



CHAPTER 6 – “Transgenderism, Sexuality, and the Church”

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Identify the Problem and Discover the Solution

While this chapter hones in on the sin of transgenderism and homosexuality I want to back up and look at the overall mess our world is in regarding sexuality as a whole. Specifically, we will start with the shift that has occurred in our country regarding sexuality and then look at some of the causes before digging into how to reach those engaged in homosexuality and transgenderism.

The Shift In Our Thinking On Sexuality

Never in the history of the world has a culture and its values concerning sexuality shifted as fast or as drastically as they have in America in the last fifty years. Here are some of the revealing statistics about the shift:

- In the 1950s about 5% of girls and about 10% of boys in high school were sexually active.
- By the year 2000 70% of girls and 80% of boys are sexually active during high school.¹
- The divorce rate in the 1950s was in the single digits and today it is approximately 50%.

The statistics that track the speed of change are staggering. For example, in 1987, 75 million people rented XXX porn video. Five years later, that number had rocketed to 490 million rentals of the most graphic porn. By 1996, the rentals reached 665 million. Pornography is being produced around the world, but the center of consumption is here in America. We distribute more than anyone else.²

¹ Chip Ingram, *Culture Shock* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 48.

² *Ibid.*, 48.

The Causes of the Shift

The shift from absolute to relative truth, the search for freedom in the '60s and the '70s, and bad teaching in the church created a perfect storm of consequences. During the first part of the twentieth century, the church was still laboring under the distorted picture of a Victorian, snobbish, "sex is dirty and bad" approach to sexuality. The unspoken rule was that you didn't say anything about sex. Children, seeing how their parents were uncomfortable, concluded, "Well, sex must be bad, or maybe God is antisex." Silence not only created ignorance and distortion; it set up future generations to be unprepared for the devastating wave of sexual license that followed.

The Myths, Lies, and the Truth About God's Design for Sex

Below are the top six myths or lies you have been fed about sex by your culture and the truth from God's Word that blows up these lies.

Myth 1: God is anti- sex.

Truth 1: God is so pro- sex that He designed it for...

- **Physical pleasure (Genesis 1:26-27; Proverbs 5:18-19)**
- **Procreation (Genesis 1:27)**
- **Relational intimacy (Genesis 2:18-24)**
- **Spiritual object lessons (Eph. 5:31-32)**

Myth 2: Christians sex lives and views of sex are dull, boring, and "out of touch."

Truth 2: The Scriptures command God's people to be downright erotic in their marital love.

The Bible is not all awkward about its promotion of a healthy sex life in marriage. A robust sex life is both commanded and explained in Scripture.

Read 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 and Song of Solomon 7:1-13.

Myth 3: As long as people love each other, sex is okay with God.

Truth 3: The Bible prohibits all sexual relationships outside of marriage. (Exodus 20:14; Acts 15:29; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3)

The root word for "immorality" is a very broad word in Greek - *porneia*. In Greek the word referred to all sorts of sexual distortion: adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and behaviors associated with those things. When it used a phrase like "a hint" it means fantasizing, lusting in your mind.

But if God is pro-sex, why all these prohibitions on it? The answer: God resists any notion that we can separate our sexual desires or actions from the rest of life. God is jealous for our best and wants to protect sex and its sacred power for two people to bond in an environment where they can know intimately and are known. When sex is used in any other way it cheapens its purpose and opens us up to a world of hurt!

Myth 4: Only a cosmic killjoy would prohibit all sex outside of marriage.

Truth 4: God prohibits all immoral behavior because of His desire to...

- **Protect you. (Psalm 5:11-12)**
- **Provide for you. (1 Timothy 6:17)**

Not only is God not a cosmic killjoy, but He ultimately wants to bless you with joy eternal. He knows that living in immorality not only puts you in danger which robs of you peace but He knows that lasting joy only comes when we honor Him.

What are some of the ways living in immorality robs us of peace and joy? How does honoring God with our bodies bring about peace and joy?

Myth 5: Everyone needs to sow their wild oats and experiment sexually before they settle down.

Truth 6: Sexual sins have a uniquely devastating impact on people's lives because...

- **It's a sin against yourself. (1 Cor. 6:16-20)**
- **It's a sin rooted in rebellion and idolatry. (Eph. 5:3-7)**
- **It's a practice in self worship. (Eph. 5:5)**

Since Christ dwells within us (Gal. 2:20), whenever we sin sexually we are taking Him with us into that act. Although God is ready to forgive, when we live in habitual sexual sin it cuts off our ability to hear His voice and experience His presence (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Myth 6: Sexual sin is so powerful that nothing can loosen its grip on my life.

Truth 6: Christ died to pay for the penalty of your sin and break its power in your life. (Col. 2:13-15)

While it may feel like the grip of sexual sin is so tight that you could never break free the truth is that you have already been set free from its penalty and its power. The key question becomes, "How do we actualize that?"

The answer to the above question comes about by shepherding one's own heart. Our salvation is 100% free. It is a gift of God that cannot be earned or worked for. However, our sanctification, our growth in Christ is a daily battle. We are told often in Scripture that we are to guard our hearts, that we are to grow in Christ, that we are to abstain from sin. But we are never told to do those things in our own power. In fact Jesus told us clearly that apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). So, what we will explore together below is all to be done in Jesus' power, not our own.

Shepherding our hearts in order to win the battle against sin entails...

1. Reminding yourself of who you are in Christ. (Colossians 1:21-22; Colossians 3:12-13; Hebrews 10:10)
2. Being honest with the Lord and others about your sin. (Psalm 145:18)
3. Repenting and confessing. (1 John 1:9)
4. Starving sin. (Proverbs 4:23-27)
5. Replacing sin with the things of God's Word. (Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 3:1-2)

Now that we have familiarized ourselves with the myths as well as the truths about God's design for sex, as well as how to shepherd our own hearts in the face of the battle against sin, we can now tackle the problems and solutions regarding homosexuality and transgenderism.

Understanding the Issue

Why do Christians make such a big deal about LGBTQ issues as opposed to all the other sins people commit? There are a couple of answers to that question. First, people aren't typically running around promoting and having parades for legitimizing lying, gossip, theft, adultery, etc. Therefore, we are not only standing up against something the Bible says is sin, and we must note there is not even a hint in the Scriptures that homosexuality or LGBTQ ideology is anything but sin, but we are standing for the only legitimate definition of marriage, which is between one man and one woman. That leads to the second answer as to why Christians make such a big deal about homosexuality.

Listen to what Albert Mohler wrote in his book [We Cannot Be Silent](#):

"For those who understand marriage to be a lifetime union of a man and a woman on the basis of Scripture, same-sex marriage presents a daunting challenge. The reason for that is quite simple: our convictions about the nature of marriage preclude us from recognizing the union of a man

and a man or a woman and a woman as a real marriage. In the Christian understanding, same-sex marriage is actually impossible, so we cannot recognize same-sex couples as legitimately married."

Read **Matthew 19:4-6** and answer the following question:

What would Jesus have to say based off this passage regarding homosexual marriage?

Why would you say that?

There is at least one other thing we must address before moving on to the premises of the LGBTQ community and what to say to our LGBTQ friends, and that is that we as followers of Jesus have fallen woefully short in what I call the truth - love continuum. We have either bashed the LGBTQ community with truth, expecting unbelievers to act and live like believers or we have created these "we accept you" groups without loving people enough to share the truth of the consequences of their lifestyle. Listen to the following excerpt from pastor and author Chip Ingram:

"When a person's behavior reduces their life expectancy to forty to forty-five years, is it really loving to affirm and endorse lifestyle behaviors with those results? As a society we don't hesitate to promote public service ads that say 'Friends don't let friends drive drunk' or warn of the dangers of unhealthy eating, and when those don't work, to pass legal restrictions on people's behavior. Yet we seem to have a curiously blind eye to anything that's questionable or immoral having to do with sex. To not tell the truth about what a lifestyle does to a person is actually irresponsible and cruel."

This means that the issue goes much deeper than just allowing two people who "love" each other to be married. It means recognizing a union between a man and man or a woman and a woman as a legitimate marriage where God would never endorse such an idea. In fact, according to Scripture, same-sex marriage is an impossibility. This means that we now have to completely redefine marriage if we are to accept same-sex marriage as legitimate. On top of that, the destruction of this lifestyle is catastrophic and to not share the truth and the facts with those living an LGBTQ lifestyle is both irresponsible and cruel.

At this point we need to explore the false premises in the LGBTQ community and we are to respond with both grace and truth.

The Premises In the LGBTQ Community

1. I was born this way.

There are four factors that must be addressed when it comes to the notion that someone is born gay. Those four factors include the genetic factor, the family factor, the developmental factor, and the environmental factor. Let's explore how each effects one's sexuality.

A. The Genetic Factor

Studies done by John Hopkins University; Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Evelyn Hooker, a pro-homosexual scientist; and Masters and Johnson all deny there's any genetic link when it comes to being LGBTQ. They agree that the connection between genetics and LGBTQ identification is a wishful myth.

A Loving Response Regarding the Genetic Factor

It would be fair to say to our LGBTQ friends that many of us are predisposed to something and that something may not be best for us. While some may be predisposed to homosexuality, others may be predisposed to alcohol, pornography, pedophilia, violence, or the like. Each of those have been proven to be detrimental to both the individual and the community.

The basics of dealing with these issues are the same. And the grace of God is available to all. Our guide and only hope in any sin issue we have is Jesus. We must see the way He saw. In **Mark 2:1-12**, four men brought their paralytic friend to Jesus on a mat. They were willing to do whatever it took to get him to Jesus, even at great personal expense. Despite this paralytic's obvious outward need, Jesus immediately saw the deeper need this man had for forgiveness. When we deal with people as they are, we need to develop Jesus's capacity for seeing past the obvious to meet the real need, and that is their need for forgiveness from the only One who can bring about any real change in their life. In other words, their greatest need is for salvation, even above and beyond a change in sexual orientation.

B. The Family Factor

Dr. Joseph Nicolosi has recorded that if you were to explore the family factor of active homosexuals you will often discover a family background that involves an absent father, abusive father, disengaged father, or smothering mother.

It is due to father issues that many boys will look for a man to please as they have been wired to receive what true love and acceptance is from a father figure and if they don't get that from dad they will often times try to find it in another man. Girls will often times go the opposite direction and flee from and/or rebel against men who have made them feel unsafe or unwanted. When smothered by mom, many young boys will do whatever it takes to avoid the feeling of being trapped, and thereby gravitate to men as opposed to pursuing a healthy relationship with a woman.

A Loving Response Regarding the Family Factor

What people need to know more than anything else is that regardless of what their earthly father or mother are like we have a Heavenly Father that loves us and welcomes us home regardless of what we have done or where we have gone.

Read Luke 15:11-32

What do you learn about our Heavenly Father regarding His love for sinners here?

C. The Developmental Factor

Children pass through phases as they gradually develop self and gender awareness. It's during the preteen and puberty phases that many are developing the idea of what healthy relationships and sexuality are. Traumatic experiences at this stage can and do radically affect the way they view their sexuality and gender identity. This can be anything from abuse at the hands of an adult to an unplanned experience with a peer, to something as simple as what they view via entertainment.

A Loving Response Regarding the Developmental Factor

When speaking with an LGBTQ friend take the time to ask them about their family and childhood history and then truly listen to their response. This will help you determine why they have chosen the sexual lifestyle they have, help you know how to pray for

them, and help you to develop a game plan for speaking the Gospel into their life. It is then imperative that we share the Gospel and share with them that there is a community of Christ followers that are ready to love, pray for, and walk with him/her.

D. The Environmental Factor

The media has gone to great lengths to normalize immoral behavior. For example, TV shows like *Modern Family* features three couples, one which is gay. Part of the impression given is that homosexuality is not only normal but a much larger percentage of the population than is true. In a recent Marvel comic, one of the heroes, Northstar, is marrying his male lover. Now think about who reads comic books and how intentional this “re-education” of our culture is beginning with our children.

A Loving Response Regarding the Environmental Factor

We must share with our LGBTQ friends that the ultimate goal of the media and entertainment industry is to make money regardless of who it hurts and what they promote. We must go on to share with them that our ultimate goal is for them to know the love and security that is provided in knowing Jesus Christ.

2. The LGBTQ lifestyle is a normal, healthy alternative lifestyle.

Promoting LGBTQ as a normal and healthy alternative lifestyle contradicts all the evidence as discovered scientifically and empirically. Here are some of the sobering facts:

- 78% of male homosexuals have or have had a sexually transmitted disease.
- More than 50% of all homosexual men are carriers of HPV, which produces anal warts and can often lead to anal cancer.
- Male homosexuals are about 1,000 times more likely to acquire HIV/AIDS than the general population.

A Loving Response to Homosexuality Being Normal and Healthy

We must first preface that we love our LGBTQ friend as a person created in God’s image and because they are created in God’s image we want to see them honor God with their bodies as well as protect themselves from unneeded harm. It is then that we can share with them that there is much harm done in engaging in homosexual behaviors. Share with them the actual scientific findings and statistics and share with them that this is part of the reason there is such a prohibition against homosexuality in Scripture.

WARNING: What follows to be read is graphic in nature, but important that we understand and share.

Listen to the following from Chip Ingram's book *Culture Shock* pp. 108-109.

After hearing this can we passively sit by and say that as long as what people do in their own bedrooms doesn't hurt anyone it really doesn't matter what they do?

3. Feelings and attractions to the same sex mean that I'm a homosexual.

This is simply not true. Humans struggle with a wide array of feelings on any given day, but those feelings are momentary responses to life, not an indicator of who you are. Giving feelings naming power is a recipe for disaster.

A Loving Response to Believing That Feelings Dictate Identity

Allow the Word of God to speak here. Share with your gay friend what **Genesis 1-2** teaches about who they are as a unique creation of God. Go on to share that as a unique creation of God He has veto power and naming power over who we are and how we are supposed to live as a result. Go on to have them read Ephesians 1-2 and stop at all the places that tell us who we truly are and who they could be in Christ.

Apply the Solution

Take the time to reach out to someone you know this week who is involved in a sinful lifestyle and simply walk them through the Gospel principles we discussed in this section in regards to His plan for their life. Start by letting them know that because Jesus loves them and so do you that you want to share some life changing news with them.

Recommended Resources

Culture Shock by Chip Ingram