

***Moral Issues of Our Time***  
***Lesson 6 – God’s Grace, Transgender Identity and Homosexuality***  
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***Introduction:*** God’s grace is the key to find reality.

- A. God sent His Son as the ultimate guide to freedom and purpose.
  - 1. In the servant songs Jesus is given as our covenant. **(Isa 42:6-7; 49:8-9)**
  - 2. Our God wants a relationship with all men. Where are men found? They are in darkness and in prison.
- B. When we trust the God who created all things we will let Him direct our thoughts and our lives. **(Psa 100:3)**
  - 1. The approach we take tonight is God’s word as an absolute authority.
  - 2. If you have doubts about this then consider the evidence for Jesus Christ.

***I. The real world as revealed by God’s grace***

- A. God’s grace teaches us about our relationship with God and with others. **(Titus 2:11-14)**
  - 1. Because God is holy there are thoughts, actions and teachings that must be changed. Sexual practices are one of many issues that grace teaches us about.
  - 2. These are not random rules but needed wisdom from the creator for our good.
- B. God’s grace changes the heart from selfishness to sacrifice. It is not just a set of rules but a completely changed life. **(Titus 3:3-6)**
  - 1. We are changed from being driven by lusts, living in malice and hatred to become servants manifesting the very grace that changed us.
  - 2. Good relationships are built by honesty, love, patience – others put 1<sup>st</sup> as directed by God. Self or God? The difference is like night and day.
  - 3. My heart aches for those caught in these deceptive, sexual snares. There is a better way!

***II. God’s grace and homosexual behavior***

- A. The New Testament reveals the consequences of rejecting the light of trusting God.
  - 1. The first step is a rejection of God and His rule over men. **(Rom 1:20-22)**
  - 2. Without God it is impossible to say that anything is right or wrong.
  - 3. Sexual practice and human relationships go hand in hand. What are the consequences in homes that have no moral standard or guidance? **(Rom 1:24-28)**
  - 4. These new practices are described as self-punishment. This is true.
- B. The call of becoming a Christian is a call away from these practices and these relationships. **(1 Cor 6:9-11)**
  - 1. **Homosexuals** - **μαλακός**, ή, όν soft; .. (2) figuratively, in a bad sense of men *effeminate, unmanly*; ... especially of a man or boy who submits his body to homosexual lewdness *catamite, homosexual pervert* (1C 6.9) - Friberg Lex.

2. **Sodomites** - ἀρσενικοίτης, ου, ὁ an adult male who practices sexual intercourse with another adult male or a boy *homosexual, sodomite, pederast*. – Friberg Lex.
3. There are other verses affirming the same thing. **(1 Tim 1:10; Jude 7)**

C. The earthly consequences of this practice.

1. Many will tell you that they very much want to escape the powerful snare they are in. There are many levels of participation of this practice.
2. Those that I have worked with had four things in common: (1) An angry or distant father that they perceived had rejected them, (2) parents who had a poor marriage relationship, (3) depression characterized by bouts of anger and (4) an unwillingness to discuss their anger, temptations, etc. that led to an increasing pattern of deception and a secret lifestyle.
3. Some take a major step to begin close association with others in the “homosexual community.” Often that becomes where all serious relationships occur. There is a very aggressive agenda that includes a push to promiscuity.
4. A lifestyle of rejection and numerous partners follows. There is no happiness in this only a temporary escape.

D. This practice has impacted by mental and physical health. Consider these statistics relating to men:

Men who were associated with the gay community were nearly four times as likely to have had more than 50 sex partners in the six months preceding the survey as men who were not associated with the gay community. This may imply that it is riskier to be “out” than “closeted.” Adopting a gay identity may create more pressure to be promiscuous and to be so with a cohort of other more promiscuous partners.

A far-ranging study of homosexual men published in 1978 revealed that 75 percent of self-identified, white, gay men admitted to having sex with more than 100 different males in their lifetime: **15 percent** claimed 100-249 sex partners; **17 percent** claimed 250-499; **15 percent** claimed 500-999; and **28 percent** claimed more than 1,000 lifetime male sex partners. - THE HEALTH RISKS OF GAY SEX  
By John R. Diggs, Jr., M.D.

In the late 1970s, A.P. Bell and M.S. Weinberg, in their classic study of male and female homosexuality, found that 43 percent of white male homosexuals had sex with 500 or more partners, with 28 percent having 1,000 or more sex partners. In the late 1990s, a study of the sexual profiles of 2,583 older homosexuals published in Journal of Sex Research, found that only 2.7 percent claimed to have had sex with one partner only. The most common response, given by 21.6 percent of the respondents, was of having a 101 to 500 lifetime sex partners.

Tragically, some of those partners are children. While male homosexuals comprise only 2–3 percent of the male population, they commit about one-third of all child molestation cases. That is, about one-third of all pedophile cases are homosexual in nature—man to boy.

<http://www.allaboutlove.org/homosexual-health.htm>

1. When one completely associates with such a community, it becomes extremely hard to leave.
2. I have found that anger is shared and taught towards the Bible and Bible based Christianity. Anger is a powerful tool to close hearts and allows one to be manipulated by others. Bitterness makes all relationships difficult.

3. To reach those caught in such a snare requires patience, wisdom and a display of the love of God. The battle is very similar to those who struggle with addictions. (2 Tim 2:24-26)

### ***III. God's grace and transgender issues***

- A. "Transgender" refers to a person whose self-identity does not conform to their respective male or female gender. In other words, it refers to a male who feels that he is really a female or vice-versa.
  1. According to a 2011 survey, about 700,000 Americans perceive their gender identity to be at variance with the physical reality of their biological birth sex.
  2. The American Psychiatric Association removed this condition (aka, "gender identity disorder") from its list of disorders in 2013, substituting "gender identity disorder" with "gender dysphoria."
  3. The American Psychiatric Association includes among its treatment options for gender dysphoria cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery, and social and legal transition to the desired gender.
  4. News reports indicate that parents are allowing their children to undergo these therapies - Many LGBT activists have sought to normalize the transgender experience and to define gender according to one's self-perception apart from biological anatomy.
- B. What does the grace of God teach us?
  1. God made us male and female. (Mt 19:4)
  2. God does not make mistakes – the same standard can be applied to everyone!
  3. We are male and female based upon biological realities! The Bible does not identify us by our changing desires and perceptions.

First and foremost, we must note that the Scriptures never define anyone by their sexuality. No one in the Bible is called a heterosexual, homosexual, or asexual (in 1 Corinthians 6:9, the term sometimes translated "homosexual" is the Greek *arsenokoitai*, defined as "one who lies with a man as with a woman," reinforcing our premise). In the Bible, no one is their sexuality. Instead, people have sexual impulses, desires, and urges, and decide whether and how they will act upon them. Therefore, in the Bible, sexuality is never reckoned as a form of identity; sex involves the behavior of individuals, however appropriate or inappropriate. – Counterfeit Sexuality as Identity by Ethan Longhenry

### ***IV. What are the arguments used to justify homosexuality?***

- A. "Homosexuals are born this way. They did not choose this lifestyle so it cannot be a sin."
  1. If they can prove an inborn nature the Bible would still tell us to not practice this desire!
  2. As an example, consider the alcoholic who desires to drink even after becoming a Christian. He chooses not act upon that desire while also seeking to put this desire away! (Rom 8:13-14; 1 Cor 10:13)
  3. There is no proof that homosexuality is inborn.

Few scientists have ventured into this line of research. When the genetics of being gay comes up at scientific meetings, "sometimes even behavioral geneticists kind of wrinkle up their noses," says Kenneth

Kendler, a psychiatric geneticist at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. That's partially because the science itself is so complex. Studies comparing identical and fraternal twins suggest there is some heritable component to homosexuality, but no one believes that a single gene or genes can make a person gay. Any genetic predispositions probably interact with environmental factors that influence development of a sexual orientation. -

4. A "link" can have many possible meanings.

B. "If you deny practicing homosexuals membership in your church then you are bigoted and hate-filled just like those who hated blacks in the 1950's."

1. This has assumed that these desires are inherited just like racial characteristics.

2. This is more a political tool used to silence and attack those who disagree.

C. "We are reading the Bible wrong. When we use "cultural context" we find that a perverted form of homosexual behavior was condemned. What is done today through homosexual marriage is approved."

*Cultural Context and Homosexuality by Eric Reynolds*

I've been doing a lot of studying and reading about the issue of same-sex marriages and the proposed Scriptural justifications for such. A huge amount of emphasis is given to the cultural context in which the New Testament was written. The claim is made that the ancient world had no concept of loving, committed, equal same-sex unions. That may be true if for no other reason than the Romans apparently didn't give much weight to monogamy in general. But they certainly were familiar with homosexual desires and behaviors. Instead of describing any particular practices, suffice it to say that encounters between the following groups were common:

- husband and wife
- young man and boy
- man and slave (both male and female)
- man and temple prostitute (both male and female)
- man and man
- man and mistress
- woman and younger girl

And I'm sure there are several more, but you get the point. Into this scene came the gospel. As the pagan Gentiles were converted and taught about Jesus, they were called to leave their various sexual practices behind (Acts 15:20). In fact, Paul uses four different words in 1 Cor. 6:9, referring to both hetero and homo immorality, things he says they had once engaged in before being washed and sanctified in Jesus. In their new life in Christ, the only sanctioned sexual behavior was between a man and his wife.

Proponents of same-sex marriage today say, "yes, but what we are advocating did not exist then. They did not have life-long, monogamous, same-sex relationships between equal partners." That may be true to an extent (although there are records of same-sex marriages, where one of men would even dress like a bride). They weren't concerned with monogamy or spouses of equal status. They also didn't have life-long, monogamous, OPPOSITE-sex relationships between equal partners.

But it doesn't really matter whether the people of Jesus' day had a concept exactly like the modern concept of same-sex marriage or not. They certainly had lots of arrangements we've never seen or thought of. But we don't need to know everything that is wrong when what God HAS authorized is crystal clear in the New Testament.

#### ***IV. My work with two homosexual men***

A. I was able to study with two homosexual men in the 80's and to see both baptized into Christ. **(1 Cor 6:9-11)**

1. There was a strong family behavioral pattern in both men.

2. The previous statistical data presented was upheld in these cases.

3. Other siblings suffered from depression likely as a result of home environment.

B. We should recognize the challenge in working with a loved one in these situations.

1. Work with them with understanding and compassion. There likely will be family issues that need to be addressed. **(2 Tim 2:24-26)**

2. Help them to see that one will never regret trusting God. **(Ps 25:12-14)**