

# Sexuality, Gender and Jesus

LGBTQ, Part 2

January 27, 2013

## The Big Idea:

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

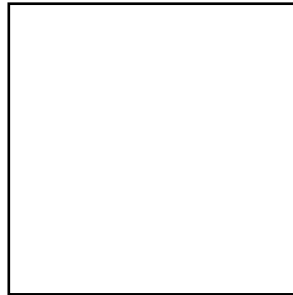
## Introduction

“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.”<sup>1</sup>

### Four Criteria to Defining an Individual’s Sexuality<sup>2</sup>

**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:

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

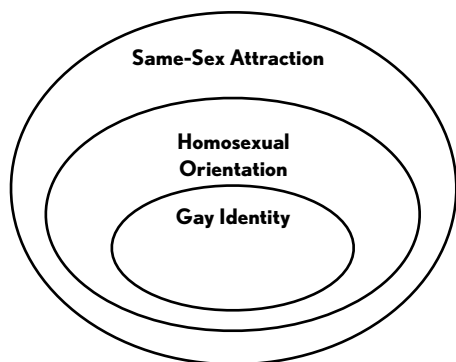
<sup>2</sup> Balswick and Balswick, 15-16.

## Review: Homosexuality ~ Key Terms & Ideas

**On Choosing:** “People do not choose to experience same-sex attraction; it is something they find themselves experiencing.”<sup>3</sup>

### What’s in a Name: A Three-Tier Distinction<sup>4</sup>

**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.

## Learning Task #5: Baby, I Was Born This Way

**5A: Watch** this video of people in the LGBTQ community telling their stories.<sup>5</sup> As you watch it, **jot down** some observations about what you are thinking and feeling as you watch this video. We’ll collect our observations as a group.

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<sup>3</sup> Mark A. Yarhouse, *Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010), 80.

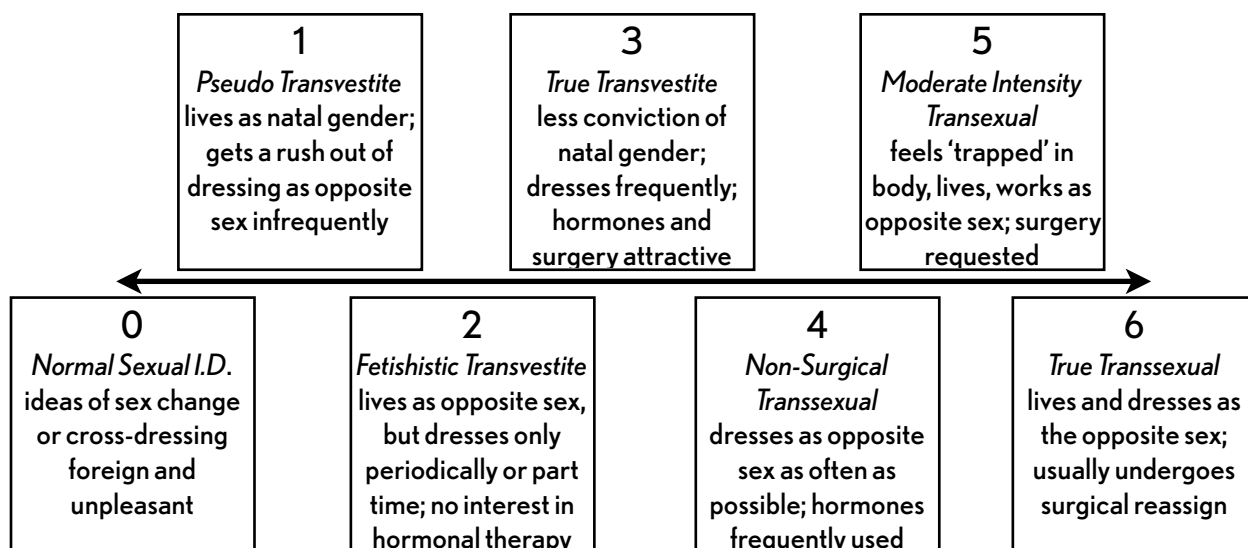
<sup>4</sup> Yarhouse, 41-43.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWYqsaJk\\_U8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWYqsaJk_U8)

## Gender Identity Disorder: Key Terms and Ideas

**Gender Identity Disorder (GID):** People struggling with GID report feeling trapped in the body of the opposite sex. Described as “strong and persistent cross-gender identification accompanied by persistent discomfort with one’s assigned sex,” people dealing with GID have no physical abnormalities, and their experience of gender identity confusion is independent of their experience of sexual attraction.<sup>6</sup>

**The Harry Benjamin Scale:** Remember the principle of *equipfinality*: there are no two identical stories of SSA. Similarly, this scale indicates that individuals experience GID at varying levels of intensity.<sup>7</sup>



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<sup>6</sup> From Mark A. Yarhouse, Richard E. Butman, and Barrett W. McRay, *Modern Psychopathologies: a Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2005), 314-315.

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from <http://www.twentyclub.net/docs/bscale.html>

**5B:** At your tables, **identify** at least two Scriptural texts relevant to the following statement: “Many people facing GID say their feelings of being ‘trapped in the body of the opposite sex’ are a result of them being ‘born this way.’”

Text	Relevance to the Issue

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**5C:** At your tables, **read** the following case study, and **respond** using what we have discussed together. Be sure to use at least one of the texts we just identified

At last weekend's family reunion, your cousin Mary was not present. As you chatted with your aunt and uncle, they informed you that Mary now asks to be called Mark. Mary--or, Mark--lives and works in men's clothing, and is in a relationship with Susanne, a woman Mark met at a Pride parade in Detroit, where your aunt and uncle reside. Your aunt and uncle tell you that Mark began hormonal therapy four months ago, and is seriously considering gender reassignment surgery. It is obvious that your aunt and uncle are distraught about this change in their...daughter.

Growing up, you always knew Mary was different: not quite as sensitive as other girls, and always more of a "Tomboy." Still, such a drastic step comes as a surprise. In college, Mark began attending an "Open and Affirming" church, which, as the slogan implies, is not only open to gender transition, but affirming of it. In fact, the pastor there was born a woman and through reassignment surgery, is now married with three children.

When you come home from the reunion, you have a Facebook friend request from Mark. You accept, and shortly thereafter receive a private message, in which Mark explains the changes she's undergone and plans to undergo in the future. "I have always felt different, uncomfortable in my own skin, you know? Even when we were kids, I was more comfortable playing ball and wrestling with the boys than I was baking and playing house. I guess I was just born this way, and God has told me that it's time for me to become who I really am. I am becoming 'a new creation!'" Mark asks that you prayerfully support him and his fiancé over the coming months as Mark prepares to completely transition.

The next day, you call your aunt and uncle, and your aunt tearfully asks for insight into this situation.

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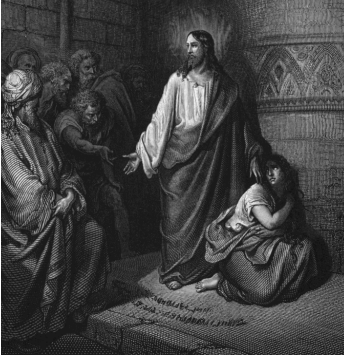
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## A Closing Word: Disconnected from Reality



“And so I insist—and God backs me up on this—that there be no going along with the crowd, the empty-headed, mindless crowd. They’ve refused for so long to deal with God that they’ve lost touch not only with God but with reality itself. They can’t think straight anymore. Feeling no pain, they let themselves go in sexual obsession, addicted to every sort of perversion.” [Ephesians 4:17-19 MSG]

“Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” [John 8:7]

5D: This text indicates that human sexuality is equally broken, the result of ‘losing touch with reality.’ With this in mind, take a moment to **reflect** on your own brokenness: struggles with lust, battles with pornography, disordered desires. As a large group, **name** how this perspective changes the way you tackled the above case study.

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## Learning Task #6: Carpe Eruditio (Seize the Learning)

At the end of this week’s class, we reflected that every person experiences a broken sexuality; the question is how we each act on this brokenness. Take a few moments to reflect on our discussion about this, and then choose at least one of the following ways to seize the learning.

- Take a few moments to **identify** any lust you may struggle with. Take a moment to read John Piper’s blog post “ANTHEM: Strategies for Fighting Lust” and **commit** to putting at least one of his suggestions into action.<sup>8</sup>
- Look up John 8:1-11, and **read** it a few times. With each reading, **imagine** being a different person each time: first the crowd, then the woman, then the Lord. **Answer** the question in a journal, “How does changing perspectives open up this passage to me in a new way?”

## 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*  
Jenell Williams Paris, *The End of Sexual Identity: Why Sex is Too Important to Define Who We Are*

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/taste-see-articles/anthem-strategies-for-fighting-lust>

## 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*

<b>Session 1: Sexuality, Gender, and Jesus</b> 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 ~ Women: Modest or Sexy? <b>Session 2: Hot Topics, Etc.</b> 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 <b>Session 3: Family Matters</b> 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
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