Homosexuality

I think I'm attracted to others of the same sex. Does that mean I'm gay?

No, people who have same-sex attraction are often referred to as gay or homosexual, but they may not actually be homosexual. A person can **feel** like being physically close and affectionate with someone without ever **doing** anything sexual. Most people do not decide to have same-sex attractions but they do decide whether to act on those attractions, or to take on the label "homosexual."

If I'm attracted to others of the same sex, will I ever be attracted to the opposite sex?

One study found that nearly 26% of 7th graders were not sure if they were gay, straight, or bisexual. (Figure 1) Research also shows that only 2-3% of adults think of themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. (Figure 2)¹

A large number of young people who have homosexual thoughts later think of themselves as straight. Even if a teenager thinks he might

be gay today, there's a good chance he won't think so a few years from now.

Why do so many people encourage those who have same-sex attractions to call themselves "homosexual"?

You may have heard some well-meaning people, teachers, or counselors say that young people are "coming out" as gay or lesbian as young as 12 or 13. Some people suggest that teens should hang out with others who say they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual, read homosexually oriented books and even try thinking of themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. However, it is unwise to do this. This suggestion ignores the power of peer pressure and increases the temptation to engage in risky sexual behavior.

I have strong sexual feelings for the same sex. Shouldn't I embrace those feelings?

Sexual hormones are very active and strong in teens, but they are not really focused. As people get older, they become better able to tell the

The Question of Sexual Orientation Percent of 7th graders who question their sexual orientation Percent of adults who think of themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual

difference between just being sexually attracted to someone and truly loving them. Research shows that marital and sexual relationships are better for those who wait until they are married to have sex. In fact, in surveys on sexual enjoyment, committed Christians report having better sex lives than all other groups.²

What can I do instead of embracing a gay sexual identity?

Develop other interests and talents. One's sexual adjustment is important, but so are career, school, activities, and hobbies. Do not get out of balance by letting sex become more important than every other aspect of your life.

Remember the difference between being tempted to do something and doing it.

You may feel guilt because of temptation.

Remember even Jesus was tempted. He was drawn to actions that would have destroyed his ministry and purpose, but he did not give in. Furthermore, homosexual thoughts and behaviors become habitual. Avoiding further contact, pornography, and provocative literature will make it easier to be free from unwanted thoughts and behaviors.

Consider counseling or support groups.

Find a counselor who believes that you can change your attractions or live with your sexual feelings. Be sure to find out your counselor's beliefs before you begin. Some counselors don't realize change is possible and will not help you.

Pray! Ask God to give you strength and help you resist temptation. Be patient. Give God time. Keep your focus on loving God and serving his people, not on your failures.

Causes and Effects

Aren't people who are attracted to the same sex born that way?

Some psychologists and scientists who study DNA, believe that genes control the direction of sexual feelings. Others suggests that a mother's hormones affect the child before he is born. Despite what you may have heard in school, no "gay gene" has been discovered. Homosexual scientist Simon LeVay, who did research on the brains of homosexual men noted, "It is important to stress what I did not find. I did not prove that homosexuality is genetic, or find a genetic cause for being gay."



DNA Strand

Even if a genetic link to homosexuality were found, all people are held to God's moral code whether they are born with a genetic or prenatal hormonal predisposition to disobey that code or not. For example, people struggling with alcohol addiction might be genetically predisposed to alcoholism, but they are still held to God's moral code regarding the abuse of alcohol.

Doesn't the individual's experiences shape his or her sexual attraction?

Some psychologists and scientists argue that early sexual experiences shape sexuality. Some former gays and lesbians believe that a critical, distant, cold, or absent father or mother drove them to look for love in a sexual manner from other people of their same sex. Although some correlation can be found between someone's sexuality and their family relationships, there is not an identifiable kind of family that *always* brings up children with same-sex attractions.

What causes same-sex attraction?

Many psychologists and scientists believe that a combination of several factors such as prenatal hormones, seduction, sexual abuse, early experience, and family relationships lead to same-sex attractions. Sexual feelings are acquired early, gradually, and sometimes without conscious thought. For this reason, people who have same-sex attractions may feel that they were born with them.

Are there health risks associated with same-sex attraction?

Yes, homosexuals have a much higher risk for sexually transmitted diseases and emotional problems.

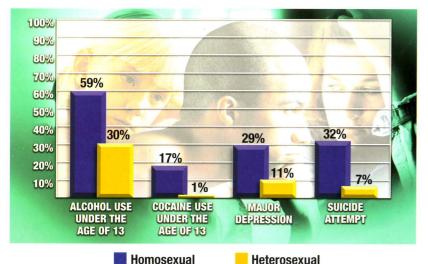
Disease According the *Journal of Public Health*, the rates of HIV/AIDS among gay males has increased 14% since 1999. Despite sex education, the rates of sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea have also risen significantly among gay males due to unwise sexual behavior.⁴

Mental Health Evidence reported in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* suggests that gays and lesbians have higher rates of depression, suicidal thinking, and anxiety than other people. Other studies suggest that drug and alcohol use is also significantly higher for gays and lesbians. In a study of identical twins (one gay, one not), it has shown that on the average, male homosexuals were five times more likely to show suicide-related behavior or thoughts than their heterosexual twin.

Isn't it society's disapproval that causes the higher rate of mental health problems in homosexuals?

Not necessarily. The rates of depression and mental health problems for homosexuals in the Netherlands (one of the most gay-accepting cultures in the world) is also much higher than it is for heterosexuals. There are significant risks associated with focusing life and sexual behavior around same-sex attractions and feelings.⁷

Health Risks and Same-Sex Attraction⁵



Can someone change their sexual attractions from gay to straight?

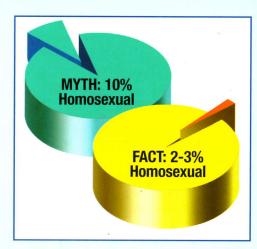
Yes, many people have changed from gay to straight. Some have changed with the help of counseling, some with the support of their religious beliefs, and some without any conscious attempt to change. Dr. Robert Spitzer (a leading American Psychiatric Association member. researcher at Colombia University, and chief decision-maker in eliminating homosexuality from the diagnostic manual as a disorder in 1973) interviewed 200 people who were involved in efforts to change sexuality. After the study was completed, Dr. Spitzer changed his perspective and he concluded that someone can change from gay to straight. The results of the study were published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior in 2003. The study found that after five years, 78% of the people interviewed reported a change in sexual orientation. Of these, 43% of men and 47% of women were clinically depressed before engaging in an effort to change. After counseling and changing, only 1% of men and 4% of women felt similarly depressed.8

Aren't those who disagree with homosexual behavior "homophobic"?

Disagreement with certain forms of sexual behavior or with a pro-gay agenda in the schools or in public policy is not bigotry. One can and should be respectful of gay and lesbian people without being forced to agree with their worldview.

Isn't 10% of the general population either gay, lesbian, or bisexual?

No, most surveys put the percentage of those who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual at around 2-3% of the population.⁹



Parent's Responses

What if my son (age 3-12) has feminine mannerisms or interests?

- Affirm maleness as good.
- Encourage a positive close relationship (not sexual) with father or a healthy male role model. Allow your son to feel tough and strong by letting him win a wrestling match with his father or male role model.
- Give privileges for being a boy. Take fatherson trips. Allow your son to fill the car with gas, or choose a special movie on "boys night out."
- Discourage "girl play" by saying calmly and firmly, "That is not for you."
- At bedtime, let the father read the Bible, pray, and put your son to bed.
- Help your son feel that maleness is a good and worthy part of "who he is."
- Become an "expert" on this topic. See resources on pages 10 to 11 of this pamphlet.

What if my teenager says he's gay?

• Do not argue. Issues of disagreement over matters of morality and behavior challenge the

strengths of any family. Do not make this issue worse than other issues of sin or disagreement. Some parents say, "I can handle anything except this!" However, parents need to remain calm and secure in their faith even in the toughest situations. You can offer to go with your teen to a counselor to help the situation.

- While always loving your child, you are not obligated to approve of his or her choices. Help your child to understand that your concern over homosexuality is separate from your love and don't give up if your child does not seem to understand you.
- Remind your child that these types of feelings change. Three out of four boys who think they are gay at age 16 do not think so by 25.¹⁰
- Do not automatically reject your child's gay friends. You might want to restrict access to them if you feel they are a harmful influence. At the same time, you may want to get to know them so you can understand your child's influences.

What if my adult child says he's gay?

- You have little control over the actions of your adult child, however, your reaction to them is key. Ask yourself how you would react if you discovered your child was involved in a sinful heterosexual relationship.
- Remind yourself that we are all sinful and fall short of God's glory. Remind yourself of all the sinful habits that you have had difficulty removing from your life.
- It's not too late to help. Be loving and pray for them, but do not allow homosexual activity in your home.
- Have a list of therapists, organizations, and scientific research available in case he or she asks for help. See pages 10 to 11 of this pamphlet for this information.

Hope for a Change

Homosexuals aren't hurting anyone. Who cares if someone is gay?

In the past 40 years, society changed its view of homosexuality. People were told that homosexuality was inborn, genetic, and unchangeable. Homosexual groups taught that

anyone who disagreed was "homophobic." Professors and psychologists said homosexuality was an acceptable lifestyle enjoyed by 10% of the population, and that it was wrong to help



homosexuals change. In fact, it might cause depression, self-loathing, and suicidal thinking. However, scientific research is proving the opposite.

Fortunately, people can change and have a better life than before.

There are several ways that people change.

What are some common factors to reorientation counseling?

There are several approaches used by counselors to help free people from same-sex attraction and develop heterosexual relationships. No matter what approach is used, there are six common factors to all of them.

- **1.** A person must want to change. You cannot force someone else to change.
- **2.** All approaches take a detailed history of the person's life.
- **3.** The counselor believes that change is possible.
- **4.** The approach has a theory to explain the development of same-sex attraction.
- **5.** Methods are suggested to minimize or live with same-sex attractions.

6. Realistic expectations about the length of time it takes before feelings change. Some people report that it could take 2 years of counseling before feelings begin to change

What is reparative therapy?

"Reparative therapy" is a term describing one of several counseling approaches that has the goal of redirecting sexual feelings from homosexual to heterosexual. Although some Christians use this approach, it is not distinctly Christian. Reparative therapy suggests that homosexual attractions and identification are efforts on the part of the person to repair a damaged bond with the same-sex parent (men with their fathers, women with their mothers). Thus, in this theory, gay men in their relationships are looking for affirmation and emotional intimacy from other men as a means of repairing the broken or non-existent relationship with their fathers.

The counseling attempts to help a person toward healthy non-sexual relationships with same-sex peers through the counselor, group counseling, and support groups. Men are encouraged to develop masculinity and women are encouraged to become more feminine. The theory suggests that if people have a solid sense of gender identification, then they will experience sexual attractions consistent with heterosexuality.

Since reparative methods are founded on only one understanding of human psychology, the approach

cannot be applied to all people. Some people with attractions to the same sex have warm and loving relationships with their same-sex parents.

The Grace Filled Christian

How should Christians treat homosexuals?

Many homosexuals consider Christians to be aggressive, judgmental, and hateful toward them and their lifestyle. Sharing Jesus is rarely effective if it is done within a hostile environment. When sharing with homosexuals, be gentle and reverent. Remember that homosexually oriented people are found in many families—they are our cousins, our brothers, our neighbors, our loved ones.

Christians should always follow Jesus' example. When a group of religious people wanted to execute a woman who was having an affair, Jesus criticized them. He told them that if they wanted to stone her to death, the first stone would have to be thrown by a person who had never sinned. Jesus was kind, forgiving, and protective of people who sinned sexually. But he also commanded these same people to stop sinning. Jesus loved the person, but did not accept and approve of their actions. (Luke 7:37-48; John 8:3-11; 1 Peter 3:15, 16)

The Bible

Is the practice of homosexuality the worst sin?

No, the Bible lists homosexuality along with all other sins. In the Old Testament, homosexual behavior is considered a crime punishable by death. The death penalty, however, is also prescribed for murder, human sacrifice, adultery, incest, rape, fornication, witchcraft, idolatry, blasphemy, desecration of the Sabbath, perjury, theft, kidnapping, contempt of court, treason, cursing a parent, physically abusing one's parent, and disobeying parents. (Genesis 9:5, 6; 18:16–19:29; Exodus 21:15-17; 22:18-20; Leviticus 18:22; 20:2-16; 24:11-6; Numbers 15:32-36; Deuteronomy 17:6-12; 21:18-21; 22:21-25)



In the New Testament, the practice of homosexuality is considered unnatural and sinful. The Bible does not, however, suggest that homosexual behavior is special or more detestable to God. The Bible makes it clear that everyone has sinned and no one is good enough to please God. The Bible also says that while we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. We have to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation

(Romans 1:27, 3:23; 5:8; 6:23; 10:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10; Jude 1:7)

Why are some rules in the Bible relevant today and others not?

Some people today argue that several Bible verses, including those that condemn the practice of homosexuality, were only written for the people of Israel or for the early church and are not relevant today. They suggest that these specific verses were not divine revelations.

Continued...



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Rules Verses Principles: The Bible is full of rules and guidelines, such as the Ten Commandments, to help society function properly, stay healthy and disease free, and be protected from doing wrong. For example, the sixth commandment commands people to not murder. Murder is wrong because it takes away God's gift of life.

All rules and guidelines in the Bible come from principles. A principle is the "why" behind the rule.

Rule: Principle: Do not murder God values life and holds it sacred.

God's values are found in the principle. Several rules in Leviticus apply to all people for all times not just to the culture of that day. For example, some rules prohibit child sacrifice, adultery, and incest.

PRINCIPLE



The "why" or principle behind food laws, hair styles, and fashion were related to the culture of that day. However, the principle behind the rules against sexual immorality, such as adultery, incest, and the practice of homosexuality, is revealed by God in the account of creation. The creation account recorded in the Bible reveals how God intends for his creation to function.

God's Principles Behind Sexual Rules:

- God created humans in His own image.
 Genesis 1:27: 5:1
- He created them "male and female."
 Genesis 1:27; 5:1
- Human beings are to have sex and reproduce. Genesis 1:28
- God formed woman from man. A man and woman are to be joined together in marriage and "become one flesh." Gen. 2:23, 24

The biblical principle is that a healthy, lifelong, heterosexual marriage effectively portrays God's original intent for human sexuality. Any sexual deviation from that principle, whether adultery, incest, premarital sex, or the practice of homosexuality, is a perversion of God's created order. Every sexual act that is forbidden in the Bible is still forbidden today. Adultery and incest were wrong then and are still wrong today. Homosexual behavior is a violation of God's created order and there is no biblical support for it.

It is very dangerous to get involved with sex before one is ready to marry. The Bible says people should run away from sexual immorality, not try to see how close they can get to the line without crossing it. All other sins are outside of the body, but those who sin sexually are sinning against their own bodies. There is so much to life besides one's sexuality. Having sex and experimenting with sexuality can cause heartache, disease, and death. The Bible says that the body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit lives inside the body of believers. God wants believers to honor Him with their bodies and not dishonor Him by pursing sinful sexual acts. (1 Cor. 6:18-20)

The Bible says that for anyone who confesses their sins, God will forgive them and make them clean again. (1 John 1:9)

Glossary

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is an incurable blood-borne disease spread through semen and blood which attacks T-helper cells. AIDS weakens the immune system's ability to fight infections and diseases. These secondary infections eventually lead to death.

Biblical Rules: Guidelines found in the Bible that are given by God in order to help people function properly within society, stay healthy and disease free, and be protected from immorality. Biblical laws and conditional statements are all based on biblical principles.

Biblical Principles: A biblical principle is the "why" behind a law or statement made in the Bible. For example: The "why" behind "do not murder" is because God values life. It is within the principle where divine revelation is found.

Bisexual: A person who is romantically attracted to and sexually active with both men and women. Someone who is sexually oriented toward both sexes.

"Coming out": The process of acknowledging, accepting, and revealing publicly one's homosexuality.

Gay: A slang term used to refer to a homosexual. The word applies to both women and men but typically refers to homosexual men. The word "gay" was not used to refer to same-sex attraction until the 20th century.

Gay gene: The belief that homosexuality is biological and inborn, therefore genetic in origin. No gay gene has ever been found.

Gender identification: An understanding of what it means to be masculine or feminine.

GLB: Acronym for "Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals."

Gonorrhea: A sexually transmitted disease caused by a bacterium. Gonorrhea is almost always passed through unprotected sex. Without treatment, babies of infected mothers can get gonorrhea in their eyes at birth, which can cause blindness or blood infections.

Heterosexual: Relating to a sexualorientation (love or desire) for people of the opposite sex. A person who is sexually or romantically attracted only to people of the opposite gender. The word "heterosexual" derived from the Greek word *heteros* meaning "other" or "different from."

Homosexual: Relating to a sexualorientation (love or desire) for people of the same sex. A person who is sexually or romantically attracted primarily to people of the same gender. It derived from the Greek word *homos* which means "same."

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the virus that leads to acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Lesbian: A homosexual woman.

Psychoanalytic psychology: The science and counseling method that involves treatment sessions during which the patient is encouraged to talk freely about personal experiences and especially about early childhood.

Reorientation counseling: Counseling approaches that seek to redirect attractions to the same sex to attractions to the opposite sex.

Reparative drive: The impulse (drive) to secure (repair) unmet needs, especially unmet needs from one's parent, related to gender identity.

Reparative therapy: One approach to reorientation counseling that suggests that homosexual attractions are efforts on the part of the person to repair a damaged bond with the same-sex parent.

SSA: Acronym for same-sex attraction.

STD: Sexually transmitted disease.

Straight: A slang term for heterosexual. Derived as an antonym for "bent" which is a slang term for a homosexual.

Syphilis: The oldest known sexually transmitted disease. Syphilis is caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium which enters the blood stream through the mucous membranes. Syphilis is spread through unprotected sex or it can be passed to babies by infected mothers.

Resources

Internet Resources

Christian Youth Sites

Exodus Youth – (www.exodusyouth.net) 407-599-6872. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

Find Out – (www.findout.org) 503-235-6372. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

Free To Be Me – (www.freetobeme.com) 416-921-6557. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

My True Freedom – (www.mytruefreedom.net/home.htm) Includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

New Direction for Life – (www.becomingreal.org) 416-921-6557. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

Stonewall Revisited – (stonewallrevisited.com). This college site includes questions and answers, testimonies, links, and resources.

Christian Sites

Exodus International – (www.exodus.to) 888-264-0877. P.O. Box 540119, Orlando, FL 32854. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, research, articles, and resources.

Family Research Council — (www.frc.org) 202-393-2100 or 800-225-4008. Includes information on family values and social policy establishment.

I Do Exist – (www.idoexist.com) 724-458-3787. A film that demonstrates that change is possible.

Love Won Out – (www.lovewonout.com) 800-A FAMILY. Provides information on a Christian conference on reorientation.

Regeneration Books -

(www.regenbooks.org/index_rc.cfm) Christian resources.

Truth Comes Out – (www.drthrockmorton.com) 724-458-3787. Includes questions and answers, testimonies, research, articles, and resources.

Other Valuable Sites

Alliance Defense Fund -

(www.alliancedefensefund.org/main/welcome.aspx) 800-TELL-ADF. Includes information on family values, social policy establishment, and legal alliance. American Family Association – (www.afa.net) 662-8984-5036. Includes information on family values, social policy establishment, legal alliance, and resources.

National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) – (www.narth.com) 818-789-4440. Information on reparative therapy, research, articles, counseling, and advice.

Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Lesbians –
PFOX (www.pfox.org) 703-360-2225. Box 561,
Fort Belvoir VA 22060: ofox exgays@hotmail.com. Articles

Fort Belvoir VA 22060; pfox_exgays@hotmail.com. Articles, testimonies, helps, resources, and links to Christian sites.

Books

Christian (Counseling and Pastoral Care)

Dallas, Joe, When Homosexuality Hits Home

Dallas, Joe, Desires in Conflict: Hope for Men Who Struggle with Sexual Identity

Davies, Bob and Lori Rentzel, *Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men and Women*

Haley, Mike, 101 Frequently Asked Questions About Homosexuality

Howard, Jeanette, Out of Egypt

Konrad, Jeff. You Don't Have to Be Gav

Lutzer, Erwin W., How to Say No to a Stubborn Habit

McClung, Floyd Jr., The Father Heart of God

McGee, Robert S., Father Hunger

Medinger, Alan, Growth Into Manhood

Paulk, John and Anne, Love Won Out

Worthen, Anita, *Cultivating Healthy Friendships Among Women*

Worthen, Anita and Bob Davies, Someone I Love Is Gay

Other Books (Counseling and Research)

Berman, Louis A. Ph.D., *The Puzzle: Exploring the Evolutionary Puzzle of Male Homosexuality*

Cohen, Richard M.A., Coming Out Straight: Understanding and Healing Homosexuality

Cohen, Richard M.A., Gay Children Straight Parents: A Plan for Family Healing

Nicolosi, Joseph Ph.D. and Linda Ames Nicolosi, *A Parent's Guide to Preventing Homosexuality*

Nicolosi, Joseph Ph.D., *Healing Homosexuality: Case Stories of Reparative Therapy*

Nicolosi, Joseph Ph.D., *Reparative Therapy of Male Homosexuality: A New Clinical Approach*

Rentzel, Lori, Emotional Dependency

Rogers, Sy, *Understanding Homosexuality: Roots and Recovery*

Satinover, Jeffrey M.D., Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth

Schmierer, Don, An Ounce of Prevention

Shaumburg, Dr. Harry W., False Intimacy

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