

CLEARING UP SEXUAL IDENTITY

Confusion



IN YOUTH

TRAINING MANUAL-2024



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GENDER IDENTITY & CONFUSION in Youth

GOAL: To help the Church to understand critical developmental issues so that they are in better positions to provide more relevant ministry to young people who are sorting out sexual identity questions and concerns.

As America become more secular, our youth are navigating difficult terrain. No longer are there obvious trail markers; it's difficult to get sure footing. They need help. We need to become better "trail guides."

**SEXUAL IDENTITY has come to mean:
Labeling oneself based on one's sexual feelings.**

PART 1:

Why are so Many Now Identifying as Something other than the Gender of their Birth?

LGBTQQIAAAP means *lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer, questioning (unsure whether they're straight), intersex (born with male and female body parts), asexual (not attracted to males or females), ally (straight person who supports LGBT), androgynous (has male and female traits), and pansexual (attracted to "all" genders: male, female, and any others we might discover).*

Sexual experimentation and confusion in adolescent years is normal.

- "I need to know who I am." We are all sexual human beings. Kids often test out things with each other.
- Peers begin to identify their friends as "acting gay" so it's easy for that child to begin to move toward that label.
- The on-line and school communities begin to applaud those decisions and suddenly a kid has a whole support system for their "choice."

People are identifying now under many different genders.

A few big labels:

Same sex attraction: Homosexuality, Lesbian,
Bi-Sexual - keeping all sexual options open

These don't necessarily want to change their body.

Gender Dysphoria/Transgender: Uncomfortable in their own body

- * It's common for teen girls to have a lot of social conflict among their own sex; if this is severe, they are encouraged to identify as the opposite sex by gender affirming friends, therapists and educators.
- * Puberty blockers and double mastectomies are encouraged.

Risks: blood clots, strokes, heart attacks.

Prevents sexual maturation and bone density issues, and possible

No long-term studies indicate that these methods improve suicide

sterilization.

risks or mental health issues.

Kids are now ENCOURAGED (in school and on-line) to believe their identity is rooted in internal feeling and desires, rather than biology. They are taught there is no real “NORMAL.”

Problem: the extreme subjectivity of feelings. Feelings change.

“It matters that we get identity right, and our own subjective feelings of an identity being ‘a good fit’ are a shaky foundation on which to build something SO IMPORTANT.”

(livingout.org)

(A website where same-sex attracted Christians tell of their encounters with Christ that changed their lives)

These quotes from people’s stories at livingout.org reveal how unstable internal identities are:

“I switched labels a lot’.”

“Non-binary is a good label for me right now.”

“I’m transgender...I think....but what if I’m wrong?”

The Good News to those who are confused and struggling:

“There is an identity which is given, not discovered. An identity that doesn’t change and that isn’t subjective. An identity that doesn’t put pressure on us, because everything that is needed to make it a reality has already been done by God. In the midst of identity confusion, we, as Christians, have the good news that can bring true freedom. **We have the offer of Christian identity - adoption as a child of God, all based on what Christ has done.**” (livingout.org)

- “...fearfully and wonderfully made in my mothers womb.” (Ps. 139)
- God was choosing how I would represent Him on earth as a male or female...from my beginning.

EVERY MOVEMENT OFTEN HAS 2 DISTINCT CATEGORIES:

1. Those who are confused and struggling

Often broken and want help.

2. Those who are militant and evangelistic.

Convinced of their way and want to expand its influence.

People struggle with sexual brokenness on many, many levels, whether it be sex before marriage, adultery, pornography, etc. We want to help every seeker or refugee to find their way to peace and security.

The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Lk. 19:10)

He brought me out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. (Ps. 40:2)

If a person is militant and evangelistic in a worldview that is in opposition to Jesus’ teachings, we **MUST** protect the weak and vulnerable from their influence. **So we must stand against and oppose those leading the weak to a place of regret and tragedy.** (Proverbs 24:10-12)

WHAT YOU BELIEVE IS AT THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING?

It's important because it determines your view on every aspect of life...maleness, femininity, marriage, sexuality, morality, politics, etc.

1. HUMANISTS BELIEVE:

- Humans are at the center of everything; there is no God.
- All things exist to give the humans pleasure and glory.
- Nothing is higher than their reason so they determine FOR THEMSELVES, the meaning of things and how to use them.
- There is no divine book to guide them.

THEREFORE, since there is no absolute right or wrong, we must affirm everyone's personal choices. To question a person's choice is unloving and intolerant.

2. CHRISTIANS BELIEVE:

- God is at the center.
- A creator designed the world and everything in it.
- Therefore, He alone is able to **define them and give them their meaning**. He sets the rules on what is the proper use of everything.
- He has **chosen to communicate with mankind**, His highest creation, and He had mankind keep a record of this communication in scripture.

THEREFORE, we bring all ideas to His revealed Word to test the truth and goodness of that philosophy.

In all generations in the past, it was assumed:

- That male and female were scientific proof that humankind was divided into 2 categories.
- Only the union of these 2 genders brought forth new life (children).
- That MOM and DAD were indispensably important in the raising of those children.
- That FAMILY UNIT was necessary for continued life on the planet.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF TIME there have been deviations from the normal.

In Leviticus 18, God spoke through Moses and communicated:

"I love you and made you for something beautiful and holy. Don't go down the road that leads to regret, brokenness!"

Some examples from the Bible:

- Don't sleep with the same sex.
- Don't sleep with your sisters or your mother.
- Don't have sex with animals.

These are just a few prohibitions about perversions we would be drawn to.

WHAT CAUSES PEOPLE TO BECOME SEXUALLY CONFUSED?

Many scientific studies have been done to analyze why people become so conflicted and confused. Many scientific studies come up with the

same root issues year after year.

- Cultural acceptance\credibility is a significant motivation to young people to entertain ideas of gender confusion or sexual distortions, especially when they may already feel out of place or different.

- Absent or disengaged father

So a boy feels alone and inferior in their maleness.

A girl often becomes sexually active early in order to validate her worth to men.

- Sexual trauma in youth (molestation, rape, etc.)

A woman doesn't want to be "seen" because it leads to sexual abuse

She begins to present herself as "not desirable" or masculine in effort to become invisible.

Women are safer to be with, so she gravitates toward sexual activity with women.

- Same sex modeling in home/environment make it seem a normal choice.
- And sometime it's NONE of the above, but the draw is just there.

SPIRITUAL INFLUENCES

- There is the Holy Spirit.
- And there are other spirits.

Spiritual influences happen in the act of sex. Sex is an act where 2 become one.

Soul ties can bring attachments that have a strong hold and are hard to break.

Someone may want to change but need help in breaking these spiritual strongholds.

Sexuality and Gender Study: New Atlantis Report 2016 Quotes:

Gender Myth #1: Some people are born in the wrong body:

- "We have seen poor mental health outcomes for groups experimenting in other than male/female identity."
- **"No scientific evidence for DNA/GENES that make one predisposed to gender confusion."**
- "Despite the lack of scientific evidence, drastic interventions are prescribed and delivered to children who (even though research shows) **90% return to their gender of origin by 21.**"
- **"We suggest that no one can determine the gender identity of a two-year-old."**

Gender Myth #2: Transgender children must be supported in their choice to change or they will commit suicide:

- Such research does not exist.
- Truth: Gender dysphoric patients who HAVE undergone medical surgery have disturbingly high suicide rates.
- www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting
Understanding the Myths of Gender Identity and Transgenderism.

It is painfully clear that confusion about Gender and Sexual Identity are at an all-time high and that many many people are suffering because they are caught up in the confusion. What they need is a clear understanding of God's design for them and their sexuality.

PART 2:

The Biblical View of Gender and Sexual Identity.

God made us In His Image, Male and Female, His Children

(Gen. 1:27-28)

- Clues to Identity begin in the womb: Fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:13-15)
- Created male and female.
- Identity is received, not chosen.
- Our physical bodies, brains, hormones and chromosomes are responding to the gender God made us in the womb.
- Our Body is essential to our image bearing status

It is a significant aspect of human identity

As people in God's image we cannot be defined apart from our sexuality.

What was God's intention for human sexuality?

Gen. 1:26-28, 2:23-24 Let Us make man in our image...so in the image of God He created man, male and female...He blessed them and commanded them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it (bring God's order and take good care of the earth)... for this cause, a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and they will become one flesh."

- **Marriage is a covenant of love instituted by God.** The vulnerability of engaging in sexual intimacy is reserved for marriage, which is a **committed relationship between a man and a woman.** Why? This is for the protection of self and others.
- **Sex has the power of life when used correctly**
(Children, family, intimacy, love)
- **Sex can be highly destructive when used outside of God's boundaries** (abortion, STD, rejection, abandonment)
- **Marriage shows the relationship between Christ and the church** and it is put on display in front of the whole world. It is to show how Christ loves the church and how the church is to be devoted to Him. So sexual intimacy is tied to something beyond any 2 people and their behavior. (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 21:2, 9)
- **Marriage reflects the relationship between the persons of the Trinity.** The differences between man and women is the way humanity reflects or represents God. The Father, Son and Spirit are all fundamentally different to one another yet fundamentally united to one another. God is a relational, interdependent being.
- **It's not enough to be different people. The people must be different sexes.** Sex must be between a man and a woman because they are uniquely designed to be able to form a "one flesh unity" (Gen 2:24). God gave sex a great power to unite a husband and wife into a life-long unity. To use sex for anything else is to misuse this power which becomes destructive to the people involved.

Jesus confirmed marriage and sex between male/female as God's plan.

Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him And He answered and said, "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 AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Matt. 19:4-5)

Our bodies are part of our Identity and it's important to God how we use them.

- Christians have been purchased by God and are not free to live in any manner they wish. (I Peter 1:14-16)
- Our bodies are a temple. (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
- We are asked to offer our bodies to God. (Romans 6:13, 16 ; Romans 12:1)

Jesus was a male. His sex was revealed at birth.

- Jesus was the most perfect image of the invisible God.
The "Son" of the "Father"
(Col 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4, Heb. 1:3)
- Jesus' "male" body disproves the notion that biology is irrelevant to identity.

Part of being a disciple of Christ is embracing our bodies as important aspects of our identity and learning to see them as gifts from God and part of how we bear His image to the world.

Sin is normal. Don't be surprised!

- As a result of the fall, all humans are marred image-bearers of God. (Gen. 3)
- We were once perfect and still have an inbuilt desire for perfection but are no longer perfect.
- We have an inbuilt tendency to live for ourselves rather than for God or others.
- We live in a broken world and are drawn to things that harm us.
- Humans sin differently. Moses had an anger problem. David's weakness was sex. For Peter it was pride. And for another it will be same-sex attraction.
- Many actions will keep us from God's presence. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
"Sexually immoral, idolater, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves , greedy, drunkenness, verbal abusers, con artists, liars...."

Many things we are naturally "drawn to" will harm us and others.

We must deny ourselves many times in order to get to a good/healthy life.

God is a redeemer!!

- He is always moving me toward **THE TRUTH** about life and sexuality.
- Because He made me, His design and instructions can be trusted for my great good and future happiness.

People have asked God to take away the feeling of same sex attraction; however, those feeling can still remain. This leaves them in a state of frustration and anxiety.

How do I help them?

**Sanctification is a process
for EVERYONE on every path!**

- Life and growth, trials, difficult time, moments when we feel like we're at the end of our rope that all spur us to seek God in our weaknesses and in the process we become more and more like Christ.
- In God's refining process, feelings are reshaped--feelings of jealousy, self-hatred, envy and other destructive emotions. Desires are transformed.
- A married man may feel attraction to a female colleague, but in deference to his wedding vows, wife and children, reputation and work, he represses this sexual instinct.

Natural human impulses are restrained and submitted to a higher standard of behavior.

We are living in a sex pre-occupied age, where we are encouraged to scratch every itch, fill every appetite and indulge every whim and desire.

Our sinful nature doesn't like the idea of self-control, restraint and self-denial.

Redeemed people view their self-denial as an investment with an eventual tremendous payoff in compensation for their present sacrifice - whatever that sacrifice is.

**GOD LOVES US AND CAN CHANGE
ANYONE INTO HIS IMAGE**

*1 Corinthians 6:9-10 "... do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. **Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.**"*

- *All of us have had wrong desires and have done wrong things.*
- *Some of us allowed those sinful things to dominate our life.*
- *Now that we are forgiven by God, we have His power to change.*
- *There are many communities of "those who change..."*

- *And even if our feelings of wrong attraction are still strong, we can live and obey God always (livingout.org).*

SUMMARY

- **You can define yourself by whatever you feel at a given moment OR you can entrust yourself to God and let Him show you a better life.**
- **Jesus said He came to give us life MORE ABUNDANTLY than we have ever had it, but that we must abide in Him and His Word to get it. He was the picture of what God was really like and He was filled with love. To be a Christian is to put our hand in Jesus' hand and say, "I will follow You and Your Word, even when it goes against my feelings...because you are**

a GOOD SHEPHERD, and I will be safe in your paths."

"It is evident that our weaknesses and honest, confessed struggles with sexuality need NOT separate us from a loving, understanding God. In fact, Scripture makes clear that such problems should instead propel us to Him for His comfort, assurance and help. The Scriptures inspire hope that our sexual problems are indeed understandable, forgivable and correctable with God's help. Yet, Scripture also warns that God will not exempt us from the often painful consequences of our disobedient choices. Neither will He settle for less than first place in our lives."

-Sy Rogers (former president of Exodus International who left a transgender lifestyle to follow Christ):

PART 3:

WHAT DOES THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY SAY ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES?

Objections to the Christian view of gender and sexuality arise not only from outside of the Church but also from within. We maintain that the Bible's teaching on both sexuality and gender are clear and that it is an imperative that Christians embrace God's clear teaching.

They say....

"The Old Testament laws don't matter today."

*"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **Matt. 5:17-19***

Jesus fulfilled the purpose of some of the Old Testament laws and so did away with those laws:

- 1. The Old Testament regulations concerning the Temple and its sacrificial system became obsolete** because Jesus spoke of His body as the true Temple and His death as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Jesus was the true lamb of God who was sacrificed once and for all to take away the sins of the world (Heb. 10:1-12).
- 2. Jesus ended the cleanliness and food laws.** *These distinctions between some things being "clean" and others "unclean" were largely given to keep God's people from mixing with and being corrupted by their pagan neighbors and also to learn the concept of holiness through outward prohibitions. These laws were clearly cancelled by Jesus (Mark 7:17-23; Acts 10: 9-16). With the coming of the Holy Spirit into each heart, holiness could now be internalized so Jesus could now change the assignment to his newly empowered followers from "Be ye separate" to "Go into the world and make disciples..."*
- 3. The coming of Christ changed HOW we worship, but NOT the moral law of how we live.** *The moral law outlines God's own character---His integrity, love, and faithfulness. And so everything the Old Testament says about loving our neighbor, caring for the poor, generosity with our possessions, social relationships, and commitment to our family is still in force. The New Testament continues to forbid killing or committing adultery, and all the sexual commands of the Old Testament are re-stated throughout the New Testament (Matt. 5:27-30; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; 1 Tim. 1:8-11). If the New Testament has reaffirmed a commandment, then it is still in force for us today."*

They say....

“Jesus never said anything about homosexuality, and the writings of the apostles don’t count because they were just men who were molded by their culture therefore had some mistaken views.”

Jesus did not specifically mention homosexuality. But then he never mentioned incest, rape or bestiality. He did not need to address those concerns as they were clearly regarded as moral sin among the Jews in his day. **He did however:**

- **Uphold the Old Testament moral law which addressed homosexuality as sin. *See scripture on previous page (Matt. 5:17-19)**
- **He also commissioned His apostles in His name. (Matt 10:1-20)**

1. *“...you will be given what to say, ²⁰for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.*
(Matt. 10:20)

2. *“Whoever listens to you, listens to Me. Whoever rejects you, rejects Me.”*
(Luke 10:16)

3. The apostles specifically addressed the subject of homosexuality since it was practiced among the pagans to whom they ministered.

- **Jesus pointed back to the beginning of creation when questioned by authorities about family life and sexual dynamics (Matt. 19:4-5)**

“He who created them from the beginning made them male and female...”

They Say...

“The word ‘homosexual’ was invented by Bible translators in the 1940s and does not appear before that in the Bible.”

The word ‘Homosexual’ was invented in the late nineteenth century by an Austrian psychologist. It took several decades for the word to come into common usage in the English language, but the concept of homosexuality was well understood long before we had a word to describe it. This objection is a linguistic trick that attempts to obscure the truth by insinuating that late modern Bible translators are inserting their own biases against homosexuality into the scriptures. But Bible translating is the act of translating ancient Hebrew and Greek into common modern language. As modern language evolves so will the language in our modern translations but the original meaning remains the same. The Greek word ‘ἀρσενικοῖται’ (arsenokoitēs) is rightly translated as ‘homosexuals’ in 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10 where it is listed among those sins which God prohibits.

Livingout.org

- **Gives excellent perspectives on having a same-sex draw and living as a Christian. Access this site and hear from those who have struggled.**

**See Specific Scriptures on
Same-Sex Attraction on Next Page**

SCRIPTURES ON HOMOSEXUALITY

NOTE: ALL THE RED are quotes from a homosexual perspective on what that particular scripture means. The rest are simply notes helping you understand what the Bible actually means.

A CHALLENGE: Open the Bible and read these scriptures for yourselves. See if you can figure out what they mean. God didn't make it too difficult to understand.

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

Romans 1:21-27

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. ²⁵ For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. ²⁶ For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, ²⁷ and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

- They say, "Mutual loving acts between 2 consenting adults is not 'going against their nature.' This passage refers to perverse, hedonistic acts. Persons with homosexual orientation are not 'going against their nature.'"

The LGBTQ is changing the wording here. The Bible doesn't talk about "their personal nature" but about what is universally true about ALL NATURE--this is "nature" as God created it.

I Cor. 6:9-11

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

- They say, "Only sex between men and "boys" is perverted. Men with consenting men is not perverted."

I Timothy 1:8-11

⁸ But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers ¹⁰ and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, ¹¹ according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

- They say, "If a homosexual uses a power advantage of one person over another, that is bad. Not the act of homosexuality."

2 Peter 2:6-10

⁶ and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter, ⁷ and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men ⁸ (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), ⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.

Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties,

Jude 1:7

7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

Genesis 19 (The story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Angels visit Lot and the men come to request sex with them.)

4 ...Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; 5 and they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them."

- They say, **"Gang Rape was the real sin. Not homosexuality."**

Other references to Sodom's Sin

Leviticus 20:13

"If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their blood guiltiness is upon them."

Genesis 18:20

"And the Lord said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave."

Isaiah 3:9

"The expression of their faces bears witness against them, And they display their sin like Sodom; They do not even conceal it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves."

- They say, **"These laws no longer apply because they are Old Testament. We are "no longer under the law."**

Ezekiel 16:46-59

⁴⁸As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "Sodom, your sister and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. ⁵⁰Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw it.⁵⁸ You have borne the penalty of your lewdness and abominations," the LORD declares.

- They say, **"Sodom's sin was being inhospitable and not helping the poor."**

(These sins AND homosexuality were all a subset of Sodom's pride and idolatry. Many of these verses describe a self-absorbed hedonistic people who did not care for others.)

Leviticus 18:22

"You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."

PART 4:

How Should Christians Respond to Those Struggling With Sexual and Gender Confusion?

God has called us to demonstrate His love and truth to a fallen world.

We demonstrate His love by being **concerned and openhearted to people struggling with the consequences of sin.** The Christian view is that we are all sinners and Jesus came into the world to save sinners like us. Irrespective of your past or current sins or struggles, you can be reconciled to God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the message of the Bible.

The way that we are saved is by receiving the truth. So often the conversation of sexual and gender confusion is completely devoid of truth. We must be willing to **courageously declare God's truth about the design for men and women and their sexuality. Our friends who are struggling in this way are not helped by us withholding truth in order to avoid offense.**

The truth is that God designed us and our sexuality to be instruments of His. We find our purpose and greatest fulfillment when we are

rightly aligned with God and submitted to His purposes. We all have ways that our minds and hearts have been affected by sin, how our appetites and sense of self do not fully align with God's design. In those areas we must repent and by faith pursue the high calling of picking up our cross and following Him. In so doing we will find forgiveness, hope, and strength.

Goals for Teen Small Groups

Note: As our culture shifts to a humanistic view of life, everyone is encouraged to define themselves as they feel and make up their own moral rules.

"...In those days, everyone did what was right in their own eyes." (Judges 21:25).

When the apostles asked Jesus how they could know the right way, Jesus said, "I Am the Way, Truth and the Life." (John 14:5-6)

FIRST GOAL: Discipleship in Truth

- Developing an identity is a primary assignment and need for adolescents.
- Our primary identity is as a follower or disciple of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus said, "If you hold to my teachings, you are really My disciple."
(John 8:31)
- There are many people with different opinions and teachings. Jesus is the One we must believe and follow in every area of life.
- According to the Bible, how many genders are there?
Two: male and female
- The Bible teaches that my gender was determined by God when the first cell formed in my mother's womb.

Why are we divided into boy/girl groups?

- So we can be undistracted in our pursuit of truth.
- Sexual pursuit is suspended here. Girls pursuing girls becomes a problem.
- If a parent sends their child to be discipled in Christ and they are propositioned by someone of the same sex, the parents are going to be angry.
- So we set clear rules.

No physical displays of affection

No pursuing another person sexually.

We are going to have to be proactive in talking about all things sexual. If we don't tell them FIRST, the internet and friends will.

We must communicate this to the parents. It's the parent's job FIRST.

- Youth leaders are a support system.
- Some parents don't want you to do their job.
- Other parents will need your help in sorting all this out.
- Give parents the resources listed in this booklet and use them yourself with your groups.

SECOND GOAL: Evangelism

Evangelism is bringing those who don't know God's ways into His Kingdom to see how good His ways are. To touch His love --through us.

How do we make it safe for kids to open up and talk about sex or same sex attraction? Because if we don't, the gay community is happy to shepherd them.

1. Communicate to the whole group that there's a lot of confusion about sexual identity right now because the schools are encouraging kids to choose their own gender.

- This is because our society says that the way to happiness is to do whatever you feel like doing as long as you don't hurt others.
- Many don't believe God is real and they believe their understanding is much better than what Jesus taught in the Bible.
- They think that if we let everyone go with their feelings and remove any bad feeling (shame) for what they are doing, everyone will be happy and fulfilled.
- "Going with your feelings" isn't really going to make them fulfilled and happy because it ISN'T THE TRUTH. And they are in your group to learn truth. And ANYONE who seeks Jesus can stay and seek out HIS TRUTH.
- Just because someone feels an attraction to the same-sex, it doesn't make them gay.
- We need to help them deal with their feeling BEFORE they "chose an identity."

2. Communicate to ALL THE KIDS that if they open up, they will not be alone; they will find others who will love them and will help walk this journey with them.

- First, be a great listener.
- Provide them with tools and resources that are encouraging.
- Allow them to vent their thoughts and feelings instead of "combusting" on the inside.
- Help them learn how to building healthy relationships with family and friends.
- We have great mentors and councilors available:
 - ◆ Foothills Counseling Center 619-442-7728
 - ◆ Peer Counselors and Mentors referred through here.
 - ◆ Mentors who have overcome in this particular arena
 - ◆ NewDayWomensCenter.com
 - ◆ La Mesa Counseling: www.rhombuscounseling.com

What does ongoing support look like?

For the most part, that will involve normal church life – having ordinary conversations, finding areas to serve within the church, and being part of a small group. But a conversation with a pastor or somebody else in the church at an agreed frequency may be a helpful way of checking in on the topic of sexuality.

3. Training our teens what to do when secrets are shared

- Usually teens choose to tell someone who isn't a parent before they tell their parents....they are testing the waters of acceptance.
- If they believe they will be teased, bullied or shamed they will remain silent.
- Teach your teens that when someone shares their secrets, they should encourage that person to open up to their youth leader and tell

them you will go with them to talk to that leader.

In Summary:

1. For the confused, struggling or broken soul, we have nothing but deep compassion and help on every level.
2. However, if a child or a parent is militant and convinced of their understanding (which is out of sync with Jesus' teaching) and want to use the group to expand their influence, we **MUST PROTECT** the weak and vulnerable from their influence. So we must stand against and oppose those leading the weak to a place of regret and tragedy. We would then re-evaluate that person's participation in the group.

Our Aim:

- To see Christians living out their sexuality and identity in ways that enable all to flourish in Christ-like faithfulness.
- For all to see their questions and desires about sexuality and identity are best met in Christ.
- For all to receive Chris's comfort in all our struggles and to become overcomers in any challenge to our faith and identity.

PART 5:

Resources

BOOKS

1. **Male And Female He Created them:** A study on Gender, Sexuality and Marriage by Denny Burke, David Closson, and Colin Smothers.
2. **Irreversible Damage:** The Transgender Craze by Abigail Shrier
3. **A Change of Affection:** A Gay Man's Incredible Story of Redemption by Becket Cook
4. **Transgendered to Transformed** by Laura Perry Smalts
5. **Defined** by Priscilla Shrier (a mentoring book for young women)

WEBSITES

Axis.org

Axis delivers Gospel-centered videos and audio resources on topics that matter most to parents, youth workers, and your students. These videos and discussion guides help you jump start amazing conversation. Especially pertinent to this topic are:

GENDER
IDENTITY
LGBTQ and Your Teen

Focusonthefamily.com

How to talk with kids all ages on all sexual subjects

Under "Sex Education", topics include:

Understanding Myths of Gender Identity and Transgenderism
God's Design for Sex

Livingout.org

Listen to same-sex attracted Christians tell their different stories of enjoying their new identity in Christ.

3 EXCELLENT YOUTUBE VIDEOS

1. Ex-gay hip-hop artist Jackie Hill Perry (7 minutes)
2. Linda Jernigan - Such were some of you. (22 minutes)
3. The Detransition Diaries: Saving our Sisters

ARTICLES

1. Sy Rogers: Questions I'm Asked Most About Homosexuality (Firststone.org)
2. Ex-transgender teen accounts "Horrible Experience of Transition Surgery"
3. California Man: Hormone Therapy Almost Killed Me. (realnewsaggregator.com)
4. From Gay to Gospel: The Fascination Story of Becket Cook (TheGospelCoalition.org)

