

Harvest USA | 15-Session Video Curriculum

GOD'S
DESIGN
for
SEXUALITY
in a
CHANGING
CULTURE

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

PARTICIPANT OUTLINE

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION I—INTRODUCTION: WHY DO WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT SEX?

I. The silence of the church in talking about sex and sexuality has hurt God's people in two ways:

1. We are confused about what the Bible says.
2. It leaves strugglers feeling hopeless and defeated over their own hidden struggles with sex.

II. The reasons why it's so hard to talk about sex and sexuality in the church:

1. It's too personal.
2. It's too shameful.
3. It's too fearful of a topic.

III. Four ways the church's silence is impacting Christians' faith:

1. "I don't know what to believe anymore."—confusion
 - a. We don't know Christian doctrine
 - b. Truth is now defined by one's subjective personal story
 - c. The culture is intimidating the church and silencing us
2. "If I struggle here, I must not be a Christian."—we feel defeated by our struggles
 - a. Accessibility to pornography
 - b. Sexual struggles and addiction is rampant

3. “My life is a lie.”—Christians just go through the motions of faith

a. Compartmentalizing life: living in two worlds

b. Just going through the motions of faith

4. “I don’t know what to say”—we begin to feel that the gospel has no power to help

a. We teach that the gospel is only for Sunday morning

b. The pressure to say nothing to preserve relationships

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

» Sex and the Silence of the Church: How It Is Crippling God’s People—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/sex-silence-church-crippling-gods-people>)

» Is Yours a “Yeah, We Can Handle This” Church?—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/is-yours-a-handle-this-church>)

» Three Stories of Struggle, Addiction, and the Role of the Church—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/three-personal-stories-of-struggle-addiction-and-the-role-of-the-church-to-help>)

- » **Leaders and the Minefield of Discussing Sexuality and Gender**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/real-life-conversations-leaders-must-enter-the-minefield-of-sexuality-and-gender-discussions>)
- » **Living Faithfully with Our Bodies: It Still Matters**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-faithfully-bodies-still-matters>)
- » **Living in the Shadows: Life as a Game-Player**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-shadows-life-game-player>). Read also the personal testimony that follows: “Stepping into the Light after a Lifetime of Shadow Living.”

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SESSION 2—SEX, LIES, AND CULTURE: DOES GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY MAKE SENSE? (PART 1)

- I. A deeply divisive issue
- II. Everything is different now
 - 1. Living in the world of marriage equality
 - a. Ridicule and misunderstanding
 - b. Pressure to conform
 - 2. Worldviews in conflict—this is not a small issue
 - a. Secular: the individual, personal freedom, and self-fulfillment is primary

b. Biblical: God is primary, but we live in a fallen world

c. We need to understand what the culture believes (Acts 17:16-34)

3. How should we respond to these cultural differences?

a. With humility and respect (Titus 2: 7-8; 3:1-5)

b. With truth and accuracy

4. Remember! Scripture is authoritative

a. Foundation for knowing God

b. Foundation for knowing what God wants of us—checking in with our Maker
(2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1: 19-21)

III. The sexual scripts of the twenty-first century

The “Three Taboos” of the secular sexual script*

1. One may not coerce or cause harm to another

2. One may not engage sexually with someone without their consent

3. One may not criticize or restrict another’s life choices or behavior

1. Cultural lie: Sex = Life

- a. Sex is a good gift, but life is only found in living for the Giver: to worship God (Ephesians 4:17-19).

2. Cultural lie: My personal freedom must be guarded at all costs

- a. But true freedom is living by design as an image bearer of God (Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

* Dale S. Kuehne, *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationships Beyond an Age of Individualism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 71.

3. Cultural lie: Love is what really matters

- a. But biblical love encompasses more than emotions or desires

4. Cultural lie: Sex is just a physical act

- a. But humanity is created in God's image, so there's a spiritual reality behind sexuality

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

- » **Voices that Confuse: Reclaiming Biblical Truth from Interpretative Distortions**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/voices-that-confuse-reclaiming-biblical-truth/>)
- » **Gay Marriage: What the Church and God's People Need to Do Now**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/gay-marriage-what-the-church-and-gods-people-need-to-do-now/>)
- » **Facing the Hard Questions**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/on-the-road-facing-the-hard-questions/>)
- » **My Mixed-Orientation Marriage**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/mixed-orientation-marriage/>)

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SESSION 3—DOES GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY MAKE SENSE? (PART 2)

I. God is the creator of sexual pleasure

1. Contrary to what the culture thinks of us, Christianity is unashamedly positive about sex and sexuality
2. The Bible affirms the goodness of the physical nature of our bodies: The physical aspect of our existence is not secondary to the spiritual
3. The Bible is positive about sex (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

II. God's Design for Sexuality

1. The first and primary principle of God's design: Gender is foundational to sex and marriage

2. Four more principles for marriage according to God's design

a. Procreation

- We cannot divorce procreation from sexual activity—original intent

- Gender matters: only through a heterosexual union comes life

b. An opposite partner (Genesis 1:26–28; 2:7–8, 15–25)

- Male and female is a reflection of our image-bearing of the Trinitarian nature of God

- “Helper” is not about submission but about finding a partner for Adam

- Male and female are complementary parts of a single piece; sex between a husband and wife is a reunion.

c. Particularity

- God's created intent for sexuality is to be focused on one person

- “Spousal-sexual”

d. Signpost to the ultimate union

- Sexuality points us to our union with Christ

- God’s longing for us and his covenant faithfulness to us is reflected in our covenant faithfulness to our spouses
- Isaiah 62:5 and Ephesians 5:31–33

III. What this means for God’s people

- 1. Sexuality is a major doctrinal issue. Denying God’s design for sexuality (male and female) is denying God’s goodness in creation**
- 2. Our sexuality is a litmus test for who we are spiritually (1 Thessalonians 4:5–8)—Christians are to be radically different from the culture**

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

- » **Just What Is Godly Sex? How Sexual Pleasure Points to Something Greater**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/just-godly-sex-part-1>)
- » **God Gives the Best Sex: A Positive Theology of Sexuality**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/God-gives-the-best-sex>)
- » **Transgenderism: The Reshaping of Reality**—blog at harvestusa.org. (<https://www.harvestusa.org/transgenderism-reshaping-reality>)
- » **The Great Transgender Case of Mistaken Identity**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/identity-the-great-transgender-case-of-mistaken-identity>)
- » **Homosexuality and the Bible: Outdated Advice or Words of Life?**—minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2014. A brief overview of the passages in Scripture that mention homosexuality directly, and an overview of both traditional and revisionist interpretations. Available in 5-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/homosexuality-and-the-bible-outdated-advice-or-words-of-life/>.

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SESSION 4—UNDERSTANDING OUR SEXUAL STRUGGLES: WHY DO WE STRUGGLE WITH OUR SEXUALITY SO MUCH? (PART 1)

I. The Harvest USA Tree Model (Quick Overview)

1. The Harvest USA Tree Model is an explanation of how human struggles develop, and how change occurs

- a. Scripture links behavior to the human heart

- b. But behavior (fruit) is not what Scripture focuses on in addressing struggles and sin

2. Components of the Tree that are components of our behavior and actions

Fruit: behaviors and thoughts

Seed: the human heart; the central place of our will, decision-making

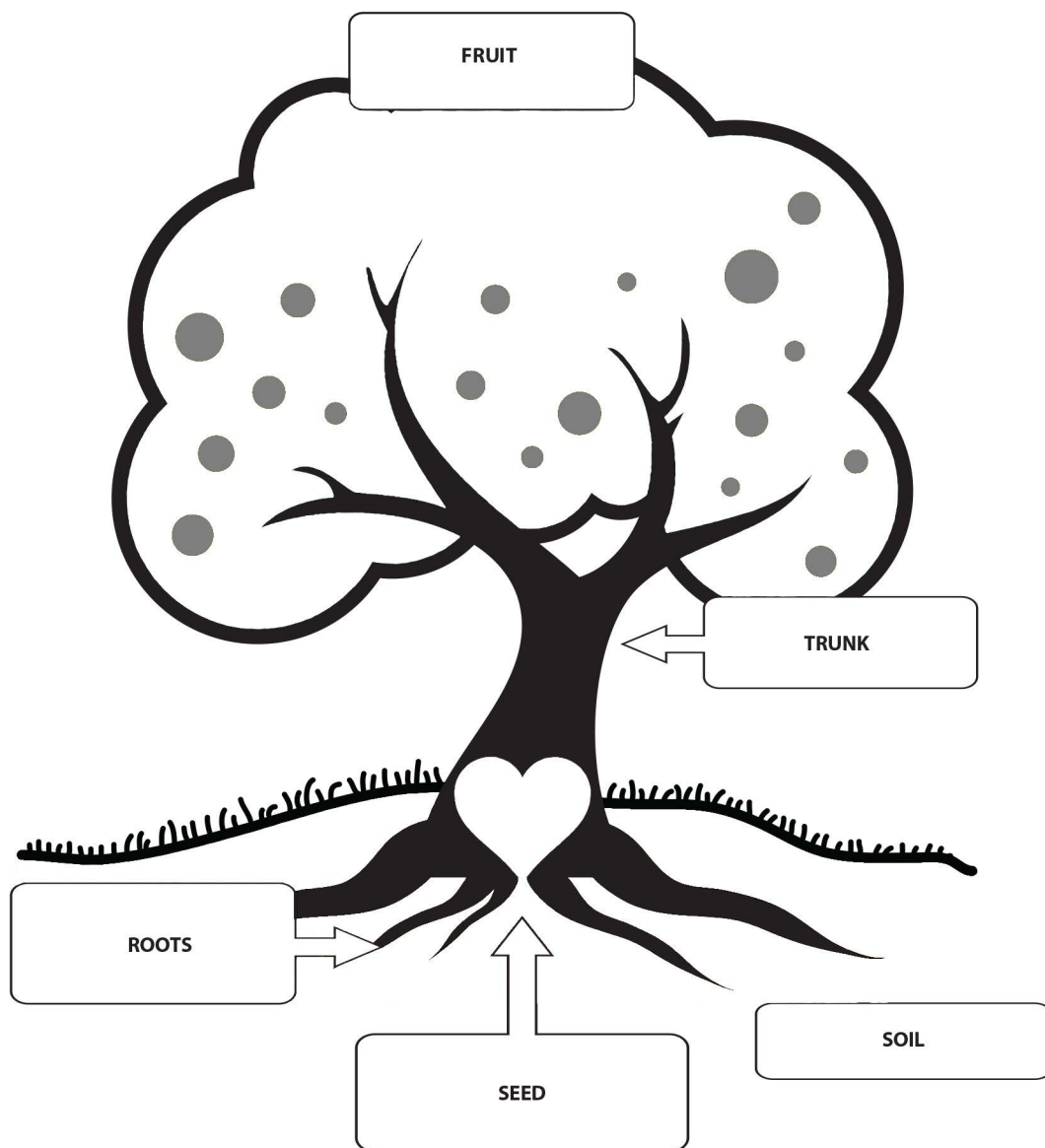
Soil: external influences in our lives that have strong shaping aspects

Roots: our desires, both God-given and self-driven

Trunk: what we believe about ourselves and life, our personal worldview

3. Beth and the Harvest USA Tree Model: Beth's fruit

- Teachable
- Caring heart
- Pornography
- Masturbation
- Sexual fantasy life
- Unbelief



II. The Seed

The human heart is now sinful and . . .

- Idolatrous
- Selfish
- Broken

III. The Soil: Influences outside of our control

- Unique to each of us
- How we experience life in a fallen world
- Have a strong shaping power but not determinative
- Overlap with one another

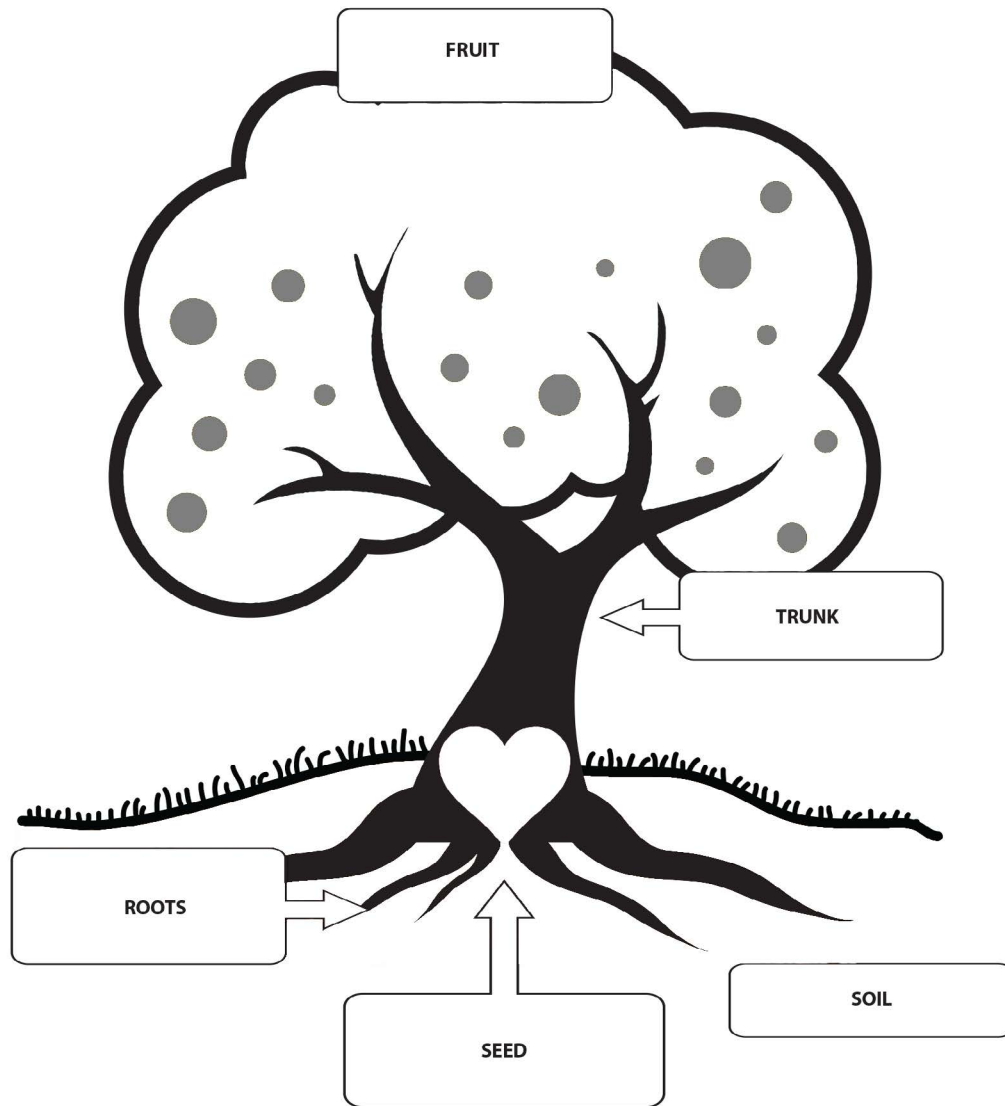
1. Particular aspects of our soil: Key Influences

- Gender
- Physical characteristics
- Personality and natural talents
- The brain
- Family dynamics
- The culture
- Peer pressure
- Trauma
- Spiritual warfare

2. Beth's soil influences

- Single, age 26
- Sexually involved with an older man
- History of sexual abuse from age 12-14, by an older boy from a church leadership family
- Gregarious—people person
- Raised in a “good Christian home”
- Closest two friends are engaged
- Never taught about sexuality
- Physically attractive

- » **Lust**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Lust>)
- » **Protecting Desires: God Cares about Your Longings**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Protecting-Desires>)
- » **Questions about Sexuality Need Good Answers**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/on-the-road-did-good-answers/>)



II. The Roots: Our Desires

1. Desires are powerful motivators that move us in a direction

a. We all have desires: to be known, loved, valued, to belong, etc.

b. Beth's Roots: To be loved and to be pursued; to belong

2. Desires can become controlling desires in our life, especially in times of deep disappointment

a. David Powlison on understanding desires as motivators:

“What do you crave, want, pursue, wish, long for, hope to get, feel you need, or passionately desire? God has an interpretation of this that cuts to the marrow of who you are and what you live for. He sees our hearts as an embattled kingdom, ruled either by one kind of desire or another kind. On the one hand, what are the lusts of the flesh that hijack your heart from God’s rule; on the other hand, what holy passions express your love for God?”**

HOW DESIRES BECOME IDOLS

Desire

Love
Good Self-Image
Affirmation
Affection
Security
No Pain or Suffering
Control
Understanding
Intimacy



Idol

“I *must* have this . . .
I don’t care what it takes.”

III. The Trunk: Our True (or Functional) Beliefs

1. Our true beliefs refer to the way we really live.

** David Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes: Counseling and the Human Condition through the Lens of Scripture* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2003), p. 146.

2. We make interpretations about how life works.

3. Our interpretations affect how we think about God, ourselves, people, and relationships.

4. Often our beliefs form in childhood, unchecked by the truth of God's Word.

5. Beth's trunk = her true beliefs
 - a. Emotional pain must be avoided at all costs.

 - b. Marriage is good, but men are unsafe.

 - c. God is mostly good.

d. The Bible doesn't address my struggles.

e. I cannot share with anyone about my sexual sin.

IV. The Fruit: Our Behavior

1. Behaviors are the presenting problem of our struggles.

2. Fruit bears out of our hearts—we cannot just address behavior.

3. Beth's Fruit:

a. Viewing pornography

b. Masturbation with porn

c. Fantasy life

d. Discontent

e. Unbelief

V. How do we change, and help people like Beth change?

1. Christ brings change to our life at the level of the human heart.
2. Christ gives us a new heart and power for a new pattern of living.
3. What we all need is the same: change from the inside out.

VI. How the gospel changed Beth

1. **Seed/Heart:** She learns to worship and trust Christ, even during hard times.
2. **Soil/Influences:** She gains understanding of her history, in light of God's redemption and healing.

3. **Roots/Desires:** She grows in submitting her desires to Jesus, in dependence on him.

4. **Trunk/Beliefs:** She renews her mind with Scripture, to live out of a biblical worldview.

5. **Fruit/Behavior:** She repents and begins to change her behavior, even if change comes slowly.

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue. They are the same resources given in Session 4, so if you've not read them yet, do so now. Part 2 of this talk about "Why Do We Struggle with Our Sexuality So Much?" focuses on desires, their origins, and where they lead to in our lives.

- » **How Does the Church Help Us Live with Sexual Integrity? (Parts 1-5)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/sexual-integrity-its-hard-now-it-was-hard-then-too>)
- » **Finding Your True Self in Feelings and Desires?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/finding-your-true-self>)
- » **Identity Theft! Who Are You in Christ?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/identity-Theft>)
- » **Women: Running the Race Well (Parts 1-4)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Women-Running-the-Race-Well>)
- » **Lust**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Lust>)
- » **Protecting Desires: God Cares about Your Longings**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Protecting-Desires>)
- » **Questions about Sexuality Need Good Answers**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/on-the-road-did-good-answers>)

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SESSION 6—MINISTRY TO THE SEXUALLY HURTING

I. Sexual strugglers need confidentiality and transparency.

1. How safe are you as a helper who hears painful stories?
2. Confidentiality is what moves one from isolation to transparency.

II. Sexual strugglers need to see the sin behind the presenting issues.

1. We need to know what the deeper roots are that motivate sexual sin.
2. The first step in helping is to enter fully into someone's life: Show Christ before you speak Christ.

Three key principles for listening

1. What is painful in their story?

2. Where is there hope in their story?

3. What are they living for?

III. Sexual strugglers need accountability—but what is that?

1. Two pitfalls to avoid

a. The savior role

b. The cop role

IV. Five aspects of good accountability

1. It needs to be a mutual relationship.

2. Focus on “putting on” and “putting off” (Colossians 3:5-10, 12-14).

3. Aim for the heart, not just the behavior.

4. Reach out before, during, and after slip-ups.

5. See this relationship as a long-term investment.

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

- » **From Isolation to Community**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/from-isolation-to-community>)
- » **Is Yours a “Yeah, We Can Handle This” Church?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/is-yours-a-handle-this-church>)
- » **From Despair to Hope: One Man’s Journey, Part 1 and Part 2**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/despair-hope-one-mans-journey-part-one/> and <https://www.harvestusa.org/from-despair-turney-part-two-2>)
- » **Living Faithfully with Our Bodies: It Still Matters**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-faithfully-bodies-still-matters>)
- » **Living in the Shadows: Life as a Game-Player**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-shadows-life-game-player>). Read also the personal testimony that follows: “Stepping into the Light after a Lifetime of Shadow Living.”
- » **Helping a Sexual Struggler Open Up**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/helping-a-sexual-struggler-open-up-and-talk>)
- » **Living in the Light: A Redemptive Response to Sexual Sin**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-in-the-light-a-redemptive-response-to-sexual-sin>)
- » **Five Reasons Why I Lead a Men’s Group on Sexual Integrity**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/five-reasons-why-i-lead-a-mens-group-on-sexual-integrity>)

- » **Pornified Mind: Reclaiming Your Thought Life (Parts 1-3)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/renewing-your-mind-from-pornography-taking-thoughts-captive-part-1>)
- » **Fighting the Battle with Pornography (Video Blog)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/bob-heywood-fighting-battle-pornography>)
- » **Gender Confusion: What Do We Say to Someone?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/gender-confusion-what-do-we-say-to-someone>)

Here are some book-length resources that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue, and in helping others:

- » **Sexual Sanity for Men: Re-Creating Your Mind in a Crazy Culture.**—A one-on-one mentoring or small group workbook by Harvest USA, David White, New Growth Press, 2012. A workbook for men to use with other men to find support and freedom from pornography and other sexual struggles and sexually addictive behavior. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/sexual-sanity-for-men-re-creating-your-mind-in-a-crazy-culture>.
- » **Sexual Sanity for Women: Healing from Relational and Sexual Brokenness.**—A one-on-one mentoring or small group workbook by Harvest USA, Ellen Dykas, ed., New Growth Press, 2013. A workbook for women to use with other women to find support and freedom from sexual struggles and sexually addictive behaviors. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/sexual-sanity-for-women-healing-from-sexual-and-relational-brokenness>.
- » **Hide or Seek: When Men Get Real with God about Sex,**—by Harvest USA, John Freeman, New Growth Press, 2014. Explores the heart issues that keep men in bondage to porn and other sexual struggles, and the practicality of the gospel as the one thing to set them free. A great one-on-one mentoring book as well. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/hide-or-seek>.
- » **When Your Husband is Addicted to Pornography: Healing Your Wounded Heart.**—A devotional, one-on-one or small group resource by Harvest USA, Vicki Tiede, New Growth Press, 2012. A daily devotional workbook to help wives assess and grow through sexual brokenness in their marriage. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/when-your-husband-is-addicted-to-pornography-healing-your-wounded-heart>.

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SESSION 7—WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT SEXUALITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: THE “CLOBBER” PASSAGES (PART I)

I. Three critical principles

1. Remember that Scripture is authoritative.
2. All of Scripture is in view, not just isolated verses.
3. Personal stories do not have authority over Scriptural truth.

II. The revisionist approach

1. A belief in the inherent goodness of humanity—my natural inclinations and desires are good.
2. We know better now (cultural enlightenment argument: ancient vs. modern).
3. The Bible doesn't really address gay marriage as we know it today.

4. The only law is “love” –doctrine doesn’t matter.

5. Isolate texts from the overall context—especially in defining words.

6. Jesus never mentioned homosexuality.

III. The Old Testament teaching on homosexuality

1. Genesis 19:1-29

And they called to Lot. “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them.” (Genesis 19:5)

a. Revisionist approach to Genesis 19

- Passage is talking about gang rape—not gay marriage

- The real issue was inhospitality (social justice)

Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. (Ezekiel 16:49)

(But another passage does bring sexuality into view about Sodom and Gomorrah):

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. (Jude 7)

b. A gospel approach to Genesis 19

- Genesis 14: Abraham goes to battle for Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Genesis 18: Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah to be spared from destruction.

2. Leviticus 18:22 (20:13)

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

a. Revisionist approach to Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13

- None of us follow the Levitical law, especially dietary laws.
- Christ has abolished the law.
- The issue here was male prostitution.

b. A gospel approach to Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13

- Leviticus condemns all sinful sexual behavior, including heterosexual, making clear that all human sexuality is broken by the Fall.
- The Levitical law has civil and ceremonial ties to ancient Israel, but the moral aspects are still applicable today.

- The restrictions on human sexuality in Leviticus make clear that all human sexuality needs redemption in Christ!

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Voices That Confuse: Reclaiming Biblical Truth from Interpretative Distortion**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/voices-that-confuse-reclaiming-biblical-truth/>)
- » **First Steps: Students and Same-Sex Attraction**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/first-steps-students-sex-attraction>)
- » **Pro-Gay Theology: A Response to Matthew Vines' YouTube Video**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/pro-gay-theology-a-response-to-matthew-vines-youtube-video>)
- » **Homosexuality and the Bible: Outdated Advice or Words of Life?**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2014. A brief overview of the passages in Scripture that mention homosexuality directly, and an overview of both traditional and revisionist interpretations. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/homosexuality-and-the-bible-outdated-advice-or-words-of-life>.
- » **Can You Change if You're Gay?**—Minibook by Harvest USA, David White, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses the issue of sexual orientation and what the gospel means by change, and includes practical steps for those living with same-sex attraction who want to follow biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/can-you-change-if-youre-gay>.
- » **When Your Gay Child Says, "I Do"**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses how to maintain both an ongoing relationship with your gay-identified son or daughter and how to hold fast to biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-gay-child-says-i-do>.
- » **When Your Child Says, "I'm Gay"**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Tim Geiger, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses how to talk to your child (or help parents to do so) when they come out. Practical do's and don'ts for parents in keeping their relationship with their child healthy while maintaining a biblical stance. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-child-says-im-gay>.

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SESSION 8—WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT SEXUALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE “CLOBBER” PASSAGES (PART 2)

I. Three approaches to Scripture

1. Cut-and-paste parts of the Bible.
2. Throw out the Bible entirely.
3. Submit to the Bible's teaching.

II. The New Testament teaching on homosexuality

1. Romans 1:18-28 (ESV)

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

a. Revisionist approach to Romans 1:18–28

- Paul’s word “unnatural” means promiscuity, excess, or noncommitted gay relationships.
- Paul is prohibiting pagan worship and temple prostitution.
- Paul is prohibiting pederasty.

b. A gospel approach to Romans 1:18–28

Paul’s argument: God is Creator, and all of creation lives in obedience to him.



Paul's argument: But humanity has turned away from God, making creation and themselves supreme over him. (This is idolatry.)

Creation



Humanity



God

- “Given over” refers two times to all of humanity—a universal indictment
- Romans 1 and 2 prepare us for the good news of Romans 3: describing what Jesus accomplished at the cross

2. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. 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.

a. The revisionist approach to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

- Challenge word definitions (while ignoring context and regular usage)
- *Malakoi*: “soft ones”—most frequently used for male prostitutes

- *Arsenokoites*: term coined by Paul—combination of “male” and “couch” = translates to “male bedders of men”

b. A gospel approach to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

- Don't be deceived!
- Heinous sins are listed with “garden-variety” sins, convicting all of us.
- “Such were some of you”: washed, sanctified, justified!

III. Overall conclusions

1. **Genesis 1 & 2 establishes the normative pattern to sexuality.**
2. **Homosexuality throughout Scripture is described as behavior, not orientation.**
3. **The concept of orientation is unbiblical; doing so makes what is a fallen condition part of God's creation.**
4. **Homosexual behavior is never affirmed in Scripture.**

5. The original, creational pattern for sexuality is reaffirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19. Jesus did speak about sexuality—that sex is about gender and marriage.

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Voices That Confuse: Reclaiming Biblical Truth from Interpretative Distortion**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/voices-that-confuse-reclaiming-biblical-truth/>)
- » **First Steps: Students and Same-Sex Attraction**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/first-steps-students-sex-attraction/>)
- » **Pro-Gay Theology: A Response to Matthew Vines' YouTube Video**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/pro-gay-theology-a-response-to-matthew-vines-youtube-video>)
- » **Homosexuality and the Bible: Outdated Advice or Words of Life?**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2014. A brief overview of the passages in Scripture that mention homosexuality directly, and an overview of both traditional and revisionist interpretations. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/homosexuality-and-the-bible-outdated-advice-or-words-of-life>.
- » **Can You Change if You're Gay?**—Minibook by Harvest USA, David White, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses the issue of sexual orientation and what the gospel means by change, and includes practical steps for those living with same-sex attraction who want to follow biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/can-you-change-if-youre-gay>.
- » **When Your Gay Child Says, "I Do"**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses how to maintain both an ongoing relationship with your gay-identified son or daughter and how to hold fast to biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-gay-child-says-i-do>.
- » **When Your Child Says, "I'm Gay"**—Minibook by Harvest USA, Tim Geiger, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses how to talk to your child (or help parents to do so) when they come out. Practical do's and don'ts for parents in keeping their relationship with their child healthy while maintaining a biblical stance. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-child-says-im-gay>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 9—CAN YOU CHANGE IF YOU'RE GAY?

I. Defining the terms

1. The media has erroneously concluded that the origin of sexual orientation is settled.

- a. American Psychological Association statement on orientation (www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/orientation.pdf)

2. Issue of causation is now less important

- a. What is now asserted is personal autonomy (my experience).

- b. This is also an assertion of our culture's commitment to sexual freedom at all costs.

3. Harvest USA prefers the descriptive term: *same-sex attraction*

- a. The term, *gay*, however, has become a label that defines identity

II. The crucial starting point

- 1. A biblical view of humanity means acknowledging that all sexuality is broken and in need of redemption

III. What about identifying oneself as a “gay” Christian?

- 1. Our sexuality should not be the foundation of our identity.

2. The Bible locates our identity in two places:

- a. Our physical sex: male or female

- b. Our spiritual allegiance

3. We want our identity to be conformed to what God says, and that includes who we are in this life and in the life to come

- a. In eternity, any fallen aspects of our being will no longer be a part of us

IV. The opposite of homosexuality is . . . not heterosexuality, but holiness.

1. Holiness means to be set apart for God.

2. Holiness means I am not autonomous; God has rights over me (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 4:1-5).

V. A biblical view of change

1. The Scriptural view of change: that your heart and your behaviors are increasingly surrendered to Christ (Galatians 5:17).

2. The Bible does not promise that you will live without temptation, but that God will meet you in your struggle (1 Corinthians 10:13).

- a. Change means increasingly submitting your heart to Christ and living in obedience to him.

VI. Five aspects of a changed life: the journey of holiness

1. Live out of a biblical view of sexuality

a. Heterosexual functioning is not the benchmark for a changed life.

b. Marriage and family is not the ultimate goal of the Christian life.

2. Think differently about Christian community

a. The Christian life is to be radically interdependent on others.

3. See friendships as being highly valued

a. Sex is not the pinnacle of relationships

4. Focus on a new definition of victory

- a. A commitment to perseverance, and being honest with others.

5. We need a renewed hope

- a. We focus our eyes on the world to come (Matthew 26:29).

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

- » **Voices That Confuse: Reclaiming Biblical Truth from Interpretative Distortion**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/voices-that-confuse-reclaiming-biblical-truth/>)
- » **First Steps: Students and Same-Sex Attraction**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/first-steps-students-sex-attraction/>)
- » **Protecting Desires: God Cares about Your Longings**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/protecting-desires/>)
- » **The Dangerous Expectations of Reparative Therapy**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/the-expectations-of-reparative-therapy/>)
- » **Why Do People Fall Back into Homosexuality? (Parts 1–6)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Why-Do-People-Fall-Back>)
- » **Homosexuality and the Bible: Outdated Advice or Words of Life?**—minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2014. A brief overview of the passages in Scripture that mention homosexuality directly, and an overview of both traditional and revisionist interpretations. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/homosexuality-and-the-bible-outdated-advice-or-words-of-life/>.
- » **Can You Change If You're Gay?**—minibook by Harvest USA, David White, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses the issue of sexual orientation and what the gospel means by change, and includes practical steps for those living with same-sex attraction who want to follow biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/can-you-change-if-youre-gay>.

- » **When Your Gay Child Says, “I Do”**—minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses how to maintain both an ongoing relationship with your gay-identified son or daughter and how to hold fast to biblical sexuality. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-gay-child-says-i-do>.
- » **When Your Child Says, “I’m Gay”**—minibook by Harvest USA, Tim Geiger, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses how to talk to your child (or help parents to do so) when they come out. Practical do’s and don’ts for parents in keeping their relationship with their child healthy while maintaining a biblical stance. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-child-says-im-gay>.

III. What is lust?

1. Greek word, *epithumeo*, means “strong or over-desire”

2. Lust is anything that is:
 - a. *out of bounds* (outside of God’s design).

 - b. *or out of balance* (an idol that consumes your attention).

3. Lust violates Jesus’s second great commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:39).
 - a. Lust is about taking; it uses others for one’s self-centered purposes

 - b. Love is about giving; it thinks about what is best for the other

IV. What are the dangers of pornography?

1. It teaches a false and fake view of sex and relationships—it teaches that what is of highest value is me and my needs.
 - a. Porn turns real people into objects to be used.
 - b. Sex is more important than the relationship.
 - c. People are just commodities to be used and discarded.
 - d. Porn teaches radical self-centeredness—people exist to serve you.
2. Porn slowly drains the life out of reality—and can lead to addictive behavior.
 - a. Triggering the release of brain chemicals contributes to addiction.

b. Marital sex will seem dull by comparison.

c. Sex cannot hold a relationship together.

d. Even occasional usage is sinful and an escape from real life.

3. Porn disconnects sex from love and respect—it encourages aggression and abuse.

a. Much of porn is filled with images of aggression and violence.

b. Boundary lines become blurred.

4. Porn teaches a lifestyle of lies and deceit.

a. Living a double life

b. “Game-playing” with spouse

c. “Game-playing” with God

d. Spiritual life on the margins

5. Porn normalizes perversity and diminishes human dignity.

a. Tendency to look at edgier and more extreme images

b. Leads to being no longer shocked by what we see

6. Porn participates in global abuse and injustice.

a. Porn fuels the demand for sexual exploitation.

- b. Many participants come from broken backgrounds.

V. How can the church community help those who struggle here?

- The way forward in living with sexual integrity is found in relationship—with Christ and one another.

Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8).

For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

- No one escapes their struggles by dealing with it alone. The way God generally works in our lives is through his church, his people.
- You need to believe that the deepest and most secure relationship you have is with Jesus Christ.

1. The church needs to be real about life.

- a. We need to be honest about our hidden struggles.

- b. Christians do not have it all together.

2. The church needs to become unshockable.

a. We need a new attitude: God can handle this.

b. God is not shocked by our struggles.

3. The church needs to give mercy.

a. Loving mercifully invites strugglers to ask for help.

b. Loving mercifully means forgiving and restoring.

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Living Faithfully with Our Bodies: It Still Matters**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/living-faithfully-bodies-still-matters/>)
- » **Your Church: A Healing Community for Sexual Strugglers**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/your-church-can-be-a-healing-community-for-sexual-strugglers/>)
- » **Lust**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/lust>)

- » **Pornography and Injustice: The Social Impact of Sexual Sin and What the Church Must Do**—3-part blog series at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/pornography-and-injustice-the-social-impact-of-sexual-sin-and-what-the-church-must-do-part-3/>)
- » **What’s Wrong with a Little Porn When You’re Married?**—minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses the negative impact on the heart of a porn user, the impact of porn use on the marriage relationship, and how to move both the user and the relationship back to health. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/whats-wrong-with-a-little-porn-when-youre-married>.
- » **What’s Wrong with a Little Porn When You’re Single?**—minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses the subtle and dangerous impact porn usage has on dating relationships and how to find freedom. Excellent resource for teens and young adults in particular. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/whats-wrong-with-a-little-porn-when-youre-single>.
- » **Your Husband Is Addicted to Porn: Healing after Betrayal.**—minibook by Harvest USA, Vicki Tiede, New Growth Press, 2013. Mini book version of her larger book (see below). Practical ways to heal your heart in dealing with your husband’s porn usage. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-husband-is-addicted-to-porn-healing-after-betrayal>.

Here are some book-length resources that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue, and in helping your church help those who struggle:

- » **Sexual Sanity for Men: Re-Creating Your Mind in a Crazy Culture**—a one-on-one mentoring or small group workbook by Harvest USA, David White, New Growth Press, 2012. A workbook for men to use with other men to find support and freedom from pornography and other sexual struggles and sexually addictive behavior. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/sexual-sanity-for-men-re-creating-your-mind-in-a-crazy-culture>.
- » **Sexual Sanity for Women: Healing from Relational and Sexual Brokenness**—a one-on-one mentoring or small group workbook by Harvest USA, Ellen Dykas, Editor, New Growth Press, 2013. A workbook for women to use with other women to find support and freedom from sexual struggles and sexually addictive behaviors. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/sexual-sanity-for-women-healing-from-sexual-and-relational-brokenness>.
- » **Hide or Seek: When Men Get Real with God about Sex**, by Harvest USA, John Freeman, New Growth Press, 2014. Explores the heart issues that keep men in bondage to porn and other sexual struggles, and how the practicality of the gospel is the one thing to set them free. A great one-on-one mentoring book as well. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/hide-or-seek>.
- » **When Your Husband is Addicted to Pornography: Healing Your Wounded Heart**, (a devotional, one-on-one or small group resource) by Harvest USA, Vicki Tiede, New Growth Press, 2012. A daily devotional workbook to help wives assess and grow through sexual brokenness in their marriage. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/when-your-husband-is-addicted-to-pornography-healing-your-wounded-heart>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 11—REDEEMING MARRIAGE FROM PORNOGRAPHY'S DESTRUCTION

1. Bob and Marilyn's struggles before Bob admitted his problem
2. Bob and Marilyn discuss the key difference that moved their relationship forward.
3. The key moment of change
4. The changes in their marriage, and personally, since Bob confessed and began to work on his porn addiction
5. Advice to couples dealing with pornography struggles

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue.

- » **Responding to My Husband's Sexual Sin**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/how-does-a-wife-respond-to-her-husbands-sexual-sin>)
- » **Help for the Shattered Spouse**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/help-for-the-shattered-spouse>)
- » **Do I Stay or Do I Leave?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/do-i-stay-or-do-i-leave>)
- » **From Isolation to Community**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/from-isolation-to-community>)
- » **Is a Struggle with Pornography a Deal-Breaker for Getting Married?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/struggle-pornography-deal-breaker-getting-married>)
- » **Lies, Lies, and More Lies**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/lies-lies-and-more-lies>)
- » **Rebuilding Trust after You've Been Discovered (Parts 1- 3)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/building-trust-again-picking-up-the-pieces-when-youve-been-discovered>)
- » **What's Wrong with a Little Porn When You're Married?** Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses the negative impact on the heart of a porn user, and its impact on the marriage relationship, and how to move both the user and the relationship back to health. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/whats-wrong-with-a-little-porn-when-youre-married>.
- » **Your Husband Is Addicted to Porn: Healing after Betrayal.** Minibook by Harvest USA, Vicki Tiede, New Growth Press, 2013. Mini book version of her larger book (see below). Practical ways to heal your heart in dealing with your husband's porn usage. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-husband-is-addicted-to-porn-healing-after-betrayal>.
- » **When Your Husband Is Addicted to Pornography: Healing Your Wounded Heart**, by Harvest USA, Vicki Tiede, New Growth Press, 2012. (This is a long read—a devotional, one-on-one, or small group resource.) A daily devotional workbook to help wives assess and grow through sexual brokenness in their marriage. Available at <https://newgrowthpress.com/when-your-husband-is-addicted-to-pornography-healing-your-wounded-heart>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 12—PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY IN AN INTERNET WORLD

I. A call to action for everyone

1. The danger we face:

“What we are facing today regarding technology and the Internet—with its portrayal of sexuality—is lethal to the spiritual, emotional, sexual and relational development of our children.”

2. The action we need to take:

“You act on what you know.” When you know what the dangers are, take action!

II. Three things about technology

1. There's an upside

2. There's a downside

3. There's a dark side

III. First key step: Talk

1. Talk about God's good design for sex
2. Talk about both the upsides and the downsides of technology
3. Be the parent—be in charge of guiding them
4. No “Big Brother”
5. We are all in this together

IV. Second key step: Block

1. Protection inside and outside the home
2. Understand how porn “hooks” us

3. Know what apps are on devices

- Investigate how safe they are

- “Is _____ safe for kids?”

4. Don't ignore a loophole: search engines

- Google SafeSearch parental controls

5. Social media: Know who their friends are

6. Other media: TVs, game consoles

7. Test your protection plan

V. Third key step: Walk

We need to give God's grace

1. Grace recognizes the struggle

2. Grace invites asking for help

3. Grace forgives and restores

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Pornography and Injustice: The Social Impact of Sexual Sin and What the Church Must Do**—3-part blog series at [harvestusa.org](https://www.harvestusa.org/Pornography-and-injustice) (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Pornography-and-injustice>).
- » **The Normalization of Porn in the Church: What the Church Needs to Do Now**—blog at [harvestusa.org](https://www.harvestusa.org/the-normalization-of-porn-in-the-church-what-the-church-needs-to-do-now) (<https://www.harvestusa.org/the-normalization-of-porn-in-the-church-what-the-church-needs-to-do-now>)
- » **Your Children Are Looking at Pornography. How Are You Responding?**—blog at [harvestusa.org](https://www.harvestusa.org/your-children-are-looking-at-pornography-how-are-you-responding) (<https://www.harvestusa.org/your-children-are-looking-at-pornography-how-are-you-responding>)
- » **Is It Time to Walk Away from Our Mobile Devices?**—blog at [harvestusa.org](https://www.harvestusa.org/time-walk-away-mobile-devices) (<https://www.harvestusa.org/time-walk-away-mobile-devices>)
- » **Protecting Your Home from Porn, Parts 1 & 2**—blog at [harvestusa.org](https://www.harvestusa.org/protecting-home-porn-part-1-2) (<https://www.harvestusa.org/protecting-home-porn-part-1-2>)
- » **iSnooping on Your Kid: Parenting in an Internet World**. Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses not just technology protection strategies but also how to talk to your family about healthy sexuality and the need for accountability. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/isnooping-on-your-kid-parenting-in-an-internet-world>.
- » **Raising Sexually Healthy Kids**. Minibook by Harvest USA, Dave White, New Growth Press, 2014. Discusses how and what to say to your children regarding sex, sexuality and how to address cultural expressions of sex and sexuality with biblical wisdom. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/raising-sexually-healthy-kids>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 13—RAISING SEXUALLY FAITHFUL KIDS

I. Who should do the talking?

1. Our culture is talking to them all the time—via the Internet and media.
2. What keeps you from talking about sex to your family?
3. Christ qualifies parents to disciple our children about sex, sexuality, and gender.

II. What should I teach about sex?

Three positive talking points:

1. Sex and sexuality are about glorifying God (1 Corinthians 10:31).
2. Sex and sexuality are wonderful gifts to be enjoyed.

3. God has a great design for sex: a lifelong marriage between a man and a woman.

Three negative talking points:

1. The world says love is a feeling, but God defines love as giving and serving.
2. The world says that sex is an ultimate thing, but God is ultimate above any good thing.
3. The world says that sex and sexuality define our core identity, but personhood is defined differently by God (Galatians 2:20, 2 Corinthians 5:16-17).

III. What kind of conversations should I have?

Two kinds of talks

1. “As you go” talks: Deuteronomy 6:7
2. **Intentional, topical talks**
 - Decide on a topic to discuss

- Practice first!

Three principles

1. The grammar stage: young children (toddler to age 6)
2. The logic stage: older elementary children and tweens (7-12)
3. The rhetoric stage: teens (13-18)

What if I haven't talked to my kids about sex at all?

1. Admit it, repent, and ask for forgiveness from them
2. Find out what they know already (from peers, media, etc.)
3. Connect what they know with a biblical perspective

5. Pray with your child.

6. Keep checking in.

V. Three applications

1. Pray for conversations.

2. Set a time for your talk with your child.

3. Trust God.

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Your Children Are Looking at Pornography. How Are You Responding?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Your-Children-are-Looking-at-Pornography>)
- » **God Gives the Best Sex**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/god-gives-the-best-sex>)
- » **Take Courage! Parents and the Dreaded Conversation**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/take-courage-parents-and-the-dreaded-conversation>)
- » **A Father's Story: My Child Hooked on Porn**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/a-fathers-story>)
- » **A Person. Not a Problem**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/person-not-problem>)

- » **How Do I Talk about Sexuality with My Kids?**—video blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/sexuality-and-children>)
- » **How Do I Tell My Children about My Sexual Past?**—video and blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/tell-children-sexual-past>)
- » **Sexual Sufferers. Not Just Sinners**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/student-are-st-just-sinners>)
- » **Just What Is Godly Sex? (Parts 1-2)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/just-godly-sex-part-1>)
- » **Youth Culture Issue**, harvestusa magazine, Spring 2017 (https://www.harvestusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Harvest_Fall_2017-HUSA-Magazine.pdf)
- » **iSnooping on Your Kid: Parenting in an Internet World**. Minibook by Harvest USA, Nicholas Black, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses not just technology protection strategies but also how to talk to your family about healthy sexuality and the need for accountability. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/isnooping-on-your-kid-parenting-in-an-internet-world>.
- » **Raising Sexually Healthy Kids**. Minibook by Harvest USA Dave White, New Growth Press, 2014. Discusses how and what to say to your children regarding sex, sexuality and how to address cultural expressions of sex and sexuality with biblical wisdom. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/raising-sexually-healthy-kids>.
- » **When Your Child Says, “I’m Gay.”** Minibook by Harvest USA, Tim Geiger, New Growth Press, 2013. Discusses how to talk to your child (or help parents to do so) when they come out. Practical do’s and don’ts for parents in keeping their relationship with their child healthy while maintaining a biblical stance. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/your-child-says-im-gay>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 14—SEXUALITY AND THE SINGLE PERSON

I. Singleness: Not a “one size fits all” category

II. Signposts of God's design for sexuality—four things about our sexuality:

1. It points to God in how he relates to us as his people: an exclusive, devoted, life-long relationship
2. Male and female image-bearers pointing to God's relationship to himself in the Trinity
3. God's design for those who are married
4. God's design for those who are single

III. Three Areas where singles can struggle:

1. Beliefs

a. Idolatry: exalting something I want above Christ

b. Sexual activity: It's no big deal

c. Faith disconnect: God is no help here

2. Desires

a. Desires are powerful motivators.

- Physical

- Emotional

- Mental

- Sexual

b. We need to bring our desires under the reign of Christ (Psalm 119:112; Philippians 2:12-13)

3. Past

a. Sexual experiences: positive or negative

b. Trauma ⇨ shame and fear

IV. Consequences of misused sexuality

1. Selfishness nurtured

2. Faith disconnect: living a hidden life

3. Pollution of thought life

V. Wisdom and grace for singles

1. Honesty

a. Honestly address your real-life struggles.

b. Be honest with self, others, and God

c. Being honest with God is a trajectory toward obedience to him (Matthew 11:28-30).

2. Receive God's care.

a. God gives us forgiveness, comfort, and correction

b. We are not orphans; we have a spiritual family

c. We need to grow in our friendships

d. We need to embrace God's plan for singleness

3. Draw close to Christ

a. Allow your singleness, even with its struggles, to draw you closer to Christ.

b. Cultivate your closeness to him

c. Love and serve people.

d. Jesus knows us better than anyone in our temptations (Hebrews 4:15).

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Being Single and Tempted: Where Is God in This?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/single-tempted-god>)
- » **Being Single and Tempted: How Can I Avoid Sexual Sin?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/being-single-tempted-can-i-avoid-sexual-sin>)
- » **How Can My Church Minister to Singles?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/how-can-my-church-minister-to-singles>)
- » **How Does the Church Help Us Live with Sexual Integrity? (Parts 1–5)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/sexual-integrity-its-hard-now-it-was-hard-then-too>)
- » **Sexuality and the Single Christian: Godly Answers in a Confusing World**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/Sexuality-and-the-Single-Christian>)
- » **Protecting Desires: God Cares about Your Longings**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/protecting-desires>)
- » **Is Our View of Masturbation Outdated?**—video blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/view-masturbation-outdated>)
- » **Sex and the Single Girl: Smart Ways to Care for Your Heart.** Minibook by Harvest USA, Ellen Dykas, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses practical ways for single women to manage their sexuality within God’s design. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/sex-and-the-single-girl-smart-ways-to-care-for-your-heart>.
- » **How to Say No When Your Body Says Yes: Finding True Satisfaction.** Minibook by Harvest USA, Dan Wilson, New Growth Press, 2012. Discusses practical ways for singles to address temptation and what benefits we receive when we obey God. Available in

five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/how-to-say-no-when-your-body-says-yes-finding-true-satisfaction>.

- » **Living Together: Why Marriage Is the Best Choice.** Minibook by Harvest USA, Ellen Dykas, New Growth Press, 2016. With the trend increasing toward cohabitating rather than marriage, Ellen discusses why marriage, as a promise-based relationship, is superior to casually living together; and she gives practical steps on backing out of a cohabitating relationship for those who wish to follow biblical boundaries. Available in five-packs for physical copies and e-book (single) at <https://newgrowthpress.com/living-together-when-marriage-is-the-best-choice>.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY IN A CHANGING CULTURE

SESSION 15—A BIBLICAL VIEW OF GENDER AND TRANSGENDER

I. What is a traditional understanding of gender?

1. Male/female binary

2. Intersex conditions: 1 per 1,500 births

II. What is the new understanding of gender?

1. Male/female continuum—gender is fluid, not static

2. Transition in thinking about gender struggles—from psychological to perceptual

3. Dichotomy between sex and gender

Sex	Gender
Genitalia	Psychological
Physical components of sexual identity	Self-awareness as sexual being
Incidentally related to identity	Primarily related to identity
Objective	Subjective

III. A biblical understanding of gender

1. Scripture identifies two and only two genders in creation.

a. Gender is congruent with biological sex—gender is not a process.

- Established generally by God’s decree (Genesis 1:27)
- Assigned particularly to each individual by God’s providence (Psalm 139: 13-16)

b. The impact of the Fall

- The Fall has impacted us physically, psychologically, spiritually.
- Some people are born intersex.
- The church needs to acknowledge this and care for them well.

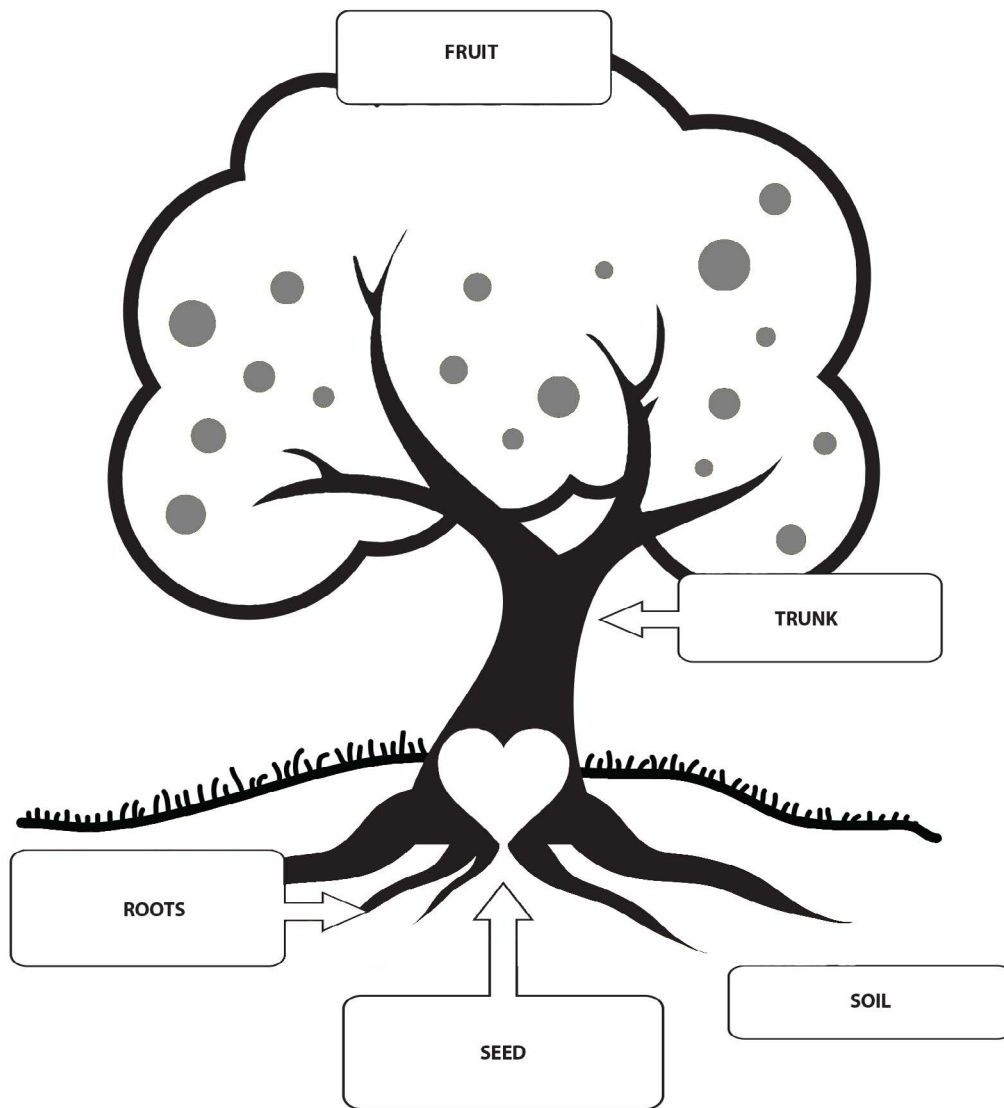
2. Gender-bending or gender transition is sinful.

- a. Deuteronomy 22:5

 - b. To determine one's gender is to put ourselves in control of gender, and denies God's right as Creator.
-
- 3. **A person's psychological sense of gender is rightly consistent with his or her birth gender.**
 - a. Gender is not developed after birth; it is not a process.
-
- 4. **Gender is fixed**
 - a. Gender is not on a continuum.
-
- 5. **Cultural idealizations of gender are not always biblical.**
-
- 6. **Godly gender lived out in real-life situations may have a diversity of expressions, and may not conform to cultural norms.**

IV. Why do some people struggle with their sense of gender?

1. A person's desires and life experiences can lead a person to act sinfully



(The Harvest USA Tree Model is discussed at length in Sessions 4 and 5.)


- a. The Harvest USA Tree Model: over-desire → temptation → sin → death

4. Acting on gender dysphoria—whether in thought, word, or deed—is sinful behavior and must be repented of.

5. Transgender struggles and intersex are not the same, and are not linked.

VI. Helping the gender

NOTE: This video discusses the issues that are in the church needs to address gender dysphoria or confusion. This video does *not* talk about a detailed process of pastoral care, nor how to establish a long-term relationship with the person who struggles or how to walk alongside of that individual for the long haul. That level of pastoral care is discussed in Session 6, “Ministry to the Sexually Hurting.” It will be important to view and discuss that video before you view and discuss this video on gender and transgender.



Disappointment
Discouragement
Despair

It would be best, then, to review the key *relationship-building steps* of good pastoral process that video #6 laid out, with the key points being:

- The first step in helping is to enter fully into someone’s life: Show Christ before you speak Christ.
- Three key principles for listening:
 - a. What is painful in their story?

 - b. Where is there hope in their story?

 - c. What are they living for?

1. The call for believers is the same for other sexual struggles: walking in increasing faith and repentance, in community with others
2. The church has a role in disciplining someone with gender dysphoria.

VII. What would repentance look like?

1. Actively turning away from acting on gender dysphoria
2. Actively pursuing accountability with other Christians
3. Becoming actively engaged in Christian fellowship
4. Learning to embrace one's God-given gender
5. Understanding typical patterns of temptation/behavior to act out, and actively turning from those patterns

6. **Actively turning from associations with others who cultivate an unbiblical worldview here**

VIII. Further ways to help the gender struggler

1. **Remind them that repentance does not necessarily include attaining to cultural idealizations of gender or gender roles if they are extrabiblical.**

2. **The church needs to offer authentic love and community for the struggler, in place of the counterfeit he or she finds in transgender fantasy or the transgender community.**

3. **Communicate that acting on gender dysphoria and engaging in transitioning behavior are not the unforgiveable sin**

Here are some resources (short reads) that can help you go deeper in understanding this issue:

- » **Transgenderism: The Reshaping of Reality, A Compassionate and Biblical Response**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/transgenderism-reshaping-reality>)
- » **Gender Confusion: What Do We Say to Someone?**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/gender-confusion-what-do-we-say-to-someone>)
- » **The Great Transgender Case of Mistaken Identity**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/identity-the-great-transgender-case-of-mistaken-identity>)
- » **Talking to Millennials about Transgenderism**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/on-the-road-talking-to-millennials-about-transgenderism>)
- » **Raising a Child with Gender Brokenness**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/gender-brokenness-raising-a-child-with>)

- » **Children at Risk: Transgender Ideology (Parts 1-2)**—blog at harvestusa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/children-risk-transgender-ideology>)
- » **Alternative Trans-Stories**—blog at harvest usa.org (<https://www.harvestusa.org/alternative-trans-stories>)

