

DAY ONE

BE AUTHENTIC

Not all transgender or same-sex-attracted people are pushing an agenda. In fact, many of them just want the same things most people want—happiness, relationships, meaning, freedom, and so on. They want to be able to live authentic lives as they see themselves, whether that’s a different gender or as someone who is attracted to the same sex.

They also want to be able to share openly and honestly with you, and you can do the same with them. I know this is a difficult conversation to have—to balance love with not backing down from the truth. But to follow Jesus’s example of doing these things, you have to know what God’s Word says. Thankfully, the Bible is clear about same-sex relationships.

Let’s take a look at four sin lists we didn’t cover in the group session.

READ GALATIANS 5:19-21.

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

NEXT, READ COLOSSIANS 3:5-9 IN YOUR BIBLE.

NOW READ 1 TIMOTHY 1:9-10.

The law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,

READ REVELATION 21:8.

“But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

What does each passage say about those who practice sexual immorality of any kind?

Which of these verses specifies homosexual behaviors? What does it say about those who “practice homosexuality”?

When you talk to someone who is same-sex attracted or transgender, you may be tempted to back off from the truth. But being kind and compassionate or a good friend doesn’t mean you have to compromise the truth; you are called to share it God’s way.

READ 1 PETER 3:15 IN YOUR BIBLE.

When you sit with a friend who’s a part of the LGBTQ community, what do you do?

- **Read, pray, seek.** Read the Bible and know what God says about sexual identity. Pray for wisdom concerning any difficult conversations you might have. And seek advice from other believers such as your parents, youth leader, or pastor.
- **Listen.** Ask questions that show a genuine interest in that person and the struggle they’re facing—this in itself shows love and compassion.
- **Once they’ve shared, maybe ask:** “Can I share with you about what I think it means to be a follower of Jesus? Just as you’ve been authentic and open with me, I’d like to do the same for you.” Then, you may lovingly and kindly express your thoughts.

This doesn’t mean every person will react positively or even want to hear what you say, but this is one way to stay rooted in Scripture while also speaking with “gentleness and respect” to those who believe differently (see 1 Pet. 3:15).

There’s no real formula for having difficult conversations—these are difficult issues. But, at the end of the day, Christians have to be faithful to Scripture. We are called to reach those who are hurting, including the gay and transgender communities.

Let’s be people who love them for the precious people God has made them to be.

Take a minute to think about the truth we’ve discussed today and throughout this session. What truth could you share if you had the opportunity? How would you say it? Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on a separate piece of paper, expressing what you’ve learned.

DAY TWO

GOOD FRUIT, BAD FRUIT

Maybe the most powerful emotional argument to affirm same-sex sexual relationships is the claim that historic Christian teaching harms gay people.

In reference to Jesus's teachings about judging a tree by its fruit (see [Matt. 7:15-20](#)), some claim the "fruit" of historic biblical teaching is harmful, so the teaching itself must be corrected. Sadly, it is true that LGBTQ people are more likely to be lonely, depressed, and suicidal.⁴ Such a reality should break our hearts and motivate us with compassion toward these people God deeply loves.

If someone does not like biblical teaching, does that mean that it must be changed? Why or why not?

What do you think about the claim that not affirming same-sex marriage is unloving and harmful?

There are two problems with the claim that the historic Christian teaching harms gay people. First, there is no evidence that the traditional teaching itself brings harm to gay people.⁵ It's my experience, along with many others who work with LGBTQ people, that gay people who choose to go to churches that do not affirm same-sex sexual relations do so because they find meaningful community and biblical teaching. Generally, LGBTQ religious people are actually more—not less—happy than non-religious LGBTQ people.⁶ The other problem is that the above use of [Matthew 7:15-20](#) is not scripturally sound.

READ MATTHEW 7:15-20.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."

What is the "fruit" that Jesus talks about?

READ MATTHEW 7:21-27.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

What does it mean to build your house on the rock?

Why is denying the teaching of Scripture like building your house on sand?

When Jesus says to judge a tree by its fruit, He doesn't mean we are free to reject teachings that are emotionally difficult to follow. Instead, Jesus means that teaching that leads people toward disobedience and "good fruit" leads toward repentance and obedience. The wise person who builds his or her house on the rock is the one who "hears these words of [Jesus] and does them" (v. 24).

Denying the teaching of Scripture may sound emotionally convincing, but it creates an unstable foundation. We best love God and our neighbors when we are obedient to Christ and when we are faithful to the teachings of the Bible. Doing so builds our house on a firm foundation that does not shift or move, even through the storms of life.

DAY THREE

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

How can we exercise both grace and truth in a culture conflicted on issues such as gender and identity?

As Christians, we need to be especially careful not to import gender stereotypes into our relationships. When we define gender boxes too rigidly, we make it easy for people who do not perfectly fit the stereotypes to feel like they do not belong.

When I ask Christian audiences who they consider a “manly man” in the Bible, most mention King David.

List all of the characteristics and actions of King David that you can think of.

Which of those do you consider to be “manliest”?

Most will agree that David was acting stereotypically manly when he killed Goliath. But what about when he played a harp or wrote poetry? Scripture offers no hint that these were not manly actions. David was both a warrior and a poet.⁷

Does this mean there are no significant differences between boys and girls? No!

What are some legitimate differences between males and females that are more than just gender stereotypes?

Gender is so important for how children learn. Dr. Leonard Sax notes, “Trying to understand a child without understanding the role of gender in child development is like trying to understand a child’s behavior without knowing the child’s age.”⁸ In fact, he considers gender to be more revealing for how a child learns than age.

Consider a few key differences Dr. Sax observes between males and females:

- The average girl has better senses of smell and hearing than the average boy.
- When given paper and crayons, girls tend to draw flowers and trees with lots of colors. Boys are more likely to draw action scenes, such as with monsters and aliens.
- After fighting, boys are more likely to become better friends. With girls, hurt feelings often linger.

Science is revealing significant gender differences that emerge early in childhood development. Failing to recognize these differences significantly harms children.

How does this affect the way you view transgenderism?

What are some practical ways that you—with your unique gifts and abilities—can make a difference in the church and beyond with these difficult cultural issues?

We need young Christians to become pastors who will help people struggling with gender dysphoria. We need young Christians to defend the rights of people who want the freedom to live their lives—and run their businesses—according to their convictions about marriage. We need young Christians with the courage to do quality research that demonstrates the reality of differences in the genders. And we need young people to become communicators who use social media to help advance a Christian worldview in a loving and kind way.

In other words, we need young people to resist destructive ideologies and to take a stand against unbiblical and unscientific ideas about the fundamentals of human nature.

Could this be you?