

Crucial Questions

How Should the Church Respond to LGBT Issues?

CONNECT:

How have you learned about Biblical sexuality in the church? Has it been handled positively or negatively?

PREPARE:

- If we understand that we are people in process, how does that help against becoming defensive in discussions that might be difficult or uncomfortable?
- How do you see a renewal to our theology on Biblical sexuality tied to a renewal to our mission of loving people and reaching people with the good news of Jesus?

STUDY AND DISCUSS:

God has called the church do the following:

- **A Story to Live:** Sexuality is broken. God meant it as a gift and a blessing, but it has become broken in us and around us. What are some ways that the promise of freedom in the sexual revolution has led to sexual bondage instead?
- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8. If there is sexual immorality mentioned in this passage, there is obviously a standard for sexual morality. What is the key purpose of this passage and why is sexuality used to point that out?
- **A People to Love:** Based on the statistics from the study by Andrew Marin, what are the biggest takeaways of why LGBT people left the church?
 - 86% of the LGBT community in the US grew up in the church vs. 76% of the general population.
 - 54% have left the church as adults, after they turned 18.
 - Of those who leave the church, only 3% of LGBT people said they left because of the church's traditional view of marriage and sexuality. The other 97% left for relational reasons.
 - 76% of LGBT people who left the church say they would consider returning to the church, compared to just 9% of the general population if the church was willing to make some changes in the way that we relate to LGBT people.

Community Group Discussion Questions

- 92% would not require their church to change views on sexuality and marriage for them to return to church.
- Read the following quotes and discuss how the church could respond to these people differently?
 - “To be gay in the American Evangelical church is to be dead. You are an outcast, a diseased person.” - Drew Harper
 - “After hearing a sermon about the gay community being an abomination I was ashamed that I was such an abomination to the God I adored.” - Lesli Hudson
 - “All I wanted was to feel loved by those in the church I grew up with...Love is giving me time to be with you to figure this out together. If you let any people read this, tell them that I don’t have to be right to feel loved. I have to be dignified in our disagreement.” - Tasha, 21 year old lesbian in the church
- Read Matthew 18:21-22. How is Peter’s question about extending grace and love?
- Read Galatians 6:1-3. Why does our posture need to start at the foot of the cross as people in absolute need of God’s grace? How can you bear one another’s burdens when they seem to be such drastically different burdens than you carry?
- **A Mission to Lead:** Based on the examples of Jesus (Zaccheus, woman caught in adultery, woman at the well, etc.), how did he relate to people?
- What were your thoughts of the story of Rosaria Butterfield? Why is Romans 1:24-28 considered to be a “clobber passage”? How did God use it in Rosaria’s story?

RESPONSE:

Read the following 4 Directives. Which area do you need to work on the most?

1. Seek to understand before you refute.
2. Listen intentionally and humbly to those who identify as LGBT people.
3. The discussion should not primarily be about “inclusion” vs. “exclusion”.
4. Unbiblical expectation of marriage and sexuality hinder both side of the conversation.

PRAY:

Pray that God would give you grace and humility to recognize your own brokenness and view other’s through the lens of God’s grace.

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