



# QUINAULT

BAPTIST CHURCH

*Organizing Biblical Principles of  
Gender and Sexuality*



## How to Use this Booklet

The current confusion surrounding sexuality and gender in our culture can be overwhelming. There have been numerous new books published in the last five years that have sought to help Christians navigate these choppy waters. However, we recognize that not everyone can profit from reading through several books on the issue. This booklet is an attempt to consolidate the wisdom of many of the best books that have been written recently, and put them in a concise, bullet-point format.

The first three points serve as the Biblical grounding for the practical application that follows. The first section deals with a basic theology of the body and how sin affects us internally. The next is an explanation of what God's Law forbids/requires, and the third what the Gospel promises in Christ. After these three foundational sections, there is a series of practical applications of what these Biblical doctrines look like when we put them into practice in our life.

Feel free to skim through these points and find what is most pertinent to you or answers your questions.

The section titled "Wisdom for Christian Parents" are just that—areas of *wisdom*. Meaning, you should not understand that section to be a "straight line" application of God's Word, but rather "jagged line" implications of God's Word that fellow believers should consider seriously, but may disagree on.

We pray that this book serves you, your family, and those around you as you seek to "glorify God in your body" (1 Cor 6:20).

- *The Elders of QBC*

# **The Body, Illicit Desire, and Identity Confusion**

1. Since all people are made in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27), our bodies are an integral aspect of our identity as image bearers. We are irreducibly *embodied* beings.
2. The Bible puts a very high value on our physical bodies. The Son of God took on flesh at His incarnation and continues to possess a glorified human body (John 1:14; 1 John 4:1-3; Luke 24:39). While we will be temporarily separated from our bodies at death, all persons will be reunited with their bodies—some to eternal life, some to eternal death—at the Last Day and will remain in a body forever (Rom 8:23; Rev 20:4-5, 11-15). For Christians now indwelt with the Holy Spirit, our physical bodies are bestowed with the dignity of being “temples of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 6:19).
3. Sin mars God’s image but does not eradicate it (Gen. 9:6). Sin alienates us from God and makes God’s Law seem strange, burdensome, and constricting to the natural man (Isa 59:2; Rom 7:7-25).
4. The curse of sin affects all of creation, including our physical bodies as well as our minds/hearts (Rom 7:24; 8:5; 8:23; 2 Cor 4:16). This leads to morally neutral infirmities that affect the body (disability, illness, death) as well as the mind and heart (mental illness) (2 Cor 5:1-4; cf. John 9:1-3). We are not morally culpable for these experiences of the Fall.

On the other hand, the consequence of sin can also lead to morally culpable infirmities, such as illicit and unnatural desires, passions, loves, or inclinations—for these we are morally responsible (Rom 6:12; John 3:19; Eph 2:1-3; 2 Thess 2:10-12).

5. Therefore, it is not surprising for sinful, unnatural desires to *feel* natural and familiar (as is the case with homosexual lust in Rom 1:24-28) nor is it surprising for some to find themselves *feeling* alienated from their own bodies (Rom 7:22-24). Since the image of God is expressed through our sexed bodies and sin alienates us from the One whose image we bear, sin *can* leave some feeling dislocated from their own bodily, sexed identity (i.e. a man *feeling* that he is really a woman).

*Note:* "Gender dysphoria" is the psychological phenomenon of a dislocation between one's biological sex and their internal sense of identity, commonly described as feeling as if one is "a man trapped in a woman's body" or vice versa, or a more generalized confusion of one's gender-identity. The term does not imply a positive acceptance of the dysphoric feelings, but simply describes the phenomenon.

6. God's Law, not our feelings, intuitions, or passions, is our guide for determining right and wrong, and identity (Ps 19:7-14; Jer 17:9-10).

# What God's Law Tells Us

1. There are only two sexes: male and female (Gen 1:27)—this identity is made evident by our physical bodies. Our bodies are given to us to be used in such a way to glorify God (1 Cor. 6:12-20) (including what we do sexually)

*Note:* The tragic and rare cases of those born with ambiguous sexual organs (intersex) do not negate this truth, but only demonstrate the depth to which the curse of sin can break our physical bodies (Matt 19:12.)

"Moreover, some persons, in rare instances, may possess an objective medical condition in which their anatomical development may be ambiguous or does not match their genetic chromosomal sex. Such persons are also made in the image of God and should live out their biological sex, insofar as it can be known." – (*PCA General Assembly's Report on Human Sexuality.*)<sup>1</sup>

2. Gender, a term historically synonymous with biological sex, now frequently refers to one's own perceived sense of self-identity that does not necessarily correspond to their biological sex. This view, however, is contrary to God's Law. While we can acknowledge that some expressions of gender are necessarily culturally conditioned (*how one culture expresses masculinity or femininity may differ from another*), God's Law makes it evident

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<sup>1</sup> <https://pcaga.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/AIC-Report-to-48th-GA-5-28-20-1.pdf>

that it is forbidden for humans to embrace a cultural expression of gender that seeks to blur gender lines (Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:2-16).<sup>2</sup>

3. While acting upon sinful desires leads to much more egregious sin and consequences (Rom 1:24-25), the Bible describes the desires and cravings for sin as themselves sinful (Rom 6:11-12; 1 Pet 1:14; 2:11; 4:2-3; Titus 3:3). Thus, illicit sexual desires, be they for someone of the same-sex, or for anyone outside of the covenant of marriage, are to be repented of and mortified. Nevertheless, there is a distinction between *temptation* to sin and *sin* itself (James 1:14-15; Heb 4:15). Temptation transforms into sin at the point in which we “internally ponder and entertain the proposal and desire,” (Statement 6, of *PCA GA’s Report on Human Sexuality*. See also, Statements 4-5).
4. Similarly, while we can acknowledge that someone’s temptation to transgress their God-given gender may not *necessarily* be sinful, it becomes sinful to the degree that the individual actively entertains the desires and relishes the idea of rejecting God’s Law. These desires must be put to death and repented of (Col 3:5).
5. Unrepented lust leads to the dishonoring of our bodies (Rom 1:24-25).
6. The only context in which the gift of sex is to be enjoyed is within the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and woman

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<sup>2</sup> <https://marcjssims.com/2021/08/19/an-overview-of-a-difficult-passage-1-cor-112-16/>

(Matt 19:3-6; Heb 13:4). The gift of sex is given to depict the indelible “one-flesh” union of husband and wife which illustrates our union with God through Christ (Gen 2:24-25; 1 Cor 6:16-17). Further it is given for procreation (Gen 1:28; 2:18); to give pleasure, comfort, and unity (Prov 5:15-20; Song of Songs); and to prevent sexual immorality (1 Cor 7:1-5, 9, 36).

7. Homosexual acts are contrary to “nature” because they subvert the design of male-female intercourse with the potentiality of child-bearing in the act (Rom 1:26-27). One purpose of sexual differentiation (male and female) is for the purpose of fulfilling the original mandate: *be fruitful and multiply* (Gen 1:28). This is why it was “not good” for Adam to be alone—he cannot fulfill the mandate to bear children alone and needs Eve (Gen 2:18).
8. We must not give approval or support to what earns God’s wrath (Rom. 1:32; 1 Cor. 13:6). Like all other sins, homosexual acts and lusts are to be confessed and repented of if one is to inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10).
9. God calls men and women to embrace unique and complementary roles in the world, the church, and the family. While there is far more that is similar than distinct, there are significant ways in which godliness for a man bears out unique responsibilities that differ from godliness as a woman, and vice versa (1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Pet 3:1-7; Eph 5:22-33).

# **What the Gospel Tells Us**

1. Jesus' life and death have provided the means for any sinner to be reconciled with God, have their sins forgiven, and be declared righteous (2 Cor 5:21; Ps 130; 1 Cor 6:11). The wrath of God for the sins of the Church have fallen wholly and completely on Christ so that there now remains no condemnation for those who have turned from their sin and put their faith in Christ (Rom 8:1-3).
2. Prior to our conversion, the Holy Spirit begins to regenerate our dead hearts and give us new desires for godliness. This process of the Holy Spirit regenerating our inner selves with new thoughts and desires carries on throughout our lives until God brings us home (John 3:3-8; Eph 2:1-5; Rom 8:9-11). While Christians are responsible to put their sins to death, they are not left alone in their battles with sin but are helped by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:5, 8:13; Gal 5:16-25) and fellow Christians (Eph 4:11-16; Heb 3:12-14; Gal 6:1-2).
3. Therefore, repentance is always possible for those who are in Christ (1 Cor 10:13) and through Christ we now imperfectly, yet sincerely, strive to obey God's Law (Rom 3:31; Rom 8:4).
4. Christians will continue to struggle with sin until we die or the Lord returns, but God will never abandon them—He will finish what He started (Phil 1:6; Rom 8:38-39).
5. God places His children into the family of God in the local church where he or she is to experience the community, love,

fellowship, and accountability of the fellow saints that will help them walk through the life God has called them to (Mark 10:29-30; Eph 4:11-16; Heb 3:12-14; 1 Cor 12:12-27).

6. The New Testament upholds singleness as a praise-worthy and laudable calling and gift that God bestows on some Christians within His Church (Matt 19:10-12; 1 Cor 7:6-9, 32-35).

## Practical Application

1. Nowhere in the Bible do we have any grounds for identifying with our sinful desires, rather we are to "put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness," (Eph 4:22-24).

There is a bright line drawn between our former selves enslaved to "deceitful desires" and our new selves in Christ. So, while honesty about our struggles is always commendable, if a Christian were to experience strong gender dysphoria or same-sex desires, they should not see those as true identities (*gay Christian, queer Christian, etc.*).

*Note:* For more on this, read Rosaria Butterfield's: [Is Sexual Orientation a Concept Christians Ought to Use?](#)<sup>3</sup>, or for a deeper dive, chps. 3-4 of Rosaria Butterfield's *Openness Unhindered*. See also statements 9-10 of the [PCA's General Assembly Report on Human Sexuality](#).

2. In no interactions should we ever "rejoice in wrongdoing" (1 Cor 13:6) or give approval to what Scripture identifies as wrong (Rom 1:32), nor should we ever make someone think that one can be embracing a life of unrepentant sexual sin yet be able to inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-11). Yet, the nature of our relationship dictates different responses when someone asks us,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://rosariabutterfield.com/new-blog/2018/2/14/is-sexual-orientation-a-concept-that-christians-ought-to-use>

implicitly or explicitly, to affirm an LGBTQ identity. For instance, we do not respond to our unbelieving neighbor the same way we would respond to our children. The deeper the relationship, the more obligated we are to make our convictions clear.

*Note:* As it pertains to participating in events that officially celebrate what God deems sinful, such as same-sex wedding ceremonies or “coming out” parties, Christians ought to abstain from attending such events. Regarding weddings in particular, attendance implies a tacit support and approval of the marriage union, which is why so many marital vows draw attention to those in attendance: *Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today...if anyone sees any reason why these two should not be joined together, speak now or forever hold your peace*, etc. By attending these ceremonies, Christians (even if they do not intend to) give the appearance of approving and celebrating what God rejects.

3. Christians should abide by their conscience as they deliberate the many “gray” decisions that need to be made in these areas. For instance, some Christians may not be troubled to use a transgender co-worker’s new name because names are less concrete in being gender-specific, while others may disagree. We should all pray, be settled in our own mind (Rom 14:5), and then abide by our conscience without passing judgment on other weaker brothers (Rom 14:1-4).
4. If someone requests you to embrace their new identity that contradicts God’s Law (*I am gay*, or *I am trans*) we must not accept this as a *true identity* but should instead see it as a

potentially *true description* of their experience. So, we must not say, "Yes, I affirm and support your new identity," but could instead say something like, "I believe that what you have told me is an accurate representation of your lived-experience." Our doctrine of original sin makes sense of why someone would experience same-sex desires or gender dysphoria (see pg. 3-4). We disagree that their feelings are reliable guides (see pg. 4), but we can sympathetically acknowledge the confusion and heartache they may be experiencing as a result of the Fall.

## **Parents and Children**

Regarding children, Christian parents bear a unique responsibility that is distinct from all other relationships. Parents are charged to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4), to teach them God's Law (Deut 6:7), and to require obedience from them (Prov 22:6; Ex 20:12). Given the unique authority the scripture bestows on parents, if a child claims a sexual or gender identity outside God's created design, there are certain non-negotiable obligations that every Christian parent must uphold. Yet in questions less black and white, we believe the Bible also provides wise principles that can help shape and guide conversations and interactions with these children.

### *Obligations of a Christian Parent*

1. Make sure that both parents are aligned in their desires for their child. If agreement cannot be reached, sit down with a pastor to help facilitate conformity on the matter.

2. Both parents must embrace their God-ordained rules, roles, and responsibilities within the home, Church, and world at large, providing a safe and comfortable environment in which the child can see and feel that the Lord's design for manhood and womanhood is good and beneficial for all.
3. Do not affirm this identity, even if you affirm their experience (see point 4 under "Practical Application").
4. Do not use the child's preferred pronouns or refer to them as possessing a homosexual identity ("gay", "lesbian," "queer," etc.).
5. Demonstrate the love of Christ through an unquestioning acceptance of the child (*"Nothing you could ever do would make me love you less"*), while making it clear that acceptance does not necessarily mean approval ("I love you and you always will be my child, but I cannot support this decision")
6. Continue to practice the regular spiritual rhythms of your home—Bible reading, prayer, attending church, etc.

#### *Areas of Wisdom for a Christian Parent*

1. Do not use a child's preferred name. The more you give credence to the alternate identity, the more concrete it becomes in their mind.
2. Be cautious not to box the child into gender stereotypes (*if you're a girl you need to be wearing dresses and wearing makeup*), but also do not permit them to flagrantly flaunt gender norms (*letting your son wear dresses*).

3. Take away internet access, smart phones, and especially social media.
4. Remove the child from any social space where their identity is encouraged and/or accepted (e.g. their school, clubs, circle of friends, etc.).
5. Don't make every conversation with them about gender or sexuality; make your convictions clear (*and do not budge*), but spend lots of time with your children doing things together that help foster deeper relationships.

The good news is that the overwhelming majority of adolescents who experience gender dysphoria will outgrow it (see Abigail Shrier's *Irreversible Damage* as well as Ryan T. Anderson's *When Harry Became Sally*). However, *the more parents go along with the child's gender identity (using pronouns, preferred names, allowing cross-dressing, etc.) the more cemented the identity becomes in the child and the harder it is to overcome it.*

6. Lean heavily into your church and wider community of Christian friends for support—one of the most consistent factors for LGBTQ de-transitioning is developing meaningful relationships with other peers who will hold to Biblical standards of truth.

*Note:* Concerning adult children, once children leave the home and are no longer under the authority of their parent, the parent's obligations now transition. The Christian parent

cannot require the same things of their adult children that they can while they are younger. The Christian parent thus must continue to not affirm a lifestyle that Scripture forbids, but they cannot require the children's behavior to conform to Biblical principles (i.e., Bible reading, church attendance, dressing appropriately, etc.).

## Different Responses to Different Relationships

If someone identifies themselves as a Christian and as a member of the LGBTQ community, our response will vary depending on the nature of our relationship with them. But in every relationship we should communicate clearly to them that they cannot follow Christ and embrace this sinful lifestyle.

### *A Fellow Church Member*

If someone identifies themselves as LGBTQ and is a fellow member of our church, then we would respond by restoring this brother or sister "in a spirit of gentleness" (Gal 6:1). We would lovingly entreat them to see what God's Word says about the sinfulness of homosexuality and/or transgenderism and call them to repent. If they refuse, we would bring along two or three others with us to again plead with them to repent (Matt 18:16).

At this point the elders should be included and if the individual persists in unrepentant sin, the elders should present the erring member to the congregation and ask the congregation to be praying for and lovingly seeking out the wayward member (Matt 18:17a). If the erring member continues in their sin and refuses to

listen to the church, the church should then remove the member from the membership rolls and thus bar them from taking the Lord's Supper (Matt 18:17; 1 Cor 5:6-11) in the hopes that they will be saved (1 Cor 5:5). We would no longer regard this person as a Christian and our relationship with them has now shifted to that of one of evangelism.

### *A Non-Church Member*

If someone adopts an LGBTQ lifestyle, claims to be a Christian, but is not a member of our church then we do not have the same authority over them (Matt 18:18-20), but we can still speak clearly about what righteousness and unrighteousness is. We can ask pointed questions "with gentleness and respect" (1 Pet 3:15) and "destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God," (2 Cor 10:5). We should "contend for the faith" against those who want to "pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 3-4) and call them to repentance and faith.

Practically, this means that where there is opportunity, we should seek to demonstrate from Scripture why we believe this person to be in error and should either reject their homosexual lifestyle or should stop taking the Lord's name in vain. Further, this means that we should not speak to this person in such a way that would subtly telegraph to them that we believe that they are a genuine Christian (i.e. asking for them to pray for you, speaking of "we" or "us" when talking about them and Christians, etc.).

### *Children*

If a child is currently embracing an LGBTQ identity, we should still follow what is written above in the previous categories.

If the child is a member of the church, we should follow the parameters of church discipline as laid out in Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Cor. 5. If the child does not repent and turn from their sin, the parents should no longer regard their child as a Christian and should treat them as an unbeliever. However, this does not change the reality that this individual is still their child and still needs the love, care, attention, and guidance of their parents. The clause in 1 Corinthians 5:11 to "not even eat with such a one" in regards to the person under church discipline is referring to the table fellowship of the Lord's Supper, the Christian Passover meal (see 1 Cor 5:6-8).

This **does not** mean that family members or friends are no longer allowed to share normal table fellowship with this individual or must shun them. Those under church discipline need the love and ministry of their parents and other Christians. They may no longer be regarded as a part of the New Covenant community, but they are still a member of your family.

## **What If I Experience Same-Sex Desires or Gender Dysphoria?**

If you find within yourself illicit desires—whether homosexual or gender dysphoric—then you should rely on a number of helps from the Lord.

- Seek the Lord through prayer. Remind yourself of the gospel—that Jesus has died to both forgive you of your sin and to help

you put your sin to death (1 Pet 2:24). Jesus is *for you*, so He is against your sin. He loves *you*, so He hates your sin.

- If your heart has savored and entertained these desires, then confess your sin to the Lord, or if you have acted upon these desires, confess your sin to the Lord.
- Remember that our feelings and desires can “wage war against our soul” (1 Pet 2:11), so they are not reliable guides to our identity, or wholeness of life.
- Seek out trusted counselors within the church who will provide wise counsel, encouragement, and accountability.

## In Closing

Obviously, this small booklet is a wafer-thin survey of issues that run miles deep. The intersecting complications regarding human nature, our bodies, sin, and sex are not simplistic issues. Alongside everything stated above—from the glory of our image bearing to the shame of our sin—there are other factors that make these matters complex. We are situated beings, all born into unique families with unique stories and unique experiences that overlay who we are in Christ, or in Adam. The elders of QBC do not want this booklet to give an impression that one can read a few Bible verses, dust off your hands, and remedy all sexual sin. This booklet is simply an attempt to provide categories and definitions to set the framework for the conversation that must carry on.

Perhaps you don’t struggle with the sins laid out in this booklet, but if you’re honest, you see your own sin for what it is and know that it doesn’t go quietly or quickly. Everyone, to some degree, is a sexual sinner, and every sexual sinner, to some degree, needs the same thing: Jesus Christ, crucified and resurrected. By God’s grace,

this Christ is freely given to all who come to Him in simple penitent faith, and by God's grace, this Christ is made visible through His body, the local church. What every sexual sinner needs is a loving community where Christ and His gospel can be re-presented to them over, and over, and over again. We want our church to be that kind of place, a place of truth and love where we all grow into Christ (Eph 4:15). We want to be a place where it is safe to be a sinner—a *sexual*/sinner, even—but not a safe place for sin. A place where Jesus speaks to us all, "Neither do I condemn you; go forth and sin no more," (John 8:11).

So, while we acknowledge that this topic may not be *simplistic*, the answers are at least found in a simple place: In Christ and in God's people, the Church.

## For Further Reading:

Personal Stories:

- [\*\\*\\*Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert\*](#) by Rosaria Butterfield, 154 pgs. (2012)
- [\*Out of a Far Country: A Gay Son's Journey to God. A Broken Mother's Search for Hope.\*](#) By Christopher Yuan and Angela Yuan, 240 pgs. (2011)
- [\*Born Again this Way\*](#) by Rachel Gilson, 160 pgs. (2020)

Easier:

- [\*Is God Anti-Gay?\*](#) by Sam Allberry, 88 pgs. (2013)
- [\*What God has to Say about Our Bodies\*](#) by Sam Allberry, 208 pgs. (2021)
- [\*\\*\\*What does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?\*](#) by Kevin DeYoung, 160 pgs. (2015)

- \*\*Men and Women in the Church by Kevin DeYoung, 176 pgs. (2021)
- God and the Transgender Debate by Andrew T. Walker, 208 pgs. (2022)
- Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters by Abigail Shrier, 276 pgs. (2021) \*note: not a Christian book, but a journalistic exposé in the rise of transgenderism among adolescent girls.

#### Medium:

- \*\*Openness Unhindered by Rosaria Butterfield, 206 pgs. (2015)
- Love Thy Body by Nancy Pearcey, 336 pgs. (2019)
- When Harry Became Sally by Ryan T. Anderson, 264 pgs. (2019)
- \*\*Strange New World by Carl R. Trueman, 208 pgs. (2022)

#### Robust:

- \*\*The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self, by Carl R. Trueman, 432 pgs. (2020)
- The Genesis of Gender by Abigail Favre, 251 pgs (2022)
- What Is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense by Sherif Gergis, Ryan T. Anderson, Robert B. George, 152 pgs (2020)
- Wonderfully Made: A Protestant Theology of the Body by John W. Kleinig, 224 pgs. (2021)

Asterisk (\*\*) = Pastor Marc's favorite