

I am my Sexuality – Same sex attraction and transgender

I. Introduction: Can those who experience unbiblical sexual desires be changed?

- A. How can we help those who are enslaved to these sins to live holy lives?
- B. Our culture is embracing homosexuality. Rom. 1:32
 - 1. The gay narrative
 - a. Same sex attractions signal a naturally occurring or “intended by God” distinction between homosexuality, heterosexuality, and bisexuality
 - b. Same sex attractions signal who you really are as a person (emphasis on discovery).
 - c. Same sex behavior is an extension of that core.
 - d. Self-actualization of your sexual identity is crucial for your fulfillment.
 - 2. Allberry
 - a. You are your sexuality.
 - b. Your sexuality is your sexual desires.
 - c. You discover your sexuality by sexual feelings which then define you.
 - d. Your sexual desires must be embraced in order to flourish because your sexuality is who you really are.
 - e. Failing to affirm someone’s sexuality is offensive since it equates to rejecting someone at the deepest level.
- C. We need to be prepared to give honest, compassionate biblical answers. 1 Pet. 3:15 Acts 20:20 Eph. 4:15
 - 1. The issue hinges around definition and identity. The world believes that people are free to create their own identities and to define marriage as they wish.
 - 2. Our identity is created by God Who also defines marriage.
 - 3. We must interpret people’s life stories using God’s infallible and timeless Word. 2 Ti. 3:16f
 - 4. Human marriage is important because human marriage is used to reflect the story of the Bible which begins and ends with marriage. (Allberry) Gen. 2:24 Rev. 19:7-8

II. Should homosexuality be treated differently from other sins/temptations?

- A. Homosexuality is contrary to God’s design and His law.
 - 1. God’s design is for one man and one woman to come together sexually in the covenant of marriage. Gen. 2:18-25 Mt. 19:4-5
 - 2. God’s law forbids all sexual activity outside of marriage between a husband and his wife. Heb. 13:4 Lev. 20:10-16
 - 3. God’s Word explicitly forbids homosexual behavior. Lev. 18:22 20:13 Jude 1:7 1 Ti. 1:10
 - 4. A culture which celebrates sexual deviancy has been given over by God. Rom. 1:26-27 Deep down people know this. Rom. 1:32 2:15

B. Why do some people experience same sex attraction (SSA)?

1. Nature.
2. Nurture.
3. We are all sinners by nature. Rom. 3:10ff Jer. 17:9 Pr. 14:12 Isa. 53:6 Eph. 2:3 Mark 7:21ff 2 Co. 5:17 1 Pe. 1:18
4. We all live in a fallen world which is full of evil influences. Ro. 12:2 1 Jo. 5:19
5. Different people struggle with different temptations. 1 Co. 10:13 Mark 7:21-
6. We are responsible for the choices we make. Js. 1:13-15 1 Co. 10:13
7. Nature and nurture are important influences but they are not determinative – Christ has redeemed us from the sins of our forefathers. 1 Pet. 1:18 Ps. 27:10
8. Christ enables us to live new holy lives. 1 Co. 10:13 Gal. 5:16ff 2 Cor. 5:17

C. Is same sex attraction sinful?

1. Our culture wrongly assumes that whatever someone desires (especially in the sexual realm) is good and normal. Judges 21:25 Prov. 14:12 Isa. 5:20 Heb. 3:13
2. Scripture teaches that unholy desires (not just acts) are sinful. Mt. 5:27-28,21-22 Js. 1:13-15 Col. 3:5 Jer. 17:9
3. Not just the act, but the desire must be put to death. Col. 3:5 1 Jo. 2:16
4. Don't blame God when you are tempted to sin. James 1:13

III. How can people change?

A. Can homosexuals change?

1. Some claim that sexual orientation can't be changed.
2. Homosexuality is like other sins and requires the same response. 1 Co. 10:13 6:9-11

B. God's Word (the gospel) offers unique hope for all sinners.

1. We understand the true problem – sin which comes from the heart. Mark 7:20ff
2. We know the true answer – redemption. Eph. 2:1ff
3. We have the truth – God's infallible, powerful, and all-sufficient Word. 2 Tim. 3:16f
4. We have the power of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:16ff
5. The gospel provides both forgiveness and transformation. 2 Co. 5:17 Phil. 1:6
6. God will not allow a believer to be put into a situation in which sin is inevitable. 1 Co 10:13

C. Homosexuals need to become Christians, not merely heterosexuals. 1 Co. 6:9-11 Luke 15:4-7 Mark 1:14-15 1 Th. 1:9 Luke 15:4-7

1. *I was converted not out of homosexuality, but out of unbelief.* (Rosaria Butterfield)
2. Those who are converted have a new identity. 1 Thess. 1:9 2 Co. 5:17 Luke 15:4-7

D. Many pursue unbiblical methods of change.

1. Mysticism/deliverance ministry. Prov. 2:2-12 Eph. 6:11ff
 2. Legalism/moralism. Rom. 5:20 8:3 Gal. 3:3 4:9 Mark 7:20ff Pr. 4:23
 3. Reparative/conversion therapy. Col. 2:23
- E. The change we seek is unique. Col. 1:28 1 Tim. 1:5 Eph. 4:24
1. We seek not merely a change of behavior, but a transformation of heart..
 2. Unbelievers are incapable of the change God requires. Rom. 8:6-8
- F. The gospel is the foundation for change.
- a. Remember what God has done for you. Eph. 1-3 Col. 1-2 Eph. 4:19-20,24,32 5:1-2,25ff
 - b. Only believers can change in a way that pleases God. Rom. 8:5-8 14:23 Heb. 11:6
 - c. What about cases in which unbelievers appear to change (lose weight, quit drinking or smoking, etc.)? Mt. 12:43-45 Rom. 14:23 1 Co. 10:31 Heb. 11:6
2. Your standing in Christ is the foundation for the changed life you want to live. Rom. 6:11 Col. 3:1ff 2 Pe. 1:3-4 Gal. 3:3
 3. Understanding your union with Christ is the key to your growth in holiness. Ro. 6:1ff
 4. The gospel is life-changing and liberating – a new identity. 1 Co. 6:9-11 2 Cor. 5:17
 - a. Christ is better than the idols/sins which tempt you. Isa. 55:1-2 John 4:10 7:38 6:35,48ff Gen. 39:9 Prov. 9:1ff Ps. 34:8
 - b. Christ empowers you to bear good fruit. John 15:1ff Gal. 2:20 5:16ff
- G. Change also involves effort.
1. Some wrongfully stop with the indicatives of what God has done for us, while neglecting the imperatives of what God calls us to do. John 14:15
 2. God’s Word calls us to exert effort towards obedience. Rom. 12:1ff 6:12ff Eph. 4:1ff Col. 3:1ff John 15:1ff 1 Jo. 2:6,10 Mt. 5:29-30 7:24-27 Js. 1:22 Mark 8:34
 3. Our motive for obedience is crucial. John 14:15 1 Co. 6:20 Phil. 3:9
- H. Ultimately we are dependent upon God’s grace for change.
1. Sometimes change doesn’t take place because the person is not yet regenerate. John 15:2,6 1 Jo. 2:3-4 Mt. 7:16ff Phil. 1:6
 2. God is the author of change – personal revival. John 3:8 15:5 Ps. 85:6 119:25,37,40,88,107,149,154,159 Mt. 7:7
 3. God uses means to accomplish change. Heb. 4:12-13 Ps. 119:67,71
- IV. What help can we offer to those who struggle with same sex attraction?
- A. We should reflect Jesus’ compassion for our fellow sinners. Mt. 9:36 11:28-30 Heb. 2:17 1 Tim. 5:8-17 Js. 1:19 Prov. 20:5

- B. Our objective is not to merely see people changed from homosexual sinners to heterosexual sinners (fornicators and adulterers).
 - 1. Nor are we merely seeking to make people more moral.
 - 2. The gospel gives us a new identity and sets us free from slavery to sin. Rom. 6:1ff
1 Co. 6:9-11 2 Co. 5:17 Mark 8:34
 - 3. God offers you the satisfaction and joy you need. Is. 55:1-2 Pr. 9:1ff 5:15ff Ps.
34:8 86:12-13
 - 4. Sexual sin which begins with false worship can be overcome when replaced by true worship. Rom. 1:18ff 1 Co. 6:20 10:31

- C. For Christians who struggle with SSA, homosexual temptation must be battled in the same way that all other temptation is fought.
 - 1. Sinful desires can be changed. Rom. 8:13 2 Co. 4:16
 - 2. Remember who you are in Christ. Rom. 6:11 2 Co. 5:17
 - 3. Put to death the deeds of the flesh – starve the sin. Rom. 6:12-14 Js. 1:14-15
2 Tim. 2:22 Mt. 5:27ff Pr. 8:13 Heb. 12:1ff Titus 2:11-12
 - 4. Put on Christ. Walk by the Spirit. Gal. 5:16ff
 - 5. *Repentance requires greater intimacy with God than with our sin.* (Butterfield)

- D. Some former homosexuals may continue to struggle with SSA, just as other Christians continue to battle against their former sins. Rom. 7

- E. Some former homosexuals experience a transformation in their desires and marry someone of the opposite sex.

F. Some who are still tempted by SSA strive to walk in purity while remaining single.
Mt. 19:11-12 22:30 Rom. 7:2 1 Co. 7:7,6,28,32,35

V. How should we change?

- A. The world has created a false dichotomy between celebrating sin and hateful bullying.

- B. We have much in common with our homosexual friends.
 - 1. We too were once enslaved to sin. 1 Cor. 6:9-11 Eph. 2:1ff Rom. 6:6
 - 2. We know what it is like to be tempted by that which God has forbidden. 1 Co. 10:13

- C. We can love those who are lost as we once were.
 - 1. Speak the truth with love. Eph. 4:15
 - 2. It is not loving to embrace sin with all of its destructiveness.

- D. We can offer help to those in our churches who struggle.
 - 1. Make the church a safe place for them to seek help.

2. Discipleship and accountability. Heb. 3:13 Gal. 5:16ff
3. Public and private means of grace.
4. Community.
5. Stories can be very powerful.

E. Summary (Sam Alberry)

1. We can know without a doubt who we are not because our feelings tell us, but because He tells us. John 4:29
2. We do not have to discern our identity; we receive it as a gift of God.
3. Jesus makes it clear where true satisfaction can be found. John 6:35,41,48

VI. Transgender.

A. Defining terms

1. Biological sex - reproductive anatomy (visible at birth).
2. Gender - cultural and social norms about what it means to be male or female
3. Gender identity - my sense/experience of myself as male or female
4. Cisgender -- there is agreement between biological sex, gender, and gender identity.
5. Gender dysphoria -- when biological sex, gender and gender identity don't agree.
6. Transgender - a term for anyone who would wish to present their external gender and their gender identity-hatred of their body
7. Intersex – homaphrodite – born with no clear biological sex.

B. What transgender people do.

1. Gender bending.
2. Cross dressing.
3. Hormone therapy.
4. Gender reassignment

VII. Understanding the problem of worldview (Lambert).

A. What we have in common.

1. We all believe in authority.
2. We all believe in morality.
3. We all seek conversion.

B. Transgender.

1. Authority is their own sense of self.
2. Morality – this inward sense of self must be expressed outwardly.
3. Conversion – others must accept them as they define themselves.

C. Biblical perspective.

1. Authority – The Bible. Ps. 119:11
2. Morality – Gen. 1:27 Rom. 1:18ff.

3. Gospel.

VIII. What do we do?

- A. Compassion -- We are co-sinners. We too were slaves. Rom. 6:16
- B. God changes hearts and lives. Titus 2:11 1 Co. 6:9-11
Instead of changing the body to match the mind, change the mind to match the body. .

IX. Questions

- A. Should I go to a homosexual wedding? Rom. 14:23
- B. What if I have a friend who says that he has homosexual desires, but doesn't act upon them?
- C. How should I respond if someone claims that God made him or her homosexual?
- D. Can a person be a church officer if he has a child who is homosexual? 1 Tim. 3:1ff
- E. When does homosexuality become a matter for church discipline? Mt. 18:15ff 1 Co. 5:1ff
Given that the church tolerates so much other sin (divorce, covetousness, etc.) why can't we allow for homosexual unions?
- F. How can we help a child who has same sex attraction? Prov. 4:23 Gal. 5:16ff Mt. 5:29
- G. What about those who have same sex attraction which is not primarily sexual?
- H. How do we engage in discussions with unbelievers about this topic without sounding judgmental? Isa. 55:6-7
- I. How do we help friends whose children are struggling with same sex attraction?
- J. How can a Christian counselor ethically counsel LGBTQ clients while still holding to your beliefs?
- K. Should you refer to a transgender person according to his/her preferred pronoun?

X. Recommended resources

- A. Alberry, Sam, Is God anti-gay?
- B. Burk, Denny and Lambert Heath, Transforming Homosexuality
- C. Butterfield, Rosaria, Openness Unhindered
- D. Butterfield, Roasria, Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert
- E. De Young, Kevin, What does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality
- F. Maxham, Coming Out: Compassion and Truth for Freedom from Homosexuality
- G. Welch, Homosexuality: Speaking the Truth in Love
 - H. Roberts, Vaughan, Talking Points: Transgender
 - I. Walker, Andrew, God and the Transgender Debate