

Biblical Sexuality in the Context of Biblical Marriage and the LGBTQI+ Community:

Jesus is Calling the UK Church to Represent Him

Note: This document was written for UK Christians who recognize and submit to the authority of the whole of Holy Scripture and want to know, in practical terms, how to relate lovingly and biblically with, and how to minister to, people in the LGBTQI+ community. It is provided to you by the following Christian organization: Marriage, Sex & Culture Group¹.

The focus of this document is on *what* and not *how*: *what* is biblical, *what* is true, and *what* the church needs to accomplish; but not on *the methods* the church might best use to accomplish it, which is touched on by some of the documents in the footnotes. A full discussion of methods is important, but too large a topic for this document.

This document was also written as a replacement for the inadequate treatment of Biblical Sexuality in page 7 of the Evangelical Bishops' paper "The Church of England's Doctrine of Marriage", which in contrast does an excellent job of defending Biblical Marriage in pages 1-6.²

Biblical Marriage and Biblical Sexuality

"Holy Matrimony, in Christian understanding, is more than a contract, a private arrangement between two individuals that helps build social cohesion. It is theologically much more significant. Every time a man and woman are joined together in the promise of lifelong fidelity, the goodness of creation is affirmed, the interdependence of humanity is celebrated, the story of salvation is depicted, and life is (potentially) generated. Marriage is thus a sacramental sign of something bigger than itself and that signification depends to a significant degree on sexual difference. Every marriage is thus a proclamation of the gospel. It bears witness to God our Creator and Redeemer; to God's nature, purposes, and love. This is a picture of reality that matters for Christians, and the framework within which the Christian doctrine of marriage sits and from which the Church's sexual ethics properly flow. For here is an icon of what salvation looks like, in contrast to the more abstract concepts of community, freedom or justice developed by the philosophers of the Enlightenment."³

Biblical sexuality is an inherent part of biblical marriage and does not exist outside the context of biblical marriage. Therefore, it is not possible to set forth a biblical view of marriage adequately and fully without including a full discussion of biblical sexuality. Gen 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:8; Ephesians 5:31 all declare sex to be an integral part of marriage "and the two shall become one flesh".

"From beginning to end, the Bible tells a covenant story of marital love in the mysteries of our creation, fall, and redemption. It begins in Genesis with the marriage of the first man and woman, and it ends in Revelation with the marriage of Christ and the body of believers. We can summarise all of Sacred Scriptures with five simple yet astounding words: *God wants to marry us.*"⁴ Jesus is

¹ MSC Group, "Our Vision", Marriage, Sex & Culture Group, accessed on 1 March 2023, <https://msc.support/>

² 14 Church of England Evangelical Bishops, *The Church of England's Doctrine of Marriage*. (Diocese of Guildford, 2023), https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/docs/default-source/statement/31123-the-church-of-england-s-doctrine-of-marriage-paper.pdf?sfvrsn=b4350832_2

³ 14 Church of England Evangelical Bishops, *The Church of England's Doctrine of Marriage*, 5

⁴ Christopher West, *Our Bodies Tell God's Story: Discovering the Divine Plan for Love, Sex and Gender*. (Grand Rapids MI, Brazos Press, 2020), 14, [Our Bodies Tell God's Story: Discovering the Divine Plan for Love, Sex, and Gender: Amazon.co.uk: West: 9781587434273: Books.](https://www.amazon.co.uk/West-9781587434273-Books)

the bridegroom who is coming back for a pure, spotless and holy bride -- the Body of Christ. Those who belong to Him will one day sit down with Him at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. "If we could see the utter beauty and splendour of God's plan for the body and sexuality, a way would be opened for *true freedom* – the freedom to love as Christ loves."⁵

"Since we are made in the image of God as male and female, the body ... is also *theological*. It tells an astounding divine story. ... This means that when we get the body and sex wrong, we get the divine story wrong as well."⁶

The Bible is very clear that the only place for God-ordained sex is within heterosexual marriage. The Greek word *porneia* is used 25 times in the New Testament. Many of these uses are in texts that state that *porneia*, i.e., "any kind of sexual connection with another person that is not within the context of a biblical marriage commitment",^{7,8} is sin. No distinction is made between heterosexual sin and homosexual sin in the meaning of *porneia*. If we are to remain true to the scriptures and traditional Church of England doctrine, this must be the cornerstone of all discussions about all the kinds of sexual connections,⁹ including "lusting in the mind" as Jesus put it in the Sermon on the Mount.¹⁰

Let's pause for a moment to remind ourselves that God knows what's best for us and the best way for us to live. He also knows what will harm us and in doing so rob us of life – that and only that is what God names as 'sin' because He doesn't want us to be harmed. It's like a good parent who tells a small child not to touch the stove because they don't want their precious child to be burned.¹¹

In the past sixty years, *porneia* has taken over Western culture to the point of obsession. This modern idolatry follows the pattern of Baal worship of the Old Testament, which was the downfall of Israel into captivity, and it has captivated our nation.¹² The worship of Baal and his wife Ashtoreth, the male and female idol-gods of sexual orgy,¹³ was then and is now characterized by apostasy, *porneia* in general, homosexual practice, prostitution, transgenderism, pornography, euthanasia, and sacrificing children to the fire (*infanticide; modern-day abortion*).¹⁴ Baal is worshiped at idol altars and Ashtoreth at Ashtoreth poles,¹⁵ but behind these idols are spirits and principalities,¹⁶ which of course are led by Satan. Some say the principality of Baal is Satan himself.

We are now under the dominion of Baal in Western culture. Many of our church leaders have

⁵ West, *Our Bodies Tell God's Story*, 3.

⁶ West, *Our Bodies Tell God's Story*, viii.

⁷ ..., "Porneia in Blue Letter Bible Lexicon" Blue Letter Bible, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4202/kjv/tr/0-1/>

⁸ John Nolland, "Good news? 'LGBT couples "will be able to celebrate their love... in a Christian [marriage] ceremony"', Marriage, Sex & culture Group, 2022, <https://msc.support/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/JOHN-NOLLAND-16.mp4>

⁹ John Nolland, *Sexual Ethics, and the Jesus of the Gospels*. (Anvil, Volume 26 No. 1, 2009), 21-30, https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/anvil/26-1_021.pdf.

¹⁰ Matthew 5:27-32

¹¹ Psalm 119:165

¹² Jonathan Cahn, *The Return of the Gods*. (Lake Mary FL, FrontLine, 2022), [The Return of the Gods \(Audio Download\): Lawrence Richardson, Jonathan Cahn, Frontline: Amazon.co.uk: Audible Books & Originals](#).

¹³ Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence: Curing the Soul Through Union with Christ*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Books, 1995), 232, https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/080105348X/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1.

¹⁴ Cahn, "The Possessor", "The Enchantress", and "The Destroyer" in *The Return of the Gods*. (Lake Mary FL, FrontLine, 2022), 39-41, 73-76, 95-98.

¹⁵ 2 Chronicles 34:3-7

¹⁶ Cahn, *Return of the Gods*, 13.

become prophets of Baal by allowing, inviting, and promoting Baal worship into the churches. This is the very thing Elijah confronted in I Kings 18 -- a riveting, sobering read when you think about what happened to the prophets of Baal. "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal is God follow him" (v. 21 NIV). There is no more fence-sitting. We must come out from under the principality of Baal or face the deadly consequences of being under Satan's rule.

Definitions of some key terms:

biblical friendship:

two people attached to each other by a feeling of liking and caring or esteem in the absence of romance, sex, projection or emotional dependence

As with biblical marriage, a biblical friendship has Jesus at its centre.¹⁷ Biblical friendships often focus around shared interests, opinions, and feelings.

non-biblical relationship:

any kind of connection, not within a committed, exclusive¹⁸ heterosexual marriage, between two or more people who engage in any form of sexually arousing activity, and/or whose connection involves any kind of idolatry of the other person

non-biblical same-sex relationship:

non-biblical relationship or romantic relationship in which one of the people involved is of the same biological sex as at least one of the other people involved

Biblical Sexuality and the LGBTQI+ Community

Given that people who identify as LGBTQI+ are persons, they are covered by the above doctrine that "*porneia* is sin".¹⁹

God's Goodness leads everyone who will be led to repentance,²⁰ but if repentance doesn't occur, there is judgment! The fact that everyone is not under judgment straight away is because of His mercy and patience.

The question is how the church, especially local parishes, can best and most effectively relate to people who identify as LGBTQI+ the way Jesus would.

The bottom-line answer is that Jesus would love each person passionately – and far too much not to tell them that their attitudes and behaviour is sin, i.e., that they are slowly killing their souls and bodies.

But how, in practice, do we love individuals who identify (*or used to identify*) as LGBTQI+ the way Jesus would love them?

SOME TRUTHS ABOUT THE LGBTQI+ CONDITION THAT JESUS WOULD TAKE AS GIVENS

Taking on board some truths about the LGBTQI+ condition is the foundation on which we must

¹⁷ Ecclesiastes 4:12

¹⁸ 'exclusive' means closed or monogamous, i.e., one sexual partner until death

¹⁹ Janet Boynes, "Sexual Sin is Sin, Right?" in *God & the LGBT Community: A Compassionate Guide for Parents, Families & Churches*, (Tulsa, OK, Harrison House Publishers, 13 July 2021), 107-110, [Amazon.co.uk : God & the LGBT Community](https://www.amazon.co.uk/God-the-LGBT-Community/dp/1910000000).

²⁰ Romans 2:4 NKJV

build our understanding of the way Jesus would love the LGBTQI+ community in practice if he were here – so we can love them in practice the same way and tell the following truths:

1. People are not born gay – and therefore do not have to continue to choose to identify themselves as gay for their whole lives.
 - a. All the scientific evidence demonstrates this.^{21,22,23,24}
 - b. The LGBTQI+ community now promotes “sexual fluidity” and has dropped the “born-gay” message.²⁵
 - c. Removing homosexuality from the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) list of mental disorders defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) was a **coup** planned and executed by the gay activist members of the APA at their annual conference during the Summer of 1973.
 - i. This removal was not based on fact, research, *Robert’s Rules of Order*, or any form of discussion. It was done by the gay attendees while the rest of the attendees were away on an outing arranged by the gay activist delegates. While they were gone, the gay delegates voted to remove homosexuality from the DSM. When all the rest of the delegates returned from the outing, they didn’t have the courage to confront this coup and put it right.^{26,27}
 - d. The personal experience of many thousands who once identified as gay proves this

²¹ J M Bailey, M P Dunne, and N G Martin, “Genetic and environmental influences on sexual orientation and its correlates in an Australian twin sample”, *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 2000 Mar, 78(3):524-36, doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.78.3.524, PMID: 10743878, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10743878/>. Australian twin study - 33,000 sets of identical twins, where only 11% of same-sex attracted people had a same-sex attracted twin.

²² Tinca JC Polderman et al, “Meta-analysis of the heritability of human traits based on fifty years of twin studies”, *Nature Genetics*, 47 (2015): 702-709, <https://doi.org/10.1038/ng.3285>, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276922271_Meta-analysis_of_the_heritability_of_human_traits_based_on_fifty_years_of_twin_studies.

²³ Andrea Ganna et al, “Large-scale GWAS reveals insights into the genetic architecture of same-sex sexual behaviour”, *Science*, 365, 6456 (30 August 2019), DOI:10.1126/science.aat7693, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Brendan-Zietsch/publication/335478658_Large-scale_GWAS_reveals_insights_into_the_genetic_architecture_of_same-sex_sexual_behavior/links/5d6e1e7b299bf1808d61ca68/Large-scale-GWAS-reveals-insights-into-the-genetic-architecture-of-same-sex-sexual-behavior.pdf.

²⁴ Neil Whitehead and Briar Whitehead, *My Genes Made Me Do It!: Homosexuality and the Scientific Evidence*, 6th Edition. (Lower Hutt, New Zealand, Whitehead Associates, 2020), https://www.amazon.co.uk/My-Genes-Made-Homosexuality-Scientific-ebook/dp/B00LPSNTPO/ref=sr_1_1?crid=AKAY0UNTO2Z4&keywords=My+Genes+made+me+do+it&qid=1679332659&s=books&srefix=my+genes+made+me+do+it%2Cstripbooks%2C61&sr=1-1

²⁵ IFTCC, “Sexual fluidity happens in both directions but this is being ignored” in “The Declaration”, IFTCC: The International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice, [An International Declaration on ‘Conversion Therapy’ and Therapeutic Choice \(Full Review Document\) - IFTCC - Supporting people with unwanted same-sex attraction and gender confusions](https://www.iftcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/An-International-Declaration-on-Conversion-Therapy-and-Therapeutic-Choice-Full-Review-Document-IFTCC-Supporting-people-with-unwanted-same-sex-attraction-and-gender-confusions.pdf), Declaration 4 (*contains eleven references to academic papers*)

²⁶ Jeffery Satinover, *Homosexuality and The Politics of Truth*, (Grand Rapids MI, Hamewith Books, 1996), 35, [Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth: Amazon.co.uk: Satinover, Jeffrey: 9780801056253: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Satinover-Jeffrey-9780801056253-Books/dp/0801056253).

²⁷ Personal account given by one of the gay delegate coup leaders a week after the coup occurred.

as well.^{28, 29, 30, 31}

- e. It is fallacious to think that God creates people gay while at the same time intending that they should not act according to the “gay” nature that He supposedly creates -- as reflected in His Word telling them that gay behaviour is sin. Worse still, to say that God created people “gay” is blasphemy on the character of GOD because, in God, right ‘doing’ flows from, and is consistent with, the nature of the ‘being’ He gave us when He created us.
 - f. To blame being born-gay on the Fall and say that people with same-sex attraction or gender confusion can’t change is to trample on the blood of Jesus, by saying that what He did on the Cross is insufficient to deal with this aspect of the Fall -- another blasphemy.
 - g. If one believes that one is born gay, it’s far too easy to say “it’s not my fault and there’s nothing I can do about it”. This makes it more difficult, if not impossible, for one to believe and say “I am able to change – to have my feeling of same-sex attraction diminish”.
2. The “I” in LGBTQI+ stands for “Intersex”. Intersex conditions, which are exceedingly rare, are of three main types (though some say four).³² They have various combinations of abnormal hormonal, anatomical, and chromosomal factors.³³ There is no correlation with sexual orientation per se. Clearly such people need a particular kind of medical and psychological support in dealing with their sexual characteristics and feelings. Over and above this particular support, the church would minister to people with an Intersex condition in the same way as with all other people, as described in the following pages.
 3. Feelings of same-sex attraction or gender confusion are not the same thing as:
 - a. choosing a gay identity or choosing a biologically defying gender identity, or
 - b. same-sex sexual activity.
 4. People who identify themselves as LGBTQI+ are choosing to find their identity in their sexual preference or in separating their gender from that of their body, instead of finding their identity in Christ as every person was created to do. Of course, becoming a born-again Christian out of the LGBTQ+ community and staying celibate does not necessarily mean that one is hanging onto ones LGBTQI+ identity, even though that is way too often the case. It is possible for one’s LGBTQI+ identity to “fall off” one in a moment through Divine revelation.^{34, 35}

²⁸ ..., X-OUT-LOUD: Honored to celebrate the identity of those finding freedom from unwanted homosexual desires and gender confusion, <https://www.xoutloud.com/>.

²⁹ ..., X-OUT-LOUD: *Emerging X-LGBT Voices*. (Ballynahinch, Northern Ireland, Core Issues Trust, 2021+), <https://www.xoutloud.com/book/>.

³⁰ ..., Changed Movement, <https://changedmovement.com/>.

³¹ ..., *CHANGED: #OnceGay Stories*, 2nd Edition. (Redding, CA, Changed Movement, 2023), <https://changedmovement.com/changed-book>.

³² Leonard Sax, “How common is intersex? a response to Anne Fausto-Sterling”, *Journal of Sex Research* 39, 3 (2002): 174-178, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12476264/>.

³³ ADAM Health Solutions, “Medical Encyclopedia: Intersex”, MedlinePlus - Health Information from the National Library of Medicine, 8 October 2021, <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001669.htm>.

³⁴ From a personal story.

³⁵ | Corinthians 6:11

- a. A person who identifies as LGBTQI+ bows to, and makes an idol of, another person of the same sex or an imaginary gender persona. The psychological dynamic here is that the affected person looks at another person or persona and loves a lost part of themselves” (*i.e. some of their traits*) that they see in the other person or persona, but cannot recognize and accept in themselves.^{36,37,38} The fact that so many gay couples look a lot alike is a picture of this. Therefore, choosing a LGBTQI+ identity is a form of idolatry.
 - b. A true Christian stands straight up, eyes to heaven, worshiping the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and finding their identity in them.
 - c. The very term "LGBTQI+ Christian" is at its heart a contradiction in terms. Christians find their identity ONLY in Christ. The LGBTQI+ community finds its identity in sexual preference or separating their gender from their body. Hanging onto, and often even celebrating, one's LGBTQI+ identity after becoming a Christian is, at best, a failure to become who God created us to be. At worst, it is a full-fledged rebellion in flaunting oneself in the face of finding our true identity in Christ.
 - d. Of course, it may take time for the chosen LGBTQI+ identity to be given up after someone comes to Christ.
5. Feelings of same-sex attraction or of being a gender different from one's body are symptoms of something deeper that is out-of-order in one's soul.
- a. These feelings are best thought of as being like dreams in that they are to be interpreted symbolically, not literally. When Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, the interpretation was not literal, *i.e.*, no lean cows came up out of the Nile river and ate fat cows; the interpretation was symbolic, *i.e.*, seven years of famine would eat up seven years of abundant harvest.³⁹

Rather than taking feelings of same-sex attraction literally and acting on them sexually, these feelings are meant to be taken symbolically as signposts sent by God to make us conscious that there is something out of order in our souls that needs to be re-ordered. This re-ordering occurs when we come with it to the Cross, and may also need counselling and therapy, to become healed.⁴⁰ This one insight, if practiced regularly at the cross, is enough to disengage the power of same-sex behaviour.

Feelings, including feelings of same-sex attraction, *can be thought of* as being similar to children in that they need to be listened to and not silenced or suppressed. To be defined by our feelings is no different from allowing the children to make the decisions in a household.

- b. The fundamental root causes of these feelings of same-sex attraction or gender

³⁶ Leanne Payne, "Matthew's Story: Identity Crisis" in *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Books, 1995), 46-47, [Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer: Amazon.co.uk: Payne, Leanne: 9780801053344: Books.](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B000000000)

³⁷ Ed Hurst and Robbi Kenny, *Homosexuality: Laying the axe to the roots*, 1984. (Outpost), 20-21

³⁸ From a personal story.

³⁹ Genesis 41:1-36

⁴⁰ Leanne Payne, "Appendix: Listening to Our Dreams" in *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Books, 1995), 151-163, [Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer: Amazon.co.uk: Payne, Leanne: 9780801053344: Books.](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B000000000)

confusion are brokenness of many kinds. Such brokenness results from many kinds of emotional and/or physical wounding experiences, typically as babies, children or adolescents, that are the responsibility either of others or of oneself.⁴¹

- c. A secondary cause of these feelings of same-sex attraction or gender confusion is contemporary Western culture, both in its highly sexualized nature in almost every aspect: advertising, entertainment, music, schools, peer pressure, freely available pornography, etc.; and in its “anything goes” acceptance of sexual experimentation. Even one same-sex experience causes a wounding and entrance for destructive spiritual forces that then causes the kind of brokenness discussed in b. above.
6. Feelings of same-sex attraction or of being a gender different from one’s body are not sinful in themselves. What is sin is:
- a. Refusing to take such feelings to the cross for healing of their root causes, and getting counselling or therapy help where needed – *a sin of omission*.
 - b. Hanging on to these feelings and choosing a LGBTQI+ identity based on them. In the absence of full truth about the nature of feelings of same-sex attraction, this seems to be the only option because of the power of these feelings. A LGBTQI+ identity is chosen based on a lie (*deception*) and is, therefore, *a sin of commission*.
 - i. It is possible for a LGBTQI+ identity to fall off in a moment through Divine revelation. It usually takes a long time, and sometimes a very long time, for the healing of root causes and the feelings of attraction or confusion to disappear.⁴²
 - c. Engaging in sexual activity based on them.
7. What was accomplished by Jesus on the Cross is enough to heal all wounds, brokenness, disorder, and sin -- including those that are at the root of feelings of same-sex attraction or of gender confusion. To anyone who seeks Him *with all their heart*, Jesus is able to break every chain and bring true freedom and full restoration for wholesome and joyful living in every aspect of their lives.
- a. Not to help people who have identified as LGBTQI+ receive the healing salvation made available by Jesus’s sacrifice to become a new creation in God family, is to squander His sacrifice at best, and trample on the blood of Jesus at worst.

“Is it nothing to you that in darkness of sin are many who grope for the light?
Is there so much to do that we cannot bring in the wanderer from out of the night?
Is it nothing to you when souls are in bondage?
Is it nothing to you when dream-hopes have vanished?
Can you not hear their cry, ‘Carest not that we die?’?
All of you passing by, is it nothing to you?”⁴³
 - b. Healing after salvation is part of the process of spiritual formation⁴⁴ and maturation: “Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works

⁴¹ Leanne Payne, “The Causes of Homosexuality: Contemporary Theories” in *The Broken Image*, 29-33

⁴² From a personal story

⁴³ Keith Whitford, “Is It Nothing to You?” in *The Missionary Message in Song*, ed. Eugene L. Clark, (Lincoln NE, Back to the Bible Publishers, 1953), 41, [The Missionary Message in Song: Amazon.co.uk: Eugene L Clark: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eugene-L-Clark-Books/).

⁴⁴ Richard Foster, “Spiritual Formation”, Renovaré, 2023, <https://renovare.org/about/ideas/spiritual-formation>

in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.” Phil 2:12b-13 NIV. “We all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” 2 Cor 3:18 NIV

- i. It is a process of dying to the “old man” (*the old false self*) and rising as the “new man” (*the true self in union with Christ*). The deeper the wounding and resulting brokenness and the more wounds and kinds of brokenness the longer it usually takes to travel this journey of healing, and the more/deeper the pain that is often felt one last time.⁴⁵
 - ii. Most modern-day Western Christians would not tolerate the level of *dying to the old man* required to leave feelings of same-sex attraction or gender confusion behind. But experience shows that it is worth it in spades to persevere in this process until one wins through.⁴⁶
 - iii. Some people cannot bring themselves to bear the pain of any more “becoming” and tragically stop their journey of spiritual formation. While this is understandable from a short term perspective of feeling immediate pain one last time, it stops one from entering fully into the abundant life Jesus promised. It can easily lead to rebellion which can, most tragically of all, cause a few to throw away what has already been accomplished – and even on rare occasion to disown their salvation.
8. As the brokenness and disorder behind feelings of same-sex attraction or of gender confusion are healed at the cross and through counselling and therapy,⁴⁷ these symptomatic feelings almost always diminish over time to be replaced by increasing feelings of other sex attraction and comfort with one’s own body gender. For some they go away entirely given enough time.⁴⁸

HOW JESUS WOULD LOVE THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY IN PRACTICE: CALLING THEM TO SALVATION

Jesus gave us the model of how we should love by the way he dealt with the woman taken in adultery, who was brought to him by the pharisees. “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” “Then neither do I condemn you,” (*so we shouldn’t condemn*) Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”⁴⁹ (*so we should tell everyone to leave their life of sin behind*).

The others in the story were giving the woman the same message of sin, but in a condemnatory way – wanting to stone her, rather than giving her a way out. Jesus gave her a way out. He was

⁴⁵ Leanne Payne, “Incarnational Reality: The Key to Carrying the Cross” in *The Healing Presence: Curing the Soul Through Union with Christ*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Books, 1995), 197-229,

https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/080105348X/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

⁴⁶ From a personal story

⁴⁷ Sam Salter, “Why is homosexuality a sin?: An ex-gay man’s testimony.”, Anglican Mainstream: An information resource for orthodox Anglicans, 17 February 2023, [Why is homosexuality a sin?: An ex-gay man's testimony. - Anglican Mainstream](https://www.anglicanmainstream.com/why-is-homosexuality-a-sin-an-ex-gay-mans-testimony/)

⁴⁸ Carolyn Pela and Philip Sutton, “Sexual Attraction Fluidity and Well-Being in Men: A Therapeutic Outcome Study”, *Journal of Human Sexuality*, 12 (2021): 61-86, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5987bcaeebbd1aa4143952f8/t/631628f3d8e297550abdb63f/1662396660461/HS+-+Pela+%26+Sutton.pdf>.

⁴⁹ John 8:7,11

loving, not condemning, and it was only once He had her attention with love that she could receive the message about her sin, because she saw Jesus's heart for her. The key here is that she was enabled to trust Jesus because of his love.

This will be true for us in the church as we truthfully love people in the LGBTQI+ community. When, like the adulterous woman, Jesus encounters people in the LGBTQI+ community with His love *in* us and expressed *through* us, they are not condemned but enabled to receive and act on His command, "Go now and leave your life of sin" -- in this case their LGBTQI+ identity and sinful sexual behaviour. Many thousands who once were in the LGBTQI+ community have heard Jesus and left their life of sin behind.

It is very difficult for anyone, who has identified with the LGBTQI+ community or is privately feeling same sex-attraction or gender confusion, and has not been born again and therefore have not received the Holy Spirit to dwell within them, to leave their LGBTQI+ identity and sexual activity behind.

We certainly should not expect them to do so before they have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, nor should we lay any such expectations on them. An awareness of the truth as laid out in points 1-6 above is about all one should expect before salvation. The role of the Christian and the local church then is to love them within the context of their awareness of these truths, whether or not they accept points 1-6 as true.

Typically, people who identify as LGBTQI+ have missed out in experiencing love and warm connections with others, first in the family, and then in friendships and the various communities they were a part of. The love of Christ flowing through those who belong to Him and the sense of community from belonging to a local church family⁵⁰ is the best antidote for the aching loneliness that so commonly flows from such love deprivation.

This kind of Christian love in the context of these truths is expressed, among many other ways, by:⁵¹

- befriending them by:
 - making a point of chatting with them every Sunday,
 - inviting them to meet for a coffee or doing something social together.
- valuing them by:
 - inviting them as a guest to a meal out or at home,
 - finding out an activity they like and offering to do it with them,
 - sharing stories about what Jesus has done for you.
- giving them a sense of belonging among people who love Jesus by:
 - inviting them to a church social activity,
 - including them in some activity with your group of friends.
- encouraging them to read the most easily engaged gospels, like Mark by:
 - giving them a study guide for one of the gospels,
 - even better, do a one-on-one Bible study with them.

⁵⁰ John Comer, "Community", Practicing the Way, 2021, [Practicing the Way Study Guide \(subsplash.com\)](https://www.subsplash.com)

⁵¹ Boynes, "How to Minister as the Church" in *God & the LGBT Community*, 121-128.

The impact of personal, practical love given to people from the LGBTQI+ community within the context of the above truths cannot be overestimated. It shows them what Jesus is like and kindles a desire in them to have Jesus as an intimate friend.

HOW JESUS WOULD LOVE THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY IN PRACTICE: MINISTERING HEALING TO THEM

“The first and primary healing out of which all other healing proceeds is the new birth. Once Christ abides within, one with our spirits, then His life can radiate throughout our souls – that is, our minds and hearts – including our memories, our willing (volitional), feeling, intuitive, and imaginative faculties, and beyond that, even to our sensory and physical being. Then, as His light encounters dark places of unforgiveness and woundedness within us, healing can take place.”⁵²

The journey into wholeness starts best with the healing of the failure to accept oneself the way God created one. Once a foundation of self-acceptance is in place, one can proceed to healing for the failure to forgive others and the failure to receive forgiveness for oneself. This journey into wholeness is referred to as “spiritual formation” and as “initiation into Christ” in the early church, where it took two or three years to complete.⁵³ Of course, spiritual formation and becoming more like Christ is a process that should never stop.

One might characterize the spiritual formation process as Phil 2:12b-13 (Amplified Bible) commands it: “Continue to work out your salvation [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]. For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfil your purpose] for His good pleasure”.

C.S. Lewis illustrates this spiritual formation process as a major theme in the Narnia book, “The Voyage of the Dawn Treader”, and refers to it as being “undragoned”.⁵⁴ Eustace’s nasty old false self nature is revealed when he becomes a dragon. Aslan removes Eustace’s old false self with his claws to bring alive his true self. That is an almost unbearably painful process, but with the wonderful outcome of being turned back into a boy – a good boy. This pictures Jesus removing our selfish old false self and revealing our true self which is made alive in union with Him.

A modern version of a spiritual formation program focusing on healing of relationships through healing

⁵² Leanne Payne, *Restoring the Christian Soul: Overcoming Barriers to Completion in Christ through Healing Prayer*, (Eastbourne UK, Kingsway Publications, 1996), xiv, paragraph 2, [Restoring the Christian Soul: Overcoming Barriers to Completion in Christ through Healing Prayer eBook : Payne, Leanne: Amazon.co.uk: Kindle Store](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B000000000).

⁵³ Leanne Payne, *Restoring the Christian Soul*, xiv, paragraph 3.

⁵⁴ Leanne Payne, “We’ve Been ‘Undragoned’” in *Real Presence: The Christian Worldview of C. S. Lewis as Incarnational Reality*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Publishing Group, 1995), 63-75, [Real Presence: The Christian Worldview of C. S. Lewis as Incarnational Reality: Amazon.co.uk: Payne, Leanne: 9780801051722: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/9780801051722).

prayer may include “working out our salvation as God works in us” in these subject areas:^{55,56,57,58,59}

- acknowledging our need,
- responding to the Father’s love,
- the nature of the Father,
- revealing Christ through the gift of our bodies,
- the cross and confession, renouncing idols,
- overcoming addiction,
- how wounds can make us more whole,
- identifying brokenness,
- restoring broken boundaries, the true self forgives,
- the true self aspires to wholeness,
- the true self unites with God,
- the true self embraces same gender friendship,
- offering the gift of ourselves to the opposite gender,
- restoring woman’s honour,
- restoring man’s honour,
- for the body of Christ - His bride,
- hope and wellness.

NONBIBLICAL SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS INCLUDING GAY CIVIL MARRIAGE

While it is possible for outsiders to imagine same-sex relationships as being lifelong, loving, committed, faithful, and providing deep and enduring healthy companionship, the reality is very different.

The fundamental dynamic in same-sex relationships is one in which each partner is trying to find themselves and their identity in their partner.⁶⁰ Since the only place to find oneself is in oneself in union with Christ, this practice of unreality actually causes one to lose more of oneself over time, leaving each partner emptier and emptier.⁶¹ Same-sex relationships are rarely lifelong, and the longer they last the emptier the partners become.

⁵⁵ Andrew Comiskey, *Living Waters: Restoring Relational Integrity through the Broken Body of Christ*, 2020 ed., (Grandview MO, Desert Stream Press, 2020), <https://www.shopdesertstream.org/product-page/living-waters-guidebook-1>, <https://desertstreamministries.uscreen.io/orders/checkout?c=1592017>, [What is Living Waters](#)

⁵⁶ Dallas Willard & Jan Johnson, *Renovation of the Heart (20th Anniversary Edition): Putting on the character of Christ*. (London, UK, SPCK Publishing, 9 Nov. 2021), <https://dwillard.org/books/renovation-of-the-heart>

⁵⁷ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart 13-Session Video Curriculum*. (Franklin Springs, GA, Life Spring Resources), <https://lifespringsresources.com/renovation-of-the-heart-dvd-kit>, https://lifespringsresources.com/media/wysiwyg/Renovation_of_the_Heart_Resource_Guide.pdf

⁵⁸ Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit*. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, n.d.), 126-127, [The Healing Gifts of the Spirit: Amazon.co.uk: Agnes Mary White Sanford: 9780060670528: Books](#)

⁵⁹ Lin Button, “Books — HPS”, HPS, 2023, [Books — HPS \(healingprayerschool.org.uk\)](https://healingprayerschool.org.uk)

⁶⁰ Leanne Payne, “Matthew’s Story: Identity Crisis” in *The Broken Image*, 35-57.

⁶¹ From a personal story

One researcher on gay couples, Lee Badgett, noted, that “As Willem, who was married to a man, put it, ‘Fidelity is not between your legs, but between your ears’”.⁶²

For many same-sex relationships including gay marriages, faithfulness is just a euphemism for including sex with others, jointly or severally. Same-sex relationships that are truly exclusive⁶³ on the part of both partners are rare indeed, especially for men.^{64,65,66,67,68}

While good can be found within same-sex relationships, the typical emotional dependence, projection, and unfaithfulness makes for a dysfunctional relationship that in the end outweighs the good.⁶⁹

Yes, the church needs to find ways to recognise and welcome the people involved in such relationships, without explicitly or implicitly changing her teaching by doing so, including teaching on Biblical Sexuality.

THE CHURCH NEEDS TO CONFESS AND ASK FORGIVENESS OF THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY.

We acknowledge again that there is much for the Church to repent of in attitudes and behaviours towards LGBTQI+ people who have often been victims of prejudice and shunned or ignored in ways that have made it hard, sometimes impossible, to find a home in the church.⁷⁰

This confession needs to be specific so that specific repentance and amends can be made by the church. Some examples of such confession, repentance, and making amends, where applicable, are:⁷¹

- brushing aside heterosexual sin in the church family and expecting the LGBTQI+ community to live by higher standards than heterosexual believers are living out.
- ambivalence toward, dislike of, aversion to, prejudice against, fear of, and/or hatred of people who identify as LGBTQI+.⁷²
- fear of homosexual activity.

⁶² M. V. Lee Badgett, *When Gay People Get Married: What Happens When Societies Legalize Same-Sex Marriage*, (New York, NY, NYU Press, 1 Nov. 2010), 95, https://www.amazon.co.uk/When-Gay-People-Get-Married/dp/0814709303/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1677688373&sr=8-1

⁶³ ‘exclusive’ means closed or monogamous, i.e., one sexual partner until death

⁶⁴ David P. McWhirter, Andrew M. Mattison, *The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ : Prentice-Hall, 1984), 249-259, <https://www.amazon.com/Male-Couple-How-Relationships-Develop/dp/0135476615>.

⁶⁵ Michael Radkowsky, “Why do so many gay couples open up their relationships?”, *Washington Blade*, September 4, 2020, <https://www.washingtonblade.com/2020/09/04/why-do-so-many-gay-couples-open-up-their-relationships/>.

⁶⁶ Stuart Haggas, “Infidelity and the gay community: Do gay men struggle to be faithful?”, *LGBT HERO*, <https://www.lgbthero.org.uk/fs164-infidelity-and-the-gay-community>

⁶⁷ Peter McGraith, “Viewpoint: How has marriage changed life for gay people?”, *BBC News*, 2 May 2016, [Viewpoint: How has marriage changed life for gay people? - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-35484444)

⁶⁸ Daniel Mendelsohn, “What are the Plausible Causes of Homophobia?” in *The Elusive Embrace: Desire and the Riddle of Identity*, 1999. (New York City: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 46-50, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Elusive-Embrace-Daniel-Mendelsohn/dp/0375400958/ref=sr_1_1?crd=2CN9VBMM83AGM&keywords=The+Elusive+Embrace&qid=1679345505&s=books&prefix=the+elusive+embrace%2Cstripbooks%2C76&sr=1-1

⁶⁹ From a personal story

⁷⁰ James Parker, “Is ‘Pride’ a veil covering deep inner trauma?”, *MercatorNet: Navigating Modern Complexities*, 22 February 2023, [Is ‘Pride’ a veil covering deep inner trauma? | MercatorNet](https://www.mercatornet.com/articles/is-pride-a-veil-covering-deep-inner-trauma/)

⁷¹ Boynes, “The Judgmental Church” in *God & the LGBT Community*, 11-119.

⁷² Douglas Murray, *The Madness of Crowds: Gender, Race and Identity*, 1st Edition. (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2020), https://www.amazon.co.uk/Madness-Crowds-Gender-Identity-BESTSELLER/dp/1472979575/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1679345046&sr=1-1

- ongoing ignorance about the nature of same-sex attraction and gender confusion.
- failure to ***proclaim that people are not born gay or trans and therefore depriving them of hope.***
- caving to intimidation from LGBTQI+ activist's trying to silence the good news of the gospel of Jesus for the LGBTQI+ community.
- failure to speak the truth about non-biblical relationships and same-sex relationships, which is to, by default, agree with what the world says about them.
- making the church an unsafe place for people, who were once in the LGBTQI+ community and have put that behind them, by allowing, even welcoming, sexual sin within the church family and thus bringing temptation right into the church.
- blessing heterosexual and/or homosexual sin instead of loving the person as Jesus loves them enough to tell them that their illicit sex is slowly – or rapidly – destroying them. Such blessing of sin is actually cursing the person who is sinning.
- lack of a burning, deep compassion for people identifying as LGBTQI+ to see many become true sons and daughters of the Most High, walking in intimacy and joy with the Father as true believers.
- robbing people in the LGBTQI+ community of hope by failing to communicate the healing power of the cross to bring forgiveness, freedom and healing.
- failure to communicate the vision of the nature, beauty and joy of Biblical Sexuality and the significance of the design of our bodies as symbols of Christ and His Bride, the church.`
- failure to live that vision out fully in front of the LGBTQI+ community as a real example of what they could have.
- failure to invest time and energy in people genuinely open to, and gradually responding to, the tug of the Holy Spirit.
- failure to walk alongside people with a LGBTQI+ background in a sacrificial way giving them "tough love", both before and after salvation.
- failure to provide new Christians from a LGBTQI+ background with the opportunity to grow spiritually and personally into maturity, via guided spiritual formation, healing and practical mentoring.
- raising too high expectations that feelings of same-sex attraction will diminish more quickly and/or more completely than may actually be the case for any given person, including raising expectations for them to always completely go away for every person.
- Where the above have occurred, the failure to acknowledge the failure and where possible put it right, learn from the failure and correct it so it is not repeated going forward.

GODLY ALTERNATIVES TO BIBLICAL MARRIAGE: BIBLICAL FRIENDSHIP & SINGLE CELIBATE CALLING IN CHRIST

Marriage is far from the whole relational picture in the Bible and within the Christian tradition. Christians have frequently celebrated other forms of relationship, such as the gift of deep biblical friendship and the family of the Church at its best. We have too often implied that marriage is for everyone, the only place to find close relationship and belonging, with the result that we have woefully side-lined single people and the value of devoted biblical friendship within and beyond the life of the Christian community.

Both marriage and single celibacy are to be lived now in full view of Christ's Kingdom in which our individual relationship to Christ is growing into its ultimate full union with Him to be consummated at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.^{73,74}

CONCLUSION

There is still work to be done on how the church can best provide a better welcome for, and inclusion of, LGBTQI+ seekers and Christians from an LGBTQI+ background in the church family. However, the church can do many things now that we already know work. It will take some time to fully implement these proven approaches. Together we can learn new and better ways to help and bless the LGBTQI+ community as we go forward before the Lord -- by bringing them into the Kingdom and helping them to grow into full spiritual and personal maturity.

APPENDIX

Letters/Stories of Damage caused by the Church to people who have identified as LGBTQI+

In discussions about Biblical Marriage, and particularly Biblical Sexuality, there has been much reference to appalling accounts of attempts by the church to heal people from the LGBTQI+ community, labelling such "attempts" as effectively being spiritual, psychological, and emotional abuse.

Any responsible leader, church or otherwise, would make an objective assessment of any accusation **before** deciding on how to deal with it.

What has been missing until now is an objective assessment of such letters and stories by biblically orthodox Christians who have deep experience in these matters. References to these accounts, and/or passing these accounts on, should be held in abeyance until they have been adequately assessed.

Any such objective assessment of this kind of accusation should include answers to questions such as the following:

- What is the direct source of this accusation?
- Is this source the specific person who believes they experienced the healing ministry of the church as abusive?
- If not, who is the specific person that this accusation is asserting received abuse from the church?
- What local fellowship or church group is alleged to have committed this abuse?
- What is the context and circumstances of this alleged abuse?
- What is the nature of the abuse that is alleged?
- What do the other people involved in the context and circumstances of the alleged abuse have to say about the abuse?
- How did the activity, within which the abuse is alleged to have occurred, line up with biblical

⁷³ West, *Our Bodies Tell God's Story*, 80-83

⁷⁴ Leanne Payne, "The Mystical Marriage" in *Crisis in Masculinity*, (Grand Rapids MI, Baker Publishing Group, 1995), 38-43, [Crisis in Masculinity: Amazon.co.uk: Leanne Payne: 9780801053207: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/9780801053207)

teaching on the practice of discipleship, spiritual formation, healing, and church discipline?

- What faults, if any, occurred in that situation in terms of biblical standards?
- Have all the “faults” found been discerned for their nature by people with in-depth experience in inner healing, counselling, and/or therapy?
- Who is ultimately responsible for any abuse that actually occurred?
- What changes, if any, need to be made by the local fellowship or church group in which the alleged abuse occurred?
- Have these changes been made?
- What discussions need to be held with the person who experienced what was determined to be abusive in the light of the answers to the above questions?
- Have these discussions happened?
- What kind of remedial care should be offered, and provided if accepted, to the person who experienced what was determined to be abusive?
- Has this care been provided?

The same kind of truth-seeking and care of the people involved should be carried out as would be done in the case of direct sexual abuse.

Only the types of changes discovered to be needed in healing ministries should be discussed openly and that done only as learning experiences for other healing ministries.

Throwing around unsubstantiated, unvetted and/or un-investigated accusations in the body of Christ is gossip, which the scriptures speak strongly against as sin.