

# **HOMOSEXUALITY: SEXUAL ATTRACTION AND THEORIES OF SEXUAL ATTRACTION**

## **1. Introduction**

First of all it is important to understand according to what sexual attraction is judged. Sexual orientation is judged with regard to the level of sexual attraction towards individuals of the same or opposite sex. This attraction however is not the attraction experienced momentarily towards another individual, but rather the tendency an individual has over an extended period of time in which he or she feels attracted to others, being from the same or opposite sex. (LeVay, 2010:2)

## **2. Possible reasons for the development of deviant sexual attraction and orientation**

The feelings a person has for others are not chosen by the self and in fact are determined by various factors. One myth is that a person is born as a homosexual and therefore cannot change, this is a myth due to the fact that there is no evidence which suggest this assumption to be true (Williams, 2005:231) Thus it is more correct to state that the feelings of attraction towards individuals from the same sex is brought about by either circumstances under which the individual was raised, psychological disorders as well as glandular malfunctions within the body which affects the hormone levels. (West, 2008:15)

Another cause of homosexuality is ascribed to be the result of either sexual abuse or physical abuse specifically by individuals of the opposite sex during childhood. These events brings about a hatred and mistrust in the opposite sex and results in same sex attractions being formed. (Joubert, Rostoll, Esterhuizen & Coetzee, 2012:54) Having a dominant mother and weak or no father is yet another cause of being sexually attracted to the same sex (Joubert, Rostoll, Esterhuizen & Coetzee, 2012:24).

This is due to the false sense of family created by the altered family setup and results in the formation of a false image especially in boys as they see their dominant mother as being overruling and this evokes a fear for women in general. When the father figure on the other hand is completely missing from the family environment there may be a lack of gender and sex role learning for males and this brings about their orientation towards the same sex. (Williams, 2005:252-253)

### **3. Best suited theoretical perspective**

Natural law theory is concerned with the way in which nature, or more specifically God, intended sexuality and sexual orientation to be and how it is practised. It states that the only way any sexual act can be defined as morally just is if it has the potential of bringing about reproduction; in other words vaginal intercourse. (Joubert, Rostoll, Esterhuizen & Coetzee, 2012:21-22) This theory supports the creation story in which God created opposite sexes and gave them the instruction to reproduce.

Queer theory is seen as the theory which is the most suited theory when discussing homosexuality and sexual attraction. The reason why this theory is the most suitable theory is due to the fact that Queer theory states that sexuality is not an inborn or natural dimension of humanity but that it is rather learned and constructed by history as well as the culture in which one finds yourself in. (Sullivan, 2003:1) Another tenet of Queer theory is that all people have a certain degree of sexual feelings towards the same sex which is acquired as you age. (West, 2008:15)

Due to the deviation of Queer theory from the theory of natural law it has various influences on counselling. One being that due to its deviation from the norm as described by natural law it enhances the understanding of the deviation found in sexual attraction between individuals of the same sex.

It furthermore also supports various sources which gathered evidence which shows that the homosexual person is not to be blamed for the orientation as society and other factors influences this orientation and it also helps the counsellor to eliminate all stigmatisations the individual holds which is ascribed to him by society which blames him or her for their sexual orientation.

With regard to the reparation of sexual orientation through reparative therapy the belief in healing through forgiveness and prayer is strengthened through this theory as hope is created. Hope is created in the sense that the individual is shown that the self is not at fault until giving in to the deviant orientation as well as that this is not what God intended and that He will help and free the individual from this deviant state and restore sexual orientation to the natural law.(Williams, 2005:240)

#### **4. The impact of the inner conflict on daily functioning**

For the Christian homosexual a great deal of inner conflict arises due to the believes Christianity has with regard to homosexuality; the homosexual person may feel ashamed of his sexual orientation and find the self in a constant state of inner conflict and is constantly trying to fight against the “shameful” urges. Thus it is clear that this conflict originates in the feeling of being ashamed.

The inner conflict affects the individual on various levels of functioning. The psychological effects of this inner conflict includes emotional distress as well as an increased probability of suicide and substance abuse. It may furthermore also induce problems with one’s self-image which includes but is not limited to depression and self-hatred. (Joubert, Rostoll, Esterhuizen & Coetzee, 2012:24-25) Spiritually this inner conflict may also result in the individual being in conflict with God as he starts to question Gods love as well as His existence and unconditional acceptance.

These mentioned effects of the inner conflict affects the daily functioning drastically as the individual needs to not only deal with hiding the deviant sexual orientation but also needs to deal with the various consequences of this state of inner conflict. The individual struggles to cope as the individual is psychologically, emotionally and spiritually engaged in this state of conflict.

## **References**

Joubert, N.L., Rostoll, U., Esterhuizen, E., Coetzee, Z., (2012). *Christian Ethics 2B*. Unpublished Study Manual, Germiston, ICP

LeVay, S. (2010). *Gay, Straight And The Reason Why: The Science Of Sexual Orientation*. New York:Oxford University Press

Sullivan, N. (2003). *A Critical Introduction To Queer Theory*. United Kingdom:Edinburg University Press

West, D.J. (2008). *Homosexuality: Its Nature And Causes*. Chicago:Adire Pub. Co.

Williams, B.K. (2005). *Ministering Graciously To The Gay And Lesbian Community: Pouring In The Oil And The Wine*. USA:Destiny Image Publishers, Inc.