

## Message Notes

The gospel preaching to culture's views of sex

**Introduction** – *Do you already know what you believe about this? Does it truly matter to you what gets said in what follows?*

### Sermon series:

*Hey! I have a question!*

### Today's Question:

*How should we, as the church, address current cultural realities about sexuality?*

Past sermon series on topics of sex

Last week: God's good design for sex

Cultural examples of current sexual realities

The struggle is REAL! a GAP exists

#1 - Of first importance: the gospel

#2 - The gospel includes both truth and grace

#3 - The gospel is first introspective

#4 - Jesus died for sins, even sexual ones

#5 - Don't be surprised when Culture and God's Word disagree

#6 - Matter and manner, matter, especially here

#7 - Those who sense themselves to be lost will (eventually) look for a trusted guide

**Gospel Application** - *Have you heard what God thinks about you? And about others?*

## Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

### John 3:16-18

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

### Romans 11:22-23

22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

### Matthew 7:1-5

1 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

### Galatians 3:10

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

### James 1:19

19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

## For Further Study

### The Bible

Past HCC sermon series:

-Song of Solomon (2011)

-Gospel Sexuality (2013)

-Holy Sex (2016)

### **Rosaria Butterfield**

The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert: an English professor's journey into Christian faith

Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ

The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World

*How to Evangelize Friends Identifying as LGBTQ* (Gospel Coalition article)

### **Jackie Hill Perry**

Gay Girl Good God

On her own story involving homosexuality, gender confusion, and finding wholeness

Sexuality and Identity (YouTube video)

### **Wesley Hill**

Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality

Spiritual Friendship: Finding Love in the Church as a Celibate Gay Christian

### **Sam Alberry**

Is God anti-gay?

Answering the question: What if God created Transgender people? (YouTube video)

### **Christopher Yuan**

Giving a Voice to the Voiceless: A Qualitative Study of Reducing Marginalization of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Same-Sex Attracted Students at Christian Colleges and Universities

With his mother, Angela

Out of a Far Country: A gay son's journey to God. A broken mother's search for hope.

Holy Sexuality and the Gospel: Sex, Desire, and Relationships Shaped by God's Grand Story

### **Tim Keller**

Sex, Singleness and Marriage by Tim and Kathy Keller

Answering the question: What do Christian have against homosexuality? (YouTube video)

### **Matt Moore**

*Why God never answered my prayer to make me straight* (article on FaithIt.com)

### **Richard & Sharon Phillips**

Holding Hands, Holding Hearts: Recovering a Biblical View of Christian Dating

### **Sheila Wray Gregoire**

The Good Girl's Guide to Great Sex (And You Thought Bad Girls Have All the Fun)

### **Drew Hunter**

Made for Friendship: The Relationship that Halves Our Sorrows and Doubles Our Joys

**Mark Yarhouse (many books written on the subject of sexuality)**

Understanding Gender Dysphoria: Navigating Transgender Issues in a Changing Culture

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Recently I read a panel discussion in which a bunch of people sat around. The question was...*What are we to make of Christ in light of our modern lifestyles and values?* There was a Marxist there who said, "I like to think of Christ as a revolutionary who brings liberation."

Another person (he was an artist, by the way) said, "I like to think of Christ as a prophet against the cultural establishment." Do you see how comical this is?... Friends, I know some of you are out there saying, "I already know what I believe about sex. I already know what I believe about men and women and gender. I already know what I believe about my needs. I already know what I believe about my desires. If Jesus Christ does not fit into those things, I'm out of here." Do you know what you've done? If Jesus is who he says he is, who cares about your needs and who cares about your opinions? Don't you see how silly it is? What are we to make of Christ? What is Christ to make of you?

Therefore, if you go at it with this attitude you have already assumed he is wrong before you start your investigation. You've assumed he can't be God, because if you say, "Look, I don't want to hear I have to stop this," or, "I don't want to hear I have to change this. I don't want to hear that. If he doesn't fit in, then I'm out of here," then you've assumed he couldn't be who he says he is.

Because if he is who he says he is, who cares what you think? There is an ultimate reality there you have to adapt to. It doesn't matter what you think of him; it matters what *he* thinks of *you*.

~ Keller, T. J. (2013). The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive.  
New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.



**HEY!  
I HAVE A  
QUESTION!**

Summer Sermon Series

This week's question:

*“How should we, as the church, address current cultural realities about sexuality?”*

May my comments be toward pastoral concerns of Hope  
Community Church.

While aware of and sensitive to public exposure or political  
correctness or opinions of close friends, my foremost  
commitment is to this church, your spiritual care and well-being.

5/26/13 – The brokenness and confusion of our (sexual) world

6/2/13 – What is the point of sex anyway?

6/9/13 – Gospel sexuality in a non-Gospel world

6/16/13 – Men and Women: A celebration

6/23/13 – Sex and singleness

6/30/13 – The Gospel and same-sex attraction

7/7/13 – Lust: Dealing with the dragon within

7/14/13 – Restoration: Picking up the broken pieces of our broken sexuality



10/30/16 – It's just sex – The American lie

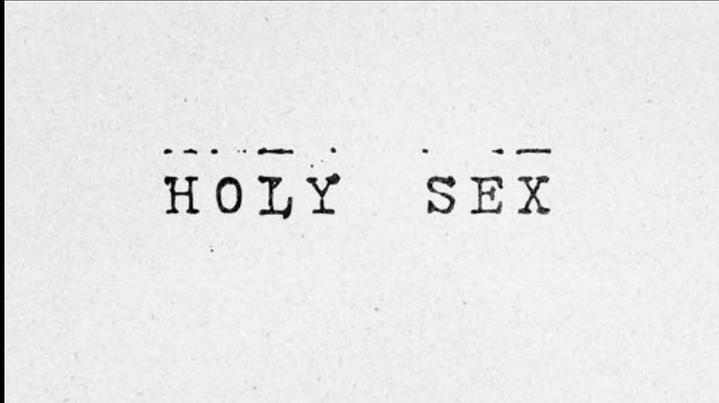
11/6/16 – What was God thinking?

11/13/16 – The idolatry of marriage (or singleness)

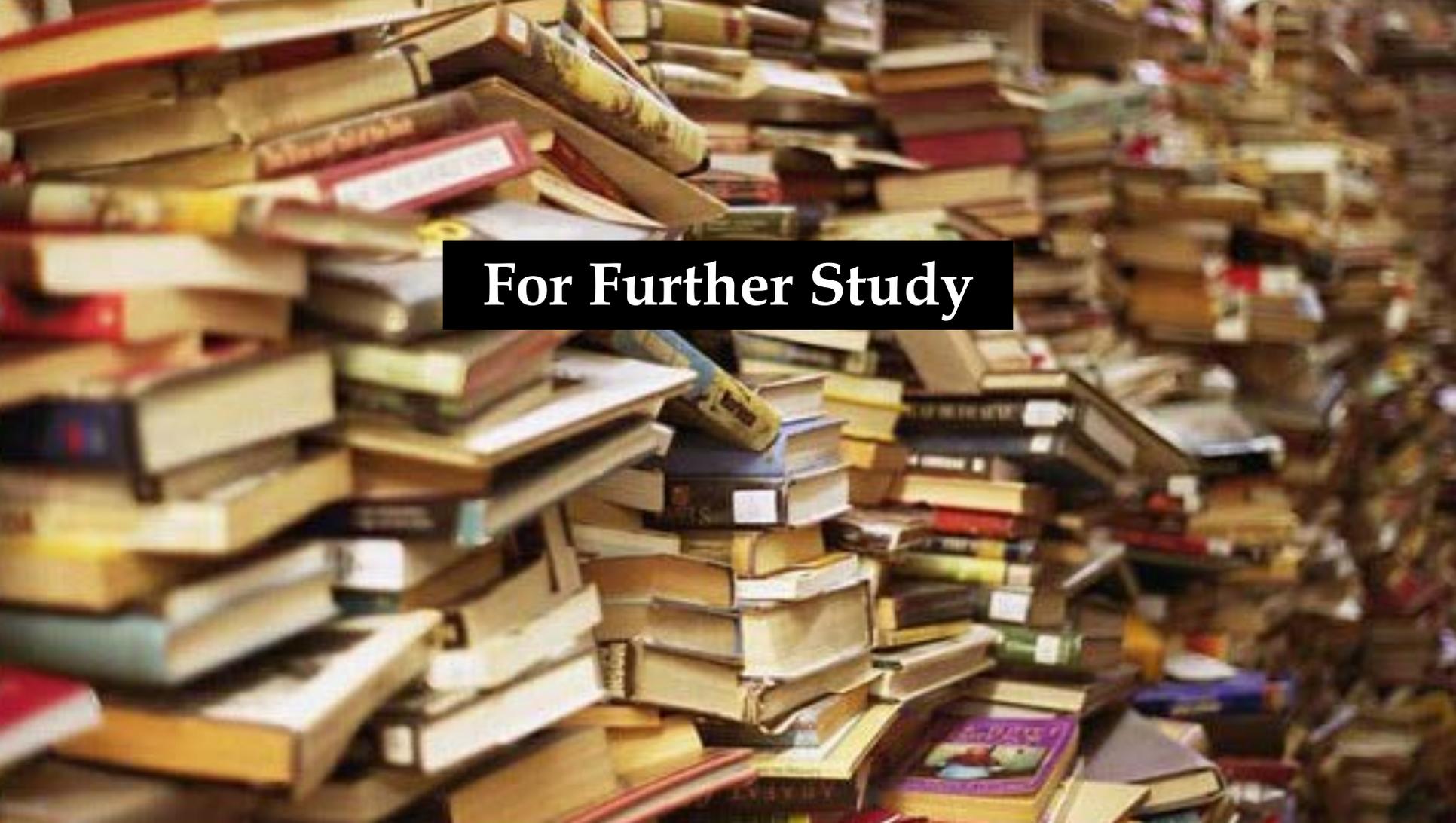
11/20/16 – Holy sex and homosexuality

11/27/16 – Deceptive imitators

12/4/16 – Beauty from ashes: hope for the sexually fallen



HOLY SEX

A large, dense pile of books of various colors and sizes, filling the frame. The books are stacked haphazardly, creating a textured, three-dimensional effect. The colors range from light beige and cream to dark reds, blues, and purples. The lighting is warm, highlighting the edges of the pages and the spines of the books. A black rectangular box with white text is centered over the middle of the image.

**For Further Study**

# Gospel Sexuality

God created sex  
to be received as a gift  
and experienced at his direction  
for ever-increasing intimacy and benefit

**AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF HIS  
RELATIONSHIP WITH US**

Hope Community Church believes that Christian marriage is a joyful covenanting between a man and a woman in which they proclaim, before God and human witnesses, their commitment to live together in spiritual, physical, and material unity. In this covenant they acknowledge that the great love God has shown for each of them enables them to love each other. We believe that the wedding ceremony is the place where this promise of a lifelong covenant between husband and wife is made and in which the two become one flesh, as it is both an ordinance of Creation, affirmed as such by our Lord, and commended by Saint Paul as a sign of the mystical union between Christ and His Church (Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:22-32). Therefore, Hope Community Church only allows wedding ceremonies that would affirm Christian marriage as defined above, and officiated by Licensed Ministers of the Gospel in the State of Minnesota who also would agree with the above definition.

# Breaking the binary

Diversity of human sexuality and sexual orientation

## Gender Identity

How you think about yourself



Woman  
Genderqueer  
Man



## Gender Expression

How you demonstrate your gender



Feminine  
Androgynous  
Masculine



## Biological Sex

Organs, hormones and chromosomes



Female  
Intersex  
Male



## Sexual Orientation

Physical, spiritual and emotional attraction



Heterosexual  
Bisexual  
Homosexual



"Diversity in human sexuality," ASSAf, 2015

# Cultural Example from The Emmys

“Billions” (Showtime drama series) star Asia Kate Dillon continues to blaze Hollywood trails. Dillon, who plays the first gender non-binary character on a mainstream television show, just helped clarify the Television Academy’s submission rules for Emmy Awards consideration, Variety reported Wednesday. The “Orange is the New Black” veteran, who also identifies as gender non-binary offscreen and uses the pronoun “they” for identification, has received almost universal praise since joining “Billions” in its second season. But they encountered an issue when the Showtime asked them how they would like their work to be submitted for Emmys consideration.

# Cultural Example from The Emmys

Unable to find a suitable answer, they wrote an impassioned letter to the Television Academy, which was excerpted by Variety. It read in part:

*I'd like to know if in your eyes 'actor' and 'actress' denote anatomy or identity and why it is necessary to denote either in the first place? The reason I'm hoping to engage you in a conversation about this is because if the categories of 'actor' and 'actress' are in fact supposed to represent 'best performance by a person who identifies as a woman' and 'best performance by a person who identifies as a man' then there is no room for my identity within that award system binary.*

*Furthermore, if the categories of 'actor' and 'actress' are meant to denote assigned sex I ask, respectfully, why is that necessary?"*

# Cultural Example from Your Newsfeed

Hi, I'm queer. 

•

I identify as queer. I don't personally identify as gay, but you can feel free to refer to me that way, as I know it's easier and more understandable for most people.

•

I'm the first one to admit that I've had a bit of an identity crisis the past 5+ years, especially when it comes to my sexuality. I found myself questioning things and changing who I was to fit the mold of what I thought my current social circles wanted me to be. But I'm done trying to hide who I am and I'm done trying to please people. This is who I am.

•

While it's kind of scary to post this, it's also one of the most freeing feelings. I know my true family and friends will still love me no matter what. But most importantly, I've never been more comfortable with my sexuality than I am now and that's an amazing feeling.



# The struggle is real

An internal sense  
of ourselves such  
that we would say,  
“This is who I am.”

GAP

An external summons  
to us such  
that they would say,  
“This is who you  
should be.”

*“How should we, as the church, address current cultural realities about sexuality?”*

# #1 - Of first importance: the gospel

## 1 Corinthians 15:1-5

1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

# #1 - Of first importance: the gospel

## John 3:16-18

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Testimonies are useful. Testimonies are powerful. But they are not ultimately authoritative. So we gotta get to the Scriptures, right?...Because the emphasis is God. It's God who made me. It's God who drew me. It's God who saved me. It's God who is keeping me. God is the one to "blame" for my being his. And so, far too often I think in talking to people about sexuality or talking about sexuality, a lot of times we can get to a lot of morality without God. And when you leave God out of the equation, what happens to your evangelism is that your evangelism automatically has no more power. Because Romans 1:16 says that, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation." If you know anything about the gospel you recognize the gospel is less about you and more about what God did to get God glory."

Jacki Hill Perry,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-6a6kiRgYg&feature=youtu.be>



*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, do you see the gospel as of first importance?*

## #2 - The gospel includes truth and grace

Truth  
Justice  
Holiness  
Severity

Grace  
Love  
Mercy  
Kindness

## #2 – The gospel includes truth and grace

John 1:14

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, do you see the gospel bringing equal measures of truth and grace?*

# #3 – The gospel is first introspective

## Matthew 7:1-5

<sup>1</sup>“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

<sup>3</sup>“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

## #3 – The gospel is first introspective

There is sufficient sexual sin within Hope Community Church;  
we need not exit these doors to go find more of it.

*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, have you first given due attention to the sexual sin within you?*

# #4 – Jesus died for sins, even sexual ones

## Galatians 3:10

<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”

This position contends a primary goal of Christianity is to resolve homosexuality through heterosexuality, thus failing to see that repentance and victory over sin are God's gifts and failing to remember that sons and daughters of the King can be full members of Christ's body and still struggle with sexual temptation. This heresy is a modern version of the prosperity gospel. Name it. Claim it. Pray the gay away.

Rosaria Butterfield, writer, speaker, homemaker, and former tenured professor of English at Syracuse University,  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/you-are-whatand-howyou-read/>



*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, are you believing certain (sexual) sins are worse than others?*

# #5 – Don't be surprised when Culture & God's Word disagree regarding "This is who you should be"

**Genesis 1:1**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

# #5 – Don't be surprised when Culture & God's Word disagree regarding "This is who you should be"

## Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

## Mark 10:6

<sup>6</sup> (Jesus) "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'"

# #5 – Don't be surprised when Culture & God's Word disagree regarding "This is who you should be"

## Genesis 1:1

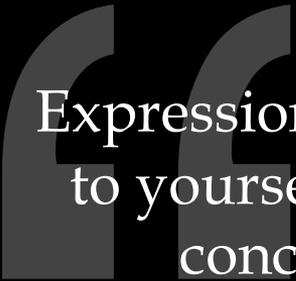
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

## Mark 10:6

<sup>6</sup> (Jesus) "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'"

## Genesis 2:24

<sup>24</sup> That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh



Expressions abound like “Nothing is more important than being true to yourself,” or, “This is my truth.” It’s self-wrought ideology. It’s conceived by self for the sake of self. Self reigns supreme.

And it runs contrary to the principal teaching of Scripture:  
Our God reigns! (Isa. 52:7)

*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, who are you giving final say about “how things should be”?*

**#6 – Matter *and manner*, matter, especially here.**

# #6 – Matter *and* manner, matter, especially here.



**Ed Stetzer**  @edstetzer · 2h

God does not bless Christians using ungodly means to accomplish godly ends.

 23

 60

 329



 NWS Twin Cities replied

## #6 – Matter *and* manner, matter, especially here.

### John 8:3–11

<sup>3</sup> The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group <sup>4</sup> and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. <sup>5</sup> In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” <sup>6</sup> They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. <sup>7</sup> When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” <sup>8</sup> Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. <sup>9</sup> At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. <sup>10</sup> Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” <sup>11</sup> “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

“Unconditional love is not the same thing as unconditional approval of my behavior.”

Christopher Yuan, speaker, author, Bible professor at Moody Bible Institute,  
Newest book: *Holy Sexuality and the Gospel - Sex, Desire, and Relationships Shaped by God's Grand Story*



## #6 – Matter *and manner*, matter, especially here.

James 1:19

19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

The development of sexuality [speaking of orientation] is complex and is, I think, best understood as being on a spectrum, along which individuals can move, especially in the years soon after puberty, but also later. A small proportion of people, including Christians, find that they remain exclusively attracted to the same sex as they grow into mature adulthood. God has the power to change their orientation, but he hasn't promised to and that has not been my experience.

Research suggests that complete change from exclusively homosexual desires to exclusively heterosexual ones is very rare.

Vaughan Roberts, rector of St Ebbe's, Oxford, and the author of *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible*



*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, does your manner demonstrate God's love to this person?*

# #7 – Those who sense themselves to be lost will (eventually) look for a trusted guide

**Luke 6:39-40**

39 He also told them this parable: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.

Science can't tell you whether you can [or should] engage in homosexual behavior or not. It can't tell you that. It can't tell you what's healthy and what's not healthy. It can't tell you what human beings ought to be like! That's the realm of faith. As soon as you start to tell people how they ought to be and how they ought to get there, as soon as you tell people to change and say, "Go in that direction," you are being religious. You're making faith assumptions.

Oh I know, there are some people who say, "Well, I don't tell people how they ought to be. I don't give any values to them. I just help them find their own moral values." That is a moral value. You can't say that. As soon as you've decided morality is so relative that it doesn't matter what that person becomes as long as he or she becomes what she wants to be or he wants to be, that *is* a moral value, and you *are* operating on the basis of it, and you're being religious.

The only difference between Christian counselors and other kinds of counselors is Christians are coherent about their faith and they have a basis for it and they admit that's what it is. The Christian counselor, or the Christian pastor, or anybody, or a Christian friend who helps you change says, "I know what a human being ought to be like. You ought to be like Jesus. Jesus Christ, the image of God, righteousness and holiness. That's where we're going."

~ Keller, T. J. (2013). The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive.  
New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.



*When it comes to addressing current cultural realities about sexuality, will you be the type of believing person others will turn to for guidance?*

# Gospel Application

Therefore, if you go at it with this attitude you have already assumed he is wrong before you start your investigation. You've assumed he can't be God, because if you say, "Look, I don't want to hear I have to stop this," or, "I don't want to hear I have to change this. I don't want to hear that. If he doesn't fit in, then I'm out of here," then you've assumed he couldn't be who he says he is.

Because if he is who he says he is, who cares what you think? There is an ultimate reality there you have to adapt to. It doesn't matter what you think of him; it matters what *he* thinks of *you*.

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Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.