

Sexuality, Gender and Jesus

Part 2: LGBTQ, Part I

January 20, 2013

The Big Idea:

Homosexuality is an intensely personal and complex struggle; therefore, discussion of cause and solution must begin with discernment, a willingness to listen, and compassion.

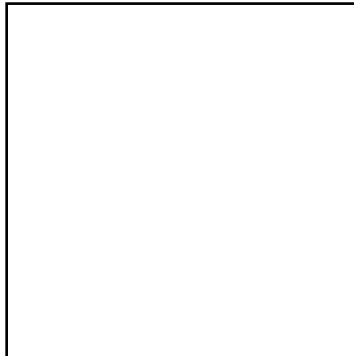
Introduction

“Human sexuality must be understood in light of a variety of influences, including biological, sociological, psychological, theological, as well as gender, emotions, behaviors, attitudes and values... Authentic human sexuality has to do with human beings seeking to live as sexual beings according to God’s design and purpose.”¹

Four Criteria to Defining an Individual’s Sexuality²

Natal Sex: Physical & biological features at birth that determine whether the baby is male or female.

Gender Role: One’s gender identity as defined by a particular culture.



Sexual Identity: A person’s sexual self concept, the view one has of oneself as a sexual person.

Sexual Orientation: The direction of one’s erotic attraction.

Notes:

¹ Judith K. Balswick and Jack O. Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality: An Integrated Christian Approach* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 13-14.

² Balswick and Balswick, 15-16.

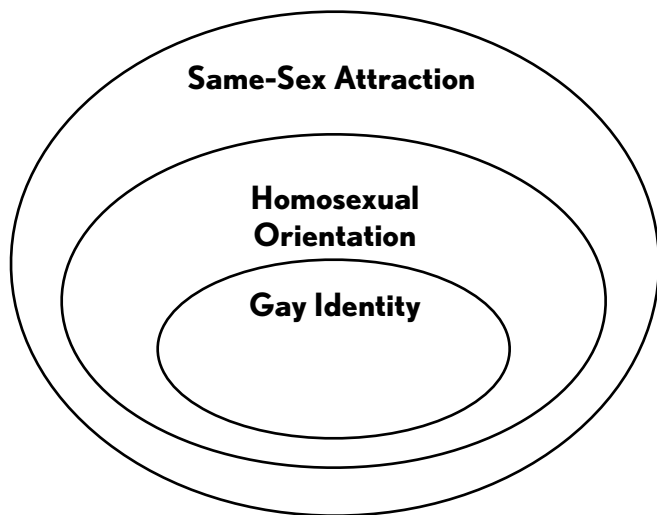
Homosexuality: Key Terms and Ideas

On Development: “Sexual identity development can be thought of in three broad stages: identity dilemma, identity development, and identity synthesis. Sexual identity development begins with sexual attraction at as young an age as ten or twelve, and may involve same-sex behaviors around ages thirteen or fourteen; this may be followed by a questioning of identity and, for some, identity labeling at around age fifteen.”³

On Choosing: “People do not choose to experience same-sex attraction; it is something they find themselves experiencing.”⁴ In other words, a person wasn’t born that way, but it may certainly feel like it.

What’s in a Name: A Three-Tier Distinction⁵

Same-Sex Attraction: “Certain people, regardless of the cause, have experiences of attraction to the same sex. This fact doesn’t say anything about either their identity or their behavior. It doesn’t hint at who they are or what they do... We are simply talking about the fact that a person experiences same-sex attraction.”



Homosexual Orientation: “When people talk about having a homosexual orientation, they are essentially saying they experience a same sex attraction that is strong enough, durable enough, and persistent enough for them to feel that they are oriented toward the same sex.”

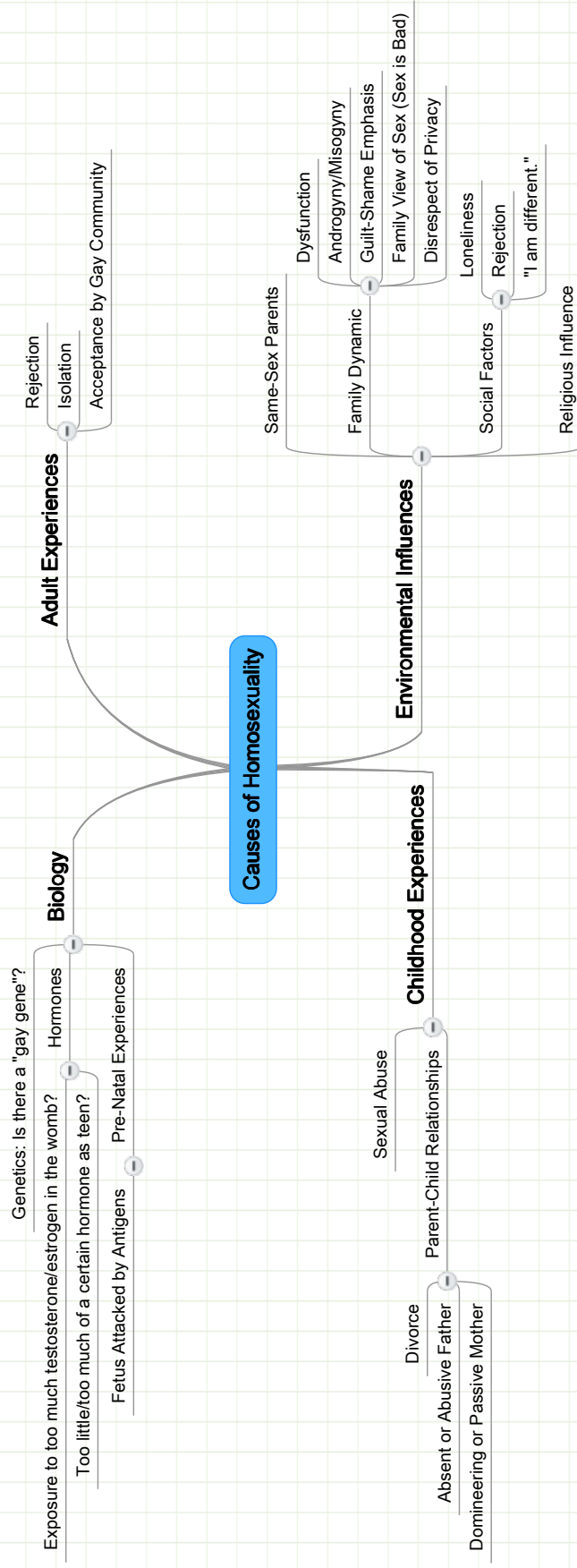
Gay Identity: Uses an “I am” statement to describe their experiences of same-sex attraction and their feelings of a homosexual orientation are essential to who they are.

Notes:

³ Mark A. Yarhouse, *Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010), 55.

⁴ Yarhouse 80.

⁵ Yarhouse, 41-43.



3C: At your table, **summarize** your assigned passage of Scripture into 1-2 sentences to share with the class. **Write** your summary on a large sheet to be posted at the front of the room. Use the chart below to take notes and jot down other groups' summaries.

- NOTE: Other relevant texts regarding same-sex attraction which have not been included: (e.g., Genesis 19:1-29; Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Judges 19, 1 Timothy 1:10). We will study New Testament texts because OT texts are most often ignored in conversation.

Romans 1:21-27	1 Corinthians 6:9-11
Matthew 19:11-12	Romans 3:23-26

Notes:

A Closing Word: Answering the 'Who Am I?' Question

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. [Galatians 2:20]

3D: Identify something in your life (a person, a thing, an addiction, a hobby) that threatens to be your center, that might define you more than Christ. **Name** one person you could tell about this thing in the next week.

Notes:

Learning Task #4: Carpe Eruditio (Seize the Learning)

Sometime this week, take a moment to review your notes and reflect on a point of discussion or a Scripture that particularly struck you. We invite you to choose one of the following ways to seize your learning:

- **Meditate** on Galatians 2:20, the verse we closed our time with. Christ must be the defining element of our identity, our center. What challenges Christ's place at the center of your life and threatens to take a greater place in your identity?
- **Listen** to a favorite song that reminds you of God's grace and mercy to your sin. **Write** the chorus of that song and put the note somewhere you'll see it often over the next few days.
- **Journal** about the things that you had to leave behind in order to follow Christ.

For Further Reading

Judith K. Balswick and Jack O. Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality: An Integrated Christian Approach*
Mark Yarhouse, *Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends*
Christopher Yuan, *Out of a Far Country: A Gay Son's Journey to God, A Broken Mother's Search for Hope.*
Wesley Hill, *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality*
Jenell Williams Paris, *The End of Sexual Identity: Why Sex is Too Important to Define Who We Are*
Janelle Hallman, *The Heart of Female Same-Sex Attraction: A Comprehensive Counseling Resource*

A Note on The Learning

For this semester's Hot Topics series, Kyle and Stephanie will be utilizing the principles and practices of **Dialogue Education** to learn with you. Pioneered by Jane Vella, a Catholic missionary, nun, and educator dialogue education believes that the teacher should never do for the learner what she can do her herself. In that sense, there is no teacher: there are only learners of whom the teacher is one.

Jane Vella has written, "The end is learning, the means is dialogue and the purpose is peace." By asking open ended question and engaging in learning tasks (see footnote 4 above) each of us participates in the learning by being attentive to one another and to Christ who is the *dia-logos*, the Word among us. Jesus is who, the how, and the why of our learning.

Our hope is that as we learn together you are able to take your learning to your life in order to be conformed to Christ. This is our hope, and prayer: that through our time together Christ would be formed in you (Galatians 4:19).

In light of this, we commit to come to class each week prepared, with the necessary materials for our learning in-tow, so that meaningful, Christ-centered learning can take place. We invite you to come to each session ready to learn: to engage in learning tasks, to answer questions, and to experience the joy of learning together. Remember: joy is the measure.

Our Coming Sessions

Dates and Topics Subject to Change

Session 1: Sexuality, Gender, and Jesus 1.20 ~ LGBTQ, Part I - Understanding the Struggle 1.27 ~ LGBTQ, Part II - Transgendered Sexuality 2.3 ~ LGBTQ, Part III - A Compassionate Response 2.10 ~ Pornography 2.17 ~ Modest or Sexy? Session 2: Hot Topics, Etc. 2.24 ~ Global Outreach Conference 3.3 ~ Politics: To Vote or Not to Vote? 3.10 ~ Politics: Was Jesus a Socialist? 3.17 ~ Entertainment, Culture, and Discernment 3.24 ~ Unfriend Yourself	3.31 ~ No Class - He is Risen! 4.7 ~ Depression, Despair, and Doubt' Session 3: Family Matters 4.14 ~ How Low Can You Go? Living within Your Means 4.21 ~ The Role of the Church in the Family 4.28 ~ No Class - Congregational Meeting 5.5 ~ Parenting for Healthy Adulthood 5.12 ~ No Class - Happy Mother's Day! 5.19 ~ Bullying 5.26 ~ Loving Families with Developmental Disabilities
---	--