

# Gay Men to Lead Boy Scouts: Gates' Failure to Render Genuine Leadership

*This week the Boy Scouts of America have announced they will welcome transgendered youth into the program. This culture-following trend began when the BSA allowed gay scouts, then gay leaders. This shows a serious leadership gap, according to Eagle Scout, former Scout employee, and volunteer Byron Barlowe.*

Boy Scouts will now be subject to gay adult leadership if BSA (Boy Scouts of America) president Robert Gates' advice is taken. Gates, who once held our military's top position as Secretary of Defense, declared the inevitability of ending the ban on openly gay Scout leaders while [addressing the BSA national annual meeting](#) in Atlanta Thursday, May 21, 2015.

Does anyone really doubt that Gates' position will be made official, especially given recent advances for gay rights at the states' level, with the Girl Scouts, in Ireland's national referendum vote three days later and most likely via the United States Supreme Court this June? I wager it'll be only a few months before it's official BSA policy.

The question for Mr. Gates: How does bowing to the rapidly changing poll numbers on this issue constitute leadership? Don't heroes often have to stand alone? Even if Gates holds convictions that would dictate openness in his personal dealings, his stated premise for lifting the long-time ban on gay Scout leaders that stands to affect tens of thousands of youth is flawed: that the proverbial train has left the station and the organization needs to cover its rear guard, to go with the inevitable flow of gay rights, to kowtow to pressure from within and without. Pure pragmatism on parade.

And entirely inappropriate and unrespectable.

## **Brave New World vs. “A Scout is Brave”**

Part of the Scout Law every Boy Scout for 105 years has memorized and recited reads, “A Scout is trustworthy . . . brave . . . reverent. . . .” But the BSA has done a 180-degree flip on the topic of homosexuality, having won a Supreme Court case against a gay membership push as recently as 2000. [The Opinion of the Court in Dale v. Boy Scouts of America](#), written by Chief Justice Rehnquist, reads, “The Boy Scouts asserts that it ‘teach[es] that homosexual conduct is not morally straight’” in its defense of denying avowed homosexual and gay activist James Dale leadership privileges with a Scout troop.

***Oh, what a difference fifteen years makes when one bases decisions on the swiveling wind vane of a degrading culture.***

To his credit, Dr. Gates called for individual chartering organizations—representing 70 percent of Boy Scout Troops and Cub Packs—to decide for themselves how to implement such a policy. Yet, in the same speech, Gates cites the refusal of a New York Council to abide by current BSA policy in hiring gay leaders as a realistic reason to change the national policy. Which is it? Gay men get the right to lead, or troops and packs get to say no? We see where that is going in the courts and in culture with Christian photographers, bakers and T-shirt makers: inescapable pressure to succumb.

## **Live Up to High Standards of Scouting**

I’m holding President Gates to a high standard here. Sure, he’s been pressured by his own big business (read: big donor) board members like Randall Stephenson of AT&T and James Turley of Ernst & Young to eradicate the BSA’s longstanding policies against gay participation at every level. Though it may not compare to high stakes, national level non-profit boardroom politics, I lost my job as a BSA District Executive by holding

to the principles of Scouting (and my biblical faith). When asked to misrepresent the number of Cub Scout Packs in local schools at a BSA Council in North Carolina, I refused. Threats didn't move me despite my 23-year-old, first-job fears. Call me naïve. Then explain that to a boy. It would be refreshing to see Mr. Gates stand up to power himself.

Even if I agreed with gay rights claims concerning the private youth training organization, I'd object to the hypocrisy of its leader.

Gates' recent declaration, as with the BSA's 2013 decision to enroll openly gay Scouts, is modeling another dereliction of duty. Yet "duty to God," others and self has always formed the three-legged stool of values on which Scouting stood. God is not confused on this issue, nor was the Scouting program for a full century.

## **If This Goes, Scouting Will Forever Be Altered**

I write "values on which Scouting stood" in past tense advisedly. As I was quoted via the *Los Angeles Times* syndicate while demonstrating against the policy change to allow openly gay Scouts in 2013, this is the end of Scouting as we have known it. Another prediction: A sharp decrease in numbers following that decision will be surpassed if the BSA allows admittedly gay leaders. As an Eagle Scout, father of an Eagle Scout, former volunteer Scouting leader and BSA local executive, I can no longer support in any way the Boy Scouts of America. I'll support other youth programs.

This conviction grieves me, but borrowing from the Christian reformer Martin Luther, here I stand and I can do no other. No, this episode does not rise to the level of religious reformation; however, the gravity of such social slides will change the cultural landscape for as long as our Republic stands. The gay advocacy heavyweight Human Rights Campaign is

right when it celebrates Gates' announcement as a huge victory in its drive for full acceptance of homosexuals across the culture, given that the BSA is "one of America's most storied institutions."

As SecDef, Gates ended the ambiguous "Don't ask, don't tell" doctrine, a decision that opened doors for openly gay service men and women to serve freely despite fears of sexual chaos. Our former CIA Director and, again, Secretary of Defense Gates now holds the top leadership post among a younger group of Americans. On this issue he has led neither members of the armed forces nor impressionable and sexually vulnerable adolescent Scouts.

Once again, Gates' ethics reek of pure pragmatism: "We must deal with the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be. The status quo in our movement's membership standards cannot be sustained," he said to the assembled Scouting leaders.

Never mind high ideals. The wind has blown, the ship has sailed and we must get on board or be left behind (or at least sued heavily). Oh, such bravery.

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## **When a Church Tells a Member, "It's Not OK to be Gay"**

Watermark Community Church in Dallas (where my husband and I are members) was recently dragged into the media when a former member published a letter to the church on the one-year anniversary of his membership being revoked. After several

years of fighting his unwanted same-sex attractions, the young man got weary of the battle and embraced a gay identity—and a boyfriend. The church pleaded with him to repent (turn 180 degrees) and submit to the Bible's commands to sexual purity, but he would not. So the church sent him a letter which the young man made public.

Within hours, a firestorm erupted on social media, TV media, and print media.

Predictably, the church's counter-cultural beliefs and stance were misrepresented out of people's inability (or refusal) to understand biblical values and truths. It would be easy to come away with a very skewed perception of this situation, which is why it's important to use discernment in reading or hearing anything about this controversial subject.

Recall the wisdom of Proverbs 18:17: "The first to plead his case seems right, until another comes and examines him." It's important to remember there's another side of every story, and to hold judgment until one's discernment kicks in.

It started when the former member's Facebook post was picked up by the *Dallas Morning News*. His title was "Watermark Church Dismissed Me for Being Gay," and the paper chose the title "[Watermark Asks Homosexual Member to Leave Church](#)." It sure sounds like the church kicked him out, doesn't it? But that's not what happened. The church responded, "Watermark makes a distinction between attending our church [*Sue's note: which the former member was welcome to do*] and being a formal member of our church. We don't remove someone's formal status as a member for struggling with sin—whether that sin is pride, materialism or sexual sin. Every member of Watermark needs God's grace to stand firm in the midst of temptation and His forgiveness for the times we fall short."

Jacqueline Floyd, a *Dallas Morning News* columnist, wrote a scathing [column](#) criticizing Watermark.

Ms. Floyd:

**“A lot of people are upset that an institution that professes love for all its members would exile someone because of his sexual orientation.”**

And they should be! But that’s not what happened. Pastor Todd Wagner’s [response](#):

“Following the example of Jesus, Watermark loves and welcomes people of all backgrounds, economic statuses, ethnicities and sexual struggles. Also following his example, we encourage people to turn away from sin and to follow Jesus. We have *many members* and *several staff* who struggle with same-sex attraction or for whom same-sex sexual activity is a part of their past. We count it a privilege to labor with them in their desire to resist temptation, and we rejoice with them as they experience forgiveness and new life in Christ. Their stories are powerful and serve as beautiful testimonies to the transforming power of Jesus Christ.” [Emphasis his]

Ms. Floyd:

**“He tried for years to conform to church requirements that he alter his essential nature, ‘repent’ his sexual orientation, undergo a form of ‘conversion therapy’ that research as well as mainstream psychology and counselors have denounced as harmful and pointless.”**

This makes sense if you believe the culture’s sexual mythology that says being gay is one’s “essential nature,” as if a gay identity were the most important thing about an individual. (Consider how unbalanced it would be if we switched out the standard for how well someone can sing, declaring that one’s “essential nature” was one’s ability to carry a tune—or not. How awfully narrow and unnecessarily limiting that would be, as if every other aspect of one’s giftings and temperament, interests and abilities paled in comparison to their singing voice!)

The church does not require that anyone “alter their essential nature,” but it does align itself with scripture, acknowledging that we are all born sinful and broken, with a tendency to rebel and disobey against God:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;  
there is no one who understands;  
there is no one who seeks God.  
All have turned away,  
they have together become worthless;  
there is no one who does good,  
not even one.” (Romans 3:10b-12)

Our true “essential nature” is that we are both infinitely precious and valuable because we are made in God’s image, but also fallen and sinful. That “essential nature” can’t be altered by ourselves, but it can be transformed by God. That is the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I don’t know if anyone at Watermark mistakenly urged this brother to repent of his sexual orientation as if he had chosen to be same-sex attracted, but we certainly do exhort everyone to renounce and repent of all sexual sin (which means anything outside of marriage between one man and one woman). Concerning “conversion therapy,” Watermark doesn’t have that. What we do have is a call to discipleship, asking people to be “all in” with Jesus, obeying His word and pursuing intimacy with Christ. That intimacy usually produces heart change, which means transformation from the inside out, where therapy is an attempt to bring about change from the outside in.

Ms. Floyd:

**“Trying to ‘change’ someone’s sexual orientation is about as useful as trying turn a turtle into a duck. When this witch-doctor alchemy predictably failed to work, the church blamed him—and revoked his membership. Not in person. They mailed him a letter.”**

Lots of people believe that sexual orientation is fixed and unchangeable. That's because if a lie is repeated loud enough and long enough, people will accept it as truth. Change is possible, and feelings (because that's what we're talking about here) are fluid. We see change happening in the first-century church; 1 Corinthians 6:11 says to former homosexuals, "And such were some of you." I have seen change happen before my own eyes, for 18 years of involvement at [Living Hope Ministries](#). And if that's not enough, google "Lisa Diamond Sexual Fluidity" for some intriguing academic [research](#) that cites that change happens.

But then it sure sounds cold to mail someone a letter revoking his membership. And it would be—if it had happened like that. The letter was just the final formal communication, the period at the end of a series of anguished, face-to-face conversations.

See why it's so important to remember that "The first to plead his case seems right, until another comes and examines him"?

The letter from our own former member needs to be read with discernment as well:

**"I spent years battling against my own homosexuality. When I wasn't able to change, you turned your back on me."**

I'm sure there were some people mistakenly thinking and hoping that his same-sex attractions were a matter of choice that could be changed on demand. "Everstraights," especially men, have a hard time imagining what it's like to be drawn to the same sex, and can easily burden those who are, with unrealistic expectations.

Battling one's homosexuality is incredibly difficult, and I can appreciate that many, many people pray hundreds of times, "God, I beg You, take this away!" That prayer is like mine growing up: "God, please! [Heal me!](#)" It's like the apostle Paul's prayer, recorded in 2 Corinthians 7b-9:



“I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

Paul pleaded with God to remove his thorn in the flesh, but God had something better. I pleaded with God to remove my thorn in the flesh, but He had [something better](#). My same-sex attracted brother, our former member, pleaded with God to remove his thorn in the flesh, and He had something better for him as well, but my brother decided to embrace his flesh instead. He wrote,

**“I am who God made me to be. I cannot change my sexual orientation, and nor would I want to. I now have internal peace and happiness unlike ever before.”**

No, God did not make anyone same-sex attracted. Based on the thousands of men who have come through Living Hope, I would say God probably made him to be sensitive, artistic, creative, relational, and gifted. But not gay.

It’s not surprising that he now senses “internal peace and happiness unlike ever before.” He quit battling his flesh, the part of us that lives independently from God. The relief that comes from giving into temptation can feel like peace and happiness, for a while. It can feel like freedom. But it comes at a cost. There is no true intimacy with Jesus when we are indulging our flesh. There can be a faux intimacy, the echoes of having walked with Him in obedience and abiding trust. But true intimacy can only happen in the light:

“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship

with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” (1 John 1:5-7)

So I pray for my brother, and I pray for all of us to develop discernment as we process the war of worldviews about sexual ethics. It won't be easy.

[Note: If you want a blessing and strong but grace-filled instruction about church discipline, please watch Todd Wagner's response to this issue from the Watermark platform, "Why Good Leaders Have Always Written Letters to the Church They Love": <http://www.watermark.org/plano/message/4320>]

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## Orlando's Bizarre Coincidence?

My phone dinged Sunday morning, June 12, with Facebook's notification that three of my friends were safe in regard to the Orlando shooting. I had no idea what that meant, but fortunately social media makes it easy to find out what's happening in the world within seconds. My heart sank when I learned of the largest mass shooting in American history at a gay nightclub, with 49 dead and 53 injured. I couldn't even begin to wrap my mind around the pain and horror inflicted on the victims and their families and friends.

Then I learned about the very different kind of pain and horror that also happened in Orlando two days later, when an alligator snatched a two-year-old boy and won the wrestling match with the boy's father, pulling the toddler under the water and drowning him—in preparation, one might assume, to make a meal of him later.

I shared the horrifying news with students at Probe's Mind Games camp, where we were teaching that week. Three of the campers are from Orlando, and I learned that Floridians just *know* that alligators are everywhere, and they take precautions. When Aimee heard that the incident had happened on one of the Disney World properties, she asked, "Where's the family from? I bet not Florida. [It was Nebraska.] We *know* about alligators. You can't see them, but they can see you. Even in four inches of water."

It is certainly possible that the back-to-back nightclub shooting and the alligator snatching both happening in Orlando was just a bizarre coincidence. But I wonder if one is a physical representation of a spiritual reality about very real warfare that happens in the unseen spirit realm.

Alligators are predators. They're always looking for something to kill and eat. I couldn't help but be reminded of 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour."

I am absolutely sure that our enemy the devil was actively prowling at the Pulse nightclub. Jesus said that the devil comes to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10), and he was successful at all three the morning of June 12. As I looked at pictures of all the people who died that day, I saw young men and women who were someone's sons and daughters, someone's nieces and nephews and grandchildren, someone's friends and

co-workers, their lives snatched by a horrible predator.

I thought about the parents and loved ones of gay-identifying people who faithfully pray that God will open the eyes of their beloveds in “the far country” of sin and self-indulgence (Luke 15) to see the destructive path they are on and repent. I thought about the parents and loved ones I know personally, with whom I join my prayers for God to protect their children in the far country before the heartless, evil predator snatches them like the alligator grabbed little Lane Graves.

Disney has been changing their signs, from the polite request “No Swimming Please” to the explicit “Danger: Alligators and Snakes in Area.” People need to know when they are exposed to dangerous predators, right?

It’s true in the spiritual realm as well. Sexual and relational brokenness often leads to sin that opens people to attacks of our enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, always on the prowl looking for someone to devour. Just as real as the alligators in what’s supposed to be “The Happiest Place on Earth.” Celebrating and encouraging what God calls sin—especially any kind of sexual behavior outside of marriage between a husband and wife—is like erecting a sign at the Seven Seas Lagoon that says, “Come on in, the water’s fine.”

But it’s not. Whether people wade into the shallows or dive into the deep, they are making themselves an offering to the predator, right in his territory.

Like a lion or alligator, the enemy of our souls is on the prowl, seeking to steal, kill and destroy.

Just ask the parents of the ones who died at the Pulse nightclub. Or the parents of little Lane Graves.

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## **LGBT and Political Correctness**

Everything about the subject of LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) identity and sexuality is colored in some way by political correctness. PC thinking embraces all beliefs and positions (except orthodox Christianity), and seeks to validate any and all self-expression (as long as it differs from biblical morals). One of the most amazing demonstrations of PC thought is this video, in which a short Caucasian male asks students at the University of Washington how they would respond if he told them he was a 6'5" Asian woman. The students were more committed to his right to be whatever he said he wanted to be, no matter how silly it sounded, than what was objectively true:

So much of PC thought in our culture today reminds me of the Hans Christian Andersen tale of a vain emperor who cares about nothing except wearing and showing off his luxurious clothes. He hires two weavers—two scammers—who promise him the finest, best suit of clothes made from a magic fabric that is invisible to anyone who is hopelessly stupid or unfit for his position.

Neither the emperor nor his ministers can see the fabric themselves, but they pretend that they can for fear of appearing unfit for their positions. Finally the weavers report that the suit is finished. They mime dressing him, and the emperor marches in procession before his subjects.

The townsfolk, who of course cannot see the (imaginary) fabric, play along with the pretense, not wanting to appear stupid or unfit for their positions. Then a child in the crowd, too young to understand what was going on, blurts out the truth for all to hear: "The emperor's not wearing any clothes!" The townspeople try to hush him up, even though what he's saying is the truth.

Political correctness is often about maintaining an illusion and hushing up the people who speak the truth. Those who speak out the truth, like the little boy, are shamed with the intention of silencing them. This certainly happens in the arena of sexuality and identity, where the illusion is that sex is the highest pleasure and the most important aspect of life, and everyone has a right to express their sexual feelings however they want.

In order to think rightly about political correctness, we need to know what's really going on—what is fueling the illusion. (Which is why it's so important to understand worldview!) Recently I was privileged to address a Christian high school chapel on this topic, and I told the students that they were born into a cultural brine that is shaping and pickling their thoughts about sexuality and identity, just like the college students on the video. They needed to know how our culture got to the place it is today so they have a chance to refuse the pickling process.

In 1989, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen wrote a manifesto for normalizing homosexuality, *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90s*. Their very specific, very achievable goals now describe American culture.

(Please note, the bolded words are Kirk and Madsen's words, not mine):

1. **Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and often as possible.** This would desensitize people to the issue of homosexuality so it would become an always-present, no-big-deal aspect of American culture.
2. **Portray gays as victims and not as aggressive challengers.** Two main ways to achieve this: propagate the "born that way" mythology, and portray homosexuals as victims in an anti-gay society.
3. **Give protectors a just cause.** Fighting discrimination, or what is portrayed as discrimination, makes people feel good about themselves as they defend the underdog.
4. **Make gays look good.** Particularly in media such as TV and movies, make the gay characters as good-looking, charming, smart, witty and winsome as possible.
5. **Make the victimizers look bad.** Make the "anti-gays" look so nasty that average Americans will want to dissociate themselves from such types.

Every one of these goals has been attained, and this is the culture we now live in. In order to be aware of the PC thought that shapes how most people think, we need to be aware that the entire society has been manipulated.

What earned Probe Ministries a spot on the Southern Poverty Law Center's list of hate groups is our website content about homosexuality, which agrees with the biblically orthodox position that same-gender sexual behavior, like every other violation of God's intention for sex to be limited to the marriage bed of one man and one woman, is wrong. As [my pastor](#) says, "Truth sounds like hate to those who hate the truth." There are so many cultural lies about God's design for sex and identity that when we proclaim God's truth in a culture that embraces lies, we get called hateful and discriminatory.

In order to think biblically, we need to know the difference

between the culture's lies (politically correct thought) and God's truth:

**CULTURE'S LIE:** Who I am is a sexual being. Whether it's a culture or an individual, when God is left out of the equation, sex is elevated to the #1 most important spot because it's so powerful and a source of such intense pleasure (or can be). So people define themselves by their sexuality.

**GOD'S TRUTH:** Who I am is God's beloved creation. Made in the image of God, created for intimacy and fellowship with Him, my worth proven by what the Son was willing to pay for me: His very life.

**CULTURE'S LIE:** Sex is a need and a right for everyone to experience. Many people believe it is on the same level of necessity as food, water and sleep.

**GOD'S TRUTH:** Sex is so powerful it is to be contained only within marriage between one man and one woman. The mingling of bodies and souls through sex is deeply spiritual as well as physical. God's prohibitions against sex outside of marriage are His gift to us, meant for our protection from the painful consequences of sexual sin. They are like guard rails on a treacherous mountain road, intended to keep us from going off the cliff to pain and destruction.

**CULTURE'S LIE:** I create my own identity depending on what I feel. Untethered from a connection to God as Creator, people live out the sad, repeated description of Israel in the book of Judges, where "all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes." (Judges 17:6, for one).

**GOD'S TRUTH:** My identity is who my Creator says I am. All of us exist because God wanted us and hand-crafted each of us (Psalm 139). Feelings are real but they're not reliable. Jeremiah 17:9 instructs us on why our feelings can't be trusted: "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"

**CULTURE'S LIE:** Gender is whatever we want it to be. Biological



sex has been separated from gender (how one feels about maleness and femaleness). (Personally, this strikes me as illegitimate as proclaiming that the white keys on a piano are bad and the black keys are good.) Facebook currently offers 58 choices of gender.

**GOD'S TRUTH:** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; *male and female* He created them. (Gen. 1:27) The first words in the room when a baby is born are still, "It's a girl!" or "It's a boy!" Gender is still binary because God still creates male and female.



**CULTURE'S LIE:** I can create my own reality. For example, recently a man abandoned his wife and seven children, announcing his chosen identity of a 6-year-old girl.

Another man, deciding his identity is a female dragon, cut off his ears and nose, dyed his eyes, and inserted horns in his forehead.



**GOD'S TRUTH:** There is objective truth and objective reality because God is real and true. We do not have the freedom to dismiss what is objectively true and real;  $2 + 2$  will always be 4, not 7 or 200, and gravity will always be operational on the planet. These things are real and true because a real and true God rooted His creation in His own nature.

**CULTURE'S LIE:** "Born this way." This lie has so much traction because it's repeated so often people assume it to be true.

**GOD'S TRUTH: No Evidence.** There is actually no scientific evidence of a gay gene or any other determiner of same-sex attraction. **Identical Twins Studies:** In identical twins (who share the same DNA), when one identifies as gay or lesbian, the other one only identifies as gay or lesbian about 11% of the time. If homosexuality were a genetic issue, the correspondence would be 100%.

American culture continues to pump out the illusion—the fantasy, the myth—that sexuality is the most important thing about life and about us, and that sexual identity and expression is where life is found.

Beware: *the emperor has no clothes!*

This blog post originally appeared at [blogs.bible.org/engage/sue\\_bohlin/lgbt\\_and\\_political\\_correctness](https://blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/lgbt_and_political_correctness) on May 18, 2016.

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## Should We Go to Our Gay Neighbors' Wedding?

"Sue, I love my sweet gay neighbors, and after the SCOTUS decision I figure we'll be invited to a wedding. Do we go?"

Christians take different positions on this question, just as Christians take different positions on the issue of homosexuality in general and same-sex marriage in particular. I believe that regardless of our feelings on this issue and

about our friends and loved ones, we need to follow what the Word of God says.

Both Old and New Testaments clearly state that homosexual behavior is sin. Regardless of how we feel about those who engage in it, the Word of God is internally consistent on this issue: all sex outside of marriage, which is restricted to one man and one woman in a lifetime covenant, violates God's created intent for us. And that includes homosexual sex. Redefining marriage does not change the unnatural, sinful nature of same-gender sex (Romans 1).

A wedding is a communal event where society gathers together to witness the union of two people coming together to start a new family, a new building block of community. The point of a wedding is that the guests witness, support, bless and approve the marriage. Contrasted to lovers making promises to each other in a private intimacy, the communal witness and celebration of a wedding elevates and formalizes these vows as a covenant (a promise on steroids), and the new one-flesh union becomes a recognized part of the community.

So there is a huge difference between having dinner with gay neighbors, and attending their wedding. When people attend a wedding, it makes a statement. Attendance at a wedding means one is offering support, approval and blessing to the couple.

I suggest that since God has already spoken clearly about the nature of homosexuality, He would not contradict Himself to endorse and celebrate what He has declared to be sin (Leviticus 18:22). Neither should we.

Beyond that, the scriptures also direct us not to support other people's behaviors that God calls sin:

"Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them" (Eph. 5:11).

1 Timothy 5:22 instructs us not to "take part in the sins of

others. . .”

How can one attend a gay wedding without participating in “deeds of darkness,” without “taking part in the sins of others”?

To be consistent, Christians should examine why we attend any wedding. Since the Bible is equally unequivocal about believers marrying unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14), it would be wrong to attend that wedding as well. It would be saying, “I support, affirm, bless and celebrate this union.” Just like going to a wedding of a Christian who dumps his wife without biblical grounds to marry a younger trophy wife. No!

Lots of people scoff at this position: “God is a God of love! Who are you to judge anyone’s love?”

It’s true, God IS a God of love, and He has described love for us:

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous;  
love does not brag and is not arrogant,  
does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,  
**does not rejoice in unrighteousness**, but rejoices with the truth;  
bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

If love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but God has declared that same-sex relationships are not right, then it is not loving to engage in unrighteousness. If same-sex relationships are outside God’s created intent for human sexuality, then it is not loving to support and bless relationships that grieve God and will result in pain down the road for the people involved.

So, to answer my friend’s question: “How can you attend a gay wedding without making a clear statement of support and

endorsement, approval and blessing? And since you know what God says about the nature of their relationship as sin, what statement would you be making as His ambassador?" I encourage my friend to keep loving her wonderful neighbors, to continue to be their friends and to be salt and light to them.

But not to go to their wedding.

And if they ask why, to kindly and lovingly say, "I am a Christ-follower, and He has spoken about His intention for marriage. Just as He loves you more than you can imagine, I love you too, but I'm so sorry, I can't stand with you that day. But I'll look forward to visiting with you, as usual, on the other side of that day. And I will be praying for you."

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## **Why Have So Many Christians and Churches Become Pro-Gay?**

A recent email from a friend: "Sue, I'm seeing more and more 'evangelical' churches come out in support of gay marriage. Also, Christian friends are changing their views on the validity of the LGBT lifestyle being acceptable for a Christ-follower. I start worrying that I'm missing something, and even start questioning my beliefs."

No, my dear friend, you are not missing something, but it *is* a good time to question (not doubt) your beliefs so you can be more convinced than ever that the Creator God has not changed and neither has His word.

I think there are two big reasons so many confessing believers in Christ have allowed themselves to be more shaped by the culture than by the truth of God's word, drifting into spiritual compromise and even into apostasy (abandoning the truth of one's faith). This is not a new problem; the apostle Paul urged his readers in Rome, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God re-mold your minds from within. . ." (Romans 12:2, Phillips).

## **Reason One: Rejecting the Authority of God's Word**

The bitter fruit of several decades of shallow preaching, teaching and discipleship is that many believers have been especially vulnerable to Satan's deceptive question to Eve in the Garden of Eden: "Did God really say . . .?" When Christians ignore or flat-out reject the unmistakably clear biblical statements condemning homosexual relationships, they are playing into the enemy's temptation to justify disobedience by making feelings and perceptions more important than God's design and standards.

There are now two streams of thought on same-sex relationships and behavior, the Traditional View and the Revisionist View. The Revisionist View basically says, "It doesn't matter what the Bible actually says, it doesn't mean what 2000 years of church history has said it means, it means what we want it to say."

People are redefining the Bible, gender and marriage according to what will let them do what they want, when they should (in my opinion) be asking the insightful question posed by Paul Mooris in *Shadow of Sodom*, "[A]m I trying to interpret Scripture in the light of my proclivity, or should I interpret my proclivity in the light of Scripture?"

<i>Traditional View</i>	<i>Revisionist View</i>
<p>The Bible is inspired by a Holy God and is inherently true and trustworthy. The Bible is written by men, but divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit and is sealed by a God of truth and authority.</p>	<p>The scriptures which traditional Christianity understands to condemn homosexuality [such as Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:9-10] have either been mistranslated, yanked out of context or were only appropriate to the culture of that time. Therefore, we no longer have to follow passages we don't like.</p>
<b>Sexuality</b>	
<i>Traditional View</i>	<i>Revisionist View</i>
<p>Sexuality and sex are God's good gifts to men and women. While sexuality is an essential attribute of human nature, our Creator did not intend it to be the defining characteristic of humanity.</p>	<p>Sexuality—the feelings and attractions one feels for other people—is God ordained, diverse, deeply personal and morally permissible. One's sexual orientation, whatever it is, should be celebrated as one of God's good gifts.</p>
<b>Gender</b>	
<i>Traditional View</i>	<i>Revisionist View</i>

<p>God created both male and female in His image, and each gender reflects different aspects of the <i>imago Dei</i>. God's sovereign choice of gender for every person reflects His intention for that person's identity; it is one of the ways in which he or she glorifies Him as Creator.</p>	<p>We are free to make a distinction between sex and gender. Sex is biological maleness or femaleness at birth, and gender is how one feels about their "true" maleness or femaleness internally. Based on Galatians 3:28, "there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."</p>
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**Marriage**

<i>Traditional View</i>	<i>Revisionist View</i>
<p>Marriage is God-ordained between one man and one woman in a lifelong, monogamous, covenantal relationship. The Bible begins with the marriage of Adam and Eve, and ends with the marriage of the Lamb (Jesus) and the Bride (the church). The complementarity of husband and wife express God's intention of both genders in marriage.</p>	<p>Homosexual behavior is appropriate within the confines of a committed, loving, monogamous, lifelong, Christ-centered relationship.</p>

Both individual Christians and churches have drifted into endorsing same-sex relationships because it always feels better to follow one's flesh than to follow Jesus' call to "deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).

## **Reason Two: Snagged by the Gay Agenda**

In addition to those several decades of shallow preaching, teaching and discipleship I mentioned earlier, many believers have not been submitting themselves to the truth of the Word



of God. By default, then, they were easily shaped and swayed by the six points of a brilliantly designed "Gay Manifesto" spelled out in a book called *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90s*. Originally published as an essay called "The Overhauling of Straight America" that was published in a gay magazine, the authors laid out this plan which has been executed perfectly in the United States. (The quotes below are from the essay, found [here](#))

1. *Desensitization and normalization of homosexuals in mainstream America.* Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and often as possible.

"The principle behind this advice is simple: almost any behavior begins to look normal if you are exposed to enough of it at close quarters and among your acquaintances.

"In the early stages of any campaign to reach straight America, the masses should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself. Instead, the imagery of sex should be downplayed and gay rights should be reduced to an abstract social question as much as possible. First let the camel get his nose inside the tent—only later his unsightly derriere!"

2. *Portray members of the LGBTQ community as victims.* Indoctrinate mainstream America that members of the LGBTQ community were "born this way."

"In any campaign to win over the public, gays must be cast as victims in need of protection so that straights will be inclined by reflex to assume the role of protector."

"Now, there are two different messages about the Gay Victim that are worth communicating. First, the mainstream should be told that gays are victims of fate, in the sense that most never had a choice to accept or reject their sexual preference. The message must read: 'As far as gays can tell,

they were born gay, just as you were born heterosexual or white or black or bright or athletic. Nobody ever tricked or seduced them; they never made a choice, and are not morally blameworthy. What they do isn't willfully contrary – it's only natural for them. This twist of fate could as easily have happened to you!'”

### *3. Give protectors a just cause: anti-discrimination*

“Our campaign should not demand direct support for homosexual practices, should instead take anti-discrimination as its theme.”

### *4. The use of TV, music, film and social media to desensitize mainstream Americans to their plight as gay people*

Over the past 25 years, gay characters, on TV especially, have captured the hearts of American viewers because they were attractive, funny, smart—the kind of characters viewers would like to be. No one was shown the dark underside of gay bars and bathhouses, or same-sex domestic violence, or having to get one's HIV+ status checked.

### *5. Portray gays and lesbians as pillars in society. Make gays look good.*

“From Socrates to Shakespeare, from Alexander the Great to Alexander Hamilton, from Michelangelo to Walt Whitman, from Sappho to Gertrude Stein, the list is old hat to us but shocking news to heterosexual America. In no time, a skillful and clever media campaign could have the gay community looking like the veritable fairy godmother to Western Civilization.”

Use celebrities and celebrity endorsement. And who doesn't love Ellen DeGeneres?

### *6. Once homosexuals have begun to gain acceptance, anti-gay opponents must be vilified, causing them to be viewed as repulsive outcasts of society.*

“Our goal is here is twofold. First, we seek to replace the mainstream’s self-righteous pride about its homophobia with shame and guilt. Second, we intend to make the antigays look so nasty that average Americans will want to dissociate themselves from such types.

“The public should be shown images of ranting homophobes whose secondary traits and beliefs disgust middle America. These images might include: the Ku Klux Klan demanding that gays be burned alive or castrated; bigoted southern ministers drooling with hysterical hatred to a degree that looks both comical and deranged; menacing punks, thugs, and convicts speaking coolly about the ‘fags’ they have killed or would like to kill; a tour of Nazi concentration camps where homosexuals were tortured and gassed.”

This is how I see how we got to this place where so many people have been deceived. They didn’t anchor themselves to the Truth of the Word of God, and they opened themselves to the cultural brine of Kirk and Madsen’s plan to overhaul straight America.

And it worked.

I will close with three personal observations about this situation:

- Christians have bought into the culture’s worship of feelings over God’s unchanging revelation
- People love how being a protector of the underdog makes them feel
- Not enough of us Christ-followers are living lives that demonstrate the beauty and satisfaction of abiding in Christ

To my sweet friend who asked the question, let me say: God’s good gift of sex and the intimacy of the marriage relationship is still intended ONLY for one man and one woman for life. In the beginning, one (Adam) became two (when God formed Eve from

Adam), and then the two became one again. That is a deep mystery that makes all variations and deviations on God's intention *wrong*.

I am indebted to Hope Harris for her insight and analysis of this question.

This blog post originally appeared at  
[blogs.bible.org/engage/sue\\_bohlin/why\\_have\\_so\\_many\\_christians\\_and\\_churches\\_become\\_pro-gay](https://blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/why_have_so_many_christians_and_churches_become_pro-gay)  
on June 30, 2015.

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## **How Should We Think About Texas' First Same Sex Wedding?**

*Last week saw a front-page story of Texas' first gay marriage. I asked my friend Hope Harris to guest blog for me, responding to this event out of her decades of experience and perspective as a former gay activist before Jesus changed everything in her life.*

For well over 25 years I lived openly as a lesbian, advocating for gay rights and Marriage Equality. Just over six years ago I trusted Christ, and since then I have wrestled in depth with resolving my faith and sexuality, gender roles and Marriage Equality. Because of my belief that God's Word is true, I have landed on the side of the Biblical view of these issues. I can't even begin to express what a transformation God has made in me, that He would bring me to the place where I embrace the Biblical definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

Last week, on February 19, 2015, Suzanne Bryant and Sarah Goodfriend became the first same sex couple to legally wed in the state of Texas. Shortly after the ceremony, the Texas Supreme Court responded with a stay, making it clear that this same sex marriage license is illegal and is not legally binding. This was a one-time marriage license granted by a probate judge based on the fact that one of the women is battling ovarian cancer, because it is possible that Ms. Goodfriend may not live to see same sex marriage legal in the state of Texas.

How should we think about this?

Let's start with the premise by which this couple was granted a marriage license. It is based on Ms. Goodfriend's cancer battle; there is limited information available as to what stage her cancer has progressed to. In its article "Women Wed in Texas" [\[1\]](#), the Dallas Morning News states,

*"Goodfriend, policy director for state Rep. Celia Israel, said during a news conference that her last chemotherapy treatment was 4 1/2 months ago. But, she added: "All of us wonder if the cancer grows back along with the hair growing back."*

I am sorry that Ms. Goodfriend is suffering from ovarian cancer and my prayers are with her for full restoration of health. Furthermore, this not a personal attack on Ms. Goodfriend or her partner Ms. Bryant.

From my experience as an advocate for Marriage Equality, I see this as a public appeal to gain sympathy for same sex couples in Texas. After all, who would deny a "dying woman" and her faithful partner of 31 years the right to make medical and legal decisions? On the surface this sounds like a valid reason to side with the couple—after all, this is a one-time exception.

First, the couple themselves are well educated individuals. Ms. Bryant is an attorney who graduated from Duke Law School. She specializes in second parent adoptions for alternative families, meaning same sex couples. Ms. Goodfriend holds a Ph.D. in Economics from UNC.

It is a fact these women are long term partners and based on their level of education and positions, it would be hard to believe that they have not long ago obtained medical power of attorney and given each other the legal right to make medical decision should the other not have the fortitude to do so. Additionally I am sure they have had the foresight to make funeral arrangements as well.

Let's look at another aspect of this situation that appeals to our sense of equality and justice.

Bryant said Thursday that being legally married to Goodfriend, who has ovarian cancer, would ensure inheritance. . . "Financially, now we're intertwined, and we will have community property that we will share."

As mentioned above, the couple is well educated, and they have the ability—apart from marriage—to legally ensure that their joint property goes to the parties they intend it to, such as the remaining partner and their two adopted daughters. I see this as a ploy to gain the compassion and understanding of their fellow Texans for the larger agenda of granting all same sex couples the rights, responsibilities and portability now granted to heterosexual couples in the State of Texas.

What should our response be as Christ followers who want to uphold the Biblical definition of marriage?

It is crucial that we have each resolved that the Biblical definition is God's best plan for humanity. I can assure you that the battle is just gaining momentum in Texas. As it does it will also bring many heated and harsh exchanges between people on both sides of the issue, in public forums, town

meetings, churches and personal conversations. Anger will be most intense towards those who stand on the side of Biblical marriage.

Understand that those advocating for Marriage Equality often view Christians as unkind, uneducated and intolerant. Because of this, I believe it is all the more necessary for God's people to become educated. Learn to effectively demonstrate a balance of love and truth. Become men and women who can exercise empathy and compassion without compromise to those with opposing views. Below are three common positions most often brought to the forefront of the Marriage Equality argument.

**Social Constructs Argument:** *Men and women are equal and able to effectively carry out the roles of the opposite gender in traditional marriages.*

Understand that gay marriage dilutes the value of marriage by insisting that there is nothing intrinsically essential about the balance of male and female. It will further weaken the family bonds that God ordained.

**Civil Rights Argument:** *Gay rights and same sex marriage are civil rights issues parallel to the 1960s civil rights movement.*

Same sex marriage is not a civil right, by definition; civil rights are based on socio-economic changes rather than emotional wants and physical attractions.

I have always found this position personally offensive to men and women of color who fought tirelessly to gain equal footing to their counterparts here in the United States. From the perspective of one formerly immersed in the gay culture, I can attest that the majority of the LGBT community are well educated Caucasians who have not suffered the civil injustices people of color have.

**Religious Argument:** *It is necessary to redefine marriage and sexual identity as a cultural norm in order to justify living as one's "authentic self," according to one's primary attractions.*

God created sexuality as complete and perfect; however, as the result of sin entering the world, humanity now lives with sexual and relational brokenness. People are using the term "authentic self" to describe what is actually flesh, the part of us operating independently from God and His intentions for us.

The cultural tide is sweeping the church, not only accepting but affirming men and women who chose their primary identity as gay rather than as a redeemed child of God. Furthermore, many so-called "gay Christians" are advocating redefining God's design for marriage and sexuality as it is stated in the Bible. (So many people have become desensitized to this label or identity that it fails to disturb any more. How would we respond if a group started a "Christian swingers" or "KKK for Christ" movement?)

This position diminishes the integrity of the Bible as absolute Truth and God-inspired, with the ability to evaluate and direct our lives to become the people God calls us to be.

For those who embrace the Biblical definition of marriage being between one man and one woman, there are moral, ethical and theological implications—for Christians, churches, and pastors in Texas, the United States and beyond. We must not succumb to the cultural tidal wave challenging God's definition of marriage. Be brave and courageous, friends. Stand firm in God's Truth. Keep a level head and a calm spirit, and speak the truth in love.

1.

[www.dallasnews.com/news/state/headlines/20150219-women-wed-in-texas-first-same-sex-marriage-but-union-contested.ece](http://www.dallasnews.com/news/state/headlines/20150219-women-wed-in-texas-first-same-sex-marriage-but-union-contested.ece)





Follow Hope's blog, Hope's Pathway, at [hopespathway.wordpress.com/](http://hopespathway.wordpress.com/)

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# Gay Agenda in Schools – A Christian Worldview Perspective

*Kerby Anderson summarizes the efforts currently underway to implement a gay agenda in our public schools, identifying some of the negative consequences. Looking at this initiative from a biblical worldview perspective, he suggests actions that Christians should take in response to these actions.*

## Advancing the Gay Agenda in Schools

Since the early 1990s gay activists and various homosexual groups have been using strategies that provide them with greater access to public schools. Usually the focus is upon making the schools a safer place for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and transsexual students, thereby justifying the introduction of topics and speakers on the subject of

homosexuality. And the establishment of homosexual clubs on campus provides an ongoing program to continue to introduce homosexuality to students on campus.

Two key organizations are the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). Both have been helpful in establishing a foothold for homosexual speakers, programs, and curricula.



Perhaps the most effective wedge used by gay activists to open the door to the public schools has been concern over student safety. Kevin Jennings, Executive Director for GLSEN, explained in a speech how the “safety” issue was a most effective strategy:

*In Massachusetts, the effective reframing of this issue was the key to the success of the Governor’s Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. We immediately seized upon the opponent’s calling card—safety—and explained how homophobia represents a threat to students’ safety by creating a climate where violence, name-calling, health problems, and suicide are common. Titling our report “Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth,” we automatically threw our opponents onto the defensive and stole their best line of attack. This framing short-circuited their arguments and left them back-pedaling from day one.*[\[1\]](#)

The strategy has obviously been successful because no one would want to be against making the schools a safer environment. It almost doesn’t matter whether the allegations are true. Once you raise the concern of safety, most administrators, teachers, and parents quickly fall in line.

There is an irony in all of this. Many of the behaviors that are taught and affirmed in these school programs and clubs are unsafe in term of public health. For example, *Pediatrics* (Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics) reported on a

Harvard study that found more than thirty risks positively associated with self-reported gay-lesbian-bisexual (GLB) orientation.[{2}](#) So it is indeed ironic that the idea of “safety” is often used as means to introduce teaching and discussion of behaviors that have been proven to be quite “unsafe.”

## **The Goals of GLSEN**

The mission statement of GLSEN is straightforward: “The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.”[{3}](#) It is a growing, well-funded homosexual organization that promotes homosexual identity and behavior on campus. It has been very successful in gaining access on campus by working with such influential groups as the National Education Association.

Anyone who takes the time to read some of the materials recommended by GLSEN will quickly find that it condones sexual themes and information that would be disturbing to most parents. One researcher who has taken the time to review these materials and investigate various school programs came to the following seven conclusions:[{4}](#)

1. GLSEN believes the early sexualization of children can be beneficial. This means that virtually any sexual activity as well as exposure to graphic sexual images and material, is not just permissible but good for children, as part of the process of discovering their sexuality.

2. “Coming out” (calling oneself or believing oneself to be homosexual) and even beginning homosexual sex practices at a young age, is a normal and positive experience for youth which should be encouraged by teachers and parents, according to GLSEN.

3. Bisexuality, “fluid” sexuality and sexual experimentation is encouraged by GLSEN as a right for all students.
4. Meeting other “gay” and “questioning” youth, sometimes without parental knowledge, is a frequent theme in GLSEN materials. At these meetings, minors will come into contact with college-age people and adults practicing homosexuality.
5. In GLSEN material, the “cool” adults—parents, teachers and counselors—are those who encourage students to embrace homosexuality and cross-dressing. They also allow adult-level freedoms and let children associate with questionable teens or adults.
6. GLSEN resources contain many hostile, one-sided anti-Christian vignettes and opinions, as well as false information about Christianity and the Bible’s position on homosexuality. This encourages antagonism against biblical morality and increases the risk that youth will experiment with high-risk behavior.
7. The spirituality presented positively in GLSEN resources is heavily laced with occult themes and nightmarish images.

## **Goals of PFLAG and Gay Clubs**

PFLAG is a national organization of parents, families, and friends that “promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.”<sup>{5}</sup> It has been an active organization at the local level to promote its views of human sexuality into schools, churches, and various youth organizations. Although there is a strong emphasis on rights and tolerance, their message about sexuality would be disturbing to most parents.

One researcher who has taken the time to review their brochures and other materials came to the following five conclusions:<sup>{6}</sup>

1. PFLAG believes in total sexual license for people of all ages. For children, this means that virtually any sexual activity, as well as exposure to graphic sexual images and material, is not just permissible but good for children as part of the process of discovering their sexuality.

2. "Coming out" (calling oneself homosexual or cross-dressing) at a very young age, and even beginning early homosexual sex practices, is a desirable goal in the world according to PFLAG.

3. Bisexuality, fluid sexuality, and sexual experimentation is encouraged by PFLAG. The group believes it's important for all students to learn about these options.

4. Meeting with other "gay" and "questioning" youth, usually without parental knowledge, is a frequent theme in PFLAG materials. At these community meetings, thirteen-year-olds will come into contact with college-age youth and adults practicing homosexuality.

5. PFLAG spreads false information about the Bible, religious faith, and restoration of heterosexuality through faith. This misinformation closes the door of change for many young people, and stirs up anti-Christian and anti-Jewish bias and hostility.

Another way the gay agenda is promoted in the public schools is through Gay-Straight Alliance clubs. In the mid-1990s, there were a few dozen Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs in U.S. high schools. Today there are 3,200 GSA clubs registered. [\[7\]](#)

These student-run clubs provides a meeting place for student talk about homosexuality and homosexual behaviors. It is also provides a platform for outside speakers to address various topics and for students to organize a "Pride Week" on campus. Once a year, many of the students in these clubs also participate in "The Day of Silence." This is a day when

students will remain silent all day as a way of acknowledging the silence induced by those who oppose homosexuality.

## **Legal Liability**

Is there any legal liability when schools permit and even promote the teaching of homosexual education the campus? One group (Citizens for Community Values) believes there is a potential liability. The group has published a manual documenting the potential liability that schools, administrators, and teachers might face. The following is a brief summary of much more information that can be found in the document "The Legal Liability Associated with Homosexual Education in Public Schools."[{8}](#)

**Life expectancy**—The *International Journal of Epidemiology* found that gay and bisexual men involved in homosexual behavior cut off years from their lives. One study showed that "life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men." They therefore concluded that if "the same pattern of mortality were to continue, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged 20 years will not reach their 65th birthday."[{9}](#)

**Sexually transmitted diseases**—The danger of various STDs, including HIV infection in homosexual relationships, has been well documented through many studies. The Medical Institute for Sexual Health says that "Homosexual men are at significantly increased risk of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, anal cancer, gonorrhea and gastrointestinal infections as a result of their sexual practices. Women who have sex with women are at significantly increased risk of bacterial vaginosis, breast cancer and ovarian cancer than are heterosexual women."[{10}](#)

**Other health risk behaviors**—A study by Harvard University of over four thousand ninth- to twelfth-grade students found that gay-lesbian-bisexual "youth report disproportionate risk for a

variety of health risk and problem behaviors” and they found that they “engage in twice the mean number of risk behaviors as did the overall population.”[\[11\]](#)

**Mental health**—A study published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* found those engaging in homosexual behavior have a much higher incidence of mental health problems. “The findings support the assumption that people with same-sex sexual behavior are at greater risk for psychiatric disorders.”[\[12\]](#)

Permitting and promoting homosexual activity through on-campus programs and clubs will certainly increase homosexual behavior among students. Administrators, teachers, and parents should reconsider the impact these programs, and the subsequent behavior, will have on the student body.

## **Biblical Response**

When we talk about the issue of homosexuality, it is important to keep two biblical principles in tension. On the one hand we must stay true to our biblical convictions, and on the other hand we should reach out with biblical compassion. Essentially this is the balance between truth and love.

On the one hand, it is crucial for us to understand how the homosexual agenda threatens to normalize and even promote homosexuality within the schools. Moreover, gay activists are pushing an agenda in the courts, the legislature, the schools, and the court of public opinion that will ultimately threaten biblical authority and many of our personal and religious freedoms. Christians, therefore, must stand for truth.

I have provided a brief overview of the groups and programs that are promoting the gay agenda in the public schools. I encourage you to find out what is happening in your community. We have also documented the potential legal liability associated with many of the behaviors that are encouraged by these programs. Often administrators and teachers are unaware

of the potential dangers associated with homosexual education in the schools. Take time to share this information with them.

On the other hand, it is also important for us to reach out to those caught in the midst of homosexuality and offer God's grace and redemption. We cannot let the hardened rhetoric of gay activists keep us from having Christ's heart toward homosexuals. As individuals and as the church, we should reach out to those caught in the sin of homosexuality and offer them hope and point them to Jesus Christ so that they will find freedom from the sexual sin that binds their lives.

It is important to remember that many in the homosexual lifestyle are there because of some emotional brokenness in their families. They may be trying to meet their emotional needs in ungodly ways. Youth in the public schools may be experimenting sexually and find themselves caught up in the homosexual lifestyle.

It is also important to remember that [change is possible](#). The testimony of hundreds of former homosexuals is proof that someone can change their sexual behavior. So are the various [studies](#) that document these same behavioral changes. And, most importantly, the Bible teaches that change is possible. Paul, writing to former homosexuals in the Corinthian church, noted that "such were some of you" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

In addressing the issue of the gay agenda in public schools, it is crucial to stay true to our biblical convictions (and stand for truth) while we also reach out with biblical compassion.

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1. "'Governor's Commission for Gay Youth' Retreats to 'Safety' and 'Suicide'," *The Massachusetts News*, December 2000.
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6. Linda Harvey, "The World According to PFLAG," Mission America, 2003, <http://www.missionamerica.com/stoppflag2.php>.

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11. Robert Garofalo, *Pediatrics*, 1998.

12. Theo G.M Sandfort, et. al., "Same-Sex Sexual Behavior and Psychiatric Disorders," *Archives of General Psychiatry*, Vol. 58 (1) January 2001, 85-91.

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## Same Sex Marriage: A Facade of Normalcy

*Sue Bohlin takes a look at the arguments for same sex marriage and finds them lacking from a Christian, biblical worldview perspective. She explains that those pushing for same sex*

*marriage have redefined it into something it never was and was never intended to be.*

## **What's Marriage For?**

In any discussion on same sex marriage, we need to start at the beginning: What is marriage is for, anyway? Marriage begins a family. The family is the basic building block of society. It has always been this way from Adam and Eve down to today.

Man did not invent marriage; God did. He invented and ordained marriage as the foundation for all human society when He gave Eve to Adam and pronounced them man and wife. Marriage is one of those institutions that is found in every human culture. Across the globe and across the ages, marriage has always been defined the same way: one man and one woman in a committed relationship, providing a safe place to bear and raise children. I would suggest that since this pattern for marriage applies to all cultures and all times, this indicates that God is its inventor and creator. It's such an intrinsic part of the way we relate to each other that even those who have lost track of the story of the true God (the non-Judeo-Christian cultures) still practice marriage according to the pattern God designed: one man and one woman in a committed relationship, providing a safe place to bear and raise children.

God has woven "marriage into human nature so that it serves two primary purposes throughout all societies."[\[1\]](#) The first is the way men and women were created to complement each other. Marriage balances the strengths and weaknesses of masculinity and femininity. Women help civilize men and channel their sexual energy in productive rather than destructive ways. Men protect and provide for women—and any children they produce together.

Marriage is built on a basic building block of humanity—that we exist as male and female. The strong benefit of marriage as

God intended it is that males and females are designed with profound and wonderful differences, and these differences are coordinated in marriage so that each contributes what the other lacks.[{2}](#)

The second purpose of marriage is producing, protecting, and providing for children. Marriage ensures that children have the benefits of both mother and father. Each gender makes a unique and important contribution to children's development and emotional health, and marriage provides the best possible environment for children to thrive as they enjoy the benefits of masculinity and femininity.

Those who are pushing for same sex marriage don't see marriage this way. They seek to redefine it as a way to get society's stamp of approval on their sexual and emotional relationships, and a way to secure financial and other benefits. Both of these reasons are about the adults, not about children. Both reasons are driven by the philosophy of "How can I get what I want? How can I be happy?" It's a very self-centered movement.

Many homosexuals want the right to marry only because it confers society's ultimate stamp of approval on a sexual relationship—*not* because they want to participate in the institution of marriage.

## **Why Same Sex Relationships Are Wrong**

Let's look at several reasons (though not an exhaustive list by any means) that same sex relationships are wrong.

First, homosexuality is an attempt to meet legitimate needs in illegitimate, ungodly ways. We all have God-given heart hungers to feel loved and known and validated—to feel that we matter. God intends for us to have those needs met first by our parents and then by our peers, but sometimes something goes wrong. People find themselves walking around with a gaping, aching hole in their souls, longing to make the

connections that didn't happen when they were supposed to, earlier in their lives. From both the women and the men that I know who are dealing with unwanted homosexuality, I hear the same thing: "I just want to be held, I just want to be known, I just want to be special to someone." But turning to homosexual or lesbian relationships to get those needs met is not God's intention for us.

Second, same sex relationships are outside of (and fall far short of) God's created intention for sex. God made us male and female, designed to complement each other physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Two men or two women coming together can never live out God's intent for His creation. The biology of our gender shows us that same sex relationships don't work, but opposite sex relationships do. It is unwise to ignore the obvious about how the pieces fit, or don't fit, as the case may be.

Third, marriage is an earthbound illustration of the mystery of Christ and the church.<sup>{3}</sup> There is a mystical unity of two very different, very *other* beings coming together as one. Only the profound differences of man and woman display this mystery. "If the man represents Christ and the woman represents the church, then a male to male partnering would be, in essence, a symbolic partnering of God with Himself apart from His people. Likewise, a lesbian relationship would become a symbolic partnering of God's people without Him. Either option is incomplete, unnatural, and abhorrent."<sup>{4}</sup>

Fourth, same sex relationships are idolatrous. In Romans 1, Paul describes the downward spiral of people who worship the creature instead of the Creator. When God says intimate relationships with people of the same sex are forbidden, and people insist on pursuing them anyway, they have elevated something else to the position of a god. It could be the other person, or sexual pleasure, or even just one's own feelings, but all these things become idols because they are more important than anything else, including God.

Homosexual and lesbian relationships are wrong because God designed us for something far better. The nature of the gospel is to bring transformation to every aspect of a believer's life, and many people have discovered the "something better." (See my article, "[Can Homosexuals Change?](#)")

## The Differences Between Heterosexual and Homosexual Relationships

Sometimes you hear gays or lesbians say, "We're just like anybody else. We have two kids, a dog, a mortgage, and we worry about the economy. We just don't want anybody telling us who we can love." My friend Brady, who used to be part of that gay sub-culture, calls the homosexual lifestyle "a façade of normalcy." And it is *only* a façade.

Consider the huge variance in the stability of relationships. Despite a high divorce rate, 57% of heterosexual marriages last over twenty years.[{5}](#) The average length of homosexual relationships is two to three years.[{6}](#) Only 5% of them last 20 years.[{7}](#)

And consider the issue of promiscuity. In heterosexual marriages, over three-fourths of the men and 88% of the women remain faithful to their marriage vows.[{8}](#) Most sexually active gay men are promiscuous, engaging hundreds of sexual partners over a lifetime.[{9}](#)

The concept of a committed relationship is very different for the two groups. Most heterosexual couples are faithful and stable. When homosexual men are in what they call a "committed" relationship, this usually includes three to five outside partners each year.[{10}](#) Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, told the *Dallas Morning News*, "Monogamy is not a word the gay community uses. . . . We talk about fidelity. That means you live in a loving, caring, honest relationship with your partner. Because we can't marry,

we have people with widely varying opinions as to what that means. Some would say that committed couples could have multiple sexual partners as long as there's no deception. Each couple has to decide."[{11}](#)

In Holland, which legalized gay marriage in 2001, the average is eight outside partners.[{12}](#) One study of gay men who had been together for over five years could not find one single monogamous relationship.[{13}](#) Not one!

Women in lesbian relationships often stay together not because they want to, but because they're stuck financially and emotionally. "I heard one speaker say at a Love Won Out conference, "We don't have partners, we have prisoners." Of course, that's not universally true, but over the years of walking toward Jesus with women who were no longer in lesbian partnerships, I have heard over and over, "We didn't know how to do life apart from each other."

Heterosexuals live longer, happier lives. Sexually active homosexual men live a dangerous and destructive lifestyle. They are at huge risk for contracting AIDS, and run a much higher risk of sexually transmitted diseases than straight men. The gay community experiences three times more alcoholism and drug abuse,[{14}](#) and much more promiscuity and domestic violence than the straight world.[{15}](#) Gay men can expect to live twenty years less than their straight neighbors.[{16}](#)

And finally, a home with a mom and a dad is the best possible place for children. Homosexual parents put kids at risk. The American College of Pediatrics discovered that children raised by gay parents tend to be more dissatisfied with their own gender, suffer a greater rate of molestation in the family, have homosexual experiences more often, and are encouraged to experiment in dangerous, destructive lifestyle choices.[{17}](#)

Please hear me: We're commenting on the extremely high-risk *behavior* that is part and parcel of a homosexual lifestyle.

That's not the same thing as condemning the *people* who engage in it. A homosexual lifestyle *is* a façade of normalcy, but it can be changed.

## **Answering Arguments for Same Sex Marriage**

Let's look at several arguments being offered for same sex marriage.

The first is that marriage will encourage faithfulness and stability in volatile homosexual relationships. But the nature of homosexual and lesbian relationships is broken to begin with. Two broken people will not create a whole, healthy relationship. The best description I've ever heard of same sex relationships is "one broken little boy looking for his daddy, connecting with another broken little boy, looking for *his* daddy." And the same is true of women. Neither a marriage license, nor the approval of society, can fix the nature of a relationship that is irretrievably broken at its core.

Another argument is that we need same sex marriage to insure hospital visitation. But it's the patient who decides. If he appoints his partner as a health-care proxy, even if he's in a coma that document will insure access to the hospital. We don't need marriage for that. It's a smokescreen.

A third argument is that we need same sex marriage to insure survivorship benefits. But that's what a will is for. You don't need marriage for that.

Some say that we need same sex marriage for Social Security benefits. This is an interesting argument, since Social Security benefits were created to address the financial inequity of father as breadwinner and mother as stay-at-home caregiver. Homosexual relationships are usually two-incomes. It's very rare to have one stay-at-home caregiver of the kids, since homosexual relationships do not and cannot produce children naturally. When they do, they are borrowing from

God's plan for creating families.

Then there's the discrimination argument. There are really two issues that fall under this argument: *denied liberties* and *denied benefits*.

Concerning the issue of denying the liberty to marry, this argument doesn't hold water. Any person can marry whoever he or she pleases, with certain restrictions that are true for everyone. You can't marry a child, a close blood relative, a person who is already married, or a person of the same sex. These restrictions apply equally to everyone; there is no discrimination here. The problem is, some people don't like the restrictions.

True discrimination functions against an unchangeable identity, such as gender or color. Homosexuality is a lifestyle, a chosen behavior. Even sexual orientation is changeable. It's not easy, but it *is* possible.

The other issue of discrimination is denied benefits. But benefits are granted to families because society has an interest in providing a safe place for children to grow up and be nurtured. So the government provides child-oriented benefits such as inheritance rights and tax relief to ease the financial burden of children. Insurance policies and Social Security benefits provide for the money gap between wage-earner and caregiver. These benefits are inherent to *families*. The essence of marriage is about building families. Homosexual relationships cannot build families legitimately. They have to borrow from heterosexual relationships or technology to create children.

## **Final Points to Consider**

Joe Dallas draws on his wisdom and experience as a former homosexual to address the issue of same sex marriage in his book *When Homosexuality Hits Home*. He provides some excellent



points to consider about this subject. [{18}](#)

We can recognize that people genuinely love each other, and we can respect their right to form a partnership, even if we disagree with the nature of their partnership. We can say a relationship is wrong without disrespecting or condemning the people in that relationship.

For example, look at the relationship between Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. Tracy was a married man when he met and fell in love with her. For decades they had a deeply committed and affectionate relationship although they never married. Note two glaring and conflicting facts about their relationship: it was adulterous, and therefore wrong, and they truly loved each other. You can find a number of good things about their relationship, such as the way they respected each other and cared deeply for each other and seemed to be good for each other. When we say it was morally wrong, this does not deny the good things about their relationship. But to recognize the good things does not change the fact that it was morally wrong. The two are not mutually exclusive.

With gay or lesbian couples, we can acknowledge that there may, indeed, be deep love and commitment to each other. After all, humans have an amazing God-given capacity to love—even outside the bounds of His design and commands. But God cannot and does not sanction homosexual relationships, so we cannot either. We can respect those involved without capitulating to their demands.

Redefining marriage is especially unacceptable to Christians, since it is spelled out in both Testaments as a type of God's relationship with His people. In the Old Testament, God is portrayed as the husband of the nation of Israel, and in the New Testament, Jesus is the bridegroom of the Church. Marriage is far more than a social construct that provides for the creation of new families. It is a living parable that helps us to understand the dynamic, mysterious relationship between God

and His people. How can we redefine something that has such a deep, spiritual meaning? Even if that were not part of the equation, we would still need to deal with the truth that marriage was created by God, and we do not have the right to tinker with His creation.

The problem with same sex marriage is that it doesn't work, it doesn't fit, and it is an attempt to make right something that is intrinsically, irretrievably wrong. God created us in His image as both male and female, and intends that His full image be expressed as men and women come together in designed complementarity. This is impossible in same sex marriage.

## Notes

1. Glenn T. Stanton and Dr. Bill Maier, *Marriage on Trial* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 22.
2. Stanton and Maier, 24.
3. Ephesians 5:22-32.
4. Joe Dallas, *When Homosexuality Hits Home* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2004), 164-165.
5. Rose M. Kreider and Jason M. Fields, "Number, Timing, and Duration of Marriages and Divorces: 1996" *Current Population Reports*, P70-80, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. (February 2002): 5.
6. M. Saghir and E. Robins, *Male and Female Homosexuality* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1973): 225; L. A. Peplau and H. Amaro, "Understanding Lesbian Relationships," in *Homosexuality Social, Psychological, and Biological Issues*, ed. J. Weinrich and W. Paul (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982).
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9. A. P. Bell and M. S. Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), pp. 308, 309; See also A. P. Bell, M. S. Weinberg, and

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10. David H. Demo, et al., editors, *Handbook of Family Diversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): 73.

11. *Dallas Morning News*, July 5, 2003.

12. Maria Xiridou, et al, "The Contribution of Steady and Casual Partnerships to the Incidence of HIV Infection among Homosexual Men in Amsterdam," *AIDS* 17 (2003): 1031.

13. This study by McWhirter and Mattison lasted five years, studying 156 male couples (312 individuals). Cited in "Long-term Gay Relationships" by Louis Berman, Ph.D., <http://www.narth.com/docs/1996papers/berman.html>

14. Peter Freiberg, "Study: Alcohol Use More Prevalent for Lesbians," *The Washington Blade*, January 12, 2001, p. 21. Karen Paige Erickson, Karen F. Trocki, "Sex, Alcohol and Sexually Transmitted Diseases: A National Survey," *Family Planning Perspectives* 26 (December 1994): 261.

15. Lettie L. Lockhart et al., "Letting out the Secret: Violence in Lesbian Relationships," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9 (1994): 469-492. D. Island and P. Letellier, *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence* (New York: Haworth Press, 1991): 14.

16. Robert S. Hogg et al., "Modeling the Impact of HIV Disease on Mortality in Gay and Bisexual Men," *International Journal of Epidemiology* 26 (1997): 657.

17.

<http://www.acpeds.org/?CONTEXT=art&cat=22&art=50&BISKIT=2920801063>

18. Dallas, p. 162-165.

**See Also:**

- [Can Homosexuals Change?](#)
  - [Did Phil Get It Wrong? Is Homosexuality Sin?](#)
    - [Homosexual Myths](#)
    - [Homosexuality: Questions and Answers](#)
    - [Homosexual Theology](#)
  - [When Someone In Your Congregation Says "I'm Gay" \(Pastors' Brochure\)](#)
- [And also our answers to e-mails about homosexuality issues](#)

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# Can Homosexuals Change? – A Christian View of Homosexuality

*Sue Bohlin looks at the real evidence showing people who have changed from homosexuality. From a Christian perspective, Sue presents some proven paths to recovery from homosexual thoughts and practice. When we let Christ begin to heal our underlying hurts and feelings of inadequacy, it is truly possible to experience a fundamental change.*

## Is It Possible for Homosexuals to Change?

Mike<sup>{1}</sup> was marching in a Gay Pride parade when God got a hold of him. He had been high for four days and his "buzz" suddenly evaporated as he heard a voice in his head say, "You don't have to live like this." He knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was God offering him a way out. He put down his Gay Pride sign, left the parade, sat down in a nearby stairwell, and repented of his rebellion. He gave his heart to Jesus

Christ and starting walking out of homosexuality that day. Today, several years later, he is married with a child, and living a very different kind of life. Not just on the outside; his heart was changed from the inside out.

Paul was on a self-destructive path of drug and alcohol abuse and homosexual activity. When he told his mother he was gay, she threw him out of the house, and the only place he could find belonging, safety, and identity was the gay community. As he spent more and more time “escaping” the pain in his life through sex and alcohol, he began to realize how bad his life was. He wanted to die but God had something else in mind.

Paul was invited to a Bible study where he met a man who had left the gay lifestyle and was living a changed life. For the first time he honestly called out and said, “God, please help me.”

One of his friends became a Christian. He asked her about homosexuality and was angered by her initial response. She said, “I now believe it is a sin—but God wouldn’t call it a sin if there weren’t something better.” Paul eventually realized that he was a sinner who needed God’s love and grace, and in 1992 he trusted Christ as his Savior. Two months later, he was led to an organization that helps people deal with unwanted homosexuality through an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. He left his homosexual identity behind and embraced his true identity as a child of God, committed to holiness and purity. Paul is now director of that ministry and is helping others walk out of homosexuality. He’s not perfect, he’s still growing . . . just like me and every other Christian I know. But the “something better” God had in mind for him is an intimacy with Christ that is breathtaking.

Randy brings glory to God every day of his life by living out the abiding truth that change is possible.

## Stories of Women

Carol grew up in a religious home with parents whose standards were too strict to allow her to please them. But she was smart, and a good student, and her teachers gave her the affirmation and encouragement her heart longed for. She developed very strong bonds with her teachers, some of which became profound emotional dependencies.

In graduate school, she was hit by the unexpected pain of loneliness and emptiness. Carol got into an intense relationship with a married woman, facing completely new temptations. She was totally unprepared to resist the strength of same-gender attraction, and quickly found herself emotionally and physically involved in a relationship she couldn't believe was happening. Now she was not only emotionally needy, she was shackled by deep shame, woundedness, and guilt.

A friend told her about a ministry to those dealing with same-sex attraction, and it was like finding a door to another world. Through the support she found there, Carol was challenged to identify the lies of Satan which she had believed her whole life and replace them with the truth of Scripture. God is renewing her mind, meeting her deep heart-needs, and bringing her to a place of freedom and hope.

Diane's story is different. She spent eighteen years in a committed lesbian relationship with another woman she believed to be her soul-mate. They went through a commitment ceremony in a gay church, and raised a daughter together. She enjoyed a position of leadership as a bright and articulate spokesperson for a gay church.

Through all those years, Diane's mother was steadfast in three things. She loved Diane unconditionally. She never backed down about her belief that her daughter's lifestyle was sinful because God says it's wrong. And third, she prayed faithfully

for her daughter.

Diane and her partner sought the Lord about everything except their sexuality. At one point, they were praying together for wisdom and truth about a situation that had nothing to do with their relationship. God answered their prayer in an unexpected way; He showed them the truth about the sinful nature of their relationship. It was a terribly painful and unwelcome discovery to learn that they had been deceived. Together, they decided out of obedience to God to separate and break off their relationship. It's still painful, even as Diane experiences God's healing touch in the deepest parts of her wounded soul. He's changing Diane and Carol from the inside out.

## **Three Claims for Change**

Some people deal with same-sex attraction by pretending it's not there. Denial is unfortunately the time-honored "Christian" response. But this is not the way God wants us to deal with problems; Psalm 51:6 says, "Surely you desire truth in my inmost parts." Acknowledging one has a homosexual orientation is like seeing the red light on your car's dashboard; it means something is wrong somewhere. A homosexual orientation isn't the actual problem; it's the symptom of a deeper issue—legitimate, God-given needs for relationship and intimacy that have been channeled in unhealthy and sinful directions.

But it is not a simple matter, and it would be disrespectful to imply that there is an easy solution to the complex issue of homosexuality. Among those who claim that change is possible, there are three main schools of thought on how to get there.

The first is the deliverance ministries. They say that homosexuality is caused by a demon, and if we can just cast out the demon, the problem is gone. Sounds like an easy fix,

but it ends up causing even more problems because homosexuality isn't caused by a demon. The person who was "delivered" may experience a temporary emotional high, but the same temptations and thought patterns that plagued him before are going to return because the root issue wasn't dealt with. Only now, he's burdened by the false guilt of thinking he did something wrong or that he's not good enough for God to "fix" him.

A second and more effective treatment for homosexuality is reparative therapy. There is a lot of wisdom to be found here because many therapists believe that homosexuality has its roots in hurtful relationship patterns, especially with family members, and many homosexual men and women report exactly that. But reparative therapy is often just behavior modification, and it deals only with the flesh, that part of us independent of God. Reparative therapy can make people feel better, but it can't bring true inner healing.

The third, and I believe best, way to bring about real and lasting change is a redemptive approach. Ministries that disciple men and women in intimate relationship with Jesus Christ are able to lead them into inner healing because God transforms His people. It's excruciatingly difficult to leave homosexuality without support. Fortunately, even for people who do not live in an area where there is a ministry tailored for those dealing with unwanted homosexuality, there are online support forums that can be almost as powerful as face-to-face groups. I especially recommend Living Hope Ministries' online support groups at [www.livehope.org](http://www.livehope.org). There are also some wonderful books available, particularly *Coming Out of Homosexuality* by Bob Davies, and *Someone I Love is Gay* by Anita Worthen and Bob Davies. Another excellent book is *You Don't Have to Be Gay* by Jeff Konrad for men and *Restoring Sexual Identity* by Anne Paulk for women. My all-time favorite author on this topic is [Joe Dallas](#); anything he writes is exceptionally good. But discipleship is hard work, and there



is no simple and easy fix.

## **The Path to True Change**

The most effective route to real, lasting change for those caught in same-gender attraction is a redemptive approach. This means discipleship, being taught and encouraged and held accountable to develop intimacy with Christ. Interestingly, it doesn't seem to matter what the particular stronghold is in a person's life—whether it be homosexuality, gluttony, drug dependency, compulsive gambling or shopping, alcoholism, sexual addiction, or any other stronghold—the most effective solution is the same: intimacy with Christ.

True discipleship is hard work. And God even gives us the energy for discipleship! But it takes tremendous self-discipline to choose to operate in the Spirit instead of in our own flesh, to depend on God's strength instead of our own. The real battle is in the mind.

The steps to overcoming homosexuality also apply to overcoming any stronghold.

First, the person has to stop the sinful behavior. It's best to ask for God's help. This is no different from the requirement for any drug or alcohol abuse treatment. You can't work on a problem when you're still totally controlled by it.

The second step is to work on learning what the Bible says about who you are in Christ. Just as people learning to identify counterfeit money examine real currency so they can spot the fakes, the struggler needs to fill their mind with God's Word so they can enter into their true identity as a beloved, valuable child of God.

The third step is working on the thought life, since this is where the battle is. It's important to identify Satan's lies playing as tapes in one's head, and stop the tape player! Then, deliberately replace the lies with the truth. Instead of

“I’m never going to change,” repeat the truthful promise that “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13). Instead of obsessing over the aching and longing for the unhealthy and sinful behavior or relationship, fill your mind with praise and worship and Scripture.

Next, face the fact that it feels lousy! When we stop trying to meet our needs in our own ways, we start experiencing the emotional pain that our strongholds had covered up. When it feels really really bad, we are at that very point where God can make the biggest difference. Ask, *What is my true need?* What is it my heart is truly longing for? Go to Jesus and let Him meet your deepest heart-needs. Let Him direct you to get your divinely-designed needs for relationship with other people met in godly ways.

This is where powerful healing happens.

## **Ex-Ex-gays**

For the last several years, people who had left homosexuality have slowly but surely gained a hearing in telling their stories. Word is getting out: change is possible!

And there are also the voices of the frustrated and disillusioned souls who tried to leave homosexuality, who tried to change, and gave up. There’s even a name for it: “Ex ex-gays.” Their stories are full of tremendous pain, and some have even lost their faith over it. What happened?

Well, I think the same thing that happened to people who tried AA but couldn’t stop drinking, or those who tried Weigh Down Workshop but couldn’t lose weight. I have a friend who was in Weigh Down Workshop, and it didn’t do a thing for her. The problem is, she never made the commitment to “die to self,” to use an old spiritual term<sup>{2}</sup>. She never got to the point of saying, “Jesus, I choose You over food. I choose a holy relationship with You over an unhealthy relationship with my

appetite. And I will do whatever it takes to allow You to change my heart.”

Many people who tried to change their homosexuality could win contests for praying and reading their Bibles. They really did try very very hard. But the prayers are often misdirected: “God, change me. Take away my desires. Let me start liking people of the opposite sex.” Unfortunately, as well-intentioned as this prayer is, it’s a lot like trying to get rid of dandelions in your back yard by mowing them. They keep coming back because you’re not dealing with their roots. The basic cause of a homosexual orientation isn’t genetics or choice; it’s a wrong response to being hurt. It’s about protecting oneself and trying to get legitimate needs met in ways God never intended. True change can only happen with the hard work of submitting to God, allowing Him to expose the deep hurts and needs of one’s heart, which means facing horrible pain, and inviting Him to bring healing to those wounded places. That’s why intimacy with Christ is the answer. A wise friend observed that homosexuality is the fruit of sinful ways of dealing with pain—sinful because they cut us off from the One who can heal and meet our needs, sinful because they place us at the center of our universe and we don’t belong there. Jesus does.

I hope you can see that real change is hard and it costs a great deal because it requires strong motivation, hard work, and perseverance. But hundreds of former homosexuals have found a large degree of change, attaining abstinence from homosexual behaviors, lessening of homosexual temptations, strengthening their sense of masculine or feminine identity, and correcting distorted styles of relating with members of the same and opposite gender. Some former homosexuals marry and some don’t, but marriage is not the measuring stick; spiritual growth and obedience are.

The bottom line is, change is possible.

**Notes**

1. All names in this article are changed.

2. This term is not actually biblical, but the concept is. See Romans 6.

**See Also:**

- [Homosexual Myths](#) [Sue Bohlin]
- [Homosexuality: Questions and Answers](#) [Sue Bohlin]
  - [Homosexual Theology](#) [Kerby Anderson]
- [Same Sex Marriage: A Façade of Normalcy](#) [Sue Bohlin]
- [When Someone In Your Congregation Says "I'm Gay"](#) (Pastors' Brochure) [Sue Bohlin]
- **[See also "Probe Answers Our E-Mail: Homosexuality"](#)**