

THE CHURCH: RESPONDING REDEMPTIVELY TO THOSE WHO ARE SAME SEX ATTRACTED!

I get asked often how we as the church and Christians are to respond to LGBTQ+ individuals. There is so much confusion and real concern about this and rightly so. We can't just do nothing! We must do something? But what? We do not want to condemn? We do not want to condone? Are these our only options? No, there is another one. The best response is one that is redemptive. Here is some insight to help you in responding redemptively.

BECOME INFORMED ABOUT THE LGBTQ+ IDEOLOGY.

Start by reading what God says about this subject in the Bible. When reading, consider the following passages: Genesis 19, Judges 19, Leviticus 18:1-30, 20:7-24, Romans 1:18-32, I Corinthians 6:9-11, I Timothy 1:8-11, Revelation 22:14-15.

Read all of what it says. Resist the urge to pick a verse here and there in order to support your own opinion. Let the Bible inform your opinion.

Read it in its context. When you read the Old and New Testament passages on homosexuality you will notice that homosexuality is spoken of usually if not always in the context of other sexual sin.

Talk with someone who once was involved in homosexuality but is now walking in freedom. Our contact information is on the front page of this article and we will be glad to talk with you about our experience.

Also, read some accurate books about the subject. Here are a few that I would suggest.

- "Desires In Conflict" Joe Dallas
- "101 Questions" Mike Haley
- "Gay Girl, Good God" Jackie Hill Perry
- "When Homosexuality Hits Home" Joe Dallas
- "The Gay Gospel?" Joe Dallas
- "Live Free...One Step At A Time" (A Bible Study) Hal & Lisa Selby

BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT BEING REDEMPTIVE.

Being intentional about being redemptive means you will do the following:

a. Evaluate how you are "known" and make changes where needed. Are you known as someone who is condemning and critical towards LGBTQ+ individuals? Are you known as someone that an LGBTQ+ individual would come to for help? Are their changes in how you are known that need to take place? What will you do about it? When will you do it?



b. Develop a redemptive mindset. By redemptive mindset, I am referring to what I see in Jesus as He interacted with "sinners" of all kinds. When I consider what I find in the gospels, I believe that the following perfectly characterizes Jesus and His redemptive action. Redemptive actions are actions toward someone with the goal of influencing them toward redemption. Redemptive actions follow a redemptive mindset. Here is what a redemptive mindset looks like.

Never be content to leave anyone in their sin. Genesis 3:9, Luke 15:4-7, 19:10

Never condemn anyone for their sin. John 3:17, 8:10-11 a

Never categorize sin. I Corinthians 6:9-10

Never compromise the Word of God about any sin. I Corinthians 6:9-11

Always communicate Truth in the context of love & grace. Romans 2:4, 5:8, I John 4:19

Always call the individual to Jesus who alone transforms lives. Acts 4:12, 2 Cor. 5:17

Always challenge the individual to go and sin no more. (And it is possible.) John 8:11

c. Create a safe environment where LGBTQ+ individuals will not be ridiculed or condemned but will find help and support to walk in freedom from same sex attractions.

d. Be proactive and begin addressing this subject and that of healthy sexuality with our students so that the next generation will know the truth. Unfortunately in our culture our children and students are exposed repeatedly every day with the LGBTQ+ ideology and if we are not giving them truth about godly sexuality then they will be "pressed into the mold" (Romans 12:2) of this culture. I would say that we must get ahead of this but I really believe that we are so far behind that I'm not sure that is even possible! However, I believe in a God who says that with Him all things are possible and so let's be proactive and get started impacting our culture rather than being impacted by it!

BEGIN BEING INVOLVED IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVE SAME SEX ATTRACTIONS

Being involved means we are building relationships with LGBTQ+ individuals in order to show them love, extend to them grace and to share with them truth that will lead to transformation in their lives. "Being involved" suggests not a onetime event but a relationship. Relationships are the bridge over which the gospel travels to individuals!

We can't just do nothing! We can't just say it is wrong! We have no right to condemn! We must not compromise! We must seek to have a redemptive influence. Will you? Will we as the church?