

# “I Need Resources for My Porn Addiction”

I need help with a problem. I need a number I can call—to a ministry that doesn't exist—from what I have been able to research. It might also be that I am, well, a little crazy to expect a match for myself. Is there a ministry that you all are aware of for people to get, like a prayer partner, when you are basically a sex(porn) addict? I can not deny my Lord, but I can't seem to control myself with this sin, without compounding it into a greater sin. I hope that doesn't sound too odd. Any help would be appreciated.

I do have some suggestions for you, and bless you for asking. Praise God, there IS help!!

Online, may I suggest these sites:

My favorite is Setting Captives Free, which has a blow-your-socks-off excellent online 60-day Bible study course (that is FREE!!) called “The Way of Purity.” This Christ-centered course not only addresses the core issues that contribute to a porn addiction, but they provide online mentors for every student:

[www.settingcaptivesfree.com](http://www.settingcaptivesfree.com)

Dr. James Dobson provides resources here:  
[www.drjamesdobson.org/pornography-resources](http://www.drjamesdobson.org/pornography-resources)

Every Man's Battle has a great book, a great seminar to attend, and online support: [www.everymansbattle.com](http://www.everymansbattle.com)

Help in Breaking Pornography Addiction: [www.freed4life.me](http://www.freed4life.me)

One other resource: Neil Anderson has helped MANY men with sex addictions through his book *A Way of Escape*.

I pray for you, \_\_\_\_\_, that God will show you the way of

escape through the glorious truth that your “old man” was crucified with Christ and the new you was raised with Him. . . and that the way out of this addiction is to stop trying harder (which I’m sure you are an expert at) and depend fully on Jesus to live HIS powerful, holy life through you. The way out of sexual addiction is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27)

I do hope this helps.

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin

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## **“How Do I Handle My Husband’s Porn Addiction?”**

For the past year or so, I have been recording and watching where my husband visits hardcore porn sites. This has been extremely painful for me. What is wrong with me? He never seems interested in me, I have provided a good sexual relationship for us. He tries to hide this, I have confronted him twice, each time to be told “they aren’t real people”—YES they are! He stays up until 3 or 4 a.m. each night and views this stuff. He sleeps until 2 or 3 in the afternoon. We have a daughter who is four, I wish he would spend more time with us. I have also viewed conversations he has had with coworkers regarding women he works with. I have viewed emails he has sent to online “whores” including pics and descriptions on what he would like to do with them. I am tired and starting to feel a little numb to all this. My doctors have told me to

**“learn to accept it or just leave.” This is a little more complicated than that. I have asked for counselling once – he is TOTALLY against it. I am about to give up and ask him to leave, do you think this is too excessive and that I should give him another chance? I am tired and don’t want to deal with it anymore. I hate that porn has ruined our marriage. Thank God for my closest friends and for the occasional comment from other men. Help me, please.**

I am so very, very sorry that you have to deal with your husband’s addiction. PLEASE KNOW–this is not about you. There is nothing wrong with you. This is about him. You could be as gorgeous as a supermodel with the world’s most perfect body and he would still have the addiction, because it’s doing something for him that is completely separate from you.

I want to suggest some excellent resources for you to help you cope with a situation you can’t change AND to bring glory to God in the process.

Porn-Free.org has a helpful essay, “Help for Christian Spouses of Sex Addicts” at [www.porn-free.org/spousehelp\\_christian.htm](http://www.porn-free.org/spousehelp_christian.htm)

The Covenant Eyes blog has a helpful article, [7 Questions Wives of Porn Addicts Often Ask](#).

[Spouse Healing](#) article from the Sex Addiction Lifeline Foundation.

The very wise, very experienced Renee Dallas has an excellent website called “Wifeboat” with a section for [wives of men with porn addiction](#).

There are several articles on CafeMom.com. Do a search for “wives of porn addicts”: [thetir.cafemom.com/search.php?keyword=wives+of+porn+addicts](http://thetir.cafemom.com/search.php?keyword=wives+of+porn+addicts).

Henry Rogers, a dear friend of Probe, has written a wonderful book on this called *The Silent War*. Having researched this

difficult topic thoroughly, he says the first thing wives need to know is that IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU.

In fact, in a chapter called "The Wounded Wife," he reprints "Emily's Story":

"I write this out of love. Love for the porn addict, love for his wife, and most of all for the children. I pray this chapter is used for God's glory and honor, that it might somehow prevent families from being destroyed.

"I remember listening to a panel of women James Dobson had on his radio program. They talked about being married for over 20 years and discovering their husbands were involved in pornography. It seemed so unfathomable to me that someone could be deceived for so long. I remember thinking how stupid those women were. Little did I realize I would be one of those women less than a month later.

"It was like a birth process. Pain, agony, sweat, tears, hours of intense hurt, and finally truth. My husband is a porn addict. I heard it. I reacted. For two weeks I was numb. Numb to after 20+ years knowing something was wrong, but not knowing what. A relief to finally know the truth. A relief to now live in reality in light and truth rather than the unreality of darkness and deception. My husband would never tell me the secrets of his past before our marriage. I always thought if I loved him enough some day he would tell me. If I loved him enough. . . .

"We always had a difficult marriage. My husband was always withdrawn and quiet. I thought I could help him. I was outgoing, attractive, and spontaneous. In our marriage I could never do anything good enough. I was constantly criticized and put down. I thought it was me so I started a self-improvement program, more counseling, more seminars. I learned more was never enough. My world stopped, knowing something had died in me.

"My husband always seemed to be "tuned out" in another world. He worked long hours and often fell into bed at 2 a.m. I missed him. I begged him to come home. I raised the kids as he pursued his career. I told myself I needed to help him. I poured my heart and soul into his endeavor supporting and encouraging. There were still problems. When he was home he would go into his office and read his books, newspapers, and reports, and again I would cry myself to sleep. I had others confront him. I gave this man every chance to tell me about his pornography addiction. Lies weave other lies. Secrets kill. Comparisons kill. I feel every time he looked at an image and masturbated he took away a part of me that God intended to be mine. I remember seeing him masturbate and he was in his own world, set on his own pleasure, stimulated and excited by images of women he didn't know. It was a feeling of betrayal and heart-wrenching emptiness that a woman feels when she learns that her husband is living a lie.

"Pornography tears at the very thread of a woman and her femininity. My heart was ripped and uprooted thrown somewhere into a desert with no place to find refuge. It's as if I wasn't enough. Not sexy enough. Not beautiful enough. Not thin enough. Not exciting enough. Women get significance from their relationships with their husbands and when he turns to another for satisfaction it cuts her deeply at the core.

"I started buying sexy nighties, acting sexier, and suddenly I realized I was bowing down to an idol. It hurt that he chose not to tell me ... to not allow me to come alongside him as his helper. To this day he refuses to see the pain that he caused. It amazes me as a wife how we are involved in every other area of a man's life his profit margin, his ability to manage, everything but when it comes to pornography, it's hidden in deception. A man's way seems right to a man. Porn addiction is very selfish. It takes and

takes and doesn't give back. It's all for the user's pleasure.

"Another lie is that porn does not hurt anyone. Such a web of deception. 'And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness' (Eph. 4:19). There are consequences and the stakes get higher. It takes one lie to cover another. It saddens me how men can compartmentalize this sin. He has the little wife over here with precious children and this nasty sin over here for his private time, justifying it because he still loves his wife and children. You can't walk simultaneously in the darkness and the light.

"I'm a wife. I'm a wife of a porn addict. I'm relieved to know what it is, though I always knew something was wrong. Tears. Pain. Disgust. Betrayal. To face the death of a husband would be better than this. A widow has the support of the church. A porn addict leaves shame and divorce. It would be easier if he were dead. We wouldn't have to face the public humiliation and shame.

"Today is a new day. It's early morning and I must get breakfast for my children. I take each day as it comes now. Just for today. My husband still chooses his sin and refuses to take responsibility for it. I have to let him go and let the Lord deal with him. I can no longer be his excuse, his enabler. It's a new day and I'm moving on and my Deliverer is by my side. He is faithful. He will never leave me nor forsake me. He will never break His promise. To a woman who has been betrayed, this is my comfort. Hear my cry."

The Lord bless you as you seek Him on this. Again, I am so sorry.

Sue Bohlin

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# “Why Is There a Hell?”

I was in a discussion about heaven and hell. My agnostic friend looks at free will and states that if God truly loves all humans unconditionally, then that kind of negates any concept of hell.

I know from a Biblical and Christian standard you can lay down the facts but is there an earthly standard/concept that can explain why there is in fact hell and heaven? Or can you not separate the two—Christianity—heaven and hell—and does the freewill factor have anything to do with it?

I think your friend’s understanding of God is skewed. I was really helped by the way C.S. Lewis explained heaven and hell. A prominent disciple of his, Peter Kreeft, wrote this on his website ([www.peterkreeft.com/topics/hell.htm](http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics/hell.htm)):

*Heaven and hell may be the very same objective place – namely God’s love, experienced oppositely by opposite souls, just as the same opera or rock concert can be heavenly for you and hellish for the reluctant guest at your side. The fires of hell may be made of the very love of God, experienced as torture by those who hate him: the very light of God’s truth, hated and fled from in vain by those who love darkness. Imagine a man in hell—no, a ghost—endlessly chasing his own shadow, as the light of God shines endlessly behind him. If he would only turn and face the light, he would be saved. But he refuses to—forever.*

Dr. Kreeft (one of my favorite authors) also says this in the same essay:

*Hell follows from two other doctrines: heaven and free will.*

*If there is a heaven, there can be a not-heaven. And if there is free will, we can act on it and abuse it. Those who deny hell must also deny either heaven (as does Western secularism) or free will (as does Eastern pantheism).*

You might want to check out this essay to help you think through the issue of hell.

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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## **“A ‘Just Right’ Planet?”**

Sue:

I enjoyed reading your article entitled [“Evidence for God’s Existence”](#) on probe.org. I found it to provide interesting insight.

I found your comments regarding a “just right” earth particularly intriguing. You stated that our “just right” planet is clear evidence that it was created by “a loving God.” As someone who has witnessed the fury of mother nature more than once, I am compelled to ask – do you include volcanic eruptions, floods, tidal waves, and earthquakes in this “just right” view of God’s creation of the earth?

I find it very hard to believe that this planet we live on is as “just right” as you portray. I have seen massive landslides that buried charities, churches, and brothels side by side without regard. I have seen so many God-fearing people struck by flood and other natural disasters that I cannot help but



fail to understand how the earth can be so “just right.” Think about how many innocent children suffered for days, even weeks in immense pain and agony, buried under rubble in an earthquake, before finally dying. Are such tragedies really part of a “just right” design?

I recent read a research paper from the American Oceanographic Institute regarding some really cool bacteria – they live 2 miles deep in the ocean near hot thermal vents in the ocean floor where no light has ever penetrated. The water temperature there reaches 800 degrees or more and contains highly toxic and poisonous chemicals (well – to humans at least). These conditions are not so different than you might find on other planets in our solar system. I know that one day we will land spacecraft on other planets and find, in the most hostile environment imaginable, living organisms thriving in places we never thought possible.

Like you, I marvel at the intricacies of the world (and universe) we live in – it truly is a wondrous place. William Paley is well-known for his “watchmaker” theory – he, too, marveled at our universe and was so overwhelmed at it’s complexity that he said that someone MUST have engineered it – for it could not possibly exist without a designer.

I offer you this challenge, then – let’s apply Mr. Paley’s own logic to God himself. Surely you will agree that God himself is far more complex and intricate than the universe is. By Mr. Paley’s logic, something so complex MUST have a creator. Therefore, someone or something MUST have created God, since such complexity cannot exist without a designer. I submit that Mr. Paley is simply a victim of someone in need of a reason – we all want to have a reason. Some of us can accept the fact that we don’t yet know where the universe came from. Others, like Mr. Paley, are so desperate to explain things that they will simply make something else up which is immune from question to explain that which they cannot.

I say these things not to inflame you or attack you. I simply seek knowledge, thought, and interaction with people of differing viewpoints than my own. Perhaps one day I will come to agree, perhaps not. But I find that speaking to everyone I can, becoming their friend, and agreeing to disagree to be very fulfilling in my life.

Hopefully you will take a few minutes to talk with me and we will both go our ways with a little more knowledge and insight than we started with.

I have received quite a few e-mails from people who disagreed with me in this article, but none that were as gentle and reasonable and sweet-tempered as yours! It says something about your character, methinks. . . . <smile>

Two answers. First of all, concerning the horrific destruction that gets unleashed in nature: according to the Bible, which gives us information we couldn't know otherwise because it's information from "outside the box," this world is in a state very different from the one God originally created. After sin entered the world courtesy of the first human beings, the whole world was plunged into a state of corruption, decay and destruction that spawned natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and droughts. (And then you add the HUMAN disasters that are a result of moral corruption and decay that spawned atrocities like the Holocaust and Sept. 11!—But that's another story.)

At the risk of belaboring the point, allow me to offer an illustration. My sister-in-law is an extraordinarily gifted cake decorator in Chicago, and I live in Dallas. She wanted to share one of her creations with me, and was told by a mentor that if she packed a cake with the right precautions, she could FedEx it to me and it would arrive intact. Apparently, the folks at FedEx didn't know that, and when I opened the box it was a mess of crumbs and broken sugar flowers. It still tasted wonderful, and evidence abounded for its original

beauty and glory, but it got ruined between Chicago and Dallas. Her heart sank when she learned what had happened to it, not only because of the waste but because her hopes for pleasing me with the cake's original condition were dashed. I think it's an illustration of how it grieved God for His beautiful earth to be ruined by the mishandling of the people into whose hands He had placed His creation to be good stewards, because their sin caused all manner of destruction not only between people but also on the earth itself. The fact that the cake was ruined after it left my sister's hands didn't detract one bit from the gifted design and skill that went into creating it in the first place. I still contend that God's design is "just right," even though the world doesn't function as perfectly as it did when He first created it.

Secondly, concerning the idea that someone or something must have created God: as you move backward in discerning cause and effect, there must eventually be an Uncaused Cause in order for anything to exist at all. At some point there has to be something or someone who has always existed who is responsible for causing other things to come into existence, because nothing comes into existence on its own. Thus, at some point there had to be an Ultimate Causer (or Ultimate Cause) that has always been here. Because if you can go "beyond God," so to speak, to a time when there was nothing and no one in existence, then there would be no way for God to come into existence without a cause. There MUST be an Uncaused Cause.

Hope this helps you to understand where I'm coming from!

Most respectfully and cordially,

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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# “What Does It Mean to be Filled With the Spirit?”

I need some clarification! What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? I believe that it happens at the point of salvation, but many times in scripture it talks about people who are “full of the Spirit.” Is this filling a one time deal or something that can happen many times. I know that in Old Testament times the Spirit came and went upon certain people. But in our times (and since Pentecost), how would you explain this. Thanks so much for your time, wisdom, and ministry.

The best explanation I have seen (and which has worked for me experientially for many years) is that being filled with the Spirit means yielding to Him (the Holy Spirit) in full dependence so that we are out of the way and He can do His thing through us and in us. The verb tense in Ephesians 5:18 means “be continually being filled,” so it’s not a one-time event. It’s an ongoing discipline of submission.

I love the analogy of taking a hard, dried-up sponge and plunging it into a sink full of water. The sponge softens and soaks up the water until it is super-saturated. It is “filled with” water, right? But of course, a sponge can’t choose to jump into the sink like we can choose to open ourselves to the filling and empowering of the Holy Spirit. And this choice is a matter of will, not of emotion; the difference between operating in the flesh (our own power apart from God) and being filled with the Spirit is a simple choice to ask, “Holy Spirit, please fill me” with a submissive, humble heart. It doesn’t LOOK any different to someone else and it usually doesn’t FEEL any different to us, but it’s a real event. It can happen many times throughout the day. (I have shared this concept with my MOPS [Mothers of Preschoolers] group, and suggested they draw a line in the carpet with their shoe or draw an imaginary line across the kitchen floor, and step

across the line to signify that they are moving from self-dependence to Christ-dependence and filling. One girl told me, "Sue, you should see my house! There are lines all OVER the place!")

The problem is that we default to the flesh; we keep gravitating toward doing things on our own and either rebelling against God or passively ignoring Him. We wake up "reset" to the flesh every morning. ☐ So we need to be filled again and again and again. Sort of like eating. We need to do it again and again and again! ☐

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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## **"What Do You Say When People Call Christians Hypocrites?"**

I was just wondering... when people call Christians hypocrites, what is a good response? Isn't everyone a hypocrite in one way or another? I mean, I TRY not to be one, but like all humans, I mess up. Thankfully I am a Christian and have God's forgiveness. What is a quick reply that I can give people who accuse me of hypocrisy?

That is a tough accusation, for sure. Too bad it's so often accurate.

I would agree with the person that many Christians are indeed hypocrites, and it saddens God greatly. But you might remark that the church is supposed to be a hospital for sick people, not a museum for perfect people.

Sometimes, the “Christians are hypocrites” charge is nothing but a smokescreen, which is why I would ask if they have any personal experience with it, or if it’s just something they’ve heard and they’re using it to keep distance between themselves and Christians. Or, more accurately, between themselves and God.

If someone were to make that comment to me, I would respond with, “Is that something you’ve just heard, or have you had a personal experience with someone in a church who hurt you?” I’d try to find out the heart of the matter. Sometimes people just need for someone to know and acknowledge that they were hurt by a Christian who brought dishonor to the name of Christ, and they would appreciate a compassionate and regretful response. I have been able to say, “I am so sorry you had to experience that. So is God.”

I would also ask, in humility, “Have I done anything to make you see hypocrisy in me that I need to ask forgiveness for?” And then be prepared to LISTEN to the answer!

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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## **“How Is It Just for God to Put Our Sins on Jesus?”**

How is it just for God to put someone’s sins on Jesus, making them sinless? I have heard the analogy of a judge fining someone, and then paying the fine on their behalf; but sin is surely really, really bad, and no court would allow a judge to

die instead of a criminal who had been given the death sentence.

After talking through the gospel with friends, this seems to be a big sticking point. How can a murderer seemingly get away with what he's done and go to heaven, while Johnny Average gets punished—solely on the basis of whether he accepts Jesus? It is loving on God's part to give everyone the chance of salvation, and it is just for him to punish unrepentant sinners, but how is it *just* for God to forgive a repentant sinner, who though repentant still sins?

I think you might be confusing "just" with "fair."

Justice is about making sure that someone pays the penalty for a wrongdoing. Fairness is about treating people appropriately and right.

It is *just* for God to insist that someone pay the penalty for sin. It wasn't *fair* for Jesus to pay that penalty Himself, because that's about grace, not justice. Someone has said that justice is getting what we deserve, mercy is not getting what we deserve, and grace is getting what we don't deserve. I find those distinctions very helpful.

It is just for God to forgive a repentant sinner who continues to sin (that would be all of us!) because all of our sins, those committed before salvation and all those committed after salvation, were all paid for at the cross. Maybe I can help with the "sticking point" with a very simple word picture: we are all standing at the bottom of the waterfall of God's love and grace. Those who refuse to turn to God in trustful dependence, receiving His forgiveness and salvation, have their cups upside down and therefore can't receive what God is pouring out on them. Those who have trusted Christ have turned their cups right side up, and can receive what God is offering.

One of the most amazing truths about the gospel is that our

sins are transferred to Jesus, who paid for them at the cross, and His righteousness is transferred to us. It is the most absurdly unfair transaction in the history of all creation, but it's true. Love does things like that.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

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## **“Why Did Jesus Have to Go to Hell After He Died?”**

At a family picnic, my niece asked a very good question that had us all puzzled.

When reciting the Apostolic Creed, we say “...and suffered under Pontius Pilate...was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again and ascended into heaven.” My niece asked, “Why did Jesus have to go through hell too...what was the point of that? Didn't Jesus defy the devil right here on earth ... why did he have to go through hell upon death?”

I am embarrassed to have to write and ask you (and yes, I am even more embarrassed to go to my pastor and look him in the eye and ask him directly...because I feel I “should” know this answer. I guess I was sleeping somewhere along the line...I've been searching in my Bible and Bible commentary, but cannot find a “real” answer.) Thanks for your help!

Great question! There is still a lot of discussion about what that phrase meant to those who inserted it into the Creed, and



what it means today.

First, we need to make a distinction between the Apostles' Creed and scripture. Scripture is inspired; the creed, while based on scripture, is not. Secondly, you may be surprised to learn (as was I) that the Apostles' Creed does not date back to the time of the apostles, but was a "work in progress," developing gradually from about A.D. 200 to 750. Before 650, the phrase "descended into hell" only appeared in one version of the creed, in 390, written by a man who understood it to mean simply that Christ was buried—He "descended into the grave." (Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, p. 174)

In defending this part of the creed, these scriptures have been offered:

*Acts 2:31 (KJV) He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that **his soul was not left in hell**, neither his flesh did see corruption.*

The problem is that the Greek word translated in the KJV "hell" is actually "Hades," which means "the place of the dead." The word that definitively refers to hell, "gehenna," isn't used here.

*1 Pet 3:18-19 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and **made proclamation to the spirits now in prison...***

The context indicates that the "spirits in prison" may have been disobedient demons from Noah's time, to whom Jesus went and made proclamation—what, we're not told. The Greek word for preached means "proclaimed," not evangelized. This may well indicate that He visited the demons in their holding cells after His death, but that's not the same thing as experiencing

hell after His death.

When we look at what the scripture says about where Jesus went after his death, what we see is:

1. He told the thief on the cross, "Today you will be with me in paradise." After His death, Jesus knew He would be in heaven and see the repentant and newly converted thief there.
2. Some of His last words on the cross were, "It is finished." He had already suffered hell—separation from his Father—while hanging on the cross. His work was over and so was the torment of being under the Father's wrath and alienation.
3. Just before dying, He said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit," indicating that He expected the Father to receive Him when he died.

There is clearly a mystery here, in view of the 1 Peter passage, and I don't think any of us will figure it out this side of heaven.

So, what I would say to your niece is, "Jesus didn't have to go to hell, and He didn't suffer anymore in hell (or any other place) after He died, but it seems that He visited it to make a point to the demons there."

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

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# When Someone In Your Congregation Says “I’m Gay”

## Things to Remember

1. **No one is born gay**, and no one chooses to be gay. Because of relational brokenness in families and among peers, some people experience emotional needs that they try to meet in ungodly ways. Many of them are uncomfortable with their own gender; later, they discover they are attracted to others of the same sex, but this is not their choice. Acting on it, however, is.

2. **Change is possible.** Even going back to the first-century church, the apostle Paul wrote to former homosexuals in the Corinthian church, “and such were some of you” (1 Cor. 6:11).

3. Because we live in a fallen world, **we are all broken.** Many people in our churches are sexually broken—victims of incest, pornography and masturbation addicts, and compulsive sex addiction. Homosexuality is only one form of brokenness.

4. **Homosexuality grows out of broken relationships and is healed in healthy relationships**, especially same-sex relationships. This is one of the reasons it is essential for recovering homosexuals and lesbians to be actively involved in the church, because this is where they can find healthy, God-honoring friendships. Their homosexuality is not contagious!

5. **Treat them with respect like you would anyone else.** They are people made in the image of God for whom Christ died—they are not their sexuality. Many people trying to come out of the gay lifestyle expect to find respect and acceptance only in the gay community. Finding it in church is immensely healing to their souls.

6. **Accept them where they are, just as Jesus did.** Choose to accept the person, but not sinful behavior. People don't change unless they experience the grace of acceptance first. But once they know they are loved and accepted, many of them are willing to do what it takes to live a life of holiness.

7. **Seek to see them with God's eyes** of love and acceptance, with His intention for their wholeness, healing and freedom. This means depending on the Holy Spirit for divine perspective and exercising humility to recognize that first impressions are often incomplete and inaccurate.

8. This is a great opportunity to lead people to an understanding of **what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.** Some homosexual strugglers, especially men, feel that they have committed the unpardonable sin. They've heard they are going to hell no matter what they do, so they are permanently separated from God. They need to know this is a lie, because when we confess our sins, the blood of Jesus covers them ALL and cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

9. Because of abuse issues, most **strugglers seem to have an especially hard time relating to Father God** and to receiving His love. Yet it is the masculine voice (first in earthly fathers, and ultimately in our Heavenly Father) that calls gender out from both men and women, and it is the Father's personal and powerful love that is the most important healing agent in human hearts.

10. Because most pastors are men in authority, **most strugglers (men and women) are INCREDIBLY intimidated** by them. Pastors need to know this and really understand in order to minister to strugglers. This means respecting the fragility of strugglers' relationships with pastors and choosing to be deliberately tender and gentle. They really need "good shepherds." Verbalize to them that God can not only change them, but He is very proud of them (as you are) for sharing

this with you and desiring to change.

11. **Most same-sex strugglers have very weak and broken boundaries.** Their deep neediness causes them to lapse into emotionally dependent relationships with everyone who gets close. We encourage you to only counsel these folks at your office during regular business hours where others can be aware of your activities. This gives a sense of security to the struggler and a protection for you as the pastor.

12. The most success in overcoming same-gender attraction has occurred when strugglers experienced **God as Healer through heterosexual people who were willing to come alongside them** in their journeys—men helping men, and women helping women. It would be helpful for you to find someone willing to befriend and mentor the struggler. This takes a person willing to seriously invest in the life of a very needy person. They will need to be available and accessible. Their presence in the struggler's life can be powerful and healing.

13. **If someone comes in with an agenda** of arrogance, demanding acceptance of their sexual sin, don't let them bully you. There is a difference between welcoming the sinner and allowing him to continue in his rebellion. Homosexuality is sin. Lev. 18:22-23; Rom. 1:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-11. Note that these verses condemn homosexual behavior, not feelings.

## **Five DON'TS:**

1. **Don't panic.** An excellent resource for understanding the issue of homosexuality is *Someone I Love is Gay* by Bob Davies and Anita Worthen (published by InterVarsity Press). Also Exodus International ([exodusinternational.org/](http://exodusinternational.org/)), a Christ-centered ministry that helps people deal with unwanted homosexuality, has numerous resources. Living Hope Ministries ([www.livehope.org](http://www.livehope.org)) is an Exodus referral ministry in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area with excellent online forums for parents, spouses, men and women, and youth (ages 13+) who

struggle with homosexuality

**2. Don't make false assumptions or accusations.** For example, please do not assume he is HIV positive. Many aren't. And if he is, AIDS is sexually transmitted; the people in your congregation are safer than many fear. Respect the seriousness of HIV with commonsense precautions (such as contact with bodily fluids), but don't ostracize the person. Handshakes and hugs are perfectly safe.

**3. Don't shut down pastorally or emotionally.** The person coming to you has known a lifetime of rejection and desperately needs to know that a representative of Jesus Christ will extend grace to him. Hug them when they leave. It may be the first positive touch they have had in years.

**4. Don't pass judgment.** All of us have besetting sins! As Billy Graham said, "Don't take credit for not falling into a temptation that never tempted you in the first place."

**5. Don't disclose this person's secret without permission,** even among church staff. There is nothing safe about the gay lifestyle; people struggling with same-sex attraction need to find safety in the church.

*This is the text of a brochure from Living Hope Ministries, written by Sue Bohlin, who serves on the Board of Directors of Living Hope and moderates one of the online forums. A PDF version of this brochure is also available for download [here](#); you will need the free Adobe Acrobat reader to see it.*

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# The Galapagos Islands: The Bohlins' Visit



The Galapagos Islands, off the coast of Ecuador, are where Charles Darwin received the inspiration for the theory of evolution. In observing the islands' ecosystem and how its bird and reptile inhabitants compared to similar South American cousins, Darwin assembled what has become the driving philosophy of science.

In May 2003, Dr. Ray and Sue Bohlin visited the Galapagos Islands with a different perspective, focusing on intelligent design and the natural limits to biological change. Here is their report.

[1 – Why Visit the Galapagos Islands?](#)

[2 – Thursday PM: Bartolome](#)

[3 – Friday AM: Punta Espinosa](#)

[4 – Friday PM: Tagus Cove](#)

[5 – Saturday AM: Punta Moreno](#)

[6 – Saturday PM: Urbina Bay](#)

[7 – Sunday AM: Darwin Research Station](#)

[8 – Sunday PM: Santa Cruz Highlands](#)

[9 – Monday AM: Beach Visit](#)

[10 – Galapagos Wrap Up: ICR Lecture, What It All Means](#)