

Two Genders, Two Spectrums

Sue Bohlin suggests a biblical view of masculinity and femininity that encompasses the variety within two genders as God creates us.

How do you see the variations of gender in people? Many people automatically think of a single spectrum with masculinity on one end and femininity on the other.

I don't think that's the way it works.



Consider the very first thing we encounter about gender in the creation account of Genesis 1:27–

So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Just two genders. No matter how many choices of made-up genders that Facebook used to offer.

We can look at the issue of gender spiritually by reading about how God created us male and female. We can also see the binary nature of gender by looking at biology. Male bodies produce small reproductive sex cells called gametes—sperm—and female bodies produce large gametes, eggs. There are no other options.

In this article we'll be walking through a way of looking at gender that I believe faithfully reflects what God has revealed in His word about His design for us as human beings. Instead of a single spectrum with male and masculinity on one end and female and femininity on the other, I suggest there are two separate spectrums^[1]: a masculinity spectrum and a

femininity spectrum. God makes delightful variations in girls and women, and equally delightful variations in boys and men, all of us made in His image and created for His glory.

I suggest that God chooses where on each gender spectrum a baby comes into the world. It's our starting point, but as we mature we can embrace and grow in the other characteristics of masculinity or femininity. We can take up more "bandwidth" and become a more fully-rounded man or woman.

One end of the masculinity spectrum, I suggest, are the rough-and-tumble boys who are constantly moving, playing sports, making noise, getting dirty, and can easily be emotionally clueless. On the other end of the spectrum are the sensitive, artistic, creative boys. And there's everything in between.

On the femininity spectrum, we see girly-girls on one end, who love frilly clothes, playing with their doll babies, and in American culture are drawn to pink and purple and sparkly. On the other end are the tomboy jockettes who are often gifted athletes and natural leaders, and hate girly clothes. And, as with their brothers, there is everything in between.

Let's explore these different gender spectrums and hopefully gain a fuller understanding of the goodness of God's creation just the way He makes each one of us.

Masculinity Spectrum 1

I really like the idea that every child, created in his or her own individuality in the image of God, is a gift box that we as parents and care-givers get to open and discover what's inside. Every child is fearfully and wonderfully made, as we read in Psalm 139, and that includes the kind of boy and the kind of girl God chose for them to be. Whoever came up with the philosophy that children are blank slates that we write on, so they become whoever and however the surrounding culture instructs them to be, must have never been around actual

children. Real babies come out of the womb and start revealing how God made them.

God shapes some baby boys as rough-and-tumble. They are often considered classically “all boy.” They’re constantly moving. Ask boys to walk from point A to point B and they may well zig-zag their way across the room. They often have an affinity for fighting and weapons. One mama who said no toy guns in her home because she hated violence, found her young son nibbling his toast into the shape of a pistol, which he pointed at his brother and made shooting sound effects. Her other son would treat the longest French fry from his Happy Meal like a miniature rifle to pretend-shoot his brother.

These rough-and-tumble boys are often emotionally clueless. They don’t *mean* to be insensitive, they just don’t pay much attention to non-verbal cues from other people. They tend to enjoy rough-housing with their daddies and with other boys. They will chest-bump and jostle each other in their male way of expressing friendship and affection. And these boys are drawn to contact sports, especially anything with balls.

God delights to make other boys, though far fewer of them, as sensitive, artistic, and creative. They are often gifted in the performing and visual arts, music, dance, drama, and design. They tend to experience life through a magnifying lens attached to their soul; everything is bigger, louder, and more vibrant. They can experience negative communications as more critical than they actually are. A parent’s frown may feel as devastating as a spanking.

They constantly scan their environment, sensing when others around them are upset. My husband can spot these sensitive boys at age two in the church nursery. He has seen boys drop whatever toy they had and go over to another toddler asking, “You okay? It’s okay.”

Many of them don’t care for sports, especially contact sports.

Often they lack the eye-hand coordination needed for sports that utilize balls, rackets, clubs and other game equipment. They can do better at sports that scratch their competitive itch where they're racing against the clock, like cross-country running.

And of course, there are boys (and men) everywhere in between as well. One of my sons was so sensitive and artistic he graduated with an art degree; the other puts himself square in the middle of the masculinity spectrum.

Masculinity Spectrum 2

We see the two kinds of boys and men in the account of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25. Esau, the rough-and-tumble man, was a hunter, an outdoorsman. His twin brother Jacob was a mama's boy, more interested in hanging back in the tents with his mother, in all probability the sensitive, artistic, creative type.

Since sensitive boys are in the minority, they often get bullied by the rough-and-tumbles or boys in the middle of the spectrum, and they can easily feel like they don't fit, they don't belong. They feel different from an early age.

These are the ones who are vulnerable to spiritual attacks of being labeled gay and other ugly words. In recent years, as sensitive, artistic and creative boys feel the pain of not fitting in, they are now being encouraged to label themselves as transgender. It used to be they would think, "I don't fit in the world of boys. There's something wrong with me." Now they are being encouraged to think, "I don't fit in the world of boys because I'm really a girl. Or life would be better and easier if I became a girl." (Which, of course, is impossible.) Then if they accept these false labels and they practice seeing themselves that way, they can literally think themselves into a gay or trans identity. But it doesn't have to be that way. Scripture tells us to "take every thought

captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). All of us need to derive our identity from who God says we are.

Thinking of the masculinity spectrum, I like to ask, where would you put Jesus?

I think He embodies the entire spectrum. He was the best of rough-and-tumble men, strong and physically active; He started out as a carpenter or handyman, and men were drawn to Him. Was He artistic? Have you ever seen a sunrise or a sunset? Jesus paints the sky with glorious colors! Was He creative? Scripture tells us He was the Creator of the universe!

I have observed over years that as boys and men grow spiritually, they start taking up more bandwidth on the masculinity spectrum as they become more well-rounded. Rough-and-tumbles learn to listen and show compassion, and sensitives stretch out their comfort zone to take more initiative and reject passivity.

Rough-and-tumbles can become great leaders and servants as they use their strength to love and serve others. Sensitives can become great husbands, dads, pastors, counselors, and teachers as *they* use their gifts to love and serve others.

Femininity Spectrum 1

On the one end of the femininity spectrum are the girly-girls who come into the world wanting a pink receiving blanket and one of those headbands with a big puffy flower on their little bald head. They can't wait till their fingernails and toenails are big enough for Mommy to paint. In American culture they often gravitate toward pink and purple and silver glitter. They cuddle baby dolls and stuffed animals.

One progressive-minded mother didn't want to support gender stereotypes for her daughter, so instead of buying her stuffed animals and dolls, she gave her cars and trucks. One afternoon she saw her little girl lining up the cars and trucks,

covering them with a blanket, and tenderly kissing them “night-night” as she put them down for a nap. Just as she would have with dolls and stuffed toys, if she’d been allowed to have them.

It’s easy to define feminine as girly-girls, but God loves and creates another kind of femininity.

He delights to make some girls tomboy jockettes. They have no interest in frilly clothes or makeup. They don’t care for skirts or dresses and in fact will often push back when required to wear “girl clothes.” For them, comfort is everything. You can find them outside climbing trees, shooting hoops, and perfecting their spirals. Some mechanically-inclined girls want to help their dads work on cars and lawnmowers. They tend to have no patience for girly-girl activities; girl drama drives them crazy. Barbie is stupid, and who wants to play house—nobody wins!

Many times they are gifted athletes, and often natural leaders.

Like sensitive boys, tomboys are outnumbered by girly-girls and those in the middle of the femininity spectrum. Being the minority, they are often bullied. They are judged and ostracized for not being like the other girls.

Sensitive boys and tomboy girls can get the message loud and clear that they don’t have what it takes to be a good boy or girl. They can conclude, wrongly, that they don’t belong in the world of boys, of girls. They burn with the shame of being “other than.” Different.

But God makes every person male or female on purpose, for His glory. They DO belong in the world of boys or girls, of men and women!

Femininity Spectrum 2

As girls grow spiritually, becoming more like Jesus, they can take up more bandwidth on the spectrum and become a more well-rounded expression of femininity.

Girly girls can put down their mirrors and selfies, and become prayer warriors and first responders. They can walk into emotional crises and hard conversations to point people to Jesus. They can become shepherds, more concerned about other people than themselves.

Tomboys can embrace the softer, more nurturing side of femininity. These girls often want to fight and defend those needing protection. They need to be introduced to spiritual warfare! Whether as a princess warrior or a warrior princess, the kingdom needs all girls and women to be fully engaged in fighting evil!

Many of the gender issues today are about stereotypes. People want to stick everybody in either a blue box or a pink box. They make sweeping generalizations like

- “Boys wear blue and brown and play with trucks and guns.”
- “Girls wear pink and purple and play with Barbies and jewelry making kits.”

But what if a boy thinks blue and brown are boring, and he loves pink and purple? Does it mean he’s gay? No! Jesus loves pink and purple! Have you ever seen a sunrise?

What if he doesn’t want to play tackle football? What if he’d rather sit and try to draw out another kid’s thoughts and feelings? Does it mean he’s gay? No! It may be a junior counselor in the making, who’s also going to be a fantastic daddy!

What if a girl thinks it’s just WRONG that she has to stay inside and learn to make gravy because Grandma says that’s

what girls do, when there's a broken carburetor outside she's itching to get her hands on? What if she's an amazing softball player? Does it mean she's a lesbian? No! It means she's a gifted mechanic or athlete!

Let's forget the blue and pink boxes and just open the gift box that is each child and find out how God packed the gifts and interests inside. Let's celebrate God's good design of each child IN HIS IMAGE and affirm them as the child they are, even if they don't conform to stereotypes.

Can you imagine how freeing it would be to celebrate the full spectrum of masculinity and femininity, and teach kids to appreciate and celebrate it in each other?

Notes

1. I do realize that the plural of spectrum is *spectra*, but most people don't take five years of Latin like I did. For those who wince at my coining a word, my apologies.

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Helping Teens Understand Homosexuality – Facts to Help Youth Withstand the Current Culture

Sue Bohlin provides practical ways to communicate with teens about common misunderstandings and the truth concerning homosexuality. Recognizing that teens deal with peer pressure to experiment and feelings of same sex attraction, she

provides real ways to help teens make their way through this maze of contradiction and confusion.

In this article we look at ways to communicate the truth about homosexuality to teens. We examine the lies they are told and the sexual pressure they are under. We also look at ways to help kids process their gender confusion, as well as address helpful ways to encourage teens who already identify themselves as gay or lesbian. And finally, we provide perspective on how to treat those who struggle with same-sex attraction in a compassionate and godly way. By looking at this topic, from a Christian, biblical worldview perspective, we can communicate the depth of God's love and His desire for us to experience the best life possible.



The Lies They Hear

In many schools and in the rest of the culture today, only one perspective is allowed to be heard. Consider four lies that are very familiar to teens today:

First, *"Homosexuality is normal and healthy."* It's neither. The fact that it simply occurs (in about 2% of the population) doesn't make it normal. When we look at the way males and females were designed to complement each other both emotionally and sexually, that tells us something about the nature of homosexuality, that something has gone wrong somewhere. This is not judging the people who experience same-sex attraction; it's like a red light on the dashboard of a car, denoting that something needs attention.

Acting physically on same-sex attractions is certainly not healthy. Those who do are at far greater risk for sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS; alcoholism and drug abuse; depression; emotionally exhausting relationships; and a shortened lifespan.[\[1\]](#) Please see the "Facts About Youth" website from the American College of Pediatricians, especially

this article: [Health Risks of the Homosexual Lifestyle](#).

Lie #2: *“If you’re attracted to someone of the same sex, that means you’re gay or lesbian.”* Not so. It really means that there are unmet, God-given needs for love and attention that were supposed to be met earlier in life. Having crushes on other people, of both sexes, is also a normal part of adolescent development. It means teens are transitioning emotionally from child to adult.

The third lie is, *“Since you were born that way, you can’t change.”* First, there is no scientific evidence that anyone is born gay. It’s a myth that has been repeated so often that people believe it. Second, thousands of people who were once gay have experienced significant changes in their attractions and behavior.^{2} Change is possible.

The fourth lie is, *“Embrace and celebrate your gay identity, because gay life is cool.”* Those in ministry to those dealing with unwanted homosexuality have heard many heartbreaking stories of the truth: a dark side of intense and difficult relationships, relational patterns of disillusionment and breakups, physical and emotional unhealthiness.

Countless people have said they wished they never entered the gay community in the first place, but it’s hard to leave.

Teens and Sexual Pressure

Adolescents are under an extraordinary amount of sexual pressure. They live in a sex-saturated culture, and the messages they receive from the media and, unfortunately, in school, clearly communicate an expectation that sex is just part of having a social life. Rarely do they hear about the heart-wrenching consequences of being sexually active, both physically and emotionally. The agenda pushing sexual freedom is also engaged in trying to normalize homosexuality as well.

Teens are pushed to decide early if they are gay, straight, or

bisexual, as young as elementary school. But kids in their early teens, much less even younger than that, are no more equipped to “decide” their sexual orientation than they are to choose a college major and career track. A landmark study done by the University of Minnesota determined that at age twelve, one fourth of the students were unsure of their sexual orientation. Their bodies were just beginning to experience the changes that would turn them from children into adults, and they were being asked if they were gay, straight, or bisexual. No wonder so many were confused! But by age seventeen, that number of kids unsure of their sexual orientation had dropped to 5%.[\[3\]](#)

And psychiatrist Dr. Jeffrey Satinover says, “[W]ithout any intervention whatsoever, three out of four boys who think they’re gay at age 16 aren’t by 25. So if we’re going to treat homosexuality as a state, 75% of ‘gays’ become ‘non-gay’ spontaneously. That’s a statement which I consider ludicrous, but if you accept this tacit proposition—that being gay is an actual state, like being short or being tall, black or white—then in three out of four people that condition changes itself spontaneously. . . . That’s with no outside intervention, just the natural processes of development.”[\[4\]](#)

We need to tell teens, “It’s too soon to ‘declare a major’ in your sexuality.”

Teens are also pressured to experiment with both sexes as the only way they can know their sexual orientation. It’s presented as nonchalantly as our cruise ship table partner suggesting we try escargot—“Hey, how can you know if you like it unless you try it out?”

Teenage sexual behavior can have lifelong consequences, but they are not in a position to recognize that. Their brains don’t finish developing until age twenty-five, and they tend to make decisions out of the region of the brain that controls emotion. So they are easily swayed to make dangerous and

irresponsible choices, like engaging in any kind of sexual behavior.

Teens need to be encouraged to face the sexual pressures and stand against them.

Gender Insecurity

At a conference I attended, author and ministry leader Andy Comiskey^{5} shared a painful experience in junior high where one day, out of the blue, the whole school was abuzz with the rumor that Andy was gay. There was even graffiti about it on the wall. He struggled with his sexual identity, but he had never acted out. He walked into a classroom on an errand and on his way out, two boys called "Faggot!" He was crushed and humiliated. Later on, he made it into a self-fulfilling prophecy and immersed himself in the gay lifestyle.

I went up to him and asked, "If you could rewrite the script of that incident, knowing what you do today, what would it look like?" He said, "Oh, I wish there had been some sensitive adults, especially in the church, to talk freely with me and other kids about 'gender insecurity.' They wouldn't even have to talk about homosexuality or use the word—many kids can relate to the idea of 'gender insecurity.' It would have been so freeing for me to have someone acknowledge that it's a real thing, but it didn't mean I was gay. I wish there were people who could have spoken truth into my life at that point."

One kind of truth that kids should hear is that around age ten, attraction for the same sex begins. This attraction is emotional, non-sexual, and involuntary. It doesn't mean teens are gay or lesbian; it means they are transitioning through normal adolescent development. We have to learn to attach to people of our same sex before we can learn to attach to people of the opposite sex. But most teens don't know this.

Some kids don't feel secure in their masculinity or femininity

for a variety of reasons, usually having to do with not being affirmed by parents and peers. God gives each of us [needs for attention, approval and affection](#). When those needs are not met, the onset of hormones can sexualize this “hole in the heart.” Some teens can find themselves longing for the attention, approval and affection of people of their same gender. When others put on them the false and hurtful labels of “homo,” “fag,” or “lez,” they can easily find themselves believing the lies.

When teens are not secure in their gender, they *don't* need to be pointed to gay groups at school. They need to be affirmed and encouraged to develop their innate, God-given [masculinity or femininity](#), to see their gender as good. They need to have other kids reach out to make them feel “one of the guys” or “one of the girls.” They need time to finish growing up.

Teens Who Identify as Gay or Lesbian

Growing numbers of teens are self-identifying as gay or lesbian. In many circles, being gay—or claiming to be gay—is now considered cool, especially among girls.

Teenagers experiment with same-sex relationships for a variety of reasons. Some experience normal crushes on same-sex peers and think this means they are gay—or their friends *inform* them that's what it means. What it really means is that they are learning to form deep and intense attachments which is a necessary precursor to maintaining long-term adult relationships like marriage.

Others experiment with same-sex relationships out of a legitimate need to belong. Some kids are simply curious; they just want to try it out like a new shade of lipstick.

Some teens experiment with same-sex relationships because others have labeled them gay or lesbian, and they wonder, “Am I? Do they know something I don't know? Maybe I am and I need

to go in that direction.” This is one reason it’s so important to impress on all kids the absolute unacceptability of name-calling and other cruelties. It’s not only bullying behavior, it can have terrible emotional consequences.

Some adolescents pursue same-sex relationships because they are anxious about growing into adolescence and the responsibilities of adulthood. So they hide behind immature and emotionally volatile same-sex feelings and behaviors.

Often, what teens are attracted to in same-sex peers are the characteristics they wish they had in themselves: popularity, good looks, a winsome personality, a strong physique. This kind of jealousy doesn’t mean they are gay or lesbian; it means there is an area they need to build confidence in!

Most girls who get involved in same-sex relationships start out in friendships that grow increasingly controlling and needy. In these emotionally dependent relationships, girls can get so enmeshed with each other that their relationship turns physical.

Many people who later identify as gay or lesbian report feeling different from others, feeling like they don’t fit in or belong. Girls can feel like they don’t belong to the world of girls, and guys almost always feel like they can’t measure up in the world of males. This is gender insecurity, not homosexuality, but teens usually don’t hear this message. They need to.

Labels such as “gay” and “lesbian” and “homo” and “dyke” are incredibly hurtful, and it is easy for those who are slapped with those labels to believe them. But God doesn’t call anyone homosexual or lesbian; those labels are man’s invention, not biblical truth. It’s essential for teens to know who they are in God’s sight—beloved, precious, and stamped with the imprint of His acceptance and delight.

When Teens Struggle with Same-Sex Attraction

If you know teens who are struggling with feelings of same-sex attraction, or who seem to be experiencing gender insecurity, let me make some suggestions on how to minister to them.

First, don't address the issue of homosexuality head-on. Same-sex strugglers are always wrestling with feelings of inferiority, rejection, shame and fear, so it's extremely uncomfortable for anyone to bring up the subject. The heart of the issue for kids who find themselves attracted to others of the same sex are these dark and negative feelings. It's much better to ask indirect questions that encourage them to talk about the underlying feelings of disconnection with a parent, or the ridicule of their peers, or depression and sadness.

Second, don't use any labels. Teens who struggle with their gender identity already have a huge struggle with feeling that the rest of the world has put an unwelcome label on them. The false, man-made labels of "gay" and "lesbian" are hurtful, false, and restricting.

Consider what it would be like if we created a label such as "angro" for people who are easily ticked off and walk around in a continual low-level state of hostility. What if people went around saying, "I'm an angry person. That's just the way I am—that's WHO I am. I'm an angro." They might believe they were born angry, that they have an "angro gene." Not only is the label of "angro" false and misleading, but it can lead people to believe the lie that it is a permanent state or condition rather than a description of one's current feelings.

That's what happened with the relatively recent labels of "gay" and "lesbian." They can become like jail cells, making people feel hopelessly trapped in a state or condition. It's much better to help teens deal with the fact that they are experiencing some attractions to their same gender, and those

feelings are like the red light on the dashboard of a car. They mean there's something going on inside that needs some attention. And that's literally true: God creates all of us with the need for attention, affection and approval, and those are the things adolescents are craving when they have feelings for people of the same sex. The needs are legitimate; we need to help them be met in healthy ways. This is where the church and other Christian youth organizations can make all the difference in the world.

Third, communicate to kids who struggle that God did not make them gay. God doesn't make anyone gay, and there is no scientific evidence that there is a biological basis for homosexual feelings or behavior. Even if they feel that they were born gay, this is the result of being told a fairy tale. Were American kids born English speakers? That's all they ever knew, right? No, they weren't *born* English speakers, they were born *language* speakers. Which language they speak is a matter of the shaping influences of their upbringing. Kids who experience same-sex attraction were born to be relational creatures, but how those relationships shape their souls is a function of their temperaments, their home life, and how they relate to other kids.

Fourth, give them a safe place to process their feelings without being shamed or condemned. For many teens, this unfortunately rules out their home, school, or church. I'm sure it grieves God's heart that for many people, church is the most unsafe place on the planet for those who struggle with various life-controlling sins and urges. But there is a great free, online support group for struggling youth, moderated by an experienced and understanding youth pastor, at www.livehope.org. Kids can safely talk to others like themselves and learn how intimacy with Jesus Christ brings healing and change to broken and wounded hearts.

Fifth, many students who experience same sex attraction often feel fake if they don't choose to identify with or act on

their feelings. They have believed the lie that gay or lesbian is what they are. They want to be real. But getting real is becoming who God created them to be, despite their feelings of what those around them might say.^{6} Finding out who God says they are is the true path to being real and not fake.

The Call to Understanding and Compassion

Many teens feel, "I just don't get this whole gay/lesbian thing." That's perfectly understandable. Only 2-3% of the population deals with same gender attraction. The fact that it's such a huge issue in our culture is completely out of proportion to the actual number of people experiencing it.

Kids need to know a few things about those who do struggle with same-sex attractions and feelings. First, they didn't choose it. It's something people *discover*, not something they *decide on*. And almost every single person who discovers they have strong feelings and fantasies about the same sex is horrified and terrified by this discovery. It's a very painful part of their life, so it's important for others to be respectful and kind.

Second, having crushes and strong feelings for friends and teachers of the same sex is a normal part of adolescent development. It doesn't mean a teen is gay or lesbian. When other kids assure them that it does, it is slapping a false and hurtful label on them that they may find almost impossible to take off. If someone walked up to you and put a "Hi, My Name Is" nametag on you that had someone else's name on it, you probably wouldn't have any trouble taking it off and saying, "There's a mistake here—that's not who I am." But when kids do the same thing with the "nametag" of "gay" or "lesbian," they usually put it on kids who don't have the security and self-confidence to realize that's not who they are, and they can go through the rest of their lives believing a lie.

Third, be compassionate. People don't know who around them is struggling, either with their own same-sex desires and attractions, or the painful burden of knowing a family member or loved one has them. They only have to show contempt once for those who experience same-sex feelings to show that they're not a safe person.

Fourth, be respectful. That means cutting phrases like "Oh, that's so gay" out of their vocabulary. It means not throwing around words like "homo" or "fag" or "queer." Every gay joke or insult is like sticking a dagger in the heart of those who carry a painful secret.

The bottom line for helping teens understand homosexuality is to call them to see God's design as good, and show grace and compassion to those who don't see it. Be "Jesus with skin on" in both His holiness *and* His kindness.

Notes

1. 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. 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. Also note this article by Dr. John R. Diggs, Jr.: [The Health Risks of Gay Sex \(catholiceducation.org\)](http://catholiceducation.org).

2. Read a few of the testimonies at the Living Hope Ministries website, www.livehope.org.

3. www.freetobeme.com/yw_minn.htm

4. Homosexuality and Teens: An Interview with Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, Massachusetts Family Institute.

www.mafamily.org/Marriage%20Hearing%202003/satinover2.htm

5. Founder and Director of Desert Stream Ministries, author of *Pursuing Sexual Wholeness and Strength in Weakness*.

6. www.becomingreal.org

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See also: answers to many questions in [“Probe Answers Our E-Mail: Homosexuality”](#)

“Our Granddaughter is Severely Confused About Her Gender Identity”

I just read an article by Sue Bohlin on [transgender](#) and God's view on it. We completely believe our granddaughter is severely confused and we believe her gender identity is being greatly influenced by the people she is hanging out with. She is almost 22, we have told we love her unconditionally but do not support her lifestyle as it goes against God's Word. She understands that we will not compromise our faith and what the Word of God says. But we have been reaching out to pastors and they have offered zero spiritual guidance. In fact they really do not want to discuss it. Our pastor told me to buy a secular book on homosexuality from Amazon. I told him I do not need or want the world's view on it, I need spiritual guidance. He had nothing. I'm reaching out because I agreed 100% with what Sue said and we still need spiritual guidance. We love our granddaughter and pray for her all the time but we are struggling with how to deal with it.

I am so very, very sorry for the pain you are experiencing in this spiritual battle. The enemy has gone after your beloved granddaughter, deceiving her with lies and demonic schemes about her true identity. You are undoubtedly right about the influence of the people she's hanging out with, and that would extend to (and may even entirely consist of) the voices she is

listening to on social media.

In terms of how to deal with it, let me encourage you that you are already doing the two most important things: loving her and praying for her. Your love will be a beacon for her to find her way out of spiritual darkness back to truth, and your prayers are powerful for the pulling down of strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:3-4). This is a battle that has to be fought on your knees, using the supernatural weapon of prayer. Trying to convince her out of her delusion won't work; it has to be God's power.

You will need encouragement from others who are also in the battle for their children and grandchildren. Let me suggest two places to find that. One is the Friends and Family forum at Living Hope Ministries. www.livehope.org. The other is to request access to the private group "CHANGED Movement" on Facebook, where you will find very encouraging testimonies from those who have come out of the LGBTQ community.

Let me close with a story I hope encourages you.

A couple were heartbroken that their daughter had jumped into the LGBT community and identity, and needed to know what to do about it. On the recommendation of a mutual friend the husband called me; as we talked, the Lord dropped an idea into my head, which he followed.

He took her out for a meal and said to her, "Sweetheart, I want to tell you something, and I'm only going to say this once, so pay attention.

"Your mom and I see that because of your choices, it's like you're on the Titanic, and we know that eventually it's going down. But we're out here in a lifeboat, rowing around the ship, and we will never stop rowing. We'll be here to love you and pray for you, and we'll be here to help you when you realize you've got to get off a sinking ship." They were so faithful in daily praying for her.

Ten years later, their daughter showed up on their doorstep. When Dad opened the door, the daughter asked, "Are you still in the rowboat?"

That was *ten years later*.

And many many prayers later, they just celebrated the one-year anniversary of her repentance . . . of her recognizing the ship was sinking and she got in the lifeboat with her parents. This man said that in all his many years, he has never seen such a full and beautiful repentance as what his daughter exhibited.

Recently, in fact, he and his wife and their daughter stood in front of his Sunday School class to tell their story. For the first time, the daughter told her side; can you imagine what it was like for the parents to watch their beloved daughter give testimony to God's goodness and her parents' faithfulness in praying for her? In fact, she had sent an email at one point that said, "Mom and Dad, thanks for never giving up rowing."

The dad had also told his story to a men's conference, sharing the rowboat part, and said the other men, all fathers who would do anything for their children, were in tears. They all understand how hard it is, especially as men designed to "fix" things, not to be able to fix their children's hurt or destructive choices or the consequences of those choices. But the power of a praying parent can redeem the pain and the choices and the consequences.

So. . . don't give up rowing!

And [please hear my voice being very very gentle here] let go of your expectations for God's timetable. He knows how long it will take for her to see the light, in a way that will bring the most glory to Him and the greatest benefit to your granddaughter.

I'm sending this with a prayer that God does amazing things in your family. Please remember—if it's not good yet, God's not done yet!

Warmly,
Sue Bohlin

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Grace and Truth About LGBT

Sue Bohlin provides a compassionate, biblically based look at what is happening as LGBT ideology has taken root in the culture.

What Does God Think About LGBT?

This article is about grace and truth in the context of LGBT, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender. What does God think about people for whom this is their primary (or even secret) identity?

After 20-plus years of walking with dear friends dealing with unwanted same-sex attraction, the very first thing that comes to my mind is the deep compassion and tenderness of our God toward wounded and deceived people that He loves very much. I am reminded of Isaiah's words (42:3), "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out."



People *discover* attractions toward those of the same sex. They don't initially choose them. These disordered feelings are like the warning lights on the dashboard of a car. They are

saying, "Something's wrong under the hood; check it out!" So in the beginning, same-sex attractions constitute *temptation* rather than sin, but it easily crosses over to sin when people choose to feed and nurture thought patterns that God's word says are sin.

And God's word has always called sexual behavior outside of marriage between a man and woman, sin. That's because sex is deeply spiritual as well as physical, and He wants to protect us from the harmful consequences of sexual sin. His word will last forever, and it doesn't change. So I believe God is grieved when people reject His clear biblical statements about sexual sin, as is now happening in many churches and individuals.

God's word calls us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. An important part of the Kingdom message is that God changes believers more and more into the likeness of Jesus. That means that God endorses *change*, which makes sense since growth and change are an intrinsic part of life.

But the cultural narrative says that your sexuality can't be changed. If people don't want their broken same-sex attractions, and seek help recovering God's intended design for them, it is becoming illegal to do that. It's labeled as "conversion therapy." But if someone says they're transgender and seeks to inject their healthy body with artificial hormones and mutilate it with surgery to pretend they are something they're not, that's called "gender affirmation." Yes, it's backward.

God addressed this backward thinking in Isaiah 5:20—"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."

Back to the cultural narrative says that your sexuality can't be changed. That's not what some social scientists have found,

which is that sexuality can be quite fluid and changeable.^{1} There is no magic switch to flip from homosexual to heterosexual; but when people invite God into the woundings and deficits of their earlier life and receive healing in their souls, some can develop attractions to the opposite sex. I have personally seen this happen multiple times. The problem is that people aren't telling their stories, or when they try, they aren't believed.

Disordered thinking and unnatural desires are not too hard for God to handle. Remember, He can raise the dead!

Cultural Lies vs. God's Truth

There is a massive clash between the lies of our sex-saturated culture, and the eternal truth of God's word.

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.)

GOD'S TRUTH: God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; *male and female* He created them. (Genesis 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 only 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. [{2}](#)





Another man, deciding his identity is a female dragon, cut off his ears and nose, dyed his eyes, and inserted horns in his forehead. [\[3\]](#)

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. And 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.

Life is found in Jesus, and nowhere else.

Transgender: The Emperor's New Clothes

In the old story of the Emperor's New Clothes, scam artists appeal to the pride of a conceited emperor, claiming they can

create a magical outfit for him that is invisible to anyone who is unfit for their position, stupid, or incompetent. He parades his new suit of clothes before his subjects, which of course no one can see because it's a scam. But no one will say they don't see it lest they be seen as stupid. Finally a little boy pipes up and blurts out the truth: "But he isn't wearing anything at all!"[\[4\]](#)

The transgender narrative is the equivalent of the Emperor's New Clothes. The objective truth is that there is no such thing as magical clothes, and there's no such thing as changing genders. People can only deceive themselves (and others), damage their bodies, and mutilate themselves—but our God-ordained maleness and femaleness, our biological sex, is stamped into every cell of our bodies.

It's especially alarming when parents, educators and other authorities feed a child's fantasy that they are the other gender. We would never do that if a child declared herself to be a cat or a unicorn; we would gently and lovingly correct her wrong thinking by speaking the truth to her. But if a boy insists he's a girl or vice versa, many progressive-minded adults are so proud of their "wokeness" that they rush to board the child on the transgender train.

Most often, children who reject their gender are reacting to gender stereotypes. Girls can think that boys get to do cooler stuff than girls, and sensitive boys who love pink and purple sparkly things can think it's better to be a girl. Both sexes who experience abuse can believe that it would be safer to be the opposite sex.

Children never see the big picture—that's why God gives them parents to help them see their world more accurately. One little boy told his parents he wanted to be a girl but no one inquired why, they just jumped on the transgender bandwagon. Turns out that when his baby sister was born and consumed a lot of attention because she was very sick, he concluded that

if he were a girl, he would get the same attention.

Transgender – Part 2

When a person experiences a conflict between their biological sex and their internal sense of whether they are male or female, that's called gender dysphoria. Various studies have shown that this very painful emotional state resolves itself about 85% of the time simply by going through puberty. It appears to reset things. So the best and wisest treatment is no treatment at all, but of course wise parents and other adults will continue to speak truth about a child's identity—especially the truth that God who is good, loving and wise chose their gender for them, so we need to receive it as His gift.

This whole transgender phenomenon has ignited where children have access to the internet on their smart phones. The illusion of transgender is easily spread by social contagion. Children and teens talk about their beliefs that they are transgender on social media, and their impressionable peers are influenced to start thinking and feeling the same way. The popularity of social media has sped up the spread of this fantasy, especially on the Tumblr platform. One academic who studied the reports of parents alarmed by sudden changes in their children coined the term “rapid onset gender dysphoria.”[{5}](#)

Anyone who has been around adolescents for any length of time doesn't need to be surprised by this dynamic. Teens copy each other in all kinds of ways.

Many adolescents who identify as transgender suffer from anxiety, depression, and self-injury.[{6}](#) There is a whole constellation of painful mental health struggles all bound up together. We are also finding that a disproportionate number of teens who explore the transgender identity are on the autism spectrum.[{7}](#)

They already feel the shame of being different, of being “other than,” and it’s easy for them to mislabel themselves as transgender instead of just different.

One final note on transgender: we must not go along with the Emperor’s New Clothes story that athletes can compete as the opposite sex just by declaring themselves so. It’s not just heartbreaking, it’s *wrong* for teenage boys to rob girl athletes of scholarships{8}, not to mention dignity, by unfairly competing against them and demanding to use their restrooms and locker rooms.{9}

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

More and more individuals and churches have come out in support of homosexuality and gay marriage. Why is that?

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, which means abandoning the truth of one’s faith.

Reason One: Rejecting the Authority of God’s Word

The first reason is that millions of people are 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 behavior, 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, Biblical View and the Revisionist View.[{10}](#) 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.” And we want it to say that God endorses all relationships that invoke love.”

Reason Two: Snagged by the Gay Agenda

When people don’t submit themselves to the truth of the Word of God, they are 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*.[{11}](#) This gay agenda has been executed perfectly in the United States. (Note: these are the authors’ words, not mine.)

- 1. Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and often as possible.*
- 2. Portray members of the LGBTQ community as victims. Indoctrinate mainstream America that members of the LGBTQ community were “born this way.”*
- 3. Give protectors a just cause: anti-discrimination.*
- 4. The use of TV, music, film and social media to desensitize mainstream Americans to their plight as gay people.*
- 5. Portray Gays and Lesbians as pillars in society. Make gays look good.*
- 6. Once homosexuals have begun to gain acceptance, anti-gay opponents must be vilified, causing them to be viewed as repulsive outcasts of society.*

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.

I will close with four personal observations about this situation:

1. Christians have bought into the culture's worship of feelings over God's unchanging revelation
2. People love how making themselves an ally and protector of the underdog makes them feel, despite God's design and standards for sexuality and marriage.
3. Not enough of us Christ-followers are living lives that demonstrate the beauty and satisfaction of abiding in Christ.
4. The church has been dismal at loving those who struggle with their sexuality and showing them the grace that is in God's heart toward them. It's essential to both speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), and seek to show love filled with truth.

Notes

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How Should We Think About Pride Month?

How should Christ-followers think about Pride Month?

Well, first, in case you are not aware, Pride Month is a time of highlighting and celebrating everything LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender). You might have seen a few more letters tacked on—QQIAA (queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally).

It's hard NOT to notice it's Pride Month when rainbows suddenly appear on all kinds of products and logos. Many cities have Pride marches, much of which is not safe to broadcast on the evening news because the behavior in these parades is definitely not family-friendly.

How should believers think about it all?

We need to pass our thoughts and judgments through the filter of God's word. What does God think about Pride Month?

First, every single person who is part of the LGBT community is a precious soul that He made in His image, for whom Christ died. And very few who identify as LGBT have not sustained some sort of soul wound, which makes this promise in Isaiah 42:3 even dearer: "A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice." So in terms of the individuals who participate in Pride Month, God knows each of them by name and He loves them, tenderly and great compassion.

God understands the heart cry of those in the LGBT community to belong, to be included and not excluded, to be visible and heard and understood and cared for, to hear that they matter. These are the heart desires of those who align under the Pride flag.

And God gets it, because those are legitimate desires that we all have because we're born that way. God made us that way, all of us, to long to be loved, accepted, and affirmed.

It means the world to those who have found community under the LGBT banner because they were "different," they were "other," so they often felt marginalized and ostracized from their families or school communities or religious communities.

So Pride Month is a call to love the people who celebrate it.

But that's not all.

God has also revealed His design and intention for human sexuality and gender identity, both in the Old Testament and, in the words of Jesus Himself, in the New Testament: "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave

his father and mother be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?" (Matthew 19:4-5)

God made human beings male and female. It really is that simple, regardless of how complicated people's feelings can be about gender.

And He intended sexual expression to be limited to husband and wife within marriage, which we see by the Bible's 44 references to sexual immorality (sex outside of marriage) as sin.

In view of the LGBT community's desire for not just legitimacy but commendation in any and all sexual expression, we need to remember that God specifically forbade same-sex behavior in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable." In the New Testament, the apostle Paul expands this prohibition to include lesbianism in Romans 1:24-27:

Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. . . . Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men . . .

So how should Christians think about Pride Month? With discernment.

- Remembering that the people involved are precious to God, but the identity they are choosing falls short of the glory of God (the Bible's definition of sin, Romans 3:23) because it does not submit to and align with God's intention for human sexuality.
- Not being fooled by the slogan "Love is love," which is a slick gloss over the false declaration that calling

something “love” automatically validates it. How about brother-sister incestuous “love”? How about adulterous “love”? How about polyamory (multiple partners in a relationship) “love”? And, especially since we have already started down the slippery slope, how long before there is a call to extend the sexual underpinnings of “love is love” to children and animals?

- Comparing one’s view of all things LGBT to God’s word. Those who identify as an Ally should ask themselves why they want to support behavior and an identity God calls sin.
- Taking seriously the sin of pride, holding two important ideas as equally important: Philippians 3:19 says those who “are proud of what they should be ashamed of” (such as those exhibiting their broken sexuality in Pride parades) are “enemies of the cross of Christ.” But Proverbs 16:5 warns, “Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD.” So every single one of us needs to confess our sin of pride, of comparing ourselves to anyone else so we feel we are better than others. In fact, seeing the Pride flag during Pride Month would make a great reminder to examine ourselves to look for a prideful, judge-y heart, to confess it as sin and repent.

Many of those who have come out of homosexuality are deeply grieved by Pride Month because they know it encourages hurting, lonely, wounded people to try to find life where it can never be found. They know the truth of Jeremiah 2:13, where God says,

“For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me— the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!”

How should a Christian think about Pride Month? With compassion and prayer for those caught in it, that they will

turn to Jesus as the fountain of living water. And with humility for ourselves, to repent of any pride that comes from comparing ourselves to those waving rainbow flags. As Billy Graham said, “Never take credit for not falling into a temptation that never tempted you in the first place.”

This blog post originally appeared at

blogs.bible.org/how-should-we-think-about-pride-month/ on June 15, 2021.

“How Do We Respond to the Charge That We’re on the Wrong Side of History?”

When I present my view on the LGBT issue, the Biblical view, people say I’m on “the wrong side of history.” What say you? I know this is an empty PC mantra but how should I answer?

When we’re smack dab in the middle of history-making, from a biblical perspective it’s waaaaay too early to declare what is “the wrong side of history.” We have already received revelation about how things will go toward the end of the world in the book of Revelation and other biblical books, so we can have an idea of where we’re headed. And it’s not pretty.

When Prohibition was enacted in the United States, there might have been people declaring that those objecting to it were on “the wrong side of history.” Except that they weren’t, because

things change.

I can tell you personally, as one who has been involved in homosexual ministry (to those with unwanted same-sex attractions) for 18 years, God's "thou shalt nots" of all sex outside of marriage are given out of love for us and a complete knowledge of how He designed us for male-female complementarity. Those insisting that the [LGBT agenda](#) (see the book *After the Ball*, which spells it out) is right and we hopelessly outdated dinosaurs are wrong, will still run into the fact that God made us male and female to reflect the beauty and glory of unity in diversity. Even if it's un-PC.

Frankly, I think we will have to get used to being misunderstood and judged. And we can take comfort in the fact that Jesus knows a whole lot about that.

Thanks for writing,

Sue Bohlin

Posted Jan. 26, 2017

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LGBT and Political Correctness

Everything about the subject of LGBT (lesbian/gay/bi-sexual/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.

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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.



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



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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 on May 18, 2016.

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.”^{5} 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:^{6}

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.

Notes

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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.^{3} 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."^{4}

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

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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](#)

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.



This article is also available in [Spanish](#).

Is It Possible for Homosexuals to Change?

Mike^{1} 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. 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^{2}. 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.

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See Also: [See also "Probe Answers Our E-Mail: Homosexuality"](#)