



Navigating Conversations about Sexuality with Truth and Grace – PART 1: BIBLICAL TEACHING

Dave Detwiler, Staff Development Specialist, September 19, 2022

As we field more and more LGBTQ+ questions, it's important that we understand the larger context of sexual ethics in Scripture. For ever since the Fall, human sexuality has been broken, or "not the way it's supposed to be,"¹ with *each one of us* in need of God's redemptive grace and power in order to honor him in this area. That means we must take a fresh look at what the Bible teaches ...

ABOUT MARRIAGE

Adapted from our marriage brochure: Marriage is a gift from God that is to be fully enjoyed. It is an exclusive, intimate, lifelong, publicly affirmed partnership between one man and one woman who fully share one life as a new family—including sexual intimacy, which is designed by God to be pursued and enjoyed only within the relationship of marriage (more on that below).

*Myths that persist*²:

- Myth 1: Marriage represents God's best for every person—and especially every Christian.
- Myth 2: Marriage is all you need to fulfill your relational needs and eliminate loneliness.
- Myth 3: Marriage means that you will no longer struggle with sexual desire toward others.

Key passages:

- **Gen 1:27; 2:24** – Jesus quotes both of these verses to clarify God's design for marriage.
- **Matt 22:30** – But he adds that while marriage is good, it is not part of life in God's kingdom.
- **Eph 5:31-32** – Paul reveals that marriage is designed to illustrate an even greater intimacy.
- **Heb 13:4** – Marriage is honored by reserving sexual intimacy for that relationship alone.
- **Matt 19:3-6, NIV:**

³ Some Pharisees came to [Jesus] to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" ⁴ "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' ⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Fair question: How is Genesis 1:27 (quoted in v. 4) relevant to the question of divorce?

¹ The memorable title of Cornelius Plantinga Jr.'s classic work on sin, published in 1995.

² I'm indebted to Sean McDowell for getting me thinking about various myths relating to marriage, singleness, and sex—many of which he addresses in his helpful book *Chasing Love: Sex, Love, and Relationships in a Confused Culture* (Nashville: B&H, 2020).

Key observation: “[Jesus] only needed to quote Genesis 2:24 to make his point about divorce—married people have become ‘one flesh’ and therefore shouldn’t get divorced. Why, then, does Jesus start in Genesis 1:27—‘God made them male and female’—which explicitly highlights sexual difference? ... If Jesus didn’t think that sexual difference is essential for marriage, then his quotation of Genesis 1:27, which talks about sexual difference, is unnecessary and superfluous. But Jesus does quote it, so it would seem that male-female pairing is part of what marriage is according to Jesus.”³

Main takeaway: Jesus affirms that God’s design for marriage involves one man and one woman who are united as “one flesh” (see Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved*, chapter 2, for details).

ABOUT SINGLENESS

Myths that persist ⁴:

Myth 1: Singleness is too hard—especially if that means no sex!

Myth 2: Singleness requires a special calling.

Myth 3: Singleness means no intimacy.

Myth 4: Singleness means no family.

Myth 5: Singleness hinders ministry.

Myth 6: Singleness wastes your sexuality.

Myth 7: Singleness is easy.

Myth 8: Being single means there’s probably something wrong with you.

Key passages:

- **Jesus**, being single, shows us that marriage and sex are not required for human flourishing.
- **Matt 19:10-12** – He affirms that remaining single “for the sake of the kingdom” is good.
- **Matt 22:30** – As noted above, he reveals that none of us will be married in God’s kingdom.

“Apparently, there are more wonderful pleasures in store for God’s people [in the kingdom] than sexual release and even the exclusive interpersonal intimacy of marriage. Whatever those pleasures are and whatever kinds of relationships we will have with other believers and with Christ Himself, who elsewhere calls us His bride (Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17), they will last forever, unlike the fleeting pleasures of even the longest and most wonderful marriage in this life. Single adults will not be able to complain that they missed out on anything!”⁵

- **1 Cor 7:32-35** – Paul adds that a single person can be fully devoted to “the Lord’s affairs.”

³ Preston Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved: Why Homosexuality is Not Just an Issue* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), pp. 35-36.

⁴ The first seven myths are taken from Sam Allberry, *7 Myths about Singleness* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2019). Sam is a celibate same-sex attracted Christian and a respected pastor.

⁵ Craig Blomberg, “The Choice and High Calling of Marriage and Singleness” in *Marriage: Its Foundation, Theology, and Mission in a Changing World*, eds. Curt Hamner, et al (Chicago: Moody, 2018), p. 93.

- **1 Cor 7:7-9, CSB:**

⁷ I wish that all people were as I am. But each has his own gift from God, one person has this gift, another has that. ⁸ I say to the unmarried * and to widows: It is good for them if they remain as I am. ⁹ But if they do not have self-control, they should marry, since it is better to marry than to burn with desire [“with desire” is implied—it is not in the original Gk].

* Both the CSB and the NIV add the footnote, “Or widowers,” which may help us make sense of this passage.

Fair question: How is it wise to encourage a single person with no self-control over their sexual desire to get married? How would that make for a healthy marriage? But if that is what Paul is saying, wouldn't it also apply to those with same-sex attraction—that they should marry as well, rather than “burn with [same-sex] desire”?

Main takeaway: Both Jesus and Paul affirm that marriage and sexual intimacy are not required to experience God's best in this life. This is good news for those who are single—regardless of their sexual orientation.

ABOUT SEXUAL INTIMACY

Again, adapted from our marriage brochure: God created both marriage and sexual pleasure, and he asks us to trust him so that we will enjoy these amazing gifts in the way that he intended. The one and only context where sexual intimacy is to be pursued and enjoyed, as we'll see below, is between a wife and her husband. Engaging in the beautiful gift of sex in any other relationship does not honor God, who longs for us to experience life to the fullest.

Timothy Keller sums up the biblical teaching beautifully: “Sex is perhaps the most powerful God-created way to help you give your entire self to another human being. Sex is God's appointed way for two people to reciprocally say to one another, ‘I belong completely, permanently, and exclusively to you.’ You must not use sex to say anything less.”⁶

Myths that persist ⁷:

- Myth 1: Sex is an unavoidable drive, a natural appetite, and therefore no big deal.
- Myth 2: Sex is a necessary evil, something degrading and dirty, but required for making babies.
- Myth 3: Sex is a necessary form of self-expression—a way to “be yourself” and “find yourself.”
- Myth 4: Sex is a private matter between consenting adults—it's nobody else's business.
- Myth 5: The Bible has a thoroughly negative view of sex (as per Myth 2 above).

Key passages:

- **Gen 1:28** – The first purpose of sex revealed in the Bible relates to having children.

⁶ Timothy Keller with Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (New York: Riverhead, 2011), p. 257.

⁷ The first four myths are taken from Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, chapter 8: “Sex and Marriage.”

- **Gen 2:24-25** – But another purpose is enjoying a special unity or bonding as “one flesh.”
- **1 Cor 6:16** – Paul later clarifies that this special unity or bonding occurs even in casual sex.
- **1 Cor 7:1-6** – He then reminds us that enjoying sex in marriage is about mutual self-giving.
- **Prov 5:15-23; Song of Songs** – The OT also affirms enjoying sexual intimacy in marriage.
- **Heb 13:4, ESV:**

⁴Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral * and adulterous.

* The Gk. word behind “sexually immoral” is a general one for “sexual sin of any kind” (see below for more). But because it is distinguished here from the “adulterous,” meaning those cheating on their spouses, it probably refers to sexual sin other than adultery, and therefore would include sex prior to marriage. We fail to honor marriage when we engage in sexual intimacy outside of that context.

Fair question: Shouldn't we be glad that the more recent progressive, or affirming, Christian view is also wanting to honor marriage by restricting sexual intimacy to that relationship alone?

Main takeaway: The Bible affirms that sexual intimacy is a gift to be enjoyed, but only within the marriage relationship, which, as Jesus already affirmed, involves one man and one woman.

ABOUT SEXUAL DESIRE

- **James 1:13-15** – Sexual desire itself is not a sin, nor is the temptation to act on that desire.
- **Matt 5:27-28** – Jesus clarifies that when sexual desire turns into lustful thoughts, we sin.
- **Heb 4:15-16** – Jesus knows all about sexual temptation, and we are urged to seek his help.
- **Titus 2:11-14** – His grace helps us to exercise self-control over these “worldly passions.”
- **1 Thess 4:3-8, NET**, and laid out in a syntactical display, to help us see what Paul is saying:

³For this is God's will: that you become holy,
 [specifically] that you keep away from sexual immorality,
 = ⁴that each of you know how to possess his [or her] own body [lit. “vessel”]
 in holiness and honor,
⁵not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God.
⁶In this matter no one should violate the rights of his brother [or sister]
 or take advantage of him [or her],
 because the Lord is the avenger in all these cases,
 as we also told you earlier and warned you solemnly.
⁷For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness.
⁸Consequently the one who rejects this is not rejecting human authority
 but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Fair question: Given that one's sexual desire is not chosen, but just is, wouldn't acting on it be consistent with how God created that person—regardless of their sexual orientation?

Key reminder: "Due to our fallen condition, all human perceptions and experiences are subject to the distortive effects of sin. Due to sin, all my loves—my affections and attractions, my desires and devotions—are susceptible to deviations from God’s design. Experience might confirm my desires as good, yet it also might mislead me into mistaking what pleases me for what pleases God."⁸ This is true for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation.

A leading voice for the more recent progressive view affirms this as well:

"Just because an attraction or drive is biological doesn’t mean it’s okay to act on ... For example, suppose a man is just ‘wired’ to be attracted to women. His hormones and brain structures work together to give him feelings of attraction when a pretty woman walks by, and that doesn’t stop just because he gets married. Does that make it okay for him to cheat on his wife? Of course not. His attractions may be rooted in his biology, but acting on them is still sinful.

"We all have inborn tendencies to sin in any number of ways. If gay people’s same-sex attractions were inborn, that wouldn’t necessarily mean it’s okay to act on them, and if we all agreed that gay sex is sinful, that wouldn’t necessarily mean that same-sex attractions aren’t inborn."⁹

Main takeaway: The Bible affirms that we are to honor God with the choices we make in response to our unchosen sexual desire. Just because an attraction is there, doesn’t mean that it is God-given and therefore we should act on it.

ABOUT SEXUAL SIN

Key understanding: "*Porneia* [usually translated "sexual immorality"] was the broadest term for inappropriate sexual relations in the Greek language and included premarital sex, extramarital sex (which by itself could also be called *moicheia*—'adultery'), indecent exposure, homosexual sex, prostitution, polygamy, and bestiality; in short, any kind of sexual relations outside of monogamous, heterosexual marriage."¹⁰

- **Matt 15:19** – Jesus states that "sexual immorality" originates in our hearts and defiles us.
- **Gal 5:19** – It’s the first of "the works of the flesh," meaning our fallen human nature.
- **Matt 5:32; 19:9** – Sexual sin betrays the marriage covenant and is grounds for divorce.
- **John 4:1-26; 8:2-11** – Jesus was exceedingly gracious toward those engaged in sexual sin.
- **1 Cor 5:9-10** – Paul says we are *not* to condemn or avoid unbelievers engaged in sexual sin.
- **1 Cor 5:11-13** – But he *does* say believers are to hold *each other* accountable in this area.

⁸ Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, *Marriage, Scripture, and the Church: Theological Discernment on the Question of Same-Sex Union* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021), p. 22.

⁹ Justin Lee, *Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays-Vs.-Christians Debate* (New York: Jericho, 2012), p. 62.

¹⁰ Blomberg, "The Choice and High Calling of Marriage and Singleness" in *Marriage: Its Foundation, Theology, and Mission in a Changing World*, p. 99.

- **1 Cor 6:18-20, NET** (cf. Col 3:5, which says to “Put to death ... sexual immorality”):

¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality! “Every sin a person commits is outside of the body” *—but the immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

* This translation, perhaps rightly, leans toward seeing this as a Corinthian slogan, which reveals their casual attitude toward sexual activity outside of marriage, as if what is done with one’s body is not a big deal (Paul actually starts calling them on this starting in verse 12; see that full stretch for Paul’s complete argument).

Main takeaway: A proper understanding of the Greek word behind “sexual immorality” affirms that any sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman is a sin. God takes *all* of it seriously, regardless of sexual orientation, and so should we.

ABOUT SAME-SEX SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Once again, from a leading proponent of the more recent progressive view: “Even with a more traditional reading that condemns gay sex, the Bible never condemns gay people for who they are and what they feel. We may disagree on whether the Bible can be reconciled with same-sex marriage, but we should be able to agree that the Bible is not homophobic and does not justify the unkind attitudes some Christians have become known for.”¹¹

Myths that persist:

- Myth 1: It’s a sin to be gay, or same-sex attracted.
- Myth 2: Two wrong options here: Being gay is a gift from God, or Being gay is a choice.
- Myth 3: Those who experience same-sex attraction can be “cured” of that if they want to be.
- Myth 4: The Bible singles out same-sex sexual behavior for special condemnation.

Key passages:

- **Lev 18:22; 20:13** – The Jews understood same-sex relations as part of “sexual immorality.”
- **Matt 15:19** – Jesus spoke against “sexual immorality,” which included same-sex relations.
- **1 Tim 1:10** – This verse, and the following passage, appear to refer back to Leviticus.¹²
- **1 Cor 6:9-11, NET** (netbible.org, a free online resource with lots of helpful info):

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners,^a practicing homosexuals,^b ¹⁰ thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ Some of you once lived this way. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

¹¹ Lee, *Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays-Vs.-Christians Debate*, p. 243.

¹² For the details behind this important connection, see Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved*, Ch. 7.

- a** [From the actual NET footnote] This term is sometimes rendered “effeminate,” although in contemporary English usage such a translation could be taken to refer to demeanor rather than behavior. BDAG 613s.v. μαλακός 2 has “pert. to being passive in a same-sex relationship, *effeminate* esp. of *catamites*, of men and boys who are sodomized by other males in such a relationship.” L&N 88.281 states, “the passive male partner in homosexual intercourse” ... A number of modern translations have adopted the phrase “male prostitutes” for μαλακοί in 1 Cor 6:9 (NIV, NRSV, NLT) but this could be misunderstood by the modern reader to mean “males who sell their services to women,” while the term in question appears, at least in context, to relate to homosexual activity between males. Furthermore, it is far from certain that prostitution as commonly understood (the selling of sexual favors) is specified here, as opposed to a consensual relationship. Thus the translation “passive homosexual partners” has been used here.
- b** [Again, from the actual NET footnote] On this term BDAG 135 s.v. ἀρσενικοιτης states, “a male who engages in sexual activity w. a pers. of his own sex ...of one who assumes the dominant role in same-sex activity, opp. μαλακός.” L&N 88.280 states, “a male partner in homosexual intercourse ...It is possible that ἀρσενικοιτης in certain contexts refers to the active male partner in homosexual intercourse in contrast with μαλακός, the passive male partner.” Since there is a distinction in contemporary usage between sexual orientation and actual behavior, the qualification “practicing” was supplied in the translation.

Fair question: Isn't it possible that Paul is referring here only to abusive or exploitative same-sex sexual intercourse, rather than consensual same-sex intimacy? (Yes, it is possible.)

But don't miss this: For Paul to say that “some of you once lived this way,” but have since become lives changed by Christ, means that the church must have been incredibly welcoming, providing a safe place for anyone to learn about Jesus without being condemned or turned away due to their past or current sinful behavior. And it's notable that Paul urges them to root their identity not in their former behavior, but in what God has done for them in Christ, and then to live out that new identity—which probably means that people continued to struggle with their past, including acting on their sexual desire, as they learned what it means to follow Jesus well. In other words, it was messy and required a lot of patient shepherding/discipling.

- **Rom 1:18-2:4, CSB**, revealing our brokenness due to having turned away from God:

Important reminder regarding context: “Paul doesn't write this chapter to condemn gay people. He writes it to condemn all people,” so that we can *all* see our need for Jesus.¹³

24 Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves.

Don't miss this: “Up to this point, Paul's condemnation could apply equally well to all sexual offenses, heterosexual as well as homosexual.”¹⁴

26 ... God delivered them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. **27** The men in the same way also left natural relations with women and were inflamed in their lust for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the appropriate penalty of their error.

¹³ Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved*, p. 102.

¹⁴ Richard B. Hays, “Homosexuality,” in *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (New York: HarperOne, 1996), p. 386.

Important background info: "Same-sex relations between males typically followed the dominator/dominated paradigm, esp. during the Roman era. [But] there were exceptions to this pattern, including adult consensual relations. These exceptions become the norm when we look at female same-sex relations. By far, the most common type of relationship we see between females was adult-consensual; some were even described as marriages."¹⁵

28 And because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a corrupt mind so that they do what is not right. **29** They are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, God-haters, arrogant, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31** senseless, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful. **32** Although they know God's just sentence—that those who practice such things deserve to die—they not only do them, but even applaud others who practice them.

2 Therefore, every one of you who judges is without excuse. For when you judge another, you condemn yourself, since you, the judge, do the same things.

*Several important observations*¹⁶:

- "Paul singles out homosexual intercourse for special attention because he regards it as providing a particularly graphic image of the way in which human fallenness distorts God's created order."
- "Homosexual acts are not, however, specially reprehensible sins; they are no worse than any of the other manifestations of human unrighteousness listed in the passage (vv. 29-31)."
- "For Paul, self-righteous judgment of homosexuality is just as sinful as the homosexual behavior itself."

Fair question #1: Again, is Paul only condemning abusive or exploitative sexual activity?

Fair question #2: Or is Paul only condemning sexual promiscuity fueled by lust?

Fair question #3: How can same-sex sexual intimacy be "unnatural" for one who is gay?

(For thoughtful answers to these three questions, see Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved*, Ch. 6.)

Fair question #4: And if all gay sex is wrong, why would God make someone gay?¹⁷

Fair question #5: Can't we just agree to disagree, like we do with women in leadership?

Notable conclusions from various scholars who uphold the more recent progressive view:

E. P. Sanders: "We should let Paul say what he said, and then make the decisions that we should make, which should take into account the modern world ... Paul's own view of homosexual activities in Romans 1, where both males and females who have homosexual

¹⁵ Preston Sprinkle, "Did Adult Consensual Same-Sex Relationships Exist in Bible Times?" Pastoral Paper 7 (The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender), p. 7, available for download from www.centerforfaith.com.

¹⁶ Hays, "Homosexuality," pp. 388-389.

¹⁷ See the discussion under "Sexual Desire" above, pp. 4-5.

intercourse are condemned ... is a completely unambiguous condemnation of all homosexual activity."¹⁸

William Loader: "Paul employs same-sex passion and its fulfillment in same-sex intercourse, among both women and men, as his first item of evidence for human depravity ... I will therefore want to take what Paul says seriously, but his views are to be assessed in the light of all relevant available information, as a result of which we should feel free to reach different conclusions from Paul if the evidence suggests that this is appropriate."¹⁹

Luke Timothy Johnson: "I think it important to state clearly that we do, in fact, reject the straightforward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority when we declare that same-sex unions can be holy and good. And what exactly is that authority? We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to, which tells us that to claim our own sexual orientation is in fact to accept the way in which God has created us."²⁰

Main takeaway: The Bible affirms that same-sex sexual behavior is one of many expressions of sexual sin, all of which reflect the brokenness of human sexuality. The challenge for each one of us, regardless of our sexual orientation, is to become so captivated by Jesus that we will gladly surrender every area of our lives to him—including our sexuality.

ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS

- **Luke 9:23-26** – To follow Jesus, one must "deny himself" and "take up his cross daily."
- **Luke 14:33** – That is, we must give up everything—including our sexual desires.

But consider this thoughtful reminder, from an influential affirming leader: "Mandatory celibacy for gay Christians differs from any other kind of Christian self-denial, including involuntary celibacy for some straight Christians. Even when straight Christians seek a spouse but cannot find one, the church does not ask them to relinquish any future hope of marriage."²¹ This has important pastoral implications as we walk alongside those who are same-sex attracted and desire to faithfully follow Jesus.

Further thoughts on this, from a celibate gay Christian and scholar: "Celibacy is not merely a temporary state to be lamented and endured as people make their inevitable passage toward marriage. Nor is celibacy to be understood as an inferior calling in which same-sex attracted Christians fail to live out a truly healed or transformed life. On the contrary, celibate gay Christians precisely in and through their celibacy may be imitators of the life of

¹⁸ E. P. Sanders, *Paul: The Apostle's Life, Letters and Thought* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), pp. 370, 373

¹⁹ William Loader, *The New Testament on Sexuality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), pp. 320-21.

²⁰ Luke Timothy Johnson, "Homosexuality and the Church: Scripture and Experience," *Commonweal Magazine*, June 11, 2007, <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/homosexuality-church-0>.

²¹ Matthew Vines, *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships* (New York: Convergent, 2014), p. 17.

Christ, signs of the coming kingdom, witnesses to the gracious calling of God for themselves and for their married friends and neighbors."²²

- **Mark 10:29-30, niv:**

²⁸ Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!" ²⁹ "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel ³⁰ will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.

Fair question: How are we doing as a church in helping to fulfill this promise for those who happen to be same-sex attracted and desire to faithfully follow Jesus? That is, do we truly feel like family, where they experience consistent love and support?

- **Luke 5:27-32; 7:29-35; 15:1-2; 19:1-10** – Jesus' scandalous love for "tax collectors and sinners" gives us a clue as to how we should behave toward sexual minorities.²³ We'll unpack this in part 2 of this training.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The following resources all deal with what the Bible teaches about the matters above, with a special emphasis on what it teaches about same-sex behavior. Resources that discuss pastoral questions in more detail will be included in part 2 of this training.

To give both sides of this debate a fair hearing:

- Sprinkle, Preston (ed.), *Two Views on Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016). This is an in-depth analysis where contributors respond to each other in a respectful way.
- Unbelievable? podcast (video format), "Side A & B Gay Christians debate sexuality - Brandan Robertson & David Bennett" (premiered February 21, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMsv6ZBK8SE&t=205s>. This is far easier to take in than the book above, and perhaps the best place to start in understanding both views.

If you only have time for one resource:

- Preston Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved: Why Homosexuality is Not Just an Issue* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015). Available for teens as *Living in a Gray World* (our Student Ministry staff have used this resource).

Additional resources:

- Nate Collins and Greg Coles, "Is Same-Sex Attraction (or 'Being Gay') a Sin?" Pastoral Paper 3, available for download from www.centerforfaith.com. We assign this in DEVELUP. Nate and Greg are celibate gay Christians.
- Preston Sprinkle, "15 Reasons for Affirming Same-Sex Relations—and 15 Responses" Pastoral Paper 5, available for download from www.centerforfaith.com. A really helpful critique of the main affirming arguments.
- _____, "Did Adult Consensual Same-Sex Relationships Exist in Bible Times?" Pastoral Paper 7, available for download from www.centerforfaith.com.
- _____, "Why Didn't Jesus Mention Homosexuality?" Pastoral Paper 2, available for download from www.centerforfaith.com.
- Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, *Marriage, Scripture, and the Church: Theological Discernment on the Question of Same-Sex Union* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021). A thorough and theologically-rich treatment of the question.

²² Wesley Hill, "Washed and Still Waiting: An Evangelical Approach to Homosexuality," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 59.2 (2016), p. 329. For a thorough practical discussion on this, see Allberry, *7 Myths of Singleness*.

²³ See Sprinkle, *People to Be Loved*, p. 77ff, as he was the first to draw my attention to this analogy.