

Navigating Challenging Topics with Your Children & Teens

Introduction:

John 16:33: I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

Tackling sexual discipleship with our children:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Dr. Juli Slattery: Sexual discipleship is a lot more than a ‘talk’ or retreat teaching about sexual purity. It means walking with people through the journey of sexuality through all the stages of life and addressing questions that arise from life experience and cultural pressures. Sexual discipleship goes beyond sex education. Biblical sexual discipleship paints a complete picture of sexuality as not simply something to avoid but a great gift to be treasured, celebrated, and reclaimed.”¹

¹ Juli Slattery, “The Importance of Sexual Discipleship,” February 3, 2016, *Authentic Intimacy*. <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/resources/2641/the-importance-of-sexual-discipleship>. Accessed 16 January 2020. See also, Juli Slattery, *Rethinking Sexuality: God’s Design and Why It Matters* (New York, NY: Multnomah Publishers, 2018).

Navigating conversations about sex with your child²

- Speak biblically
 - Biblical framework:
 - God created sex (Gen. 2:24)
 - Sex is for procreation in marriage (Gen. 1:28)
 - Sex is for intimacy in marriage (Gen. 4:1; Song of Songs 1:2; 4:10-11)
 - Sex is for pleasure in marriage (Prov. 5:18-19)
 - Sex outside marriage is a sin (1 Cor. 6:9, Matt. 15:19)³
- Speak positively
 - *Sam Allberry*: Every time God gives us a prohibition, he's protecting something good. So we need to teach the positives behind the negatives and show that God's Word isn't in fact arbitrary but instead points toward what is best and most life-giving for us. Whenever God says no to something, he is saying a much bigger yes to something else. Unless we thrill people with the biblical vision for marriage and human sexuality—especially how they point beyond themselves to God's love shown to us in Christ—we won't be providing the full spiritual resources needed to fight deep and besetting sinful desires.⁴
- Speak honestly
 - *Howard Hendricks*: We should not be ashamed to discuss that which God was not ashamed to create.
 - The tension that parents must wisely discern
 - Justin & Lindsay Holcomb, [God Made Babies](#)

² Julie Lowe, "4 Principles for Talking to Your Kids about Sex," July 8, 2020, CCEF.org, <https://www.ccef.org/4-principles-for-talking-to-your-kids-about-sex/>. Accessed 16 November 2022.

³ Dennis and Barbara Rainey, "How to teach your child about sex," May 29, 2017, Challies.com. <https://www.challies.com/sponsored/how-to-teach-your-kids-about-sex/>. Accessed 16 January 2020.

⁴ Sam Allberry, "Where to Find Hope and Help amid the Sexual Revolution," November 5, 2018, *The Gospel Coalition*. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/hope-help-sexual-revolution/>. Accessed 16 January 2020. It also is a reminder for us that when God does give us a command, frequently there is a promise of his presence and/or power behind that command. This article from CCEF counselor, Darby Strickland, notes this well: <https://www.ccef.org/when-a-command-became-a-promise/>.

- Speak often and speak soon
 - *Deborah Ruffman*: Kids who grow up in families where sexuality is openly discussed are not just healthier and happier, but they also postpone participation in a range of risky behaviors including sexual activity.⁵
 - *Holcomb & Davis*: Talking with our kids about sex isn't a box to be checked; it's a conversation to be started and sustained. The "one and done" approach can overwhelm children and close the door to future questions. Simple explanations over a long period of time will sink deeper and build trust. So start the conversation early and foster the relationship around it.⁶
- Additional considerations:
 - Pay attention to what makes these discussions hard for you
 - *Tim Challies*: I think the default attitude of a parent should not be to really be angry with your kids or really be concerned for your kids. Why don't you see it as an opportunity?⁷
 - Make a plan; don't be caught off guard.
 - Utilize every moment
 - Take advantage of organic moments

⁵ Jim & Angela Davis/Justin & Lindsey Holcomb, "Kids, Let's Talk About Sex," December 18, 2019, *The Gospel Coalition*. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/kids-lets-talk-about-sex/>. Accessed 16 November 2022.

⁶ Jim & Angela Davis/Justin & Lindsey Holcomb, "Kids, Let's Talk About Sex," December 18, 2019, *The Gospel Coalition*. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/kids-lets-talk-about-sex/>. Accessed 16 November 2022.

⁷ Tim Challies, "Has your child been looking at bad stuff online?" January 15, 2019, *challies.com*. <https://www.challies.com/vlog/has-your-child-been-looking-at-bad-stuff-online/>. Accessed 16 January 2020.

Navigating conversations about physical safety with your child

- Teach and use proper anatomical terms for body parts with your child
 - *Justin & Lindsey Holcomb*: Clearly identify for your child which parts of their anatomy are private. Explain to your child that “some places on your body should never be touched by other people—except when you need help in the bathroom or are getting dressed or when you go to the doctor.” You can do this with young children during bath time or have your child dress in a bathing suit and show them that all areas covered by a bathing suit are “private.” The bathing suit analogy can be a bit misleading because it fails to mention that other parts of the body can be touched inappropriately (like mouth, legs, neck, arms), but it is a good start for little ones to understand the concept of private parts.⁸
- Good touch vs. bad touch
- Talk about who is a trusted adult
- Use real-life scenarios in conversations
 - “Sometimes relatives, like grandparents or uncles or cousins, don’t understand the rules and touch kids in ways they’re not supposed to. If that ever happens, be sure to tell Mom or Dad or another adult you trust so that we can help that person learn the rules.”⁹
 - “What if you are at a friend’s house and her older brother asks you to play a game that makes you feel weird or uncomfortable or involves something like touching or taking off your clothes?”¹⁰

⁸ Justin and Lindsey Holcomb, “9 Ways To Protect Your Children From Sexual Abuse,” August 29, 2015, *Biblical Counseling Coalition*, <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2015/08/29/bcc-weekend-resource-9-ways-to-protect-your-children-from-sexual-abuse/>. Accessed 16 November 2022.

⁹ <https://www.stopitnow.org/ohc-content/talking-to-children-and-teens>.

¹⁰ <https://www.stopitnow.org/ohc-content/talking-to-children-and-teens>.

Navigating conversations about pornography with your child

- *Matt Fradd*: There is no question about whether our children will see porn. Their exposure to it is inevitable.¹¹
- *John Perritt*: I'm convinced that one of the greatest tools of the enemy has used when it comes to pornography has been this: silence.¹²
- Ask good questions about the incident:
 - Was this something you stumbled upon or that you were searching for?
 - Remember, most instances are accidental or forced...not intentional acts.
 - What prompted you to look/search for that?
 - Is this the first-time something like this has happened?
 - Have you seen or viewed something like this at a friend's house? On the bus? In the locker room?
 - Were other rules/guidelines broken in order to access the pornography?
 - Was there deceitfulness, dishonesty, and lying to cover up the use of pornography?
 - What was the nature of the content being viewed? Soft-core pornography? YouTube nudity? Virtual chatrooms? Webcamming? Sexting?
 - Is the use of pornography coupled with masturbation?
- *Tim Challies*: Our goal is to have the Holy Spirit convict our children of their guilt more than to have Mom and Dad make them feel a deep shame. It is very possible that you are feeling embarrassed or feeling a sense of failure as a parent, and this may lead you to be harsher than you ought to be. Your goal is not to convict your children of their shame before their mom and dad, but to assist the Holy Spirit as he convicts them of their guilt before God.¹³
- Enforce consequences
 - *Julie Lowe*: Throughout Scripture, the goal of discipline is to teach Christlike character, self-discipline, stewardship, self-control, a good work ethic, and service . . . and love for God and man.¹⁴
 - *Matt Fradd*: A child who never suffers the consequences of his bad choices will soon learn that he can get away with anything. A child who never learns to respect authority will soon come to believe that all rules and guidelines are nothing but arbitrary standards that can be discarded for any momentary pleasure.¹⁵

¹¹ Matt Fradd, *The Porn Myth: Exposing the Reality Behind the Fantasy of Pornography*, (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2017), 159.

¹² John Perritt, *Not If, But When*, (Fearn, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 2020), 11.

¹³ Tim Challies, *Help! My Kids Are Viewing Pornography*, (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2017), 35.

¹⁴ Julie Lowe, *Child Proof: Parenting by Faith Not Formula*, (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2018), 80.

¹⁵ Fradd, 167.

- Offer accountability
 - *Matt Fradd*: Some kind of Internet filtering and monitoring is an absolute must. Make this your personal rule: if I am not willing to monitor it, I will not provide it or allow it.¹⁶
- Don't bypass the heart
 - *Luke Gilkerson*: Technology that merely blocks where your kids go on the Internet (like a filter) can be very helpful, but when we rely merely on blocking mechanisms, we only shape behavior, not the heart.¹⁷
- Follow up consistently
- Affirm your love and affection

Resources:

Jim Davis, Angela Davis, Lindsey Holcomb, Justin Holcomb, [Kids, Let's Talk About Sex](#)
 Jen Wilkin, Sam Allberry, Jason Cook, "[How To Talk to Your Children About Sex](#)"
 Liz Edrington, "[How To Talk To Students About Sex](#)"
 Deborah Ruffman, *Talk to Me First: Everything You Need to Know to Become Your Kids' "Go To" Person about Sex*
 John Perritt, *Not If, But When: Preparing our children for worldly images*
 John A. Younts, *Everyday Talk About Sex & Marriage*
 Lindsey Holcomb, "[5 Ways to Teach Your Kids About Sexual Development](#)"
 Julie Lowe, "[5 Ways to Help Protect Your Kids from Sexual Abuse](#)"
 _____, "[Teaching kids about sex and personal safety](#)"

¹⁶ Fradd, 163.

¹⁷ Luke Gilkerson, "Accountability as a Lifestyle: The Next Generation," February 23, 2011, Covenant Eyes. <https://www.covenanteyes.com/2011/02/23/accountability-as-a-lifestyle-part-3-the-next-generation/>. Accessed 16 January 2020.

Foundations of Godly Parenting

Introduction:

Matthew Johnson:

For around 30 years, researchers have studied how having children affects a marriage, and the results are conclusive: the relationship between spouses suffers once kids come along. Comparing couples with and without children, researchers found that the rate of the decline in relationship satisfaction is nearly twice as steep for couples who have children than for childless couples...The irony is that even as the marital satisfaction of new parents declines, the likelihood of them divorcing also declines. So, having children may make you miserable, but you'll be miserable together.¹⁸

Laying a gospel foundation:

1. *Faithfully image God to your children*

- a. *Christina Fox*: When we parent our children as God parents us--when we relate to them the way God relates to us--we show them who he is; we point them to their own Father in heaven. Imaging God to our children is an important _____. To do so, we need to consider all the ways God parents us.¹⁹
- b. We follow Christ.

¹⁸ Matthew D. Johnson, "Decades of studies show what happens to marriages after kids," *The Conversation*, May 9, 2016. <http://fortune.com/2016/05/09/mothers-marriage-parenthood/>. Accessed 3 December 2017.

¹⁹ Christina Fox, *Like Our Father: How God Parents Us and Why That Matters For Our Parenting*, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2022), 41.

c. We reflect his character.

- i. *Christina Fox*: Because we are image bearers, we image God to those around us. We reflect Him to others as we do what He does and as we display His _____ in our lives. When we image and reflect God's communicable attributes, they learn more of who God is. When we parent our children the way God parents us, they see God through us.²⁰
- ii. *D. Blair Smith*: Scripture gives us a number of similes and metaphors for thinking about God's qualities, but we must recognize that it clearly and directly speaks of God as _____. What is more, Scripture reveals this is a personal *name*.²¹

2. Faithfully _____ and _____ to your children about God

- a. *Deuteronomy 6:4-9*: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- b. *Matt Chandler & Adam Griffin*: Diligence implies _____. You are not just hoping for your kids to know the Lord; you are dedicated and relentless in doing everything it takes to help them know more about their God. Whatever the cost. No matter what. Your child will not escape your house without knowing the life, joy, and freedom that comes with loving and serving God above all others. This is your biblical mandate as a parent.²²

3. Faithfully fulfill your _____ as parent

- a. *Paul David Tripp*: Here's how it plays out: many parents are motivated more by what they want _____ their children and _____ their children rather than what God has planned to do through them *in* their children.²³

²⁰ Fox, 26-27.

²¹ Fox, 32.

²² Chandler & Griffin, 48.

²³ Paul David Tripp, *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 14-15.

- i. _____ *Parenting* is not overtly selfish, abusive, or destructive. It seems right, it feels right, and it does many good things.
- ii. _____ *Parenting* begins with the radical and humbling recognition that our children don't actually belong to us. Rather, every child is God's possession for his purpose (see Psalm 127:3).²⁴

Getting Practical

1. Understand the importance of the heart

Matthew 12:33–37: Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.



Christina Fox: If we spent the bulk of our parenting focused on outward _____ to rules and not on helping our children recognize they are sinners in need of a Savior, they will grow to think they are capable of being good. They will strive to “be good” on the outside, but not know

²⁴ <https://www.paultripp.com/wednesdays-word/posts/are-you-a-confused-parent>.

their Savior on the inside. This means we need to keep the gospel front and center in all our teaching, pointing them to their need for Christ and His great love for them...²⁵

2. *Pay attention to their* _____

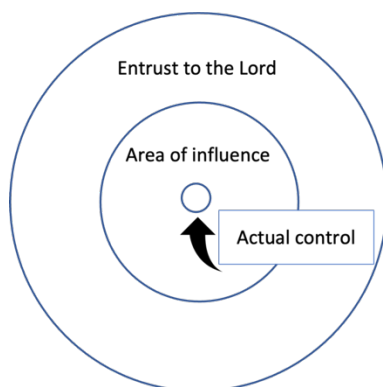
Eliza Huie: Regarding your child's emotions is also significant because it can open _____ to address their heart. Emotional expressions reveal what's going on in their heart. No matter how old the child is, their heart will overflow in their emotional reactions. Emotions are therefore often the entry gates to deeper, meaningful conversations.²⁶

3. *Talk about* _____ *in a positive way*

Justin Whitmel Earley: Authority intervenes with loving strength. It is the opposite of sitting on the sideline and making a request. We are not politely petitioning our children to consider our point of view, we are parenting them.

Julie Lowe: Parents need to fulfill the _____ that authority brings. The more godly authority we possess, the more those under us will desire to submit to it, because it will be founded on a trusting relationship.²⁷

4. *Clarify responsibility*



²⁵ Fox, 87.

²⁶ Eliza Huie, *Raising Emotionally Healthy Kids: Help for Parents*, (Great Britain: 100ofThose Publishing, 2022), 48.

²⁷ Lowe, 104.

5. *Become an _____ on your children*

Julie Lowe: Becoming an expert on my family means that I need to _____ them. It is important to take time to know well the people God has placed in your family and to understand how you all function, thrive, and grow together.²⁸

6. *Make discipline a part of your discipleship*

²⁸ Lowe, 49-50.

Identity: What It Is & How Is It Formed

TGC Staff: The Christian prohibitions about marriage, homosexuality, and transgenderism make no sense to most people, because of their belief that sexuality is crucial for the expression of identity. And behind that belief is the very concept of the modern self.

Jonathan Haidt on how people come to a conclusion on what is right or wrong:

- *Test 1: Is it harmful or not? No, being gay or lesbian doesn't hurt anyone.*
- *Test 2: Is it freeing or oppressive? Why would you limit my personal freedom? How or what I identify as is my choice.*
- *Test 3: Is it fair or discriminatory? Your ethic does not seem fair. It's repressive and discriminatory.*²⁹

In our culture, sex is no longer seen as a way to honor God and to create and nurture new human life. Most believe something like this: *"If you want to use sex for the development of new human life, that's an option and your choice, but it's not the primary reason people have sex. Rather, sex is for individual fulfillment and self-realization."*³⁰

Expressive individualism

Alex Morris: "It's more fun to get [sex] out of the way and see how you connect, and then focus on who they are as a human. 'Are you interesting? Are you fun to be around? Great.' Sex isn't inherently a huge step. At the end of the day, it's a piece of body touching another piece of body – just as existentially meaningless as kissing."³¹

If sex and gender is anything and everything you want it to be, it's ultimately nothing. It's meaningless. Sex and gender can't be everything and anything...it must be something.

²⁹ The other three are: loyalty & betrayal, authority/subversion, sanctity/degradation

³⁰ TGC Staff, "Apologetic Approaches to Biblical Sexuality",

³¹ Alex Morris, "Tales from the Millennials" Sexual Revolution," *Rolling Stone*, March 31, 2014.

<https://www.rollingstone.com/interactive/feature-millennial-sexual-revolution-relationships-marriage/>. Accessed 7 October 2018.

Carl Trueman: The fact that “I am a woman trapped in a man’s body” makes sense to Joe Smith probably has far less to do with him being committed to an elaborate understanding of the nature of gender and its relationship to biological sex than to the fact that it seems intuitively correct to affirm someone in his or her chosen identity and hurtful not to do so, however strange the particulars of that self-identification might have seemed to previous generations.³²

Understanding human identity and how it is developed

Traditional identity

Modern identity

Understanding Identity: What It is & How It is Formed			
	<i>Traditional Identity</i>	<i>Modern Identity</i>	<i>Gospel Identity</i>
<i>Where do you get your identity?</i>	External	Internal	God
<i>Who gives you identity?</i>	Chosen for you	You choose	Given to you
<i>What is the highest good?</i>	Honor	Happiness	Following Christ
<i>How do you relate to your culture?</i>	Fit in	Stand out	Citizen/Sojourner of this world
<i>Who validates your identity?</i>	Higher powers/parents/someone outside of you	You	God
<i>What is the decisive and formational factor for your identity?</i>	What you do	What you feel	What God says about you and to you
<i>Who makes the sacrifice for your identity choices?</i>	You make the sacrifice for society	Society makes the sacrifice for you	Jesus makes the sacrifice
<i>What do you do with emotions?</i>	Ignore your feelings	You are your feelings	Feelings are part of our faith

³² Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 38.

Modern identity: problems and critiques

- Modern identity is _____
 - *Nancy Pearcey*: Though our feelings are important...they are not what define our identity. Nor are they a reliable guide to God's purposes. Because we are fallen and sinful, our feelings fluctuate over time. The most reliable marker of who we are is our physically embodied, God-given identity as male and female.³³
- Modern identity is _____
- Modern identity is _____
- Modern identity is an _____
 - *Jeremy Treat*: It's interesting how being "true to yourself" usually means aligning with some mainstream cultural _____.³⁴

Gospel Identity

- *Matthew 10:39*: Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- *John Stott*: The astonishing paradox of Christ's teaching and of Christian experience is this: if we lose ourselves in following Christ, we actually find ourselves. True self-denial is self-discovery.

³³ Nancy Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering the Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018), 156.

³⁴ <https://twitter.com/JeremyTreat5/status/1173624816382795777>.

Understanding the Landscape of Sexual and Gender Identity

Sexual Identity

Understanding the terms

- _____: women who are sexually attracted to women
- Gay: men who are sexually attracted to men (can also be used as an inclusive term for the movement)
- _____: one who is sexually attracted and interested in both men and women
- Transgender: physically born one gender, but identifies as a different gender
- _____: Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with bisexual.³⁵
- Demisexual: Used to describe an individual who experiences sexual attraction only after forming an emotional connection.³⁶
- _____: Used to describe an individual who experiences romantic attraction only after forming an emotional connection.³⁷
- Biromantic: Refers to someone who is romantically attracted to men and women.³⁸
- _____: Often called “ace” for short, asexual refers to a complete or partial lack of sexual attraction or lack of interest in sexual activity with others. Asexuality exists on a spectrum, and asexual people may experience no, little or conditional sexual attraction.³⁹

³⁵ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>.

³⁶ <https://pflag.org/glossary>.

³⁷ <https://pflag.org/glossary>.

³⁸ <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/demisexual-biromantic-lgbtq-youth-adopting-wide-array-labels-n1062001>.

³⁹ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>.

Excursus: Rise in bisexuality as an identification⁴⁰

- 2006-2010 (CDC): 2% women, 1.2% men identify as bi
- 20011-2013: 5.5% women, 2% men
- Women sexual contact: 14.2% to 17.4%

The phrase “[bi-curious](#)” has come to be used to refer to such people who are “interested in having a same gender sexual experience without necessarily labeling their sexual orientation as bisexual.”⁴¹

Understanding the struggle

American Psychological Association: There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian orientation. Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social and cultural influences on sexual orientation, no findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles; most people experience little or no sense of choice about their sexual orientation.”⁴²

- *Anna Mondal:* Scrabbling for causation puts all the _____ on problem-solving and human reason while de-emphasizing humility and Spirit-dependence.⁴³

What does the Bible have to say about this issue?

Jen Hatmaker: Thousands of churches and millions of Christ-followers faithfully read the Scriptures and with thoughtful and academic work come to different conclusions on homosexuality (and countless others). Godly, respectable leaders have exegeted the Bible and there is absolutely not unanimity on its interpretation. There never has been.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Carina Storms, “Bisexuality on the rise, says new U.S. survey,” January 7, 2016, *CNN.com*, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/01/07/health/bisexuality-on-the-rise/index.html>. Accessed 25 October 2021.

⁴¹ Joe Carter, “Why Teenagers Are Becoming Trans-Curious,” March 5, 2018, *The Gospel Coalition*, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-teenagers-are-becoming-trans-curious/>. Accessed 18 February 2019.

⁴² <http://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/orientation.pdf>

⁴³ Anna Mondal, “Counseling Gender Questioning Teens”, January 10, 2020, *Biblical Counseling Coalition*, <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2020/01/10/counseling-gender-questioning-teens-part-2/>. Accessed 5 May 2021.

⁴⁴ Jen Hatmaker, “World Vision, Gay Marriage, and a Different Way Through,” March 25, 2014. <http://jenhatmaker.com/blog/2014/03/25/world-vision-gay-marriage-and-a-different-way-through>. Accessed 26 January 2018.

Biblical texts which discuss homosexuality:

- Genesis 19:1-11
- Leviticus 18:22
- Leviticus 20:13
- Romans 1:26-27
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- 1 Timothy 1:8-11

Summary

1. Homosexual sin is _____.
2. Homosexual sin is not _____.
3. Homosexual sin is not _____.

Jesus and homosexuality:

- *Preston Sprinkle*: [But] when it comes to same-sex relations, there is nothing explicit nor implicit suggesting that Jesus corrected, improved upon, or did away with the sexual commands in Lev. 18:22 and 20:13. Nothing. There is no evidence.⁴⁵
- *Gregory Coles*: Not only does Jesus speak against sexual immorality as Jews would have understood it, but he also reaffirms the sanctity of the marriage bond between male and female.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Sprinkle, 73.

⁴⁶ Gregory Cole, *Single, Gay Christian: A Personal Journey of Faith and Sexual Identity*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2017), 41.

Gender Identity

Understanding the terms

- _____: male or female according to chromosomes, external/internal physiology (anatomy)
- *Gender*: the psychological, social, and cultural manifestations of maleness and femaleness (masculinity and femininity)
- _____: how a person perceives or experiences themselves as male/female (how they understand themselves)
- *Cisgender*: someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth
- _____: the experience of incongruence between one's biological sex and gender identity (duration of at least 6 months)⁴⁷
- *Transgender*: broad umbrella term for a person who experience a different gender identity than their biological sex
- *Gender-fluid*: gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of boy and girl. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days.
- _____: A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur, but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ movement.
- *Gender non-conforming*: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category
- _____: those whose sex at birth is somewhat ambiguous; 1 in every 5,000 births (0.02%); people whose chromosomes, genitals or gonads do not allow them to be distinctively identified as male or female at birth

⁴⁷ In order to receive this diagnosis, feelings of dysphoria must last 6 months in duration, cause great distress (APA, DSM-5, Washington RD: APA Publishing, 2013) p. 452.

Understanding the statistics

- Statistics on gender dysphoria:
 - .005% - .014% experience GD [DSM-V]
 - 2011: Williams Institute at UCLA: .3% of the US population (700,000 people)
 - 2016: Williams Institute at UCLA: .6% of the US population (1.4 million people)⁴⁸
 - 2022: Gallup Poll- LGBTQ+ population is at 7.1% of the total US population⁴⁹
- Gender dysphoria in children and teens
 - *Dr. Paul S. McHugh* further noted studies of children who had expressed transgender feelings but for whom, over time, 70%-80% “spontaneously lost those feelings.”⁵⁰
 - *Dr. John Whitehall* (Western Sydney University professor of pediatrics): Dutch children with dysphoria aged 4-11 revealed 52% had associated psychiatric problems with diagnoses including anxiety, phobias, mood disorders, depression, attention deficit disorder and oppositional behavior.⁵¹
 - ROGD: rapid onset gender dysphoria
- [Jared Poulton](#): 3 questions regarding gender reassignment surgery
 - Have these practices been tested and verified?
 - Are these practices safe?
 - Are these practices working?
 - [Jesse Singal](#): What’s happening is our society is moving faster than the _____ base.

⁴⁸ <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/How-Many-Adults-Identify-as-Transgender-in-the-United-States.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Jeffrey Jones, “LGBT Identification in U.S. Ticks Up to 7.1%,” February 17, 2022, *Gallup News*, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/389792/lgbt-identification-ticks-up.aspx>. Accessed 13 March 2022.

⁵⁰ Paul McHugh, “Transgender Surgery Isn’t the Solution”, Wall Street Journal, June 12, 2014. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/paul-mchugh-transgender-surgery-isnt-the-solution-1402615120>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

⁵¹ Dan Flynn, “Confusing Gender Ideology Not For Vulnerable Children”, March 2, 2017. http://www.acl.org.au/confusing_gender_ideology_not_for_vulnerable_children?recruiter_id=3606

Understanding the struggle

- *J. Alan Branch*: No one knows what _____ gender dysphoria. No one has discovered a transgender gene. No one has discovered a transgender brain. What have been found are some variables that correlate with a higher incidence of transgenderism in certain cases. But no biological or genetic trait has been found that is both necessary and sufficient to cause transgenderism.⁵²

Understanding the stories

- *Caitlyn Jenner*: I've tried to explain it this way: God is looking down making little Bruce...And then at the end, when he is just finishing, he says, "Wait a second; we've got to give him something. Everyone has stuff in their life they have to deal with. What are we going to give him? Let's give him the soul of a female, and let's see how he deals with that." So here I am: stuck. I'm so happy, after such a long struggle, to be living my true self..⁵³
- *Chaz (Chastity) Bono*: There's a gender in your brain and a gender in your body. For 99% of people those things are in alignment. For transgender people, they're mismatched. That's all it is. It's not complicated, it's not a neurosis. It's a mix-up. It's a birth defect, like a cleft palate.⁵⁴
- *Jim Pocka*: [I Couldn't Live the Lie of My Sexuality](#)
- *Benjamin Schulke*: [The Broken Cistern of GD: One Pastor's Story](#)
- *Jean Yael Wallis*: [Confessions of a Christian Who Struggled with Gender Identity](#)

⁵² Branch, 129.

⁵³ <http://abc.go.com/shows/2020/episode-guide/2015-04/24-bruce-jenner-the-interview>.

⁵⁴ Cintra Wilson, "The Reluctant Transgender Role Model", *New York Times*, May 6, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/08/fashion/08CHAZ.html>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

The nature of change and the hope of the gospel

- *Wesley Hill*: The message of what God has done through Christ reminds me that all Christians, whatever their sexual orientation, to one degree or another experience the same frustration that I do as God challenges, threatens, endangers, and transforms all our natural desires and affections.⁵⁵

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Books & Resources:

[*The Company We Keep: In Search of Biblical Friendship*](#)

[*Counsel for Couples: A Biblical and Practical Guide for Marriage Counseling*](#)

[*Rescue Plan: Charting a Course for Prisoners of Pornography*](#)

[*Rescue Skills: Essentials Skills for Restoring the Sexually Broken*](#)

⁵⁵ Hill, 64-65.