

07 Same-Sex Sexuality

PARENT GUIDE

BIG IDEA:

LGB/SSA individuals need to understand the love of God. Simply experiencing same-sex attraction (or being gay) is not a morally culpable sin. We believe that lust is a sin, and sex outside of a male/female marriage is a sin. But simply being tempted with same-sex attraction? The Bible doesn't say that this alone is a sin. In other words, someone can experience attraction to the same sex and also faithfully follow and glorify Christ.

5 Minute Check-In with Yourself and/or Your Spouse:

1. How have you and your spouse addressed this conversation in your home?
 2. How might the way you address this topic in your home, or choose not to address it, impact how your child sees the entirety of the conversation about sex and sexuality found in Scripture?
 3. Is there anything unloving you've said or done to those who identify as LGBTQ+? If so, identify what this is and consider talking to your child about it. They will greatly respect your humility and honesty.
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5 Minute Check-In with Your Child:

1. What stood out to you in this week's teaching and/or small group time?
2. How do you think someone who is attracted to the same sex would hear this week's message?

Tips for Further Conversation:

Before diving into this conversation, you might need help understanding some important words. We do this because words really matter. Millions of people have been psychologically and emotionally hurt by something they were called over twenty years ago. Unfortunately, many gay and lesbian individuals have been wounded deeply by an inappropriate or harmful use of words.

Terms to understand:

- Lesbian - A woman who is attracted to other women.
- Gay - A man or woman who is attracted to the same sex.
- Bisexual - Someone attracted to both men and women.
- Transgender - Someone who experiences some level of incongruence with their biological sex.
- Questioning - Someone who is unsure about the nature of their attractions.
- Queer - A catch-all identifier for someone who feels that their sexuality, gender identity, or both are different from the majority norm of their society.
- Nonbinary - Someone who doesn't identify as either male or female, or might not identify with masculine or feminine traits.
- SSA - Same-Sex Attraction.
- LGBTQ - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer.
- Gender Dysphoria - The distress some people feel as a result of not resonating with their biological sex. Dysphoria can range from mild to severe.

Terms Words to AVOID:

- “The Gay Lifestyle” - What most people are talking about when they use this term is sex, specifically gay sex. We don't equate the term “the straight lifestyle” with heterosexual sex, and neither should we reduce gay people to a particular kind of sexual activity.



- “Homosexual” - This is an older clinical term used to describe gay people, but most gay people don’t prefer to be called “a homosexual.” Use “gay” or “same-sex attracted” instead, according to the preference of the person in question.
- “Homosexuality” - This isn’t necessarily a bad term, but it’s very broad. It can include both sexual orientation (who people are attracted to) and sexual behavior (how people respond to their attractions). As a result, it tends to blur the line between people who experience SSA but submit their same-sex desires to the Lordship of Christ and those who don’t follow a Christian sexual ethic. It’s better to use more specific terms if possible.
- “The Gay Agenda” - Another overgeneralizing term that’s unhelpful. Not every straight person shares the same “straight agenda”; likewise, not every gay person shares the same “gay agenda.”

Here are few other things to keep in mind as you have this conversation in your home:

Be honest about your own mistakes in this conversation.

If we are to take a balanced approach to our conversation about same-sex sexuality, we have to be willing to own our own mistakes. This might be hard, but it is needed. Your child needs to see this humility and know that people in the church are sorry for what has been done to their friends and family in the name of God.

Be okay with the complexities of this conversation.

We highly recommend doing a lot of study on this conversation. You can never do too much learning here. But don’t worry if you don’t understand everything about the conversation. No one has it all nailed down. Admitting what you don’t know will help you be a better parent in the process. This conversation can be extremely tough, but your posture toward it will influence how you learn and what you ultimately teach your teen.

This is about people.

So often we can get stuck on the question, “Is homosexuality (whether the sexual behavior or the orientation itself) a sin?”. Those who identify as LGBTQ+



are a diverse group of people. Be willing to listen to those who are LGBTQ+, and be willing to extend unconditional love to all people—especially those who have experienced marginalization from the church. God is not anti-people. He loves every person. He created all of us in his image. Thus, we need to eagerly love people as he does.

Be consistent.

For too long, the church has (generally) come down extra hard on anyone who experiences attraction to the same sex while being much more lenient about “straight” sexual sins. Many straight Christians struggle immensely with porn addiction, divorce, lust, and various kinds of immoral sexual behavior. We often turn a blind eye to these sins and then pick up stones to toss at gay people. We need to have a consistent sexual ethic, one that views us all as sexually broken, in need of grace, and cherished in the eyes of God despite our failures.

What if I think my child is gay?

Because this requires much more than just a paragraph, we’ve included the website for The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender in our additional resources section.

Additional Resources:

VIDEO: Full-length interview with Gregory Coles

VIDEO: Sean McDowell and Preston Sprinkle discuss the term “homosexuality” - <https://youtu.be/noXmiLzbhPY>

VIDEO: Dear Church, I’m Gay - <https://youtu.be/rc6NXB6TP5A>

BOOK: Preston Sprinkle, *Living in a Gray World*

TOOL: Weekly devotional

WEB: centerforfaith.com

