentary on 1 Corinthians 6:9⁸⁷, he refers to homosexual acts as, "That monstrous pollution which was but too prevalent in Greece."

Modern ideas of gender equality were equally far from the thoughts and minds of the other reformers. Therefore, in "The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment (unnatural rule) of women"⁸⁸ John Knox used this theology to argue against the legitimacy of the various female sovereigns of his day. In particular he attacked

duty in which sexual acts were not prohibited and where marriage was considered to be "Second Best". By the time of the 4th century Church, all sex had then come to be understood as necessary evil, to be engaged in for procreation alone. The form of celibacy which was then embraced by the religious and priests prohibited not only every sexual act, but also all thoughts of sex. Later on, in the 13th century, Aquinas liberated sexual attitudes within marriage, but he strongly condemned all sexual acts engaged in outside marriage as mortal sins and lustful acts. What may be regarded as the present day concepts of marriage and sexuality begin to be seen within the condemnations of Luther and the other Reformers. By this time Sodomy has become defined more firmly in the context of homosexuality, and it condemns for the practice of all same-sex activities. The changes which the Reform movement made to social and gender variance were significant, however they did nothing to reduce the condemnation of homosexual acts.

⁸³ Luther's Works, Vol. 3, 251-252: Augsburg Fortress (1 Jan 1959) ISBN-10: 0800603370 ISBN-13: 978-0800603373

⁸⁴ Luther clearly interprets the story of Sodom and Gomorrah to be one of same-sex desire, rather than domination, humiliation and rape.

⁸⁵ Luther's Works, Vol. 3, 255 : Augsburg Fortress (1 Jan 1959) ISBN-10: 0800603370 ISBN-13: 978-0800603373

⁸⁶ See: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom38.v.vii.html>. Accessed 5 April 2013.

⁸⁷ See: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.ii.html>. Accessed 5 April 2013.

⁸⁸ Of Women in Politics: by John Knox. For a summary see: http://www.covenantofgrace.com/knox_women_in_politics.htm. Accessed 5 April 2013. Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

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Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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Mary of Guise the Dowager Queen of Scotland who was the regent to her daughter Mary, Queen of Scots, and Queen Mary 1 of England. Knox opposed all of these Roman Catholic Queens on religious grounds. He based his reasoning on his biblical premises that "God, by the order of his creation, has [deprived] woman of authority and dominion" and from history that "man has seen, proved, and pronounced just causes why it should be", however his arguments rebounded on him when Queen Elizabeth 1 came to the throne.

2:1:4 Attitudes to Church Authority

As within the early Church, the reforming movement also had to discover ways to manage relationships between the Church and the state. From the outset there were strongly differing attitudes to the magisterium and to the magister⁸⁹ of the Church. Mainstream Protestantism began with the Magisterial Reformation. It was called this because the movement received support from the magistrates (or the civil authorities of the state) as opposed to the Radical Reformation which refused to have state sponsorship. Therefore mainstream Protestantism accepted these links and it made full use of them, while the radical reformers rejected them. The Church of England established its own magisterium, which transferred the line of authority by making the monarch the head of the Church in the place of the Pope. The radical reformer Andreas von Bodenstein Karlstadt described the Wittenberg theologians of the Magisterial Reformation as "New Papists"^{90 91}.

2:1:5 Augustine and the Reform Tradition

For the most part the reformers were inspired by the teachings of Augustine. This meant that Luther, Zwingli Knox and Calvin all thought along those lines which were similar to the theological teachings put forward by Augustine himself. Luther's enthusiasm for Augustine was obvious but this did not stop Luther and the other reformers from rejecting many of the doctrines which were associated with him and the fourth century Church^{92 93 94}. It has been seen that the aims of these reformers

⁸⁹ Magisterium and Magister. In Catholicism, the Magisterium is the teaching authority of the Church. According to the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church it is: "The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him." Magister is Latin for "master" or "teacher." It may refer to anyone in authority.

⁹⁰ Gstohl, Mark (2004). "The Magisterial Reformation". Theological Perspectives of the Reformation. Retrieved 5 April 2013. http://cat.xula.edu/initiatives/rich/tpr_dd.pdf

⁹¹ Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli are considered Magisterial Reformers because their reform movements were supported by ruling authorities or "magistrates". Frederick the Wise not only supported Luther, who was a professor at the university he founded, but also protected him by hiding Luther in Wartburg Castle in Eisenach. Zwingli and Calvin were supported by the city councils in Zurich and Geneva. Since the term "magister" also means "teacher", the Magisterial Reformation is also characterized by an emphasis on the authority of a teacher. This is made evident in the prominence of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli as leaders of the reform movements in their respective areas of ministry. Because of their authority, they were often criticized by Radical Reformers as being too much like the Roman Popes

⁹² Oberman, Heiko A. (2006). "Luther: Man Between God And The Devil" Translated by Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart . Yale University Press, 2006 ISBN 0300103131, 9780300103137

⁹³ Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone was essentially a deliberate attempt to recover the old Augustinian claim according to which both the beginnings and the accomplishment of the salvation process belong to God and only to God. In 1532 Luther recalled "At first I devoured, not merely read
Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

was to "Turn again" to the nature of the church, and to the beliefs which originated from Jesus Christ. However the sixteenth century reformers were limited by the then current knowledge about what could be achieved. Even though they felt able to criticize these doctrines, the knowledge of some of the changes which had occurred earlier in the church history was not available to them, and this also applied to the doctrines on the issues of sexual and gender variance. It is not surprising that the teaching of Augustine and that of the fourth century Church on the aspects of gender equality, gender role and gender and sexually variant behaviour were accepted as correct by the reformers, and why they remained largely intact.

This presumption is incorrect⁹⁵. There were very great changes in the attitude of the Church to sex and sexuality in the first three centuries. This period is also marked by the change from a protesting minority religion of a subject culture to a religion of a dominant society, which had the authority of the Roman Empire behind it.

The Christian condemnations of sexual malpractice in the surrounding first century societies were uncompromising and extreme. Nothing in this investigation condones sexual misuse, however major cultural clashes were found⁹⁶. Examining first century societies using methods that take these cultural clashes fully into account gives very different perspectives on the roles which were played by many of the institutions and perhaps most notably the behaviour of the Goddess cults⁹⁷. Like the Goddess cults, early Christianity did not simply challenge gender inequality through the importance and the esteem that it gave to women. It also challenged the moral precepts and the

Augustine." In his lectures on the Psalms (1513-1514) and other later writings he cited Augustine extensively. In his lectures on Romans (1515-1516), Luther was able to learn from Augustine the evangelical sense of the righteousness of God in Romans 1:17. However he went further than Augustine to make the break through to ultimately recover St. Paul's understanding of justification by faith alone. It was also Augustine who taught Luther to place the Bible above all authority.

⁹⁴ Luther rejected some of Augustine's teachings when he thought they were not according to what Scriptures revealed. The most obvious was on the doctrine of purgatory. Augustine was probably the first to introduce a number of ingredients that later went to make up the doctrine of Purgatory, but unlike Augustine, and also to avoid any notion of a gradual process of healing and transformation, Luther did not draw a distinction between justification and sanctification. The idea the Church had the sacred authority to ensure that purgatory was avoided by encouraging people to buy indulgences from the organisation was anathema to Luther. While these protests were initially about indulgences, they were also denying the elevation of any institution and its priesthood into the role of a sacred authority, therefore the Church was to be found within all of the people themselves.

⁹⁵ See Part 3 of this document

⁹⁶ There were major cultural clashes between the Judean and the Greco/Roman cultures which were characteristic of the different attitudes to sexual practice in a dominant society and those in a subjugated one. Within the dominant Greco/Roman societies sexual morality was determined through responsibility and authority. This meant that any Greek or Roman male citizen could engage with an unattached woman or with a man of lesser status without penalty for the purposes of sexual gratification, and this included the penetrative acts. Same-sex rape was also used as a weapon to humiliate a beaten enemy. Maintaining the social status had an absolute priority and in any same-sex relationships between two male citizens who were of equal status only the penetrated or the submissive partner was condemned. In a victimised and subjugated society the reverse situation is encountered. The horror of same-sex rape being inflicted upon the Israelites is evident in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, and this resonates through all of the Jewish tradition.

⁹⁷ Contrary to the Christian condemnations, Cybele's myths and doctrines embraced both sex and spirituality, they gave earlier cautions against lust and the other sins of excess, and they also demonstrated that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love. Those included nurture, care, protection and responsible sex.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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perceptions upon which that patriarchal society was based^{98 99}. However, unlike the reasons and objectives of the Christian condemnations of the Goddess cults, which exclusively concentrated upon lust and improper sex, the principal concerns were about the political and the social pressures which both Christianity and the Goddess cults presented to the gendered security of the male dominated Greco/Roman society. That is considered at length in section 3:1:3 of this document. If Christianity was to maximise its impact on this society it had to find some ways of integrating itself into it, and that meant neutralising all these concerns. This analysis shows how and why Christianity later came to implement the same gender complementarity as that which belonged to the surrounding Greco/Roman society, having at first rejected it, and it demonstrates how the original teaching of Jesus had established an attitude to gender equality and to sexual and gender variance which would be acceptable in the present day¹⁰⁰.

This early Christian teaching had demanded a revolution in social attitudes, but the message of Jesus which is presented in the Gospels also required the Church to work within society in order to change it, rather than to destroy it. This presented the Church with a difficult choice; and it attempted to compromise the original Gospel doctrines of gender transcendence in order to gain the respectability which would enable it to convey the remainder of the Gospel message into the wider world¹⁰¹. By this adjustment and endorsement of the social structures of Greco/Roman society, and with its adoption of the dogmas of gender complementarity that were practiced by the surrounding Greek, Roman and Jewish societies, it is shown that the ability of the Christian Church to bring the Gospel messages to all people in the matters of gender equality and sexual and gender variance was destroyed¹⁰².

⁹⁸It is shown that a major driving force behind the gender disruptive behaviour of the Goddess cults was defined by the pursuit of power for female protection, concerns and rights. The Christian Church instead makes the presumption that this disruptive behaviour was entirely in pursuit of illicit sex.

⁹⁹By the first century women had become an increasingly powerful influence on society and at this time the social status of women had developed to a point where the breakthrough was needed, however the existence of gender defined Gods and Goddesses in a polytheistic society created divinely ordained boundaries that could not be crossed. See: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See the footer for access

¹⁰⁰This paper is one of three companion papers. The document: Gilchrist, S. (2013). "Reform and the Christian Church" gives an overview of a more extended analysis that is separately described in Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". The issues of gender complementarity are examined in the paper: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". Other papers are also available; please see the footer for access to these documents

¹⁰¹For the description of how this took place see the companion papers Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church" Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation", and in the companion paper: Gilchrist, S. (2013). "Reform and the Christian Church". See the footer for access.

¹⁰²It would appear that the initial aim of the Church was to accept that gender complementarity had to be endorsed for relationships with outside society, but within the Church and the Christian Community, complete gender transcendence was still to be maintained. A parallel to this is found in the letter to Philemon, where the author deals with the issue of the runaway slave who is about to go back to his master after they have both been converted to Christianity. The letter asks for the slave to be accepted by his master on Christian terms. However, instead of asking for the emancipation and

That transformation leads to the simple and direct conclusion which states that what today are considered to be the traditional doctrines of the Christian Church on sexual and gender variance are built on a false foundation. They were driven by the need to gain respectability in Greco/Roman society and they do not come from the teaching of Jesus himself. However an even greater reversal was required, because in order to obtain respectability in this society, Christianity quickly had to separate itself from the still continuing social and gender disrupting behaviour of the Goddess cults. This meant that instead of just adopting the social structures and gender complementarity which were a cornerstone of the gender unequal Greco/Roman society, Christianity had to be seen to take a proactive role in its enforcement of them, and it is shown that this pursuit of respectability has led to the imposition of a strong heterosexual, gender defined and exclusive orthodoxy in which all types of expression of gender or sexually variant behaviour is automatically considered to be a mortal sin and an immoral act. This has also led to the great severity of the Christian condemnations of all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour as being second only to bestiality in the heinousness of their acts.

That searching for respectability is apparent through all of the Pauline epistles, as is the departure from proclaiming a doctrine of gender transcendence within a gender unequal society. From the second century a strong and an exclusively heterosexual orthodoxy had come to be adopted. By the time of Augustine and the fourth century Church a total transformation had occurred. All expressions of gender and sexually variant behaviour were labelled as being in pursuit of promiscuity, prostitution and lust, and all of them very strongly condemned.

Severe gender discrimination was also exercised¹⁰³. Christian redemption for women on earth could only be obtained by then through motherhood and childbirth or by the denial of all femininity¹⁰⁴. A male priesthood was assumed and in place of the prominent role which had been the prerogative of women within the early Church they were only offered a secondary and a subservient role¹⁰⁵. Although the cult of Mariology put women on a pedestal, and the Virgin Mary was given a very exalted status as an intercessor and mediator¹⁰⁶, this also confined them to these roles¹⁰⁷.

the release of the slave, the author supports the social conventions on slavery in society. The slave remains a slave, who is subject to his master, but now within the Christian community the slave and master are to be treated completely as equals and brothers, and this is because all are one in Christ. Equivalent master and servant relationships are found between men and women within a gender complementary society. However the problem with the attitude to gender complementarity adopted by Peter and Paul is that it demanded the submission of women to men, not just in relation to outside society, but also within the Church. By this action the concept that the Church could be a true island of gender transcendence and equality within a gender unequal society was lost.

¹⁰³ See sections 2:2:4 and 3:3:2 of this document.

¹⁰⁴ Kidd, Erin (2007). "The Virgin Desert: Gender Transformation in Fourth-Century Christian Asceticism" Lyceum, Volume VIII, Number 2. Spring 2007 ISSN number 1934-2438. The Lyceum is a publication of the Philosophy Department of Saint Anselm College . Accessed 12 December 2012 at: <http://lyceumphilosophy.com/8-2/Lyceum-8-2-Kidd.pdf>

¹⁰⁵ See section 3:3:2 in this document.

¹⁰⁶ For a contemporary Roman Catholic View on the Virgin Mary, see : *Redemptoris Mater: On the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Pilgrim Church.* Pope John Paul II (1987)

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031987_redemptoris-mater_en.html

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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So Gender equality was at the discretion of the male and on the terms which the male decides. Instead of the call to celibacy which was the call for devotion to duty, that Jesus had offered a different and Neo-Platonic form of celibacy was adopted, which required not just the denial of every sexual act, but also all thoughts of sex¹⁰⁸.

2:1:6 Luther Aristotle and Aquinas

During the following centuries and up to the end of the first Millennium, the failure of the Church to live up to these standards resulted in scandals of corruption, nepotism and sexual abuse. The failure of the Cathar revolt, which was fuelled at least in part by these abuses, enabled the Church to establish its control in a much stronger way, but this meant that it had to review some of its doctrines, and it needed to liberalise its teaching on married sex.

Both Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther attempted to liberalise the teaching of the Church on sex within marriage, however this was for almost the opposite reasons. While Aquinas used the philosophy of Aristotle and the principles of logic to reform the teaching of the Church on sex within marriage, he did this in a way which acted to reinforce the authority of the institution of the Church. On the other hand Luther forcefully rejected the imposition of all such authority, and his disapproval of Aristotle and the doctrines of the Church on these matters were very strongly felt¹⁰⁹. Luther

¹⁰⁷ Paradoxically the situation may become worse for women in a monotheistic religion where there is a gender transcendent God. In a polytheistic culture two parallel structures are set up, with a god and goddess at the head of each group. Women can rely on a separate goddess to protect their interests, and that is seen in the aggressive elements in the cult of Cybele which disrupted the social order and tested the male domination of society. However this polytheism leads to a divided and theologically sanctified structure where men engage in the social roles of power and politics while the women's domain is that of the hearth and home. Therefore the allegiance to an independent goddess in a polytheistic religion gave a woman considerable power within her domain. However that protection is lost in a monotheistic religion in circumstances where the single god who, although transcending gender, is assumed to have male characteristics. In theory full gender equality should be achieved but in practice the situation may become worse, since there is now no goddess who could protect female interests. See: Frymer-Kensky, Tivka. (1993) "In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth" Ballantine Books; (First Edition February 10, 1993) ISBN-10: 0449907465 ISBN-13: 978-0449907467

¹⁰⁸ See Section 3:3 of this document.

¹⁰⁹ Luther and Aquinas were not contemporaries. They were separated by some 300 years. Luther objected to Aquinas because he believed he had corrupted the truth with the philosophy of Aristotle, and he traces his understanding to the errors of his day in theology and religion to the introduction of Aristotle three hundred years earlier. See: Luther, Martin. "Works of Martin Luther" - With Introductions and Notes (Volume 1) FQ Books (6 July 2010) ASIN: B003YMNWZG and Luther, Martin. "Works of Martin Luther", with Introductions and Notes (Volume 2) Paperback: ISBN-10: 1152135090. ISBN-13: 978-1152135093. Despite the extremity of his rejection Luther's relation to Aquinas was not merely negative. He strongly rejected his moralism and the hierarchial institutionalism, but there is a positive side to this relationship to Aristotle. Carlson expresses it thus: "Luther takes the thought of grace, interprets it as God's immediate good will toward the sinner, and raises it to the level of sola gratia. Thus he fulfils, instead of denies, the Augustinian-Thomist line of Christianity. Rome, on the other hand, takes Augustine's concept of grace, in the form in which it is found in Thomas, and on the basis of it builds a still more imposing institutionalism." Carlson, Edgar M. (1948), "The Reinterpretation of Luther". Philadelphia: Westminster Press, <http://intl-tj.sagepub.com/content/6/1/139>. There is a constant tension in the writing of Aquinas for, while he follows the logic of Aristotle, the conflicts that then arise from church doctrine are trumped by the theology of the Church. Thus: instead of regarding Aquinas a philosopher who uses logic to argue for the doctrines of the Church. It is better to regard him as a theologian who uses philosophy to confirm *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation"*.

rejected the “Scholastic” approach of Aquinas and the Aristotlean School, in favour of his own “Theology of the Cross”. For Luther the Cross expressed a paradox and justification, salvation and sanctification¹¹⁰ were all provided, not through any human efforts, but by Grace¹¹¹: this is described in more detail in sections 2:2:2 and 2:2:3. A more detailed consideration of the theology of Aquinas is given in section 3:7 of this document and also elsewhere¹¹². However even though Aquinas and Luther pursued objectives which were nearly completely opposed to each other, for the basis of their arguments both of them had to rely on doctrines which were expressed by Augustine and the fourth Century Church, and well before that time the Church had adopted its strong and exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy as a key foundation for its belief.

Like Aquinas, Luther and the reformers accepted this heterosexual orthodoxy, and they endorsed gender inequality in the public roles of men and women as part of the original Christian doctrines of the Church. Because of their strong welcome of the wholesomeness of heterosexual sex the Reformers also differentiated very strongly between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, so not only did they continue to support the traditional teaching of the Church on these matters, their condemnation of any deviation from heterosexual orthodoxy and their censure of sexual and gender variant behaviour may have become even more strongly expressed.

2:1:7 The Development of Current Day Attitudes

In the Reform movement of the 16th Century the one thing that everyone was agreed on was the need to restore the authority of the bible in the teachings of the Church. However with different groups and in different areas a diversity of opinion could be found and this has occurred both in the theology and in the attitudes to authority within the denominations. All of the reform movements made use of these doctrines to develop their own perceptions of the Gospel message. By doing this these groups continued what had always taken place. However some means of reaffirming the Gospel outlook has now become much more urgent. The capabilities of the present day reformed Churches to respond to this need these changes, or indeed to react against them, depends on the importance of authority within the various institutions, their attitudes to the interpretation of the bible and also to the social prejudices and structures that each of the Churches have formed.

In theory, this ability to accept change is potentially easier for those Churches who have dispensed with as much central authority as is possible. That implies that this transformation should also be more difficult for the Church of England since it has maintained a number of the previous structures of authority and it has kept the role

the doctrines of the Church. A full examination of this is given in Gilchrist, S (2011), “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”

¹¹⁰ For the Reformers there was no separation. Relying on St Paul they argued that Justification and Sanctification were given by Faith alone.

¹¹¹ See: Janz, Denis R. (1998). “Syllogism or Paradox: Aquinas and Luther on Theological Method”.

Theological Studies, 59 (1998) p 3-21. Available at:

<http://www.ts.mu.edu/readers/content/pdf/59/59.1/59.1.1.pdf>. Also Shelton, Ray (2011). “Martin Luther And Scholastic Philosophy” Originally published. June 12, 1952. Revised, Jan. 21, 2011.

<http://fromdeathtolife.org/cphil/lsp2.html>

¹¹²This will be returned to later in this document. A full examination of this is given in Gilchrist, S (2011), “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”
Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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of spiritual intermediaries for the priests. The present controversies over women bishops and on the lesbian and gay issues seems to be as much concerned with preserving the traditions of the institution as it is about these issues themselves. Nevertheless, those Churches which do not have a strong central authority fare little better. One result of this absence of central authority has been their fragmentation into different denominations, factions or groups. Because of this there is not just one attitude to issues of sexual and gender variance, there are many. Some Churches are strongly inclusive, while others are totally exclusive. All of them proclaim they are affirming the Gospel Truth, yet, despite the uniformity of intention, strongly conflicting views are often expressed.

2:1:8 Summary

Any doctrines which belong to a Church or the Reformation Movement will fail if they do not possess an accurate and secure foundation. The lack of coherence and the apparent contradictions which exist within the New Testament itself have prevented a fundamental understanding of the doctrines on gender and on sexual variance being formed. This means that the development of these doctrines has had to rely heavily on the traditions which have been created within the Church, and it is these traditions that are in severe conflict with the social attitudes of the present day. The Reformation of the 16th Century became a pivotal point in the development of the Christian Church and an inclusive understanding of the positions these Reformers were coming from, and of the changes which have subsequently been made, is needed in order to interpret the present day values. The only correct way to assess the validity of a tradition is to independently determine where it has first come from and how it has later developed. By now addressing the issues of sexual and gender variant behaviour which the Reformers were not able to tackle, it is hoped that the Reformation can be made a little more complete.

2:2 Social Consequences

In section 2:1 the development of the Church is reviewed from the point of view of the sixteenth century Reformers. This section seeks to review the history of sexual and gender variance from the time of the fourth century Church up to the present day. The present day social consequences are also examined.

2:2:1 History

The history and the traditions of the Church, and that of the surrounding first century cultures has always been interpreted through the prism which states that all gender and sexually variant behaviour is driven by the pursuit of sexual licence, promiscuity and lust. This analysis takes a different viewpoint which argues that at least some of the behaviour is driven by the need for identity, and this means that as complete a range of moral attitudes and behaviour are found in every one of these societies as humanity would expect.

That does not mean that there will be cultural agreement between societies. Indeed what is acceptable in one society may be horrific in another and the clashes between

Judean and the Greco/Roman societies may have been in no small part due to the differences in attitudes to authority, social relationships and to anal penetrative sex. Apart from some more general overriding features, such as the preservation of the common good, the behaviour of any member of one society must be judged by the moral precepts of that society, and not by those of any other. An extended study of the surrounding Greek, Roman and Jewish societies, cults and moral attitudes has been undertaken as part of this investigation and this approach has been used to distinguish social differences from the theologies and philosophies of the cults^{113 114}.

The most noteworthy contribution which this neurophysiological and psychological investigation has made to understanding the development of these Church traditions is because it has broken through this sexual barrier. It has forced upon this analysis the recognition that gender and sexually variant conditions are identity driven, which means that as large a variety of moral attitudes and behaviour must be encountered within the gender and sexually variant communities as are found in society at large¹¹⁵.

¹¹³ It will be shown later that although sexual misbehaviour is prevalent in every society, the gender and sexually disrupting behaviour of the Goddess religions may be seen to be concerned with the manipulation of power rather than the delights of sex. Sexual behaviour was also moderated by power, so any man could anally penetrate another man of lesser status, (or a woman), without penalty, however responsibility in behaviour was expected. Temple prostitution could be engaged in for the blessings of male fertility, rather than sex. In addition to this, sexuality from the ancient societies through to the Renaissance was structured quite differently than it is today. Attitudes prior to the mid eighteenth century tended to perceive men and women as versions of one sex. Women were seen as lesser men, where the clitoris and the uterus were reduced or inverted versions of the penis and scrotum. Such a one-sex model meant that the differences between men and women were not clear in the early medical Greek and Roman texts and both men and women were seen as parts (if unequal parts) of a larger cosmological order. Due to the actions of heat or other phenomena it was also considered possible for men to be turned into women. Therefore the gender disrupting activities of the Goddess religions could be seen to create a potential threat to any man, and the existence of the self castrated male priests of the Goddess religions were a reminder of this threat. Rather than strong gender inequality, a gendered stratification into divinely ordained and segregated gender roles was imposed. Boys and girls took part in educational and cultural activities together and, at least in the upper classes, women were well educated. Although they were completely barred from any public role and they were totally subject to their husbands, women were given a relatively high status in Roman society. Therefore far from any idea of their existence just to promote sexual orgies, the Goddess cults had the roles of protecting female interests against male aggression and domination, support for women's concerns, birthing and the need for responsible sex. When the activities of the Goddess cults are examined through the prism of Christian belief, in which all gender and sexually variant behaviour is considered to be in pursuit of promiscuity prostitution and lust, then the only conclusion which can be reached is that their purpose was principally for the pursuit of degenerate activities. When this prism is removed the other roles become evident. For a full account see: Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships", Gilchrist, S. 2012. "Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church". And Gilchrist, S. Pub.2014. "Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief".

¹¹⁴ About half of the Greek and Roman Goddesses were virgins and a form of celibacy associated with the call of duty was expected of their priests. The cult of Cybele was singled out by the Christian Church for special condemnation. In stark contrast to the condemnations of immorality and the eventual total repression of the cult by the Roman Catholic Church, Cybele's myths embraced sex and spirituality, they gave an earthier caution against lust and other sins of excess and they showed that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love.

¹¹⁵ For a full description of this work see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach". Gilchrist, S. (2013). "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New
Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

The current Christian doctrines which are commonly held argue that, while it is not sinful in itself to possess such transgender or homosexual feelings, to engage in any expression of them whatever is a sinful and also a lustful act. This analysis and the present day encounters destroy the validity of this argument because it is evident through observation that people are able to express these feelings in the context of loving relationships, and that these very same people could also be as disgusted as others if sex was to be pursued for inappropriate acts.

It will also be shown later in this analysis that the same outlook was also true for the first Century Middle Eastern societies, where the identical observations of same-sex relationships could also be made, but where distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour were instead decided on the basis of the motives that were involved, rather than by specifying the physical acts¹¹⁶. What was then demanded was responsibility of behaviour, and the boundary that divided acceptable from unacceptable behaviour was fixed between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex¹¹⁷.

The consequence of the suppression of all types of same-sex relationships by the Christian Church for over one thousand years has meant that the ability to make these key distinctions between love and lust has been lost. Therefore the belief that lust is always the driving force for these actions has become totally woven into the doctrines of the Church. The conclusion that homosexuality is exclusively about promiscuity and sexual immorality would become universally accepted; and also all engagements in homosexual acts have been made the scapegoat for abusive sex. For as long as the Christian church was able to retain its social monopoly there was no possibility of any changes to these attitudes. The social changes of the last fifty years mean that the true nature of the situation can no longer be hidden. However the burden of history has meant that traditional views are difficult to shift.

A major challenge which now faces everyone is that of removing the ghettos of discrimination which the centuries have enforced¹¹⁸. There is nothing in this account that condones immorality in any way. In this analysis it is shown how faithful and committed same-sex relationships could be celebrated within Christianity during the period of the Gospel Church, and how and why the Christian Church during the first three centuries of its existence came to vehemently condemn all such acts. It also provides a theological perspective on same-sex and transgender issues which is of relevance to the present day.

Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach”, and also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “Self Identity, Gender, Sexuality and Religious Belief”. See footer for access

¹¹⁶ See Section 3:2:2 in this document

¹¹⁷ For a complete account see: Gilchrist, S. 2011. “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”

¹¹⁸ A Complete account of this is given in Gilchrist, S. “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”. Current and historic research is examined from both the theological and the psychological point of view and the activities of the campaigning groups are examined. Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

2:2:2 Theology

Theology is often identified as the source of many forms of conflicts, and for Martin Luther and Thomas Aquinas the need to reform the teachings of the Church required both of them to trace back through the traditions developed by the Church. For both of them their primary point of reference was that of Augustine and the fourth Century Church. However Luther sought to point out the errors in Church teaching by linking his criticisms directly to New Testament texts. Aquinas, who was writing some 300 years earlier, did not take these bible passages to be his primary model, but instead he made use of the arguments of the Greek philosophers, most notably Aristotle, to establish the doctrines of Natural Law, through which he could employ his logic and reason to argue for the accuracy and the viability of the traditions which were held by the Church. However neither Luther nor Aquinas could succeed in the creation of a completely rational progression of their theological arguments and both of them were still left with the paradox of explaining how the death of a single person could be the salvation for all of mankind. With Luther that paradox is more clearly observed, and this mystery simply had to be accepted within his context of the "Theology of the Cross"¹¹⁹. However for Aquinas the application of the principles of logic and reason could attempt to diminish that paradox, through the employment of the principles of Natural Law to justify the traditional teachings that were endorsed by the Church¹²⁰. The disagreements between these two figures led to the key fundamental theological differences which lay at the heart of the Reformation.

2:2:3 Grace, Revolution, Justification and Sanctification

Some of these implications can be seen in the differing attitudes that are taken to specific theological concepts. Grace in Christianity is considered to be the free and unmerited favour of God for the salvation of sinners, and the bestowing of blessings. It is God's gift which is given when asked for, without any restrictions. Justification, which means setting people right in the eyes of God, is also instantly given and also without any restriction, For Luther and the other Reformers, both Justification and Sanctification¹²¹ are considered to be products of the one process. Both of these are

¹¹⁹ According to Luther, the theology of the cross preaches what seems foolish to the world (1 Cor. 1:18). In particular, the theology of the cross preaches that (1) humans can in no way earn righteousness, (2) humans cannot add to or increase the righteousness of the cross, and (3) any righteousness given to humanity comes from outside of us.

¹²⁰ See also Section 3:7:1 in this document.

¹²¹ Understanding the difference between justification and sanctification can be as important as understanding the difference between salvation and damnation. Justification is the work of God where the righteousness of Jesus is passed to the sinner so the sinner is declared by God as being righteous under the Law (Rom. 4:3; 5:1,9; Gal. 2:16; 3:11). This righteousness is not earned or retained by any effort of the saved. Justification is therefore an instantaneous occurrence with the result being eternal life. It is based completely and solely upon Jesus' sacrifice on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24) and is received by faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9). In the Roman Catholic tradition no works are necessary whatsoever to obtain justification but sanctification has to be earned. Sanctification is the process of being set apart for God's work and being conformed to the image of Christ. This conforming to Christ involves the work of the person. But it is still God working in the believer to produce more of a godly character and life in the person who has already been justified (Phil. 2:13). Therefore sanctification is not instantaneous because it is not the work of God alone. The justified person is actively involved in submitting to God's will, resisting sin, seeking holiness, and working to be more godly (Gal. 5:22-23). Significantly, sanctification has no bearing on justification. Even if we

understood to be given through that Faith alone¹²² which comes from the outpouring of the Grace which is received. However, even though Justification by Grace in the Roman Catholic tradition was also instantly given without any restriction whatever, Sanctification was something which had to be earned through the actions of turning to Christ.¹²³ These differences arise through the inconsistencies in scripture since different passages appear to indicate that there are different paths to righteousness. Paul understands that justification is through faith alone, and he clearly omits the requirement for any good works to be undertaken in order to obtain sanctification and salvation. Conversely, James believes that good works must accompany faith, since "Faith without works is dead." (James 2:14-26). The different reformers dealt with the paradoxes in various ways. Alterations in perspectives and the development of doctrines of pre-destination, and changes in attitudes to work ethics were some other consequences of these lines of argument. When these are used as weapons against each, other serious social conflicts can erupt.

While the theological arguments can become very important in terms of intellectual discussions, the author has had more than enough first hand experience of working in situations of conflict and violence to know about the harm and the distress that can be created when differences in theology are employed as a means of keeping other people out. Theology then becomes a weapon of difference. Lying at the core of the Protestant Reformation, and the earlier Cathar Revolt, there was the need to reform a corrupt and power hungry medieval Church. Sadly this was to lead to the Wars of Religion which extended throughout Europe during and after the Reformation¹²⁴.

All too often even abstract theology has been used to create the battle formations of warfare both before these events and ever since. There are many examples of this in the present day. Without any mental means of consciously separating the self from the other the distinction between interpersonal and intrapersonal concepts cannot be made. This first period up to about the age of two years is here categorised as one of

don't live a perfect life, we are still justified. For those who fail to achieve sanctification on earth the doctrine of purgatory was developed by the Roman Catholic Church.

¹²² For Luther Justification and Sanctification came through faith alone. He wrote: "The first and chief article is this: Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification (Romans 3:24-25). He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29), and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works and merits, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Romans 3:23-25). This is necessary to believe. This cannot be otherwise acquired or grasped by any work, law or merit. Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us ... Nothing of this article can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and everything else falls (Mark 13:31)". See: (Luther, Martin. "The Smalcald Articles," in *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005, 289, Part two, Article 1. Accessed 3 May 2013 at <http://www.cph.org/pdf/531131.pdf>)

¹²³ According to Article 1989 of the Roman Catholic Catechism: "The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. "Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man". In the Roman Catholic tradition justification was first given but sanctification had to be earned.

¹²⁴ As previously noted, the European wars of religion were a series of wars waged in Europe from ca. 1524 to 1648, following the onset of the Protestant Reformation in Western and Northern Europe. Although sometimes unconnected, all of these wars were strongly influenced by the religious change of the period, and the conflict and rivalry that it produced
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014
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acquisition and integration to society where only the components of what can later be used to separate the self from the other are formed. A corollary of this is that the same principles which are outlined in this investigation can also be used to study the formation of tribal identities among groups of people, and extended use of these principles for the analysis of such conflicts has been made¹²⁵.

2:2:4 Gender Equality

Within the ancient world, women have most usually been considered to be inferior to men¹²⁶. This can be observed in the way that women were treated in society, with no political rights, with little freedom, and they were totally subject to the whims and fancy of their fathers and husbands. In many societies women were believed to be not only physically inferior to men, but also mentally inferior¹²⁷. In addition they were often thought to be representatives of evil and channels of seduction¹²⁸. That picture is of course a stereotype, since there were wide variations across different cultures, and between the class structures in individual societies¹²⁹. This is the only picture to be painted by the traditions of the Christian Church, but it is frequently not correct. In place of present day societies, where complete gender equality is now determined through the principles of universal human rights, the relationships between men and women in the first century Greco/Roman and Jewish societies were determined by enforcing a compulsory gender complementarity which maximised the perceived usefulness of men and women inside these societies. This always demanded that

¹²⁵ See for example: Kaptein, Roel, Morrow, Duncan. (1993). "On the Way of Freedom". Dublin: Columba Press. ISBN-10: 1856070778 ISBN-13: 978-1856070775 Zurawski, Nils. (2002) "Girard among the Paramilitaries of Ulster: Identity, History, and Violence" *Anthropoetics - The Journal of Generative Anthropology* Volume VIII, number 1 (Spring/Summer 2002) ISSN 1083-7264. McClelland, R (2005) "Victims of the Conflict in and About Northern Ireland- Truth and Justice", Ed: Gilchrist, I., Proceedings of a conference on "Healing Through Remembering: Dealing with the Past". Conference Date 12th March 2005. Accessed 2 may 2012 at <http://www.crestcons.org/society/Co50727a%20Conference%20Proceedings%2012%20Mar%2005.pdf>. Morrow, Duncan. (2005). "Violence and the Sacred in Northern Ireland", University of Ulster at Jordanstown: Accessed 2 May 2012 at http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/cover/contagion/contagion2/contagion02_morrow.pdf.

¹²⁶ This was not universal. There was a remarkable degree of gender equality in Ancient Egypt. In other societies a strong gender complementarity, rather than gender inequality might be encountered in which men and women were given rigidly separated gender roles which could be regarded with equal esteem. There were many societies where severe gender inequality and gender discrimination did exist.

¹²⁷ Pomeroy, Sarah B. (1995) "Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity". Schocken Books, ISBN 080521030X, 9780805210309. See also Blundell, Sue. (1995) "Women in ancient Greece: Harvard University Press, 1995 ISBN 0674954734, 780674954731 and Rawson, Beryl: "Finding Roman Women," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, Blackwell, 2010. See: <http://www.hamyaar.ir/book-download/Blackwell%20Companions%20and%20Guides/Companion%20to%20the%20Roman%20Republic,%20A.pdf>

¹²⁸ This was certainly true of the second and third Century Christian Church. See section 3:3:2 of this document.

¹²⁹ According to Jewish tradition, a covenant was formed between the Israelites and the God of Abraham at Mount Sinai. This required men to ensure that all members of their household (wives, children and slaves) met these requirements as well. However Judaism was also a strongly Matriarchal society where women played an important role. See: Hauptman, Judith. (2001). "Women." *Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary*. Ed. David L. Lieber. The Jewish Publication Society, 2001. 1356-1359. ISBN-10: 0827607121 ISBN-13: 978-0827607125

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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women were placed in submission to men, but instead of complete subservience a complementarity of outlook was also required.

One particular area to note was found in the field of education. For many women any education was not considered to be a requirement, but for others a good education was essential for, even though women were totally excluded from any public role in a strongly gender polarised society¹³⁰, their contribution to the social economy could be immense¹³¹. Plato considered that the only innate differences between males and females were the reproductive ones¹³². Socrates likewise believed that that males and females have no distinct qualifications for any particular pursuits and that no particular function should be reserved for men and women, but both sexes should be treated alike¹³³. Within Plato's Republic, the Guardians are put into place to defend morality and to rule society because they know the truth and possess the knowledge and wisdom of true forms¹³⁴. The equality of opportunity for both men and women to enter the Guardian Class¹³⁵ demands an equality of education for both sexes, and this principle of the equality of education for both men and women was embraced in the real world. In Roman society, at least amongst the upper classes, women seem to have been very well-educated¹³⁶. The personal relationships within marriage also appear to demonstrate a mutual equality of intellectual esteem, and the snapshots of Roman Life that were obtained during the excavations of Herculaneum and Pompeii shows how fully this was put into practice.

Rather than gender discrimination, a gender complementarity was practiced in which men and women were placed into separate and exclusive gender roles which were considered to have equivalent esteem¹³⁷. Ovid and Martial imply that boys and girls

¹³⁰ Gender discrimination may be confused with gender polarisation and gender complementarity. In a gender complementary society both sexes may be regarded with equal esteem, but they are separated into the separate socially defined and divinely sanctioned gender roles. In a gender polarised society the role division still exists but the same esteem is not granted. In both the submission of women may be required and gender discrimination can occur.

¹³¹ See also section 3:1:2 of this document

¹³² These were arguments for gender equality but instead of arguing for equal legal rights the arguments were based on a society that maximised the use of the different capabilities of men and women instead.

¹³³ Blundell, Sue. (1995) "Women in ancient Greece: Harvard University Press, 1995 ISBN 0674954734, 780674954731

¹³⁴ Plato, The Republic. Books I–V: The eutopia portraying the ideal community and the education of the Guardians

¹³⁵ See <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics-politics/> "Plato's Ethics and Politics in The Republic" First published Tue Apr 1, 2003; substantive revision Mon Aug 31, 2009

¹³⁶ Rawson, Beryl (1987) "The Roman Family," in "The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives" Cornell University Press, 1987, pp. 30, 40–41. ISBN0801494605, 9780801494604

¹³⁷ It should be noted that this was not always true and it could vary between city states. In earlier Greek Societies before 400 BC women had to have their husband's permission to leave their homes. With the exception of women in ancient Sparta, Greek women at this time had very limited freedom outside the home. If they had their husband's permission, they could attend weddings, funerals, some religious festivals, and visit female neighbours for brief periods of time. But without their husband's permission, they could do none of these things. However inside the house at this time Greek women were in charge. After 400BC there was a rapid change and a transformation in the freedom of women largely because of the reverses Greece suffered in war. Not every boundary was broken, however it is undeniable that the visibility and role of women during this time of violent change in ancient Greece was in the ascendant. Women had a great deal to do with it. However, although great advances were

were educated either together or to a similar standard. Livy also assumes that the daughter of a centurion would be in school¹³⁸. Children of the elite were taught Greek as well as Latin from an early age¹³⁹. Children of both genders learned to behave socially by attending dinner parties and in other events. Girls and boys took part in religious festivals, and they sang together in choirs¹⁴⁰. For entertainment women could attend the debates at the Forum¹⁴¹, and events like the public games, chariot races and the theatrical performances. In the early Empire, the legal standing of daughters differed very little from that of sons¹⁴². If the “Pater familias” died without leaving any valid will, the right of a daughter to her share of the family property was treated as being equal to that of his son. A will that did otherwise, or it emancipated any family member without conforming to the due processes of the law, could be challenged by the woman¹⁴³. Women could write their own wills. They could also appear in court as their own advocates. An emancipated woman legally became “Sui iuris”, or her “Own person”, therefore she could accumulate wealth, she could own property and she could buy or dispose of it as she saw fit. However, despite all of this autonomy a woman was still totally excluded from any public role and office. She was not allowed to speak in public about any concerns. She had to be totally obedient to her husband, who as the “Pater familias” held absolute power over her. The one and only area of public female influence lay within religious practice where, amongst the Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Rome, complete gender equality was considered to exist¹⁴⁴.

2:2:5 Gender Discrimination

Although gender complementarity was exercised, gender discrimination was needed to enforce it. That meant that women always had to submit to the authority of men, they were denied access to all power over their own lives, and they could not make any contribution to public life. Because of this discrimination the lives of boys and

made, they had no right to vote and the husbands retained the ultimate power. Michael Scott , Michael (2009) “The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece” History Today Volume: 59 Issue: 11 2009
¹³⁸Rawson, Beryl (2003) “Children and Childhood in Roman Italy” Oxford University Press, ISBN 0191514233, 9780191514234, pp. 197-198

¹³⁹Assa, Janine. Anne Hollander (Translated by) (1960): “The Great Roman Ladies”; Grove Press New York, 1960, ASIN: B0000CLOIT p. 50

¹⁴⁰Rawson, Beryl (2003) “Children and Childhood in Roman Italy” Oxford University Press, ISBN 0191514233, 9780191514234, p. 198.

¹⁴¹ But not take part

¹⁴² Frier, Bruce W. McGinn, Thomas A. J. (authors), Lidov, Joel (Series Editor) (2003): A Casebook on Roman Family Law (American Philological Association Classical Resources Series) Oxford University Press, USA (November 6, 2003) ISBN-10: 0195161866 ISBN-13: 978-0195161861 pp. 19–20.

¹⁴³ Johnston, Roman Law in Context, chapter 3.3; Frier and McGinn, Casebook, Chapter IV.

¹⁴⁴ The one major public role reserved solely for women was in the sphere of religion: the priestly office of the Vestals. Freed of any obligation to marry or have children, the Vestals devoted themselves to the study and correct observance of rituals which were deemed necessary for the security and survival of Rome but which could not be performed by the male colleges of priests. From the Mid Republic onward, religious diversity became increasingly characteristic of the city of Rome. Many religions that were not part of Rome’s earliest state cult offered leadership roles for women, among them the cult of Isis and of Cybele, or the Magna Mater. An epitaph preserves the title “Sacerdos maxima” for a woman who held the highest priesthood of the Magna Mater’s temple near the current site of St. Peter’s Basilica (Stephen L. Dyson, Rome: A Living Portrait of an Ancient City: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, p. 283.)

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girls diverged quite dramatically after they had formally come of age. Nevertheless some women did exert very considerable public influence and power, but that was only exercised either in the shadow of their husband's authority, or as his widow, or through acting as regent for a male minor, or by using their husband's names^{145 146}. In practice the supremacy of the male was always absolute, and women could have no jurisdiction even over the most major things like the life or the death of their own children¹⁴⁷.

The presence of the separate gender defined Gods and Goddesses, who occupied their own worlds of total gender equality within a polytheistic society, did give women considerable power in their own domains. However instead of the ideal of a gender complementarity which involved the same full gender equality, it polarised society through the creation of the separate dominant male and subject female worlds. The existence of an educated and informed female group was always a threat to a male dominated society and the frustration of living permanently in submission and without any power or control over their own lives must have been very great. Thus a male superiority was strongly asserted and the social segregation through gender was rigidly enforced¹⁴⁸. The gender disrupting performances of the Goddess cults further challenged the male domination. The statement that is attributed to the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:34; which declares that: "Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church" - is an apt description of that Greco/Roman society and not of Jesus and the Gospel Church.

¹⁴⁵In Ancient Rome, the head of the family, the "Pater familias", had authority over everything and everyone in his home. In contrast, the mother in the Roman family had no legal rights and no involvement in the public affairs of Rome.

¹⁴⁶ Freeborn women in ancient Rome were citizens (cives), but could not vote or hold political office. Because of their limited public role, women are named less frequently than men by Roman historians. But while Roman women held no direct political power, those from wealthy or powerful families could and did exert influence through private negotiations. Exceptional women who left an undeniable mark on history range from the semi-legendary Lucretia and Claudia Quinta, whose stories took on mythic significance; fierce Republican-era women such as Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and Fulvia, who commanded an army and issued coins bearing her image; women of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, most prominently Livia, who contributed to the formation of Imperial moral customs and practices; and the empress Helena, a driving force in promoting Christianity.

¹⁴⁷The practice of exposing unwanted babies, in order that they would die was accepted within Roman society

¹⁴⁸ The idea of the submission of women existed in the Christian Church. See for example the statement by Paul: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24) and also Peter " Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. (Bible, 1 Peter 3:1-6)

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The contrast in outlook which is found between this later statement and entrance of Christianity with its gender transcendent God which is expressed in Paul's assertion in Galatians 3:28 which states that: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", demonstrates the nature of the changes that occurred. Like the Goddess cults, early Christianity did not simply challenge gender inequality through the importance and the esteem which it gave to women. It also challenged the moral precepts and the perceptions upon which that patriarchal society was based¹⁴⁹ ¹⁵⁰. If Christianity was to maximise its impact on this society it had to find some ways of integrating itself into it, and that meant neutralising all these concerns. That early challenge was to be destroyed by the drive of the Christian Church to obtain respectability in a gender polarised Greco/Roman society for it attempted to compromise the original Gospel doctrines of gender transcendence in order to gain the social respectability which would enable it to convey the rest of the Gospel message to the wider world¹⁵¹. After that happened, and with it the removal of the ability to invoke the protection of any separate gender defined Goddess, the social position of women would become even worse. The growth of severe gender discrimination during the first three centuries of the Christian Church is described in sections 3:3:1 and 3:3:2 of this document¹⁵². Sadly the example of Tertullian, which is given in that section was not the exception, it was the general rule¹⁵³. Over many centuries the rights of women to own property,

¹⁴⁹It is shown that a major driving force behind the gender disruptive behaviour of the Goddess cults was defined by the pursuit of power for female protection, concerns and rights. The Christian Church instead makes the presumption that this disruptive behaviour was entirely in pursuit of illicit sex.

¹⁵⁰ By the first century women had become an increasingly powerful influence on society and at this time the social status of women had developed to a point where the breakthrough was needed, however the existence of gender defined Gods and Goddesses in a polytheistic society created divinely ordained boundaries that could not be crossed. See: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See the footer for access

¹⁵¹ For the description of how this took place see the companion papers Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation"., and in the companion paper: Gilchrist, S. (2013). "Reform and the Christian Church". See the footer for access.

¹⁵² According to the Church: Ironically, even though it is the woman who represents corruption personified, it is through the male issue that the Original Sin is actually transmitted: for it is the semen which is the bearer of death. Therefore in creating a new creature, it is the woman who provides the body from her substance, but it is the man who gives the soul through his semen, which is already corrupt. This theory is called Traducianism.

¹⁵³ A few more for the collection! Clement of Alexandria, *Pedagogues* II, 33, 2: "With women the very consciousness of their own nature must evoke feelings of shame". Origen, *On the Apparel of Women*, chapter 1: "And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway: you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert--that is, death--even the Son of God had to die." St. Augustine, *Soliloq. I* 10 "I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state." St. John Chrysostom "The whole of her bodily beauty is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, rheum, and the fluid of digested food... If you consider what is stored up behind those lovely eyes, the angle of the nose, the mouth and cheeks you will agree that the well-proportioned body is merely a whitened sepulchre." St. Jerome, *Commentary on Ephesians*, III ch.5 "As long as a woman is for birth and children she is different from man as body is from soul. But when she wishes to serve Christ more

and most particularly the ability to be a "Sui iuris", or their "Own person" would be removed. In Britain there was to be a wait of at least 1600 years, before a landmark decision by the Privy Council on October 18th, 1929 restored the situation. This at last stated that "Women were declared to be "persons" under the law."¹⁵⁴ It changed the whole framework of British and Canadian Law, and it enabled women to become once again "Sui iuris", or their "Own person", now this time, by absolute right.

2:2:6 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse can broadly be defined as a physical or emotional activity in which one participant sexually imposes himself or herself on another without the freely given consent of the other person for the purposes of power, domination, humiliation, or for the physical pleasures of the sexual act. Consensual same-sex relationships are excluded by this definition. However that was not the viewpoint which was taken by the Christian Church, this condemned every form of same-sex act. The complaints about priestly sexual abuse began early, and they were a constant presence during the first millennium. However it was not until about the year 300 when the Church hierarchy began to single out all same-sex actions for special disapproval. There were many condemnations of sexual abuse which were issued by the authorities of the Church¹⁵⁵. These became more and more vehement, however these were often not acted on in the civil ordinances in the ways which the Church demanded, either by most of the Roman Emperors or later on by the Carolingian Kings (the principal exception to this is the Emperor Justinian)¹⁵⁶. Charlemagne on several occasions

than the world, then she will cease to be a woman, and will be called man." St. Albert the Great, *Quaestiones super de animalibus* XV q. 11 "Woman is a misbegotten man and has a faulty and defective nature in comparison with his. Therefore she is unsure in herself. What she herself cannot get, she seeks to obtain through lying and diabolical deceptions. And so, to put it briefly, one must be on one's guard with every woman, as if she were a poisonous snake and the horned devil.... In evil and perverse doings woman is cleverer, that is, slyer, than man. Her feelings drive woman toward every evil, just as reason impels man toward all good." St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I q. 92 a. 1 "Woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence, such as that of a south wind, which is moist."

¹⁵⁴ On October 18th, 1929, a landmark decision changed the face of British and Canadian politics. Women were declared "persons" under the law and were granted the right to be appointed to the Senate. Their victory was the result of an arduous struggle by five Alberta women. By 1929, Alberta's women had secured many of the liberties commonly withheld because of gender, but surprisingly, women could not be appointed to the Senate because The British North America (BNA) Act declared, "women are persons in matters of pain and penalties, but are not persons in matters of rights and privileges." The women initiated an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada to make changes to The BNA Act. The women asked the question "does the word 'person' in Section 24 of The British North America Act include female persons?" The decision from the Supreme Court stated that individuals must be "fit and qualified" to be appointed to a public office and therefore only men were eligible. Relentless in their quest for reform, the women approached the Privy Council of England - at that time Canada's highest court of appeal. On October 18, 1929, the Lord Chancellor of the Privy Council declared, "Women are eligible to be summoned and may become Members of the Senate of Canada." <http://www.albertacentennial.ca/news/viewpost.aspx?id=364.html>

¹⁵⁵ The full account is given in Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships"

¹⁵⁶ One might expect any type of same-sex act to have been a major area of concern, however by far the major condemnations in first century Greco/Roman and Jewish society seem to have been socially and status determined. The jurist Paulus stated in his Digest of Roman law, written around 300 A.D., that a male who voluntarily is passive to another male should lose half of his estate. He also
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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republished the Canons of the Council of Ancyra¹⁵⁷ ¹⁵⁸ which, for the lay people prohibited anal penetration but did not prohibit any other same-sex act. Towards the end of the first millennium a flowering of atypical sexual expression occurred. This liberalisation was countered by the ever increasing condemnations by the Church over the breaches of celibacy, sodomy¹⁵⁹ and sexual abuse. However the already serious sexual abuse and misdemeanours by the clergy continued to increase, and at the end of the first millennium there was a huge and widespread scandal in the Church.

In the absence of relationships with members of the opposite sex, heterosexual men and women will engage in same-sex acts. As always the response from the Church was to increase the penalties against those clergy and the religious who broke these vows of celibacy, rather than to question the policy of celibacy itself. There is a sad litany of documents, written over many centuries, which describe the widespread extent of and also the penalties that were applied to this priestly sexual abuse. One prominent example of this is found in the compilation of the incidences of sexual abuse in the eleventh century book by Peter Damian, "Liber Gomorrhianus [or the Book of Gomorrah]"¹⁶⁰. This book was presented to Pope Leo IX, who at first praised the work but he came to conclude that the account that it gave was exaggerated. He then softened Peter Damian's recommendations by excluding only those clergy who had offended repeatedly, and even then, over a long period of time. This failure to take decisive action, together with the Church corruption and the abuse of its secular power were influences which led in part to the Cathar Revolt. Despite the military defeat of the Cathars in the Albigensian Crusade, the continuing frequency of sexual abuse and the tendency to hide such incidents from public view have ever since continued to plague the Church¹⁶¹ ¹⁶².

reiterates an earlier edict barring such men from the legal profession. In 438 A.D. the Roman Emperor Theodosius II confirmed that just the submissive partners in homosexual relationships were to be put to death. The Roman Emperor Justinian, in amendments to his Novels No.77 (dating 538) and No.141 (dating 559), declared that the sin of Sodomy was specifically due to same-sex activities and the desire for them. Initially both of the offending partners were to be put to death, but this was later relaxed. This was the first Roman legal assignment of the term Sodomy to these activities. During the remainder of the first millennium a number of Church Councils increased the penalties against same-sex acts, but these could not be enforced without the support of the civil authorities.

¹⁵⁷ From as early as the years 306 and 314, bishops in the Christian Church had enacted legislation in the Council of Elvira and the Council of Ancyra which imposed the rule of celibacy on all who served as religious or priests. For those who were already married Canon 31 of the Council of Elvira declares "Bishops, presbyters, deacons, and others with a position in the ministry are to abstain completely from sexual intercourse with their wives and from the procreation of children. If anyone disobeys, he shall be removed from the clerical office". Accessed at:

<http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/canon%20law/elviracanon.htm> on the 21 August 2011. The Canons of the Council of Ancyra can also be found on the Web.

¹⁵⁸ This was also associated with the Arian controversy.

¹⁵⁹ It is important to note that the term sodomy refers to acts of anal penetration which correspond to actions of same-sex rape. This was the original definition and not that of modern day usage.

¹⁶⁰ Pierre J. Payer (ed.): (1982) Book of Gomorrah: An eleventh century treatise against clerical homosexual practise, Waterloo, Ont. Wilfrid Laurier University Press. ISBN 0889201234 ISBN-13: 978-0889201231. In this and other translations of this book the references to sodomy or sexual abuse are replaced with the word homosexuality instead.

¹⁶¹ Doyle, Thomas P. (2003): "Roman Catholic Clericalism, Religious Duress, and Clergy Sexual Abuse," in Pastoral Psychology, Vol. 51, No 3, January 2003.
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The failure of the Church to act decisively on these matters has a modern ring to it, and the psychological analysis which is summarised in Sections 1:1:1 and 1:2 of this document demonstrates why the approaches that involve ever increasing repression or condemnation have a counterproductive effect¹⁶³. All forms of sexual abuse must be totally and unequivocally condemned, and all victims, or potential victims, must be rigorously protected from any possible future transgressions. This protection must be the overwhelming priority, but this analysis also makes it clear that the management techniques that are appropriate to an identity driven conflict are required¹⁶⁴. Until that happens, all future efforts that are made to eliminate these incidences by increasing the vilification and the condemnation of offenders, will not have the desired effect.

2:2:7 Celibacy and Abuse

The implications of this examination also mean that it is necessary to reconsider the policy of priestly celibacy itself. Article 1579 of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church¹⁶⁵ states:

“All the ordained ministers of the Latin Church, with the exception of permanent deacons, are normally chosen from among men of faith who live a celibate life and who intend to remain celibate "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:12.) Called to consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to "the affairs of the Lord," (1 Corinthians 7:32) they give themselves entirely to God and to men. Celibacy is a sign of this new life to the service of which the Church's minister is consecrated; accepted with a joyous heart celibacy radiantly proclaims the Reign of God”.

That philosophy of celibacy is entirely in accord with Christ's teaching in the Gospel. However it will be shown in sections 3:1:5 and 3:3:1 of this document that the type of celibacy which had come to be adopted by the fourth Century Church was not one that would be recognised by the Gospel Church¹⁶⁶. Voluntary celibacy is indeed given a very high esteem within the Christian Church, and that should always be respected. Even though the ideals which this compulsory celibacy expresses may be considered admirable, it is too much honoured in the breach. The compulsory celibacy which is imposed on the priesthood and religious of the Roman Catholic Church is regarded only as a discipline, it is not a doctrine; thus there is no scriptural authority which would preclude dispensing with it.

While one fully acknowledges and welcomes the sincerity and the earnestness of the present day Roman Catholic Church to condemn, and to eliminate the problems of priestly sexual abuse, it will fail to succeed before it reconsiders the nature of the conflicts and the dynamics that are involved. It is shown by this analysis that the

¹⁶² Doyle, Thomas, J.C.D., C.A.D.C. A Very Short History of Clerical Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church. Accessed on the 24 August 2011 at:

<http://www.crusadeagainstclergyabuse.com/htm/AShortHistory.htm>

¹⁶³ A summary of the psychology is given in: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014) "Personality Development and LGB and T People: A New Approach".

¹⁶⁴ See section 1:2 of this document.

¹⁶⁵ http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c3a6.htm

¹⁶⁶ See Section 3:1:5 in this document

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presumptions which the Church makes on the genesis of all sexual and gender variant conditions must be discarded. It is shown from the neurophysiological and psychological analysis that attempts to use techniques which involve suppression or repression to manage such deep seated conflicts have a counterproductive effect. Therefore imposing an even more stringent enforcement of a compulsory celibacy which cannot be lived up to will increase the sexual frustration which leads to actions of abuse, and without a change in approach the issues of sexual abuse will continue to plague the Church¹⁶⁷.

2:2:8 Gender Complementarity and Gender Transcendence

To ask a first century male Roman citizen if he practices gender discrimination, he might answer that he does not. Instead he might consider that he practices gender complementarity, where men and women are divided into exclusive gender defined and divinely sustained gender roles which possess equal esteem. Rather than using any modern perception of human rights, that policy is determined by the most useful contribution which each of the sexes can make to the wellbeing of society. For Paul, a male Roman citizen, who was born in the city of Tarsus in modern day Turkey; that perception would be the natural Roman world view. For Peter a similar Jewish view of gender complementarity would also apply, and it would be one in which to place the Christian Church. It is also the outlook which expressed the ideals of the Greek philosophers, and adopting it would provide respectability for the Church. In addition it is a perception upon which those people who oppose the consecration of women Bishops in the Church of England base their arguments on today.

There would seem to be very strong arguments for gender complementarity because the evidence for this is supported by both the Apostles Peter and Paul in the New Testament and by the strong traditions that arose very early in the Church. It is also a principle which has survived intact through the 16th century reformation, and up to nearly the present day. However there are certain issues which may test its validity. These include the attitude which Jesus took to the women of the Gospels and the prominence which was given to women in leadership roles in the Gospel Church. Both of these attitudes directly challenged the principles of male authority and of gender complementarity which existed in First Century Society. There are also the inconsistencies and concerns over interpretations of the New Testament and Old Testament texts¹⁶⁸. Other areas which require further discussion include the nature and closeness of the association of Christianity with the Goddess Cults, and how the success in imposing the moral views of a subject Jewish culture, together with the equivalent Christian outlooks onto a dominant society acted to disrupt both the social relationships and the gendered security of a male dominated society. This includes the transformation of the true gender transcendence and full equality of the original Gospel message into the resolute imposition of a strong and exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy, and the transformation in attitudes which occurred after a religion which first started out by promoting an agenda for women became dominated by a male

¹⁶⁷Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach". See footer for access.

¹⁶⁸The Apocryphal Gospel of Thomas may offer some interesting perspectives. See Sections 2:3:2, 3:1:4 and 3:7:2

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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leadership, and how this led to extreme expressions of gender discrimination against women within the fourth century Church.

2:2:9 Discipline or Doctrine?

Perhaps the more telling way to assess these arguments is to examine the authority which the New Testament invokes. In 1 Corinthians 14:34, Paul was urging Christian women to keep silent in Church because that would be a disgrace to society, and there is no direct reference to Christ. For Peter likewise (1 Peter 3:1-16) the need for women's submission was because the esteem of the Church must be nurtured within society at large. Paul's comment in Ephesians 5:22-24 again refers to the absolute authority and control exercised by the "Pater familias" in Greco/Roman society. All of these statements reflect the need for the Church to gain respect in that society and this provided a model for the Church. None of them attempt to derive their authority from the teaching of Christ. There is a good precedent which urges the Apostles and the early Church to follow the rules of the secular society. In Mark 12:17 Jesus said to his questioners, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."¹⁶⁹ In Romans 13 Paul declares that Christians are obliged to obey all earthly authorities, stating that because they were introduced by God, a disobedience to them equates to disobedience to God.

Thus to embrace gender complementarity within Christianity is to follow the authority of Caesar and of Rome. It is not the authority given by divine rule. Therefore every person in every society is required to work out for themselves how to follow the Gospel of Christ in their own world. Exactly this is found in Paul's letter to Philemon, the owner of a runaway slave. Paul does not demand that the contract of slavery should be broken but he asks his master to treat the slave as an equal partner in the love of Christ. Today nobody (one hopes) would use the letter to Philemon to justify slavery. Equally no one should use these arguments on gender complementarity to impose that requirement on laity or priests in 20th Century life.

This also demands the question as to what the original teaching of Jesus and of the Gospel Church were, and for this it is necessary to look back to an earlier time, before the compromises needed to fit in with Greco/Roman society were made. Part 3 of this document, "Relationships and the Early Church", examines these issues.

2:3 Adaptation and Regeneration

2:3:1 Rationalisation

In any analysis which attempts to trace back through the Church traditions a road block is encountered during the time of the fourth century Church. That is hardly surprising, for this is the point at which Christianity was transformed from a minority and often persecuted religion into one which represented the authority of the State. This required a massive rationalisation of the teaching of the Church, which took place through the various councils which were held early in the fourth Century. The

¹⁶⁹ The passages are in Matthew 22:15-22 and Mark 12:13-17 Luke 20:20-26

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principal council was that of the First Council of Nicaea, held in 325. This decided on the present day Canon of scripture, which included the four Gospels, the Epistles and the letters of Paul, plus a number of other texts. Many were left out. Before that time there had been other Gospels and other Christian texts in general circulation. However most of these could be considered to be spurious or they were elaborations of the original Christian message, and because of this these were correctly omitted. Nevertheless, irrespective of the accuracy or otherwise of their contents, these texts represented the very large range of Christian views which existed at the time. Some of these rejected gospels, such as the Gospel of Mary¹⁷⁰, and the so-called Gospel of Jesus' wife¹⁷¹ were a measure of the wide variety of attitudes that still existed in regard to the place of women in the Church.

The first century was also a period when there was great experimentation in religious belief. All of the old Gods had lost a great deal of their credibility, and there was a resurgence of the Goddess cults. Paul's description of the altar to the Unknown God (Acts 17:16-34) in Corinth, together with the proliferation of the Idols which he had discovered in the city reflects the wide variety of belief systems that were followed. Christianity brought a new spirituality to life. Other new cults were also being created and the Christian Church had to be very careful about the tendencies towards syncretism and Gnosticism¹⁷² which did occur. Because of the subsequent need for rationalisation and orthodoxy it would hardly be surprising if some of the genuine Christian traditions were lost at this time as well.

2:3:2 Transition and Resistance

The conclusion that the Christian Church took up and adapted the concept of gender complementarity from Greco/Roman society has considerable consequences; as this makes it a discipline, rather than a theological doctrine of the Church. However the idea of gender complementarity is also a derived outcome. The passages specifically on the role of women in 1 Peter, and in Paul's epistles, are about the importance of submission, for their direct demand is for the submission of women to men within a male dominated Greco/Roman society. However it should also be noted that gender complementarity is embodied within the same bible passages, and when these are

¹⁷⁰ For the full text see: <http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm> Accessed 3 May 2013.

¹⁷¹ The earliest and most reliable records of Jesus's life – the New Testament gospels – do not say explicitly whether Jesus was married or not. Whenever the New Testament gospels refer to Jesus' natural relatives, they speak only of his father, mother and siblings, but never of a wife. Although almost all scholars of all religious persuasions take this as strong evidence of the singleness of Jesus, a few have proposed that Jesus was married. The fictional account of the Da Vinci Code has increased speculation about the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. However, while it is often stated that she was a close companion in early Christian literature, none of the orthodox or Gnostic texts, including the Gospel of Philip, (which is the one most cited for this argument), ever say that Jesus was married. The "Gospel of Jesus' Wife" is discussed more extensively later in this document.

¹⁷² Gnostic comes from the word "learned", in Greek and it represents special often secret knowledge. Gnosticism is the dualistic belief that the material world should be shunned and the spiritual world should be embraced. In some traditions Christ the human was completely separated from Christ the God. Gnostic ideas influenced many ancient religions which teach that gnosis (variously interpreted as enlightenment, salvation, emancipation or 'oneness with God') may be reached by practicing philanthropy to the point of personal poverty, sexual abstinence (as far as possible for their hearers, but total for their initiates) and diligently searching for wisdom by helping others.

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then compared with the fourth century doctrines previously cited, which were used to condemn women in the later Church, a world of difference is found.

As a revolutionary Jesus was a disappointment to the Jewish nation, for instead of conquering an oppressing empire in order to destroy it, the Gospel demanded that people work within that society and its empire to change it instead. This delivers a major challenge which can too easily be lost. Throughout history and throughout the world many Churches have conformed to the moral values of unjust societies, so much so that they have become part of them. Instead of the agents for reconciliation they become the centres for conflict instead.

In theory gender complementarity and full gender equality should be able to co-exist. However gender complementarity has its inbuilt difficulties, and the problems occur when it is enforced. On the one hand it compels a society in which men and women are regarded with fully equal esteem. On the other hand the gender complementarity enforces the division of the sexes so that men are given the power to govern, and to express their opinion in the public sphere, but women are confined to the hearth and home. The social pressures and this requirement had led to the development of a well educated female population within the Greek and Roman world. The subjugation of a well educated female population is almost bound to lead to power struggles and to conflict, and it is argued in this account that this is one of the reasons for the gender disruptive activities which were common to all of the Middle Eastern Goddess cults¹⁷³. The cult of the Goddess Cybele is one of these, and this has a particular relevance for Christianity.

All of the main Goddess cults engaged in gender disruptive behaviour in ways which attacked the gendered security of a male dominated society. The cult of Cybele was no exception to this, and Christians and the Church adopted an approach of strict heterosexual orthodoxy in order to distance themselves from the cult and to obtain the respectability of the Church within Greco/Roman society. For the same reasons it also identified all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour with immoral sex, and that is the understanding which has been built into the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church¹⁷⁴. Currently accepted research work embraces a similar viewpoint. Roller, Borgeaud and others perceive a single boundary between reputable and disruptive behaviour¹⁷⁵. The popular viewpoints exclusively associate the Gallae and the morals of the cult with sexual orgies, prostitution and for the practice of immoral sex. This analysis argues that both these presumptions are incorrect, and that more than one boundary must exist. For an examination of that it is necessary to consider how and why the cult was first introduced into Greece and then into Rome itself.

Cybele was introduced into Athens around 412 BC. Before that time there had been an Athenian Goddess cult about which little is known, except that it seems to have been involved with the governorship of written justice for the city, and that it had a

¹⁷³ See Section 3:1:4 in this document.

¹⁷⁴ Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997.

¹⁷⁵ The impact of these separate boundaries on relationships is discussed more fully in Section 3:1:3 of this document

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political role. At the end of the 5th century BC this goddess became iconographically linked to an ancient foreign goddess from Phrygia¹⁷⁶. Roller argues that this raucous cult of Cybele or the “Mother of the Gods” cut across the boundaries between Greek and non-Greek during a time when the Athenian social boundaries were being made increasingly pronounced. Roller¹⁷⁷ and Borgeaud¹⁷⁸ examine the presentation of the cult as it is given in two plays by Euripides. These plays are, *Helen* and *Bacchae*. According to Roller both of them resolve a crisis through a healing ritual that was brought by a foreign deity. She argues that Euripides stresses the necessity of the foreign deity to “break down barriers between public and private cult.” This Goddess is usually assumed to be Cybele. Two things had happened at this time. The Greeks had previously been at war with Persia and then with Sparta in the Peloponnesian wars. During the Sicilian expedition of 413 BC¹⁷⁹ they encountered a massive defeat. The men had been called away to battle and war had decimated the male population so women became even more essential for maintaining key functions of society¹⁸⁰. These reversals resulted in considerable advances in women’s rights and the iconography and the cult philosophy which was associated with the goddess Cybele would have fitted in with this change¹⁸¹. Not only does the image of the Goddess who arrives in a chariot which is pulled by lions, together with other warlike elements associated with the cult demonstrate her power to achieve a military victory, the assertion of the gender disruptive behaviour of the cult reinforces the direction of social change demanded¹⁸². Similar parallels were encountered when the cult was imported into Rome in 205 BC. The wars with the Carthaginians were decimating the male population and Rome was in severe danger of defeat; Cybele was brought to Rome to obtain the help of the Goddess in winning the war, and together with her

¹⁷⁶See p13 Philippe Borgeaud, *Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary*”.

¹⁷⁷See Roller pp. 317- 319. Lynn Roller assumes Asiatic origins for the Mother of the gods in “Reflections of the Mother of the Gods in Attic Tragedy” (pp. 305-322 in Eugene N. Lane (ed.)

¹⁷⁸Borgeaud concentrates on the Chorus to *Helen* in his analysis. He alludes to crimes of impropriety and offences carried out before the disastrous Sicilian expedition, the wild and primitive elements of the Goddess are also emphasised, and reconciliation finally comes by turning anger into laughter instead. See: p18-27 Philippe Borgeaud, *Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary*”.

¹⁷⁹ The drama was written just after the Sicilian Expedition in which Athens had suffered a huge defeat and was being deserted by its allies. At the same time sophism was beginning to question traditional values and religious beliefs. Within this framework Euripides deems war in his play to be the root of all evil

¹⁸⁰Between the fall of Athens in 404 BC and the rise of Alexander the Great in the 330s BC, the Greek world was turned on its head. The transformations were motivated in part by the catastrophic effects of the Peloponnesian War, the 30-year conflict which had brought democratic Athens to its knees. In response to the increased poverty that resulted, Greek women began to work outside the home. The orator Demosthenes, writing in the middle of the fourth century, complained that they now worked as nurses, wool-workers and grape-pickers because of the city’s penury. This primarily economic drive was coupled with great political upheaval, an increasingly muddled distinction between public and private worlds and new forms of religious expression. In different parts of ancient Greece women become visible for different reasons and in Athens they appear centre stage in comic discussions of sexual and political equality and in the law courts on issues relating to citizenship. See Scott, Michael. (2009) “The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece” *History Today* Volume: 59 Issue: 11 <http://www.historytoday.com/michael-scott/rise-women-ancient-greece>

¹⁸¹ Despite the great advances in women’s rights men still retained absolute power and authority.

¹⁸² In 395 BC, just nine years after Athens had suffered catastrophic defeat in war the comic playwright Aristophanes wrote and produced a play called *Women in the Assembly* (*Ecclesiazusae*). The plot is simple and striking. The women of Athens are fed up with the mess men have made of the city and its affairs. They infiltrate the political assembly and persuade it to hand over all power to the women. It is a comedy, and the demand for true gender equality is taken to excess.

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arrival came the same gender disruptive behaviour which was seen as a challenge to the male dominated society and the defence of female rights¹⁸³.

Perhaps the nearest modern equivalent is can be seen in the consequences of the First World War. The decimation of the male population had transformed the whole of society and the role of women within it. However, while it might be a wise man who would agree with the requirement for the suffragettes to disrupt the social order within a male dominated society to obtain the rights that they fought for, it would be a foolhardy man who also suggested that the suffragettes were universally involved in illicit and immoral sex. Complete sexual purity was essential for the suffragettes' victory and something very similar to this is found in the accounts of Cybele's entry into Rome in 205 BC. The importance of women of very high sexual purity and the virtuous nature of the women who welcomed her is very evident within the accounts. Whatever the role that sex played in the Cult's activities, it is clear that the women's liberation element within it cannot be ignored.

The problem with making judgments of all forms of purity is that these must always be made within the social contexts and the cultures of the societies in which they are set. An examination of the cult's theology and its practices demonstrate plenty of evidence of the gender disruptive behaviour, the disorderly processions, the ecstatic activities, the flagellation, the self-castration etc but the emphasis is on the power of the Goddess, rather than on sex. However it must also be recognised that the sexual moralities of dominant societies, such as those of Greece and Rome were based on authority. This meant that any male Roman citizen could sexually penetrate anyone else below the rank of citizen, or his own social rank, without any moral approbation being given¹⁸⁴. Therefore these societies, in effect, condoned what today would be regarded as heterosexual and homosexual rape. Inside the subject societies, whose members were likely to be victims of such activities, any possibility of this occurring was utterly abhorred. Therefore in any judgements the cultural adjustments must be made, and within the cult's theology there is no apparent approval of illicit or immoral sex. In stark contrast to the condemnations of immorality and to the eventual total repression of the cult by the Roman Catholic Church, Cybele's myths embraced sex and spirituality, they also gave an earthier caution against lust and the other sins of excess and they showed that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love. Cybele was characterized by different qualities. Most prominent among them was her universal motherhood. She was the great parent not only of gods but also of human beings and beasts. Care, nurture and the promotion of female interests were of primary importance and that also included responsibility in sex. Any role which the cult has played in the care, nurture and protection of these female interests has been hidden by the condemnations of the Christian Church.

2:3:3 The Genderisation of God

It has been demonstrated that the existence of the separate gender defined God and Goddess religions within a polytheistic society gave women considerable power in their own domains, but it also polarized society through the creation of separate

¹⁸³ See also section 3:1:3 of this document.

¹⁸⁴ Responsibility in action was nevertheless required.

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dominant male and subject female worlds¹⁸⁵. It has also been shown that the gender disrupting behaviours of the Goddess cults strongly challenged this male domination, but the existence of the separate God and Goddess religions also created a glass ceiling which could never be crossed. The coming of Christianity, with its gender transcendent God, and its doctrine of gender transcendence should have broken down these final barriers. However the adoption of gender complementarity by the Church re-imposed these barriers and this time, without the power of an independent Goddess cult to protect women's issues, the situation was made even worse.

The understanding of whom or of what God is bears an important influence on the attitudes that are adopted. Even though the behaviour which was attributed to each individual God and Goddess within Greco/Roman society left a very great deal to be desired, when the pantheon of Gods and Goddesses instead is taken as a whole, the overall focus on religious belief was the pursuit of the "Form of the Good". This underlying concept created an attitude to equality which rose above both gender and sex. A similar experience was encountered inside post-exilic Judaism, where the holiness attributed to God totally forbade any form of human image, and even the written or spoken expression of God's name was totally prohibited. This refusal to physically represent God in human terms is fundamental to the teaching of Judaism, and this goes back to the Pentateuch and to Moses himself. Although Hebrew does not possess gender neutral pronouns, which demands that God must always be represented as a "Him" the perception of God in Judaism is one of a being who is above gender and sex. For many religions the essence of God is an abstraction which is expressed in the qualities of goodness, discipline, fear, hope care and love. Only the intermediaries can be represented by any human form, and some of these intermediaries could be very irresponsible and unpleasant indeed¹⁸⁶.

Instead of this distancing of the essence of God, Christianity took almost the reverse approach. The doctrine of the Incarnation brought God down to earth. Therefore God is no longer just a distant image, but someone made in each person's own likeness, who walks alongside, and who knows individually everyone's intimate thoughts. That change more readily enables the genderisation of God to take place. However for as long as gender transcendence could hold sway in the Early Church, there could be no discrimination on a gendered basis since all are as one in Christ. The adoption of gender complementarity in the absence of gender transcendence in male dominated society not only allows, it also enforces a divinely ordained differentiation of gender to take place, and instead of a God who in his or her being rises above both gender

¹⁸⁵ The idea of the submission of women existed in the Christian Church. See for example the statement by Paul: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24) and also Peter " Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. (Bible, 1 Peter 3:1-6)

¹⁸⁶The worship of individual Gods and Goddesses could depart greatly from these ideals

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and sex the presumption of a male gender defined image of God is created. What had been the gender and sexual transcendence previously presented in the Gospels quickly turned into the suppression of gender and sex. The desire and the necessity for sex became seen to be a consequence of the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. So intercourse was a necessary evil because it was required for procreative acts. Although the Church held Adam and Eve equally responsible for the Fall, there was seen to be a quantitative difference in their behaviour. Adam was considered to be the weaker male who gave in to Eve, but Eve was regarded as the temptress who engaged in an active act. This discriminatory attitude was also reinforced by the first century Greco/Roman attitudes, which considered women to be inferior males who could not be trusted because of the fickleness of their behaviour¹⁸⁷. The attacks on women that were delivered by the church, particularly in the first four centuries of its existence were extremely repugnant. However these Christian doctrines of gender complementarity and gender transcendence also demanded that women were given some way out. Therefore for women, their life on earth was to be lived out as one of atonement for the sins of Eve, but full redemption remained available for women in heaven, as it was for men, because in it there could be neither lust nor sex¹⁸⁸. These same considerations also had their effect on the attitudes to celibacy, and instead of the call to celibacy which was advocated by Jesus in the Bible, the later doctrine of celibacy demanded not only abstention from all forms of sexual practice but also the condemnation of all thoughts of sex.

¹⁸⁷ According to Plato (427 - 347 BC), women came about through a physical degeneration of the human being. "It is only males who are created directly by the gods and are given souls. Those who live rightly return to the stars, but those who are 'cowards' or [lead unrighteous lives] may with reason be supposed to have changed into the nature of women in the second generation."

¹⁸⁸The act of childbirth was a redeeming act. Redemption was only available to women on earth if they rejected all femininity and sex. Many fourth-century female ascetics in early Christianity were praised (and praised themselves) in words which emphasized the denial of femininity. Gregory of Nyssa, wrote in great detail about the life of his sister Macrina. After he referred to her as a woman, he then asked himself the question: "if indeed she should be styled woman for I do not know whether it is fitting to designate her by her sex, who so surpassed her sex." Another mystic, Amma Sarah, refers to her own gender transformation in this way: "According to nature I am a woman, but not according to my thoughts." See: Kidd, Erin (2007). "The Virgin Desert: Gender Transformation in Fourth-Century Christian Asceticism". *Lyceum*, Volume VIII, Number 2. Spring 2007 ISSN number 1934-2438. The *Lyceum* is a publication of the Philosophy Department of Saint Anselm College. Accessed 12 December 2012 at: <http://lyceumphilosophy.com/8-2/Lyceum-8-2-Kidd.pdf>

One example of this discrimination against women is expressed by Tertullian¹⁸⁹, who writes¹⁹⁰ "Do you not know that you are Eve? The judgment of God upon this sex lives on in this age; therefore, necessarily the guilt should live on also. You are the gateway of the devil; you are the one, who unseals the curse of that tree, and you are the first one to turn your back on the divine law; you are the one who persuaded him whom the devil was not capable of corrupting; you easily destroyed the image of God, Adam. Because of what you deserve, that is, death, even the Son of God had to die." Sadly the example of Tertullian was not the exception, it was the general rule¹⁹¹. The growth of these attitudes of gender discrimination during the first three centuries of the Christian Church is more fully described in sections 3:3:1 and 3:3:2 of this document¹⁹².

¹⁸⁹ Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, anglicised as Tertullian (c. 160 – c. 225 AD), was a prolific early Christian author from Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. He is the first Christian author to produce an extensive corpus of Latin Christian literature. He also was a notable early Christian apologist and a polemicist against heresy. Tertullian has been called "the father of Latin Christianity" and "the founder of Western theology." Though conservative, he did originate and advance new theology to the early Church. He is perhaps most famous for being the oldest extant Latin writer to use the term Trinity (Latin, trinitas), and giving the oldest extant formal exposition of a Trinitarian theology. Other Latin formulations that first appear in his work are "three Persons, one Substance" as the Latin "tres Personae, una Substantia" (itself from the Koine Greek "treis Hypostases, Homouosios"). He wrote his trinitarian formula after becoming a Montanist. However, unlike many Church fathers, he was never canonized by the Catholic Church, as several of his later teachings directly contradicted the actions and teachings that were adopted by the Church. (Although Montanism came to be labelled a heresy, the movement held similar views about the basic tenets of Christian doctrine to those of the wider Christian Church. It was a prophetic movement that called for a reliance on the spontaneity of the Holy Spirit and a more conservative personal ethic. Parallels have been drawn between Montanism and modern day charismatic movements such as Pentecostalism movement). (see Wikipedia).

¹⁹⁰ 'De Cultu Feminarum,' section I.I, part 2 (trans. C.W. Marx)

¹⁹¹ A few more for the collection! Clement of Alexandria, *Pedagogues* II, 33, 2: "With women the very consciousness of their own nature must evoke feelings of shame". Origen, *On the Apparel of Women*, chapter 1: "And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway: you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert--that is, death--even the Son of God had to die." St. Augustine, *Soliloq. I* 10 "I consider that nothing so casts down the manly mind from its heights as the fondling of women, and those bodily contacts which belong to the married state." St. John Chrysostom "The whole of her bodily beauty is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, rheum, and the fluid of digested food... If you consider what is stored up behind those lovely eyes, the angle of the nose, the mouth and cheeks you will agree that the well-proportioned body is merely a whitened sepulchre." St. Jerome, *Commentary on Ephesians*, III ch.5 "As long as a woman is for birth and children she is different from man as body is from soul. But when she wishes to serve Christ more than the world, then she will cease to be a woman, and will be called man." St. Albert the Great, *Quaestiones super de animalibus* XV q. 11 "Woman is a misbegotten man and has a faulty and defective nature in comparison with his. Therefore she is unsure in herself. What she herself cannot get, she seeks to obtain through lying and diabolical deceptions. And so, to put it briefly, one must be on one's guard with every woman, as if she were a poisonous snake and the horned devil.... In evil and perverse doings woman is cleverer, that is, slyer, than man. Her feelings drive woman toward every evil, just as reason impels man toward all good." St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I q. 92 a. 1 "Woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence, such as that of a south wind, which is moist."

¹⁹² Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation"

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However the citation of this condemnation by Tertullian in isolation fails to do justice to the genuine complexities of the situation¹⁹³. For example, Tertullian in his earlier writings seems to recognize the presence of women in ecclesiastical orders¹⁹⁴. He believes that widows should also be ranked alongside the Clergy and he argues for the individual priesthood of all believers¹⁹⁵. In the particular circumstances which are outlined by Tertullian, women are able to preach, teach and baptize in the Church. In his later work all that is gone. By then he had changed his mind about the priesthood of all believers and the right of all male and female followers to baptize, to teach and to offer the Eucharist.

Tertullian was married and two of his books were dedicated to his wife¹⁹⁶. In his book "On the Veiling of Virgins" (ca. 213) which is later than "On Exhortation to Chastity" (ca. 204-212) Tertullian says. "It is not permitted to a woman to speak in the church; but neither (is it permitted her) to teach, nor to baptize, nor to offer, nor to claim to herself a lot in any manly function, not to say (in any) sacerdotal office."¹⁹⁷ Karen Jo Torjesen describes Tertullian's perception of the church as an essentially Roman institution. "Tertullian's description of the Christian community dramatically marks the transition of the model of the church from the household or private association to the body politic. With him the church became a legal body (corpus or societas, the term the Romans used for the body politic) unified by a common law (lex fidei, "the law of faith") and a common discipline (disciplina, Christian morality)". Tertullian conceived the structure of the church as being analogous to Roman society, divided into distinct classes or ranks, which were distinguished from one another in terms of honour and authority. "Only those who were full members of the political body could possess ius docendi (the legal right to teach) and ius baptizandi (legal right to baptize)". Women could not be full members. Therefore they were excluded from the clergy and in the laity they could only occupy a submissive role¹⁹⁸.

The consequences of these changes had a serious effect, and these were magnified by the genderisation of a gender transcendent God. With independent Goddesses to protect female interests, the approach of gender complementarity could work better within a polytheistic society. However without the checks and the balances which this created, that protection was lost. Although the many Goddess cults were vehemently condemned, elements of the cult of Cybele did transfer to the Christian Church. The doctrine of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary was the same as that applied to Cybele herself. However unlike Cybele, who was an independent goddess, whose cult was also responsible for a great deal of the gender disruption and the challenges to male domination in Greco Roman society, the Virgin Mary is always portrayed as someone who embodies the submission to a male God. The challenging features of gender transcendence which could have disrupted a male dominated society were to

¹⁹³ According to the Church: Ironically, even though it is the woman who represents corruption personified, it is through the male issue that the Original Sin is actually transmitted: for it is the semen which is the bearer of death. Therefore in creating a new creature, it is the woman who provides the body from her substance, but it is the man who gives the soul through his semen, which is already corrupt. This theory is called Traducianism.

¹⁹⁴ Tertullian. On Exhortation to Chastity, Chapter XIII

¹⁹⁵ Tertullian. On Exhortation to Chastity, Chapter VII

¹⁹⁶ Tertullian and Women in Ecclesiastical Orders By Susanna Krizo | Published: January 28, 2010

¹⁹⁷ Tertullian. On the Veiling of Virgins, Ch IX

¹⁹⁸ Karen Jo Torjesen, When women were priests (Harper San Francisco, New York, 1993) 162-3
Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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be replaced with submission and gender discrimination instead. Nevertheless the church could not ignore the gender transcendent elements in the Gospel message. Equality was still available to women, but it could only come after death. The idea that women have an instant sex change when they die, in order to enter heaven as men, was also of common parlance in the early church. Augustine devoted one complete chapter to the topic in his work, the "City of God" (This discussion is found in Chapter 17 of book XXII - Whether the Bodies of Women Shall Retain Their Own Sex in the Resurrection)¹⁹⁹. However Augustine did not agree with this proposition on the grounds that lust and sexuality could not exist in heaven. Redemption was still available for women, but it came only through the blessings of childbirth or through the total rejection of femininity and the refusal of all earthly sexual passions or acts. The standard view was that women were subordinate in all ways to men, although few people would take this doctrine to Augustine's extremes. For Augustine, and for his contemporaries, equality for women occurs in heaven but not on earth.

The need to transform society and still to work within it had initially led the church to try to combine the attitudes to gender complementarity adopted by the surrounding first century societies with the gender transcendence that was embraced by the Gospel message. However the desire for the Church to obtain respectability and authority in Greco/Roman society meant that these transcendent ideals were lost. Instead of an advance, the blaming of women for the Fall, the presumption of a male god, and the removal of an independent Goddess to protect women's interests only made the situation become even worse for women than it had previously been in the Jewish and Greco/Roman societies from which the Church developed²⁰⁰. Although the doctrine of gender complementarity was still maintained, it also demanded the submission of women. These understandings of gender complementarity continued to be developed by the later Church. The presumed inferiority of women became encoded within the Roman Catholic Church Law, most notably in the Decretum Gratiani of 1234 AD. This was a vital part of the Canon law which remained in force until 1916²⁰¹ and some elements still remain²⁰². From a religion which had started

¹⁹⁹ Augustine. City of God Book XXII Chapter 17.- "Whether the Bodies of Women Shall Retain Their Own Sex in the Resurrection". Accessed <http://www.tertullian.org/fathers2/NPNF1-02/npnf1-02-28.htm> 19 December 2012.

²⁰⁰ In traditional Judaism, women are for the most part seen as separate but equal. Women's obligations and responsibilities are different from men's, but no less important. The equality of men and women also begins at the highest possible level. In Judaism, unlike traditional Christianity, God has never been viewed as exclusively male or masculine, and Judaism has always maintained that God has both masculine and feminine qualities. Both man and woman were created in the image of God. According to many Jewish scholars, "man" was first created (in Genesis 1:27) with a dual gender, and was later separated into male and female. The rights of women in traditional Judaism were much greater than they were in the rest of Western civilization until the 20th century. These rights and freedoms seem to have remained comparable to those experienced by women in First Century Greco/Roman and Judean society. Women had the right to buy, sell, and own property, and make their own contracts. These are capabilities which women in Western countries (including America) did not have until about 100 years ago. Proverbs 31:10-31, which is traditionally read at Jewish weddings, speaks repeatedly of business acumen as a trait to be prized in women and some traditional sources suggest that women are closer to God's ideal than men.

²⁰¹ Some of these restrictions were relaxed in 1916. Further relaxations took place in the code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983. These new relaxations allowed women to serve as advisory judges in tribunals; they permitted women to be authorized to preach in churches and to be entrusted with the pastoral care of local communities.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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out with an agenda for women, a male priesthood and leadership was assumed. Gender equality could be made available to women, but only on the terms that the male decides.

This again raises the issue as to what the original teachings of Jesus were, and that poses a challenge, since the need to conform to the requirements of society, means that anything which does not support the concept of female suppression and gender complementarity may well be written out. There however still some evidence which is available in bible passages. Matthew 19; 3-12 is one of these and this is considered in section 3:2:1 of this document.

2:3:4 An Apocryphal Challenge

Nevertheless there is another document which is of particular interest; and that is the Apocryphal Gospel of Thomas. Scholars disagree and debate about the origin of this document. Some give it a late date, and others consider it early. Some consider this to be the lost document Q, which contained the sayings of Jesus which were later incorporated into the Gospels of Matthew and Luke²⁰³. Examining this Gospel from the point of view of attitudes to gender and sex, and comparing this to what may be the teaching of the early Church leads to some interesting results.

One of the most interesting elements is that of saying 114, which is also the last in the Gospel. The saying states:

(114) Simon Peter said to him, "Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life." Jesus said, "I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven."²⁰⁴

This seems to be a difficult passage to modern eyes. However this understanding of gender transformation was not uncommon²⁰⁵. Those who accept an early date for

²⁰² However, the discrimination still continues in other areas. Canon 1024 states that "Only a baptized male validly receives sacred ordination". Canon 129, paragraph 1 excludes women from the power of governance in the Church. "In accord with the prescriptions of law, those who have received sacred orders are capable of the power of governance, which exists in the Church by divine institution and is also called the power of jurisdiction". This is reinforced in Canon 274, paragraph 1 which states that: "Only clerics can obtain those offices for whose exercise is required the power of orders or the power of jurisdiction".

²⁰³ See Section 3:1:4 in this document for more on the provenance of the Gospel of Thomas

²⁰⁴ Peter seems to have been particularly averse to the presence of women.

²⁰⁵ For an account see Meyer, Marvin (2004) "The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus, p. 109-110. Harper One; 2nd Revised edition (April 27, 2004) ISBN-10: 006065581X ISBN-13: 978-0060655815. In this book Meyer states: "The transformation of the female into the male is discussed extensively in ancient literature (the transformation of the male into the female is also discussed, in the context of the acts of self-castration within the mysteries of the Great Mother and Attis). A few ancient accounts, in authors like Ovid and Phlegon of Tralles, communicate fantastic stories of women sprouting male genitals and thus becoming male, but most of the accounts use the gender categories in a metaphorical sense. Often the transformation of the female into the male involves the transformation of all that is earthly, perishable, passive, and sense-perceptible into what is heavenly, imperishable, active, and rational. In short, what is connected with the earth Mother is to be transformed into what is connected with the sky Father. If this is a correct interpretation of Gospel of Thomas saying 114, then the saying is intended to be a statement of liberation, although the specific
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the Gospel of Thomas often presume that this passage is a later insertion, but there is merit in considering it as part of the original. To understand that it is necessary to examine the first Century understanding of gender and sex. Instead of today's ideas of gender binaries, a one sex model was understood. In this men and women represented extreme ends of the range, and movement across the boundaries could occur for a number of reasons. Those could be through external influences. Thus the thought, and the fear, that men could be changed into women, and vice versa was not as improbable as it seems. This did not require any automatic change in body shape²⁰⁶. For example eunuchs were often not simply regarded as castrated males: they could be regarded as members of a separate third sex. At first sight, saying 114 might also be taken to support the principle of gender complementarity. However the perception that this saying could refer to any of these things is dismissed by Saying 22, which states:

(22) Jesus saw infants being suckled. He said to his disciples, "These infants being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom." They said to him, "Shall we then, as children, enter the kingdom?" Jesus said to them, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female; and when you fashion eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness; then will you enter the kingdom."

use of gender categories may be shocking to modern sensitivities." In support of this Meyer quotes Hippolytus, Refutation of All Heresies 5.8.44 "For this, he says, is 'the gate of heaven,' . . . where it is necessary for them, when they have come there, to cast off their clothing and all become bridegrooms, having been made male through the virgin spirit." He also quotes Clement of Alexandria, Excerpts from Theodotus 79: "As long, then, as the seed is still unformed, they say, it is a child of the female, but when it was formed, it was changed into a man and becomes a son of the bridegroom. No longer is it weak and subject to the cosmic (forces), visible and invisible, but, having become male, it becomes a male fruit." A further quote comes from the First Apocalypse of James 41:15-19 for comparison: "The perishable has gone [up] to the imperishable, and [the] element of femaleness has attained to the element of this maleness." (The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus, p. 110) and finally a quote from Zostrianos 131:2-10: "Do not baptize yourselves with death, nor give yourselves into the hands of those who are inferior to you instead of those who are better. Flee from the madness and the bondage of femaleness, and choose for yourselves the salvation of maleness. You have not come [to] suffer, but rather you have come to escape your bondage."

²⁰⁶ Paul condemned "Malakoi" or "Soft men" in 1 Corinthians 6:9. What Paul meant the Corinthians to can be subject to a number of interpretations (1) People who lack self-control, including control of their desires, or people who indulge unrestrainedly in bodily pleasures. (2) People who have a soft, luxurious lifestyle. (3) Men who choose to act like women in appearance or in non-sexual behaviour. Or (4) Men who have passive sex with other men

A standard theological understanding of saying 22²⁰⁷ takes the view that both this saying and saying 114 are not concerned about the transcendence of gender and sex but they demand the suppression of all gender and sex. That is evident in the commentary by Bruce²⁰⁸ and by Grant and Freedman²⁰⁹. That can be a perfectly

²⁰⁷ Grant Robert M. and Freedman, David Noel. (1993) "The Secret Sayings of Jesus", pp. 143-144, : Barnes & Noble Books; First Edition edition (January 1, 1993). ISBN-10:1566192749 ISBN-13: 978-1566192743 write: "Infants (as in Sayings 3, 21, and 38) may be compared with those who enter into the kingdom (cf., John 3, 3.5). But entering the kingdom means more than becoming childlike. The two must become one; all earthly differences must be obliterated, including - especially - those of sex. Sayings very much like this one are preserved in the Gospel of the Egyptians, in 2 Clement 12:2, and in the Martyrdom of Peter (see pages 78-79). The unity of Christian believers in the body of Christ is, of course, based on the New Testament. Doresse (pages 155-56) cites John 17:11, 20-23; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 2:14-18; and he points out that in Ephesians 5:32 the unity of Adam and Eve (i.e., of human marriage) is referred to 'Christ and the Church.' It is perhaps more important to notice that in Galatians 3:28 Paul says that 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free men, neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' This kind of unity looks back to the first creation story in Genesis, where 'man' is male and female; it is the second creation story that sharply differentiates Eve from Adam. The original state of creation is to be reached through spiritual union. Man is not to be man; woman is not to be woman (though according to Saying 112 she is to become man - i.e., fully human in a spiritual sense)."

²⁰⁸ Bruce, F. F. (1974) "Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament", pp. 153-154. Eerdmans Pub Co (Jun 1974). ISBN-10: 0802815758 ISBN-13: 978-0802815750 writes: "This is not the only place in Gnostic literature where Peter expresses impatience at the presence of Mary Magdalene in their entourage. [In Pistis Sophia, when Mary has expounded the 'mystery of repentance' in a Gnostic sense and been congratulated by Jesus for her insight, Peter protests: 'My Lord, we are not able to bear with this woman, speaking instead of us; she has not let any of us speak but often speaks herself' (54b). In the John Rylands University Library of Manchester there is an early third-century Greek papyrus fragment (P. Ryl. 463) of a Gospel according to Mary (Magdalene), in which the disciples discuss revelations which the Saviour is said to have given exclusively to Mary. Peter is unwilling to believe that the Saviour would have committed privately to a woman truths which he did not impart to his male disciples, but Levi rebukes him and defends Mary. (Part of the same work survives in a Coptic version in the Berlin papyrus 8502.) For Mary cf. Saying 21 (p. 122).] The general rabbinic idea that women were incapable of appreciating religious doctrine - compare the disciples' astonishment at Jacob's well when they found Jesus 'talking with a woman' (John 4.27) - was reinforced in Gnostic anthropology, where woman was a secondary and defective being. Yet none could deny Mary's fidelity: to an objective observer, it surpassed that of the male disciples. Jesus's promise that she will become a man, so as to gain admittance to the kingdom of heaven, envisages the reintegration of the original order, when Adam was created male and female (Genesis 1.27). Adam was 'the man' as much before the removal of Eve from his side as after (Genesis 2.18-25). Therefore, when the primal unity is restored and death is abolished, man will still be man (albeit more perfectly so), but woman will no longer be woman; she will be reabsorbed into man. [This is the point of the mystery of the bridal chamber (cf. Saying 75, p. 141); it was a form of initiation calculated to reverse the process by which death entered. 'When Eve was in Adam, there was no death; but when she was separated from him, death came into being' (Gospel of Philip 71)."

²⁰⁹ Grant Robert M. and Freedman, David Noel. (1993) "The Secret Sayings of Jesus", pp. 143-144, : Barnes & Noble Books; First Edition edition (January 1, 1993). ISBN-10:1566192749 ISBN-13: 978-1566192743 write: "As in the Gospel of Mary (pages 17-18 of the papyrus) and in Pistis Sophia (chapter 146), Simon Peter is not enthusiastic about the presence of Mariham (mentioned in Saying 21), just as in John 4:27 the disciples of Jesus are amazed because he is speaking with a woman. Male and female must become one (Saying 23 and Commentary). Jesus will 'draw' her (John 12:32) so that she will become 'one spirit' with him (1 Corinthians 6:17). She will become a man; just so, Ignatius of Antioch says that when he receives the pure light he will 'become a man' (Romans, 6, 2; for another parallel to Ignatius see Commentary on Saying 82). In order to enter into the kingdom of heaven, women must become men. We might be tempted to take this notion symbolically were it not for the existence of Gnostic parallels, for example in the Gospel of Mary (page 9), in Clement of Alexandria (Excerpta ex Theodoto 21, 3), and among the Naassenes. The 'house of God' is reserved 'for the spiritual ones alone; when they come there they cast off their garments [see Saying 38] and all
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well argued position to adopt when it assumed that Thomas is a product of the Gnostic literature, and the Gospel was written at a later date. However there is no internal evidence in the Gospel itself, which suggests that it enforces suppression instead of transcendence, and the most relevant sayings (21, 22, 61, 106, and 114) do not support that argument. Saying 112 which states: "Woe to the flesh that depends on the soul; woe to the soul that depends on the flesh." appears to condemn extreme asceticism and extreme licentiousness. If an early date for the Gospel of Thomas is assumed, then the statement by Paul in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." seems to encapsulate the ethos of this Gospel. It is also shown in part three of this analysis that the Gospel of Thomas denies gender complementarity and it supports gender transcendence together with the gender challenging behaviour of the early Church.

The consequences of the policies in relation to issues of history, theology, gender equality, sexual abuse, celibacy, gender complementarity and gender transcendence have all been considered in this section of the document. The Reformers made the abolition of clerical continence and priestly celibacy a vital element in their reforms. Although this was done for scriptural reasons, they also blamed the discipline of compulsory celibacy and continence for the widespread sexual misconduct that was encountered amongst the clergy. Celibacy, gender polarity, heterosexual orthodoxy and gender and sexual variance are all intertwined. To give way on any one of these elements may then challenge the whole structure and the authority of the Church because it challenges the foundations on which Church traditions are based. Change is therefore difficult, and there is major resistance to overcome. That may create particular problems for the Roman Catholic Church.

2:3:5 Tracing Forward and Tracing Back

The aim of Luther, Zwingli Knox and Calvin the other Reformers was to "Turn again" to the nature of the church and belief originated by Jesus Christ, which was witnessed to in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, and to the Christian teaching which was shorn of all later additions. It has already been noted that for the most part these reformers were inspired by the teachings of Augustine and it has also been seen that the Reformers were limited by the then current knowledge on what could be achieved. Therefore the teachings of Augustine and those adopted by the fourth century Church must continue to be questioned. Through this examination of the developing attitudes to issues of sexuality, gender role, gender identity, and gender equality in the early Church it is hoped that the Reformation can be made a little more complete.

become bridegrooms [Saying 75], having been made male by the virginal Spirit' (Hippolytus, Ref., 5, 8, 44). The high point of Thomas's eschatology is thus reached, at the end of his gospel, with the obliteration of sex." (The Secret Sayings of Jesus, p. 198) Robert M. Grant and David Noel Freedman write: "Indeed, Jesus says of Mary (presumably Mary Magdalene, as in most Gnostic revelations) that he will make her a male so that she may become a 'living spirit' like the male apostles: 'for every woman who makes herself a man will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven' (114/112). According to the Naassenes, spiritual beings will come to 'the house of God'; there they will cast off their garments and all of them will become bridegrooms, having been made male by the virginal Spirit. [Hippolytus Ref. V. 8. 44.] This teaching is close to that of Thomas." (Gnosticism & Early Christianity, p. 188)

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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Tracing back through the Church history can only provide knowledge about the end point that has been reached after this crucial period for the history and development of the Church in the first three hundred years of its existence has passed. Finding out what the start point was, is even more important, and to do this a different and complementary strategy is now required. This approach therefore demands a detailed consideration of the surrounding cultures and of the different societies which created the social and cultural background from which the early Church developed. This is the principle behind the appraisal which follows. It starts with an examination of the moral codes and the cultural values in the surrounding societies, and then it traces forward from that base.

2:3:6 Framework of Analysis

In addition to the already acknowledged and the previously researched historical and theological perspectives, this analysis imports a new element which is drawn from the psychological and neurophysiological analyses that have been an integral part of this investigation. These studies have shown that the sexually and gender variant conditions such as transsexuality and homosexuality are identity driven. Therefore as extensive a range of moral approaches, desires and perceptions can be found amongst these groups as exist in society at large, and the same ability of gender and sexually variant people to choose between good and evil has also been shown to exist across cultures, continents and religious beliefs. A second result of the analysis is the need to recognise that these conclusions destroy the validity of any current or previous attempts of the Christian Church to make homosexuality or every other type of identity driven sexual and gender variant behaviour a scapegoat for abusive or for inappropriate sex. That does not mean that sexual misbehaviour cannot take place, and this examination provides no support whatever for any type of immoral sexual pursuits. Instead of this it presumes that all of these same human qualities, which everybody possesses, and the ability held by everyone to make their own decisions between what is right and what is wrong will always apply.

2:3:7 Credibility

The Christianity that is known in the present day has been heavily influenced by the teachings of Peter and Paul and the compromises which the Church made to gain respectability in Greco Roman society. That includes a strong and an exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy, which the Church at first enforced in order to distance itself from the gender disrupting activities of the Goddess Cults. It has further given the Church a structural model which is based on the mores of gender complementary in Greco/Roman society rather than gender transcendence in the Gospel Church. Instead of the pragmatic decisions that were made by Peter and Paul, and by the early Church, it has come to consider these as doctrines instead. The difficulties in reconciling all of these fundamentals with the original teachings of Gospel Church have also led to the attitudes which identify shame with many aspects of sex. The consequences of these beliefs upon the social structures of society have been discussed and it has been demonstrated that instead of only advances, some very negative outcomes have occurred. For nearly 1700 years the moral values and the cultures of secular societies have been guided by these doctrines of Christian belief. In the 20th Century those links have been broken and the Church now has to face up

to the authenticity of its own beliefs. People can now observe for themselves the true fidelity, love and commitment that can be found within same-sex relationships. In the perceptions of present day secular society the Christian attitudes to celibacy, gender polarity, heterosexual orthodoxy and on gender and sexual variance have all been found wanting. If no action is taken, other than the continued retreat into the ever increasing assertions of these traditional doctrines, then the credibility of Christianity will continue to be destroyed.

The dilemma for the Church of today is one of not knowing what to put in the place of these doctrines, if it is to continue to be true to the Gospel of Christ. That is why the Church still continues to try to enforce the ideas which were derived from the gender polarised²¹⁰ fourth century Roman Church on today's secular society. However one result of this analysis is to show that there was a major disconnection between the doctrines which were expressed by the Gospel Church and those of this fourth century organisation.

All of the first century Middle Eastern cultures had developed different attitudes to the morality and the acceptability of sexual expression from those that were found in the fourth century Church and in the present day. Thus the aim of the analysis in part three of this document is to seek to establish what the original teachings were, so that any changes which are now needed do not depart any further from the Gospel message, but they instead return to the truths which were originally expressed.

²¹⁰ But not today (at least in theory) a gender unequal society
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
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An Unfinished Reformation

Susan Gilchrist

This document brings together information from a number of sources to examine the development of the attitudes to gender equality, gender complementarity and gender and sexual variance within the Christian Church. Part 1 of this document gives an overview of the approach and the principles of analysis. An introduction to the issues of cultural differences and compromises is also provided. Part 2 considers the history and the subsequent development of these Church traditions by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers to determine how these viewpoints were understood by the fourth century Church, how they differed from the original Gospel views, and the transformations that occurred. Part 3 of this document has the same objective, but this time the material is examined from the perspective of the surrounding cultures from which the Church developed. A further perspective is provided by using the results of some recent neurophysiological and psychological research which shows that the traditional teaching of the church on homosexuality and gender and sexual variance cannot be correct²¹¹. Part 4 considers the impact of these on the present day Church. The discussion and conclusions are contained in Part 5. From examining the inconsistencies and the conflicts which are encountered when these three approaches are compared with each other, it is hoped that a better understanding of the relevance and the accuracy of present day Church teaching on homosexuality, gender complementarity, gender equality and on gender and sexual variance can be found, and that the original teaching of Jesus can be restored.

Part 3: Relationships and the Early Church.

3:1 First Century Attitudes

3:1:1 Duality

Within the moral compasses of all religions and of all people there is the freedom to choose between good and evil. This choice can sometimes be summarised as the difference between “The way of darkness” and “The way of light”.

The prophet Jeremiah states:

“This is what the Lord says: See; I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. Whoever stays in the city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives” (Jeremiah 21:8-9).

These verses from Jeremiah provide the theme which underlies the duality within much of the early Christian teaching, which also distinguished between “The way of

²¹¹ Gilchrist, S. (2013), “A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach”. See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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Darkness” and “The way of Light”. The recognition of that duality is clearly expressed in early Christian worship²¹². Within the usual Christian teaching the “Way of Light” celebrates with delight the course which is right. However in this particular passage Jeremiah was forcing the Israelites to choose between two evils, and there may not always be an easy choice.

Similar perceptions of this duality were common to many cultures and traditions. In Ancient Rome an equivalent duality is found in the attitudes of society to the cult of Cybele, which on the one hand gave the cult a high status, and yet on the other hand, it strongly condemned it^{213 214 215 216}. The Greek philosophers distinguished between all forms of acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour by employing an equivalent duality which was inherent to their discussions²¹⁷. They expressed it

²¹² The “Didache” is considered the first example of the genre of the Church Orders of Service. The first section (Chapters 1-6) begins: “There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways.” Lightfoot and Holmes, note that: “The Two Ways material appears to have been intended... as a summary of basic instruction about the Christian life to be taught to those who were preparing for baptism and church membership. In its present form it represents the Christianization of a common Jewish form of moral instruction. Similar material is found in a number of other Christian writings from the first through about the fifth centuries, including the Epistle of Barnabas, the Didascalia, the Apostolic Church Ordinances, the Summary of Doctrine, the Apostolic Constitutions, the Life of Schnudi, and On the Teaching of the Apostles (or Doctrina), some of which are dependent on the Didache.” (See: Holmes, Michael W.(2006) “Apostolic Fathers in English”, Baker Academic; ISBN-10: 0801031087 ISBN-13: 978-0801031083, and The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations of Their Writings. Trans. by J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer. 2nd ed. Edited and revised by Michael W. Holmes. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.)

²¹³ The Roman attitudes to the Goddess cult of Cybele and to her self castrated Gallae priests were always ambivalent. There were the strong conflicting condemnations of gross immorality on the one hand and respect for the purity and high status of many of the cult’s devotees on the other. Roller attributes this contrast to a dualism in the cult practices whereby the formal public components created and maintained the social boundaries while the ecstatic elements transgressed them. Borgeaud tends to set the boundary more directly by using the traditional teachings of the Church. See: Roller, Lynn E. (1996). In Lane Eugene N (ed.) (1996), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren*. Religions in the Greco-Roman World, 131. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. ISBN 90-04-10196-9. and Roller, Lynn E. (1999). *In Search of God the Mother The Cult of Anatolian Cybele* Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press. ISBN 0520919688, 9780520919686. Philippe Borgeaud, *Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary*. Originally published as *La Mère des dieux: De Cybele à la Vierge Marie*. Éditions de Seuil, Collection “La Librairie du XXe siècle”, 1996. Translated from the French by Lysa Hochroth. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8018-7985-X.

²¹⁴ Fear, A.T. “Cybele and Christ”, In Lane Eugene N (ed.) (1996), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren*. Religions in the Greco-Roman World, 131. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. ISBN 90-04-10196-9. Fear contends that the cult of Cybele and Attis was deliberately reshaped to meet the challenge of Christianity, with no influence passing the other direction. Disagreement with this argument is discussed later in this account.

²¹⁵ Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”. Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”. See footer for access.

²¹⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2012). “Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”. See footer for access.

²¹⁶ Gilchrist, S. (2011). “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”. See footer for access.

²¹⁷ The moral values surrounding the attitudes to gender, sex and sexuality in the first century were very different to those of the present day. Although these condoned activities which were horrific to modern day perceptions, the moral integrity of these activities was intensively discussed. Unlike the present day traditional teaching of the Church which considers all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour to be inherently disordered, and always in pursuit of lust and immoral acts, the first century societies, most notably Greek, but also the Roman and Jewish societies took an attitude to gender and sex which demanded total responsibility in behaviour but which separated the acceptable

using an analogy which concerned the integrity of the charioteer who was driving the ugly black horse of passion and the noble white horse of love²¹⁸. It has further been established that the same principles of duality are found to apply across all cultures, continents and religious beliefs²¹⁹. This duality conforms with that predicted by the neurophysiological and psychological study.

That duality is confirmed by the psychological and neurophysiological components of this analysis²²⁰, where it is demonstrated that all people, irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity are equally capable of following “The way of darkness” or “The way of light”. In many religions across the world, people who transcend the sex/gender boundaries to adopt moral standards which are seen to be true to the ideals of both lives were frequently given a high and often priestly status. Those who instead transgressed the sex gender boundaries for the pursuit of gratification and lust, without regard to the moral standards of their own societies were very strongly condemned²²¹. This perception of a duality in same-sex relationships is absent from the Christian tradition, although it was present inside the Greco/Roman cults, and the

activities which were for the noble pursuit of love, from the unacceptable activities which were for the carnal abuse of sex.

²¹⁸ Gilchrist, S. 2011. “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”. See footer for access.

²¹⁹ The relationship between transgender people and religion varies widely around the world.

Religions range from condemning any gender-variant behaviour, to honouring transgender people as religious leaders. Views within a single religion can vary considerably. Buddhist scripture does not distinguish same-sex sexual activity from heterosexual activity. In Thai Buddhism, being katoey (an umbrella term that roughly maps to a range of identities from male to female transsexuality to male homosexuality) is seen as being part of one's karma. In Shinto, Shirabyōshi, female or transgendered kami are associated with same-sex love or gender variance. They are linked to Shinto priests of the same name, who are usually female (or occasionally transgender) and perform ritual dances in traditional men's clothing. In African religious beliefs the Akan people of Ghana for example, have a pantheon of gods that includes personifications of androgynous or transgender deities. The indigenous population of Australia have a shamanic religion, which includes a pantheon of gods, and the rainbow serpent god Ungud has been described as androgynous or transgendered. Third gender, or gender variant, spiritual intermediaries are found in many pacific island cultures. The pre-Christian Philippines had a polytheistic religion, which included the transgender or hermaphroditic gods Bathala and Malyari, whose names means "Man and Woman in One" and "Powerful One" respectively. Two-Spirit People is an umbrella term that is now sometimes used what were previously known as berdaches. These are indigenous North Americans who fulfil one of many mixed gender roles found traditionally among many Native Americans and Canadian First Nations communities. Two-spirit people were both respected and feared in many tribes. They frequently became practitioners of tribal medicine. Although success could bring high status they could be likely to be suspected of witchcraft in cases of failed harvest, or the death of a tribal member.

²²⁰ Gilchrist, S. (2013), “A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach”. See footer for access.

²²¹ In the Middle East, MTF (male-to-female) priestesses were known to have served Astarte, Dea Syria, Atargatis and Ashtoreth / Ishtar and Cybele; who was also known as The Great Mother. For centuries Muslim tradition differentiated between MTF transsexuals who lived as prostitutes or criminals, and those in whom femininity was innate, and who lived blamelessly. The latter were called "Mukhannathun," and they were accepted within the boundaries of Islam. Mukhannathun could have relationships with either men or women, but only those who had been castrated or were exclusively attracted to men were allowed into women's spaces. Later it was ordered that all mukhannathun undergo castration. Other religions which accept and endorse transgender priests and priestesses exist on a worldwide basis. For a fuller description of these see Gilchrist, S. 2012. “Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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following analysis examines what happened to the principles of that duality during the development of the social and religious traditions of the early Christian Church.

3:1:2 First Century Greek and Roman Attitudes

A major difficulty in interpreting first century attitudes comes from the presumptions which today's labels imply. Too often labels are employed to condemn others or to pursue particular points. Like using labels to equate homosexuality with pederasty and by applying the same labels without distinction to same-sex acts engaged in by heterosexual men for ritual purposes, sexual satisfaction or for their religious rites. Most of the ancient Near East adopted an attitude to homosexuality and same-sex acts which was very similar to that of classical Greece and Rome, where this was simply accepted as long as it was done among consenting adults, or where different social classes of the partners were involved²²². Public expressions of homosexual relationships between two adult male citizens were strongly disparaged²²³, the social status of the dominant partner was unaffected by this, but compliant behaviour or the effeminate deportment by the submissive partner was condemned²²⁴. The need to maintain the social status was all important and this act would be seen to debase male citizenship to the status of women²²⁵. Same-sex intercourse with slaves or with people of a lesser status was common practice at least amongst the higher classes; and for slaves the issues of consent simply did not arise²²⁶. That does not imply that the same-sex acts were the consequence of any homosexual relationships, for they could also be engaged in by heterosexual men for their physical gratification, and for the practice of safe sex. The ancient Greeks did not possess the terms or employ concepts which correspond to the contemporary dichotomy of 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual'. They used different words for the different types of love and these were not defined in gendered terms²²⁷. Probably the most frequent assumption

²²² For the complete analysis see Gilchrist, S. 2012. "Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church". See also: "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". See footer for access.

²²³ There is always the need to distinguish between homosexual relationships and the activities of two men who engage in sexual activities for the purposes of physical gratification and/or the practice of safe sex. Pederasty was practiced and the sexual morals of any person must always be judged against the cultural rules and permissions of the societies in which they occur. That does not mean that the activities themselves have to be approved of by other cultures.

²²⁴ All of Paul's letters imply that people should keep the Old Testament sexual laws.

²²⁵ See for example: Winkler, John J. (1990). "The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece". New York: Routledge. In 1 Corinthians 6:9, Paul also condemned the behaviour of the "malakoi" or "soft men" There are a number of possible meanings including: People who lack self-control, including control of their desires, people who indulge unrestrainedly in bodily pleasures, people who have a soft, luxurious lifestyle, men who choose to act like women in appearance or in non-sexual behaviour, or men who have passive sex with other men. When the Corinthian Christians heard or saw the word malakoi in Paul's letter, their most likely interpretation would have been to think of them as effeminate men (those with effeminate appearances or weaknesses). However if Paul had meant to refer to effeminate men he could have used the more direct words "thelubrios" or "androgunos" instead.

²²⁶ It is of interest to note that the same sort of attitudes could apply to the relationships between slaves and their Christian masters in the New World during the 17th-18th Century..

²²⁷ The terms "heterosexual" and "homosexual" are eighteenth century definitions. First century culture was so different, that a person from that time would not know what these meant. This approach aims to separate the social from the theological elements in each of the Greco/Roman cult doctrines. The first requirement is to accept that sexual morality provided a time-honoured and socially determined frame of reference within these societies and that any judgements on moral

about sexual orientation in Greek society was that people could respond erotically to beauty in either sex.

However a very different situation was encountered in those subject societies which were dominated by the major powers. Here the reverse views are encountered. The absolute horror of the threat of same-sex rape being carried out on the Israelites by the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah is very clearly expressed in the Jewish texts, and the high degree of anguish about the castration which some of the Jews were subjected to during the time of the Exile is also found²²⁸. Therefore it follows that the magnitude of the changes in outlook which take place when the self-centred morality encountered in the cults and the religions of a dominant society are replaced with the all-encompassing morality which is required of a subjugated culture, are likely to be significant, and must be considered in this account. Same-sex rape was used as a weapon of domination and submission, and enforced castration was a method of control. For the Jews any form of authority that was imposed by the dominant society could never be given an acceptable role. Inside the Judean tradition the freedom to engage in all penetrative relationships was instead governed by love²²⁹ and even a slave was protected by this requirement. Therefore the Greeks and Romans could be regarded as people who penetrated at will, but the Jews did not²³⁰.

Even though women in Greco/Roman society were subject to male authority in every way the attitudes them are often misunderstood. In principle gender complementarity was expected to be practiced, but that would depend entirely on the attitude that was taken by each "Pater Familias", who held full responsibility for the household, even over the matters of life and death. Restrictive rules could be placed on women and this meant that severe gender discrimination could always take place. An extended discussion of this is given in sections 2:2:4 and 2:3:2 of this document. The Christian apologists of today cite this gender discrimination for their condemnations, but many

values must be made exclusively within the terms of that morality. The second step is to use this separation as a means to unlock the barriers which prohibit a greater understanding of the theologies and the philosophies which were embraced by the cults. By isolating the conflicts and condemnations which arise through the differences in sexual morality from all of the other elements in the theologies of the cults it is argued that a better understanding may be gained.

²²⁸ Judaism has always forbidden all forms of castration. Among the nations of antiquity, the Jews alone imposed a religious prohibition on the emasculation of men and even animals. The Bible directly refers to the ban on castration by excluding castrated animals from serving as sacrifices on the altar (Lev. 22:24), also by banning a descendant of Aaron "who has his stones crushed" from the priestly service (Lev. 21:20), and a man "that is crushed or maimed in his privy parts" from entering into "the assembly of the Lord" (Deut. 23:2). In the Talmud (Shab. 110b–111a) and codes (e.g., Sh. Ar. EH 5:11–14), the biblical interdict is widely extended to cover any deliberate impairment of the male reproductive organs in domestic animals, beasts, birds, and man, including the castration of a person who is already impotent or genitally maimed (Encyclopaedia Judaica. 2008, Gale Group. ISBN 13: 9780028659282. ISBN 10: 0028659287. However the need to accommodate people who had been castrated was important since the practice was widespread across the Middle East. The Bible and the Talmud carefully defines how such people were to be treated.

²²⁹ Or maybe in battle

²³⁰ In Greco/Roman society attitudes to anal penetration varied with time and widely varying rules applied to different regions and city states. Although this comment describes the accepted practice, there was always concern over its misuse. Rules and regulations were applied. In the case of the practice of pederasty in Greek culture the junior partner was the person responsible for initiating the action and emotion was not to be involved. For a full account, see: Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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of them only provide a partial account because they simply describe the numerous restrictive rules. However this discrimination and separation of role broke down to a large extent in Greece around 400 BC, and again in Rome around 205 BC²³¹. Men had been called away to battle. War had decimated the male population, and women became even more essential for maintaining key functions of society²³². Within the marriage relationships, as well as in the occupations that men and women fulfilled in society, a full compatibility of intellect between men and women was expected²³³. By the time of the first century many women had become well educated and they made significant contributions to society; nevertheless women were still denied any power and authority over their own lives. The growing importance of their contributions and the developing roles of women in this society meant that this status quo was being increasingly challenged, and it appears that around the start of the first century a

²³¹In earlier Greek Societies before 400 BC women had to have their husband's permission to leave their homes. With the exception of women in ancient Sparta, Greek women at this time had very limited freedom outside the home. If they had their husband's permission, they could attend weddings, funerals, some religious festivals, and visit female neighbours for brief periods of time. But without their husband's permission, they could do none of these things. However inside the house at this time Greek women were in charge. After 400 BC there was a rapid change and a transformation in the freedom of women, largely because of the reverses Greece suffered in war. Not every boundary was broken, however it is undeniable that the visibility and role of women during this time of violent change in ancient Greece greatly increased. See Scott, Michael (2009) "The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece" History Today Volume: 59 Issue: 11 2009. Also: Pomeroy, Sarah B. (1994) Goddesses, Whores, Wives And Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity". Publisher: Pimlico; New Edition (5 May 1994) ISBN-10: 0712660542 ISBN-13: 978-0712660549

²³²Between the fall of Athens in 404 BC and the rise of Alexander the Great in the 330s BC, the Greek world was turned on its head. The transformations were motivated in part by the catastrophic effects of the Peloponnesian War, the 30-year conflict which had brought democratic Athens to its knees. In response to the increased poverty that resulted, Greek women began to work outside the home. The orator Demosthenes, writing in the middle of the fourth century, complained that they now worked as nurses, wool-workers and grape-pickers because of the city's penury. This primarily economic drive was coupled with great political upheaval, an increasingly muddled distinction between public and private worlds and new forms of religious expression. In different parts of ancient Greece women become visible for different reasons and in Athens they appear centre stage in comic discussions of sexual and political equality and in the law courts on issues relating to citizenship. See Scott, Michael. (2009) "The Rise of Women in Ancient Greece" History Today Volume: 59 Issue: 11

<http://www.historytoday.com/michael-scott/rise-women-ancient-greece>

²³³Plato considered that the only innate differences between males and females were the reproductive ones. Socrates likewise believed that that males and females have no distinct qualifications for any particular pursuits and that no particular function should be reserved for men and women, but both sexes should be treated alike. In Plato's Republic, the Guardians are put into place to defend morality and to rule society because they know the truth and possess the knowledge and wisdom of true forms. The equality of opportunity for both men and women to enter the Guardian Class requires an equality of education for both sexes, and this principle of the equality of education for both men and women was adopted in the real world. This meant that, rather than gender polarisation, a gender complementarity was exercised in which men and women were placed into separate and exclusive gender roles which were considered to have equivalent esteem. In Roman society, at least among the upper classes, women seem to have been very well-educated. Only after children had come of age did the standards and expectations differ. Then men and women were groomed for their respective roles. See: Blundell, Sue. (1995) "Women in ancient Greece: Harvard University Press, 1995 ISBN 0674954734, 780674954731: Plato, The Republic. Books I–V: The eutopia portraying the ideal community and the education of the Guardians: See

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics-politics/> "Plato's Ethics and Politics in The Republic" First published Tue Apr 1, 2003; substantive revision Mon Aug 31, 2009: Rawson, Beryl (1987) "The Roman Family," in "The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives" Cornell University Press, 1987, pp. 30, 40–41. ISBN0801494605, 9780801494604.

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turning point was reached. This was also a period of religious upheaval in Greek and Roman society. Many of the traditional religions had lost much of their credibility, the Goddess cults were undergoing a major resurgence, there was a proliferation of new religious beliefs, and the male domination of society was being put to the test²³⁴.

3:1:3 Boundaries of Acceptability: Power and Sex

None of the Goddess cults exhibited stereotypically feminine or maternal behaviour, and all of them disrupted the social structures and the gender divisions of their own societies. There were two ways in which the male establishment could react to this challenge. One way was to offer them a greater accommodation within the existing structures of the male dominated society, and the other was to condemn the cults. It has been shown that each large advance in the influence of the cult of the Goddess, Cybele occurred during periods when there were also major advances in women's rights²³⁵, and during the time of the first century an equal status for women had been established in the realm of the Gods, but not in everyday life. Although only women and castrated men were allowed to act as the normal priests of the Goddess cult, the activities of the cult were ultimately governed by the senior Roman priests who were drawn from among Rome's highest ranking and its wealthiest citizens, who were not castrated²³⁶. These senior priests of Cybele in Rome were expected to pay for all the running costs of the cult, including the temples, assistants, and the festivals. Male Roman followers of the Goddess Cybele were organised into sodalities, or male fraternities, and their members were mostly men of social status and influence²³⁷. The most notable of these were the Dendrophori (or the "Tree-bearers") and the Cannophori (or the "Reed-bearers"). On two occasions the Emperor Augustus had personally funded the rebuilding of Cybele's, (or the Magna Mater's²³⁸), Palatine temple. The upper classes sponsored her festivals, and held lavish, private festival banquets in the honour of the goddess, from which her self castrated eunuch priests were conspicuously absent.²³⁹ Because of the high degree of freedom which was

²³⁴ This analysis gives a very different perspective on the role and function of the Goddess cults from that the traditional Christian viewpoint, which regards them as havens for lust, promiscuity and inappropriate sex. In this analysis it is demonstrated that the rituals and activities of the Goddess cults possessed the attributes of protecting female interests against the attacks of male aggression and domination. They additionally included support for women's concerns, for birthing and nurture, for fertility and renewal, and in total contrast to the Christian condemnations, they further emphasised the requirement for responsible sex. Therefore, far from any thoughts that their existence was purely to promote the sexual orgies, the cult's many activities had an important role. This included fortune telling, the production of charms and healing and welfare activities. They were also associated with the power struggles within these gender unequal societies, and the diversity, disruption and the nature of this behaviour caused both a strong disapproval and a high respect. A full analysis is given in Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

²³⁵ See also section 2:3:2 of this document.

²³⁶ Since the cult of Cybele was a state recognised religion the head of the Gallae, the Archgallus, was also a state-appointed position. Since Roman law did not (initially) allow a Roman citizen to be castrated, the symbolic act of castration was carried out on a bull instead.

²³⁷ Sandberg, Anders. (1991). "The Cult of Magna Mater". Accessed 17 September 2012 at <http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/churchhistory220/lectureone/MagnaMater.htm>

²³⁸ "Magna Mater", or Great Mother. An alternative Roman name for Cybele

²³⁹ Summers, 1996, pp. 337 – 9 in Lane, Eugene, (Editor) *Cybele, Attis, and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M.J. Vermaseren*, Brill, 1996.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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allowed by the Greco/Roman codes of sexual morality, these banquets and festivals could include orgies of same-sex acts²⁴⁰. The extravagant habits and the good living during these festive days were probably carried to a very high level. For these reasons the Roman senate issued a decree in 161 BC to limit the expenditure which could be incurred. However these banquets and other activities could serve another purpose, because the emperors and people who were in senior authority understood that it was necessary to respect the divine edicts of the cults. The Oracles and the prophesying provided a further resource. Through the use of these mechanisms the cults could exercise a great deal of power over any decisions that were made.

However along with this high degree of male endorsement, the female supporters of the cult who were Roman citizens and who held similar high status were expected to exercise exceptionally strong standards of sexual purity and responsibility. That is evident in the accounts of Cybele's entry into Rome 205 B.C, where the absolute purity of the Roman matrons, who welcomed the arrival of the representation of the Goddess into the city is strongly emphasised. This is more fully discussed in section 2:3:2 of this report.

Within the pagan mystery religions of the ancient Mediterranean, celibacy was also practiced in different contexts. In Rome the Vestal Virgins cultivated the sacred fire which must never be allowed to go out. They took an unbreakable vow of chastity in order to devote themselves to its guardianship and to the correct observance of the state rituals which were off-limits to the male colleges of priests. Similarly within the mystery religions the control of sexual desire could also be used to divorce oneself from the basic human biological drives in order to separate oneself from what was considered to be impure, or to distance oneself from the transient world²⁴¹. Thus celibacy could contribute to the creation of a particular status. It played a role in the construction of this transcendent identity and it gave a source of charisma as well.

The same sense of duality also applied to the transgendered Gallae priests. Through mutilating themselves they had given up something that was fundamental to their manhood and their own status in society. However this self-castration also served to indicate the Gallae's devotion to their deity. It was regarded as an act of purification, and because of this act of self-sacrifice, others believed the Gallae to be "The Wise Ones, the Pure Ones and the Holy Ones"^{242 243}. Only those who were chaste could perform certain rites, and this also endowed them with the innocence of virgins and children. As castrated men they could neither climax themselves; nor make others climax through their use of penetrative acts. The virtuous nature of this behaviour is in complete contrast to the perceptions of those Gallae whose motives might have been, or were alleged by others to be, for a sexual reward. By being self-castrated the Gallae were considered to be utterly pure and they were believed to possess far more spiritual power than those voluntary celibates who could err at any moment. By

²⁴⁰ Where it is presumed that the social restrictions imposed by society could also be relaxed.

²⁴¹ Olson, Carl. (2007) "Celibacy and Religious Traditions" Oxford University Press, 7 Dec 2007 ISBN 0195306317, 9780195306316

²⁴² Abbott, Elizabeth (2001) "A History of Celibacy" James Clarke & Co., 2001 - 493 pages. ISBN 0718830067, 9780718830069

²⁴³ Costine, Lauren (2007) "Diana How Has the Repression of the Sacred Feminine in the Patriarchal Culture Affected Female Sexuality from a Depth Psychological Perspective?"

ProQuest, 2007 ISBN 1109006705, 9781109006704

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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taking such matters into their own hands as it were, these self castrated eunuchs rejected their worldliness and their status in society, but they attained an instant superiority and holiness by the self sacrifice of their actions²⁴⁴.

This however represents only one face of their perceived behaviour, and these views about their sexual purity are in complete contrast to the Christian condemnations of the sect. This attitude also reflects the duality and ambivalence which they likewise encountered in Greco/Roman society, since, if some of the Gallae priests sought this holiness, others did the reverse. From the Roman perspective these unacceptable excesses of sexual behaviour were further reinforced by their self-castration since their rejection of masculinity was an affront to the social conventions and to the male superiority which society enforced²⁴⁵. That was additionally reinforced by the socially challenging behaviour of the cult. This is also why a Roman citizen at first could not be legally castrated, although the situation changed with greater acceptance of the cult²⁴⁶. In Roman documents the close association of the Gallae with prostitutes and with other sex workers is widely reported, and there are large numbers of other descriptions of sexual impropriety which are encountered^{247 248}. A less than flattering

²⁴⁴ Abbott, Elizabeth (2001) "A History of Celibacy" James Clarke & Co., 2001 - 493 pages. ISBN 0718830067, 9780718830069

²⁴⁵ Evidence of this discrimination from the ancient sources is abundant and easily accessible. Josephus, AD 37-100, used the term *malakos* to describe men who appeared soft or weak through lack of courage in battle, or who were reluctant to commit suicide in defeat or who enjoyed too much luxury. *Malakos* can refer to many things: the softness of expensive clothes, the richness and delicacy of gourmet food, the gentleness of light winds and breezes. When it was used as a term of moral condemnation, the word referred to something that was perceived as "soft". For example: laziness, degeneracy, decadence, and lack of courage were all summed as vices belonging to one ancient category: the feminine. For the ancients this was seen as having common sense and was natural. Women were seen to be weak, fearful, vulnerable and tender: they stayed indoors and protected their soft skin and nature: their flesh was more moist, more flaccid, and more porous than male flesh, which was why their bodies retained all that excess fluid that must be expelled every month. The female was quintessentially penetrable; their pores were looser than men's. One might even say that in the ancient male ideology women existed to be penetrated. This was their purpose (*telos*), and their "softness" or "porousness" was nature's way of inscribing on and within their bodies this reason for their existence. Martin Dale B. (1995). "The Corinthian Body" New Haven: Yale, 1995, pp 32-34, 222, 230-31, 241-42.

²⁴⁶ Roman citizens were prohibited from becoming Gallae, primarily because of their repulsion of emasculation until 101 BCE, when the laws were altered to allow certain citizens to become members of the cult. Around 50 CE, Claudius removed all restrictions preventing citizens from becoming Gallae. Eventually, the head of the gallae, the Archgallus, became a state-appointed position, and the Gallae's best known festival, the Day of Blood, when ritual self-castration took place, was incorporated into the public religious calendar along with Cybele's major festival, the Megalensia, which then became a multi-week event.

²⁴⁷ Apuleius in the 2nd century CE (*Golden Ass*, 188-89) tells a story describing a travelling band of priests of the Goddess Cybele. "The eunuch whose name was Philebus, led me off to his lodgings. When he reached the door he called out: "Look, girls, Look! I have brought you a lovely new manservant!" The girls were a set of disgusting young eunuch priests who broke into falsetto screams and hysterical giggles of joy, thinking that Philebus really meant what he said, and that they would now have a fine time with me... This queer family included one real man, a great big slave, whom they had bought with money collected by begging. When they went out, leading the Goddess in procession, he would walk in front playing a horn--he played extremely well--and at home they used in him all sorts of ways, especially in bed"..

²⁴⁸ See also Clement of Alexandria, *Protreptikos*, 2.14; Firmicus, *The Error of Pagan Religions*, 4.2; Martial, *Epigrams*, 3.81 (vol 1; ed. and trans. D.R. Bailey; *Martial Epigrams*; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993)

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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account of their behaviour during festivals is given by Ovid; however he is unusual for taking an aggressively heterosexual stance²⁴⁹. The same practices were not just confined to the Gallae. Like the priests of Cybele the priests of Artemis and other first century Goddess cults²⁵⁰ were often eunuchs, were described as effeminate, they could be sexually penetrated²⁵¹ ²⁵² and their gender challenging public behaviour was often condemned as an affront to respectable society²⁵³.

The term Galli or Gallae may sometimes be used to cover all of the groups and with all of them the equivalent concerns about sexual practices were expressed. However their motives could vary greatly. The act of self-castration during an ecstatic ritual is hardly an academic qualification for the priesthood, and a very extensive range of outlooks could be encountered. Some may have taken advantage of their situation entirely for the misuse of sex, but there were other reasons for these eunuch priests to offer themselves to men for anal penetration. It could be a way to transmit the blessings of the virgin Goddess to those laymen who were looking for fertility inside their own reproductive lives. Within Greco/Roman culture that could be a respected and altruistic act and here the cultural clashes which occur between subject societies and dominant ones become very important. The perception that any man could offer himself up for anal penetration was horrific from Jewish and Christian perspectives, and it is not surprising that this led to a universal condemnation from these sources. However when this is understood from the Greco/Roman moral standpoints a duality may instead be observed, whereby those people who transcended the sex/gender boundaries to adopt the moral standards which are seen to be true to the ideals of both lives could be given a high and a priestly status. Those who instead transgress the sex/gender boundaries for the pursuit of sexual gratification and for lust, without any concern for the moral standards of their own societies would be very strongly condemned for their acts.

²⁴⁹ See for example Ovid Fasi: Book IV: April 4 The Megalesian Festival of Cybele: accessed at <http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/OvidFastiBkFour.htm> 16 October 2012.

²⁵⁰ Artemis is described in the bible as Diana of the Ephesians. See Acts Chapter 19.

²⁵¹ Paul, the Goddess Religions and Queers: Romans 1:23-28

I. Romans 1:23-28—GLB or Idolaters?.

²⁵² Kroger, Richard Clark, Kroger Katherine Clark (1998) "I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking I Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence" Baker Academic (February 1, 1998).

ISBN-10: 0801052505 ISBN-13: 978-0801052507 also Kroger, Catherine Clark (1996) "Apostle Paul," HR 35 (1996).

²⁵³ The public behaviour of the Gallae was a major Christian and Jewish concern. The Gallae dressed in women's costume, they wore their hair long and bleached and they wore jewellery and heavy make-up. Cybele and the Gallae drew great ire from both Jews and the Christian Church. In AD 35 their public flaunting of sexuality was severely condemned by the Jewish writer Philo and another early Christian denunciation is that of Clement of Alexandria. A further third century Christian condemnation came from Julius Firmicus Maternus and around AD 425 Augustine delivered an invective against the Gallae which was particularly harsh. Here Augustine speaks of their "shameful rites" and also of "obscenities" that were "gross and immodest", describing them as "more unseemly than all scenic abomination". He also declares that "These effeminates no later than yesterday, were going through the streets and places of Carthage with anointed hair, whitened faces, relaxed bodies, and feminine gait, exacting from the people the means of maintaining their ignominious lives". See: Gilchrist, S. (2012). "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church". See footer for access
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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The existence of these dualities in the Cult behaviour has been widely recognised in current research. Roller²⁵⁴ attributes this to a dualism in the cult practices where the formal public components created and maintained the social boundaries of society, while the ecstatic elements transgressed them. Borgeaud instead sets the boundary more closely in line with the traditional teachings of the Church, which identifies the unacceptable behaviour with homosexuality, cross-gender activity and the pursuit of all forms of variant sex²⁵⁵. Roller, Borgeaud and others stipulate a single boundary between the reputable and disruptive behaviour. However this analysis argues that both these presumptions are incorrect and that more than one boundary must exist. Certainly it is true that one of these boundaries must be set between the use and the abuse of sex. The second boundary line relates to the political impact of the cults.

One of the reasons for giving the cult of Cybele a high official status was the need to respond to its widespread popularity amongst the lower echelons of society. This included people who considered themselves oppressed by the powers of the state, and that included women as well as the subject cultures. As with the subject and the dominant societies, people who see themselves to be at the receiving end of such behaviour are likely to have a very different outlook from the ones who are enforcing it. This politically defined boundary can be imagined as a horizontal boundary where the social status fixes the divisions between the two elements. It is considered from this viewpoint that the dividing line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour separates people who were willing to cooperate, and who could to take advantage of the roles which the state was prepared to offer, from those who could, would or were not.

In contrast to this, the vertical sexual boundary exists across all of the social strata of society, from the differences between the licentious practices of the high and mighty and the contrasting sexual purity which was instead demanded of the most honoured matrons of Greco/Roman society, to the sexual restrictions and to the contrasting freedoms which any male Roman citizen could indulge in with those people who were or who were not of the same or lesser status, and to the wide variety of sexual practices amongst the Gallae priests. In section 2:3:2 of this document the histories of the Goddess cults are considered in conjunction with the clashes in the sexual cultures, gender attitudes, and the development of women's rights. Very different sexual boundary lines were fixed by Jewish and Greco/Roman societies. However it is strongly argued in this analysis that it is the political boundary which is the defining feature in determining the Christian attitudes to the Goddess cults. It is argued that early Christianity had at first found itself on the wrong side of this political boundary, and it had to jump across it in order to gain the high respectability in the mainstream of Greco/Roman society that it sought. However that meant more than just rejecting any possible relationship with the cult. It also had to condemn it and to suppress all knowledge of the positive elements which were within it. This demanded a strenuous

²⁵⁴ Roller, Lynn E. (1996). In Lane Eugene N (ed.) (1996), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren*. Religions in the Greco-Roman World, 131. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. ISBN 90-04-10196-9.

²⁵⁵ Borgeaud, Philippe. (1996). "Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary". Originally published as *La Mère des dieux: De Cybele à la Vierge Marie*. Éditions de Seuil, Collection "La Librairie du XXe siècle", 1996. Translated from the French by Lysa Hochroth. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8018-7985-X.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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denial of the duality, both of theology and behaviour, which was known to exist inside the cult, and it drove the campaigns of the Christian Church which aimed to identify the cult exclusively as a repository for illicit, immoral and inappropriate sex²⁵⁶.

However none of the presently published research work on the Cult of Cybele takes full account of these political elements²⁵⁷ and in this examination it is shown that this omission has significant consequences for interpreting the behaviour of the cults²⁵⁸.

²⁵⁶The attitude taken to gender and sexually variant behaviour tends to follow the presumptions embodied in the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church. This implies that the gender disruptive behaviour of the cults self-castrated Gallae priests can only be in pursuit of immoral sex. That is not perhaps surprising given the nature of the ancient myths. See for example, Borgeaud pages 48-49, 54-55. Borgeaud is reciting the ancient myths which surround such behaviour. The possibility of other types of behaviour does not appear to be given full value and the changes to the social attitudes to women are not fully considered in these accounts. See: Borgeaud, Philippe. (1996). "Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary. Originally published as *La Mère des dieux: De Cybele à la Vierge Marie*. Éditions de Seuil, Collection "La Librairie du XXe siècle", 1996. Translated from the French by Lysa Hochroth. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8018-7985-X. See also: Gilchrist, S. (2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". See footer for access.

²⁵⁷For descriptions of the cult of Cybele see: Roller, Lynn E. (1999). "In Search of God the Mother: The Cult of Anatolian Cybele." Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. ISBN 0-520-21024-7. See also Borgeaud, Philippe. (1996). "Mother of the Gods. From Cybele to the Virgin Mary. Originally published as *La Mère des dieux: De Cybele à la Vierge Marie*. Éditions de Seuil, Collection "La Librairie du XXe siècle", 1996. Translated from the French by Lysa Hochroth. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8018-7985-X. See also: Lane (ed.), Eugene N. (1996) "Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren. Religions in the Greco-Roman World". Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. ISBN 90-04-10196-9.

²⁵⁸Roller, Borgeaud and others perceive a single boundary between reputable and disruptive behaviour. The popular viewpoints exclusively associate the Gallae and the morals of the cult with sexual orgies, prostitution and for the practice of immoral sex. This analysis argues that both these presumptions are incorrect, and that more than one boundary must exist. It also follows from this argument that two boundaries must be set. One is that between co-operative and disruptive behaviour in the pursuit of female interests and rights. The second is the boundary between proper and improper sex. The importance of identifying these separate boundaries is a key feature which has not been identified in previous studies. While one of the boundaries is determined by attitude to sex, the other is determined by the social positions in society, and these two boundaries do not coincide. The creation of these separate boundaries permits a re-evaluation of the roles of the self-castrated Gallae priests. The psychological analysis has demonstrated that as wide a range of attitudes must be found in the gender and sexually variant section of the population as there are in society at large. This also allows the Gallae priests to be treated in the same way as those belonging to other religious beliefs, where across cultures and across continents the equivalent people who seek to transcend gender may be understood to celebrate and to express the ideals of both lives. Some religions believe that holding both the male and female experience in one body is the closest that human beings can get to a total holiness and that within this relationship the worshipper "Receives the inner-most essence and power of a God." Within these traditions the descriptions of "Two spirit" or "Double gendered" may be used and in yet other cultures these people may, as with the Gallae, be considered to belong to a "Third Sex". Possession of this inclusiveness is often considered to be appropriate to a priestly role and in those societies where the requisite outlets for behaviour are provided such people can have a very high status. Indeed the reverence which they are accorded can commonly exceed the esteem that is given to other people who conform to the normal expectations of their sex. In Ancient Rome those people who transcended the sex-gender boundaries could be described as "The Wise Ones, the Pure Ones and the Holy Ones" and the myths of the cult indicate that those who crossed the sex gender boundaries were given special status. For the full account see Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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3:1:4 Gender and Transcendence

It is shown in section 2:3:2 of this document that the gender challenging behaviour of the Goddess cults was a serious threat to this male domination, and the examination of the cult of Cybele demonstrates that the political influences and the “Women’s liberation” element which were contained within it can not be ignored²⁵⁹. However there was also a significant problem. Because of the gender stratification which was inevitably imposed by the Gods and Goddesses belonging to polytheistic society who were themselves gender defined, any struggles for the equality of status or for complete gender equality could only be carried so far²⁶⁰. Even though women had achieved considerable power inside their own domains, the divinely decreed orders of difference meant that the fundamental gender divisions could not be broken and there was a glass ceiling that could never be crossed²⁶¹. What was required to make the breakthrough was a religion that worshipped a single gender transcendent God and which additionally possessed a social perspective that was close to the Goddess cults^{262 263 264 265}. Because of its agenda for women, together with the moral values of a subject society, Christianity could bridge that void²⁶⁶.

²⁵⁹An extended analysis is given in section 2:3:2 and section 2:2:8 of this document.

²⁶⁰This analysis shows that within the cult of Cybele there was a way of darkness and a way of light. Cybele's myths embraced sex and spirituality, they gave an earthier caution against lust and other sins of excess and they showed that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love. The need to rise above the divisions of gender could give at least some of the Gallae a priest like transcendent status, and this is in stark contrast to the condemnations of immorality and the eventual total repression of the cult by the Catholic Church,

²⁶¹Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”. Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”. See footer for access.

²⁶²In 395 BC, just nine years after Athens had suffered catastrophic defeat in war the comic playwright Aristophanes wrote and produced a play called *Women in the Assembly* (*Ecclesiazusae*). The plot is simple and striking. The women of Athens are fed up with the mess men have made of the city and its affairs. They infiltrate the political assembly and persuade it to hand over all power to the women. It is a comedy, and the demand for true gender equality is taken to excess so that for example if a man wanted to have sex with a pretty woman he had to have sex with an ugly one first. In ancient society the different roles assigned to men and women were determined by their perceived usefulness to society and not by modern ideas of universal equality. In Greece at this time plays were be used to criticise authority and society. This play illustrates the parity of esteem that was given. See Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”. Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”. See footer for access..

²⁶³Frymer-Kensky, Tivka. (1993) “In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth” Ballantine Books; (First Edition February 10, 1993) ISBN-10: 0449907465 ISBN-13: 978-0449907467.

²⁶⁴That there were public official duties for women in Rome contradicts the commonplace notion that women in ancient Rome took part only in private or domestic religion. The dual male-female priesthoods may reflect the Roman tendency to seek a gender complement within the religious sphere. Most divine powers are represented by both a male and a female deity, as seen in divine pairs such as Liber and Libera. The twelve major gods were presented as six gender-balanced pairs, and Roman religion departed from Indo-European tradition in installing two goddesses in its supreme triad of patron deities, Juno and Minerva along with Jupiter. This triad “formed the core of Roman religion.”(See Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, pp. 79–81. Lipka, Michael.(2009), “Roman Gods: A Conceptual Approach”.Brill, pp. 141–142)

²⁶⁵Barker, Margaret. (2001)“The Temple Roots Of The Liturgy”
Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

3:1:5: Social Transformation

Thus a major challenge (and an achievement) for Christianity when it first faced up to the Greek and Roman cultural values, and also subsequently when it was becoming the recognised state religion of the Roman Empire, was the one of transferring the distinctive views of this minority Jewish religion into a dominant culture. That meant confronting the self-centred morality and the sexual values of its male dominated society. Thus Paul's condemnations of sexual abuse which are contained in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10 can be seen to fulfil that purpose. It also meant challenging and usurping the power structures which are formed inside powerful societies by placing the concern for the victims and the suppressed first on the religious and social agendas of those cultures, and further by embracing an all-encompassing morality which is founded on compassion, nurturing and love. These moral characteristics were more typical of first century female expectations and women were also a subject group. The social pressures on the two groups had much in common, and both early Christianity and the female led cult of Cybele adopted a similar approach. The male dominated patriarchal society was challenged by both.

This is the transformation which Christianity brought. Yet that achievement carried its own dangers because this meant that in order to gain respectability in Greco/Roman society, Christianity had to quickly separate itself from the still continuing social and gender disrupting behaviour of the Goddess cults. In addition there were many other moral, cultural and theological differences between the two religious groups, and these equally required an absolute and an immediate rejection of any possible links with the Goddess cults²⁶⁷. Therefore, instead of continuing with the challenges and

This is developed from a paper read in Dublin in November 2000 subsequently published in Sourozh. A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought. Available online at:

<http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/TempleRootsofChristianLiturgy.pdf>

See also Barker, Margaret. (2003). "Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy": T&T Clark; ISBN-10: 0567089428 ISBN-13: 978-0567089427

²⁶⁶ While the cult of Cybele and the practices of the Gallae could only challenge within the sex-gender boundaries of a polytheistic society, it is the transgressive body of the eunuch in the New Testament that symbolizes the Kingdom of God, which breaks through these gender-defined frontiers, and who brings its mission to the world. Thus in Christianity this affirmation of relationships that are given in love or in early asceticism transcends both gender and sex. Christianity sought to transcend gender so that all people are treated as one in the Gospel of Christ - and this theme is present throughout the Gospel message. It is also notable that the more correct translation of the text in Galatians 3:18 reads "...male and female..." rather than the more usual version "... neither male, nor female..." The result of this change is to emphasise the social and political challenges that are brought by this

interpretation of transcending gender in the love of Christ. The translation "neither male nor female" is more usually used since this reflects the normal expectation of gender duality of today's society.

However, given that this concept of gender duality breaks down in the ancient world and that the Gallae were considered a third sex, a number of other possible interpretations follow. The effect of all of these is again to further confirm that more than just gender equality is sought, and that everybody is as one in Christ. See Gooder Paula, Sr (2008) "Searching for Meaning: An Introduction to Interpreting the New Testament". Westminster John Knox Press, ISBN 0664231942, 9780664231941.

²⁶⁷ It should be noted that sexual morality in these dominant societies was determined by authority.

Responsibility in all activities was demanded, but provided the recipient was of a lesser status than the perpetrator, these societies endorsed what in the present day would be considered to be same-sex or heterosexual rape. That was horrendous to subject societies, whose members could be the victims of such actions. However this difference arises due to cultural clashes between subject and dominant societies more than the theologies of the cults

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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social disruption of following the doctrine of true gender transcendence contained in the Gospel message which is taught by Jesus, and also by Paul in Galatians 3:28, Christianity came to adopt the form of gender complementarity which demanded the submission of women as is described by Paul in Ephesians 5:22-24, 1 Corinthians 14:34, and 1 Timothy 2:1-7²⁶⁸, and additionally by Peter in 1 Peter 3:1-6. This dogma of gender complementarity was the same as that practiced by Greco/Roman society, and it shared much with Judaism as well. However, instead of simply embracing the social divisions and the gender complementarity of these gender unequal societies Christianity also had to be seen to take a pro-active role in their enforcement and this pursuit of respectability has led to the enforcement of a strong heterosexual, gender defined and exclusive orthodoxy in Christianity, where every expression of gender or of sexually variant behaviour is automatically considered to be an immoral act. It has also led to the great severity of the Christian condemnations of all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour as being second only to bestiality in the heinousness of their acts.

However short or long this early period of absolute gender transcendence was, it had to be complete, for without this Christianity could never have made the transition into a world religion from a local gender defined sect. Therefore instead of simply seeking gender neutrality the Christian Gospel provided a major role for women. A doctrine of full gender equality was expressed in early Christianity, which would find acceptance in present day society, and it is also not surprising that women figure prominently in the early church. Despite this, even though these important roles at first were given to women, the social constraints imposed by gender complementarity meant that the public spokespeople for this new religion could only be men²⁶⁹. Through their pursuit of a male agenda and from its pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines of the gospel Church have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines that came to be adopted by the later Church²⁷⁰. The theological justifications which, in the present day are employed to validate the presumptions for a male leadership, with its male prerogatives, and its justification for an exclusively male priesthood are built on these later traditions. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus, and they do not come from the Gospel Church.

²⁶⁸ "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all --this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth".

²⁶⁹ See Section 2:3:3: of this document

²⁷⁰ Early Christianity provided an agenda for women in a society where they did not possess any human rights. Instead of supporting any perceptions of a male superiority or the concept of an exclusively male priesthood, women occupied many prominent roles in the Gospels and they were also found in leadership roles in the early church. No limits appear to have been applied to these activities and early Christianity endorsed a level of gender equality that would be acceptable in the present day. However as a protesting and also as a potentially disrupting minority religion, early Christianity did not just challenge gender inequality: it also challenged all of the moral precepts and the perceptions upon which a patriarchal society is based. The potential for disturbance was great but regrettably that attitude did not continue. Because of its search for respectability and its eventual assumption of state authority in a gender segregated Greco/Roman society, this challenge was lost. *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".*

3:1:6: Christianity and the Goddess Cults.

The most noteworthy contribution which this neurophysiological and psychological investigation has made to understanding the development of these Church traditions is because it has broken through this sexual barrier. It has forced upon this analysis the recognition that gender and sexually variant conditions are identity driven, which means that as large a variety of moral attitudes and behaviour must be encountered within the gender and sexually variant communities as are found in society at large.

These considerations in turn have demanded the full re-evaluation of the Goddess cults. An extended examination of the cult of Cybele has been undertaken, and in a complete contrast to the vehement condemnations of this goddess cult by the fourth century Christian Church it has been shown that, as well as a way of darkness, there was also a way of light, and at the core of the cult's theology there was the calling for responsible sex²⁷¹. A duality is has been shown to exist whereby people who attempt to live to the highest moral standards that their society expects can live according to the way of light. People who do the reverse follow the way of darkness instead. The equivalent dualities are encountered across cultures and continents, where people who seek to transcend the sex/gender boundaries by living in ways which are true to the ideals of both lives may be given a high and frequently a priestly status. However those who embrace the path of transgression are very ruthlessly condemned for their acts. Nevertheless there were fundamental cultural clashes between the Jewish and the Greco/Roman cultures. One of these differences related to the practice of anal penetration which was used as a weapon for humiliation and domination as much as it was for the physical gratifications of sex²⁷². The Christian condemnations of these culturally determined abuses are understandable²⁷³ and by today's standards most people, including the author, would consider the condemnations to be totally correct. However activities that were considered to be moral in one society could be horrific in another, and because of these divisions it was made easy for the Christian Church to ignore the cultural divides and the dualities within the cult behaviour in order to condemn the Goddess cults, and also Greco/Roman society, exclusively as hotbeds

²⁷¹ Although the theologies and practices of the two groups were entirely different the similarities are extremely important. The close association of the cult of Cybele and Jesus with the outcasts of society led to the condemnations of both groups by people and organisations which had a vested interest in the social structures of society. Like the disciples of Jesus the Gallae also set out on missionary journeys and, like the disciples, they were itinerant priests who relied on the alms that were provided by their followers. Like the Gallae, who were identified with the lowest forms of society, Jesus also associated himself with the outcasts. Both of the groups brought their separate messages of transcendence to the communities which they missioned to. The care for the dispossessed, and the adoption of an all-embracing moral philosophy of a subject culture was common to both groups. Both groups suffered denigration and attack. For those of the castrated Gallae who followed the "Way of Light" it was their transcendence of the gender boundaries of society which offered them their shamanic and priestly role. In stark contrast to the condemnations of immorality and the eventual total repression of the cult by the Roman Catholic Church, Cybele's myths embraced sex and spirituality, they gave an earthier caution against lust and other sins of excess and they showed that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love.

²⁷²This was the original definition of the term Sodomy. The word is not used here since it has come to mean many other things

²⁷³It was same-sex rape and not consensual same-sex relationships which was condemned as Sodomy by the Christian Church. See: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access
Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

for illicit and inappropriate sex²⁷⁴. In the social and political arenas the Goddess cults received support from all strata of society, from emperors on the one hand to slaves on the other. Therefore some people had very strong reasons for protecting the existing structures of society, but for others there were strong reasons for confronting them, and these differences are observed within the behaviour of the cult.

3:1:7: Power and its Usurpation.

Apart from the religious structures which were imposed by the high status that was given to the cult in Greco/Roman society, the cult of Cybele was serviced by female priestesses, who mostly remained in the temples and also by the roving itinerant self castrated male priests. These Gallae priests represented the total inversion of the power structures of the established cult. Voluntary self-castration represented the utmost rejection of male supremacy and it attacked the social framework upon which any patriarchal and dominant society was based. As eunuchs these Gallae were forbidden Roman citizenship and they were denied any rights of inheritance. Their living also depended on the pious generosity of others. It has been noted that in the Roman documents the close associations of the Gallae with prostitutes and other sex workers are widely reported²⁷⁵. One contemporary writer states that that Gallae and the sex workers spent a considerable amount of time together "As outcasts often do". However the institutional structures of an established society have a great deal more difficulty in dealing with people who remove themselves from the normal rules of respectability and status in society, but who nevertheless still continue to live up to the highest moral values which are expected of their cults. Not only do their actions of self sacrifice establish an even greater esteem among the cult's own followers, by confronting the authority of the institutions of their society they also usurp the power structures on which that society is built. This also makes the Gallae priests uniquely equipped to bring the moral values and the teachings of the cult to those who have been oppressed by the state. That outcome can most particularly be found when it exploits the scapegoat mechanism as it is described by Girard; and this is discussed

²⁷⁴ Of particular interest is the cult of Cybele, or the "Great Mother" in Greco/Roman society. A duality in the cult practices is clearly evident where on the one hand the cult is given a very high status and yet on the other hand it is severely condemned for the social disruption and the sexual excesses which were perceived in many of its activities. Roller for example attributes this duality to the high propriety of the formal practices of the cults and the disruptive behaviour to the ecstatic elements that are found within them. (Roller, Lynn. (1996): "Reflections of the Mother of the Gods in Attic Tragedy" (pp. 305-322 in Eugene N. Lane (ed.), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren*. Brill ISBN 9004101969 978-9004101968). The assumption that the disruptive behaviour is always associated with lust and improper sex is implicitly made in the current research. However it is shown in this investigation that two boundaries must be found. One comes through the disruption that is created through the advancement of female interests and the other through the pursuit of illicit sex. None of the current studies attempt to separate this power led disruption from the practice of illicit sex and none of them take full account of how the changing role of women in society may have affected the behaviour and the doctrines of the cult. The political boundary is the one that is relevant for discussing the behaviour of the cults. A full analysis is given in Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

²⁷⁵ For early Christian attacks see: Clement of Alexandria, *Protreptikos*, 2.14. also Firmicus, *The Error of Pagan Religions*, 4.2; Martial, *Epigrams*, 3.81 (vol 1; ed. and trans. D.R. Bailey; *Martial Epigrams*; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993)

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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elsewhere in this investigation, as is the discussion of the attitude of Jesus himself to gender and sexual variance, and to the Gallae priests²⁷⁶.

From his own identification with the poor, the rejected and the outcast Jesus likewise turned this searching for authority completely on its head. His rejection of all worldly power led to his sacrifice and death as a scapegoat on the Cross, and the emphasis in Christianity has always been on the power and the significance of this redemptive act. Many recent theological studies have used the research of René Girard to model these dynamics²⁷⁷ and Girard clearly demonstrates the great power and reconciling influences which the scapegoat can exert. It has been shown that the demand for gender equality and for the protection of women meant that the male dominated patriarchal society was challenged both by Christianity and by the Goddess cults. Cybele's myths and doctrines embraced both sex and spirituality, they gave earlier cautions against lust and the other sins of excess, and they also demonstrated that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love. Contrary to the Christian condemnations, these included the activities of nurture, birthing, care, protection and responsible sex²⁷⁸. When it is also understood that these Gallae priests, together

²⁷⁶Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

²⁷⁷Apart from Girard's own work, James Alison is perhaps the most notable exponent. His books include, *Broken Hearts and New Creations: Intimations of a Great Reversal*, *Undergoing God: Dispatches from the Scene of a Break-In*, *On Being Liked*, *Faith Beyond Resentment: Fragments Catholic and Gay*, *The Joy of Being Wrong: Original Sin Through Easter Eyes*, *Raising Abel: The Recovery of the Eschatological Imagination* (2nd edition), *Raising Abel: The Recovery of the Eschatological Imagination : Living in the End Times: The Last Things Re-imagined*, *Knowing Jesus*. See: <http://www.jamesalison.co.uk/eng/books.html> for details.

²⁷⁸Cybele was just on among a number of Goddesses who had a similar role. Juno in Rome was the Goddess of marriage, pregnancy and childbirth. She was also the Queen of the Gods and part of the Capitoline triad that also included Minerva and Jupiter. Juno was an embodiment of the traditional female roles of wife and mother. One of her titles was Lucino (or light) since she helped to bring children into the light of the world. She was also Goddess of conception, who was called upon during labour and a Goddess who helped settle disagreements between spouses. Another Goddess in Roman mythology was Diana, who was the goddess of the woodlands, of wild animals, and of hunting. Diana also acted as a fertility goddess, who helped women conceive and to give birth to children. With growing contact between Greece and Rome Diana became increasingly identified with the Greek goddess Artemis and she also came to be identified with Juno Lucina herself. However the Romans viewed Diana as a many-sided goddess who was also associated with forests and hunting. Artists usually portrayed her as a virgin hunter, often with a bow and quiver, accompanied by maidens, hunting dogs, or deer. Although Diana held an honoured place among women, she was also identified with Hecate, the Greek goddess of darkness and witchcraft, and she served as goddess of the kingdom of the dead. Diana's nature was as varied as the range of her associations. As goddess of forests and hunting, she was considered to be pure and virginal. Yet she could also be arrogant and vengeful. As goddess of the moon, she had a changeable, unpredictable nature. As goddess of the world of the dead, she was unforgiving and bloodthirsty. She was also regarded as protector of the lower classes, particularly of slaves. In Roman culture Cybele was identified as the Great Mother of the Gods. In ancient Middle Eastern religion (and later in Greece, Rome, and Western Asia), this mother goddess was regarded as the great symbol of the earth's fertility. As the creative force in nature she was worshipped under many names, including Astarte (Syria), Cybele (first in Phrygia, only later in Greece and Rome), Demeter (Greece), Ishtar (Babylon), and Isis (Egypt). The later forms of her cult involved the worship of a male deity (her son or lover, e.g., Adonis, Osiris), whose death and resurrection symbolized the regenerative power of the earth. In the 5th century B.C. the cult of Cybele spread to Greece and later to Rome. She was primarily a nature goddess, responsible for maintaining and reproducing the wild things of the earth. Her annual spring festival celebrated the death and resurrection of her beloved Attis, a vegetation god. However instead of resurrection in

with their counterparts, were itinerant missionary priests who moved widely through the Roman Empire, who were known in first century Palestine, who were engaged in fortune telling, shamanic, and in healing activities, then the contest between the cult and Christianity can hardly be missed²⁷⁹.

human form, the resurrection of Attis was in the form of a pine tree, symbolising the renewal of the Earth. This did not preclude Cybele from being called on to aid human childbirth and conception, many of the earlier images show her seated in a chair and giving birth. However the image most usually seen does not make childbirth evident. The Emperor Julian II wrote: "Who is then the Mother of the Gods? She is the source of the intellectual and creative gods, who in their turn guide the visible gods: she is both the mother and the spouse of mighty Zeus; She came into being next to and together with the great Creator; She is in control of every form of life, and the Cause of all generation; She easily brings to perfection all things that are made. Without pain, she brings to birth ... She is the Motherless Maiden, enthroned at the very side of Zeus, and in very truth is the Mother of All the Gods ..." (from an Oration to Cybele composed at Pessinus, AD 363). The myths associated with all these goddesses have a great deal in common, and this suggests that they have all to be treated as a single group. Involvement in childbirth is common to all of them. There would also be other reasons to call on Cybele during childbirth. The Kuretes and Dactyls were three, five, or nine rustic Daimones (Spirits) appointed by the Mother of the Gods to guard the infant god Zeus in a cave on Mount Ida in Crete. In order to keep him safely hidden from his cannibalistic father, the Titan Kronos (Cronus), they drowned out his cries with a frenzied dance involving clashing spears and shields. These Kouretes were gods of the wild mountainside however they were also the inventors of the arts of metalworking, shepherding, hunting and beekeeping. They were in addition considered to be the first armed warriors. The five Daktyloi ("fingers") were usually regarded as identical to the Kouretes. These also had an equal number of sisters named Hekaterides, who together appeared to have represented all ten fingers of the human hand. The male and female Daktyloi were also joined in marriage, which might be imagined as a harmonious "finger to finger" folding of the hands. From this union many others were born who represented gods and goddesses of trades or professions in ancient society. Appealing to Cybele during birth was not only a supplication for the successful delivery of the baby; it was also a portent for the protection of the child and success in future life. However none of these Goddesses and their cults seems to exist just to support maternal and fertility interests. All of them use gender and sex to disrupt and challenge the social order imposed by a male society and in the case of Cybele in particular, (but also with all of the other goddesses), the disreputability caused by that disruption, and the condemnations of sexual impropriety by the Gallae, may be used to argue that Cybele could not have had a role in human childbirth. However the great purity attributed to the Goddess Cybele herself suggests otherwise. The presence in the temple of only female and castrated male priests and priestesses who are following these ideals give a safe place for women to inhabit, but the cult of Cybele was never fully integrated into Roman Society and the protection she offered could have been more attractive to those who were not Roman Citizens, than to the citizens themselves. The existence of a self-castrated priesthood for all of these Goddess cults was not well accepted by Roman society, not just because of sexual abuse but because of the political and social challenges it made. However it was common to all of the cults, as was the practice of these priests offering themselves to men (as argued in this analysis) in order to channel the fertility of the Goddess to the lay population. That became a very profitable activity as is evident in Acts 19:24, it was horrific to Christianity and Judaism but when this is judged by the moral codes of Greco/Roman society, in principle that activity would not have been an immoral act.

²⁷⁹The seventy-two disciples (known in the Eastern Christian tradition as the Seventy Apostles) were early followers of Jesus who are mentioned in the Gospel of Luke 10:1–24. According to Luke, Jesus appointed them and sent them out in pairs ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. Like the disciples the Gallae engaged on similar missionary journeys and they also relied on the hospitality of their supporters. If the initial degree of common interest between Christianity and the cult of Cybele, the Great Mother is striking, their later condemnations of each other are no less extreme. Time and again, the Christian apologists cited the Gallae as representative of all they abhorred in pagan culture. Of all the behaviour of the Gallae, none horrified them more than the radical manner in which they transgressed the boundaries of gender. See Roscoe, Will. (2010) "Priests of the Goddess". (The full *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation"*.

3:1:8: Cultural Transformations

The closeness of the cult and the results of the neurophysiological and psychological studies considerations demand a reassessment of the attitude which Jesus took to the Cult of Cybele and the Gallae priests. The most obvious passage in this respect is that in Matthew 19:12 where Jesus declares that: “For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it”. (NRSV)²⁸⁰.

Jesus would have known about the cult of Cybele and about her Gallae priests. He also would have known the Old Testament passage in Isaiah 56²⁸¹ which gave those eunuchs who kept the law a high place within Jewish society. However these were Jewish eunuchs who had that condition forced upon them because of the acts of a dominant power. Jesus went much further than this when he declared that those who have instead made themselves eunuchs for the “Kingdom of heaven's sake” are also accepted into the same fold. With the high profile of the cult of Cybele and her Gallae priests it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that those of the Gallae who sought to live true to the ideals of both lives should be included in this as well. By implication this text acknowledged the duality in the behaviour of the Gallae, and that perception is in accord with the neurophysiological and psychological studies. This recognised the standing of these Gallae; and the commanding tone²⁸² which Jesus used in this text caused great difficulties for the early Church, who would also have known about the dualities within the cult's behaviour, and whose own gender challenging behaviour threatened the social order. That is unlike the later Church where all existence of that duality and the associated disruption is suppressed or is denied. It is also in line with first century perceptions of sexual morality, which was determined by responsibility of action, and by separating the sexual acts engaged in for the noble pursuit of love from those that were pursued for the carnal abuse of sex²⁸³. It has been shown that these requirements were not usually defined on a gendered basis, and it is also clear in this passage that Jesus makes the distinction on the grounds of intention, rather than any specific act. The cultural clashes in respect of anal penetration between Greco/Roman and Jewish societies would have caused great difficulty in accepting this statement within Judaism, and that is perhaps recognised when Jesus added the words “He that is able to receive it let him receive it” in the statement he made.

The same attitude of Jesus to the cultural divisions between the Greco/Roman and Judean societies is perhaps encapsulated in the story of the Centurion and his slave,

article with notes can be found in History of Religions 35(3) (1996): 295-330. A summary is available online at: <http://www.willsworld.org/priests.html>).

²⁸⁰ A further consideration of this is given in section 3:1:3 of this document.

²⁸¹ Isaiah 56:4-5. “For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off”. NRSV

²⁸² The third phrase in this statement implies that this is an active act and for the social culture of the time that statement was very direct. Those who opposed ritual castration had an uphill battle against them for there was little doubt about the authenticity of the text.

²⁸³ See Section 3:2:4 of this document

Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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which is given in Luke, Chapter 7:1-10 and in Matthew, Chapter 8:5-13. Some argue that this story provides an insight into the approach which Jesus took to homosexual and to same-sex relationships, but this story can also be looked at in a different way.

Centurions were provided with servants or slaves to satisfy their personal needs. To avoid compromising relationships in occupied countries these included the services of sexual satisfaction. That had to be accepted by the slave because he had no other option, but these were not consensual relationships, and they would not (normally) have been expressions of homosexual desire. The description in the Bible makes it clear that the Centurion cherished both his slave and he loved the Jewish nation. Although the bible in translation does not appear to discuss the full nature of the relationship between the Centurion and the slave, the Greek words which are used in the passage do strongly suggest that a physical relationship was expected²⁸⁴. The possibility of that does not appear to have been any concern to Jesus, who in Luke, Chapter 7, verse 9, praised the Centurion by saying "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." The importance of love and care is emphasized. One of the points which are made by this passage is that the moral integrity possessed by any individual within a particular society must be considered in accordance with the expectations of that society. Therefore an important element in this passage is in the ways in which it transcended the cultural differences between the two societies. By his acceptance of the Centurion, and from his almost certain knowledge of what the usual Greco/Roman practices were, it can be argued that Jesus was consenting to the acceptability of all such relationships when they are given and received in love.

The passages which are most often used to condemn gender and sexually variant behaviour are found in the epistles and the letters of Paul²⁸⁵. In Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10, Paul, makes use of the verses in Leviticus, as it is translated in the Greek Septuagint, when he coins²⁸⁶ the word "arsenokoitai"²⁸⁷, to describe those people who are engaged in heterosexual and same-sex promiscuity and prostitution as "Abusers of themselves with mankind". By linking his invented word directly to Leviticus he made it clear that the Jewish rather than the Greek view should be understood. This directly refers a first century reader back to the specific interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 which Jesus, John and Paul would have known, and which refers to anal penetration alone. The interpretation of this word is

²⁸⁴To understand why, it is necessary to look at the original Greek word for slave used by the writers of both gospels. Both Matthew and Luke use the Greek word pais to describe the Centurion's relationship with his orderly or slave. Pais and paidika were used by non Christian writers in New Testament times to refer to the younger partner in a same-sex relationship. However in the biblical Greek lexicons, pais just means "manservant, son, young man or maid," depending on context. A Centurion in occupied countries was discouraged or prevented from having sexual relationships with the local population. Providing sexual satisfaction was one of the duties of his slave, and any first century Jew, Greek or Roman who heard the word pais in this context would know precisely what the gospel writers meant.

²⁸⁵See also sections 3:1:2 and 3:6:1 of this account

²⁸⁶"Arsenokoitai" is a Greek word that appears to have been created by Paul when he was writing 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. No record remains of any writer having using the term before Paul. In the King James Version this has been translated as "abusers of themselves with mankind". If Paul wanted the meaning to be "homosexual" he could have used the Greek word, "paiderasste" instead

²⁸⁷The interpretation of the word "arsenokoitai" has been the subject of intense discussion. Many different ideas have been put forward but none of them significantly alter the purpose of the analysis given in this document.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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controversial. Without a clear definition of the word no absolute distinction between loving and abusive same-sex relationships can be made, or any firm interpretation of Paul's attitude to loving relationships can be established. The careful use of the word "arsenokoitai" strongly suggests that Paul condemns all same-sex actions where lust is the major motive, but it does not condemn those which are given in love. Paul was certainly targeting issues of rape, respectability and sexual immorality as these were understood from the Jewish and Christian standpoint - and from that point of view Paul's condemnation of the sexual behaviour of many people within Greco/Roman society was entirely correct. However for a clearer interpretation is necessary to look elsewhere. In contrast to Paul, Jesus was addressing the relationships within that same society which were built on love and respect and in his attitude to the Gallae priests and in the story of the Centurion and the slave, Jesus demonstrated that this did not demand any automatic or universal condemnation of those loving same-sex relationships which involve anal penetrative sex^{288 289}.

This is a challenging conclusion, which contradicts nearly two thousand years of the Church teaching, and a careful study is required. The context of these interpretations is also significant. If the Old Testament prohibitions of the Law in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 condemned all acts of anal penetration; then the coming of Jesus, in fulfilment of the Law, meant that judgements were no longer to be made in literal terms, using the words of the Jewish law, but from love and on the intention of the acts²⁹⁰. Under

²⁸⁸If any doubt remains about the purpose of this prohibition, then the attitudes taken within the Jewish tradition to sex with children should also be examined. See Gilchrist, S. (2011) "Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships". This makes it doubly clear that humiliation and its avoidance was the reason for the prohibition of anal penetrative sex.

²⁸⁹This analysis identifies three reasons for the prohibition of anal penetration. These were: first, the humiliation of an enemy or stranger through the use of same-sex rape: second, the disturbances to status and social order in a gender unequal society and third, the misuse of relationships for the gratification of lust and for the practice of safe sex. In situations where two people of the same sex are in loving, faithful and chaste relationship, only the second reason for prohibiting anal penetration remains. With all other types of sexual acts the distinction which is made between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is made by distinguishing between the motives of love and lust. In a society and in relationships where true gender equality exists is argued that the same rules should also apply to the anal penetrative act.

²⁹⁰The purpose of Jesus' life and work was to fulfil both the Law (the books of Moses) and the Prophets (other Old Testament books). He did not destroy the Old Testament and in Matthew 5:17-18 Jesus said: "'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.'" (NRSV). However changes were so dramatic that some laws were "set aside" or declared "obsolete" In Hebrews. 7:18-19 it is declared that "There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual (for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God."(NRSV); and in Hebrews 8:13 it states that "In speaking of "a new covenant," he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear" (NRSV). In Galatians 3:23-25 Paul describes some of the liberation that Jesus brought "Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith" (NRSV). In Ephesians 2:14-15 Paul declares, " For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace (NRSV). However the most relevant passage comes from Jesus himself in Matthew 22:37-40. "He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest

the New Covenant these acts are encapsulated in the Gospel of Christian Love, and the way in which the Jewish law should be interpreted under the New Covenant is described in Mark 7:1-23²⁹¹. When the passages on eunuchs and the Centurion are considered in this light it can be seen that the teaching of Jesus is entirely in line with that of the New Covenant. It is also in accordance with the first century attitudes to sexual behaviour that both Jesus and John would have known, and which demands responsibility in all sexual acts, and it defines the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in terms of the difference between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex, and here also, judgement is made on intentions, rather than the condemnation of any particular act. Instead of contradicting this approach as the traditional Church teachings on sexual and gender variance has done, these conclusions confirm the results of the neurophysiological and psychological analysis, where it is demonstrated that the gender and sexually variant conditions are identity driven and that as wide a range of moral views and expectations will be discovered among these gender and sexually variant communities as there are inside society at large.

By deciding to define all forms of gender and sexual variant behaviour as disordered and exclusively in pursuit of lust, promiscuity and inappropriate or immoral sex, the Christian Church has become caught inside a trap of its own making. The changes in society in the last sixty years have meant that many people have now met same-sex couples who are in loving and committed relationships, and they are able to observe the genuineness of these relationships and the strength of the love and faithfulness that is expressed. By maintaining its traditional doctrines on all forms of gender and sexual variant behaviour the Christian Church has been forced to interpret those passages in the bible which relate to these in ways which the Old Covenant dictates, and to apply their first century interpretations to modern life. This examination asks for no more than to ensure that Christian teaching on gender and sexual variance should no longer be determined by the prohibitions of the Old Covenant, but set by the opportunities of the New, and the statement by Jesus in Matthew 22:37-40 asks that all such judgements be made on commitment and love.

This is no permission for sexual licence. The rabbis imposed very strong sanctions on the abuses of sex. The same condemnation is echoed by the Christian Church, not only in the Apostolic Decree²⁹² of AD 50 but throughout the New Testament, and the distinctions between the relationships which are motivated by love and those for fornication and sexual abuse must clearly be made. However the examples which

and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

²⁹¹ The full text is quoted in section 3:5 of this document.

²⁹² The decree is considered to deal with the arguments as to whether Gentile converts had to be circumcised. In this Peter states: "Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood. For in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud every sabbath in the synagogues. (Acts 15:19–20 NRSV). Although the decree deals only with circumcision the same arguments can be applied to all forms of physical transformation, and that would apply to the Gallae Priests. For a full discussion on this in relation to Chapter 3: 2-12, see Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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are given by Jesus demonstrate that there is no automatic condemnation of gender or of sexually variant behaviour, including anal penetration, since any judgement on these must be made only on the intention of the acts.

The challenges which the Church faced in confronting the sexual behaviour and the sexual licence which was considered to be the privilege of a dominant society were enormous, and the sexual abuses which took place as a consequence of the ability to impose that authority had to be strongly condemned. That was an absolute priority for the Christian Church and therefore the importance of Paul's teaching on sexual immorality and on same-sex behaviour in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10, must never be underestimated. Because of his careful choice of words Paul skirts round applying these condemnations to loving and consensual sex.

There were many other condemnations of same-sex behaviour which were often of very great vehemence that came from within the Church. However these were not implemented within the civil ordinances as the Church demanded, either by the Roman Emperors or the later Carolingian Kings²⁹³ The resistance to change that the Christian Church encountered is a measure of the magnitude of the problems which it faced in transforming the sexual culture of Greco/Roman society, and through the intensity of these battles it is not surprising that any sense of these dualities were lost. That is what now must be restored.

This analysis asks as many questions about the sexual and moral cultures adopted by the gender and sexually variant communities as it does about the rest of society. However there should be no mandatory prohibitions enforced on any type of loving sexual behaviour between any two people, who are of the same or of different sexes, who seek to live their lives in committed, loving and faithful partnerships with each other, who yearn for the affirmation of the Church on this love and commitment so that they can celebrate the full intensity, joy and sanctity of their relationships with

²⁹³It is usually assumed that where the church leads, then society will follow. The first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great (272-337), would have been expected to take actions which favoured the Christian tradition, however as far as sexuality is concerned no action was taken. In the year 342 the Christian emperors Constantius II and Constans, declared the death penalty for a male who aped the role of a bride. From the year 390, the Christian emperors Valentinian II, Theodosius I and Arcadius denounced males who were "acting the part of a woman", condemning those who were guilty of such acts to be publicly burned. This was of little advance since these actions only increased the penalties for a submissive citizen and left the dominant citizen untouched. Slaves were still exempt, and a male Roman Citizen could still penetrate any man of lower status without penalty, as he wished. Social resistance and the problem of legislating for intent rather than action may have delayed any change. However the extreme weather events of 535–536 caused major disruption and this may have created a situation in which changes could be made. The Roman Emperor Justinian (ca 488 - 565), in amendments to his Novels No.77 (dating 538) and No.141 (dating 559), declared that the sin of Sodomy was specifically due to same-sex activities and the desire for them. Justinian also decreed that the "famines, earthquakes, and pestilences" which had fallen upon cities had been due to "such crimes". This was the first Roman legal assignment of the term sodomy to these activities. Therefore homosexuals and others who were engaged in same-sex activities were made the scapegoats for the disturbances. The Emperor engaged in a series of pogroms to ensure that uniformity was imposed. In his decree in 535 A.D. he outlawed both passive and active same-sex behaviour, when it was carried out between Roman Citizens, and he imposed the penalty of capital punishment on both partners. However in 538 A.D. he changed the penalty of death for this behaviour to penance instead. Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". See footer for access.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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the unreserved support of the Church, and with the fullest knowledge that they can truly live their lives together in the Love of Christ.

3:1:9 Celibacy

This analysis also shows that there were two principal philosophies of celibacy which could be adopted. One was the celibacy that was associated with that of the mystery religions (which included in particular the cult of Cybele)²⁹⁴. This call of celibacy was for the total devotion to duty, but it was not for negation of sex²⁹⁵. The second model of celibacy was the one which was associated with the Neo-Platonists²⁹⁶, and this form excluded involvement in all sexual passion, which included sensual thoughts of any type.

However there is no tradition of any lifelong celibacy within Judaism to be followed. The celibacy advocated by Jesus in the Gospels was the call of the devotion to duty and this was to ensure that the distractions of marriage and family life would be avoided²⁹⁷. Strong moral values were upheld, however there was no attention given

²⁹⁴ See also section 3:3:1 of this document.

²⁹⁵ About half of the Greek and Roman Goddesses were virgins. Their authority could not be sullied or reduced by any act of male penetration, and this was one of the arguments for the castration of the male Gallae priests. Celibate eunuch priests could be given an even higher reverence than that given to any voluntary celibates, because of the sacrifice of their actions, and the knowledge that they could not stray from that path. They could however be anally penetrated but they could not climax, therefore all male rewards were removed. The issue of temple prostitution is a complex topic. Some may have taken advantage of their situation entirely for the misuse of sex, but there were other reasons for eunuch priests to offer themselves to men for anal penetration. It could be a method of transmitting the blessings of the virgin goddess to laymen who were seeking fertility in their own reproductive lives. Within the moral values of Greco/Roman society this would be a positive act.

²⁹⁶ Some of the early Fathers recognized a Christian element in Plato, and ascribed to him a kind of prophetic relationship towards Christianity. Clement of Alexandria calls his philosophy "A sort of preliminary discipline for those who lived before the coming of Christ," and he adds, "Perhaps we may say it was given to the Greeks with this special object; for philosophy was to the Greeks what the law was to the Jews, -a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ (cf. Strom., I, v.-xx.; Ante Nicene Fathers, ii. Online at: http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=1968&Itemid=27). "The Platonic dogmas," says Justin Martyr, "are not foreign to Christianity. If we Christians say that all things were created and ordered by God, we seem to enounce a doctrine of Plato; and, between our view of the being of God and his, the article appears to make the only difference" (cf. II Apol., xiii. Access via: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01>) However it is important to note that, while the attitudes associated with Neo-Platonism were adopted there was considerable criticism of Plato's philosophies themselves.

²⁹⁷ The biblical arguments which were used to justify celibacy came from a range of texts. For example in Luke 9: 59-62 and Matthew 8: 21- 22 it is written that Jesus: "Said to another man, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family." Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." And in Mark 3 31-35 it is written "Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you." "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother". And in Matthew 19:27 where Peter said "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" And Jesus, in Luke 14:26.says: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even their own life, such a person cannot be my disciple". And in Matthew 10:34-37 and Luke 12:51-53 it is also written. "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".*

to sexual acts. Marriage was considered to be second best. This Christian celibacy was a call of duty which more closely matched the celibacy that was associated with the Greco/Roman mystery and goddess religions, but by the time of Augustine and the fourth century church the different Neo-Platonic form of celibacy had come to be imposed on all priests and religious in the church²⁹⁸.

Apart from Jesus and John, all of the other Apostles are understood to have married. In Judaism everybody, including rabbis and priests, were strongly expected to marry and have children, to fulfil the commandment given in Genesis 1:28 to populate the world²⁹⁹. Nevertheless a temporary continence would be encouraged when there were particular religious duties to fulfil, and that seems to have been the attitude of the Apostles themselves³⁰⁰. The transition between this celibacy of duty towards the Neo-Platonic form could have been achieved by adding the extra functions; one of these being the lifelong commitment, the second being the negative attitude to sex taken by the fourth century Church^{301 302 303}. The Canons of the Councils of Ancyra

For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies will be the members of his own household. Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me". "You have heard that it was said: 'You shall not commit adultery'". But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28). In what Jesus says about celibacy (Matthew 19:12), he points out that, in the Christian community, besides the use of natural good things, there is renunciation for the sake of the Gospel. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven" (Matthew 22:30).

²⁹⁸In the fourth century, Augustine helped to revive many of Plato's concepts on the unnatural union of the human body and the soul in his efforts to down-play the importance of sensual pleasure. Augustine is credited with merging his Manichaeanistic, good against evil leanings with Plato's worldview to give the Christian world a negative attitude toward the human body specifically and sex in general. However he intensified an already existing trend.

²⁹⁹ Genesis 1:28: God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

³⁰⁰ Judaism has no history of celibacy for its leaders, including rabbis and priests and it was almost obligatory for Rabbis and Priests to be married. Before the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, Priests and Levites were required to practice continence (abstain from sexual intercourse with their wives) before and during their time of service at the temple. They were permitted to resume marital relations after completing their service. Some sects did practice celibacy in anticipation of the imminent coming of the Messiah, but celibacy was not a rule for the Apostles. Peter was married and his wife suffered martyrdom. Pope Clement I wrote: "For Peter and Philip begat children". Other Apostles are understood to have been married and, according to Clement of Alexandria, their wives travelled with the apostles "Not as wives, but as sisters, in order to minister to housewives". During missionary journeys it seems that the Apostles were considered to have practiced continence, but not at other times. Such a practice would have been entirely consistent with the requirements for the Jewish priests. (See: Clement of Alexandria: Ante-Nicene Fathers 2.390, 391 (c. 195). Accessed at: [http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/early-church-fathers/ante-nicene/.](http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/early-church-fathers/ante-nicene/))

³⁰¹ See section 3:3:1 in this document

³⁰² In a Church which had learned to embrace the gender discrimination and polarisation which was inherent in Greco/Roman society, the ascetic doctrines of Neo-Platonism, at least to some people, seemed to be a more appropriate way of interpreting the Gospel of Christ. Augustine was fond of saying that his Platonist God "is never disturbed by any passions." Neo-Platonism had freed Augustine from his materialism, and it had convinced him of the reality of an unseen world. He wrote "Let Thales depart with his water, Anaximenes with the air, the Stoics with their fire, Epicurus with his atoms." Augustine is often perceived as the primary crusader for Neo-Platonism but he was only the latest in a line of advocates. Earlier Christian philosophers, such as Justin and Athenagoras had attempted to connect Christianity with Platonism and the teachings of Ambrose had also influenced

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014
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and Elvira show how much things had changed during the first three hundred years of the Church³⁰⁴

There were significant differences between the two approaches. The celibacy called for by Jesus required transcendence of the distractions of sex. It called for a single-minded devotion to the Gospel message, but this need not prohibit the celebration of those sexual relationships and intimacies which were given and received in love. The Neo-Platonic form of celibacy denied any possibility of that transcendence by its total suppression of all sexual thoughts and acts.

3:2 Gender and Sexual Variation in the Early Church

3:2:1 Transgender Relationships and Marriage

In section 3:1:8 it is indicated that the statement on eunuchs in Matthew 19:3-12 is a very direct statement which connected³⁰⁵ Christianity with those of Gallae priests who transcended the gender divisions of society through embracing a morality which sought to be true to the ideals of both lives. However the worship of the Christian gender transcendent god meant that their acts of physical transformation were no longer required, although these were not prohibited by Jesus in this text. The close conjunction of the statements on marriage and eunuchs in Matthew 19: 3-12 strongly suggests that these two statements should be considered together. Both of them are included in the same sentence; the directly equivalent form of words is also used, and the Jewish midrashic tradition of interpretation imposes a very careful structuring and analysis of any biblical text. In regard to marriage, the usual interpretation³⁰⁶ that is given to this passage declares that Jesus considered that marriage should be treated as a “Second best” option, and the same close relationship between these two statements further implies that those people “Who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven” and the coupling with: “He that is able to receive it let him receive it”, should be treated in the same way³⁰⁷. Therefore

Augustine’s thoughts. Although he later moved away from Neo-Platonism, it had grounded the framework of his thinking which would reinforce and consolidate this type of Christian ascetic approach. (see: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014).”Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”

³⁰³Whitburn, Merrill. (2000). Chapter 4. “Christianity, Science and the Victory of Philosophy” in “Rhetorical Scope and Performance: The Example of Technical Communication.” Greenwood Publishing, 2000 ISBN1567505155, 9781567505153

³⁰⁴ See section 3:3:1 of this document

³⁰⁵ See Gilchrist, S. 2012. “Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”

³⁰⁶ This term is the author’s own but it is implicit in almost all scholarship and in the bible texts. See for example: Deming, Will (2004) “Paul on Marriage & Celibacy” Publisher: William B Eerdmans Publishing Co. ISBN 13: 9780802839893 ISBN 10: 0802839894

³⁰⁷ These issues caused very real difficulties for the early church. The most relevant passage in the Bible which describes the attitude of Jesus to celibacy and ritual castration is that in Matthew 19:12 which states “For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it”. The third phrase in this statement implies that this is an active act and for the social culture of the time that statement was very direct. Those who opposed ritual castration had an uphill battle against them for there was little doubt about the authenticity of the text. Throughout Christian and European history there have been many who took and taught these statements literally. They include Valentinus
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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this action too should likewise be regarded as another “Second best” approach. Modern interpretations attempt to construe that this reference to eunuchs is limited to an exhortation by Jesus for people not to marry, to abstain from sexual intercourse, or just to embrace a celibate life. However this interpretation ignores the widespread endorsement in the surrounding first century cultures of the act of self castration as an expression of supreme religious devotion, together with the major problems which its continued practice would cause throughout the early church^{308 309}. The eunuchs who kept the Law were given a high place in Jewish society (see Isaiah 56:4-5) and it was considered that Deuteronomy 22:5 only prohibited acts of cross dressing for unapproved purposes or for deceit³¹⁰. Thus just as it is with the transgressive body of the eunuch in the New Testament which symbolizes the Kingdom of God, and who is charged with bringing its mission to the world, then like the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts (Acts 8:26-40), those transgendered people^{311 312} who use the breadth and

(whose sect was declared heretical in the mid-second century), Julius Cassianus (declared heretical in the mid-second century), Basilides (also declared heretical in the early-second century), Leontios of Antiochia, (Bishop of Jerusalem, late-fourth century), Melito “the Eunuch” (ca. late-second century), Hilarion (mid-fourth century), Marcarius “the Egyptian (late 4th century) and Origen (also declared heretical in the early-third century). These people are among the most famous of thousands that chose ritual castration. This perception was not confined to the Gnostic or fringe movements, it became a major issue in the early church. The earliest report of the desire for castration among Christians comes from the second century writings of Justin. Self-castration was a widely practiced and it was an ancient expression of religious devotion throughout the Middle East. Several early Christian encratite and ascetic movements (centred mainly in Egypt) are known to have members who were eunuchs. The cloisters of Egypt and Syria were centres of self castration, and Coptic monasteries continued to perform castration well into the Islamic period. Indeed, the criminalization of eunuchs in the church at the Council of Nicaea is testimony to the degree to which self castration was practiced. For the full account see Gilchrist, S .2012. “Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”.³⁰⁸ Hester, J. David, (2005) “Eunuchs and the Postgender Jesus: Matthew 19:12 and Transgressive Sexualities” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* September 2005 28: 13-40, Interfakultäres Zentrum für Ethik in den Wissenschaften, Tübingen Centre for Hermeneutics and Rhetorics, California. Accessed at www.spirituality.org.za/files/Eunuch.pdf 23 July 2012

³⁰⁹This was the subject of the first Canon in the Canons of the Council of Nicaea: Canon 1: Castration among the clergy: “If anyone due to sickness has undergone a surgical operation, or if he has been castrated by barbarians, he is allowed to remain among the clergy. But if anyone enrolled among the clergy has castrated himself when in perfect health, it is good for him to leave the ministry. From now on, no such person should be promoted to the clergy. But since this applies only to those who wilfully castrate themselves, if anyone has been made a eunuch by barbarians, or by his master, and is otherwise fit for office, church law admits him to the clergy”.

³¹⁰ The Jewish concerns in Deuteronomy 22:5 are not about creating or reinforcing gender differences but in preventing the gender associations of clothing, or possibly body hair from being used to deceive others for purposes leading to sexual immorality, or to dishonest behaviour. Every interpretation condemns cross dressing for dishonest or destructive action or to condemn the practice in other cults. None of them prohibit it for just purpose. In the ancient world no literal interpretation has ever been applied to this passage and it is rightly put in the section of the Holiness Code in Leviticus which deals with deceit. For a full discussion and an account of the various interpretations see Gilchrist, S .2012. “Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church”.

³¹¹ In the Apostolic Church gender was contested as a “natural” category because of the transcendent power of God’s Spirit at work in the community and the world. Therefore early Christianity challenged gender in every way. Unlike the requirements for physical castration that was demanded by the Goddess religions this action was no longer required, but many Christian men still continued to self castrate as an act of extreme devotion. Origen was the most notable of these, but there were also many others. In early Christianity a woman’s identity and spirituality could also be developed separately from her roles as wife and mother (or slave), whether she actually withdrew from those roles or not. This meant that women and men could equally exercise leadership in the Church on the basis of spiritual achievement alone. That was apart from their gender status. However this attitude

range of their experiences to embrace and enrich the ideals of both lives may participate in that priestly act.

3:2:2 Homosexuality and Same-Sex Relationships

A major problem with labels is that they can force people to think along certain lines. Homosexuality³¹³ was first defined in 1869 as a description of identity or orientation

also contravened what were regarded as the “respectable” division of gender roles in a male dominated patriarchal society. (See for example King, Karen (1998) “Women In Ancient Christianity: The New Discoveries”. Accessed 27 March 2013 at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/women.html>.)

³¹² Christian examples of male to female transgendered people are hard to come by because gender reassignment in that direction would become so suppressed by the later Church. However there is much more evidence of transgender behaviour in the female to male direction. The early Church sought to transcend all divisions of gender and the nature of this type of transgender influence may be due more to the growth of gender discrimination within the Church because of the ways it sought to gain respectability by conforming to the polarised gender role expectations of a male dominated Greco/Roman society. Thus, for example saying 114 in the Gospel of Thomas reads: “Simon Peter said to them, “Make Mary leave us, for females don't deserve life.” Jesus said, “Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven.” Most scholars now tend to attribute an early date to the Gospel of Thomas. (See: <http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html>). One of the most famous woman leaders was Thecla, a virgin-martyr who was converted by Paul. She cut her hair, donned men's clothing, and took up the duties of a missionary traveller. Threatened with rape, prostitution, and twice put in the ring as a martyr, she persevered in her faith and her chastity. Her lively and somewhat fabulous story is recorded in the second century Acts of Paul and Thecla, The importance of such stories lies in their acceptance and not necessarily their absolute truth. (As at the 25 February 2013 the text of the acts can be accessed at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/primary/thecla.html>). During the second and third centuries gender discrimination continued to increase and it was considered that fourth century female mystics could only achieve salvation and redemption if they rejected every aspect of their femininity. Even then redemption could only be gained in heaven and not on earth. Therefore even if male to female transgender behaviour was considered abhorrent by the second third and fourth centuries it was positively encouraged in the female to male direction. The idea that women had to have an instant sex change when they die in order to enter heaven as men was commonly held in the Church. Had the surgical possibilities present day female to male gender reassignment been available to the second third and fourth Century Church one wonders what might have happened! Thus for women gender reassignment for entry to heaven was an ideal to be achieved but it could only come after death, in order to protect the authority of a male church hierarchy in a male dominated society. That attitude towards reassignment for entry to heaven was not held by all, and others concluded that because lust and sexuality was absent gender differentiation failed to matter at all after death. In the meantime on earth women could only redeem their lives through childbirth, obedience or by renouncing all aspects of their femininity. On earth they could only wait in penance for the sins of Eve until heaven, when the day of gender reassignment, or freedom from gender comes.

³¹³ The first appearance of the word homosexual in a printed document is found in an 1869 German pamphlet by the Austrian-born novelist Karl-Maria Kertbeny, which was published anonymously. In 1879, Gustav Jäger used Kertbeny's description in his book, *Discovery of the Soul* (1880). However “homosexuality” as originally defined by Kertbeny simply meant a sexual drive directed toward persons of the same sex. In 1886, Richard von Krafft-Ebing used the terms and distinguished between homosexual and heterosexual in his book *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886). These terms were probably borrowed from Jäger. (See: http://www.glbtc.com/social-sciences/kertbeny_km.html accessed 4 January 2013). Krafft-Ebing's book was so popular among both layman and doctors that the terms “heterosexual” and “homosexual” became the most widely accepted terms for sexual orientation. Krafft-Ebing considered procreation the purpose of sexual desire and that any form of recreational sex was a perversion of the sexual drive. He presented four categories of what he called “cerebral neuroses” in *Psychopathia Sexualis*. The consequence of this was to expand the definition *Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.*

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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only but the definition soon came to include the behaviour and the relationships between two people who were driven by the desire for sexual relationships with other people of the same sex. A major consequence of this together with the influence of the pervading Christian culture was the loss of the idea that these relationships could be sought for love instead of sex.

Any first century reader of this account would not have understood what the current definitions of homosexuality or transsexuality meant³¹⁴. At that time the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour was determined on the responsibility of each action, and by separating sexual acts which were engaged in for the noble pursuit of love from those which were pursued for the carnal abuse of sex. Instead of defining the moralities of sexual relationships through the types of act, the distinctions were made on the motives involved³¹⁵. Different words were used to define the different types of love, but they were not used on a gendered basis. These cultural differences create problems of description within an account which is intended for a present day readership. Therefore the terms homosexuality and transsexuality will still continue to be used, but that is to ensure that this account can be made most relevant to the present day understanding. Thus these cultural transformations must be understood.

If the first century attitudes to homosexuality and to transgender issues are to be correctly understood it is essential to separate the sexual aspects of these into three largely independent components. These are, first; the acts of anal penetration, second; the relationships that are given in love and third; those activities which are engaged in for illicit or for promiscuous sex. During the New Testament period the Jewish attitudes to homosexual and to same-sex relationships were very different from many Christian and Jewish attitudes which are found today. These outlooks regarded the expression of love between any two people (including people of the same sex) as being positive and the passages in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 which today are used by many to condemn all homosexual behaviour were considered in Judaism in the first century to prohibit only anal penetrative sex³¹⁶. The cross cultural

of homosexuality in popular perception from a term which originally was used to describe identity only to one which included the desire for and the practice of sexual relationships between two people of the same sex. Freud appears to have been undecided whether or not homosexuality was pathological, expressing different views on this issue at different times and places in his work. The transfer of definition from orientation to relationships is clearly evident in the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, which states: "Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved." Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997

³¹⁴ For a fuller account see Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships".

See footer for access.

³¹⁵ See section 3:2:3 of this document

³¹⁶ The Hebrew interpretation takes a very specific view but it is quoted widely in the literature and the meaning of the text appears clear. It is cited in the Babylonian Talmud and it was reaffirmed in the Conservative Judaism's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards in America in December 2006. It is Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

implications are discussed in section 3:1:8 of this document. Significantly no other physical sexual acts between two men were forbidden and that includes oral sex.

3:2:3 Same-Sex Love

In Greek and Roman literature discussion about the expressions of love between two people virtually always presumed that both people were men. Therefore the issues concerned with celibacy and the expression of same-sex relationships were closely intertwined. However there were wide variations of permitted practice across similar cultures and even between the individual philosophers and the different city states. Aristotle believed its practice was useful for population control. Plato considered that the love between two men was the highest form of love. However Plato also argued for the sublimation of all of the passions of sex for a better pursuit of the goals of knowledge and enlightenment. In his view these were distractions that had to be avoided. This type of asceticism was later developed by the Neo-Pythagoreans and others into the models of celibacy which regarded as impure not only the practice of sex, but all of the passions which were associated with it. In contrast to this rejection Judaism instead encouraged the expression of same-sex intimacies for the depths of understanding, the robustness of the discussions; the senses of purpose and the strength of commitment they brought. These differences would set the doctrines of celibacy along their very different trajectories.

Today the Christian vocation of celibacy is considered to apply only to individuals. However in Greek and Jewish society, study partnerships between two men in a close relationship with each other could be even more highly valued for the greater degree of intellectual rigour, commitment and the challenges with which each partner could test the other's arguments. As these cultures did not recognise the limitations of the present day labels, no distinctions between the legitimacies of heterosexual and of homosexual feelings were made. These partnerships could also be seen to be the fulfilment of the call of duty which was associated with individual celibacy, since the distractions of marriage and family were likewise avoided³¹⁷.

Talmudic study in Judaism traditionally used Chavruta³¹⁸ partnerships, where pairs of students worked together to learn, discuss and to debate a shared text. The rabbis in the academies repeatedly encouraged their students to adopt ever increasing degrees of intimacy. No rules for Chavruta partnerships are encountered which establish any boundaries which approve of strong heterosexual friendships on the one hand, and also disapprove of homosexual relationships on the other. A more

also cited by Josephus in "Against Apion"; and by Philo in "Abraham". These latter two sources were contemporary with Jesus and Paul: This is the interpretation which Jesus and Paul would have known and this interpretation would have guided the actions of the early Christian Church.

³¹⁷ See Section 3:1:9 in this document

³¹⁸ Chavruta, which is also spelled chavrusa or havruta comes from the Aramaic word for "friendship" or "companionship". It is a traditional rabbinic approach to Talmudic study in which pairs of students independently learn, discuss and debate a shared text. It is a primary learning method in yeshivas and kollels. The traditional phrase is to learn b'chavruta (i.e. in partnership). The word has come to refer to the two study partners as a single individual, though it is logical to describe them as a pair. In modern Orthodox parlance, a chavruta always refers to two students, but Reform Judaism has expanded the idea of chavruta to include study groups of up to five individuals.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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extended analysis of this topic is given elsewhere³¹⁹. In the Avot de-Rabbi Hathan for example it is recommended that a partner should be someone with whom one can “eat and drink, read and study, sleep, and share secrets of the Torah and personal secrets”³²⁰. Throughout all of the first Century Greek, Roman and Jewish societies the boundaries placed between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour were not primarily determined by the biological features, they were instead established to separate the noble pursuits of love from the carnal misuses of sex. Responsible behaviour and a committed relationship were also required but loving same-sex or homosexual relationships which possessed an equivalent degree of attachment to those of heterosexual relationships could be endorsed provided the correct social boundaries were met³²¹.

A question of particular interest is how far these acts of expression in Judaism could be taken. The answer from the bible and rabbinic sources is that all sexual acts were permissible apart from that of anal penetrative sex. However even though the rabbis encouraged expression of same-sex relationships within the correct circumstances, they also strongly concerned about their misuse³²². Thus anal penetration was the boundary that could not be crossed, and those people who offended against this could be harshly condemned for a “lack of respect”³²³. The absolute horror of the threat of same-sex rape being carried out on the Israelites by the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah is very clearly expressed in the Jewish texts. Despite these strong concerns, those same-sex relationships which were the expressions of love inside chavruta partnerships were understood to enhance rather than diminish the sanctity of the relationships. Many of these chavruta partnerships would have simply

³¹⁹ Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”.

³²⁰ See Maimonide’s commentary on the Mishnah, Avot 1:6 aseh lekha rav

³²¹ See Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”. The prohibition of anal same sex intercourse was made to preserve social order in gender unequal societies where same-sex rape was considered an instrument of humiliation, where married women were treated as the property of their husbands and where women were not regarded as having any personal rights. In today’s western societies where men and women are treated equally and in situations where the relations between any two people are given to each other in love and faithfulness, these rabbinic arguments disappear. Judaism questions the purpose and applies two meanings to any biblical text. The first is the original meaning and the second is what the text means within the current situation. In same-sex relationships which are given in love in a gender equal society should be no prohibition of anal penetrative sex.

³²² The four main reasons for the rabbinic opposition rely on the need to preserve social order and their interpretations of other bible texts. The first argument is that same-sex relationships cannot result in procreation, and that the bible considers this to be the focus of the sexual act. Having children was of great importance in the Jewish tradition and the avoidance of reproductive consequences could also lead to prostitution and promiscuous acts. The second reason was stability in marriage: in a society where arranged and early marriages were the normal practice the sexuality of each of the partners was not taken into account, therefore the condemnation of all homosexual behaviour was a way of ensuring that the marriage remained intact. The third reason was the disruption of the social order: in a society where men and women are treated unequally the gender based power structure is broken by homosexual and transgender acts. The fourth reason comes from the debasement of citizenship and the use of same-sex rape to humiliate a beaten enemy.

³²³ The word chavruta, like marriage, came to be used in the singular to describe two people in a relationship. The Talmud (Yevamot 62b) states that 12,000 pairs (sic) of students of Rabbi Akiva ben Joseph (ca.50–ca.135 AD) died of plague between Passover and Shavuot, “because they did not treat one another with respect”. The context of the passage indicates that each pair of students formed a chavruta. The text also implies that this plague was diphtheria, but this may be a disguise for sexual misbehaviour, and for the massacres that took place after the Jewish Revolt in 70 A.D. Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

developed into strong heterosexual friendships, but intimate same-sex relationships could also be fostered within them, and it is reported that the bonds between these same sex partners may often be stronger than those in a heterosexual marriage.

In Jewish history the Zugot period lasted from about 515 BC to about 70 AD. The term zugot simply refers to pairs. This was a time when Jewish religious leadership was in the hands of successive pairs of male teachers, and deep male pair bonding could occur³²⁴. Expressions of intense same-sex affection were very familiar to the rabbis at the time of Jesus and in the early Christian era, and it is necessary to consider what the appropriate behaviour would be within any first century rabbinic relationship³²⁵. The rabbinic partnership would have to be seen as a fully committed, responsible and ethical relationship between the two people who would also relate to each other as equals. Judaism dictated that there must be no anal penetration. However all other types of sexual acts and expressions of love and intimacy could be accepted since no other physical sexual acts between two men are forbidden, either in Jewish law and teachings, or within the bible itself.

3:2:5 Adelphopoiesis or “Brother Making”

For many centuries the Christian church had conducted services of fraternisation, or “Brother making”³²⁶ which imposed requirements that were identical to these rabbinic partnerships. The liturgies of these services from both the Roman and the Byzantine

³²⁴ The Babylonian Talmud (Pesachim 109b-112a) contains an extensive discussion of dangers of zugot and of performing various activities in pairs.

³²⁵ The full argument is presented in Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”. However Greenberg, Steven; (2004) “Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition” The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3 gives a very complete account. Wrestling with God and Men is the product of Rabbi Steven Greenberg's ten-year struggle to reconcile his homosexuality with Orthodox Judaism. Employing traditional rabbinic resources, Greenberg presents readers with relevant biblical interpretations of the creation story, the love of David and Jonathan, the destruction of Sodom, and the condemning verses of Leviticus. But Greenberg goes beyond the question of whether homosexuality is biblically acceptable to ask how such relationships can be sacred. In so doing, he draws on a wide array of nonscriptural texts to introduce readers to occasions of same-sex love in Talmudic narratives, medieval Jewish poetry and prose, and to traditional Jewish case law literature.

³²⁶ The Greek term for the ceremony was Adelphopoiesis. In a criticism of Boswell, Viscuso writes “It is beyond dispute that there are rites for adelphopoiesis contained in Byzantine manuscripts which date from the ninth to the 15th century. The ceremony was conducted by a priest for two males in church, and contained symbols common to Byzantine marriage rites including holding candles, joining hands, receiving Communion, and processing three times around a table used in the celebration”. Viscuso goes on to describe the five stages of a byzantine marriage. These stages are engagement, marriage contract, betrothal, and crowning. Engagement and the signing of the marriage contract were civil actions. Betrothal is the first religious step in the procedures of matrimony, nearly equivalent to marriage, but it is not the same as the completed union. Viscuso states that “After betrothal, spouses were required to exhibit fidelity, but could not enjoy the positive rights of marriage, such as nuptial relations.” He also states that “The effects of betrothal on relations of kinship were similar to those of complete marriage”. Crowning also took place in at least some of these ceremonies which gave rise to Boswell's suggestion that these were marriages in all but name. However Viscuso considers that the commitments were as complete as those which were embraced in a complete marriage. The full account is given in Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”. See also: Viscuso, Patrick (1994) New Oxford Review. December 1994, Volume LXI, Number 10 and Boswell, John. (1995) “Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe”. Vintage Books, 1995 ISBN 0679751645, 9780679751649
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churches have survived. These liturgies date from between the 9th to the 15th centuries but the ceremony itself is believed to have been conducted from very early in the life of the church, with anecdotal evidence from the 4th Century also being available. These relationships were made between two people as equals. They were not perceived as marriages. Anal penetration was not endorsed and there was no marriage contract, but other expressions of intimacy could be permitted. Many of the religious symbols and declarations that were used in the services mirrored those of marriage, and the full social and legal commitments of marriage were embraced. However any suggestion that these relationships were a form of same-sex marriage would have been an anathema to these earlier societies, but that was for different reasons from those which are understood today. Until very recently marriage was seen as a sacramental contract which bound the woman to a husband as his property, and in a gender unequal society any idea of a same-sex marriage was a non-starter for this reason alone. Rather than proto-marriages, these relationships are better seen as the extension of first century rabbinic partnerships which have been carried over into the Christian Church.

Paradoxically in today's gender equal societies these services of fraternisation are closer to the present day understanding of marriage than the traditional views. The principal area of difference would seem to be that of anal penetration. Nevertheless Judaism also questions the purpose and applies two meanings to any biblical text. The first is the original meaning and the second is what the text means within the current situation. Therefore in the Western societies of today, in which all men and women are treated equally, and when loving, committed, responsible and faithful same-sex relationships can be entered into without any humiliation being involved³²⁷ all of the arguments in the bible for the prohibition of anal penetration in such loving relationships disappear. That is supported by the teaching of Jesus, as described in section 3:1:8 of this document. Thus in all same-sex relationships, which are given in love and commitment within a gender equal society, there should be no prohibition of any act involving anal penetrative sex³²⁸. Neither should there be any condemnation of this activity by the Church.

³²⁷ This account identifies three reasons for the prohibition of anal penetration. These were: first, the humiliation of an enemy or stranger through the use of same-sex rape: second, the disturbances to status and social order in a gender unequal society and third, the misuse of relationships for the gratification of lust and for the practice of safe sex. In situations where two people of the same sex are in loving, faithful and chaste relationship, only the second reason for prohibiting anal penetration remains. With all other types of sexual acts the distinction which is made between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is made by distinguishing between the motives of love and lust. It is argued that the same rules should also apply to that act. If any doubt remains about the purpose of this prohibition, then the attitudes taken within the Jewish tradition to sex with children should also be examined. See Gilchrist, S. (2011) "Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships". This makes it doubly clear that humiliation and its avoidance was the reason for the prohibition of anal penetrative sex.

³²⁸ Today in societies where gender and social inequality between men and women still exists the reasons for the restriction on anal penetration continue to apply, and they are imposed with considerable force. However this is for social reasons which remain cloaked with the canopies of religious belief. In Western societies where gender and sexual discrimination is outlawed and has largely vanished, many of the social prohibitions which a gender unequal society once used to maintain its social structure have disappeared. Thus there is now no reason for the prohibition of anal penetration in loving relationships within gender equal societies. However this condemnation remains of strong importance in societies where gender discrimination is still practiced and it contributes to the severe divisions which now threaten to split the Church.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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This acceptance has not happened. What is considered to be the sinfulness of these same-sex relationships is still powerfully condemned by the traditions of the Church, which argues strongly that these ceremonies of Adelphopoiesis were adoption relationships or blood-brother pacts; and that they involved no element whatever of sex³²⁹. Perhaps many were like this and a wide variety of these relationships did exist. However that argument can only be sustained if it is presumed that the Neo-Platonic attitudes to celibacy and to same-sex relationships had always been applied, for this doctrine alone prohibited the practice of every type of same-sex act. However it is also demonstrated in this account that this Neo-Platonic approach only later came to be adopted by the Christian Church. The celibacy which Jesus instead called for was the call of duty and the only Jewish embargo on the practice of any same-sex act was specifically confined to anal penetrative sex³³⁰. These ceremonies could easily have been services which were used to bless vibrant and loving same-sex relationships. They also applied the appropriate legal commitments and the relationships of kinship were recognised. Mantzouneas notes that instead of the expressions of mother-in-law, terms such as cross-mother were used³³¹. If the call by Jesus to the celibacy of duty is not to be followed then, in the same way as that of marriage and transgendered relationships, these same-sex relationships could also be regarded as being “Second Best”. Equally, instead of singly and in celibacy; both partners who are in loving relationships with each other can also devote their lives without the restrictions of family and kinship to spreading the Gospel of Christ. So within the “pairs” culture of first century Jewish society and the recognition of the fruitfulness of interactive study; that would be regarded as a positive act.

3:3 Respectability and Disconnection

3:3:1 Changes in the Church

These first century attitudes to the expression of homosexual relationships and to transgender issues are clearly very different from the perceptions which are now regarded as the traditional teaching of the Church. This is seen in the massive turnaround from the outlook of the Gospel Church to the one that is described in the Councils of Elvira³³² and of Ancyra³³³, which took place in the years 306 and 314. The Councils preceded first Council of Nicaea by only a short time the. This was held in AD 325, and it was the event which marked the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the state. These councils imposed specific rules of celibacy on everyone who served either as religious or as priests. Canon 27 of the Council of Elvira declares: “A bishop or other cleric may have only a sister or a daughter who is

³²⁹ Bray, Alan (2003) “The Friend” University of Chicago Press.

³³⁰ This is explained in greater detail later in this account.

³³¹ Mantzouneas, Fr. Evangelos K. (1982) Secretary of the Greek Synod Committee on Legal and Canonical Matters; “Report on Adelphopoiesis 1982: “Fraternization from a Canonical Perspective” Athens 1982”.

³³² For the text see: <http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/Canon%20Law/ElviraCanons.htm> accessed 26 November 2012.

³³³ http://www.synaxis.org/canon/ECF37THE_COUNCIL_OF_ANCYRA_HISTORICAL.htm for the text. Accessed 26 November 2012

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Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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a virgin consecrated to God living with him. No other woman who is unrelated to him may remain.” And Canon 31 of the same Council declares “Bishops, presbyters, deacons, and others with a position in the ministry are to abstain completely from sexual intercourse with their wives and from the procreation of children. If anyone disobeys, he shall be removed from the clerical office”. Later councils continued to increase the severity of these prohibitions.

However this type of Neo-Platonic approach to Christian asceticism was in direct contradiction with the understandings of the apostolic fathers. Marriage and sex may have been second best to them, but neither was prohibited³³⁴. The apostles Peter and Philip were married and also had children. Clement also reported that Peter's wife was martyred before him, and that the apostle had encouraged her as she was led to her death³³⁵. Eusebius further describes the relationship between Peter and his wife using these words, “Such as the marriage of these blessed ones, and such was their perfect affection”³³⁶. The early church leaders spoke out against those who preached against marriage, and there is an underlying presumption that all of the Apostles, except John were married. Clement of Alexandria further criticized those celibates in the church “Who say that they are “imitating the Lord” who never married, nor had any possessions in the world, and who boast that they understand the gospel better than anyone else.”³³⁷ A similar criticism of this form of celibacy is given by Paul³³⁸. In his attempts to deal with these serious contradictions Augustine was to assert that: “Those who marry only for procreation now - to perpetuate the human race - are not comparable to the holy fathers, who had children in a prophetic manner, for Christ's sake, for the race from which he was to be born”..... which seems to be no answer at all.

Despite the obvious poverty which was present in Augustine's rebuttals, little was to change. The adoption of Christianity as the recognised state religion by the emperor Constantine during his reign in AD 306-337 marked the final transformation of Christianity from a protesting minority religion into the Church of Authority, which served both God and the state. By making celibacy compulsory instead of treating it as a voluntary ideal the Church removed the threats to hereditary dynasties which procreation created. During the time of the Jewish Exile this problem was dealt with by castration and which allowed individual Jews to rise to high places within the

³³⁴ While total commitment to the Gospel is required, there is nothing to stop wives and other loved ones, from being helpers and supporters on the missionary journeys. According to Clement of Alexandria, their wives travelled with the apostles "Not as wives, but as sisters, in order to minister to housewives", Clement of Alexandria, Ante-Nicene Fathers 2.390, 391 (c. 195). Accessed at: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/early-church-fathers/ante-nicene/>

³³⁵ Clement of Alexandria, Ante-Nicene Fathers. 2.541 (c. 195). Accessed at: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/early-church-fathers/ante-nicene/>.

³³⁶ Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book III, Chapter XXX. This excerpt was found in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, p. 49. Accessed at: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/early-church-fathers/ante-nicene/>.

³³⁷ Pagels, Elaine (1988) "Adam, Eve, and the Serpent", Random House. p. 21

³³⁸ 1 Timothy 4:1 "In the last times, some will turn away from the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and demonic instructions through the hypocrisy of liars with branded consciences. They forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving for those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected when received with thanksgiving. For it is made holy by the invocation of God in prayer". Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

Assyrian Empire - as the Book of Esther attests³³⁹. Eunuchs also played a similar role in Greek and Roman society but, because castration had mostly been forced on this group, their loyalty would always be suspected. Through willingly adopting a compulsorily applied Neo-Platonic form of celibacy, which denied all sexual activity to those who were religious or priests, the Christian Church was able to create an equivalent class of people who Constantine could more easily trust, and in return the Church was able to create an organisation which possessed the stature and the strength to undertake many of the important civil and social functions which society required. Thus the enforcement of this type of Neo-Platonic celibacy locked the Church into a social structure of society, from which there could be no easy escape, but the compact gave Constantine what he needed and the Church the authority it sought.

3:3:2 Respectability and Interaction

Christianity was very concerned with labels that others applied to it. Jesus and the early church had been the disrupters of the accepted values of society, and many of its followers paid the ultimate price. Paul was not reticent about producing virtue and vice lists but a constant theme within the Pauline epistles was that of establishing the respectability of the Church. It has already been seen that the need to separate itself from the socially and gender disruptive activities of the Goddess cults had led to the imposition of a strong and exclusive heterosexual orthodoxy. The Church at this time considered that the prohibition on cross dressing which is contained in Deuteronomy 22:5 was directed against the effeminacy of these priests of the goddess³⁴⁰ and this was used strongly by Augustine and others to condemn the cults. This respectability could be greatly added to because of its total condemnation of fornication and its refutation of the dominant culture of the sexual authority which governed the rules of anal penetration in Greco/Roman society. The uprightness of the Church was further affirmed by the requirement that all sexual relationships should be motivated by love. The need for these labels of respectability is evident in the context of missionary activities, but it also meant that the Church had to compromise in some way with the gender and socially unequal societies in which it worked if it was to be able to gain the respectability and the acceptance which would allow it to transmit its message to the wider world. This marked a significant change in outlook and that compromise is most obviously seen in the letter to Philemon about the runaway slave³⁴¹. It also set

³³⁹ Gerig, Bruce. (2010). Homosexuality in the Bible. Eunuchs in the OT, Part 2. Castration in Ancient Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia. Extracted from <http://epistle.us/hbarticles/eunuchs2.html> 26 August 2011.

³⁴⁰ Around AD 195 Clement of Alexandria wrote: "What is the purpose in the Law's prohibition against a man wearing woman's clothing? Is it not that the Law would have us to be masculine and not to be effeminate in either person or actions - or in thought and word? Rather, it would have the man who devotes himself to the truth to be masculine both in acts of endurance and patience - in life, conduct, word, and discipline". That particular interpretation was applied at this time but there have been many different interpretations of this verse and for a full account see Gilchrist, S. 2012. "Sexuality, Gender and the Christian Church".

³⁴¹ It would appear that the initial aim of the Church was to accept that gender complementarity had to be endorsed for relationships with outside society, but within the Church and the Christian Community, complete gender transcendence was still to be maintained. A parallel to this is found in the letter to Philemon, where the author deals with the issue of the runaway slave who is about to go back to his master after they have both been converted to Christianity. The letter asks for the slave to be accepted by his master on Christian terms. However, instead of asking for the emancipation and

a trajectory for the development of the subsequent attitudes to social status, and to gender within the church.

It has already been noted that a distinctive achievement of Christianity was one of transferring the distinctive views of a subject group into a dominant culture. This did not just apply to national groups; it applied to relationships between men and women as well. Thus instead of just gender neutrality the Christian Gospel provided a major role for women and it is not surprising that women figure prominently within the early church. However even though these important roles at first were given to women, the social constraints meant that the public spokespeople for this new religion could only be men. Through their pursuit of a male agenda and from its pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines of the Church of the Apostles have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines which were created by the later Church. Thus the theological justifications that today are used to validate the presumptions for a male leadership, together with its male prerogatives, and with its arguments for an exclusively male priesthood are founded on these later traditions. They do not come from the Gospel Church.

3:3:3 Reinterpretation and Relationships

The doctrines which have been adopted by many Christian churches, but which are espoused most notably in the present day by the Roman Catholic Church, (including the vehement condemnations of the cult of Cybele), are derived from these fourth century values. Therefore any attempt that tries to reach further back by interpreting those Church traditions may well not succeed, and this means that an alternative approach is required. Rather than looking within the Church history, this examination concentrates on the moral and cultural values of the surrounding societies and it attempts to interpret the Gospel texts within the context which these studies provide.

It is perfectly legitimate for any one society to criticise the moral values and precepts of any other, but the honesty and integrity of people within any one society must be judged by the moral precepts which form that society, and not those of another. Indeed from the Jewish point of view there was a great deal that could be criticised within Greco/Roman society and there are many things that could be criticised within first century Jewish society when it is judged by the standards of the present day. However to use these criticisms to malign the conscientiousness and integrity of people who lived within these societies is to use labels of condemnation which keep people out.

the release of the slave, the author supports the social conventions on slavery in society. The slave remains a slave, who is subject to his master, but now within the Christian community the slave and master are to be treated completely as equals and brothers, and this is because all are one in Christ. Equivalent master and servant relationships are found between men and women within a gender complementary society. However the problem with the attitude to gender complementarity adopted by Peter and Paul is that it demanded the submission of women to men, not just in relation to outside society, but also within the Church. By this action the concept that the Church could be a true island of gender transcendence and equality within a gender unequal society was lost.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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3:4 Relationships

3:4:1 Jesus and John

When the nature and the intimacies which are found in these first century rabbinic relationships³⁴² are compared with the interactions between Jesus and John, as they are presented in the Gospel of John, it can be observed that a close correspondence exists³⁴³. However almost all rabbis were married and this was almost compulsory in the society where they lived³⁴⁴. In addition to this, the modern day perceptions of the relationships between gender, sex and sexuality are broken down, because the boundaries set between acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour during the first century were not primarily determined by the biological features: They were instead set to divide the noble pursuit of love from the carnal misuse of sex. This meant that there was no inconsistency involved in balancing intense same-sex relationships against those of a full married life³⁴⁵. The relationship between Jesus and John was unusual since both of them were unmarried³⁴⁶, but Jesus could hardly

³⁴² The full argument is presented in Gilchrist, S. (2011) "Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships".

³⁴³ John was a disciple of Jesus and nowhere does it say in the bible that they were in a rabbinic partnership but from the internal evidence of the relationships between Jesus and John, and also from the discursive nature of the texts within that Gospel, it seems safe to assume that some form of rabbinic interactions took place.

³⁴⁴ Being married did not preclude the possibility of also being involved in strong and intimate same-sex relationships. There were many such rabbinic partnerships For a full description of these see Greenberg, Steven; (2004) "Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition" The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3. The topic is also covered in Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships".

³⁴⁵ Christian tradition holds strongly to the view that Jesus and John were unmarried, and this is in a society where marriage was almost compulsory. Given that all or many of the Apostles were married and at least some had children, this says more about the attitudes of Jesus and John to their own practicing of celibacy than it does about what are regarded today as the traditional doctrines of celibacy in the church.

³⁴⁶ The earliest and most reliable records of Jesus's life – the New Testament gospels – do not say explicitly whether Jesus was married or not. They do not mention his having a wife. Whenever the New Testament gospels refer to Jesus' natural relatives, they speak only of his father, mother and siblings, but never of a wife. Although almost all scholars of all religious persuasions take this as strong evidence of the singleness of Jesus, a few have proposed that Jesus was married. The fictional account of the Da Vinci Code has increased speculation about the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, however, while it is often stated that she was a close companion in early Christian literature, none of the orthodox or gnostic texts, including the Gospel of Philip, (which is the one most cited for this argument), ever say that Jesus was married. The recent discovery of a papyrus fragment which has been called "The Gospel of Jesus's Wife" provides further fuel to the argument and many have taken this up in pursuit of that claim. The best judgement must come from the scholar, Karen L. King, who analysed and published the text. She writes: "No, this fragment does not provide evidence that Jesus was married. The comparatively late date of this Coptic papyrus (a fourth century CE copy of a gospel probably written in Greek in the second half of the second century) argues against its value as evidence for the life of the historical Jesus. Nor is there any reliable historical evidence to support the claim that he was not married, even though Christian tradition has long held that position. The oldest and most reliable evidence is entirely silent about Jesus's marital status. The first claims that Jesus was not married are attested only in the late second century CE, so if the Gospel of Jesus's Wife was also composed in the second century CE, it does provide evidence, however, that the whole question about Jesus's marital status arose as part of the debates about sexuality and marriage that took place among early Christians at that time. From the very beginning, Christians disagreed about whether it was better to marry or to be celibate, but it was over a century

be expected to obtain any credibility for his own preaching on celibacy if he did not practice it himself.

It has already been made clear that if first century attitudes to homosexuality and to transgender issues are to be correctly understood, it is essential to separate the sexual aspects into the three largely independent components. These elements are anal penetration, relationships which are given in love and activities engaged in for illicit or promiscuous sex. In any relationship that might have existed between Jesus and John, any acts involving anal penetration cannot be completely ruled out³⁴⁷. If it did occur it would have to be kept private, given the contemporary Judean attitudes to this, and also to the place of celibacy which is contained in the preaching of Jesus himself. The third element can be totally ruled out. Nevertheless some form of love between Jesus and John did clearly exist, because this is what is described in the Gospel texts. The key question which has now to be asked is, "Is this love purely an expression of the ascetic love of friendship, or is it anything more?"³⁴⁸ Any thought or idea of it being anything more than just this ascetic friendship is vehemently denied by the present day Christian Church, but a re-examination of the key text concerning this issue, (in John 21:15-17)^{349 350}, when this text is taken together with the historic

after Jesus's death before they began using Jesus's marital status to support their different positions. Christian tradition preserved only those voices that claimed Jesus never married, but now the Gospel of Jesus's Wife shows that some Christians claimed Jesus was married". See <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/faculty-research/research-projects/the-gospel-of-jesus-wife>. Others argue for Jesus's marriage on the grounds that there is no tradition of celibacy within Judaism, and that throughout history Jews have embraced the Old Testament dictum: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 9:7). Jesus and his disciples were dedicated practicing Jews. All the great rabbis were married and had children, and for a great teacher to be unmarried was exceptional. However there was nevertheless a tradition of celibacy within Judaism. The Essenes were a group of apocalyptic Jews who eagerly awaited God's intervention in history and they did not marry by choice. Josephus, in Antiquities 18.1.5, described them thus: "There are about four thousand men that live in this way, and neither marry wives, nor are desirous to keep servants; as thinking the latter tempts men to be unjust, and the former gives the handle to domestic quarrels; but as they live by themselves, they minister one to another". There's no reason to believe that Jesus shared the Essene perspective, or that he was part of this group, but he did join the Essenes in accepting an apocalyptic worldview which anticipated the coming of God's kingdom, and the attitude to celibacy as described by Josephus appears to be similar. This Essene attitude also supports the view of Jesus in the Gospels that celibacy was better. Marriage was only second best because of the distractions of family and kinship it brought. However some sects took a more ascetic approach. Perhaps the best argument for Jesus being unmarried lies in the nature of his teaching, as noted above for Jesus could hardly be expected to gain any credibility for his preaching on celibacy if he did not practice it himself.

³⁴⁷ The reason for this is given in section 3:1:8 of this document, where cross cultural transformations and attitudes to anal penetration are considered.

³⁴⁸ It is noted that the relationship between Jesus and John is described by using the word agape in the Gospel of John.

³⁴⁹ In John 21:15-17 Jesus uses the word agape on the first two occasions when he asks Peter if he loves him, to which he receives an affirmative but uncommitted response. Peter uses the word phileo when he replies both times. However on the third occasion Peter's response becomes enthusiastic when Jesus reframes his question by using the word phileo instead.

³⁵⁰ The present day Church interpretation defines the word agape as the spiritual self-sacrificing ascetic and non sexual love through which Jesus calls Peter to love His Church. In this present day interpretation Jesus uses the word agape on the first two occasions when he asks Peter if he loves him, but Peter responds each time with the word phileo, meaning brotherly love or love of family or friendship instead. The current Roman Catholic Teaching as affirmed by Pope Benedict in his encyclical letter *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) argues that the difference in meaning between these two verbs for "love" signifies that when Jesus uses the word agape he is calling Peter to the higher form of love. *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".*

changes in the interpretation of the word “Agape”³⁵¹ leads towards a rather different conclusion, which suggests that something stronger than friendship did exist³⁵². With humiliation and anal penetration aside, the Jewish attitude to same-sex relationships shared much in common with the societies around them. The Zugot period in Jewish history dated from the time of the exile and it would be surprising if Jewish culture had not been affected in some way by these experiences. Additional pointers to the nature of their relationship can also be found. The tradition which shows the Apostle John as the beardless disciple might also suggest a relationship of intimacy, since the maximum age at which pederasty could be practiced within Greek society was determined by the age at which the junior partner in the relationship was first able to grow a beard. There is absolutely no suggestion that Jesus and John were engaged in any such practices but this symbolism of the beardlessness of John would be relevant to Greek society. These gospel interpretations and the teaching of Jesus on these matters means that it probably will never be known about what did exist.

love for the Church. However Peter is not yet ready to commit himself to the kind of self-sacrificing ascetic type of love for the Church that the current definition of agape represents. In English both of phileo and agape are translated in the same way as “love” and the real meaning of this passage is hidden in translation. Some scholars contend that the use of the two words, phileo and agape for “love” means nothing significant. However it is also known that John never uses double words or double-meaning words without some hidden significance, and Jesus indeed plays on the differences in meaning between the two words in this passage. First century readers of the Greek Septuagint would also read these as separate words and thus would understand the word play involved in this passage.

³⁵¹ Although present day interpretations describe agape as the type of spiritual self-sacrificing ascetic and ascending love for people and for the Church that specifically excludes the expression of any form of sexual passion, that is not the definition which first century readers would have known. The arguments for the modern ascetic interpretation are not borne out in the Old Testament texts. The word agape (which is a direct transliteration of the equivalent Jewish word ahabà) is used in passages such as Genesis 34:1-4, Judges 16:4:15, Jeremiah 2:20-25, Jeremiah 2:33, Hosea 4:18 and Hosea 9:1, to describe acts of non-marital sexual love. Passages such as Genesis 24:67, Judges 14:16, 1 Samuel 18:20-21, and 1 Kings 11:1-3 deal with married sexual love. Genesis 29, Deuteronomy 21:15, 1 Samuel 1:4-5, 2 Chronicles 11:21 use the word to describe acts of sexual attraction. The Song of Solomon uses it to describe the outpouring of love in a sexual context. The same word is also used to describe the relationship between David and Jonathan, (see for example I Samuel 18), and between Jesus and the beloved disciple in the Gospel of John. In the original Hebrew bible and in the Greek Septuagint the word agape and its equivalent it is used to describe committed and faithful love which can find its fulfilment in sex. This is in marked contrast the current Christian definition of the word. The full reasons for this change are discussed in Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”. Agape therefore means more than friendship for it allows the expression of sexual affection as well.

³⁵² Phileo is the love of friendship family and home, and this understanding has broadly remained the same. However this opening up of the definition of the word agape to include a sexual content immediately gives possible new meanings to the word-play which was used by Jesus, in John 21:15-17. This affirms that Jesus and John both loved Jesus, but that they did so in different ways. It also confirms that and in the relationship between Jesus and John there was a special intimacy, with some sort of sexual element involved. The structure of this passage also provides a deeper meaning, for it clearly positions the relationships between the two disciples by affirming the supremacy of Peter and the Church in Rome, while at the same time authenticating the use of the term “The disciple who Jesus loved” in John’s Gospel. It demonstrates the unique nature of this Gospel and it also shows why, and in what way, the Gospel of John should be regarded as complementary to the Synoptic texts. If John’s Gospel is indeed the product of such a relationship then it is a unique and intimate account of the ministry of Jesus, which has a depth which reaches far beyond that which any other relationship could bring. So instead of reacting with a condemnation or a disapproval of the possibility of any same-sex relationship, perhaps an offer of thanks for the understanding this brings is more appropriate response.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”.

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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Moral behaviour was judged on the basis of motives and of responsibility instead of specific acts. Despite this there is a strong temptation to argue that Jesus and John were involved in some form of homosexual, or gay, relationship. However that would be importing the labels of one culture and applying them to another - and that would be totally inappropriate³⁵³. The use of these modern day labels puts people into the boxes which people within first century societies would not recognise. At that time different words were employed to describe the various types of love, but these were not usually used on a gendered basis. Therefore the present day polarisations were avoided. What this analysis reveals is that the relationship between Jesus and John appears to be very similar to those which might be expected in any first century (or later) rabbinic partnership, and when the bible is then read from this perspective it no longer appears to be coy on this subject. There are many other instances of such close rabbinic relationships in Jewish history. Perhaps the most notable of these is that between Resh Lakesh (Rashi) and Rabbi Yonathan³⁵⁴. This was a relationship which possessed a very great intimacy but it was also one to which the present day classifications of heterosexuality, bisexuality or homosexuality cannot be applied.

3:5 Understanding, Discipline and Doctrine

This analysis approaches the first century attitudes to gender, sex and sexuality from different viewpoints. The social disruption that was caused by the gender challenging behaviour of both early Christianity and the Goddess Cults has been described. It also shows that for Christianity to make the breakthrough from a minority religion of a subjugated culture to become the established religion of a dominant society, an initial period of true gender transcendence and equality, with a transcendent God was required.

By using an analysis which examines the development of early Christianity from two different perspectives, the first is from tracing back through the history of the Church, and the second is by examining the surrounding cultures to determine the inputs that they provided, the changes which took place through the first three hundred years have been mapped. It has been demonstrated that the first century attitude to gender and sexuality was determined through responsibility in action, and by distinguishing between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex. This is the morality that Jesus and John would have known, and it was not firstly decided on a gendered basis. However any possibility of its use abuse was very strongly condemned by the Rabbis. The Christian Gospel makes no special pleading for gender transcendence or for gender equality, but this is also implicit throughout the Gospel texts. The acts

³⁵³ If "homosexuality" was described to any first century Greek, Roman or Jewish individual, none of them would know what it meant, it could not be easily explained to them either, for none of these societies had any equivalent term or definition that could be used. Instead different words were used to define the different types of love. The Greeks had more than four of these words and the Romans perhaps more. All of these words described motives alone. None were used on a gendered basis.

³⁵⁴ For a full description of these relationships see Greenberg, Steven; (2004) "Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition" The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3. The topic is also covered in Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships".

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of sexual domination which were endorsed by the cultural values of Greco/Roman society are properly and strongly condemned in the bible, yet the expectation of the same act of same sex anal penetration being carried out in circumstances when it is given and received in love, as it is described in the story of the Centurion and slave, gives rise to little or no concern. The attitude which Jesus took to eunuchs and to the Gallae priests³⁵⁵ indicate that it is neither the acts nor the gender transformation that is condemned; it is the purposes to which some might have put their acts. Therefore all people, lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, transgendered and transsexual who live their lives in the full love of Christ and in ways that are true to themselves and to their own identities, must be accepted alike.

Gender transcendence rejoices in its diversity, it enables people to celebrate sexual expression and the differences between men and women in a way which permits all to be as one in the "Love of Christ". However that equality has not been represented in the history of the Church. It has been shown that the need to obtain respectability within Greco/Roman society quickly led to the abandonment of these initial doctrines of gender and sexual equality and transcendence, and to their replacement by the gender complementarity of the surrounding society. The need to separate this newly respectable Church from the socially disruptive activities of the Goddess cults and the Gospel message led to the imposition of a strict heterosexual orthodoxy and the condemnation of all forms gender and sexually variant behaviour as heinous acts.

Gender complementarity does not prevent gender discrimination. It gives arguments for allowing this to take place in some areas by compensating for it in other ways. On the one hand it demands a society in which men and women are regarded with fully equal esteem, but the other hand it can be used to enforce the division of the sexes so that men are given the power to govern, and to express their opinion in the public sphere, but women are then confined to the hearth and home. It also allows gender discrimination to occur on earth by promising those who are subject to it a heavenly reward. Its enforcement demands the submission of women to the authority of men, and the subservience of women which is expected by Peter and Paul, is clearly described in the New Testament texts. However the authority that they cite for this is the requirement to ensure the respectability of the Christian Church in Greco/Roman society. This does not come directly from the teachings of Jesus himself. That is why it is argued in this analysis that these should be considered as disciplines, and not as doctrines of the Church.

The doctrines of compulsory gender complementarity that derive their authority from the interpretation of scripture are most open to misuse, and that is seen in the severe gender discrimination which was practiced over very many centuries by the Christian Church. The same types of arguments, which separate people into different classes, may also be used to justify the Christian toleration of slavery, apartheid and racial discrimination. Just as the implementation of these arguments would be intolerable in present day society, the doctrines of gender complementarity when applied in the equivalent way should also be intolerable today. The early Church had to make a difficult choice, and it sought to compromise the original Gospel doctrines of gender transcendence in order to gain the respectability that would enable it to take the rest

³⁵⁵ and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it: Matthew 19:12
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
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of the Gospel message into the wider world³⁵⁶ Although the intentions of the Church may have been wholly honourable in following this policy it then turned dogma into doctrine and applied this to relationships inside the Church.

The consequences of transforming dogma into a doctrine were condemned by Jesus in Mark 7:1-23, and the words in this passage speak for themselves:

“Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles. So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

“This people honours me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.”

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’

Then he said to them, ‘You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, “Honour your father and your mother”; and, “Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.” But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, “Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban” (that is, an offering to God) then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this.’

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’

When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. He said to them, ‘Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?’ (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, ‘It is what comes out of a person that defiles. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions

³⁵⁶ For the description of how this took place see the companion papers Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”, Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation” and in the companion paper: Gilchrist, S. (2013). “Reform and the Christian Church”. See the footer for access.

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come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Instead of the true vision of gender transcendence that was portrayed by the Gospel message shining out into Greco/Roman society as a beacon of its Christian witness to the Gospel message, Christianity chose to follow society's demands. The Church had failed to maintain the teaching of the Gospel and the consequences of this have flowed through the centuries into present day life.

3:6 Translation Drift and Re-Interpretation

3:6:1 Leviticus and Translation Drift

Translation drift and reinterpretation in bible passages has occurred from the outset and the changes in definition of the word *agape* has been shown to be of major consequence in the interpretation of biblical texts³⁵⁷. However there are further crucial areas where translation drift or re-interpretation, (which is often in pursuit of a particular viewpoint), has taken place. This applies to the most obvious passages in the bible which, in present day understanding, appear to condemn all types of same-sex relationships. For example, in the Living Bible Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is translated as “Homosexuality is absolutely forbidden, for it is an enormous sin”. The King James Bible instead translates Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.” Paul, in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10, makes use of these verses in Leviticus as translated in the Greek Septuagint, when he coins³⁵⁸ the word “arsenokoitai”³⁵⁹, to describe those people who are engaged in heterosexual and same-sex promiscuity and prostitution as “Abusers of themselves with mankind”. By linking his invented word directly to Leviticus he made it clear that the Jewish rather than the Greek view should be understood. This directly refers a first century reader back to the specific interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 which Jesus, John and Paul would have known. The role played by the cultural clashes has already been discussed, so Paul condemns all same-sex actions where lust is the motive, but it does not condemn those which are given in love.

There is little controversy within the rabbinic tradition about the meaning of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. These passages are translated in various ways but the basic meaning has always appeared to be quite clear: “And with a male you shall not lie the lyings of a woman, it is an abomination.” A similar phrase, “The lying of a male”, appears in Numbers 31:18 and this is understood to mean what women experience

³⁵⁷ See section 3:4:1 in this document

³⁵⁸ "Arsenokoitai" is a Greek word that appears to have been created by Paul when he was writing 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. No record remains of any writer having using the term before Paul. In the King James Version this has been translated as "abusers of themselves with mankind". If Paul wanted the meaning to be "homosexual" he could have used the Greek word, "paiderasste" instead

³⁵⁹ The interpretation of the word “arsenokoitai” has been the subject of intense discussion. Many different ideas have been put forward but none of them significantly alter the purpose of the analysis given in this document.

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in intercourse, i.e. that of penile penetration. The lyings of a woman are plural because she may be penetrated vaginally or anally but a man, who does not have a vagina, is singly penetrable anally. This midrashic interpretation makes it clear that the passages in Leviticus only prohibit the act of same sex anal intercourse. There is no condemnation of lesbian sex whatever since penile penetration is not possible.

This Hebrew interpretation takes a very specific view but it is quoted widely in the literature and the meaning of the text is always interpreted in the same way. For example it is cited in the Babylonian Talmud and it was reaffirmed in the Conservative Judaism's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards in America in December 2006. It is also cited by Josephus in "Against Apion"³⁶⁰; and by Philo in "Abraham"³⁶¹. These latter two sources were contemporary with Jesus and Paul: This understanding is what both would have known and the same interpretation would have guided the actions of the early Christian Church. Other interpretations have been put forward but the same principles remain. What is important are not the academic arguments, but to know what Jesus, Paul and John would have understood. These changes in meaning have brought enormous consequences, for it means that the original and specific condemnation of the one particular act has been transformed without authority into the condemnation of every homosexual relationship and same-sex act.³⁶²

Current Christian doctrine states that the possession of homosexual desires is not sinful, but to allow any expression of them whatever is a mortal sin. This contrast between the different views demonstrates how translation drift and reinterpretations have changed the message of the church from one which could at one time celebrate the fulfilment of same-sex relationships that are given and received in love to one which now condemns any and every expression of same-sex relationship and act. What the Church today regards as traditional teaching on homosexuality no longer follows what the founder had intended. It has been shown that through their pursuit of a male agenda and from its pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines of the Church of the Apostles have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines which were created by the later Church. The problems caused by this would continue for Aquinas based his reasons for the condemnation of all same-sex relationships on the same traditions. Since these later teachings do not come from the Gospel Church the consequences of this on the attitudes to same-sex relationships have also had a devastating effect.

³⁶⁰ Josephus, Flavius "Against Apion" 2.199. This work may be downloaded from: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2849/2849-h/2849-h.htm>. Accessed 19 January 2013.

³⁶¹ Philo "Abraham" 135 This work may be downloaded from: <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/yonge/book22.html> . Accessed 19 January 2013.

³⁶² The ancient rabbis must have had some sense of this problem when they ruled two thousand years ago that any homosexual sexual activity short of anal intercourse is not included in the biblical prohibition (Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 54a-56a; Sotah 26b; Niddah 13a; Maimonides, Perush L'Mishnayot on Sanhedrin 54a).

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3:7 Homosexuality and the Church

3:7:1 Aquinas

In 2003 the Church of England issued a set of guidelines which were intended to give a framework for conducting a debate on sexuality within the Church³⁶³. Implicit in these is the reliance on the work of Thomas Aquinas and in section 1:12:18 of the document it is declared that: “Where St Thomas led the Christian Tradition has followed”. This assumption that Aquinas was correct has to be challenged.

For many centuries the attitude of the Christian Church was that every form of sexual activity was a necessary evil and that these should be engaged in for procreation alone. This edict was applied to all types of sexually motivated thoughts and acts. However the inability of the Church, and most notably the priesthood, to live up to these standards led to repeated scandals of sexual abuse³⁶⁴ and the outcome of these, together with the abuse of its secular power³⁶⁵ led to the Cathar revolt. The Dominican Order was established as an order of preaching inside the Church to deal with these abuses and to counter what the Church regarded as the heresies of the rebellion³⁶⁶. However military victory suppressed the Cathars, but the church had to accede in some ways to these concerns. As a member of the Dominican Order, Aquinas sought to liberate the teaching of the church on the sexual matters, thus as well as Neo-Platonism, he also turned to Aristotle. Aquinas produced arguments which liberated sexual activity within marriage but which retained the full force of traditional Church teaching outside it. A weakness of Aquinas’s arguments was that even though the liberalising influences which Aristotle had provided could be used to relax the Platonic doctrines, they were originally intended for use with relationships between people who just happened to be of the same sex³⁶⁷. This created a

³⁶³ Some Issues in Human Sexuality: A Guide to the Debate (House of Bishops). Section 1:12:18. Church House Publishing, 21 Nov 2003. ISBN-10: 0715138685. ISBN-13: 978-0715138687.

Accessed 9 January 2013 at <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/uploads/documents/0715138685.pdf>

³⁶⁴ Gilchrist, S. 2011. “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”.

³⁶⁵ According to the Dictatus Papae, the Pope was to be judged by no one. This stated that the Roman Church had never been, and would never be, wrong and it declared the Pope's authority to depose emperors. (See:

<http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/churchhistory220/topicfive/dictatuspapae.htm>)

³⁶⁶ The Cathars adopted theological positions directly opposed to Roman Catholic doctrine, at least partly on the grounds that enforcing these doctrines did nothing to exorcise the scandals inside what they perceived was the corrupt organisation of the Church. The Cathars argued that sexual intercourse and reproduction propagated the slavery of spirit to flesh. They considered that informal relationships were preferable to marriage, and this led to charges of sexual perversion being made. The Dominican Order was established to counter the Cathar revolt. Thomas Aquinas was also a member of the Dominican Order, and this was the background to his work. The Cathar revolt was violently suppressed in the Albigensian Crusade, but the Church also had to accede to the need for some change. One of the reforms Aquinas introduced was to increase the freedom of sexual expression within marriage, while at the same time vehemently denying all sexual relationships outside it. To do this Aquinas combined the principles of Natural Law which were developed by Plato, Aristotle and others with the then current theology of the Church. This work by Aquinas has become the foundation of present day teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. However instead of being a teaching that just reflected the Church traditions, it was needed to enforce the control of the Church. It was also built on the Augustinian doctrines and the traditional values of the Roman Catholic Church.

³⁶⁷ Aquinas used the concept of Natural Law developed from Greek philosophy to develop his concepts. However First Century Judaism and the early Christian Church did the same but they came

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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constant tension in Aquinas's writing, which is observed in his attempts to reconcile the cardinal virtues of reason with the theological values of the Church³⁶⁸.

There is also evidence to show that the doctrines on sexuality which were later put forward by Aquinas were not always followed during the first millennium. On several occasions the Carolingian Kings republished the Canons of the Council of Ancyra. For the religious and the clergy these Canons reinforced the Neo-Platonic doctrines on celibacy which were being pursued by the church, but for the laity they only prohibited anal penetration, and no other type of same-sex act. Writing around 1160, Aelred³⁶⁹, who was the Cistercian Abbot of Rievaulx, encouraged his monks to express their love for each other, not only through their thoughts, but also physically, individually and passionately. He made use of the example of Jesus and John for his guidance and he declared that: "Jesus himself, in everything like us, patient and compassionate with others in every matter, transfigured this sort of love through the expression of his own love. for he allowed only one - not all - to recline on his breast as a sign of his special love; and the closer they were, the more copiously did the secrets of their heavenly marriage impart the sweet smell of their spiritual chrism to their love". After the defeat of the Cathars it is probable that any type of expression like this would have been impossible to make. The power that was brought by the military alliances which the church had created in pursuit of its victory enabled it to impose its orthodoxy in ways which suppressed all dissenting views.

Therefore the origins of what today is considered to be the traditional teaching on homosexuality of the Roman Catholic Church stems from its own traditions and the requirement for the church to rebuild its authority following the Cathar Revolt. In his arguments Aquinas condemns every type of emotional relationships and activities, including cuddles and kisses which take place outside marriage.³⁷⁰ Yet there were

up with different results. A comparative study of how natural law was applied in both circumstances is contained in the resource document, Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". The continuous tension in Aquinas' writing comes from the need to reconcile the cardinal virtues of reason with the theological values of the Church. For example Aquinas writes that any act which includes fornication, adultery or even rape is not considered a sin at all if it is performed under the command of God. When Aquinas uses logic based on the cardinal values of reason, he provides answers which do not preclude the validity of certain types of loving same-sex relationships. The conclusions which are based on reason are more in accord with the elements of first century Greek and Judean philosophy that are described in this document. However any more movement in this direction is then trumped by the arguments which Aquinas derives from the doctrines of his contemporary Church.

³⁶⁸ Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships".

³⁶⁹ Aelred was also superior of all the Cistercians in England. He wrote several books on spirituality, among them *Speculum caritatis* ("The Mirror of Charity" and *De spiritali amicitia* ("On Spiritual Friendship"). Copies of these are available in translation. His public works encouraged virginity among the unmarried and chastity (not abstinence) in marriage and widowhood, and he warns against sexual activity outside marriage. In all his works he treats same-sex and opposite-sex attraction as equally possible, and equally dangerous to the oath to celibacy. Consistent with this outlook is the value he places on all such relationships when they are given and received in love.

³⁷⁰ *Summa Theologica* II-II, 154, 4: "Whether there can be mortal sin in touches and kisses?" Aquinas condemns situations even where no sexual intercourse is involved. His reasoning is that, lustful kisses and caresses are mortal sins because the purpose behind them can lead to fornication and inappropriate sex. Aquinas always makes the presumption that the motives for same-sex relationships are those of lust and not love. He also notes elsewhere that the correct end of venereal acts is human procreation which is directed toward the good of "The preservation of the whole human race." *Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".*

no such prohibitions within the rabbinic relationships during the lifetime of Jesus. That Jesus and John had shared at least some intimacies is also evident from the gospel texts. However by the time of Aquinas the major disconnection had already occurred and the change in approach to the celibacy which was endorsed by the Neo-Platonic doctrines and which required the denial of every type of same-sex act had been long established. This was one of the foundations upon which Aquinas based his arguments. Therefore his rejection of the theologies of sex, gender and celibacy inherent in the teachings of Jesus leads to a rather surprising conclusion that; it is not merely the Roman Catholic Church, but every church which has also followed these particular traditions, has succeeded in condemning their founder for engaging in mortal sin and possibly its second most heinous act.

Fundamentalism falls into the parallel trap. The transformation from a gender and a socially disrupting religion into a socially conforming one happened very quickly. It has been seen that the search for respect is evident in the Pauline epistles, and the elements of gender segregation that were needed for this are also present. The present day disregard of the social context of Paul's writings on immorality and on sexual relationships, taken together with the uncritical use of the passages such as Deuteronomy 22:5 and Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, which are today being applied within different cultures, without any regard to their original context, and with the inaccuracies which are created by translation drift lead to the same use of a Neo-Platonic approach and to the same condemnations of homosexuality. Recent freer transliterations of the bible further compound the situation by incorporating these presumptions into their text.

The argument of the Reformed Churches that the teachings which are based on the historical traditions of the Church from the second Century onwards do not come from the Gospel Church is supported by this analysis³⁷¹. One of the major outcomes from this is that the requirement for the celibacy of the priesthood has been dropped. The various arguments have been well substantiated and have been repeated many times, but this analysis indicates that reform has have not gone far enough. One explanation for this is because the reasons for the transformation from the form of celibacy which was the call to duty in the Gospels, to that of the Neo-Platonic form of celibacy which required the rejection of all sex, by the fourth century Church has not been addressed. The standard position of the Reformed Churches is that all teaching should be based on the bible alone. However this analysis has shown that care is needed when this viewpoint is adopted. The urgent need to establish the Christian Church as a respectable organisation within male dominated Greco/Roman society, has led to compromises with the social culture, and these have later resulted in the gross gender discrimination which was eventually practiced by the Christian Church³⁷².

³⁷¹ See Section 2:1 in this document.

³⁷² Through all of the Pauline epistles there is abundant evidence of the search for respectability. However the texts which specifically demand gender differentiated behaviour appear to be either later insertions or are contained in the Epistles and Letters which may not have been written by Paul. In practice many of the Reformed Churches have already adopted the positions and attitudes to gender and sexually variant conditions which this account argues for. This analysis can be considered to provide a validation for the decisions which have already been taken but it also demonstrates that the reforming tradition still has unfinished business, and more is required.

Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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3:7:2 Current Day Attitudes

The arguments presented in this analysis do not prove that Jesus and John were in any form of relationship which could be described as homosexual, or gay: it was certainly celibate. At most it shows there was a certain intimacy shared between them and that some form of sexually involved relationship did exist. Thus within the culture of the time these attitudes should not be equated to homosexuality. However what this understanding does do is to reveal the attitudes of Judaism and the early Christian Church to those people who were involved in the expression of full gay (or in lesbian) relationships. Like transgendered people who sought to live true to the ideals of both lives, these people could be given high status and could engage in priestly acts³⁷³.

This means that all same-sex, opposite-sex and transgendered relationships that are given and received in love should be acceptable within the Church. The intimacies of appropriate same-sex relationships were also valued within the Jewish tradition and the ceremony of Adelpoiesis suggests that the same outlook on sexuality and same-sex relationships was carried forward into the Christian church. The duality which is found within the cult of Cybele and in Greek philosophy further indicates that those people who transcended the sex-gender boundaries for noble reasons were given high esteem within first century society. It is also argued that moral judgements on sexual relationships in the first century were not made on a gendered basis, but through the distinctions between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex. Therefore it is necessary to ask, what is the real division? Both sides can agree that to have homosexual and transgender feelings is not itself sinful and the question which most needs to be asked is, "Can the relationships made between homosexual couples and transgender couples who express their feelings in faithful, loving, chaste and fully committed lives be accepted by the church?" Answering yes to this question does not require any new dispensation for it returns to the truths of biblical texts.

Even though it is taken from a non-canonical Gospel, saying 22 from the Gospel of Thomas perhaps expresses a somewhat deeper truth. It states: "Jesus saw some infants who were being suckled. He said to his disciples: These infants being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom. They said to him: If we then become children, shall we enter the kingdom? Jesus said to them: When you make the two one, and when you make the inside as the outside, and the outside as the inside, and the upper as the lower, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male is not male and the female not female, and when you make eyes in place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, an image in place of an image, then shall you enter [the kingdom]". These sayings are not just about the issues of sexuality or gender identity. They are instead concerned about the whole of life. The Church possesses so much it could contribute to the world, but it is destroying itself over quarrels about sex

3:7:3 Biblical Reliability

Any changes of this magnitude are unlikely to take place before these conflicts over sexuality are resolved. This analysis demands a complete change of perspective, which is almost bound to be challenged, and it is useful to look at the benefits which are incurred. The most obvious benefit of this change in viewpoint is that it provides a new understanding of the Gospel which matches the perceptions of present day society. It further opens up the possibility that Jesus and John together might have been involved in a chavruta partnership. However there is no external evidence of this and any authentication must be looked for internally in the text. Nevertheless it has already been noted that chavruta is a traditional rabbinic approach to Talmudic study in which each pair of students work together, using a didactic approach, to learn, discuss and to debate a shared text. It challenges each student to analyse and to explain the material, to point out errors in his partner's reasoning, and to question and to sharpen each other's ideas, often to arrive at entirely new insights into the meaning of the bible text. The nearest academy (Yeshiva) was in Zippori (Sepphoris) about four miles from Nazareth and the account of Jesus' engagement with the priests in the temple at the age of twelve years suggests that he was already well versed in this didactic process. If Jesus and John did relate to each other as though they were two rabbis and if also they acted as though they had formed a chavruta partnership then the trustworthiness and the status of the Gospel of John is greatly increased by these relationships, as also is the validity of its witness to the Gospel of Christ.

A further interesting contribution to these considerations is related to the Apocryphal "Gospel of Thomas" which some scholars associate with an early date, some with a late date, and some also identify it as the lost document "Q" which is alleged to be an early collection of the sayings of Jesus which the Gospel writers Matthew and Luke incorporated into their gospels. If a late date is taken for this Gospel then the sayings within it could be taken to demand a denial of all sex. If an early date is taken it could be seen to argue for the transcendence of sex and gender. It seems to exclude the doctrine of gender complementarity. Scholars disagree and debate about the origins of this document. Examining this Gospel from the point of view of attitudes to gender and sex, and comparing this to what may be the teaching of the early Church leads to some interesting results. That is considered in more detail in section 2:3:4: "An Apocryphal Challenge" of this article. This evidence suggests an early date rather than the later date which is often assumed. Its content is also consistent with what might be expected in the document "Q" and if so, it is interesting to consider if it contains teachings of Jesus before these had become moderated by the demands of the later Church. To answer this requires more scholarship, but this is an inference which should be addressed.

3:7:4 Moving Forward

In the last fifty years the vanishing of Church authority, the widespread introduction of contraception, the legalisation of same sex relationships and the enactment of anti-discrimination legislation has meant that most people now have personal and direct experience of relating to homosexual couples and other people in same sex relationships. These observers do not need to have any special knowledge to see

that the same values of love and care and commitment can be expressed within loving same sex partnerships as there are found in heterosexual marriage. It is also easy for them to distinguish between the behaviour of two people who are in a same sex heterosexual friendship and that of another couple who are in a homosexual relationship, even if there is a total absence of sex.

The conflicts in the Church over same-sex relationships have lasted for almost two thousand years. Despite the severe disruption which these conflicts have brought the Church has always failed to resolve the conflicts at source, and today the issues of homosexuality and sexual abuse have come to dominate much of its religious life. The reaction has always been to hide, or to deny or to suppress these problems, but with the changes in the attitudes of present day society this will no longer work, for secular society refuses to tolerate the abuses, prejudices and the inequities that it sees. The tendency is to retreat. Thus far too often the churches are adopting an increasingly reactionary position, and many are retreating into fundamentalism and traditional values. The refusal of the churches to hear and listen and their continued failure to address these issues has already begun to seriously destroy their own reputations, and it is taking the reputation of Christianity with it as well.

Therefore a more pro-active approach is needed. There is an urgent need to develop a greater understanding of homosexual and transgender experiences and all sides urgently need to be able to recognise the problems and the circumstances of the other. Transgender issues are often more hidden, but they are no less relevant. Both sides have their own serious questions which they must answer, the gay and lesbian community must critically address the consequences of the cultures of homosexual promiscuity, if loving same-sex relationships are to be totally accepted within the church. The church must recognise the way in which it has made homosexuality the scapegoat for all illicit sexual acts. It must additionally address the consequences of reinterpretation and translation drift, and it must embrace the understanding that faithful and committed relationships which are expressed in love between two people of the same sex can be sanctified by Christ³⁷⁴. The standards which are set for moral behaviour must never be reduced. However all of these standards must be applied equally to heterosexual, transgender and to homosexual people alike. People can be free to agree or to disagree with those which are set, but nothing should or need to diminish these standards in any way. Indeed this account requires that the highest standards for everybody are sought.

A conference on “Sexuality and Human Flourishing” which was held in Birmingham on the 6th February 2010 sought to address these issues. The proceedings of the event are available under the Events tab of the LGB&T Anglican Coalition website www.lgbtac.org.uk. A wide range of people attended and the outcome of this was to agree that all sexual relationships given and received in love should be acceptable to the Church. An important priority is to get rid of the obsession with sex. The Christian Church has brought enormous benefits to the world and these should now be concentrated on instead.

³⁷⁴For the full analysis see Gilchrist, S. (2011) “Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships”.
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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.
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There is so much capital invested in the traditional teaching on homosexuality that these changes may be difficult to make. The attitudes to homosexuality in Islam, Judaism and other religions can vary as much as they do in the Christian tradition. Differences in culture between societies and religious traditions may cause schisms to occur. All of these issues must urgently be addressed and an effective listening and negotiating process; which results in actions must be implemented without delay. If the Christian churches do not, or they cannot, resolve the problems brought by homosexuality, transgender issues, celibacy, paedophilia and sexual abuse which have affected it from its foundation, it will continue to destroy its credibility in society at large.

3:8 Context

The Bible must be read in the context of the time when it was written. Both Paul and Jesus recognised and accepted the conventions and practices of their own societies; but they also transformed them through this Gospel of Christian Love. Just as Paul supported the restrictions placed on marriage he also showed how the relations between husband and wife are transformed by this Gospel of Christian love. Just as the Pauline writer of the epistle to Philemon had likewise supported the conventions of slavery at the time, he also showed how the relationships between master and slave are transformed by this Gospel of Christian love. Just as Jesus accepted the relationship between the slave and the centurion (Luke, Chapter 7:1-10 and Matthew, Chapter 8:5-13), he also demonstrated how the relationships between two people of the same sex can be transformed by the Gospel of Christian Love.

In Galatians 3:26 Paul stated: "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus".

(English Standard Version)

How much more should this be true of our interpretation of the Gospel of Christian Love?

An Unfinished Reformation

Susan Gilchrist

This document brings together information from a number of sources to examine the development of the attitudes to gender equality, gender complementarity and gender and sexual variance within the Christian Church. Part 1 of this document gives an overview of the approach and the principles of analysis. An introduction to the issues of cultural differences and compromises is also provided. Part 2 considers the history and the subsequent development of these Church traditions by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers to determine how these viewpoints were understood by the fourth century Church, how they differed from the original Gospel views, and the transformations that occurred. Part 3 of this document has the same objective, but this time the material is examined from the perspective of the surrounding cultures from which the Church developed. A further perspective is provided by using the results of some recent neurophysiological and psychological research which shows that the traditional teaching of the church on homosexuality and gender and sexual variance cannot be correct³⁷⁵. Part 4 considers the impact of these on the present day Church. The discussion and conclusions are contained in Part 5. From examining the inconsistencies and the conflicts which are encountered when these three approaches are compared with each other, it is hoped that a better understanding of the relevance and the accuracy of present day Church teaching on homosexuality, gender complementarity, gender equality and on gender and sexual variance can be found, and that the original teaching of Jesus can be restored.

Part 4: Current Day Issues

4:1 Current Attitudes

There is a wide range of attitudes to gender and sexually variant relationships across the various Christian churches. The total opposition to the expression of all forms of sexually and gender variant behaviour is not only found within the Roman Catholic Church. Many of the fundamentalist churches, those who believe that the Bible is the literal word of God, and those who disregard the context in which the Bible is written are often no less severe in their condemnation³⁷⁶. Attitudes of disgust are often very strongly expressed. Active campaigning against homosexuality in Africa is currently being carried out by the United States Christian Right³⁷⁷. All same-sex relationships

³⁷⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". See footer for access.

³⁷⁶Wikipedia gives lists showing the attitudes of various Churches. See:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Christian_denominational_positions_on_homosexuality

³⁷⁷A new report by Political Research Associates shows that U.S. Christian Right groups continue to build organizational strength and campaign to inscribe homophobia and anti-abortion politics in the constitutions and laws of African countries. Their most recent efforts are documented in the new report Colonizing African Values: How the U.S. Christian Right is Transforming Politics in Africa. On Easter Sunday 2013 Ugandan Pastors Solomon Male and Thomas Musoke launched their "Say No to
Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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are at present illegal in Uganda, as they also are in many other sub-Saharan African countries, where they are currently punishable by incarceration in prison for up to 14 years³⁷⁸. A bill has been placed before the Ugandan parliament which introduced the death penalty for all same-sex acts³⁷⁹. This bill has now been passed, although the death penalty has now been commuted to life imprisonment instead. Several news agencies have noted that this parliamentary bill was inspired by some American evangelical Christians. Churches opposed to the practice of homosexuality in the United States and in the United Kingdom are also being offered oversight from some conservative Primates in Africa, instead of their own church governing bodies³⁸⁰. The resulting schisms are threatening to split the Anglican Church³⁸¹.

Homosexuality” campaign outside the gravesite of the murdered gay rights activist David Kato, purposely selecting the spot to prevent it from becoming “a pilgrimage site for homosexuality.” The pastors were said to be joined by two men who claimed to be ex-gay, including Paul Kagada, who blamed Kato for recruiting him into homosexuality through bribes and forced sodomy. Kagada is an associate of the well-known antigay pastor Martin Ssempe, previously the Africa coordinator for the U.S.-based antigay organization Family Watch International, a major proponent of the Uganda Anti-Homosexuality Bill currently under consideration by Parliament. See:

<http://www.politicalresearch.org/resources/reports/full-reports/colonizing-african-values/> and <http://www.politicalresearch.org/ugandan-pastors-launch-antigay-campaign-at-david-katos-grave/>. Download the report at: <http://www.politicalresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/10/Colonizing-African-Values.pdf>. Accessed 9 April 2013.

³⁷⁸ For example the Nigerian state imposed a 14 years imprisonment sentence for gays and lesbians on the December 5th, 2013.

<http://dailypost.com.ng/2013/12/03/homosexuals-lesbians-serve-14-years-conviction-katsina/>

³⁷⁹ The bill divides homosexual behaviour into two categories: “aggravated homosexuality”, in which an offender would receive the death penalty, or “the offence of homosexuality” in which an offender would receive life imprisonment. “Aggravated homosexuality” is defined to include homosexual acts committed by a person who is HIV-positive, is a parent or authority figure, or who administers intoxicating substances, homosexual acts committed on minors or people with disabilities, and repeat offenders. “The offence of homosexuality” is defined to include same-sex sexual acts, involvement in a same-sex marriage, or an attempt to commit aggravated homosexuality. A special motion to introduce the legislation was passed a month after a two-day conference was held in which three American Christians asserted that homosexuality is a direct threat to the cohesion of African families. Divisions also emerged in the Anglican community. In response to external Anglican intervention, the Bishop of Karamoja Diocese, Joseph Abura, wrote an editorial saying, “Ugandan Parliament, the watch dog of our laws, please go ahead and put the anti-Gay laws in place. It is then that we become truly accountable to our young and to this country, not to Canada or England”. While the Anglican Church in Uganda opposes the death penalty, its archbishop, Henry Luke Orombi, has not taken a position on the bill.

³⁸⁰ The term Anglican realignment refers to a movement among some Anglicans to align themselves and their parishes under new or alternative oversight within or outside the Anglican Communion. This movement is particularly active in parts of the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada. There are also movements in this direction in the United Kingdom. Two major events which contributed to the movement were the 2002 decision of the Diocese of New Westminster in Canada to authorise a rite of blessing for same-sex unions and the ratification by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church of the election of Gene Robinson, an openly gay non-celibate man, as Bishop of New Hampshire the following year. The move has been reciprocated by African dioceses. For example the Rt. Rev. Mark J. Lawrence, Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina, received a letter of support, dated December 14, 2012, from the Steering Committee of the Primates of the Global South of the Anglican Communion signed by The Most Revd Dr. Mounier Hanna Anis, Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East; The Most Revd Nicholas Okoh, Primate of All Nigeria; The Most Revd Ian Ernest, Primate of the Indian Ocean; The Most Revd Datuk Bolly Lapok, Primate of South East Asia; The Most Revd Stephen Than Myint Oo, Primate of Myanmar; The Most Revd Dr. Eluid Wabukala, Primate of Kenya and The Most Revd Hector “Tito” Zavala, Primate of the Southern Cone which recognized Bishop Lawrence's Episcopal orders and his legitimate Episcopal oversight of the Diocese of South Carolina within the Anglican Communion. Other Anglican priests

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Prejudice against same-sex behaviour is increasing in many countries, and Russia is a notable example³⁸². Yet to even begin to consider those bible texts which in the present day, are used to condemn homosexuality³⁸³, and particularly the writings of Paul, is a gross trivialisation, both of their meaning and of their intent. The idea that Paul was specifically concerned with homosexuality and with consensual same-sex relationships is incorrect³⁸⁴. What Paul was writing about was the cultural clashes between two very different societies. The Greek and Roman societies possessed the culture belonging to a dominant power, whereby anal penetration was used as a way of subjugating and controlling subjugated people, societies or groups. These were societies whereby only the penetrated partner was condemned, and the penetrator was not. Of course this also provided an outlet for the practice of sexual licence, physical delights and for safe sex. Paul's need to define a new word for the activities which he was condemning suggests that he was taking care to ensure that the loving same-sex relationships were not the targets for his attack. There were other already existing Greek words were available and these could have been used.

Paul was equally writing from the viewpoint of a subject or victim society, where very different rules about power structures were applied, and the horror of being victims of same-sex rape is evident in the bible and other Jewish texts. The condemnation of same-sex rape was carried over into Christianity from Judaism, and this has led to increasingly strong and extremely vituperative condemnations of it in the developing Church. The use of the word Sodomy is avoided in this analysis since the definition of the term, which initially was framed in the context of domination and same-sex rape, eventually came to be used to define all actions of anal penetration, including consensual acts. It has now come to be used to condemn the expression of every

have instead joined the Roman Catholic Church. For more information on these matters see www.anglican-mainstream.net/

³⁸¹ See for example: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2156406/Anglican-church-schism-declared-over-homosexuality.html>. Accessed 9 April 2013.

³⁸²“ With the Winter Olympics set to begin in less than two months, Russian President Vladimir Putin is positioning his country as a global leader of intolerance for homosexuality. While Russia does not wish to be a superpower, he told parliament in a major speech Thursday, it will be a bulwark against “so-called tolerance — genderless and infertile” that equates “good and evil.” He went on to denounce the “destruction of traditional values from the top,” which he said is “inherently undemocratic because it is based on abstract ideas and runs counter to the will of the majority of the people.” December 16 2013. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/putin-violates-the-olympic-spirit-with-harsh-stance-on-gays/2013/12/12/682c2868-635b-11e3-a373-0f9f2d1c2b61_story.html

³⁸³ While there is much debate amongst Bible scholars about which, if any scriptures specifically address homosexuality there are eight references that are commonly used by some people to condemn it. These are commonly referred to as “the clobber passages”. Of these eight, only six are still used with any regularity as two have been accepted by most as not relating to homosexuality. Four of these (Genesis 19:1-5, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 23:17) are found in the Old Testament while the other four (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, Romans 1:21-31 and Jude 1:6-7) are located in the New Testament. The two that have been widely discarded are Deuteronomy 23:17 and Jude 1:6-7. Deuteronomy 23:17 is essentially about what is called cult prostitution. The passages from Leviticus have been fully discussed in this account. Genesis 19:1-5 is the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Jude 1:6-7 states that Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. Any relationship to homosexuality only works amongst those Churches or individuals who have chosen to make homosexuality the scapegoat for inappropriate or immoral sex.

³⁸⁴ See section 3:1:8 in this document.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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type of same-sex relationship. It is often taken to refer to homosexuals (sodomites) and all types of homosexual acts.

In the earlier sections of this document it has been shown that the conclusions of the neurophysiological and psychological analysis demonstrate that the drives to engage in various forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour come from two opposing sources, in which the approaches that are appropriate for the care and management of one are counterproductive in the other. Therefore the traditional teaching of the Christian Church as it is defined by paragraph 2357 of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church which identifies a single source as the driving force behind all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour cannot be correct. This investigation has examined the driving forces behind same sex relationships and gender and sexually variant conditions from both the theological and the psychological points of view, and it is shown that this duality exists. It concludes that the judgement on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour must be made on the basis of responsibility in all actions, including same-sex intercourse, and by separating all sexual actions that are carried out for the noble pursuit of love, from all other actions which are engaged in for the carnal abuse of sex. Not only does this affirm the results of these neurophysiological investigations it is demonstrated that this view is also in accord with the teaching of Jesus, and it demands the same high standards of moral behaviour from all people, heterosexual, homosexual, transsexual, transgendered and bisexual alike.

Today the wide range of attitudes to homosexuality, and to all manner of gender and sexually variant behaviour is a strong indication of the amount of confusion about the approach which Christian teaching should take. Those who rely on Church traditions can take a very clear view, but these traditions are built up through the need for the Church to gain respectability within a gender unequal society, and they have little to do with the teachings of the Gospel Church. The bible was not put into its final form until some three hundred years after the life of Christ, and some of the compromises which the Church had made to gain respectability and authority are found in the bible itself. This means that the bible cannot be properly understood without regard to the context of the societies within which it is written. This is why it is essential to find out what attitudes to the gender and sexually variant conditions were in the first century, and to do this independently of bible itself.

All of the evidence indicates that the early Christian Church continued to follow the Jewish tradition, and that it took the same attitude as those parts of the surrounding cultures, which likewise demanded responsibility in action and which also placed the boundary which divided acceptable and unacceptable behaviour between actions which were carried out in the noble pursuit of love, and those that were engaged in for the carnal abuse of sex. Therefore the motives, and not the acts, were the driving forces for making these distinctions. So all the relationships of same-sex love could be expressed without any restriction, and all other types of same-sex acts could be celebrated if the motives were correct.

What is no less disturbing are the ways in which the Christian Churches through the centuries have made use of translation drift and re-interpretation of bible passages to reinforce the traditional teachings of the Church. The persecution of all gender and sexually variant people over the centuries has brought shame on Christianity. Today

in some parts of the world and in some Churches a liberalisation has occurred, but in the other parts of the world the persecution continues to increase.

As well as examining gender and sexual variation, this analysis impacts on gender differentiation in regard to the eligibility of women to be ordained for the priesthood, and to the traditions of authority which have developed within the Church.

Gender equality, gender role separation, gender orientation and gender and sexually variant behaviour cannot be considered separately, because they all interlink, and a change in any one of these has consequences for all of the others. That creates a particular problem for churches which place the sanctity of their church traditions alongside the bible texts. The Roman Catholic Church, and also to a lesser extent the Church of England are the organisations most greatly affected by this. Modern society has now destroyed the historic connections between the religious and secular authorities which previously enabled the traditional teachings of the Christian Churches to be maintained, and this social status has lasted for nearly two thousand years. As with Jeremiah³⁸⁵ the changes that are now required may be difficult to accept, but they should not be avoided. When Jesus overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the Temple court he was attacking the financial practices of a religious institution³⁸⁶. When Jesus also criticised the Scribes and Pharisees he was attacking the theological and social attitudes of a particular religious group³⁸⁷. It is perfectly valid to argue that institutions and groups are needed to enable good things to happen, but Jesus did not come to preach the Gospel message for the benefit of an institution. He came to spread a Gospel of Christian Love.

4:2 Same-Sex Marriage

This conclusion has implications for the controversies about marriage in the present day. The Church of England study document on “Men and Women in Marriage”³⁸⁸ has provided a useful indication of the current Church of England thinking. However this document fails to take a proper account of how the social and legal attitudes to gender equality and to marriage have changed over the centuries. Paragraph 19 of the document states: “There have been cultures (the patriarchal period of the Old Testament among them) in which compromises have been accepted especially over exogamy and monogamy, but these compromises have tended to be of limited scope. It is possible to exaggerate the cultural relativity of marriage-forms. Many

³⁸⁵Jeremiah 21:8-9 “This is what the Lord says: See; I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. Whoever stays in the city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives”

³⁸⁶ The narrative occurs near the end of the Synoptic Gospels (at Mark 11:15–19, 11:27–33, Matthew 21:12–17, 21:23–27 and Luke 19:45–48, 20:1–8) and near the start in the Gospel of John (at John 2:13–16).

³⁸⁷In Matthew 23:1-12. Jesus warned his disciples about the scribes and the Pharisees (cf. Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:45-47). The Pharisees also challenged his behaviour and teaching, as the Gospels indicate (e.g. Mark 2:6, 16; 3:22; Matthew 9:11; 12:2).

³⁸⁸ “Men and Women in Marriage”. A document from the Faith and Order Commission published with the agreement of the House of Bishops of the Church of England and approved for study GS Misc 1046. Church House Publishing April 2013

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Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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differences there have been, but they hardly amount to a significant challenge to these structural foundations.”

That is a statement that should itself be challenged, for profound changes in social outlook have taken place. There is little reference to same-sex marriage within the Jewish literature, however the Talmud teaches against same-sex marriage in Chullin 92a, saying that the nations of the world, however sinful, corrupt or perverse, still have the merit of at least three behaviours, one of which is “they do not write a ketubah (marriage contract) for two males.” In a commentary on Genesis Rabbi Huna said in the name of Rabbi Joseph, “The generation of the Flood was not wiped out until they wrote marriage documents for the union of a man to a male or to an animal.” (Genesis Rabbah 26:5; Leviticus Rabbah 23:9). Same-sex marriage was anathema to the first Century Jewish Teachers, but it is also notable that their real objection is to the writing of a marriage contract, for that action would have the consequence of diminishing the status of at least one of the partners to that of a woman. At the Council of Trent (1545 - 1563) it was first decided by the Catholic Church that a Priest had to officiate a wedding, and thus make a marriage³⁸⁹, on the grounds that, although marriage itself had been a civil contract, the bonds which were created in marriage were something that never should be broken³⁹⁰. According to English Common Law which developed from the 12th century onward, all property which a wife had possessed at the time of her marriage became a possession of her husband. The idea that a woman is a legally equal partner in a marriage is a modern perception, for women only obtained suffrage and equality in property rights after 1928 and the requirement to enact the Gender Equality act in 2010, (with the special exemption for religious organisations!), indicates that this is still a live issue. Such major changes in the legal standing of women must have had a profound effect on married relationships, yet these are changes to which the Church did not object.

The question of the social changes that are likely to occur subsequent to the passing of the United Kingdom Equal Marriage act in June 2013, which applies the same status of a civil marriage to opposite sex and to same-sex couples, is described in Paragraph 50 of the report. It states: “It has seemed to some that the disagreement over same-sex marriage is a disagreement over mere names. But names govern how we think, and how we think governs what we learn to appreciate. When marriage is spoken of unclearly or misleadingly, it distorts the way couples try to conduct their relationship and makes for frustration and disappointment. The reality

³⁸⁹ See also Section 2:1:2 in this document. At the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563) it was first decided that a Priest had to officiate a wedding, and thus make a marriage. Before that time only the landed nobility went to a cleric, who then acted as a government clerk in the modern sense, who recorded the transaction so that the political/economic deals and obligations of the royal and landed families being sealed by the marriage could take place. Other people simply moved in together and by common law they were married. If they were church going they simply showed up at church and announced that they had moved in together, thus they had married. No sacramental ceremony was involved. With few local exceptions, until 1545, Christian marriages in Europe were by mutual consent, declaration of intention to marry and upon the subsequent physical union of the parties. The couple would promise verbally to each other that they would be married to each other; the presence of a priest or witnesses was not required. This promise was known as the “verbum.” If freely given and made in the present tense (e.g., “I marry you”), it was unquestionably binding; if made in the future tense (“I will marry you”), it would constitute a betrothal.

³⁹⁰ This comes from many Gospel texts. See: Mark 1:1-12, Mark 10:7-9, Luke 16:18 Matthew 19:9 or Matthew 5:32.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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of marriage between one man and one woman will not disappear as the result of any legislative change, for God has given this gift, and it will remain part of our created human endowment. But the disciplines of living in it may become more difficult to acquire, and the path to fulfilment, in marriage and in other relationships, more difficult to find.” With the vast changes in the social structure of marriage over the centuries this would appear to be a feeble argument to make. Given that the act exempts the religious bodies from its provisions, and that people remain perfectly entitled to continue to treat marriage in their own traditional ways it is difficult to see significant justification for the contrary argument it presents.

It has been noted earlier in this account that for many centuries the Christian church had conducted services of “Brother making” or in Greek, Adelphopoiesis³⁹¹. Many of the religious symbols and the declarations used in the services mirrored those of marriage, and the full social and legal commitments of a marriage were embraced. Rather than proto-marriages, these relationships have been shown in this analysis to be an extension of the first century rabbinic partnerships which were carried over into the Christian Church. Paradoxically in the gender equal societies of today these services of fraternisation are closer to the present day attitudes to marriage than the first century viewpoints. The major area of difference would seem to be that of anal penetration.

However in Western societies of the present, where all men and women are treated equally, and when loving, committed, responsible and faithful same-sex relationships can be entered into without any humiliation being involved, all of the arguments that are used in the bible for the prohibition of anal penetration within loving relationships disappear. Therefore in all same-sex relationships given which are given in love and commitment within a gender equal society, there should be no absolute prohibition of any act that involves anal penetrative sex³⁹². Nor should there be any condemnation of this activity by the Church. Paragraph 50 in the document on “Men and Women in Marriage” argues for the reverse of what it intends. There may indeed be a good case for calling one of these services “Marriage” and the other “Adelphopoiesis”. The negativity of the Church on these matters has given society the dominant role, and the case is made that the one word “Marriage” for both should be used.

4:3 Third World Issues

The significance of the story of Mary and Martha (in Luke 10:38-42) may tend to be underplayed in today’s Western societies, for that also challenged the stratifications of the gender roles in first century civilisations. For a present day version of the story it is better to look outside the Christian faith and to consider how such a story may be regarded by the Taliban or by Muslim communities in the villages of Pakistan. The shooting of Malala Yousafzai³⁹³, a 14-year-old female civil rights activist, who has been campaigning for girls’ education in the Swat Valley in north-west Pakistan, is an

³⁹¹ See Section 3:2:2 in this document

³⁹² This is a challenging statement and the arguments of this viewpoint are presented in Gilchrist, S. (2011). “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”. See footer for access

³⁹³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19882799>

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example of someone who is expressing Mary's role. In first century Greco/Roman society the social pressures that demanded the education of at least some women to a high standard led to the challenges which attacked the male domination of that society and the importance of depriving women of an equivalent education is not lost on the present day male dominated societies. The price which Malala and her companions have paid, and their courage in continuing their campaign to ensure that women can be educated reveals the costs that are involved.

In theory gender complementarity is practiced but gender discrimination is enforced. How many more Malalas have to be shot before gender equality is achieved? How many more people like David Kato have to be murdered before LGB&T people can be accepted as people who are of good standing in society? This is a challenge that the Churches must face, but the challenge is at least as much about confronting social prejudice, as it is about theological debate. The recently elected Archbishop of Uganda has spoken out against the extremities of the anti-homosexuality bill which is has been presented to the Ugandan Parliament. However he does not oppose jail sentences for such behaviour. From citing Paul in 1 Timothy 3:13 he argues that only people of good standing can serve as church leaders - and clearly homosexuals do not fit into that category.³⁹⁴ He correctly states that homosexuality is a big issue in Africa. A view has been expressed which states that "The Church will commit Gospel suicide if it preaches tolerance of homosexuality in Africa and in most of the third world, and that the Church will commit Gospel suicide in the developed countries of the West if it does not".

The dilemma which the Church faces in Africa and the third world is the same as the one which was faced by the first century Church. So, does the Church try to gain respectability through endorsing the traditions of a gender-unequal society? Or does challenge these traditions by seeking to express the Gospel of Christ? This analysis has demonstrated that the doctrines which are today considered to be the traditional teachings of the Church on homosexuality and on sexual relationships are not those which come from the Gospel Church. It has further revealed that the distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour were not determined on a gendered basis or sexual orientation. They required responsibility of behaviour and the separation of actions that are taken in the noble pursuit of love from those of the carnal abuse of sex. It is also shown that the reasons for the major disconnection between the teachings of Gospel Church on gender role, gender identity and sexual orientation and the doctrines of the fourth century Church occurred because of the compromises that were made with a gender unequal society. Whether it was on the grounds of gender identity, gender equality, sexual orientation or sexuality the early church made no compromise and it challenged in faith all it believed was incorrect. In Luke 9:24 Jesus said: "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever

³⁹⁴ The Rt. Rev Stanley Ntagali was elected the eighth Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Uganda in a secret ballot in June 2012 and was consecrated in December. He has joined international concern over the death penalty provisions in Uganda's infamous 'Kill the gays' bill in 2009 but has spoken out against homosexuality in the past and backed the prison sentences given for some kinds of gay acts. He said in 2009: "Homosexuality is a big issue in Africa. The Bible says that only men of good standing, following the word of Christ can be leaders of the Church. We disagree with our counterparts in England and America, who ordain homosexuals as priests." He has also said: "I think the death penalty is not acceptable. I think taking someone to jail for a period of time would be sufficient."

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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loses their life for me will save it.” Maybe to follow this command in a gender unequal society might seem to be like a Gospel suicide, but the Christian Gospel professes the message of resurrection, and should this not be resurrection Church?

An Unfinished Reformation

Susan Gilchrist

This document brings together information from a number of sources to examine the development of the attitudes to gender equality, gender complementarity and gender and sexual variance within the Christian Church. Part 1 of this document gives an overview of the approach and the principles of analysis. An introduction to the issues of cultural differences and compromises is also provided. Part 2 considers the history and the subsequent development of these Church traditions by working backwards from the understanding of the sixteenth Century Reformers to determine how these viewpoints were understood by the fourth century Church, how they differed from the original Gospel views, and the transformations that occurred. Part 3 of this document has the same objective, but this time the material is examined from the perspective of the surrounding cultures from which the Church developed. A further perspective is provided by using the results of some recent neurophysiological and psychological research which shows that the traditional teaching of the church on homosexuality and gender and sexual variance cannot be correct³⁹⁵. Part 4 considers the impact of these on the present day Church. The discussion and conclusions are contained in Part 5. From examining the inconsistencies and the conflicts which are encountered when these three approaches are compared with each other, it is hoped that a better understanding of the relevance and the accuracy of present day Church teaching on homosexuality, gender complementarity, gender equality and on gender and sexual variance can be found, and that the original teaching of Jesus can be restored.

Part 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The gender variant conditions have been given more attention in this analysis firstly because of experience and second because the markers which define the conflicts can be more easily identified. However the results can be applied equally to both conditions. The analysis considers the development of the gender and sexual variant conditions to be different outcomes of the common processes which are involved in identity creation and in the terms of the nature of their formation that is quite correct. Nevertheless it is very important to define the differences since these are often not understood - even and perhaps indeed most notably, among sexually variant people themselves. This investigation has demonstrated that these are processes which are tuned to maximise the degrees of potential and individuality which can be developed in each person and it indicates how the variations in the processes can lead to the situations where both the gender and sexually variant identities are formed³⁹⁶.

³⁹⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach". See footer for access.

³⁹⁶³⁹⁶ A summary of this research is given in Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014): "Christianity and Crisis: An Overview of Gender and Sexual Differences in the Early and Modern Christian Church". This is further elaborated in three companion papers which make use of recent developments in neurophysiological and psychological research to put together a new understanding of gender and sexually variant behaviour in the Christian Church. These documents may be read either as standalone papers or together. The first paper is: Gilchrist, S. (2013), "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian teaching".
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The results from the neurophysiological and psychological analysis also confirm that these conditions are identity driven, which means that as extensive a range of moral attitudes and behaviour must be encountered in the gender and sexually variant communities as are found in society at large. However the analysis goes further than this, because it demonstrates how this understanding of gender dysphoria and of its dynamics can be applied in other circumstances. It is shown that similar dynamics are encountered in conditions which involve personality disorders, such as those connected with depression, addiction etc. It is also capable of giving a greater insight into further areas such as the autistic spectrum disorders. Although this analysis focuses on gender and sexual variation its results have a much broader scope.

5:1 Overview

5:1:1 Conflicts and Conflict types

Advances in personal development take place through the resolution of the conflicts which these forces create. The effective management of the conflicts depends upon the existence of a cognitive continuum, and that broadly means the ability to have some understanding of the relationships between cause and effect. It is shown that a fundamental change in the character of these conflicts occurs during the transition period around the age of two years. The conflicts which have their origins from after the transition period may be characterised as goal driven, and these look forward to the rewards of the goal that is sought. Issues of self identity are not usually involved.

The identity driven conflicts possess roots which have already developed before the transition period, and it is demonstrated that these conflicts must be seen to be the symptom of the failure to develop a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. In the absence of any cognitive continuum there is no interaction between cause and effect and these identity driven conflicts are driven by the rejection of the enforced attribute or identity. Identity driven conflicts may be characterised by the obsessive and compulsive pursuit of some particular goal; but after that goal has been reached, the overwhelming intensity of the previous drive to achieve it often contrasts powerfully with the modesty of the outcomes that are encountered.

These identity driven conflicts possess bipolar characteristics. Because they are not goal driven they can manifest themselves with extreme intensities on the one hand, and yet they can seem to disappear on the other. It has been shown that all attempts to fight these conflicts do not succeed. Therefore the best management methods seek inversion, absolute acceptance and the full acknowledgement of the richness which these experiences could bring³⁹⁷.

on Homosexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach” The second paper is: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church”. Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). “An Unfinished Reformation”. The third paper is: Gilchrist, S. (2013): “Reform and the Christian Church”. See footer for access to these documents.

³⁹⁷ Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). “Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality”. See footer for access

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Access via: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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There are two very sharply contrasting main reasons as to why gender and sexually variant activities take place. One is from goal directed behaviour that concentrates upon the physical gratifications of sex. The second comes from the outpouring of love between two people who are sexually attracted to each other who happen to be of the same sex. Their aim is to be true to their own identities and to each other in relationships which are founded on love, commitment and mutual respect.

Not only do the conflicts stem from conditions which differ markedly from each other, they also have opposing dynamics. Goal driven conflicts look forward in a search of the rewards which have been promised. Identity driven conflicts instead look back at what has already been created, and their drive is to reject the identity or the attribute which is being enforced. Not only that: the methods that are essential to manage the different types of conflict are almost opposite to one another. Therefore attempting to provide well intentioned support; or to manage gender and sexual variation by using the conviction or the Church doctrines that define these as goal driven conflicts can have a very damaging counterproductive effect.

5:1:2 Doctrines and Beliefs

The discord and the trauma which these conflicts create may be enormous, and an absolute requirement for effective management is that both of these conditions must be recognised and that they are given the management they need. That has not happened in the Christian Church. The present position of the majority of Christian Churches on homosexuality and by implication on all the gender and sexually variant conditions is unambiguously described in the 1997 Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church³⁹⁸. The labels which this catechism imposes seem to be totally clear. They decree that not only is homosexuality intrinsically disordered, but they also demand full conformity to the doctrines of natural law³⁹⁹ and that the principles of sexual

³⁹⁸Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997. "Homosexuality refers to the relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."

³⁹⁹Natural law, (or the law of nature), is a system of law which is supposedly determined by nature, therefore it is universal and it is naturally understood. In the Twelfth Century, Gratian equated natural law with divine law. However a century later, Thomas Aquinas brought natural law back to its independent state by asserting that natural law was to be considered as the rational creature's participation in the eternal law. Therefore natural law was not only to be used to pass judgment on the moral worth of the various laws, but also to determine what the law said in the first place. However Aquinas also argued that because human reason could not fully comprehend the eternal principles on which natural law was based, it had to be supplemented by revealed Divine law, and this was interpreted by the theology of the Church. So, instead of absolute independence, these doctrines meant that natural law, as understood in the Roman Catholic tradition, provides a set of laws which is moderated by the theology of the Church. See: Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". See footer for access.

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Draft: Printed: 11/01/2014

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complementarity are adopted⁴⁰⁰. The statement however confirms that the genesis of homosexuality is at present not well understood, and that this doctrine has largely been developed from the traditions of the Church. Nevertheless this Church doctrine identifies every type of gender or of sexually variant behaviour as being in pursuit of lust, promiscuity, prostitution or for licentious sex. Not only are the identity driven conflicts ignored, the possibility of their existence is also denied, and yet it has been demonstrated in this investigation that the strength and the constancy of the driving forces which lie behind them can be overwhelming. It is also demonstrated that the traditional Church teachings on gender and sexual variant behaviour and on gender complementarity were not those of Jesus and the Gospel Church.

The resulting gender discrimination which came through the misapplication of gender complementarity and centuries of persecution, condemnation murder and rejection of all gender and sexually variant people whose most earnest aims and intentions were to live totally moral, faithful, committed and honest lives in ways that were true to the Christian Gospel, brings shame on the Church.

5:2 Labels

Labels are used to identify people all the time. Sometimes these labels are useful but at other times labels may be used to keep people apart. Labels are used to answer the questions of: "Who am I?" or "Who are you?" But just as each tree branches in a way that is unique, each person builds a self identity which is also unique and which is different to everyone else. That uniqueness creates all of the quirks and the individualities, the richnesses and the varieties of life which each person possesses. Thus everyone creates many different labels. Labels can help but labels can destroy; labels force people into categories and they may also be used as instruments of power. This account has looked at how labels are applied in three different ways. These are the labelling of psychology, the labelling of personal experience and the labelling of Christian belief.

⁴⁰⁰Current day doctrines on Gender Complementarity are perhaps best summed up in articles 2332-2335 of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church. "2332 Sexuality affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. 2333 Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out. 2334 In creating men 'male and female,' God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity. 2335 Each of the two sexes is an image of the power and tenderness of God, with equal dignity though in a different way. The union of man and woman in marriage is a way of imitating in the flesh the Creator's generosity and fecundity". While few would argue about the delights of a gender complementarity which simply delights in the differences between the sexes, many more would argue against a doctrine of gender complementarity that compels it. It is shown in this analysis that this doctrine was used to enforce the practices of gender discrimination against women and also the submission of women to men for centuries in society. It is also shown that this doctrine arose because of the need for the early Church to gain respectability in male dominated Greco/Roman society, and that it is contrary to the teaching of Jesus in the Gospel itself.

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Labels of psychology give medical names which often regard these conditions as psychoses or as perversions, where the normal course of development has been disrupted by trauma or inappropriate desire. These are the presumptions on which traditional treatment has often been based. It fails to consider that these conditions are identity driven. Therefore many of the medical treatments which have been used are totally counterproductive since they are directed towards the suppression of desire, instead of finding ways for people to be themselves⁴⁰¹.

Labels of Christian belief pursue the theology of the Church.

These labels can be studied from three perspectives, those of psychology, those of personal experience and those of Christian belief. Too often the labels are used as a means of exclusion, to define concepts of separation and to transfer blame from one culture to another. Religion holds the power to do the greatest evil and it possesses the power to do the greatest good. The greatest evil comes when religion misuses its power and love for its own community to enforce the labels which keep other people out. That is the way of identifying the enemy, and this leads to division and war. The greatest good comes when it is open to all and when all labels are removed. The Christian Gospel is one of inclusion. As heterosexual, homosexual and transsexual people everyone is accepted alike by Christ and the labels of separation, blame and exclusion must drop away in the Gospel of Christian Love.

5:3 Changes

The changes of centuries must also be reversed. From the pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines adopted by the Church of the Apostles have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines which were created by the later Church. Thus the theological justifications which today are used to validate the presumptions for a male leadership, with its male prerogatives, and its argument for an exclusively male priesthood are founded on these later Church traditions. They do not come from the Gospel Church. The current Christian doctrines declare that the possession of homosexual desires is not sinful, but to allow any expression of them whatever is a mortal sin. The contrast between these different views demonstrates how translation drift and reinterpretations have changed the message of the church from one which could at one time celebrate the fulfilment of same-sex relationships which are given and received in love, into an outlook which now condemns any and every expression of same-sex relationship and act. Within the Western societies of today; where all men and all women are treated equally, when loving, committed, responsible and faithful same-sex relationships can now be entered into with no humiliation being encountered and where there is no disturbance to the social order of the types that are encountered in a gender unequal society, all of the arguments which are presented in the bible for the prohibition of the acts of same-sex anal penetration in loving relationships disappear. Nor should there be any condemnation of this activity by the Church⁴⁰².

⁴⁰¹ For the full analysis see Gilchrist, S. 2011. "Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality".

⁴⁰² This does not tolerate any sexual action which is not founded on love.

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The labels must also be relevant to any current situation and Judaism has always applied two meanings to any biblical text. The first is the original meaning and the second is what the text means in the current culture and the correct time. In present day gender unequal societies, the social and practical arguments that are presented against same-sex anal penetration still possess considerable force⁴⁰³. These inter cultural conflicts must be faithfully addressed, but the use of the labels of defamation which are at present being inflicted by each section of the Christian church in order to condemn the other is destroying the credibility of Christianity throughout the world. It diminishes the Church, and it denies the Gospel of Christian love.

The first Christian teaching made use of the idiom of the Didache, which is translated as the “Two ways”. These were the “Way of darkness” and the “Way of light”. It has been shown that the same principles of duality are found to apply across cultures, continents and in religious beliefs. Those people who transcended the sex gender boundaries to adopt moral standards which were seen to be true to the ideals of both lives were regularly given a high and often priestly status. Those who transgressed the sex gender boundaries for the pursuit of gratification and lust without any regard to the moral standards of their society were very strongly condemned. This same duality was also present in early Christian teaching, but in pursuit of its own agenda the Christian Church in same-sex relationships has sought to extinguish the “Way of light”. Today there are many gay and lesbian couples within the Christian church, both in the clergy and the laity, who seek to live their lives inside committed, loving and faithful relationships. However the Church has developed its own labels of exclusion to refuse them the distinctive ministry that they could have given, and the centuries of guilt from these labels of condemnation, has descended like the blight.

Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Zwingli could all argue, on the basis of their application of largely Augustinian teaching, that many of the doctrines which were expressed by their contemporary Roman Catholic Church were not those of the Gospel Church, and that attitude typifies the views of the reform movement to the present day. This analysis takes that argument one step further and it argues that that these doctrines adopted by Augustine and the fourth century Church on gender equality, gender role and sexuality equally do not come from the Gospel Church, and by that time a major disconnection had already occurred.

5:4 Gender Equality and Complementarity

In the terms of their own social messages, both Christianity and the Greco/Roman Goddess cults shared some key elements in common. This was because they both represented minority and subjugated groups within dominant societies. Therefore a major challenge (and achievement) that was met by Christianity was its success in transferring the distinctive viewpoints of the minority Jewish religion into a dominant culture. That success meant confronting the self-centred moralities of the culture and the sexual standards which were characteristic of the Greco/Roman male dominated society. This additionally meant challenging and usurping the power structures which

⁴⁰³ This is of particular concern to the African Church.
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are formed inside these powerful societies by placing the concern for the victims and the suppressed first on the religious and the social agendas of those cultures, and by embracing an all-encompassing morality that is founded on compassion, nurturing and love. These moral characteristics were more characteristic of first century female expectations, and women were also a subjugated group. However this was a barrier which could not be crossed by any gender defined Goddess cult, and it is shown in this analysis that an initial period of complete gender equality and transcendence was needed for this breakthrough to take place. What was required to make the breakthrough was a religion which worshipped one single gender transcendent God and which possessed a social perspective that was close to the cults. However short or long this early period of absolute gender transcendence was, it had to be totally complete, for without it Christianity could never have made the transition into a world religion from a local gender defined sect.

Therefore instead of simply seeking gender neutrality the Christian Gospel provided a major role for women and it is shown that a doctrine of complete gender equality was expressed within early Christianity which would find acceptance in present day society. It is also not surprising that women figure prominently in the early Church. However even though these important roles at first were given to women, the social constraints imposed by gender complementarity meant that the public spokespeople for this new religion could only be men. Through their pursuit of a male agenda and from its pursuit of authority and respectability, the doctrines of the early Church have been disconnected from the traditions and the doctrines adopted by the later Church⁴⁰⁴. Therefore the theological justifications which in the present day are used to validate the presumptions for male leadership, together with its male prerogatives, and its arguments for an exclusively male priesthood are also built on these later traditions. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus and the Gospel Church.

5:5 Choices

The passage from Jeremiah 21:8-9, does not appear to have given the Israelites a great choice⁴⁰⁵. The options were about the lesser of two evils, and that is probably the way in which many people still feel about accepting LGB&T people into the Christian Church.

One of the main fears which arise from the lack of knowledge comes from the belief that homosexuality can be caught and that people can be recruited into a lifestyle of sexual immorality and abuse. It has been demonstrated in this analysis that this fear is unfounded. It has been shown that none of these LGB&T conditions are driven by the desire for inappropriate action. They are driven instead by the need to establish the coherent self identity which allows LGB&T people to live their lives in the ways that are true to themselves. Therefore as great a range of moral standards, motives

⁴⁰⁴ See Section 3:1 of this document. Also: Gilchrist, S. (Pub.2014). "From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church". Or Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation". See footer for access.

⁴⁰⁵ "This is what the Lord says: See; I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. Whoever stays in the city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives" Gilchrist, S. (2013). "An Unfinished Reformation".

and ideals are found within these LGB&T communities as those which exist within society at large. Nevertheless it is hardly surprising that any completely rejected and reviled group of people should react with their opposition to the standards and the demands of any organisation that is rejecting them.

This examination has established that the understanding of the Church on specific aspects of human sexuality has been built on the execution of inaccurate culturally based interpretations of the Gospel narratives. This severe theological condemnation was accompanied by secular criminalisation of the greatest seriousness. For as long as the Church possessed the authority to act as the social moderator for society, and when homosexual acts were a criminal activity these opinions could never be challenged, and any possibility of long term stable relationships being formed was denied. There was the theological denial and the wilful confusion over the need to make distinctions between same-sex relationships given in love, and those that are engaged in for lust, physical gratification and for safe sex. These prohibitions and persecutions are reasons why homosexuality came to be defined entirely through promiscuity, prostitution and other illicit sexual acts. Homosexuality was only made legal during the 1960's (in Britain in 1967) but the discrimination still continued. For homosexuals who were coming out of the religious and legal repression, the two opposite reactions of flaunting it or of hiding it still possessed considerable force. There was little incentive to conform to the ethics which were demanded by the religious and state institutions which had condemned them, and the challenges of confrontation were always present.

Clearly the distinction has to be made between those whose principal purpose is to engage in same-sex behaviour and relationships for reasons of love and those who engaged in this behaviour for the physical gratifications or the practice of safe sex. However within the lesbian, gay and transgender communities there is also a large incidence of promiscuity, one night stands and multiple partnerships. Some of this may be because of economic necessity and being forced into the sex trade by the rejection of society, or it may be through the counter culture of sexual licence which has been promoted by the rejection of lesbian and gay people by both society and the Christian Church. Others may feel free to indulge in these activities because of the absence of reproductive consequences, however with the widespread availability of contraception that issue has now moved from an area which was of specific gay and lesbian concerns, to one which challenges the attitude of the Christian church to all aspects of the practice of heterosexual and homosexual sex.

However the condemnation of some for these actions should never be transformed into condemning all. This analysis has demonstrated that as large a range of moral attitudes, expectations and behaviour are to be found among all gender and sexually variant people as there is in society at large. The attitude which Jesus took to the eunuchs and to the Gallae priests demonstrate that it is neither the acts nor the gender transformation that is condemned; it is the purpose to which people put their acts. It has shown that the statement by Paul in Galatians 3:28 that: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", and the teaching of Jesus in Mark 7:1-23 mean that all people, lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, transgendered and transsexual who live their lives in the love of Christ and in ways which are true to themselves and to their own

identities, are accepted alike. This traditional teaching of the Christian Church, which condemns all gender and sexually variant behaviour as intrinsically disordered, in the pursuit of lust, promiscuity sexual immorality and its second most heinous act, must instead be replaced by the interpretation which Jesus, John and the other Apostles would have known, which demanded responsibility in action and which also divided acceptable from unacceptable behaviour by using the boundary between the motives of the noble pursuit of love and those of the carnal abuse of sex.

Sexual abuse in the first century was very severely condemned in Judaism, as it was in the Christian Church and this discipline poses as many challenges to the gender and to sexually variant communities as it does to the heterosexual population. It has also been shown in this analysis that the traditional teaching of the church on sexual and gender variance is derived from the gender complementarity in Greco/Roman society. Instead of maintaining the original teaching of Jesus the Church sought to compromise the initial Gospel doctrines of full gender transcendence and fairness in order to gain the respectability which would enable it to convey the remainder of the Gospel message into the wider world. That also means that gender complementarity must be defined as a discipline and not as a doctrine of the Church. This means that in every generation the Church should work out anew, in relation to its contemporary culture and society, what its teaching should be. That also demands the return to the full gender equality, transcendence and fairness of the original Gospel message and this is the present day challenge for the Church.

The consequences of centuries of criminalisation and persecution mean that change is difficult to accept. Prior to legalisation, and for a considerable period subsequent to it, the only sample data that could be collected was from those who were open about their condition and this limited the range of people who could be surveyed. Attempts to compare the fidelity and the behaviour of heterosexual and homosexual couples which fail to take account of the differing social environments of the two groups can only be used to mislead and these studies cannot be given academic respect. Once the stigma of criminality had been removed the pressure was on amongst those who opposed liberalisation to try to interpret research in ways which continued to enforce the traditional definition. However more recent substantive research and the growing understanding of homosexuality makes this outlook become increasingly untenable and enforcing any inevitable linkage between homosexuality and promiscuity can no longer be sustained. Despite this the reaction amongst some has been an increasing determination to impose the traditional views. The pursuit of religious dogma has too often been presented as impartial scientific analysis and it has been pursued as a therapeutic tool. The damage this has caused through the manipulation of guilt and the imposition of campaigning views on homosexuals has been great. The damage it continues to do to the reputation of the church within the medical profession, and in society outside it, will become increasingly severe if this continues to be pursued⁴⁰⁶.

The results of the most recent scientific research show remarkably little difference in the attitudes to relationships within heterosexual and homosexual partnerships. In the end however is probably not scientific research or its manipulation that will win the day. From the early 1960's there has been the resurgence in the rehabilitation of

⁴⁰⁶ For an extended account see Gilchrist, S. (2011). "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". See footer for access.

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First Issued: 1 April 2013. Last update: 12 December 2013.

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homosexuality. The availability of contraception has meant that promiscuity without the reproductive consequences is no longer a homosexual preserve and the equality of heterosexual, homosexual and transgender rights has become fully enshrined in equality law. So when people now meet others who are openly gay and lesbian they find that they too can live conscientious and respectable lives. These changes in society have forced people to come to terms with the reality and the breadth of the homosexual and the transgender conditions. Civil Partnership and Equal Marriage legislation has now been enacted, and loving same-sex relationships are now widely accepted in society. This new situation returns the level of perception more closely to what it was in the New Testament times. More than anything, the awareness which it creates has exposed the ways in which the church has in the past, and still is, using homosexuality as a scapegoat to condemn all types of sexual immorality, and how it still treats it as a lifestyle choice. This is why the church is no longer seen to be a responsible institution by those who are outside it, and the continuing pursuit of what is perceived as discredited dogma continues to destroy the credibility that remains.

The real questions which most need to be asked should not be framed in terms of rejection, but as the questions that look for the right form of welcome instead. These should examine the special qualities which LGB&T people can bring which support and enrich the Church. These issues were examined in a lecture which had the title “Wholly Holy: What Does the Identity of Being LGBT Add to the Identity of Being Christian?” This was presented in St Martin-in-the-Fields by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Wells, present Vicar of the church, on the 30th January 2013.⁴⁰⁷ For LGB&T people this means letting one’s life become transformed through a parable of faith. The experiences of LGB&T people makes them uniquely qualified to break through the assumption that human existence is uniquely tied to reproduction. By doing this, LGB&T people can explore the sustainability of a desire which is neither upheld by the sanctions of social endorsement, nor is it either cemented or distracted by the responsibilities of offspring of and nurture. These characteristics are comparable to those of celibacy of the call to duty, which Jesus advocates in the bible, and they are true for the “pairs” traditions of the society in which he had lived. Therefore instead of singly and in celibacy; both partners who are in loving relationships with each other can devote their lives without the restrictions of family and kinship to spreading the Gospel of Christ.

LGB&T people can transcend the divisions of gender to live those lives which bring enrichment to others, and in a witness which stays true to these ideals. The same degree of sanctity was found in the first century world. The Greeks could regard love between any two men as the highest form of love, and the Jews could celebrate the same love in chavruta partnerships. These interactions between the two people were also specially valued for the increased depths of understanding, relationships and commitment they brought. Instead of adopting the lamentations of Jeremiah, we too should welcome the full inclusion of LGB&T people into the Christian Church and celebrate the unique contributions that they are able to make.

There is another way in which the passage from Jeremiah 21:8-9 is significant today. This analysis does not just challenge attitudes of the Church to gender and sexual

⁴⁰⁷ Available on the St Martin-in-the-Fields website www.smitf.org
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relationships: it challenges the whole framework on which the Church traditions are based. Today there is another difficult choice. Jeremiah had given the Israelites the choice of going into exile, so that they may live in this exile, or to remain where they were, and eventually die because of their refusal to accept the reality of the situation. At the present time Christianity faces an equivalent challenge. Does the Church stay in the country of its own traditions, or does it travel into this new country of exile, so that it can then develop, like the Jews before it, renewed from their experiences of exile, and freed from the godlets which had once been part of its polytheistic past⁴⁰⁸. Can Christianity make that same transformation, and can it also return from this exile to witness anew to the Gospel of Christ? For the Christian message rises above every label and restriction, it is about a God of Love with whom and in whom, everyone can be truly become who they are in the unconditional Love of Christ.

⁴⁰⁸ See Gilchrist, S Pub.2014. "Gender and Sexual Variation in the Bible"
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Part 6: Documents

References are given in the footnotes.

For information on access and the current status of other documents check the website: <http://www.gndr.org.uk/transgender/index.htm>

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