

Hope for Clients with Unwanted Same-Sex Attraction and Gender Dysphoria:
Examining Scripture and Science
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I. Examining Scripture

- A. God loves us more than we can imagine and sent Jesus to die to pay the price for our sin and reconcile us back to God. (See Romans 8:37-39; John 3:16; Romans 5:8-11)
- B. As Christians, we die to ourselves and live for God. We no longer live according to our fleshly desires, but according to God's Word through the power of His Holy Spirit. (Romans 8; Galatians 5:16-24; 1 Peter 2:9-11; See also Jude 17-25)
- C. Gender Matters. In the description of the creation of humans, only two qualities are mentioned – that mankind was created in the image of God and that we were created male and female. Being male or female is an essential part of our design as image-bearers of God. (Genesis 1:27)
- D. Marriage between a man and woman is the context for producing new life and nurturing those lives. (Genesis 1:28; 2:24)
- E. Marriage between a man and a woman is a sacred symbol of the most important relationship of all – that of Christ and the Church. (Ephesians 5:31-32)
- F. Same-sex relationships/marriages are forbidden in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. (Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:24-27; I Corinthians 6:9-12; I Timothy 1:8-10)
- G. Cross-dressing is forbidden by God. (Deuteronomy 22:5)
- H. Whatever a person's struggle, change and transformation are possible. (1 Corinthians 6:9-12)

II. Examining Science

- A. People are not simply "born gay" nor do they *choose* to be gay. No evidence exists that homosexuality is biological, and twin studies make it clear that people are not simply "born gay." (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2023; also see www.mygenes.co.nz) It is also important to note that people do not "choose" to have homosexual attractions. Attractions are usually the result of many complex factors.

B. Research reveals that change of behavior, identity, and/or attractions is possible for some people to varying degrees. (Pela & Sutton, 2021; Jones & Yarhouse, 2011; Phelan, Whitehead, & Sutton, 2009; Nicolosi, Byrd, & Potts, 2000)

C. Attempting to change in the area of behavior, identity, and/or attractions has not been found to be harmful. (Sullins, 2022; Sprigg, 2021; Phelan, Sutton, and Whitehead, 2009)

D. There is no evidence that people are born in the wrong bodies. (See www.mygenes.co.nz) Likewise, most people do not “choose” to feel this way.

E. Many individuals have come to regret steps taken to transition. (see www.sexchangeregret.com) In reality, it is not actually possible for a person to change his or her biological sex. Regardless of taking hormones or having surgery, male or female chromosomes remain unchanged in cells throughout a person’s body.

III. Childhood Development

A. There are various factors that can contribute in different ways to a child developing gender confusion and/or same-sex attractions.

- Parents wanting a child of the opposite sex
- Sensitive temperament, leading to interpretations of rejection, withdrawal, etc.
- Poor relationship with the same-sex parent
- Poor relationships with same-sex peers
- Over-identification with members of the opposite sex
- Parental reinforcement of cross-gender behaviors
- Sexual Abuse

B. Gender identity often develops through different stages of childhood:

- Infancy: Bonding with the mother
- Ages 1 ½ - 3,4: Gender Identification Phase – bonding with same-sex parent
- Ages 5 through puberty: Bonding with same-sex peers
- Adolescence: Having had several years of forming secure, loving attachments with members of the same sex, the child becomes secure in his or her own gender. In the teen years he or she goes on to develop curiosity, interest, and attraction for the opposite sex.

(For Section III, see Nicolosi, 2016; Lung & Shu, 2007; Moberly, 2006; Meyer-Bahlburg, 2002)

IV. Issues to Explore in Therapy

- Father Wounds
- Mother Wounds

- Peer Rejection
- Sexual Abuse or Other Traumas, Including Early Pornography Exposure
- Misperceptions of Masculinity or Femininity
- Destructive Inner Vows (“I will never...”)
- Unforgiveness

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