

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## Human Identity, Sexuality, and Gender



*Spreading the  
fame of God by  
making disciples of  
Jesus Christ*

### **Q.1 If two people love each other, why is it wrong for them to enter into a consensual monogamous relationship?**

To answer this question, we first need to define love and then we can determine what is a loving relationship. Love is an attribute of God. God is love... the definition and standard by which all other claims of love are to be measured. Like any standard of morality, such as goodness, mercy, or justice, it is God's character and the expression of His will by which we know His attributes. Therefore, since God has commanded that a same-sex relationship violates both His design and His expressed will (Genesis 2:18-25, Mark 10:6-9), then homosexual relationships, even a "consensual, monogamous relationship," cannot be called loving. Think about it this way, love is doing what is in another person's best interest. Since being in a same-sex relationship is NOT in the other person's best interest due to it violating God's will, there is no such thing as a loving homosexual relationship as defined by God. Would it be loving to encourage someone to lie or steal from someone else? No. By definition, someone who promotes the violation of God's design cannot be acting in love because God stands opposed to what they are doing.

### **Q.2 If God is love, why are Christians so intolerant towards same-sex attracted and/or transgender people?**

We would never want to marginalize nor minimize the real-world battle that some sincere Christians live with. We would be the first to affirm that there are Christians who struggle with same-sex attraction, as we would also affirm there are Christians who struggle with heterosexual attraction. The struggle is real. However, we would also never want to contribute to someone violating the will of God or reality itself. We are called to do what is in the best interest of others, even when they might not realize or even appreciate it. Therefore, followers of Christ cannot support those who affirm homosexuality, or that a person can become a gender opposite of that they were born with. To do this would be to lie. We would be affirming something God opposes. This is not intolerance but the essence of love. If you saw someone rushing toward a busy intersection, not realizing that a truck was just feet away from taking their life, would it not be loving to tackle them? While someone might initially feel offended, they soon realize that love motivated the action.

### **Q.3 Why does Grace Fellowship care so much about this topic?**

We care because people matter to God. We want people to know their Creator, to find the liberation that flows from rightly relating to Him. If you know someone might be exposed to a debilitating disease, would you not warn them? If someone you know was traveling to a dangerous part of town, would you not point that out? We are concerned because we want to care well for others as we point them to the Truth in God's Word.

### **Q.4 If God made me this way, why am I responsible for this desire?**

God doesn't make people sin any more than humans can fly through the sky; it isn't in His nature. People sin because they do not trust God, shown in their replacing His standards with our own. Each and every person is responsible for the choices they make and the actions they take in life.

Since God's Word commands people to not participate in homosexual relationships (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11), God could not have created you that way. God, by definition, cannot contradict Himself. For God to act, this way would mean He is either confused or changes when he perceives something to be better. For God to perceive something better, learn something new, or discover something He didn't know before, would disqualify Him as the Almighty. The question itself seeks to subvert the individual's responsibility by blaming God. Mark it down: every person will answer to God for how they have lived.

#### **Q.5 Can you be a Christian and struggle with same sex attraction or transgenderism?**

Yes, absolutely. Paul lists such people among the Corinthian church who have been washed by the blood of Christ and made clean:

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

The difference between a believer and an unbeliever, on this or any other issue of sin, is that a believer agrees with God about their sin. Notice the turning point in verse five below:

Psalm 32:1-5

1 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.  
2 Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.  
3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.  
4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah  
5 I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not cover my iniquity;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"  
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

David moves from being weighed down with his sin to having his burden lifted after agreeing with God about his sin and confessing it.

#### **Q.6 Can people who struggle with issues of gender and sexuality change? What about things like "conversion therapy?"**

Again, yes, and Paul makes the assertion in the Corinthians passage we just looked at that people at the church in Corinth changed.

Does that mean all illicit desires will cease? Not necessarily but as, through our sanctification process, we renew our minds (Romans 12:2), the old desires will wane and be replaced with new, God-honoring desires. However, as with all sin, we must maintain the battle as long as we are in the flesh. Paul speaks of this:

"So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin"  
(Romans 7:21-25.)

Of course this is followed by that marvelous verse: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

But if we continue to feed our sinful desires with lustful thoughts, pornography or self-justifying notions that this is our God-given identity, then we will not be successful in renewing our minds. Because such approaches show that we don't really want to renew our minds. As Pastor Dan said a week or so back in a Sunday teaching, "we always do what we want to do." If this is your struggle and you are a follower of Christ, know that there is no longer any condemnation from God. You are now free to walk in newness of life as a child of God.

As far as so-called conversion therapy, that's in many ways a boogey man created by the pro-gay crowd. There have been counseling approaches, even among secular psychologists, designed to help people with unwanted same-sex attraction. One of those, pioneered by a man named Joseph Nicolosi, was called reparative therapy and Nicolosi had success in helping many, mostly men, walk away from homosexuality. I wouldn't classify it as a Christian approach, though many Christians found his work helpful. It helped people change their thoughts and actions and to walk away from a self-destructive lifestyle. Some did that as Christians, some, not as Christians.

However, the LGBTQ+ activists lump any counseling efforts into the bucket "conversion therapy" in order to demonize those who seek to change as well as those who seek to help them do so. Because, bottom line, this can't be an unchangeable identity worthy of civil rights protections if people can change, so they will do anything to deny that possibility.

There was an article on the website "The Hill" on June 26 of this year with the headline:

"Democrats Introduce Federal Conversion Therapy Ban."

Here are a couple quotes from it:

"The Therapeutic Fraud Prevention Act, introduced Monday in the House by Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) would make it unlawful to provide conversion therapy to "any individual" or promote efforts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity."

"Conversion therapy — sometimes called "reparative therapy" — refers to a broad range of interventions designed to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, but most often involves spiritual counseling or talk therapy. It has been denounced by major medical organizations as unscientific, in part because it is underpinned by the false belief that LGBTQ identities are pathologies that need to be cured."

Notice how broad this act is. We could at some point be engaged in an illegal activity if a person comes to one of the pastors or one of the people working in Soul Care who wants help to walk away from homosexuality or transgenderism and we agree to help them.

## **Q.7 Why don't all people face the temptation of homosexuality or transgenderism?**

God's Word teaches that mankind is fallen and corrupt from birth (Eph 2:1; Ps 51:5) and that in our fallen state we are not capable of good (Rom 11-18). Mankind is corrupt at its root. However, this does not mean that mankind or any one person is as bad or sinful as he or she could be. In fact, the opposite is true.

In His kindness, God restrains many of the sinful tendencies within mankind which graciously allows us to live and flourish in societies all over the world. This also means that not everyone is tempted with the same kinds of sins. In the nineteen different vice lists found in the NT (e.g. Rom 1:28-32; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Gal 5:17-21) there are over 150 different vices or sins listed. No one person is tempted with each of those 150 vices just as there is not one sin that besets all people. We each have different areas in which we are tempted to sin and the solution for all people everywhere is to turn to Christ, repent of our sinful ways, and ask Him for deliverance from those temptations.

**Q.8 I would not have asked for this so why am I responsible for this? (also, see question 4)**

Part of the problem is that many in the church have bought into the world's thinking on this issue. Even if they believe homosexual behavior is a sin, they've bought into the world's ontology that it is an "orientation" or an "identity" that can't be changed.

Bottom line is homosexuality is not like being black or female. It's not an unchangeable "orientation," it is a sinful desire. While we all come into the world dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), we don't get handed a menu from which can choose which sins we want to struggle with. God in his sovereignty determines even our struggles.

But we also have this assurance, no matter our struggles:

"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Notice he doesn't say be totally free of it...but to "endure it." That doesn't mean everyone will have the same struggle but that no one has a unique struggle. All sins flow out of our fallen humanity and all sins can be dealt with by the blood of Christ. No one is uniquely disadvantaged as compared to other fallen human beings. The person tempted by homosexuality has the same access to Christ as the person tempted by adultery or drunkenness or anything else and they have the same call from Christ to repent and believe and to walk in newness of life.

**Q.9 Jesus never spoke about this topic, only Paul did. Doesn't this seem to imply that homosexuality wasn't that important to Jesus?**

It is true that Jesus never spoke of homosexuality. It is also true that Jesus never spoke of abortion, blackmail, or a host of other sins. To conclude that Jesus was not opposed to homosexuality because He never spoke against it is known as an argument from silence. Arguments from silence assume truths and make assumptions and are never good starting points. In fact, they are very often referred to as fallacies.

Regardless, even though Jesus never spoke of homosexuality, He did speak on sexuality and did so quoting one of the foundational verses in all of Scripture in regards to this topic when He said, 4... "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matt 19:4-6 quoting Gen. 2:24)

When considered alongside His teaching on divorce and adultery (Matt 19:8-9), it is clear that Jesus assumes either single celibacy or covenant faithfulness inside of a marriage between one man and one woman.

Finally, to properly understand the Bible one must look at the summary or totality of what it teaches on a subject in order to come to a fully informed understanding of said topic. God developed themes, motifs, and concepts over time through all the men that He superintended as He

communicated His revelation to mankind. Therefore, for us to understand God's Word in regards to homosexuality we look not just to the words of Jesus but Paul and Moses as well.

**Q.10 If we don't affirm same-sex attraction and/or transgender people, won't they end up harming themselves?**

To a fallen and sinful humanity, the truths found in God's Word, to include the Gospel itself, are offensive. This includes God's teaching on sexual ethics and gender. Thus, it is incumbent upon Christians who seek to communicate this truth to do so in a way that does not add any further offense. Having said that, the Christian is never to water down the truth or deviate from it.

It is always loving to do what is in the best interest of people and calling sinners, regardless of the nature of their sin, to repentance and faith in Christ is a loving act. Those who struggle with these types of sexual sins often do feel a measure of guilt or shame and very often attribute it to society not welcoming or affirming them. The reality of the matter is that those feelings actually come from their conscience which Paul says will either excuse or accuse them of their actions (Rom 2:15).

Christians must extend hope to those who struggle with sexual sins and we must also help them understand that their identity is so much bigger than their sexual desires. This is true because all people are image bearers of God Himself. We cannot control how a person may respond to the truth, but we can deliver the truth in a loving and kind way, drawing attention to the hope that lies within it.

An article in the New York Times on June 27, 2023 says: "Transgender people in Denmark had 7.7 times the rate of suicide attempts and 3.5 the rate of suicide deaths compared with the rest of the population."

This study was also cited by the Journal of the American Medical Association which summarized it this way:

"In this Danish population-based, retrospective cohort study, results suggest that transgender individuals had significantly higher rates of suicide attempt, suicide mortality, suicide-unrelated mortality, and all-cause mortality compared with the non-transgender population."

Of course, the implication both organizations want people to draw is that not affirming transgenderism will lead people to harm themselves.

Interestingly, when you search Bing for "Denmark and Transgenderism" this is what you get: "Denmark is a progressive country in terms of transgender rights. Since 2014, transgender people can change their legal gender without surgery or medical intervention. They can also obtain new official documents reflecting their choice of gender through a simple administrative procedure. In 2017, Denmark became the first country in the world to remove transgenderism from the list of mental disorders."

In addition, a site called Equaldex which tracks what they call an "LGBTQ Equality Index" gives Denmark a score of 86 / 100. They point out that in Denmark you can legally change your gender no questions asked, with or without surgery. You cannot be discriminated against in employment or housing for any LGBTQ status (since 1996). You can legally join the military and you can legally adopt children. They've had laws against so-called hate speech based on sexual orientation since 1987.

97.5% of the population of Denmark has a favorable view of homosexuality.

75% are in favor of transgender people being able to change their legal gender.

Homosexuality has been legal in Denmark since 1933, same-sex relationships were given legal status in 1989 and same-sex marriage in 2014. The world's first "sex reassignment surgery" was done in Denmark in the 1950s.

In short, Denmark is one of the most "affirming" countries in the world for the "LGBTQ community" and has been for decades. Perhaps, it's not lack of affirmation that is behind these statistics. When used as an argument in favor of normalizing homosexuality or transgenderism, claiming you must accept it or people will harm themselves is nothing more than emotional blackmail designed to shut down discussion. This is perniciously used on parents of "transgender" children who are told things like "would you rather have a dead son or a living daughter," meaning if you don't let your child "transition" he or she may kill themselves.

One young woman, Soren Aldaco, who was rushed into life altering surgery when diagnosed as "transgender" says her family was pressured in this way: "We hear a lot, 'Would you rather have a dead daughter or living son?' And that was the sort of mindset that they were exposed to and they acted from," Soren said. That is wicked and evil. It is truth, not lies that lead to life and peace.

Proverbs 14:25 "A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful."

#### **Q.11 Can you be a Christian and live as a transgender person or in an openly same-sex relationship?**

No, you cannot claim to be a Christian while claiming homosexuality or transgenderism are positive goods to be embraced rather than sinful desires to be put to death.

In fact, Paul is clear that people who do that should be put out of the church because they are acting like unbelievers:

I Corinthians 5:1-2 "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. 2 And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you." Notice Paul's characterization of the people promoting acceptance of sexual sin. He doesn't say they are "loving" or "humble" or "winsome." He says they are "arrogant."

#### **Q.12 The word "nature" in 1 Corinthians 11 is often dismissed as "cultural" related to women in Corinth wearing a head-covering. In contrast, "nature" in Romans 1 is applied to homosexuality for all time? If head coverings are treated as being "cultural," then why isn't homosexuality cultural too?**

Let's first consider what both passages communicate by considering their context.

##### **1 Corinthians 11:2-13**

"Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. 3 But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. 4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, 5 but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. 6 For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. 7 For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. 8 For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. 9 Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. 10 That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; 12 for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. 13 Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? **Does not nature** (*physis*) itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, 15 but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. 16 If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

In the context, the term "nature" is a general observation in the distinction between what is usual - the length and way women treat their hair vs. the length and way men treat their hair.

When Paul says, "Does not nature (*physis*) itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is a disgrace for him..." he is speaking of nature as an instinct, an innate sense of what is normal, commonly recognized by people and, therefore, right or natural. Paul is appealing to their conscience as to how things are. When observing culture, but for rare exceptions, human instinct testifies that it is normal and proper for a woman's hair to be longer and attended to with more time and care than a man would. In this sense, it would not be natural but a "disgrace" (v.14) or, literally, a "dishonor" for a man to look like a woman when it comes to hair treatment and length.

For example, when we think of a car, we imagine a vehicle with four wheels. However, three-wheel vehicles also transport people on the road. We don't "naturally" picture a three-wheel vehicle when we hear the word "car." In our minds, four-wheel cars are... cars. Or, think of a young baseball player being evaluated by the coaches - after he swings the bat, one coach comments to the other: "The kid's a natural. He has a natural swing!" The coach is using the idea of what is commonly understood as a good swing as being "natural." Paul is using the term "nature" in a similar way.

### **Romans 1:24-28**

"Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are **contrary to nature** (*para physis*); 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error."

Like Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, the theme of the passage speaks to the meaning of the noun "nature" (*physis*) and the adjective that is derived from the word "natural" (*physikos*). The idea in this passage is far different than the common or "natural" difference between men's and women's hair. The picture in Romans verse 26 is "contrary to nature" (*para physin*), describing homosexual acts as, literally, "paranormal." In other words, homosexuality goes against what is natural. In other words, those who participate in homosexuality should care because it is against God's design; it is "paranormal." Those who continue have no shame about how wrong they are.

While "nature" is used in both passages, the force, impression, and resulting outcome are completely different. Believing that the word holds the same depth and degree in both contexts is impossible for a thoughtful reader. Richard B. Hays (Ph.D.), George Washington Ivey Professor Emeritus of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, maintains that "in Paul's time, the categorization of homosexual practices as *para physin* ("contrary to nature," emphasis mine) was a commonplace feature in polemical attacks against such behavior, particularly in the world of Hellenistic Judaism." He goes on to say that Paul is using the word "nature" in Romans within "the created order," and those who would "indulge in sexual practices *para physin* are defying the creator and demonstrating their own alienation from him."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hays, Richard B. "Relations Natural and Unnatural, A Response to John Boswell's Exegesis of Romans 1." *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 1986.