

Reading the
[Homo]sexuality
Texts
Redemptively

H E R M E N E U T I C S

SLAVES, WOMEN & HOMOSEXUALS

Exploring the Hermeneutics
of Cultural Analysis



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foreword by Darrell L. Bock



**The
Homosexuality
Question**



Should Christians accept homosexuality today?

(based upon changes in our
approach to slaves and women)

MAIN [RMH] THESIS:

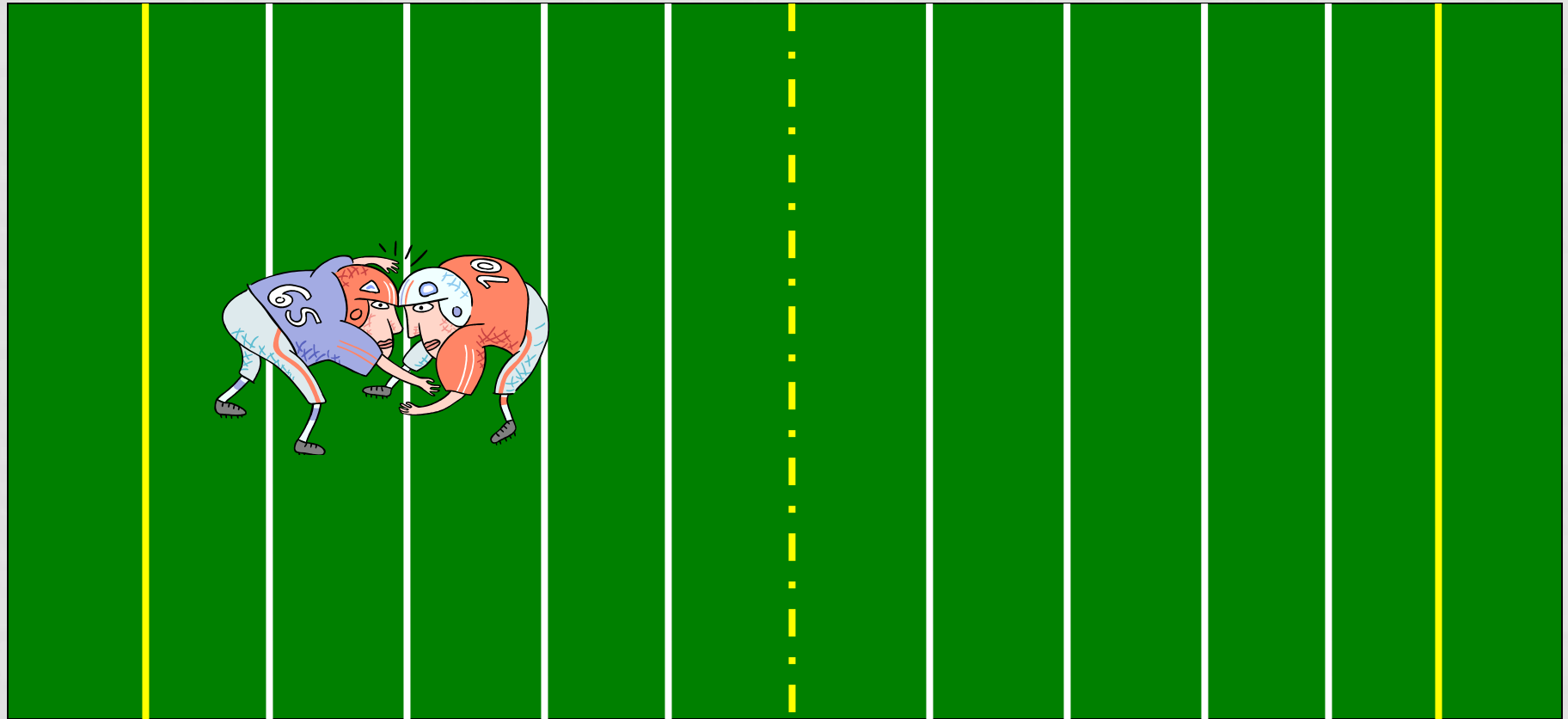
movement is meaning!

e.g.,

football



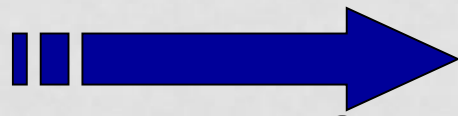
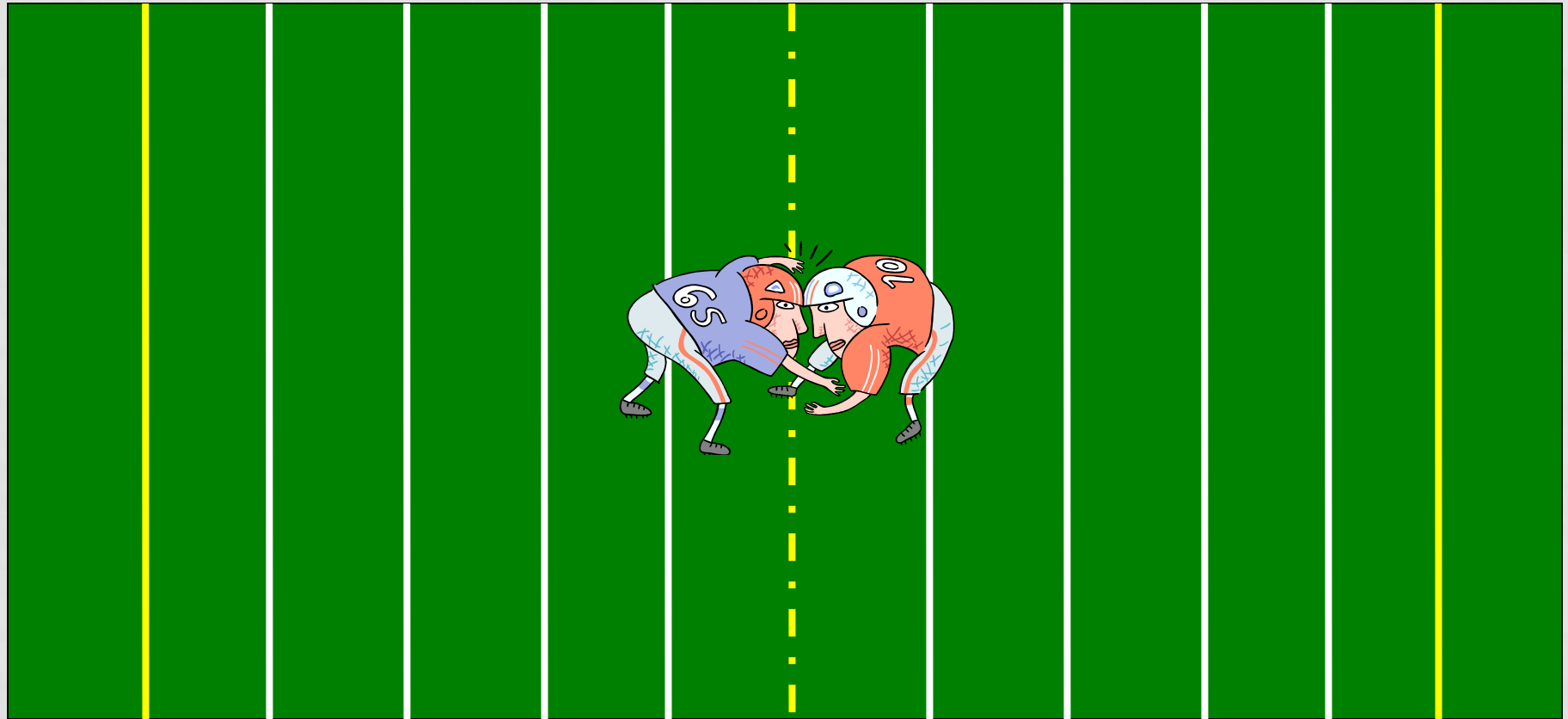
A “Redemptive Movement” Approach



**Ancient Culture
(ANE)**

**Ultimate
Ethic**

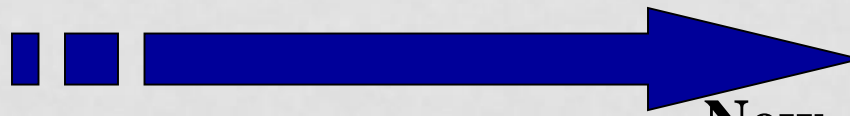
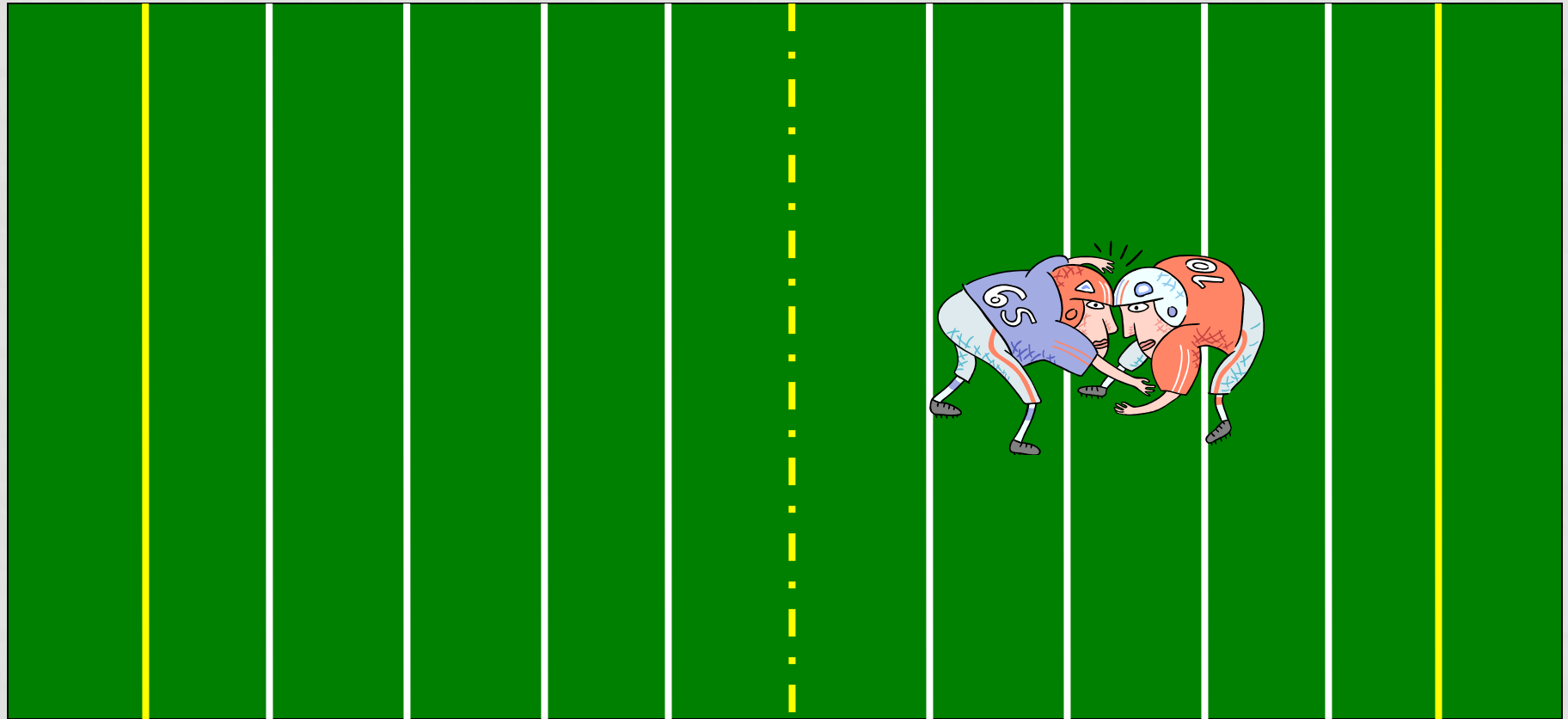
A “Redemptive Movement” Approach



**Old
Testament**

**Ultimate
Ethic**

A “Redemptive Movement” Approach



**New
Testament**

**Ultimate
Ethic**

ANE/GR Culture

more restrictive
(non-affirming)



homosexuality
texts

less restrictive
(affirming)



slavery texts
women texts

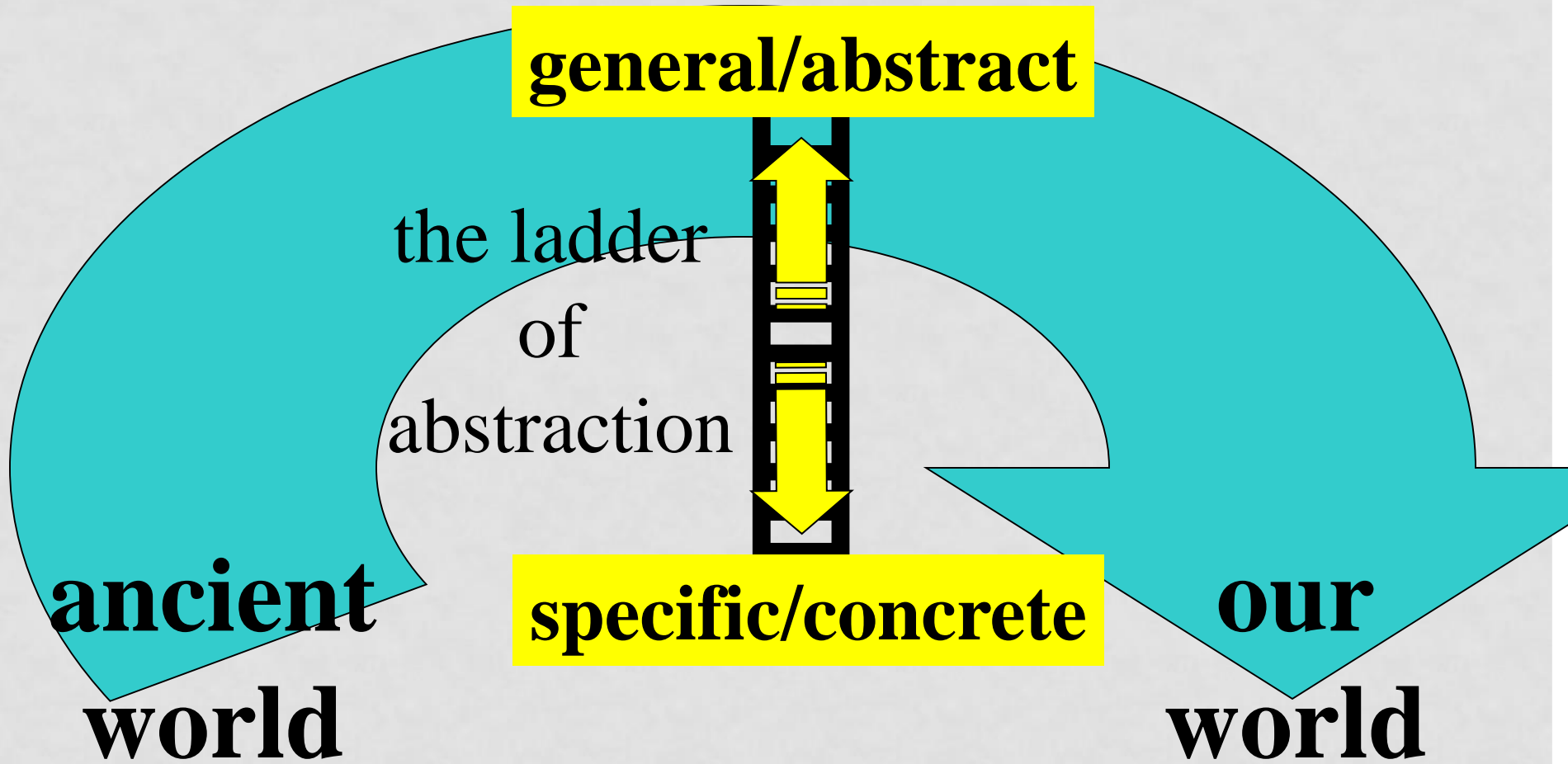
**other C/T criteria
confirm same findings**

other C/T criteria confirm same findings

 ~~18 criteria~~ 😊

 “pragmatics” criterion

PRAGMATICS CRITERION



Ladder of Abstraction

abstract

Love your neighbor

ultimate basis:

chance and will of God

ancient principle: value of people created in God's image

principle

Feed the poor

pragmatic basis:

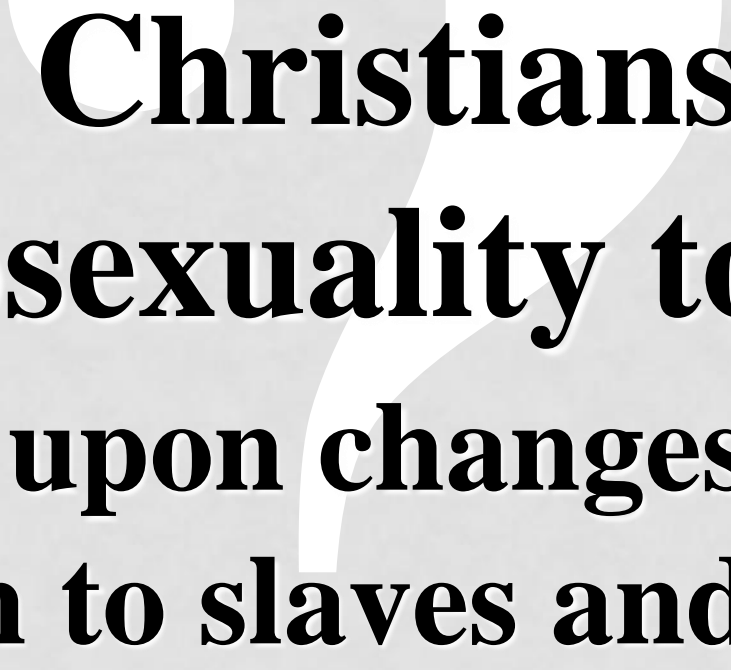
high % of population involved in farming
close proximity between population and farms

Leave the corner of your fields unharowed

concrete



**The
Homosexuality
Question**



**Should Christians accept
homosexuality today?
(based upon changes in our
approach to slaves and women)**

Answer:

No, I do not think so.

(not within a Christian sexual ethic)

Why?

RM meaning & C/T analysis

But . . .

How do we
live redemptively
in a broken world?

- welcoming and affirming
- **welcoming and encouraging**
all of us to follow Jesus
(taking incremental steps
within a broken world)*
- welcoming but not affirming
- not welcoming, not affirming

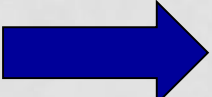
*pride,
greed,
gluttony,
lust, etc.

“Hi, my
name is Bill.
I am a
_____.”

2nd Tier Gay Theology

STEP #1: Wrestle with pastoral theology
via *analogical* reasoning
as we move between two horizons:
ancient world vs. our world.

 *polygamy* texts

 *cutting off a wife's hand* text
[Deut 25:11-12]

2nd Tier Gay Theology

STEP #2: Wrestle with pastoral theology at the level of the *individual* within our broken world: incremental (not total) redemptive movement.



divorce and remarriage texts



encourage incremental redemptive movement at the *individual* level
[different for each person—case by case]

Q & Eh?

1.

The *degree of* (heavily weighted) negative assessment of homosexuality in the OT/NT may well be culturally framed.

- Cf. Patriarchy and “What if I am Wrong” [SW&H, chp. 7]
- Children/Progeny/Fertility in the ANE and biblical world.
 - ❑ abomination language
 - ❑ Deut. 25:11-12—*Corporal Punishment in the Bible* [chp. 4—grabbing/mutilating a man’s genitals]
 - ❑ covenant sign (circumcision)
 - ❑ *Give Me Children or I Shall Die* [Cf. different role of children in our world vs. ancient world.]

2.

Living redemptively today means applying RMH case by case (individually) and not always extracting an ultimate ethic.

- Emphasis on *incremental* movement rather than the goal line.
- Cf. baptism and one partner “living in sin” (not married).
- Cf. divorce scenarios.
- Build a number of [homo]sexuality scenarios across a spectrum.
 - Multiple partners in one evening.
 - One partner at a time but little or no commitment.
 - Committed monogamous couple.
 - Committed monogamous couple with children [adopted or through in vitro fertilization].