

10 April, 2022

Human Sexuality, Gender, and the Gospel

Forestgate Presbyterian Church

Lesson 5: LGB-The New Cultural Zeitgeist

Goal for this class: to consider the context, both recent history and terminology, for the current cultural zeitgeist, or spirit of the age that embraces homosexuality, while also noting the contrasting context of biblical sexuality.

1. **Resources:** PCA Ad Interim Committee Report on Women Serving in Ministry

- The Presbyterian Church in America is joyfully and confessionally committed to the Bible's teaching on the complementarity of men and women. As a denomination, we believe that this teaching is true, good, and beautiful. We affirm the full dignity of men and women as created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28). We also humbly and happily embrace Scripture's clear teaching that the eldership is to be composed of qualified men (1 Tim. 2:12; 3:1-7; 5:17), who are entrusted by Christ with the ministry of the authoritative teaching and ruling of the church for the building up of the whole body (Eph. 4:11-13). In marriage, this mutually-edifying complementarity is displayed when a Christian husband expresses his responsibility of headship in sacrificial love to his wife (Eph. 5:23-31) and when a Christian wife welcomes her husband's headship with respect (Eph. 5:22-24, 33).

2. **A few follow-on issues re: our definitions of men and women**

- a. Over-applying our definition

- b. Over-defining our definitions

3. **Biblical Sexuality--God's Good Design for:**

- a. Gender

Thanks to my RTS Seminary Professor, Dr. Greg Lanier, for providing much of the structure and content for this course.

b. Marriage

c. Sex

Not a freedom *from* all constraints, but a freedom *for* or freedom *to* (e.g. fire in the fireplace metaphor).

4. Homosexuality: Cultural Zeitgeist and the Road to Obergefell vs Hodges

a. Harvey Milk

b. Will and Grace

c. Today: If you don't catechize your kids, the world will.

5. Some goals to keep in mind.

- a. How do we best show Christ-like love to *Christians* who struggle against unwanted same-sex desire and/or gender dysphoria, walking side-by-side in repentant discipleship?
- b. How do we best show forth the gospel of Christ in our families/schools/communities, and bear witness to God's beautiful purposes for sexuality to our children and to skeptics around us?

6. Some terminology to keep straight—The ever-expanding acronym: LGBTQQIAAP

Lesbian and Gay	Sexually attracted to same sex: L=Female and G=Male/Catch-all
Bisexual	Combination of L and G
Trans(gender)	Gender identity/expression differs from physical sex (incl. non-binary)
Cisgender	Someone who identifies with the sex assigned to them at birth
Queer	General term for any fluid or non-conforming sexual identity
Questioning	In the process of exploring a different sexual identity
Intersex	Physical characteristics of both due to chromosomal abnormality
Asexual	Lack of sexual attraction for other people
Allies	Person who is not LGBTQ+ but supports the cause
Pansexual	Ability to find any person sexually attractive at various times

<i>Homosexual</i>	<p><i>As noun</i> (“He is a homosexual”), from late-1900s psychotherapy</p> <p>→ Outdated, not really used in secular contexts; seen as pejorative</p>
<i>Gay</i>	<p>Most used and most debated term at present</p> <p>(a) Orientation <i>only</i>?</p> <p>(b) Orientation <i>and</i> pattern of desires (unwanted or cultivated)?</p> <p>(c) All of the above <i>plus</i> practices? (monogamous relationship)</p> <p>(d) All of the above <i>plus</i> “community,” “lifestyle,” “agenda”?</p> <p>As a marker of identity? Or only how you experience the world?</p> <p><i>Homosexual as adjective</i> is typically interchangeable with “gay” (a)-(c)</p> <p>→ Note: Both Christians and Non-Christians use this word in all kinds of different ways, which creates a lot of confusion</p>
<i>SSA</i>	<p>Enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual desires or for those of the same sex (including nonsexual relational bonds)</p> <p>→ Note: Non-Christians do not use this term; it is a Christian coinage; secular people will not know what you’re talking about</p>
<i>Identity</i>	<p>(a) Strong form: immutable essence of who you are (“essentialist”)</p> <p>(b) Weak form: social experience of the world (“constructionist”)</p> <p>→ A lot of the confusion in Christian circles comes from confusing one definition for another, particularly in debates about “Gay Christian.” One side thinks this is a massive category mistake (equating “gay” and “Christian” as equal identity markers in the ‘strong’ form). The other side is using “gay” in the ‘weak’ form (i.e. “Democrat Christian”)—as less central to your core self than “Christian.”</p>