

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Homosexuality A Former Lesbian's Christian Perspective**

*I believe that all Scripture contained in the 66 books of the Bible comprises the inspired word of God and is absolute truth. (2 Timothy 3:16) I believe that those who truly surrender their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ have the power to overcome sin and live a victorious life. (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

### **Are people born gay?**

I believe every person is born with a propensity and free will to choose to live outside of the boundaries that God has established for our lives. In the church we call this sin. The Bible says that all people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Sin affects every area of life in humanity as well as in the natural world around us as a result of the fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 8:20-22). I believe that same-sex attraction (SSA) and homosexuality are a result of developmental, social and environmental influences in a person's life. Because we live in a fallen world, some people experience same-sex attraction, which is not compatible with God's design for human sexuality and intimacy.

God created man and woman with different physical and emotional features to complete each other and become one flesh when joined together in sexual and relational intimacy within the boundaries of marriage. (Genesis 2:21-24) No other form of sexual conduct is affirmed in the Bible. For those who experience SSA, the feelings can be so strong and pervasive that some truly believe they were born gay. Other gays and lesbians know deep down inside that their feelings conflict with the person they know God created them to be and they fight an internal battle daily.

Since every person is born with a sin-nature, which separates us from God, we must die to self, accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and be born again (John 3:3). When we are in Christ, we become a new creation, our old nature passes away and all things become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17) Only then do we have the power to live according to God's plan and purpose for our lives.

### **Do people choose to be attracted to others of the same sex?**

No. People do not choose same-sex attraction. I believe it comes to some as a result of living in a fallen and sinful world. I believe that homosexuality and same-sex attraction are a result of developmental, social and environmental factors affecting a person's life. While I do not believe that people choose to be attracted to others of the same sex, they do choose whether to act on those feelings.

### **Is there a difference between same-sex attraction and homosexuality?**

Yes. Same-sex attraction (SSA) is just what it sounds like. A person who experiences SSA has a strong and pervasive attraction to others of the same sex; longing for companionship, relationship, and intimacy with others of the same sex. A same-sex attracted person may never act on those feelings by entering into an emotional or intimate relationship with another person of the same sex or by having sexual contact with a person of the same sex.

Homosexuality describes a person who enters exclusively into emotional or intimate relationships with others of the same-sex, often including same-sex sexual conduct. People who identify and describe themselves as gay or lesbian whether or not they have had physical sexual contact with another person of the same sex are also included.

### **Does God hate me if I am gay?**

No! God loves you with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3) He carefully formed you in your mother's womb and has a wonderful plan and a purpose for your life. (Psalm 139; Jeremiah 29:11) He wants you to love him and to trust him with your whole heart and not to try to understand and figure out life on your own. (Proverbs 3:5-6) God loves you so much that he sent his only son Jesus Christ into the world to die for you, not to condemn you, because he loves you! (John 3:16-17) We are all born sinners, and need Jesus to restore us to a right relationship with God. (Romans 3:23). Jesus died so we could be set free from our sin. (Romans 5:8; John 8:36)

### **When you say, "change is possible" do you mean people can change from gay to straight?**

When I speak of change being possible for a person who experiences same-sex attraction (SSA) or identifies himself or herself as homosexual, I am speaking from a Christian perspective. I believe SSA and homosexuality is a result of sin in the world. (See my response to the question, *'are people born gay'?*)

For each person who recognizes at some point in their life that they live a sinful life, and makes a decision to truly surrender their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, understanding that He died to take away their sins and to reconcile them to a right relationship with God, change happens! Once we accept Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us and begins to transform our lives from the inside out.

When we begin to learn about God's nature and character, allow other Christians to love us in a safe and healing way, and apply biblical principles to our lives, He begins to heal the broken places in our hearts. For many people like me, God's healing of these broken places actually results in an internal realignment of desires and attractions from the same-sex towards the opposite sex. For others, the feelings of SSA diminish but do not go away completely. This should not be seen as failure or as a lack of God's power to heal. The apostle Paul in Romans 7:14-24 laments about his inability to completely conquer his own sinful nature. He also writes of a thorn in his flesh that always reminds him of God's grace. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) But Paul also writes an encouraging passage to the Corinthian Church concerning those who once lived as homosexuals when he writes, "and such were some of you," (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) proving that change from homosexuality is possible!

### **What do you think about gay marriage?**

Marriage is a life-long covenant relationship between one man and one woman, conceived and defined by God. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Malachi 2:14-16) Within the boundaries of God-ordained marriage, sexual intimacy is endorsed. (1 Corinthians 7:2) All other sexual conduct (adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, etc.) outside of marriage (as defined by God) is considered sin. (Leviticus Chapters 18 & 20; Matthew 15:19; 1 Corinthians 6:9) One reason for marriage and sexual intimacy within the boundaries of marriage is to allow for the birth of children within a God-ordained family, who have the best chance of growing up with the necessary influence of both a mother and a father for well-rounded and healthy lives. (Genesis 1:28; Ephesians 6:1-3) Creating modern civil laws that endorse relationships that God has repeatedly deemed sinful throughout his Word while distorting and redefining God's definition of marriage will never make "gay marriage" permissible in the sight of God. (Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:26-27)

### **If homosexuality is wrong, why didn't Jesus say anything about it?**

This is a favorite question and argument of those who want to continue living their lives of same-sex attraction and homosexuality without conviction. My flippant answer might be, "He didn't say anything about child abuse, rape, or having sex with animals in the bible either; do you think he approves of these things?"

While we can't point to a specific Scripture passage where Jesus condemns homosexuality in so many words, we do get a clear picture of what he thinks about intimate human relationships and sexual expression. Jesus specifically endorses God's original design for marriage as between one man and one woman for life. (Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Genesis 2:24) Jesus often quoted the Old Testament in his teachings and even said specifically that he did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill the law. (Matthew 5:17) The law includes the passages of

scripture in Leviticus that clearly condemn homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13) Jesus also said that it is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of the pen to drop out of the law. (Luke 16:17)

The fact that the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) do not contain any specific reference to Jesus' teaching on homosexuality does not mean that he did not do or say anything about it when he was here on earth. John said that Jesus did many things that were not written down. (John 21:25) John also tells us that Jesus not only fulfills the Word, He is the Word of God! (John 1:1)

We need to read the Bible in its entirety to fully understand how God wants us to live our lives. It is dangerous to pull scripture quotes out of context or try to infer meaning where there is silence on a specific topic. God through his Holy Spirit is the author of all Scripture and God never changes. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:89; Hebrews 13:8)

Finally, Paul warns us to be aware of false teachers who say what we want to hear when we are living outside of the will of God for our lives. He says, "For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

### **Should gays and lesbians be allowed to join our church?**

Emphatically yes! To answer this question for yourself, review your church constitution to determine the documented requirements for membership. If membership requires a life free from visible and hidden sin, you likely would not have any church members. To determine whether an openly gay or lesbian individual should be allowed to join the church, apply the exact same criteria that you apply to every other person who wants to join your church.

I believe the church is a body of believers who desire to learn and grow in their relationship with God and with each other. If I had not been welcomed with open arms by a church full of people who did not compromise their convictions but loved me unconditionally in the midst of my sin, I would never have come to know and accept the love of Jesus Christ, which ultimately transformed my life. Homosexuality is no greater sin than any other. When a person comes to church in the midst of their sin, you need to know that the Spirit of God is drawing them in. The best thing you can do is to demonstrate the unconditional love of Jesus Christ and help them to enter into a personal intimate relationship with Him.

**Should gays and lesbians be allowed to serve in leadership roles in the church?**

I believe that leaders in the church are required to live by the high standards set forth in Scripture, and therefore continuing to practice a lifestyle of homosexuality is not compatible with serving in a leadership role in the church. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) While I do not endorse gays and lesbians for leadership roles, I do think they should be allowed to serve as volunteers in the church in non-leadership positions. I believe that when God leads a gay or lesbian person to a church, He is working on their hearts and wants them to be exposed to strong Christians who can love them unconditionally and help them develop a relationship with Christ.

When I first started attending a Baptist church while still living a life of homosexuality, I had accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and I was allowed to serve as a volunteer in the ministry in a non-leadership role. At that time, God was clearly working on my heart as I was trying to learn how to live this new life as a Christian. I was drawn to and wanted to be around people who were living for Christ. This exposure helped to heal the deep wounds that I had experienced in my lifetime, resulted in my renouncing my life of homosexuality and living my life as a new creation in Christ! (2 Corinthians 5:17)